

UNIVERSIDADE DE ÉVORA

COMPUTER SCIENCE MSc

INTERFACES PESSOA/MÁQUINA

---

**GBL**

---

*Author:*

Ruben Teimas

*Author ID:*

m47753

June 28, 2021



## Indice

<b>1 Problem Description</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 Target Users</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 Project Goal</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4 User's analysis</b>	<b>4</b>
4.1 Bigger Picture . . . . .	4
4.2 Deeper Analysis . . . . .	4
4.2.1 Class 1 . . . . .	4
4.2.2 Class 2 . . . . .	5
4.2.3 Class 3 . . . . .	5
<b>5 Task's analysis</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6 Interviews</b>	<b>7</b>
6.1 Interviewing <i>Class 2</i> user . . . . .	7
6.2 Interviewing <i>Class 3</i> user . . . . .	7
<b>7 Briefing</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>8 Scenario's Description</b>	<b>8</b>
8.1 Peter keeps track of his poetry books: . . . . .	8
8.2 Ava wants to connect with Josimar: . . . . .	9
<b>9 Storyboard</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10 Prototype's pictures</b>	<b>9</b>
10.1 Scenario 1 . . . . .	9
10.2 Scenario 2 . . . . .	13
<b>11 User's observations</b>	<b>15</b>
11.1 User's struggles . . . . .	15
11.2 User's suggestions . . . . .	15
<b>12 Prototype's evaluation setup</b>	<b>16</b>
12.1 Start-up guide . . . . .	16
12.2 Prototype restrictions . . . . .	16

**13 Final Stage****17****14 Conclusion****17**

## 1 Problem Description

When 2020 started I had a new year resolution: to read more! I was not very found of reading but I picked up an incredible book *Atomic Habits* by James Clear.

Since then, I have read other books such as *Brave New World* and *Clockwork Orange* and plan on picking up other ones like *Last Night On Earth Poems* by Charles Bukowski.

The problem is: my memory is very bad! So i need to keep track of what I'm reading, what I want to read, reviews for my books and other things!

Around 2015 I stumbled across *GoodReads*, even though I did not use it at the time (because I was not reading anything) I thought about using it now. I was surprised to see that in 6 years the *UI* has not changed a bit! It is still very confusing and unfriendly, almost feeling like it is bloated.

For that reason I am proposing a new web-application: *GBL* (Glorified Book List).

## 2 Target Users

The identified target users would be anyone interested in keeping track of their reading habits, discover new books and connect with peers.

Initially I thought about creating a more broad application, where you could keep track of, not only the books, but also the movies, tv-shows, video-games and albums. However, I think it is better to make a more narrow application, aimed for only of this forms of media.

## 3 Project Goal

When thinking about GoodReads I don't see a problem in the platform as a service, or in other words, the back-end itself, but rather, the user interface and experience.

For my application I was actually thinking about using the GoodReads *API* as their library is very good and there is no need to implement everything from scratch.

## 4 User's analysis

### 4.1 Bigger Picture

The system's audience has the following characteristics:

- Age superior to 13 years old;
- Basic level of literacy;
- Any gender, ethnicity or religion;
- Interest in reading.

The user's analysis seems to be vague, however, it is not true. The system aims to be universal and accessible to anyone with taste for reading, regarding of their background.

This is achieved by having a diverse library and customer tailored experience.

### 4.2 Deeper Analysis

When looking at the target users, 3 different classes can be identified:

#### 4.2.1 Class 1

The "shy" users: they use the application (sometimes even without an account) only to get information (either from the system or other user's reviews) about books they plan on reading.

#### 4.2.2 Class 2

The second class of users uses the system in a very simple way: mainly as a book list.

This type of users only use the system to track the books they are reading, the ones they've read and the ones they plan on reading.

They are the ones that give the mockery name to the system (Glorified Book List).

#### 4.2.3 Class 3

This class of users uses the application to the fullest: not only as a book list but also as a social network for reading enthusiasts.

They review the books they've read, they read other user's reviews, they check the recommendations and many other features!

## 5 Task's analysis

For this stage of the project I've identified 7 tasks for the user to perform:

### Add book to list:

- **Goal:** To add a book to a list (it can either be to read books, wish to read and custom lists).
- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.
- **Exceptions:** The user cannot add an existing book in the list twice.

