

GAME 400/490, Fall 2023

Midterm Evaluation

Team Name:

Dark Root Studios

Project Name:

Carrot Quest

Team Members:

Brenton Figures-Mormon

Joy Shideler

Overall Midterm Grade

Overall Grade: 85%

I like the look of your game idea. The art is cute, which lends to its slightly disturbing air.

Aside from that, I'm having trouble finding things about this game that are different from standard top-down shooters.

Your USP seems to be the burrowing mechanic. Is this strong enough to be considered a unique selling point? It's barely mentioned in the GDD, and is not at all explained. This is supposed to be the most important feature in your game. As far as I could tell during your pitch, there seems to be little difference between your burrow mechanic and a standard teleport mechanic, and I can't find anything in your documentation to explain it clearly.

The USPs are essential. Without them, you'll have much more trouble convincing people to buy your game. Without some powerful USPs, your company is not going to make any money.

Keep in mind, this is your capstone. It's the culmination of your entire time here at the university, during which you've learned gameplay, 2D art, 3D art, animation, level design, programming, audio and several other skillsets that are sought in the game industry. Your capstone should highlight your diverse skillsets to potential employers. It should reflect the type of work that will make you competitive. Will this project accomplish that? You need to ask yourself how this game will help you break into the industry. Some strong USPs can help you do that.

I think this game has some real potential. But it needs more.

Keep going, be sure to fill in the blanks in your design and be ready for the next phase. I'm looking forward to seeing how the prototype and vertical slice turn out.

Game Design Treatment (one-sheet and 10-pager)

90%

1-Pager: 89%

I like the logo.

The layout lacks a central focus (I don't necessarily mean literally in the center, but a main image to catch the eye). There's no one thing to focus on. The bunny images you have are all the same size and competing with each other for attention. Think like a graphic designer.

I'm not sure why you chose the bright green background. Is that in keeping with the look of the game? If not, maybe reconsider it. It's pretty overwhelming.

10-Pager: 90%

The bright lime green background is unnecessary and distracting.

You have some graphics, which is good, but they are concentrated on just a few pages. Add more images as they are created.

You have the same bunny image three times in the document. Don't repeat your art. It makes it look like you don't have enough and are just using them for filler. Your concept artist should take some time to crank out a bunch of quick concepts (which can be refined at the first opportunity) to help clarify the content and make the doc aesthetically pleasing.

The gameplay page should be first, before the story. And it definitely needs an image.

Style Guide

87%

I like the layout and the way the information is presented generally. However, it could use an overview to set up the philosophy of the art style.

The Game Feel page does not have enough information on it. This page should have a mood board.

Asset List/Schedule

90%

It's good to see you breaking down each task. You want to itemize everything.

Don't list your deadlines by week. Set specific dates. Don't be beholden to week deadlines, narrow them down to days. You need to be more specific.

You want to be precise with your estimates; instead of incomplete/complete, use a percentage system which could automatically flag a task as completed when it hits 100%, using Excel's conditional

formatting. If you want to see how this works, I can demonstrate it. But either way, giving a percent of progress made on a task makes it easier to track the overall progress of the project.

GDD

78%

Give your document a cover. Even though this is an internal document, it should be professionally designed.

Your table of contents has no page numbers, which makes it essentially useless. I recommend using MS Word's built-in Table of Contents feature; it's orderly, it updates automatically when your page numbers change, and it adds links to the page numbers so you can jump right to that page.

The USPs are not addressed in the GDD. The burrowing mechanic is not introduced or explained. There's little more than a few quick bullet points in the Controls section. This important; it needs its own section.

The Setting graphic is interesting, but without context. Descriptions (with arrows) would help, or you could use it to show game progression.

The Enemies and Enemy Ideas graphic. I don't see the purpose of this. And it's bleeding off of the page.

The page layout is haphazard. The sections seem to end and begin in random places. Between this and the lack of page numbers in the table of contents, this becomes nearly impossible to follow.

Have a logic to your document. Intro first, then the gameplay, then the world, then the characters, etc. Main characters and their abilities should be before the enemies, for example. A good layout to your pages is more than just aesthetic; it's necessary to make the information easier to find.

