Yellowhead Requirements Document

Yellowhead is an OpenWorld RPG, with a player driven narrative, and multiple story paths.

**Project structure**

The game will be built by me, in the Unity Game Engine. Using Visual Studio Code for programming, and Aseprite for pixel art, and animation.

**Naming Convention**

* Use the YHG\_ prefix for all file names.
* Use Camel Casing for all names

Get the player inputs first, and set states

All class logic should depend on public states, preferably bools. This should help keep the classes completely modular.

**Game Systems**

**General Gameplay**

Ideally Yellowhead will take around 5-7 hours to play all the way through. Aim for at least 5, and then lengthen from there, as comes naturally. The game will utilize a type of finality gameplay. Once a decision, or action has taken place, there will be no way of undoing it, short of erasing the entire save file. Gameplay loops will exist, but there will be key moments that cannot be undone. The game will not try to force the player into experiencing a certain set experience. Subverting expectations is extremely important for the overall enjoyability of the game. Try to think about what the player will expect and then do something different. In a strange way, the player is not the main character here, but instead a guardian angel for the existing characters in the game.

For maximum immersion

* **No cutscenes.** Everything will happen in real time, as the player, and other characters experience it.
* **No going back in time to fix mistakes.** Once a boss fight is complete, and the result been applied to the characters. There is no going back to change things. The player will have to live with their mistakes.
* **Multiple story paths**. Depending on the players decisions, and actions, they will experience drastically different game experiences, and events.
* **One point of view**. The player will play as themselves the entire game. No switching up and playing the other characters.
* **No crafting, or shopping.** I despise crafting, and shopping systems in games where it is not important to the gameplay. So I will not be implementing any of this.
* **Blank slate player character.** The player character will have no personality forced onto it. Hopefully letting the player project their own personality and dialogue onto it, more easily.

**Emotion**

Yellowhead will attempt to generate emotion by letting the player witness strong characters and affect their lives, either positively or negatively. I want to give the player an insight into each character’s childhood, and trauma. Getting to know their unique personalities, before they kill them, turn them evil, or ruin their hopes and dreams. Giving the player full responsibility for the way their decisions affect others. Music, and visuals will also play a crucial role in nailing the emotion. I am going for a bittersweet feel. The entire games success hinges on landing the emotional feel correctly.

**Passage of Time**

If the player dies, then time rolls back to when they last saved. (This is because the player is the mystical Lord of Time, but no one knows this until the end of certain storylines) If another person dies, then that is simply the end of them. Player can only die during boss fights. During the long stay at the academy, the player can come and go as they please. Moving back in time to fix mistakes is impossible, and once a character has died, there is no way to undo it.

**Combat System**

**I** want boss fights with repeatability. I really like the boss fights from Cuphead, and Undertale. Although, I like Undertale a lot more. I want the player to feel like they are surviving, rather than fighting. Each boss fight should be unique and contain its own specific mechanics. I am unsure about combat outside of boss fights. I tend to not like the grinding required in other games, and I want the gameplay to fluid and natural. During boss fights, the bosses will transport you back into a character’s origin story and give you an insight into their childhood. Each boss fight will be location based, and the environment will directly affect the gameplay.

**Dialogue System**

A simple Dialogue system that is not distracting is particularly important for the player to feel Immersed in the world. NPC’s need to feel very real. I think overhead text boxes will work nicely. Character portraits would be a lot of work, but they would also add a lot of realism to each character. They would need to be pulled off smoothly to work though and are not the most important thing to be worried about. To make a character start talking, the player will just press enter on them, and they will respond as though you asked them a question. Every voice line will be handwritten by me.

**Characters**

**You (Age Unknown, No Tint)**

You will play as a faceless, genderless, nameless character, who never speaks a word. The point of this is for the player to easily project themselves, and their words onto the character, as they affect the word around them. You can become better friends with any character, simply by spending more time with them, and speaking to them. Who you befriend makes a massive difference to how the story will progress. You are the mystical Lord of Time, this is pointed out to you, by the fact, that time rolls back when you die, Ralagor lines, and it is a never-ending day when you are around. This fact will not be revealed on all paths. The Lord of Time is destined to destroy Ralagor and rescue the world from his evil grip. Destroying him will be the final evil you have to commit, to finish the game.