### Remove book from list:

- **Goal:** To remove a book from a list (it can either be to read books, wish to read and custom lists).
- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.

- **Exceptions:** The user cannot remove a non-existing book from the list.

### Create a custom List:

- **Goal:** Create a custom List with a description and theme.
- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.
- **Exceptions:** There are no exceptions, the user can create lists with the same name (although it is not advisable for its own organization).

### Create a custom List:

- **Goal:** Create a custom List with a description and theme.
- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.
- **Exceptions:** There are no exceptions, the user can create lists with the same name (although it is not advisable for its own organization).

### Review a Book:

- **Goal:** Add a score and/or a comment to a book.
- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.
- **Exceptions:** A user cannot have more than one review for the same book.

### Edit a Book review:

- **Goal:** Edit the comment or score for the book review.
- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.
- **Exceptions:** The user can only edit its own reviews.

### Follow another user:

- **Goal:** Follow another user in order to know what they are reading at interact with them.

- **Requirements:** The user must have an account.
- **Exceptions:** There are no exceptions.

## 6 Interviews

For the interviews, the interview is identified with **I** and the user is identified with **U**.

### 6.1 Interviewing *Class 2* user

**I:** Since you are a reading enthusiast, how do you keep track of the book's you've read?

**U:** I used to just look at my bookshelf, but then I started lending books from friends and it stopped working. Nowadays I usually use a text document.

**I:** Wouldn't you prefer to have a more concise and secure approach to your list rather than just a file.

**U:** I usually keep it on drive, so there's no risk of losing it.

**I:** What about misspelled book names and repeated entries?

**U:** Yeah, that happened to me once or twice, it's kinda irritating but nothing I can't live with. But tell me more about your product.

**I:** GBL does not only allow you to keep track of your readings in general but also by categories, authors and many more! You can also interact with others users and be part of the community.

**U:** I ain't so interested in the last part, however, it seems to be a application that does suits my needs, as long as the last part does not bloat my experience

### 6.2 Interviewing *Class 3* user

**I:** Since you are a reading enthusiast, do you find it difficult to keep track of what you are reading?



U: No, I used to use a simple text file but more recently I've shifted to applications that help me with that task.

I: Are you satisfied with those applications?

U: Overall, yes. But sometimes I feel they are way to simple.

I: Why do you think that? What other features do you think are missing from the applications you've used?

U: Book reviews and scores, a community, recommendations system. I used GoodReads for a while but it just seem bloated and not very intuitive. Because of that, the only reading community I take part in are on Facebook groups.

I: What if I told you that we are creating an application, **GBL** with the same functionalities of GoodReads but with a more clean and intuitive *UI*.

U: I would be very happy to try it!

## 7 Briefing

*GBL* is a book tracker application and much more!

You can think of it as an *IMDB* for books, where books have scores and reviews. You can create your custom lists of books or use the ones created by default (*Finished*, *In progress*, *To read*).

Besides that, *GBL* has a social component where users can engage with each other exchanging messages or simply following each others.

## 8 Scenario's Description

### 8.1 Peter keeps track of his poetry books:

Peter started reading poetry books. Last night he finished *Last Night of Earth Poems* by Charles Bukowski. He wants to keep track of his poetry books but since he started reading he still does not have a custom list.

In order to create it he must log in on *GBL*, search for the book, and create a custom list from there.

## 8.2 Ava wants to connect with Josimar:

Ava finished reading 1984 and she went on to read some reviews on *GBL*. She searched for the book, read the reviews and one particularly caught her eye, Josimar's. She then clicked on his profile and followed him in order to engage and have a conversation.

## 9 Storyboard

The storyboard was sketched but in such a rudimentary way that it does not add any value to the report. It was mainly a bunch of boxes without any details and the steps to perform the tasks.

The scenarios are also pretty self-explanatory, so there is no need to re-write what's already written it just a bit more detail.

