



Game Design Document

iThriveBeasts

Version 2.3

Theory of Change:

Our team wishes to inspire empathy through a narrative based exploration game. We are hoping to see players become more aware of others as human beings rather than quickly judging with labels. The game quickly falls under many common labels, such as the evil government, bickering society, irresponsible cops, and the like. However, after investigating, these labels will transform into people with faults and feelings with needs and moral compasses. We wish to measure the change in players with a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the game. Since the game should take only two hours at the most, the player should be encouraged to complete it in one sitting, thus more accurately recording change. The questionnaire will be based on Mark Davis's *Multidimensional Approach to Individual Differences in Empathy*.

Overview

*Investigate the ghost town of Marlton, as you uncover stories about the inhabitants of a town neighboring a new nuclear power plant. As open and shut as the story may seem, you can never tell a bomb by its casing. **Wastes** is a first person Gone Home-esque exploration game, emphasizing a change in empathy levels. By playing against many obvious judgements through a seemingly cliched narrative, the game will open the player's eyes to ensure their own investigations in real situations, inspiring empathetic responses.*

-For the demo we will only include a small fraction of the full game.

Game Mechanics:

First person exploration game in which the player wanders around the town picking up and examining possessions of the townspeople, reading journal entries, having conversations with your employer over the carphone, and triggering events that play audio logs from the townsfolk.

Designate a button to pick up/drop objects. While holding an object allow the player to rotate and zoom in/out on the object.

Notes or journal entries will be treated slightly differently. When the player interacts with these objects, a zoomed in overlay will appear over the screen. - notes should be brief, most players do not appreciate walls of text. If the object is significant, a voice of the owner of said object may be heard by Ivan.

Technical Specs:

The Game was developed using the Unity Game Engine. All of the models used as assets within the game were modeled using AutoDesk Maya. All of the materials for the objects in the game were also created in Maya. The Terrain for the Game was modeled using the tools within the Unity Game Engine.

Art Style:

Grim, mysterious, but most importantly among the destruction there are signs of hope. Possibility of renewal. Thanks to the research and care about how the environment was crafted, there exists a feeling of realism, which should not be removed lightly. Ghost towns can seem easily cardboard cutouts. To avoid this, we need to focus on how much time has passed between the evacuation.

Audio Style:

The audio style would give very ominous feel to the game. We would keep it this way because you are a player who is lost and is searching for clues and finding out situation. As the plot progresses the music will start to feel a little more sad because we want the player to feel and understand empathy. Finally the music will end on a somber and uplifting score that will cheer the player up and end the game on a high note.

We have added minimal SFX because we wanted to let the player know they are pretty much alone throughout their whole journey in this town. We only added SFX to grab a player's attention towards a certain path or object.

The use of voice overs was to immerse the player into a new world and understand what their main character is going through. You invest in his story and his future while trying to progress the story. They are used every time the character thinks to himself or talks to another character.

Player Story:

Ivan Emery is driving in his car, while talking to his wife on his cellphone. He attempts to reassure her that he will be fine, after all they need the money. However, his wife insists that he come back home. A foreign country, a vague assignment, and a large sum of money all point to something wrong. Ivan refuses to turn the offer down.

He stops at the location he was given, and calls his employer, the government agent who wishes to be known as Hudson. As Ivan speaks with Hudson, it is revealed that there has been an incident, and Ivan must discover the cause behind it. Yet, when Ivan sees his target, sirens start going off in his head, especially after seeing the caution sign about radioactivity. He calls Hudson back and accuses him of trying to get him killed in the radioactive toxin. Hudson reassures Ivan that he is in no danger in the town, but that the town was evacuated due to panic and so Ivan could conduct his search.

Ivan explores some of the houses, discovering how the plant is benefitting the local economy by providing jobs and energy. However, he also uncovers some domestic disturbances, as well as a few people who find the plant encroaching on their livelihood. Ivan enters the town hall to discover that during a rally for the plant's opening a riot broke out. He also visits the hospital, investigating some "accidents" around the town to seemingly keep people quiet and "accidents" in the plant. He finds a hazmat suit there, and can finally investigate the plant.

Whenever Ivan makes a significant discovery, he reports back to Hudson. The player also controls Hudson for a time, while he sorts through his own files on the town, the plant, the employees, the families, and other more revealing stories. In addition, Ivan occasionally gets flashbacks about his last case.

Ivan begins to explore the plant, finding the most hard hitting truths about the explosion that caused the death of many workers, and the radiation poisoning of so many more. Lastly, Ivan finds Mr. Karl Marovich, the plant's supervisor still in his office, alive. Marovich explains a bit more about the government's involvement with nuclear weapons. However, all of this is speculation. Marovich has devoted the rest of his poisoned life to finding the truth and confirming his theory about the government.

Ivan finally discovers the culprit behind the attack: a cyber terrorist. The saboteur is unknown, without a face or a name. In the end, the town was wrong about the government, and the government was wrong about the town. When Ivan reports this to Hudson, he is slightly that the threat isn't more pertinent. Ivan calls for an ambulance for Marovich.

Ivan then revisits his old case, and attempts to clear up the misunderstanding that caused him to gain his bad name.

The town's inhabitants slowly come back to the town of Marlton.

Asset Lists

Art Assets :

Environment/Streets
22 houses / shops
Fence
Town Center Building
Beds
Dressers
Doll
Cups
Plates
Silverware
Paper/All of the notes
Audio Tape Players
Walkie-talkie
Fridge
TV
Chairs
Car
Other household objects

Text Assets:

Notes/Journal entries

Sound Assets:

All Audio files
door opening sound
picking up sound
walkie-talkie sounds
Attempt to open door
Foot steps
Wind?
Paper Turning for Journals
Dropping an object?

Suggested Project Timeline

- John and Bailey read/refine design doc
- Group skype discussing the schedule, story, and assets needed
- Zack and Phoenix implement prototype game mechanics
- Get Audio Recordings
- Video Work
- Demo

