**Designer Diary for Game Production Assignment 1**

**9th May** – We've put together a team of three classmates for this assignment 1. We're working together to come up with different ideas and types of board games and figure out how to add creative elements to them. Our goal is to create a fun and engaging experience for whoever plays our games.

**12th May** – After a period of brainstorming among the team and a little research about boardgames online we’ve decided to implement a board game based on Crimes in History: H. H. Holmes' Murder Castle and we’ve also decided to have the game settings in 1890s.

**14th May** – Today I’ve did some research about Crimes in History: H.H. Holmes’s Murder Castle board game and all the mechanics, logics, and concepts about this board game to gain further knowledge on how I should implement a more interesting game based on this. After some brainstorming and watching some video about the board game online, I thought maybe it is a good idea implement a game named “Mystery at the Murder Castle.”

**15th May** – Me and my teammates have a group meeting in teams about putting ideas together as a team and summarizing the game idea and the game mechanics. After a period of discussion, we decided to implement a game about a serial killer lair with the theme horror and multiple characters trying to escape from the serial killer to win the game. It is a 3-5 players game, and the goal is to unlock the door to escape, while only 1 player can escape at last. The overall looking of the board will be tiles laid out in square formation, tiles are randomized and hidden, objects card are highlighted, keys are highlighted. Not to mention, the tiles can be good and could be bad and players are to flip the card to discover when move away. At the start of the game each player gets 3 cards, can be used to travel around the tiles at own will, can also use to sabotage other players. The movement of the across the tiles where players can either use object to move, diagonally or straight, land on tile must flip over and do what the card says at the back when they flip. Each player has 3HP, some tiles or object by others will damage them losing a heart, all 3 out they will consider loose. However, players can gain back health while they are still alive from object (or good tiles?).

**17th May** – Today me and my teammates had a physical meeting at school to discuss about further implementation of the board game and finalizing the rules of the board game and we also did a pre prototype using papers to have a brief idea on how it should look like before we create the actual board game with cardboard and other actual materials. Additionally, we came up with more game setup and rules than the previous discussion like adding more special objects card like diagonal jump across the action tile and skip other player turn and more. Apart from special objects card, we also added more kind of bad tiles like freeze for one around and good tiles like gain 1 extra move and furthermore with the implementation of neutral cards across the tile with different directions; up, down, left, right to move by the players upon revealing the card to improve the gameplay.

**18th May** – Today was about writing down the background story line as part of the rule book. As previously we decided to have the game setting about a serial killer with the theme horror and multiple characters are trying to escape, I came up with a fictional background story line for our board game. As I started writing down the story, I thought of giving a name to our board game, so after a short while I came up with the name ‘Dungeon of Despair: Key to Survival’. However, this name is yet to be confirmed by other teammates. I gave the serial killer a name that is known as Victor Mortem and gave him a story setting about a killer who haunted the residents’ nightmares. And the whole story happens in 1892, where this killer locked those five characters in his secret labyrinthine network of dungeons beneath his dilapidated mansion, which he used as his twisted lair. Further that day, I wrote down the introduction of the characters and a background story for them in the rule book. Apart from this, I also wrote the components that consist in this boardgame and the game setup as well as the gameplay.

**20th May –** After finalizing the game idea and the rules, I started making the prototype to make the game board while my teammates are taking over for the cards of the board game. For the tiles, I bought a few pieces of cardboard in Popular and carefully measured and cut it into 59 square boxes for the use of tiles. We only needed 36 pieces for the tiles but indeed the rest of the tiles are for replacement of the tiles during the game and as for backup if there is any damage to the tiles. After making the prototype for tiles, I started searching for suitable pictures online that are related to our game theme to put it on our tiles to make the game more realistic and fun other than just a plane design cardboard.

**22th May –** Me and my teammates did a playtesting during class today and consulted teacher for advice for our board game. The overall playtesting session was fun and thrilling but instead we found out some issues and bugs in the game and decided to make some changes to the game mechanics and modify some rules of the game. The consultation with the teacher was useful and we had an idea of making the game from 3-5 players to 2-4 players where each player starts the game from 4 sides of the tile instead of the original idea where all players start at the same tiles.

**24th May –** Today me and my teammates met in school for another playtesting and finishing up the actual prototype before we record for the video pitch. After a round of playtesting, we found that our board game still consists of few bugs and unclear instructions, therefore along the way of fixing bugs for the board game we actually did a big change to our board game where instead of 2-4 players and only one person can win the game from escaping we change back to a 3-5 players game where one of the players is the bad guy and 4 other players are the good guys where they need to work in team against the bad guy in order to win. Apart from this, we changed the game mechanics where good players need to collect buttons that scattered across the tiles in order to win the game and both the bad guys and good guys are given special abilities and could only used it when they collect a specific number of buttons. Lastly, we did a little change to our background story line where escaping from dungeons were changed to escaping from castle as the tiles now represent rooms and it is more suitable with the theme castle.

