

## Game Playability Testing Summary Report

### a. Title: Art of Swords

Designer: Kuan-Ping Chang, email: kuanpinc@uci.edu

- |                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Tester 1 Name: Diane          | Tester Contact Info: Refused |
| b. Tester 2 Name: Susan          | Tester Contact Info: Refused |
| c. Tester 3 Name: HongMing       | Tester Contact Info: Refused |
| d. Tester 4 Name: Michael Zarour | Tester Contact Info: Refused |
| e. Tester 5 Name: Yanzi          | Tester Contact Info: Refused |

### b. Introduction:

- a. Goal: The purpose of this test was to get the overall feel and difficulty of the game as well as the smoothness of the game control key mappings. As well as the various UI recognition and the needs for adjustments. The tested game version consists of a single stage map containing only minion units that will only chase when the player is in sight range. Over all the game should prove to be fairly easy to learn and understand once the users understands all the possible control scheme.
- b. Description: Player is to play as a Xianren (a human who has transcend from mortal to immortal status through meditation) who is trapped within the scroll full of Yao (asian monster) and tries to escape with his Xianjian (immortal's sword) by cutting down all the Yao(s) that were also trapped within the scroll.

The player will be able to summon Xianjian (up to 3), which will rotate around and follows the player throughout the scene. These Xianjian can act as either a shield or a projectile that can be used against any Yao lurking around the map. Yao are designed to be aggressive and will chase and attack the player within the range of sight.

For the purpose of this playtest, we are only trying to figure out how the overall mechanic holds up in terms of control mappings and combat experiences. Lastly and most importantly, the theme of the game adopted the Xian Xia genre, which is designed to provide audiences who are familiar or new a bit of insight of what is the Asian (especially in Singapore, Malaysia, China and Taiwan) Xian Xia culture.

Overarching results: The play test results are very valuable that it provided many insights that merges towards some of the major problems that users commonly have. One of the major problem is when the players are brought into the game, the game immediately introduces them to swarm of enemies that are proven too difficult to handle. The other major problem is not introducing the controls early enough to help players gain accesses to all the available mechanics in the game. In terms of difficulty, most players finds that controlling the swords can be rather difficult at times as it does not let them target specific directions. Lastly, the lack of introduction to the theme is a bit

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hard for players to grasp why the game is set the way it is presented. With these results in mind, the goal is going to be focused on updating the user experiences addressing the problems mentioned and create a better introduction to the theme and more additions to the gameplay.

**c. Procedure:**

- a. Gather User Profile Summary (age, gender, experience/console/industry...):
  - i. Diane – avid gamer, female, plenty of experience in gaming, computer science background
  - ii. Susan – avid gamer, female, plenty of experience in gaming, computer science background
  - iii. HongMing – avid gamer, male, plenty of experience in high quality gaming, computer science and economic background
  - iv. Michael – casual gamer, male, some mobile gaming experiences, computer science background
  - v. Yanzi – casual gamer, female, some mobile gaming and online gaming experiences, humanity background.

**Why these people were chosen?**

User I and IV and V where users that I have only meet the first time and have shown keen interests in part take in the playtest. Opinions are valuable as it gives some different or common insights towards the pluses and negatives of the game. On the other hand, User II and III where partners in another game project in the past school year and have being helpful in providing honest opinions regarding how the game plays out. Lastly, all the chosen users were around the age 19 to 23.

b. Simple Introduction of my role, the game, and the test's purpose, and their roles and responsibilities and the interactions that would happen during the play test.

c. Allow the user to play as much as possible until they felt they had enough of it. User can asks questions if they felt it is impossible for them to proceed.

d. Asks the user any questions regarding how they feel about the game and its core mechanics after c. (referencing survey questions)

#### **d. Goals & Hypotheses:**

##### **Overall Goals:**

- The players were able to feel and experience what the theme Xian Xia brings about. (To add more to it)

##### **Specific Goals:**

##### **Core Concept:**

- Player must able to summon Xian Jian and use them against any approaching Yao and defeat them.
  - o Result:

