Meeting Minutes

Date of meeting: 28/01/19

Time of meeting: 11:00am – 12:00pm

Attendees: Bethany Cowle, Alice Baker

Minute taker: Bethany Cowle

Postmortem of the previous week:

All tasks were completed on time this week and we communicated well through email to discuss the work and keep each other updated on when tasks were being finished and whether we were having any trouble with the tasks. We also used the emails to give feedback on concept sketches that had been done and to plan playtesting sessions for the upcoming week.

Last week we set less time for tasks than usual (6 hours) as it was the Christmas break. We had a game jam to discuss our theme ideas and to decide which one we thought would be best suited for our game. We chose our theme thinking about what our target audience would like to see and we wanted a theme that was subtle but allowed us to make our game more memorable without the theme being the main focus of the game. Our tasks were mainly focused around concept art for the theme of our game and how we can make affordances for the game pieces using the theme we had chosen.

Feedback Received:

This week we had a meeting with Rob Kurta who gave us feedback on our progress over the Christmas break. As we have decided to implement a betting mechanic into our game, he suggested that we should play other games with betting involved such as Wits & Wagers and Modern Art to see various ways betting can be used to create tension. He also pointed out that our current betting system doesn’t allow for players who have been consistently behind in terms of points to catch up to the highest scorer, which may cause players to lose interest in the game as they know there is no chance of them having a comeback and winning. We discussed the possibility of introducing higher rewards for taking risks when bidding, such as rounds where players may score double/triple points, etc. This would create a negative feedback loop and mean that players could still have a chance of catching up with the current person in the lead no matter how badly they have done in previous rounds, as the person in the lead is more likely to play cautiously in order to not lose all of their tokens by risking them all in one round whereas someone behind may realise they can only win by risking it all, and this risk may pay off.

One of the other main points we discussed was whether the boards were necessary. Rob mentioned that it may be confusing for players having cards, tokens and a game board they move across and that we should try to find solutions for scoring that don’t require any extra pieces. Instead of having to reach the end of a board to win, the game may simply last a certain number of rounds, the person with the most tokens at the end being the winner. Also, to ensure that no players lose all their tokens and are locked out of the game at any point, Rob explained to us that in the game Wits & Wagers, players use a similar system of using tokens to bet on certain outcomes, but players always get to keep 2 tokens no matter whether they place a bet on the wrong option. This means that players will always have at least 2 tokens to play with. We have discussed this feedback in the game jam today and decided to playtest our current iteration with one group of play-testers this week and then remove the board and add this new scoring system with the tokens for another playtesting session this week, as we originally intended to have two playtesting sessions anyway. We will then look at the feedback and see how they compare and which version players prefer.

Other features we discussed were whether we could change the rules to allow for a continuing narrative through rounds, such as a players lie in round 2 being a continuation of their story from the previous round. We also talked about whether players could receive extra points for making their lie more ridiculous than they would score for creating a more believable lie, possibly through the use of prompt cards. In this case, players would be given prompt cards at the start of the game/round and would score extra points for including these words in their lie without getting detected by the other players. As we have previously tried using prompt cards and players mentioned that after a few times playing the game prompt cards would be more obvious as everyone would know what the different prompt cards are, we currently aren’t sure how we could implement these features but will be taking it into consideration in the upcoming week.

Overall aim of the current week’s sprint:

This week we will be playtesting both iterations of the game to see which provides a better experience for the players. We will also iterate the game the following week based on the feedback we receive in these sessions. We will be looking into variations of bidding mechanics to see how we can get the most rising tension in our game.

Tasks for the current week:

Bethany Cowle:

* Game Jam (1 hour)
* Playtesting (3 hours)
* Type up playtesting MDA (1 hour 30 minutes)
* Research into bidding mechanics (2 hours 30 minutes)

Alice Baker:

* Game Jam (1 hour)
* Playtesting (3 hours)
* Type up playtesting feedback (1 hour 30 minutes)
* Research into bidding mechanics (2 hours 30 minutes)

Game Jam (28/01/19):

During this game jam, we discussed the concepts we had created for the game pieces to suit our theme. We also talked about the feedback we received from Rob today and talked about how we can change the game based on this. We decided to iterate the game slightly so the boards are not needed and the scoring is represented by the number of counters players have and will playtest this in one of our sessions this week.