

Stage 0: Game Design

During the course of this semester, you will be working on implementing an original Text Adventure game. In this game, you will use text commands to control characters and influence the environment. This sounds more daunting than it is.

Your assignment over break was to go and play one of the many text adventure games that are available online. Once you did that, you were asked to think of your own idea for your own original text adventure game. Do not think about implementation, classes, or even programming in general. Just think inventing an interesting game.

In this stage of your project, you will need to write a document that describes your game. This will keep you and the grader on the same page during the development of your game making it easier for the grader to keep track of your project. The original design, once approved, will also serve as a contract between you and Dr Jump. You will be allowed to add to the approved design, but not remove from it.

Here is what you need to include:

Overview : Describe the background and overall goal of your game. Who is your main character and what do they have to do to win the game.

Time : In most text adventure games, time as we know it is not a factor. However, time can make several features of a game more interesting. In context with our game implementation time will be measured in the number of turns that have passed. How does time play into your game?

Player : Give a detailed description of your player. List what limitations or special characteristics your player has. Your player **must** have some characteristic that must be managed throughout the game. Examples include anything from a limit to the player's health or energy to the number and types of spells a magician can cast.

Additionally, players will be able to interact with items in the world and will be limited to how much they can carry.

The World : Your player will be moving through a world that you are creating. What does that world look like? Movement through the world is directional meaning that a player moves “north”, “southeast”, or “up” though there can be some variation here. If your world needs non-directional movement, be sure to talk to Dr. Jump about whether your idea can be done.

Your world should be big enough to be interesting, but not too big. In general, your world must have between 25-100 different rooms. I am using the word “room” here in a very general way since not all places in a game need to be an actual “room.” Your world could consist of a combination of outdoor spaces and inside rooms.

For each room that the player can move through:

- Write a description of what the player will see upon entering the room.
- What items are in this room? This includes anything that is required to make your world an interesting place (e.g., a living room might have a sofa and a tv).

- What items exist that a player needs to interact with in order to progress in any part of the whether it is to win the game or to accomplish some side task? For each item, state their purpose.
- Describe what, if anything, the player must do in this room in order to progress in the game.
- Describe anything else the player can do in this room.

Non-Player Characters (NPCs) : No player exists in a world completely alone. List any NPCs that exist for the player to interact with. These could be anything from a monster that your player needs to battle to a store clerk that your player must interact with in order to buy supplies to a guard that alerts the troops if you appear in their line of site. One good way to use an NPC is to have someone in the game that helps guide the player towards their purpose in the game. Include a description of the type of interaction you expect your player to have with any NPC.

Scoring : No game is complete without scoring and, as a result, every game will need to have some kind of scoring system. What does your player do to earn points in your game? What is the maximum number of points that the player can earn? Someone playing your game should be able to achieve the goal of the game and “win” but not earn all the possible points. This game feature is one of the things that make people play games over and over again.

Additional Stuff : Describe anything else that you want to include in your game. This includes things that will make your world more interesting to the player and can be anything from special bonus scenes to easter eggs. Are there side goals to be achieved?

When you are ready, upload your document and click on “Submit”.

Your submission will be reviewed within 48 hours (often sooner). The review process will be to ensure that you have sufficient depth in your game to make it interesting and a challenge to implement, as well as to make sure that your ideas are implementable in the environment that we are working in. The result of a review process is one of two results:

Accepted : At this point, the document you submitted forms the basis of your game and represents a contract between you and Dr Jump specifying what is required of your game. You are free to add additional features to your game as you implement, but you will not be allowed to do less without losing points.

Rejected : There are two reasons that your game design would not be accepted:

1. It contains some feature that is too difficult to implement and you will need to meet with Dr Jump to discuss.
2. It is insufficient in complexity for the requirements of this project. The comments provided should help you revise the design so that it is acceptable.

It is not unusual for a student’s design to go through several iterations before it is accepted.

Deadline: uploaded to Moodle by 11:59am on Friday, January 24th.