## 10 Prototype's pictures

### 10.1 Scenario 1

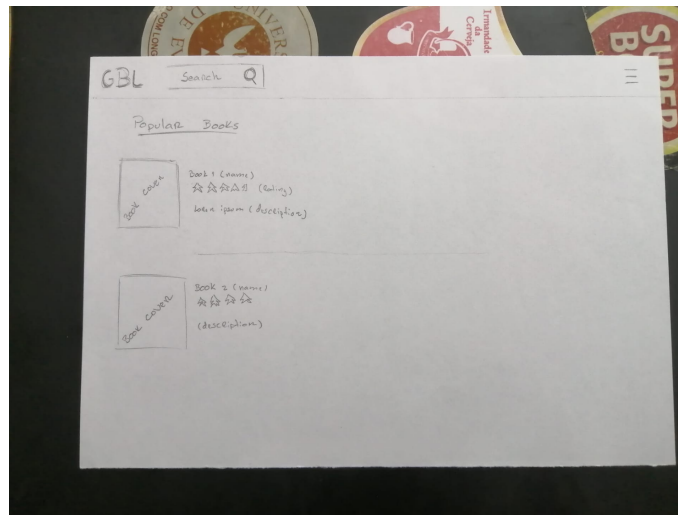


Figure 1: Landing page

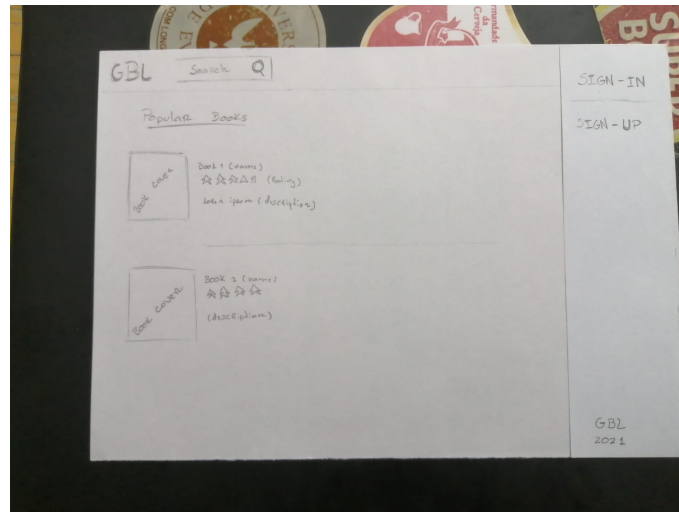


Figure 2: Login slider

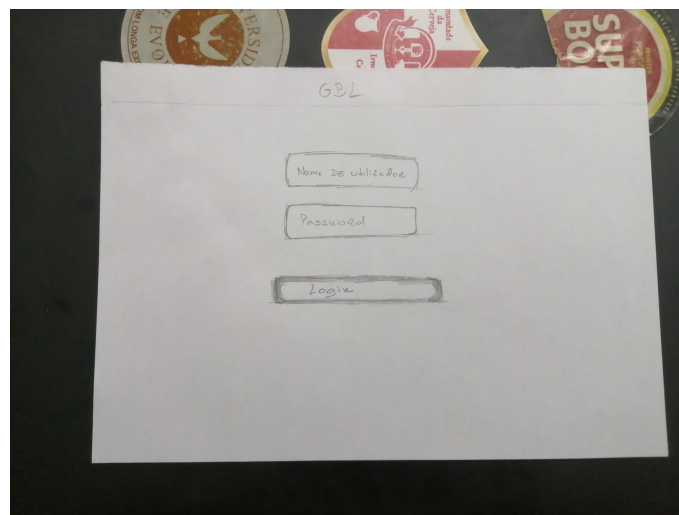


Figure 3: Login page

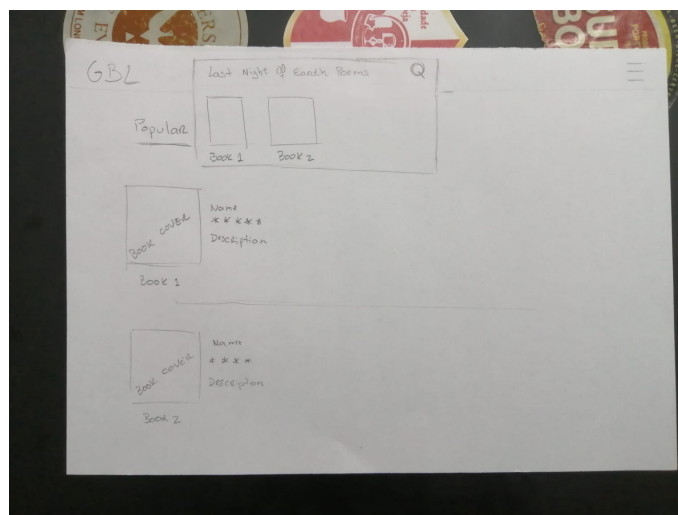


Figure 4: Book search

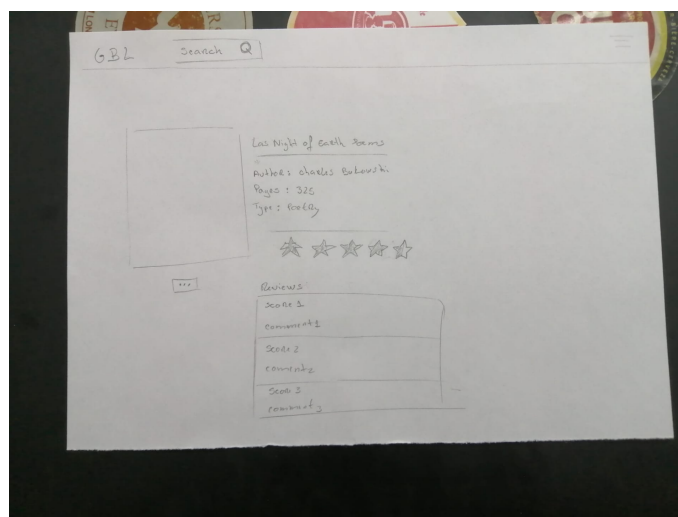