##### **Core Game Mechanics:**

- Summon Sword
  - o Summoning the sword is successful in most user test result. Some user did not realize that more than 1 sword can be summoned or has an understanding of why the sword can be summoned. Overall the art and effect on the sword is very applauded by the users.
- Use Sword
  - o A lot of user failed realize that the sword can actually be launched toward the direction the player character is facing. The native thought on the use of the sword is to summon it as a shield. There needs to be a proper introduction on the use of the sword.
- Move around the stage map with movement control keys
  - o Overall the controls for movement is easily recognized. Some users didn't realize that the arrow keys can also work for controlling the movements of the player. Should be mentioned in the controls.
- Speed up the movement via holding shift key + control keys
  - o This available mechanic isn't easily discovered and many users have a difficulty associating that shift + control keys means speed up in the direction moving. Should be mentioned in the controls. This is actually a few of the most frustrating part if the user is unable to figure it out on their own, as default speed player character moves a lot slower in comparison to the enemy in chase mode.
- Yao AI behavior
  - o Yao's chasing behavior is most recognized. The range of detection probably needs to be readjusted for better recognition.

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### Game Challenge:

- **Survival**
  - Difficult at start and gets fairly easy once the users successfully figuring out all the controls. As result, the main bottleneck is the lack of control recognition and not the stage itself.
- **Persistent knowledge**
  - The numbers on the screen, the hints on how to open menu as well as the mini map are sometimes not recognized as easily. In addition, the exact control for certain mechanics aren't hinted as well as the other. The exact range when enemy AI will start chasing the player isn't immediate obvious and can prove confusing at times. Most players have difficulty figuring out if they are actually taking damage or not, a much more special indicator has to be presented to show that the player is actually taking the damage and has invincible frames for a split second.
- **Speed, Reaction, and Timing**
  - Overall the timing for use of swords in combination with other key controls can be a bit troublesome for users. Most likely because the programmer (me while testing mechanics) got so used to it that it is now natively easy for them to use. Remapping the keys so it is better for users to control is important.

### What would the player find fun:

- **Defeating the Yao and in attempts to survive until every single Yao on the map is defeated.**
  - Most people find relief when they win the game. However, because the simple "Win" text doesn't really justify much for a reward, as such an extra ending result screen probably needed to be added explaining the aftermath is necessary.
- **Watching the Mysterious XianJian roaming around the player and defeating enemies while at it.**
  - This is by far enjoyed by a lot of people. Acknowledge that the sword can be pretty just when it is rotating and following around the player can be quit enjoyable.

### Win-Lose Condition:

- **Player loses the game if Health points reaches zero and wins the game when all enemies on the map are defeated.**
  - Win and Lose condition is easily recognized. Health point indicator can be a bit difficult to see by the users, probably needs a better indicator to make it more visible.

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#### ***What is the most important thing about the game you want to learn?***

- How do the controls feel? (Smooth control? Strains on hand?)
- Is the game understandable? (Overall goal recognized?)
- Are they able to grasp what it feels like to be in the Xian Xia world? (Feel the theme?)
- Are there any most immediate bugs that required prioritized attention? (Anything that shouldn't be happening in terms of basic gameplay)

### **3 Hypotheses:**

1. The game will be too easy since player can just summon the swords to protect them from ever being damaged by the approaching enemy (Yao).
  - a. Hypothesis incorrect, the game can prove to be difficult for some players. Mostly because the control scheme isn't immediately obvious to them.
2. The users will be interested in playing a game with the XianXia theme.
  - a. Hypothesis incorrect, while users can recognize that the game has a unique theme and unique art style. The game's intended XianXia theme isn't as clear to them as there is no supplied information in game that tells them such.
3. The game will be frustrating to the player when the collision detector failed to respond correctly.
  - a. Hypothesis incorrect, the game's most frustrating thing is actually control recognition. Key mapping of the control keys is also another problem that needs to be addressed.

#### **What are your concerns about the game (the inherent potential weakness)?**

- Feedback is weak.
  - o No immediate damage feedback when engaged by the enemy can be frustrating. Though the invincible time frame exists in the game, it isn't obvious to the players. In addition, no audio feedback is implemented in the game during the play test.
- The game is too simple.
  - o The game is a bit simple in terms of available abilities. Adding an additional abilities is recommended if time permits.
- The game lacks good UI implementation.
  - o UI requires an update to better reflect the game's overall art style.
- The game's theme isn't recognized completely.
  - o The lack of introduction to the theme makes the game's background a bit difficult for user to grasp. The need to introduce a Scene just to explain the story and the situation is necessary.