Original Background Story:

*In the dark and twisted alleys of Ravenswood, nestled in the heart of a dense forest, a malevolent presence lurked. This malevolence took the form of a twisted soul known as Victor Mortem, an infamous serial killer who haunted the residents' nightmares. Born with a dark disposition, Victor grew up in a dysfunctional family, where cruelty and violence were the norm. As he matured, his insatiable thirst for blood and suffering drove him to commit heinous acts that shocked the townsfolk.*

*The year was 1892, and Ravenswood was gripped with fear. The townspeople whispered tales of Victor's atrocities, but the authorities struggled to apprehend him. Unbeknownst to the community, Victor had constructed a secret labyrinthine network of dungeons beneath his dilapidated mansion, which he used as his twisted lair. Locked away in those hellish depths were five unfortunate souls, each with their own dark secrets and desperate desire to escape.*

Modified Background Story:

*An evil presence hung over Ravenswood's stately and intimidating castle, sitting atop a frightening hill. This malevolence manifested itself as the warped spirit Victor Mortem, a serial killer that tormented the citizens' nightmares. Born with a dark disposition, Victor grew up in a lineage of ruthless rulers, where oppression and cruelty were the norm. As he ascended to power, his insatiable thirst for control and suffering drove him to commit heinous acts that struck fear into the hearts of the kingdom.*

*The year was 1892, and Ravenswood was in the grip of terror. The kingdom's inhabitants whispered tales of Victor's atrocities, but the authorities struggled to bring him to justice. Little did they know that Victor had constructed a secret network of treacherous passageways beneath his grand castle, which he used as his stronghold. Locked away in those ominous depths were four individuals, each with their own dark secrets and an unwavering determination to escape.*

*Each survivors possessed unique strengths and weaknesses, but their common goal was to escape the castle's clutches and put an end to Victor Mortem's reign of terror. The key to their freedom lay concealed within the labyrinthine corridors, requiring the prisoners to navigate deadly traps, unravel intricate riddles, and confront their deepest fears.*

*As they ventured deeper into the castle's depths, Victor delighted in their suffering, relishing their struggles with sadistic pleasure. He watched as alliances formed and crumbled, trust shattered, and darkness threatened to consume their souls.*

*In the shadowed kingdom of Ravenswood, the battle between good and evil raged on, as the survivors fought for their lives and the chance to bring an end to the reign of the malevolent Victor Mortem. Who would emerge victorious? Only teamwork among the survivors held the answers, and their fate hung in the balance as they ventured further into the depths of the castle.*

**25th May –** Today was another fun day where me and my teammates finally see the actual prototype coming out from nothing and we did another play test to count the average time of the game session and to find if there are still possibilities’ of bugs and errors between the game. Eventually, there was some error for the character card, and we had to reprint the character card images with the abilities information. Furthermore, was a little short of materials to represent tokens in the game so I’m looking for suitable materials to represents those tokens.

**26th May –** Finished editing the actual and final look rulebook with self-design cover page using Adobe Illustrator and background images added for every page (total 9 pages).

**28th May –** Finishing taking video for assignment’s video pitch and editing with sound effect. Moreover, submitted the links of the video to Brightspace and e-portfolio.

**29th May –** Today was the presentation day for the board game and where me and my team member need to show out prototype and let other group members playtest our game. Firstly, we show our video pitch also known as marketing video for our board game and it was rather fun and exciting as we got other people’s attention from our video. Furthermore, we explained our board game to the group that is playing our game and receiving feedback from both our classmates and the teacher. After gathering feedback, they said the visuals and appearances for our board game is very nice and eye catching, however the game mechanics where the killers and survivors are balance where one side could easily win, or one side might take longer time which isn’t balanced and it’s a good idea to make some changes to the game mechanics to make it more balanced and enhance the overall gameplay. In Addition to that, me and my teammates do get the opportunity to play other group’s board game which is the ‘Scavenger’, it was a fun game overall with good game mechanics implemented, in fact the prototype was kind of rough and simple. To sum up, today was an exciting day presenting board game create by ourselves and having a chance to see what ideas other people have, instead the playtest of the game could be longer as we couldn’t manage to explain everything clearly in such a short timing and giving them a chance to actually play our game board.