**Rosie (9, Red)**

Rosie is an orphan who has the magical power to animate objects. Her only friend growing up was Theodore. She has red hair and eyes. Still quite young, Rosie has yet to discover the full range of her powers. She gets turned in to the Academy halfway the first semester. Rosie is very sensitive and relies on others. She is a very good source of tragedy for me. Rosie is very innocent, sassy, and gullible. If befriended, she will follow you around everywhere. She looks up to all the older characters.

**Theodore (Teddy) (8)**

Theodore is Rosie’s childhood stuffed bear. He was animated by Rosie. (Neither of them knows about this) He always wanted to be a “real bear” and after a falling out with Rosie, he left on a mission to become. Theodore turns up later as an evil force, working as the Reaper for Ralagor. A Bargest. Theodore is very shy, and reserved, but is secretly a real menace. When he is a “real bear” He is very thin and scraggly. Ralagor affectionately refers to him as Teddy. A savage sense of humor. A terrible alcoholic, and his friend Miranda tries to emulate.

**Miranda (20, No Tint)**

Miranda is friends with Theodore and is also a very heavy drinker (always non-alcoholic though). Hangs with a tough crowd and is very rude to everyone. Love interest for Newt, on some Paths. Miranda is a warrior for the monk tribe. Very tough and protective of people she loves. Wears a black leather jacket. Can be a boss fight on paths were Teddy turns evil. Talks trash about everyone but is secretly very naïve. A massive people pleaser, she tries to fit in everywhere she goes, adopting other people’s mannerisms, and phrases. Miranda ends up serving almost as an adoptive mother to Rosie, and when things deteriorate between Rosie and Teddy, she is very torn.

**Brother Thomas (50, No Tint)**

A minor character. The leader of the Monks, an alcoholic who smokes weed incessantly, wears his brown robe open, and is the spiritual leader of the monks. Keeps himself high most of the time. Thomas has never had a girlfriend and talks quite openly about the old days. If you get into a conversation with him, he will overshare about his tragic life. Born into riches, and lived the high life, until his whole family starved, when he spent all their money. He then joined a gang, who turned out to be undercover monk missionaries. By that point, he was trapped, and was about to run away from the monks when he was promoted to leader.

**Atlas (18, Black)**

Atlas has black hair and eyes. He can slow down his perception of time. A loner, Atlas grew up in a school where he was trained to be the perfect man to lead the Yellowheads. His powers a rude copy after the Lord of Time himself. He killed his way out of the compound at the age of 9, and then tried his best to keep a low profile ever since. He met Chloe a couple years ago but has kept his secret even from her. Atlas has a death path, where he is killed by Theodore, and become a servant of Ralagor. At the academy, people are initially suspicious of him, because black hair and eyes is extremely rare. There are rumors that he might be the yellowhead in disguise. Atlas keeps to himself and is relatively hard to befriend.

**Chloe (18, White)**

Chloe was created by the government as well, to try to bring Atlas back in. But during their time together, she has fallen in love with him. According to the government’s plan, Atlas and Chloe are meant to rule the kingdom together, under the watchful eye of king magnificent. Chloe is very quiet and shy, because of her troubled past. Her time at the creation facility was even more traumatic than Atlas’ was. Likes to laugh but doesn’t put herself out there. She can read minds but doesn’t want people to know about it. Seeing the future will be a very large part of her storyline. She can see her future with Atlas, and how he will turn out, if he turns evil.

**Kevin Colins (19, Green)**

Kevin is Newts best friend. He has a very corny sense of humor and is half loved and loathed by everyone. He is very trusting, loyal, and overall, a great friend. “The name’s Kevin, Kevin Colin” Kevin’s storyline is him trying to escape the evil grasps of his father, Old Mr. Colin. Kevin used to love Old Colin, but he is now a completely changed man. Loyal, and dedicated, a very hard worker. Colin has a German Shepherd named Jeffrey, and a squirrel, who is also named Jeffery (after his brother (who never existed), who died in a non-disclosed way. Hint that he may have been eaten/ or left in the spanking machine). Jeffery and Jeffery are a wicked pair when it comes to fighting, and combined with Kevin and Newt, they make a formidable force. Attention seeking and puts himself out there in social situations. Kevin ran away from home and met Newt in the city.

