**FINAL YEAR GAME PROJECT: FIRST STEP.**

Before you pitch us your game you must set up your brief. The brief is the overview of the issues and problems that you wish to investigate and to solve. This is the way you, as final year undergraduates must act. As we said last week, this is a key component of final year work. Your ability to take control of your own learning.

Let’s take a look a typical brief we have given you and deconstruct it.

THEME: *EMPATHY;* ***MAKE ME CARE***

*One of the great skills a designer needs in their arsenal is the ability to immerse the player into a virtual world, breathing life into every environment and character and relationship, creating a consistent, detailed, and believable diegesis, drawing the player into a meticulously designed virtual world and holding the player there.*

* The opening paragraph indentifies a key skill that we are looking for you, as game designers to develop. In this case it is brief looking to test your ability as designers to immerse *the player* in a virtual world.

*This brief invites you to explore the relationship between the Player and a game character (the MC, or ‘Main Character’). Using contemporary visual and narrative theories and techniques, you will design every component of your game to strengthen this bond. The player can be established as an invisible omniscient power – a god/godess – or as a companion recognised by the MC.*

* Here the focus is on the designer trying to develop a meaningful relationship between *the player* and a game character.

*The MC will need to be anthropomorphised, made ‘real’ with motivations, needs, desires and weaknesses, and will live out its life in a real-time environment. As such, it will require a degree of AI. You will design a set of affordances and mechanics which will allow the player to meaningfully interact with and alter the course of the MC’s life.*

* Here the brief is asking you to consider what game mechanics you might wish to introduce allow *the player* to develop this meaningful relationship

*Your game will be developed for a mobile platform. It must adhere to the principles of the ‘snack game’, allowing the player to engage with the game for short bursts whenever they want. Your interface will need to be clean and easy to navigate*

* The final paragraph asks you to provide a solution to the problems outlined above with reference to some specific technical constraints.

CORE RESEARCH MATERIALS

[Yes, Your Choices in *The Walking Dead* Mattered](http://kotaku.com/5964667/yes-your-choices-in-the-walking-dead-mattered?trending_test_two_e&utm_expid=66866090-68.hhyw_lmCRuCTCg0I2RHHtw.4)

[John Truby: How to Make the Audience Care About Your Characters](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt2PcwKHbxc)

[Steve Kaplan: A Common Mistake Screenwriters make When Developing Characters](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ni2mNiOHyQs)

[Robert McKee: Structure and Character](https://www.writersstore.com/structure-and-character-excerpted-with-permission-from-the-book-story-part-1/)

[How Do Games Differ From Other Media?](http://www.psychologyofgames.com/2015/11/podcast-9-how-do-games-differ-from-other-media/)

[IGN: *Beyond: Two Souls* Review](http://uk.ign.com/articles/2013/10/08/beyond-two-souls-review)

[Derren Brown: The Experiments (Series 1 Epsiode 2)](http://www.channel4.com/programmes/derren-brown-the-experiments/on-demand/47993-002)

* This part of the brief directs you to the readings and research that have taken place in putting the pitch together

A BREIF DIFFERS FROM A PITCH:-

* A brief is about giving someone some detailed instructions and information.
* A pitch is about giving someone a potential solution to the instructions or information they have received from the brief.
* So your first job is NOT to think about ‘the game’ which may or may not be in your head, nor is it to think about the technology you might wish to use. Your first job is to think about THE PLAYER and the key design issues or problems you wish to tackle with reference to the player experience: What does the player think, feel, and do?
* Only once you have done this can you begin to think about pitching a solution to the problems that you have identified.