Project Charter

Team Whatever
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☐ Chosen Archetype

1. Maze
2. ~~Point and Click~~ (we initially picked this and then discarded it later)

☐ Goals

❖ What are the goals of this project?

- ➢ Create an intriguing playable experience.
- ➢ Exploration focus
- ➢ Puzzle focus
- ➢ Turn based movement which gives players time to think
- ➢ Compelling narrative

❖ How are these goals compatible with the broader goals laid out in the team charter?

- ➢ Our goals are to create a game that meets our players' expectations
- ➢ An exploration and puzzle focus, and turn based movement suits our players playstyles
- ➢ Narrative gives the players a reason to care about the objectives

❖ How does this game help the team reach its future goals?

- ➢ This project will help to develop our collaborative skills as designers
- ➢ This project will serve as a good portfolio piece for our resumes

❖ How does this game align with the motivation of the team to create specific experiences for players?

- ➢ The game should feature an appealing aesthetic and immersive environment.
- ➢ The game should be a short polished experience that delivers quality moments to the player.
- ➢ The game should not be pretentious.
- ➢ These can all be achieved within the maze archetype and align with our team's values.

❖ What concerns, risks, or challenges has the team forecasted?

- ➢ Any technical problems encountered during the process.
- ➢ Worry about any workload or poor time management
- ➢ The challenge of creating the actual puzzle which is the level design
- ➢ Keep timely communication and overcome remote online collaboration that can't be avoided.

❖ How will the team overcome them?

- ➢ Record and report progress in a timely manner.
- ➢ Set milestones and utilise the Miro or Kanban board to record progress.
- ➢ Maintain communication and attention on Discord for preventing missing any project changes or reminders.
- ➢ Don't change plans without other members' authorization.
- ➢ Plan time management and target quality in advance to overcome over-scoping

☐ Project Description

❖ A short breakdown of the game

- ➢ Players will explore a maze, looking for keys and solving puzzles to progress.
- ~~➢ Players will encounter random enemies within the maze that they will fight.~~
- ➢ Players will experience a short but compelling narrative