**Newt (19, Orange)**

Newt is Crawlins best friend. He is the more pragmatic and athletic of the two. He is very sensible. The two friends get in a lot of trouble during their stay at the academy. Newt is good at nearly everything he tries, except for social interaction. Depending on the path the player takes, Kevin and Newt will accept them into their group. On some paths, a deep Rivalry with Atlas will occur. Secretly very caring and sensitive. He failed to defend his family when they were attacked and feels guilty for surviving. He knows that the government only came because they were harboring an illegal tinted. He carries around the red bat he had as a kid, as a reminder of his guilt. Newt and Atlas are both very talented warriors, and in some paths, they might fight. He has trained for years to become stronger, so that nothing else like that can ever happen again.

**Ralagor (150,000)**

The antagonist of the entire game, Ralagor is an evil god, living in the frail body of the king magnificent son. He needs to be an extremely likable character. He is very open with the main characters about who he truly is and is very proud of how much of a hold he has over the king. Even though his power is greatly weakened by the body he lives in, Ralagor is wickedly intelligent, and retains some of his supernatural power. Ralagor is very selfish, and secretly insecure. He covers this up with an I.D.G.A.F personality, pretending not to care. Ralagor pretends to be sick when he is acting as the kings’ son, but he drops this the moment the king leaves the room. At the end of the day, Ralagor just wants to save humanity from itself, and he thinks the only way to do this is to take away free will, and to rule humans himself. Ralagor thinks that for people to be happy, mercy must be removed first. People will never be happy or safe unless ALL evil is immediately and harshly punished. In the dark academy, you will also see Ralagor in his Spirit form.

**King Magnificent (60)**

King Magnificent is the king of the land. He is a massive pushover, and the kingdom is pretty much ruled by his son, and chief advisor. Magnificent is anything BUT magnificent. But it is against the law (punishable by death) to say so. He is very sickly, like his son pretends to be. Not a bad person, and easily befriended, but not cut out for a leadership position. He must be held accountable for the decisions he made, even if they weren’t his ideas. King Magnificent created the academy to find all tinted, rule out the weak of spirit, and then turn the rest into an army of yellowheads. His initial test run, with the first batch of yellowheads went very well, so he decided an army would make him invincible.

**Old Mr. Colin (50)**

Kevin’s dad. He is very vulgar and shares his son’s cory sense of humor (although he prefers to ridicule). Colins is the definition of a menace. Aldo Colin. Evil to the core, Old Colin only ever looks out for himself, and always mistreated his Kevin and Jeffery. A boss fights.

**Brink (Dark Academy Path) (200)**

The most powerful sprit warrior, and is very jealous of Newt, because he is Ralagors new favorite.

**Mrs. Trinket**

The headmistress of the orphanage. A tired, and kindly woman, who tried her very best to make the children feel at home. She was the one who bought Teddy for Rosie.

**Boss Fights**

Each boss fight will take place along with a character, as you fight some figure from their past. You will be taken back in time to deal with their childhood trauma and fight their demons with them. Depending on the actions you take, different characters will take different paths. Eventually leading you to experience a very different version of the game.

**Ralagor Human Form**

A relatively simple boss fight. Ralagor will be using his “fathers” power against you here. He will sneak in supernatural attacks as well when the king isn’t looking. If you are too violent, you will lose all favor with King Magnificent, for trying to hurt his son, and be kicked out of the palace. If you are smart about it, you can get Ralagor in trouble for trying to hurt “these innocent travelers”.

**Ralagor Spirit Form**

I want this to be a very hard boss fight, but not so hard that the player quits out of frustration. Lots of projectiles, and a lot of strategy as well. The player must rewind time repeatedly to different points to defeat him. Make sure to use some beefed-up versions of his human form attacks. Ralagor will take control of the laptop on several occasions. This is when the player will be officially revealed as the Lord of Time. Lots of 4th wall breaks will be included in the fight. This is where Ralagor will show you all the mistakes you have made and force you to deal with them all. Using the powers of the friends who died because of you. You will fight a ghost version of every character that died during your playthrough of the game before you fight Ralagor himself. This is the only boss fight were the player directly damages and fights the boss without another character supporting. At some point, Ralagor will look at directly at the camera, and crash the game.

