Break the Block

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Part 1

Break the Block is a tool in the form of a website for writers who are faced with writer's block. Its purpose is to help writers who are facing writer's block participate in an activity depending on the nature of their writer's block to help get them back into writing. The target audience is writers facing writer's block, with a primary focus on writers working on fictional works.

In my website, I want to convey that writer's block is about progress, not perfection, and show writers different ways that they can combat their writer's block. I want to clearly convey the steps of the activities designed to combat writer's block and show writers their progress by showing them how many activities they've completed in the past.

Break the Block is interesting because it offers different activities depending on the nature of the writer's block, and also uses a character in a sketch-like art style to guide a writer through the process. There are subtle 2D animations on micro-interactions (i.e. buttons get bigger when hovered over) and stop-motion animations on the images to make the experience more engaging. Bloo, the sketch-like character and face of the website also uses body doubling to help writers write and adds a layer of competition in one of the activities that makes the experience more engaging. Also, the addition of music to one of the activities elevates the experience to be more interesting by engaging another one of the senses.

Break the Block is accessible through keyboard shortcuts, a well-structured site that is easy to navigate through, feedback about errors, error-preventing confirmation screens for important actions, and emergency exits.

Part 2

- **Open the webpage to the homepage**
- **Go to the find activity page**
  - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to button + enter (accessibility)
  - Reproduce by: clicking on the Let's Go button
- **View the activity log**
  - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to button + enter (accessibility)
  - Reproduce by: clicking on View activity log button
  - **Go back to the find activity page**
    - Interaction: click with the mouse
    - Reproduce by: clicking on back arrow button
- **Find a new activity**
  - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
  - Reproduce by: clicking on Find a new activity button

- **Choose what type of block you as a writer have**
    - Interaction: click on the button that best represents you
    - Reproduce by: clicking on the first button
    - **Learn about the Back into the Groove activity and then start it**
        - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to button + enter (accessibility)
        - Reproduce by: clicking the start button
        - **Choose the vibe of your current writing project**
            - Interaction: selection dropdown and clicking on a button
            - Reproduce by: making a selection on the selection drop-down and then clicking submit button
            - **Start the activity after looking at the playlist**
                - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
                - Reproduce by: clicking on the start playlist button
                - **Pause/Play the song**
                    - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
                    - Reproduce by: clicking on play button
                - **Forward skip the song**
                    - Interaction: click with the mouse or use the keyboard shortcut (right arrow)
                    - Reproduce by: clicking on play button OR click the right arrow key
                - **Back skip the song**
                    - Interaction: click with the mouse or use the keyboard shortcut (right arrow)
                    - Reproduce by: clicking on play button OR click the right arrow key
                - **End the activity early**
                    - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
                    - Reproduce by: clicking on the end activity early button
                    - **Confirm you want to end the activity**
                        - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
                        - Reproduce by: clicking on the Yes button
                        - **Save the activity to your activity log**
                            - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the

button and hit enter
(accessibility)

- ■ Reproduce by: clicking on the log activity button
- ○ **Go back to the homepage**
  - ■ Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
  - ■ Reproduce by: clicking on the home button
- ○ **Try the same activity again**
  - ■ Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
  - ■ Reproduce by: clicking on the try again button
- ■ Reproduce by: clicking on the second button
  - ● **Add/subtract time to/from the word sprint activity**
    - ○ Interaction: click with mouse or use or use the keyboard shortcut (up/down arrow)
    - ○ Reproduce by: clicking on the add/subtract buttons or using the up/down arrow keys
  - ● **Start the word sprint activity**
    - ○ Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to button + enter (accessibility)
    - ○ Reproduce by: clicking the start button
  - ● **View the animation and see the timer count down!**
  - ● **End the activity early**
    - ○ Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
    - ○ Reproduce by: clicking on the end activity early button
    - ○ **Confirm you want to end the activity**
      - ■ Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
      - ■ Reproduce by: clicking on the Yes button
      - ■ **Input how many words you wrote and submit**
        - ● Interaction: text input and view feedback as the icon next to the text input changes
        - ● Reproduce by: inputting a number into the word count text input (or a non-number to see that it doesn't let you continue) and then clicking the submit button

- **Save the activity to your activity log**
  - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
  - Reproduce by: clicking on the log activity button
- **Go back to the homepage**
  - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
  - Reproduce by: clicking on the home button
- **Try the same activity again**
  - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
  - Reproduce by: clicking on the try again button
- Reproduce by: clicking on the third button
  - **Add/subtract time to/from the break it down activity**
    - Interaction: click with mouse or use or use the keyboard shortcut (up/down arrow)
    - Reproduce by: clicking on the add/subtract buttons or using the up/down arrow keys
  - **Start the break it down activity**
    - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to button + enter (accessibility)
    - Reproduce by: clicking the start button
  - **View the animation and see the timer count down!**
  - **End the activity early**
    - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
    - Reproduce by: clicking on the end activity early button
    - **Confirm you want to end the activity**
      - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
      - Reproduce by: clicking on the Yes button
      - **Save the activity to your activity log**
        - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
        - Reproduce by: clicking on the log activity button
    - **Go back to the homepage**

- Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
- Reproduce by: clicking on the home button
  - **Try the same activity again**
    - Interaction: click with the mouse or press tab to the button and hit enter (accessibility)
    - Reproduce by: clicking on the try again button
- Note: all buttons also have hover interactions

Part 3

1 Required External Tool
- **Name:** use-sound React library
- **Why I chose it:** I chose this library because it allows me to implement audio into my website and controls for manipulating the audio. I also chose this library because it looked simple and did what I needed it to do and the documentation was clear and concise.
- **How I used it:** I used this library to implement a playlist of songs that played music on the website. I also used it to implement music controls with buttons like pause/play, back skip, and forward skip to give the user more control over the experience.
- **What does it add to my website:** It gives the user more control over the experience, making it more personalized and enjoyable. It also allows users to engage another one of their senses, so it makes the website more immersive and engaging.

Extra External Tools I Used
- Framer-motion animation library

Part 4

I've iterated a lot on my prototypes, mainly with regard to accessibility. At the very beginning, I didn't have any back arrows or emergency exits, which I added in through the iterations. Since starting coding, I've also implemented a confirmation pop-up screen for when someone tries to end an activity early for error-prevention purposes. When implementing my website, I also realized I was missing some pages in the user flow: I forgot to design a place for users to input their word count, so I had to create a new page for that. I added animations (stop-motion animation on the images and subtle animations on interactions like buttons) to make the experience more engaging. Also, I improved usability with small additions like adding an icon with a checkmark or an X for feedback about the user's input.
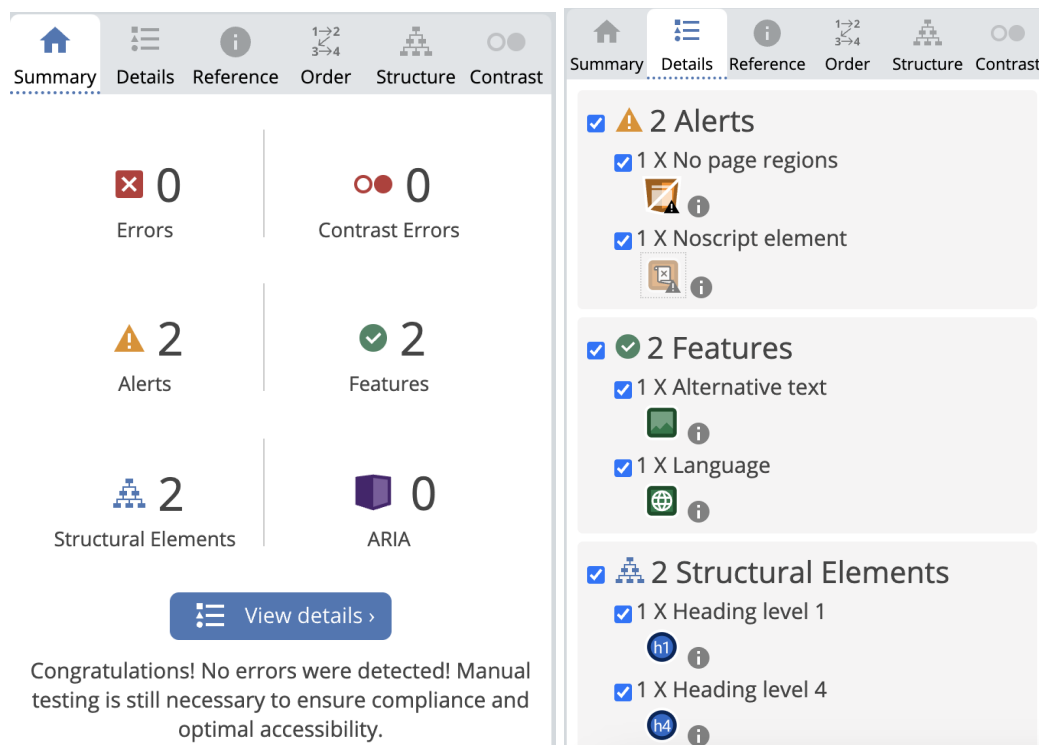
Part 5

One big challenge I experienced was that I initially used react-router but that created a lot of problems on GitHub so I decided to switch to using a state holding the current page and switched out page components as necessary. I also struggled with using the use-sound library because the documentation wasn't super thorough so I wasn't sure what certain types certain parts were and how I could use it when I had multiple sounds in a playlist to work with at one time. I had multiple songs playing at a time but figuring out the types of everything helped me figure out the logic. It was also a challenge to figure out all the edge cases of such a comprehensive user flow but I worked through this by sitting down and going through the different use cases to identify what was missing.

Miscellaneous

- The website is responsive. The minimum screen width size is 400px.

Screenshots of the "Summary" and "Details" sections

My website is technically a single-page application because I used each page as a state variable so I have one screenshot of summary/details. The two alerts seem to be things related to React that I can't change.