

Instructions for filling this form:

- Create a folder in the [Student Work drive](#) and name it YOURLASTNAME_YOURFIRSTNAME
 - Create a copy of this form and add it to that folder
 - Please fill out the form in preparation for our meeting
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Name: Sutton Fritz

1. Project Focus (Draft)

In 3–5 sentences, describe what you are currently proposing to make or investigate.

- What is the central question, issue, problem or curiosity driving the project?
- What form do you imagine the final project might take (subject to change)?

I want to create a sandbox videogame that allows the player to destroy and build their environment. Of course the form of the video game is software-based, but I am still unsure if it will run on the web, mobile, or downloadable computer application. I am also unsure about the game's aesthetic, but I am thinking it could be pixel art.

2. Context & Lineage - situate your project.

- What field(s), discipline(s), or conversations does this project belong to?
- Are there existing debates, methods, or histories it connects to?

This project belongs to the game development field. There is a robust history to game development. Specifically for sandbox games, there is a debate regarding the importance of a narrative. Most sandbox games just rely on the “have fun” philosophy, which is a gameplay loop where there are no real objectives besides just being creative. Some players and developers argue that this is not a great enough incentive to retain players.

3. Research & Reading (Required)

List **at least 3 sources** you have engaged with so far. These should include a mix of texts, talks, interviews, or other relevant materials. For each source, include:

- **Citation or link:**
<https://www.gamedeveloper.com/design/the-history-and-theory-of-sandbox-gameplay>

- **Type:** Article
- **Key idea or insight:** I learned about the history of sandbox games. They are much older than I had originally thought with the first being “Elite” debuting in 1983.
- **How it informs your project:** Since contemporary sandbox games look nothing like the OG, it has inspired me to think about the different forms I can create this game.

- **Citation or link:** <https://youtu.be/wGn41dl-vrQ?si=jnnaHJYjutiD4CNn>
 - **Type:** Talk
 - **Key idea or insight:** I learned about the criticism some have on sandbox games where there is no real object besides being creative.
 - **How it informs your project:** How can I create a game with a storyline and object, but still inspires/requires user exploration and building? Maybe, dungeon quests that you are required to go on, but the user can change the environment??

 - **Citation or link:** <https://romchip.org/index.php/romchip-journal/article/view/76>
 - **Type:** Academic article
 - **Key idea or insight:** Whitney Pow argues that video games should be used for connecting to other people like non video games (cards, boardgames, etc.)
 - **How it informs your project:** This leaves me wondering if I want to make/host my game on a server for collaboration, but this might be too ambitious.
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4. Precedents / Comparative Examples

Identify 3 precedents (projects, artworks, case studies, etc.).

- Game: Terraria
- What are they doing that feels relevant?
 - Terraria is a sandbox game with NPC's (non-playing characters) that are a part of the narrative, but the game does not explicitly say the lore– the player has to go to the Terraria wiki to learn about this.
- What do you want to do **similarly or differently?**
 - I really like how the player can build/destroy their environment and there are many bosses and objectives to complete. However, the narrative is not very strong in the game itself.

- Game: Fortnite Save the World
- What are they doing that feels relevant?

- They have a strong, in-game narrative while also allowing the player to build and destroy their environment.
 - What do you want to do **similarly or differently**?
 - The issue with this game is that the map resets after every mission besides the “homebase”, but this base is not very relevant to the game.
 - Game: Minecraft
 - What are they doing that feels relevant?
 - They are an open world sandbox game with the objective of being creative. There are bosses the player can defeat, but they are not required. It was originally coded with Java.
 - What do you want to do **similarly or differently**?
 - I want there to be a greater emphasis on the narrative by making it equally as important to being creative.
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5. Key Concepts, Terms, or Methods

List 3–5 concepts, terms, or methods that are emerging as important to your project.

- Where did you encounter them (which source)?
 - <https://www.gamedeveloper.com/design/the-history-and-theory-of-sandbox-game-play>
- Highlight which ones do you need to understand more deeply?
 - “If normal game design is developing upper-level material (missions, etc.) based on an engine, sandbox design is writing an engine to express upper-level gameplay concepts”
- Where did you encounter them (which source)?
 - https://www.reddit.com/r/truegaming/comments/fj4h9x/i_dont_understand_the_term_rpg/
- Highlight which ones do you need to understand more deeply?
 - How can I make an RPG (role-playing games) into a sandbox game? I am not very familiar with RPG's, so I will do more research on them.
- Where did you encounter them (which source)?
 - <https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/docs/gpa/user-guide/2022-4/game-optimization-methodology.html>

- Highlight which ones do you need to understand more deeply?
 - “Optimization”: how to make a game run efficiently and updatable without completely rewriting large blocks of previously existing code.
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6. Open Questions & Uncertainties

List questions you currently have. These might relate to:

- Learn C++ or C# (if I want to use them) or write in JS (which I already know)
 - Will I make my own assets or will I use a free library?
 - What will the storyline be?
 - What POV will it be?
 - How to save player work
 - Can I use the IDM PC's?
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7. Next Steps

1. Research sandbox RPG games
 2. Create a narrative
 3. Create objectives
 4. Code
 5. Assign assets/skins
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8. What You Want Feedback On

What would you most like to use our one-on-one meeting for? (highlight below)

- Have any previous students worked on a similar idea?
- Is this too ambitious?
- Are there any game dev professors I can be put in contact with? Specifically with experience with C++
- Clarifying the questions driving your project
 - How can I make a sandbox game that requires objectives and creativity equally?
- Identifying stronger sources or precedent projects
 - Terraia, Stardew Valley, Animal Crossing