Figure 5: Book page

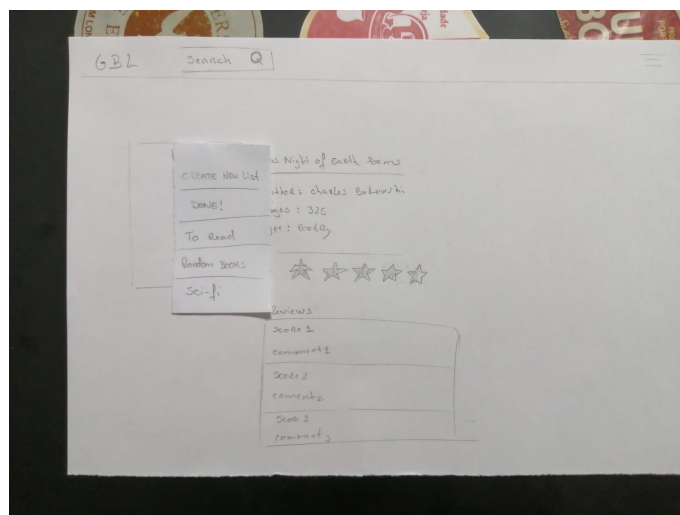


Figure 6: Selecting the list

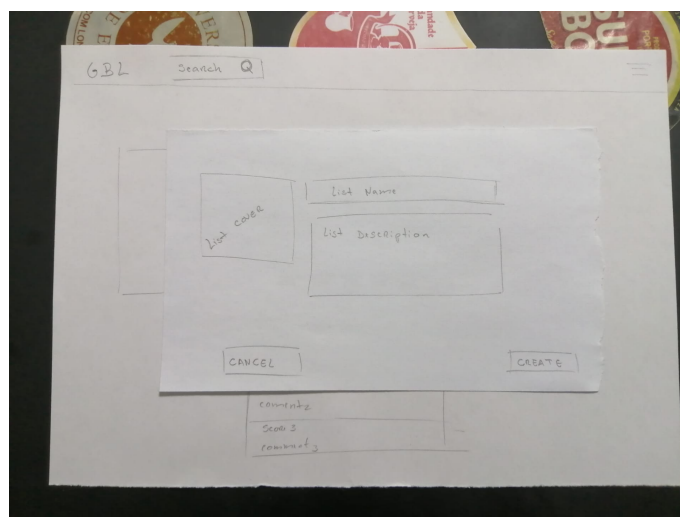


Figure 7: Create list page

## 10.2 Scenario 2

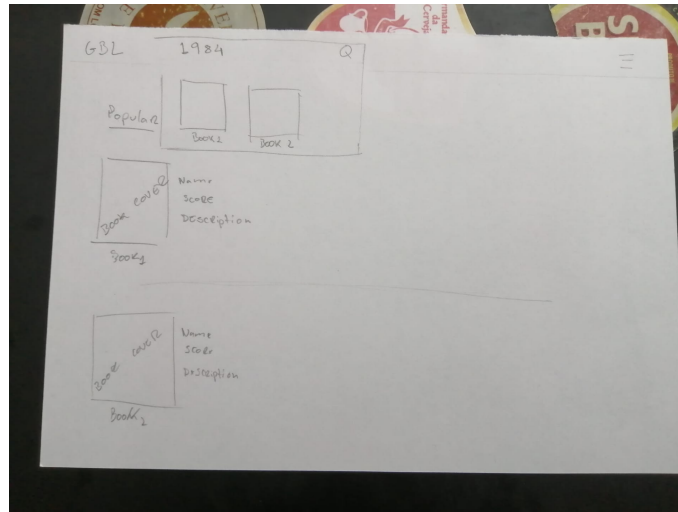


Figure 8: Landing page

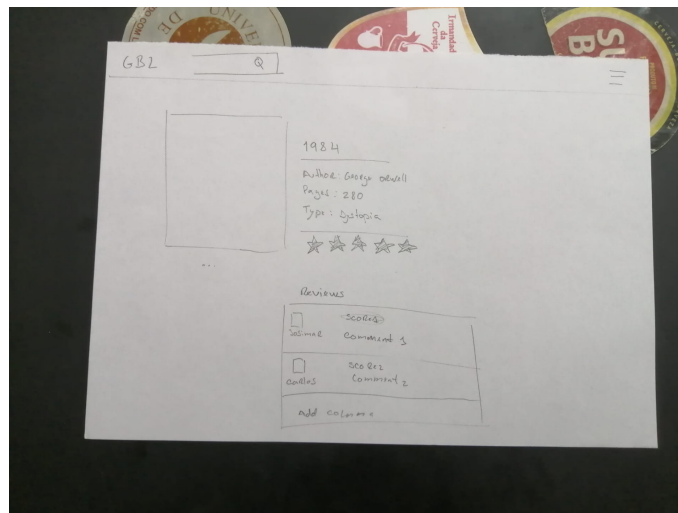


Figure 9: Book search

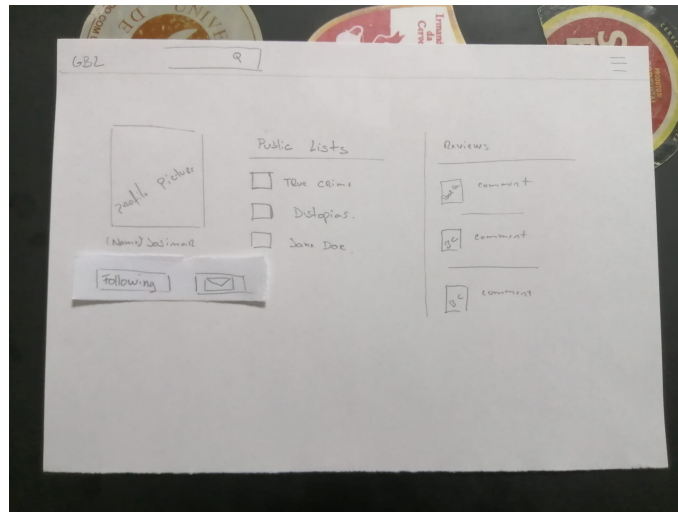