**Old Mr. Colin**

Along with Kevin, you will fight him, back at their home. Some belt attacks perhaps. Middle finger idle animation. Waking you up in the middle of the night. After Ms. Colin died, Mr. Colin abused his son, because of his hair. And this caused Kevin to run away, leaving his brother Jeffery, defenseless at his fathers will. This will all be revealed during the fight of course, adding a layer to Kevin’s otherwise goofy personality. If you don’t save Jeffery, Kevin will murder his dad, and then kill himself. A nearby flower blooms. Jeffery the dog will then be yours. No one in your party will remember Kevin.

**Teddy (Bargest)**

You and Rosie will fight him, back at the orphanage where they grew up. A very difficult boss 2/3 of the way through the game. Only on paths where he turns evil. If you get hit, you bleed out, relative to how much damage was dealt. Show the relationship between Teddy and Rosie. Rosie created Teddy to help herself deal with the trauma of the orphanage and having no family or friends. Rosie and Teddy need each other, so if you don’t restore Rosie’s belief in Teddy, he will die, and Rosie will turn dark, creating thousands of “friends”, and must be killed in a later boss fight.

**Yellowhead**

You and Atlas will fight him, back in the facility where Atlas was created. First difficult boss in the game, you must fight them before they kill all your friends. Knife hand attack takes up half the screen. General shapeshifting attacks. In this fight, you must help Atlas escape from the prison. Killing the people who raised him. As terrible as they are, they are the only family that Atlas ever had. If you lose Atlas, he will be brainwashed, and become the leader of the Yellowheads.

**Rosie**

If you end up fighting Rosie, along with Miranda, you will need to convince her that people do love her. As the fight progresses, she will create bigger and bigger creatures, and monsters for you to fight. But Rosie is a good person at heart, so each of the creations will have its own unique and lovable personality, before you kill it. If you cannot convince Rosie to stop, she will over create, and die. This will be alluded to by an increasing franticness in each monster she creates, her subconscious mind asking to be saved.

**Atlas**

If you end up fighting Atlas, along with Chloe, you will have to try to turn him good again or kill him. Atlas now has yellowhead powers, and time powers. Similar attacks to the yellowhead boss fight, but much harder. Atlas can command Yellowheads, and he will use them in this fight. Chloe is the only chink in his armor, he knows that she is supposed to be his queen and rule the world beside him.

**Newt**

Along with Kevin, you will fight shadow Newt. Try to help him remember who he is. Newt has a whip with retractable thorns on it, and supernatural powers. Newt is still a good person, but he thinks that Ralagor is his father and savior. He remembers who people are, but he doesn’t know how he knows them. Ralagor said they are evil. As you turn him good, he will use his bat instead of the whip.

**Places**

It is important for the player to have areas to explore, without things they must do. This should give the world a feeling of depth, rather than the feeling of being a game world that exists simply to be played.

**Prison Town**

Where criminals are sent instead of jail. A lawless town where, once sentenced, no one can ever leave. Terrorized by a Bargest, life in the town is an eventual death sentence. Including some horror elements into this area. This is where I want the game to take on a darker feel. More of a rundown medieval type of architecture, like the people living here were forced to build their own shelter with whatever they could salvage. Children born to the criminals live here too, even though they did nothing wrong. Even though they live in fear, waiting to die, the people here have managed to build a sort of life for themselves, with crops, homes, and a system of government. The mayor is a tired, wise man, who is merely trying to help people survive.

**Carnival**

Carnival beast would make a good theme. A place of government subsidized entertainment, infested with evil clowns, and a Carnival Beast. Found about 1/3 of the way through the game. This is where you will find Teddy and learn about him and Rosie. Maybe allude to Teddy being a beast, and then surprise them with learning that he is a (murderous) stuffed bear. This will be a full horror phase of the game. Each tent will hold plenty of things to learn about, and dangers to survive. There are lots of performers living here, with nothing to do since the crowds have moved to safer places, but they themselves have nowhere else to go. This is where the jury of jesters does their work. A drop zone with spikes at the bottom.