❖ Player experience map

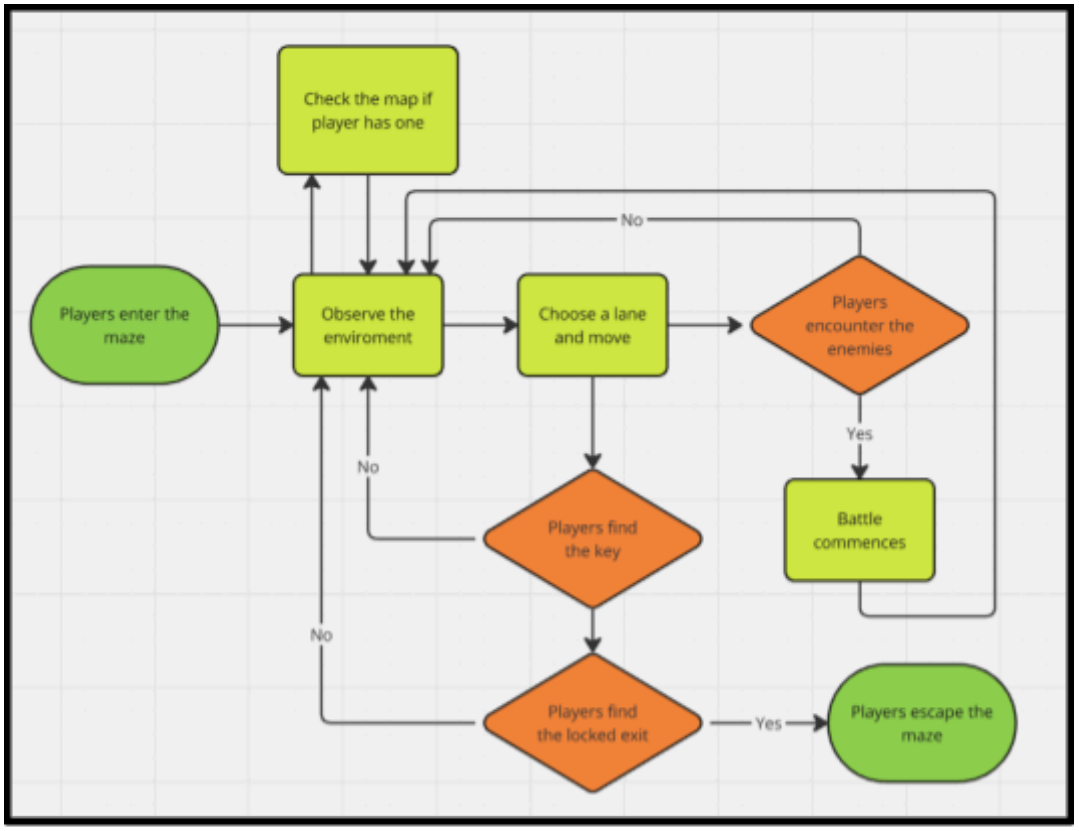

Figure 1: Rough gameplay experience

❖ **Player experience map (cont.)**

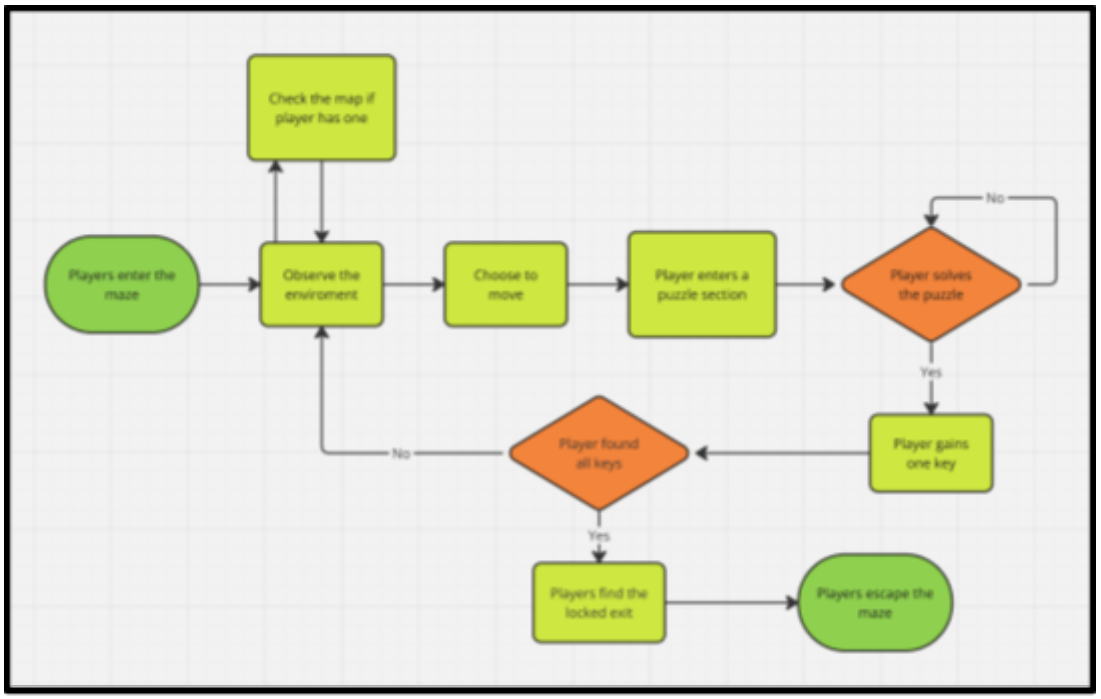

Figure 2: Refined gameplay experience

❖ **How would a player describe the game in one sentence?**

➢ "What an a-maze-ing adventure where we solve puzzles, ~~battle enemies~~, and uncover a heart touching story."

❖ **What parts of the game are core to the player's experience?**

➢ Navigate
➢ Explore
➢ Solve

❖ **What features (user stories) is your team already planning on including?**

➢ As a player, I want to have smooth controls in order to have a satisfying tactile experience.
➢ As a player, I want to be able to solve puzzles in order to exercise my competency in problem solving.
➢ As a player, I want to have nice transitions between movements in order to fill my brain with dopamine with appealing animations.
➢ As a player, I want to explore a maze with

☐ References

❖ **What references did the team explore in relation to the archetype?**

➢ Labyrinth of Galleria (2023)
➢ Dark Deception (2020)

- ➢ Etrian Odyssey (2007)
- ➢ Dungeon Master (1992)
- ➢ Mabinogi (2006)

❖ What patterns were identified?