#### **What do you hope to get from the user testing?**

- Whether the mechanics are usable and if the overall game is too simple or complex. If any mechanics should be added to the game.

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- **Result: Mechanics are usable, however there needs to be some adjustments made to make the gameplay smoother and more easily recognizable. Overall the game is a bit too simple and adding an additional boss or a variety of enemy is likely a good solution to the problem.**

**e. Results (combo with questions to ask)**

**A. What Worked Well**

- a. **XianJian the Sword: The way it is presented in terms of art and effect: Majority of the user likes the way the swords behaves (in terms of behavior w/ art effect) during the gameplay. The mysterious feel that the way sword acts is very enjoyable.**

**Why This Happened: Original thought by the designer is that it looks too boring if there is no indicator assisting in-motion visuals. The addition of trailing lines behind the sword(s) prove to bring out another layer of depth in terms of detail.**

- b. **Basic Controls: The controls matches the requirement to be able to finish the game when recognized. The game becomes much more enjoyable once the users learn the proper way to use them.**

**Why This Happen: Most users likes to button smash around the keyboard to test for functionality. Some users have successfully recognized the keys depending on how familiar they are with certain games.**

- c. **Enemy AI behavior is easily recognized: Most players agree that when they see the enemy animation starts to show them opening and closing their mouth meant that they are in chase mode.**

**Why This Happen: Clear animation showing the behavior of enemy when changing modes from default (wondering) to chase (targeting player).**

**B. What Really Needed Work**

- a. **Control Recognition: Base on observation of 5/5 users doing the play test, all struggled to recognize all the available controls provided in the game. Hints has to be provided in order to assist them in the progression or making progression easier.**

**Why This Happened: No Control Scene with control introductions implemented, but rather hidden inside the Option menu which is also not easily recognized by most users.**

**Suggestions:**

- **An Addition of a control scene dedicated to explain all the controls.**

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- **A short read tutorial prompt at the beginning of the stage briefly after introduction.**

- b. **Easier to recognize UI: UI is implemented very simple and probably too simple that it is not easily recognized. Most users have difficulty realizing that is a way to pause the game and to find the control scheme. In addition, most users finds the fonts used by the UI is very unfitting to the theme as well.**

**Why This Happened: UI implementation is just implemented with a basic frame to hold information for debugging.**

**Suggestions:**

- **Change the fonts used**
- **Making sure everything is easily readable and Health indicator needs to be obvious to the players as well.**

- c. **More abilities, enemies, or addition of boss: Most users 3/5 find that the game is probably too simple but also acknowledge that with addition of some variety of things will make the game even more colorful.**

**Why This Happened: Mostly because of time constraints...**

**Suggestions:**

- **Make a new variety of enemy (w/ different AI behavior)**
- **Make a boss unit (w/ its own AI behavior)**
- **Introducing new ability(s) for the player character.**

**d. Sample Survey Questions:**

- a. **Are you able to associate with the Xian Xia theme or understand it? (Yes, No, Why?)**
- b. **Are you able to identify the control keys? (Yes, No, Why?)**
- c. **Is the Core Mechanic(s) identifiable? (Yes, No, Why?)**
- d. **Is the Core Mechanic(s) fun? (Yes, No, Why?)**
- e. **Is the Core Mechanic(s) lacking? (Yes, No, Why?)**
- f. **Is the UI lacking? (Yes, No, Why?)**
- g. **Is the enemy too weak or strong? (1 – super weak, 3 - just right, 5 – too strong)**
- h. **Is the user able to understand the goal of the game? (Yes, No)**
- i. **Is the game frustrating to play? (Yes, No)**
- j. **Does the user find the UI lacking? (Yes, No)**
- k. **Are you having fun? (Yes, No)**
- l. **What are some of the strong points in the game?**
- m. **What are some of the weak points in the game?**
- o. **Any Suggestions**

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### RESULTS:

- a. 0/5 – only uniqueness is recognized.
- b. 5/5 – says yes but needs to allow them users to recognize these controls sooner
- c. 5/5 – says they can recognize most of the mechanics.
- d. 5/5 – says yes.
- e. 5/5 – says yes, needs more stuff in the game.
- f. 3/5 – most agree that there is enough UI but not good enough.
- g. 5/5 – enemy difficulty is acceptable.
- h. 4/5 – goal is generally recognized when the enemy is wiped.
- i. 0/5 – Only after learning the controls.
- j. 4/5 – Yes, most users find the UI lacking and probably unfitting
- k. 4/5 – say they are having fun
- l. (See part e – what worked well)
- m. (See part e – what really needs work)
- o. Improvement on UI, Better Control Recognition, Introduction of theme/story