Pitch

82%

Title slide. nice design, nice logos.

What is. Bun with a gun. Top down single-player combat. Gungeon meets Zelda meets Hollow Knight. You want to explain exactly how these games are similar to yours. Burrow mechanic. Mutated beasts.

Unique. Ah, here are the comparisons. You should keep the comparisons on only one slide instead of splitting them between these two. It's odd to have a slide titled "What's unique" and then compare it to other games. Better to have the unique stuff on its own slide. Nice GIF.

World. Nature filled. Top down isometric. You already told us that. Variety of biomes. What biomes? Be specific. Talk to villagers. Be more specific about that too (better on its own slide)

Evil. Secrets of the past. Carrot curse. What is that exactly?

Save. Villagers of Bunnyville. You said that already too. Large cast. Build relationships. How does that work? Who are the examples you show and how do you build relationships with them? You're lacking a lot of specifics.

Beware. Cursed bunnies. So it's only bunnies in the game? Terrifying foes. Boss battles. More generalizations; every game has these. You say this is the meat and potatoes of the game -- Be specific. What are the creatures you're showing? Don't reference other games once you're past the comparison slide. This should all about your game. You repeat the "have what it takes" question again.

Burrowing. Burrow from one place to another. Interesting mechanic. So is it essentially teleportation? How long does the burrowing take? Is it instantaneous or is there a cost? You talk a lot about information that is not explained on the slide.

Other features. Both range and melee. Dodge. Switch weapons. What weapons? List them. Don't diss other games, it doesn't help your pitch.

Where can I play. Steam and Epic. \$9.99. What do you get for that price? So much has still been left unexplained. You need to stop reminding the audience of other games. It only puts those games back in their minds. You only want them thinking about yours.

Conclusion. Good conclusion list. Still a lot of unanswered questions. What's the world look like? The art style (aside from the few concepts)? The NPCs? You say it's an open world and biomes but you only talk about Bunnyville and saving Bunnyville. What else is there? What are the enemies? The bosses? The weapons? We need more information.

Q&A. time restriction? Can't stay underground forever. Time limitations. Over time. Sub areas? Not huge exploration areas. Isn't it open world?

Professor Casey's feedback:

Carrot Quest: the root of evil. (Nice logo and look to the theme and slide)

What is? (Lot here.) bun with a gun. Top down combat. Burrow mechanic. Mutated beasts, carrot curse, bunnyville. (You have three games in top and they kind of get lost and you talk about them at the end.)

Unique? You talk about ripping off other games here (why were they on other slide) for your unique. You basically are repeating information too. Burrow mechanic. Combination of ranged and melee. Combo from skills and weapons.

Okay, what is the agenda and order? So confused.

World of CQ. Corruption, top down isometric, biomes, learn from villagers. Open-world. Nothing about the actual world though or showing us it.

Evil. Secrets of past and carrot curse. Again, repeated information from first slide. Nice image on side, but what is it?

Who to save? Bunnyville, cast, relationships. 4 images and names but nothing interesting about them?

Beware. Cursed bunnies. Cursed foes. Boss battles. Aside from images which are nice, nothing is spelled out or named here. So it's just bunnies? What are their names? Which one is a mob and which is boss? Don't reference other games. Now you are confusing me with intent of fun?

Burrowing. Shift and move around. Basically portals you create. No explanation of the core information on slide. (Like you can move and shoot through them).

Other features? Melee and ranged. Dodge. Switch weapons? (You are disparaging classic games and comparing to other games. This is bad bad form). 3 weapons, none on slide or listed.

(You basically bring up things that could be cool, but don't show or name them or put them on the sides.)

Where? Steam and Epic. 9.99 (for what, I have no idea how long the game is or what we get.) again, now you are comparing to another game and describing its history?

Conclusion. Top down adventure shooter, open world isometric, villagers, enemies, borrow, abilities, enemies. Save bunnyville.

Q&A:

Time restriction on burrow? Yes. Cooldown. (All the stuff you should have had on slides or talked about) Ran out of time.