- ➢ Grid System Movement
- ➢ Combat
- ➢ Party system
- ➢ Minimap
- ➢ Doors and keys

❖ What references inspired the team for this project?

- ➢ Labyrinth - Movie (1986)
  - ○ Fantasy elements / maze can transform
- ➢ Dungeon Meshi - Anime (2023)
  - ○ Party dynamics
  - ○ Dungeon creatures and species for attack system
  - ○ Hidden gate or intersection
  - ○ Traditional JRPG fantasy story
- ➢ Made in Abyss - Anime (2017)
  - ○ Feeling of exploration
  - ○ Lost/trapped in a hostile environment

☐ Audience

❖ Who is the target audience?

- ➢ Teenagers / Young adults who enjoy exploration and puzzle solving
- ➢ People who enjoy a more relaxed and slow paced experience
- ➢ People who enjoy role-playing and immersion into fantasy worlds

Excitement	Low	Completion	Mid
Destruction	Low	Power	Low
Competition	Low	Discovery	High
Community	Low	Design	Mid
Challenge	Mid	Fantasy	High
Strategy	High	Story	High

❖ How is this target audience justified?

- ➢ The maze environment provides a place for players to explore
- ➢ The turn-based nature of the game allows players to play at their own pace.

- ➢ The narrative and aesthetics of the game will immerse players into the world.

❖ **How does the target audience line up with the goals of both the game and the team?**

- ➢ Make sure the theme is obvious and clear and confirm that players will not be unfamiliar with the game mode
- ➢ Creating interesting puzzle designs align with our team's goal to build skills in game design.
- ➢ The fantasy elements and focus on immersion appeals to players interested in role-playing games.
- ➢ A shorter, more polished game appeals to players who enjoy memorable and meaningful gameplay.
- ➢ The game's relaxed feel suits an audience that prefers a low-stress, enjoyable experience.

☐ Progress Overview

★ Sprint 1

❖ Design questions & target of sprint

➢ Selected How might we questions

- How might the player move to best accommodate navigation?
- How might the player recognise paths they have already taken?
- How might the designers control the duration of each level?
- How might the player know where to find a key and how to use it?
- How might the designers place enemies and obstacles?
- How might combat be made unique from other games in the archetype?
- How might we best deliver narrative beats to the player?
- How might we make the map easy for the player to understand their current location?
- How might we combine the experience of two archetypes, maze and point & click, together?

➢ Why did your team pick the ones you explored?

- Movement is a central mechanic to the game and it's important to figure this out first before other elements of the game can be decided.

➢ How did your team decide?

- Vote :)
- Communication

➢ Where did this question come from in relation to the player experience map?

- "Observe the environment" and "Pick a lane and move"

❖ Solution & results

➢ What was the solution?

- Keyboard controls for movement, interactions with the mouse
- No strafing, only forwards and backwards, A and D for rotating
- Mouse allows the player to look up/down and a little left/right

➢ Was the solution successful?

- Yes!!! 🙂

♘ How did your team decide this?

- After a democratic vote and a close examination of each and every solution, considering all the benefits and disadvantages, the decision was made.

♘ How does this solution support the goals of the project?

- The movement we settled on allows for player freedom and feels the smoothest to control

➢ What knowledge was gained about the design of the project?

- The player should be able to look around without moving out of their current position.
- Clicking to move is more tedious than keyboard controls
- Having vertical movement with smooth animation is wicked

➢ What are the next steps for the solution?

♘ If the team was happy, is there anything you would change or update when developing it into the full game?

- Limit movement to only forwards and backwards.
- When moving and turning, use smooth animations instead of teleporting.
- Add verticality to the levels
- Having two kinds of camera movement, A & D to move left and right drastically, mouse for slight view adjustment.

- Our solution's next steps involve addressing the changes we made to the movement controls and preparing them for the game build.

★ Sprint 2

❖ Design questions & target of sprint

➢ Selected How might we questions

- How might the player control the camera to look around the environment
- How might the player interact with objects/doors/levers/etc.

➢ Why did your team pick the ones you explored?