**Capitol City**

The city surrounding the palace. Probably some steampunk inspirations for the architecture. Think about “cove”. The whole city will be very wealthy and prosperous, with happy, and well-fed people. No one has a bad word to say about King Magnificent here. This is Ralagors perfect version of society.

**Academy**

Found near the very beginning of the game. A place where the tinted are sent to be retrained into people. The longer you stay here, the more secrets there are to uncover. You can stay as long as it takes you to escape. Prestigious European architecture here, and lots of bookshelves. Warm colors.

**Newts’ Childhood Home**

The place that grew up, and where his family was murdered. A very important place for Newts’ character arch. I could base it off the Beckers’ house, with idyllic grasslands all around. It needs its own theme as well. This is Newts origin story, and the location of the climax.

**Orphanage**

Where Rosie and Theodore grew up. A bleak, but with hints of joy and nostalgia built in. Extra washed-out colors might help. I need to come up with a floor plan for this. Mrs. Trinket tried to make it a home for the unfortunate children who lived there.

**Training Facility**

This is where Atlas and Chloe were created to be assassins. Hospital vibes. A cold lifeless place, trying desperately to be warm and homely. Made even more surreal by the knowledge of the things that happen here.

**Palace**

Where King Magnificent, and Ralagor live. Palace should be a mix of American Government buildings, and Medieval Castles. Lots of pillars, and stonework.

**Dark Academy (Dark Academy Path)**

This is where Ralagor trains his servants. Only found on the Dark Academy Path.

**Tints**

**White (Rare)**

People that are tinted white, can see the future

**Black (Extremely Rare)**

People tinted black can slow down their own, and other people’s perception of time. And can sometimes pass as having brown hair.

**Red (Rare)**

People that are tinted red can move objects with their minds. (Rosie is an exception)

**Orange (Less Common)**

People tinted orange are very strong, and athletic, and have a connection with fire. Hates the cold.

**Yellow (Extremely Rare)**

Yellowheads can morph and change their bodies. The right hand of the government.

**Blue (Common)**

People tinted blue can breathe under water and love the cold.

**Purple (Less Common)**

People tinted purple are very intelligent and can deceive easily.

**Green (Common)**

People tinted green can absorb life from plants and cannot feel pain.

**Narrative**

The player will start out at the, and then get moved to the academy. At the academy they will try to find a way to escape, whilst being forced to kill other students, and being mind controlled with the song. The principal will announce the yellowhead among them, and most people will suspect Atlas. Atlas and Chloe will be a big focus during this phase of the game. During the escape attempt, they will be attacked by the Yellowhead. The Atlas boss fight ensues. All escaped students are caught and executed except Kevin, who survives by taking life from the grass, and a squirrel. After escaping, Kevin suggests that they find his friend Newt who lives in the city. You find Newts home but find it abandoned with a note saying that he had turned him in to the worthy clowns. There seems to have been a struggle. Outside they find Old Mr. Colin who orders Kevin to come home. Kevin refuses, and Mr. Colin brags about being the one who turned Newt in, and that he is probably being taken before the jury of jesters now. You rush to save him. Somehow you meet Rosie. At the Carnival, you come just in time for the Jury to sentence Newt to death by beast. He is carried into the beast cage, but the thing never comes out. The Jury has to go looking for it. When they are gone, a woman named Miranda says she knows the beast, and he might spare Newt if you get a word in first. She takes you to the bar, where you meet the “beast” it is a massive teddy bear, named Theodore, who wants to become a real bear. He seems to recognize Rosie, but he pretends not to have seen her at all. The Jesters have promised to turn him into a real bear if he executes their criminals, but he hates the job. Miranda loves Rosie and wants to adopt her.

**Visuals**

**Pixel Art**

High fidelity pixel art, and all the shadows drawn in by hand. No engine lighting whatsoever.

With Low saturation on the colors, the game should feel dreamy, and wishy washy. Any time the player goes back in time, the game will be so desaturated, it will be very nearly greyscale.

**Expectations to be Subverted**

* The monks are all alcoholics
* Atlas turns out to be good although he is expected to be the Yellowhead
* Massive Plot Twist at the end, when it turns out that the player is the god of time.
* A carnival “beast” is alluded too, but turns out to be teddy.