Development Plan

Preliminary: Rules and Voting Criteria

The first few sections are from the [Game Jam page][https://itch.io/jam/pirate]

Rules

- The submission must run in the browser
- No AI generated content
- No nudity
- No illicit drug references

Voting Criteria

These are less important for us as we are just all new developers, but we can still use them as guiding ideas.

Playability

- Were systems in your game clunky or polished?
- Was the game tripping over itself when the judges tried to play it?
- Focus on playability and make sure your build works.
- This is the most important category and counts for a lot.

Theme Implementation

- Did your game follow the theme?
- Was the theme entirely ignored?
- Did you implement the theme in a clever and interesting way?

Cleverness

- Did you have an ingenious mechanic in your game?

- Maybe you told a story with a very interesting or unique twist.
- The more clever you are the more likely you are to win.

Artistic Style

- Everyone has a style that they like or enjoy.
- Style is not bound only to Triple A assets from major studios.
- Pixel Art, Midi Songs, Foley work and more all ooze with artistic style.
- Just make something YOU think works and run with it.

Portfolios

I am including in this section the portfolios of any members that currently had some made. Hopefully this can showcase everyone's creative work!

Name	link	
Mr Jessy	https://mrjessyart.carrd.co/#illustrations	
Nick	https://github.com/Nicholas-J-Norris	
Siccness	https://soundcloud.com/siccflip	
James Cooper (Weary Shaboble)	https://cooperjamesfl.wixsite.com/official	

Tools

Please make sure that whatever tools you are using you understand their license agreements.

Special note to the Programmers

If you plan on doing any programming, you may want to learn some Version Control fundamentals. Git and Github are the usual go tos for version control

Audio

As far as I know, Siccness will be composing in FL Studio. If you plan to assist him in any of the composing or SFX then keep that mind as there may be file format incompatibilities.

Writing

Weary Shaboble is our writer and game design. As far as I am aware, they plan to use Ink which is a narrative scripting language.

Game Engine

The game engine of choice is going to be Game Maker Studio. It has it's own proprietary scripting/programming language. It is an engine that is specialized for 2d games. The creators of it allow people to use the free version of it in Game Jams.

James (GameMaker)
Jan 4, 2024, 10:29 GMT

Hi there Adam,

Thanks for reaching out to us!

I can confirm you can enter the Game Jam without a Licence. Should you wish to publish the project after however for commercial use, you will require a Professional licence.

Any further questions do not hesitate to reach out!

Kind Regards,
James
YoYo Games Customer Support Technician
Read our Help Center Articles while you wait for an agent

This screenshot is from an email that a member of the Pirate Software Discord channel shared

General info

- **Know your tools** - get familiar with the tools you'll be using. Try making prototypes of stuff, so that when the jam starts you are ready to rock and roll from the word go.
- **Introduce yourself** - if you haven't already, please introduce yourself to the team including your name and maybe pronouns if you feel that's necessary. Mine are he/him.
- **Remember that everyone is new** to this, as far as I am aware no one on this team has been to a game jam. Some of you may have more experience with your expertise than others, while others are largely new to this. Just be kind and and patient. Positivity goes a long way in these kinds of settings.
- **Get excited**, this is my first game jam and I am pumped. I've always loved video games and I am sure that's the same for all of you. I am sure you all have some kind of passion for creating, well your about to be doing that as part of a large organized group with the hopes of creating something great!

Phase 0 - Prep work

This phase takes place before the Game Jam starts (which is July 17th), and ends when the game jam starts (obviously lol). We can lay the groundwork for our game now, this includes genre, general narrative structure, and mood/atmosphere.

The end goal of this product is a prototype of a larger game. The prototype should provide a short but satisfying experience, at most an hour of play time is a decent target (this number can be workshopped, let me know your thoughts).

Phase 1 - Requirements

This phase starts on July 17th at 7 am (time zone unknown). This phase ends when we have developed a [Game Design Document] [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vl7BMvzUOhbunJrI_X1gUc6x-LAp3aaBiPwHUf27B70/edit#heading=h.lr899156xjnx] (GDD) that outlines our concept, game idea, art, audio, user experience, and timeline. We should plan to meet as early as possible to begin work on this requirement.

I think some initial expectations should be set for the game idea, we should try to avoid overcommitting on mechanics and ideas, and instead focus on a core concept that can be rewarding on it's own. This will prevent scope creep which can be lethal to small projects like this.

Its important that this phase is successful and that we don't have to make too many changes down the line as that can lead to delays. The delays also get worse as development progresses as we'll likely have to change more components to reach a satisfactory conclusion. Please don't be afraid to speak up if you think some aspect is being neglected during this phase, or if you believe we're making a mistake.

Phase 2 - Implementation

This phase begins after phase 1, and starts the process of implementation for our game. We should take the ideas that we outlined in the GDD and begin to implement them in more detail. This is where we will split off and likely perform most of our communication over Discord. We can arrange to have regular meetings, but I am personally of the opinion that this will just take too much time. Instead of regular meetings, please try to keep people informed of your progress in Discord.

Continuous Integration

There is a concept in Software Engineering called Continuous Integration which basically states that as changes are made they get tested, approved, and integrated into the final product. The goal of this approach is to ensure that there is a working version of the product at any time. I would like for us to have this kind of workflow so that we can avoid the problems associated with combining a bunch of changes all at once.

This pertains mostly to code, but I believe the same idea should be applied to the art, animation, sound, and writing. You never know what change can totally bring down the entire system, software can be a bit unpredictable when it gets large.

Phase 2.1 - Play testing

We should attempt to play test the game at all points, to ensure functionality and avoid unforeseen complications or behavior.

Phase 3 - Final tests

This phase begins when the main features are added and will likely take place over a day or two. The goal is to iron out any final usability problems, or identify bugs. This phase is over when we feel confident that we have a complete prototype.

Phase 4 - Deployment

The game must be playable in a web browser. Game Maker Studio has [documentation] [https://help.gamemaker.io/hc/en-us/articles/115000992307-Setting-Up-For-HTML5] explaining how we can do this. As lead Programmer, I will familiarize myself with this (seems pretty easy tbh). I will upload the submission with the GDD at the end of the jam to [itch.io] [https://itch.io/jam/pirate].

The purpose of the game being a Web browser supported is to minimize the threat of malware and make it easier on the judges.

Phase 5 - Profit

The reward for winning is money to upload it to Steam as well as a bunch of other things that seem neat:

Prizes

- 100$ for your Steam Upload Fee to get your game up on Steam.
- A Pirate Software Game Jam Laurel to display on your game publicly.
- Access to the "Game Jam Winners" channels on our Discord.
- A shoutout on the PirateSoftware social media accounts.
- Your game will receive feedback from offbrand games with no strings attached.