Figure 10: User profile

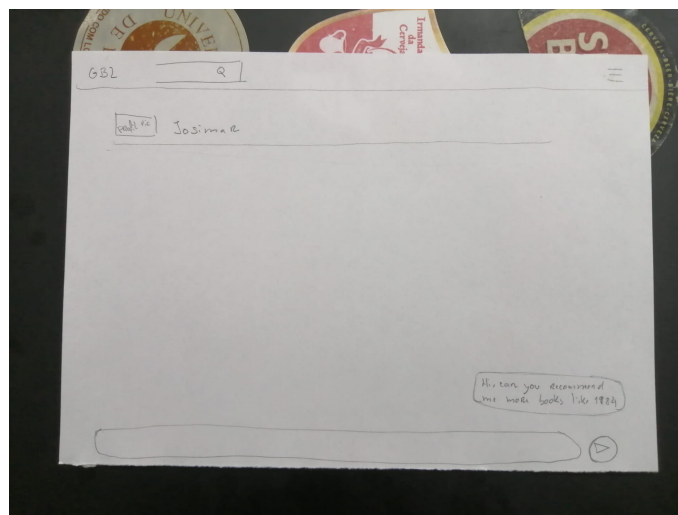


Figure 11: Chat page

## 11 User's observations

To test the prototype, 5 users with no previous knowledge about the application were chosen to interact with said prototype. In order to give them context the briefing was read to them and then they chose one of the scenarios.