- We weren't sure how the player should be able to look up and down
- We weren't sure if object interactions should be point and click or button controlled (mouse hover and press button).

- ➢ **How did your team decide?**
  - Intense whiteboard debate
  - Our team was having conflicting ideas on how to incorporate head movement using the mouse.
- ➢ **Where did this question come from in relation to the player experience map?**
  - “Observe the environment” - Camera control
  - “Player finds key” - Player interactions

❖ Solution & results

- ➢ **What was the solution?**
  - For the Interactions
    - When the player moves their mouse within a radius of an object it will be highlighted
    - Click to interact with the item
  - For the Camera
    - Mouse to look around
    - More vertical than horizontal movement
    - A slight move of the mouse will move the camera as well
- ➢ **Was the solution successful?**
  - Yes!!! 😀

  🔬 ***How did your team decide this?***
    - After reviewing the prototypes, the team came to a unanimous consensus

  🔬 ***How does this solution support the goals of the project?***
    - It provides an intuitive design for the player to interact with the game world
- ➢ **What knowledge was gained about the design of the project?**
  - Having the transition between moving and rotating gives the player a clearer sense of direction and immersion
  - It is more intuitive to click on interactable items than to use a keyboard button
  - Players should be able to interact with multiple items from one position
  - When there is more than one item it is important to highlight the selection so players know what they are clicking on
- ➢ **What are the next steps for the solution?**

  🔬 ***If the team was happy, is there anything you would change or update when developing it into the full game?***
    - Make sure the player is always in the centre of the grid when they move
    - Adding highlights on objects based on the mouse position
    - Add verticality to the maze/puzzles

        - Test limits on spamming movement

★ Sprint 3

❖ Design questions & target of sprint

➢ Selected How might we questions

- How might we design puzzle mechanics to emphasize the maze aspect of the game?

➢ Why did your team pick the ones you explored?

- Our team wanted to know how to incorporate puzzles into the maze, like a sub-puzzle within a large puzzle(maze itself)

➢ How did your team decide?

- Yet another whiteboard debate with help from stakeholders

➢ Where did this question come from in relation to the player experience map?

- “Player enters the puzzle section & Player solves the puzzle” - the actual puzzle in the game

❖ Solution & results

➢ What was the solution?

- Puzzle rooms should be maze-shaped and involve some amount of exploration and backtracking
- Spatial puzzles that make use of the maze itself are better
- If upgrades to character abilities are included they should not gate the player from entering other areas
- Puzzles that change the structure of the maze are good

♕ Specific solutions

- Ice block sliding puzzles
- Puzzle where walls move when the player moves
- Combination lock where the code is hidden throughout the maze
- Water pipes that flood/unflood rooms and passages
- Doors you can only enter through backwards
- Performing a sequence of actions to balance platforms in order to cross a gap

➢ Was the solution successful?

- Yes!!! 😁

♘ How did your team decide this?

- After reviewing the prototypes the team discussed the best direction for the design

♘ How does this solution support the goals of the project?

- Our newfound principles for designing puzzles in the game further support the maze archetype

➢ **What knowledge was gained about the design of the project?**

- Hizo learned a lot about prototyping tools
- How to make puzzle designs suit the goals of the project
- Team cooperation, sharing ideas, discussion
- Sections of the maze should focus on one puzzle mechanic
  - Kishoutenketsu style

➢ **What are the next steps for the solution?**

🔬 ***If the team was happy, is there anything you would change or update when developing it into the full game?***

- Make sure upgrades don't gate off areas
- Make sure puzzle rooms don't feel like escape rooms, should be maze-like

☐ Resources

❖ Tutorials, assets, previous projects/assignments used during the prototyping process

➢ Leon

- https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/templates/tutorials/chomp-man-3d-game-kit-tutorial-174982
- https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/templates/packs/2d-casual-game-maze-template-284247

➢ Nathan

- Simple Modular Dungeon | 3D Dungeons | Unity Asset Store
- https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/2d/gui/icons/fantasy-icon-set-252040

➢ Adam

- Unity - Scripting API: Mathf

➢ Hizo

- All assets in canva are free to use for academic purposes
  Canva: Visual Suite for Everyone

❖ Include what game engine your team plans to use during production

➢ **Godot (Godot Engine)**