Documented survey responses based on survey (PlayTest Video Online):

#### Suggestions (Live notes taken):

User 1: Xian Xia is still a bit vague, Yao is a bit less monster like...native gamer, controls native to muscle control (keyboard recognition)... find out F key works to summon (G then F)... (Theme not clearly defined – need an introduction paragraph )

User 2: Was accompany User 1: F is a bit difficult to use...Swords probably need a limiter...Finds out that there is shift (without checking controls) .....finds out the control (menu).....front page (control recommended)....F is not convenient....asks (inventory?) ....tried shift (because speed wasn't fun at default) ....invulnerable not visible enough ....doing dmg not clear enough ...UI indicator pretty weak...can't control sword launch direction(is a bit frustrating) .... One hand gameplay is a bit weak....minimum UI ... UI hints aren't clear (ugly)... likes the mini map...key mapping using both hand as requirement ...Variation of enemy....More introduction to game game...sound effects....Visual is a + ....

User 3 (Hongming): So hardly anyone notice the pause key (need to be more obvious)...(recommend some other common keys to use)...bizarre ....(sword not following in natural way – by opinion) ...(questioning objective – no clear objective...surviving? Other goals)....No boss?...Noticed mini map on round 2...trying to figure out if there is a Easter egg (but no result).....(more challenge is needed) ....notice some collider bug....(Assuming main objective is to kill the birds) ... Theme ( knew a bit of background...but lack explanation of why enemy is chasing me, more enemy variety...), Control(7/10 – for controls), Figuring out the sword control is a bit hard (recommend start control menu), Quit hard to control the direction of launch sword (while turning – need adjustments), Mechanics (more challenges, projectile from enemy, weather...background variety....timer....)(UI is fine)....fighting part is pretty cool (just clicking the F button and )...(bird feels too common)...(menu is fine)...(weak point...difficulty...once user figure out the controls the game becomes super easy)



Kuan-Ping Chang  
71018021 kuanpinc@uci.edu  
Winter ICS161 Game 2

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....More big monsters. New play style.... (Weak point... confusing start up...) (Strong...overall  
...base on early prototype idea the game is good) (More polished by opinion)(good response)

User 4: Character (viewed as girl)...tried many buttons...not sure what to do .... ESC is super hard to notice (noticed via hint)... (Paused key hint required via observation)...feel better for control after several death....Noticed health bar...died N times....not sure if the enemy is killed .... (Notice collider problem – from my view)....mini map is recognized...Need to evaluate the control menu for better visuals... (Dark Art style – recognized art style – Art direction liked) ...manual is fine... (F key behavior is questioned)... (Space key is a bit)....(Control more accessible) ...(Movement mechanic is really good)....(Sword mechanic is questioned)....(Birds are fine)... (Improve mechanic – sword direction should be predictable....regarding movement circulating is confusing....shooting should be more directional)... A introduction at the beginning is recommended /Pictures for control keys (show the key pictures to be more intuitive...)....MORE FEEDBACK ON HITBOX....feedback on hp bar is a bit distracting...more feedback is recommended... besides a picture control a video tutorial is recommended. Prefer Arrows keys for control...noticed more than 1 sword can be summoned...(need hints)....

User 5: Immediate enter the game is a bit confusing (require more hints – or better placement... Purpose of the game is unclear (should hint the player to achieve certain tasks before the game actually starts when entering the game.) ...noticed the bug...(collider issues)...Extra point (health regain + regain 5~10pt suggested)...(recommended varieties )...(hint the speed up with shift holding)...(hint the control keys because it is not immediately obvious)...asks if the sword can kill the character (answered only toward enemy)...(hint space key)...So win condition is not immediately obvious (needs to make it more clear - UI)...No control is not immediately recognized (limited user hints...UX)....Introduction and hint is very weak (new player will lose track of information)....Strong point (unique character, use unique ability...very special)....(choose difficulty will be better (easy (intro), medium, hard)....Suggestions(bonus points – 5 or 10pt via kills or recovery)....make the game character able to kill themselves.