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CS 1010 – Intro to Interactive Entertainment
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<u>Module 7 – TIO: Design Discussion – Storytelling</u>

1. How do the actions that you make available to the player work with the story in your game such that the story remains credible, coherent, and dramatically meaningful? – In *Shadow Realms*, I want the world to develop as the character makes advancements through new areas in the world. There will be area bosses that once conquered, will change the design of the area or allow side characters to also progress along with the main story. The combat and exploration of the world will be what reveals the story through the game.

2. How will you design your gameplay to be sure that the player does not experience so much randomness or repetition that it harms the dramatic tension of your story? – The gameplay will require bosses to be defeated before unlocking abilities which grant access to additional areas of the world. With new areas being unlocked and rewarding exploration, this should prevent repetitive gameplay and hopefully keep the player engaged.

3. Will the story in your game be linear or nonlinear? – I am envisioning a nonlinear story that allows players to explore the world. Certain paths or lore elements become accessible only when players choose specific actions or interactions, which give a loose control over the story's direction.

4. If your story is nonlinear, will the story branch or fold back? What kinds of things will cause it to branch: challenges, choices, or both? Will you allow deferred or cumulative influences, or will all influences be immediate? – The story will branch based on both challenges and choices. Some decisions may include helping an NPC, or choosing between combatting certain enemies and using stealth to avoid conflict.

5. If the story folds back, how many inevitable events will it have? What will they be like? – The story should have a few inevitable events at key moments, which will ensure that players reach essential plot points regardless of prior choices. The story will stay flexible to the player's journey, but major plot points in the main story will be delivered as the game progresses.

6. How many endings will your story have? How does each ending reflect the player's play and/or choices throughout the game? – I anticipate having multiple endings which can be unlocked depending on if the player has completed certain or all side quests prior to defeating the final boss. I can envision these quests even changing the final boss encounter, which would offer additional gameplay for the player.

7. What will be the size of your game's granularity? How and when are narrative events interwoven with game events and player actions? – This would embrace a very coarse granularity, where pieces of the story are revealed after large boss fights, or small narratives with NPCs.

8. What mechanism will you use to advance the plot? Travel, events, time, or some combination? – Travel and combat events will advance the plot.

9. Can the story begin at the beginning of the game, or would the game benefit from a prologue as well? – A brief prologue to set the tone and introduce the world is something that I would want to have in this game.

10. Will the game include narrative (that is, noninteractive) material? What role will it play—an introduction, mission briefing, transitional material, a conclusion, or character definition? Is the narrative essential for the player to understand and play the game? – Yes, there will be noninteractive narrative elements and cut-scenes. The narrative would include some context clues of where to explore, but wouldn't be necessary to play the game.

11. What form will the narrative material take? Pages in the manual? Scrolling text in the program? Movies? Cut-scenes? Voice-over narration? Monologues by characters? – Cut scenes.

12. What actions might the player take that are story actions but not efforts to overcome challenges? Conversations? Construction? Exploration? – Conversations engaged in with NPCs would also provide elements to add to the story.

13. Will the game include scripted conversations? Between the player and which characters? For what purpose? – Yes, there will be scripted conversations between the player and NPCs. These conversations will unlock side missions and give options for advancing the story points outside of the main quest.

14. Will the story be multipart? If so, how will the plot lines be handled: as an unlimited series, a limited series, or a serial? – I currently do not anticipate a multipart delivery of this story. I would like everything to be contained in a single delivery of the game.