Their goal was to complete the task described in the scenario they had chosen. My goal was to observe and take notes about their struggles when interacting with the prototype.

After they completed the task I also asked them if they wanted to make any suggestion in order to receive a larger feedback.

### 11.1 User's struggles

Overall the interaction was quite good, most of the users did not have any problem interacting with the prototype and found it very intuitive. However, one of the users struggled on *scenario 1*, step 5, when he was supposed to create a custom list using a book.

The user did not understand that the ... meant *more options*. Personally I do not plan on changing it because 4 out of 5 users did not experience any difficulty and it is a widely recognized symbol for that functionality.

### 11.2 User's suggestions

The users gave me some suggestions, most of them were additions.

- **Adding an indicator that user is logged-in:** When the user logged-in there was nothing indicating that he was already logged-in. I thought about adding a text, on the top right corner, saying *Hi, {user name}*.
- **Adding a confirmation message that list was created:** When the list is created there is no confirmation that all went well. For that reason one of the users proposed me to show a message (in pop-up style) mentioning that the list was created successfully



- **Allow the users to exchange messages without following each other:** One of the users mentioned that it did not make any sense that a user had to follow another in order to message him. After reflecting it about it, I agree with him, and I'm considering changing that workflow.

## 12 Prototype's evaluation setup

### 12.1 Start-up guide

To start the project the evaluator must download the project, that can be found in the *Google Drive* folder.

After downloading the project the evaluator can open the *index.html* in his favorite browser and have fun!

### 12.2 Prototype restrictions

A lot of problems came up while developing the prototype, mainly due to the tools tested to implement it (*Adobe XD* and *VueJS*) and those problems ended up being reflected on the prototype. The tool used for the final prototype was *Bootstrap Studio*.

The prototype only tries to cover the scenarios presented and even then, it has some problems. Due to lack of backend the log-in was not implemented (so I did not even include the page), so the evaluator can assume that the user is logged-in.

Also due to the lack of backend, the only book that can be searched is *Last Night of Earth Poems* and to simplify the prototype I did not include 1984, so the evaluator can use the *Last Night of Earth Poems*, from scenario 1, to test scenario 2.

Even though the prototype is not very rich I think it represents the application's vision.

## 13 Final Stage

After using *GBL* the evaluators provided me a document containing some critics to the prototype.

The critics presented were:

- The "Add to list" icon (...) is not intuitive enough.
- Sending message without being logged in.
- Adding book to a list without being logged in.
- No section describing website objective.

After reading carefully the critics I have to say that I agree with some while other do not seem to apply.

For instance, for the critics 2 and 3, where the evaluators state that the actions should not be available without the user being logged in. I agree with those concerns, however, in the document I provided previously I stated that I did not have time to implement the log-in, therefore the evaluators should assume that the user was logged-in.

For the first critic, I completely agree. I used the 3 dots icon because I was inspiring the design in Spotify's. However, their 3 dot icon allows the user to do many more things than simply adding a song to a playlist. For that reason a should use another icon for the button, for instance, a book with a plus sign.

The last critic is entirely valid, and to be honest, I feel embarrassed that I did not think about that. It makes total sense to have a page explaining the platform objective! So, just like the evaluators suggested, I should add an about page explaining the platform's objective.

## 14 Conclusion

At first I thought the first stages of the project were kind of pointless, however, as I progressed through the project I realized the importance of so much

planning, interviewing and experimenting.

It was also very interesting not only to have my project evaluated by other colleagues but also to evaluate theirs. That made me realize how mental models are presented in everyone of us but also how much our perception of some small things diverge.

Even though my prototype did not end up being the most beautiful I think it was way better than it would have been without some concepts I've learned throughout this class.