

A black and white photograph of several modern skyscrapers. The buildings are characterized by their repetitive window patterns and geometric forms. One building on the left has a prominent diagonal line of windows. The sky is a uniform light gray.

PICK -A-PATH MANUAL

Table of Contents

1.0 General Information.....	3
1.1 Software Overview.....	3
1.2 Organization of the Manual.....	3
2.0 System Summary	4
2.1 System Configuration.....	4
2.2 User Access Levels	4
2.3 Contingencies	4
3.0 Getting Started	4
3.1 Running the program.....	4
3.2 System Menu.....	4
4.0 Using the Software	6
4.1 Editor Mode.....	6
4.1.1 Canvas.....	6
4.1.2 Make a Box	7
4.1.3 Select a Box	7
4.1.4 Make an Arrow	8
4.1.5 Select an Arrow	9
4.1.7 Delete and Delete All.....	12
4.1.8 Zoom.....	13
4.1.9 Scroll Bar	13
4.1.10 Saving and Loading Files	14
4.2 Player Mode	15
5.0 Addendum.....	16

1.0 General Information

The general information section of the manual presents a general overview of the program and the organization of this manual.

1.1 Software Overview

The main goal of Pick-a-Path is to have an adaptive environment molded by user decisions in order to experience basic story game development. This software provides a platform for you to make logical decisions to create a text-based game. This can be used to make any number of different possible outcomes for your game. You will have two different modes to develop your game, the editor mode and the player mode, to make this software as user-friendly as possible.

In the editor mode, you can start by creating boxes, which will represent the scenarios that you want to incorporate into your story. An arrow connects two boxes (scenarios) by representing the option that would take the player from the first box to the second. In this manner, you can create as many boxes as you would like and connect them with a logical flow.

In the player mode, the player will be presented with the scenario and the options. According to the option selected, the player is going to be taken to the next scenario and so on till the end of the game.

1.2 Organization of the Manual

This manual is organized into four parts: General Information, System Summary, Getting Started and Using the Software.

General Information explains the purpose of the software and provides information about the manual.

System Summary provides an overview of the system's hardware and software requirements, user access levels and the system's behavior during any contingencies.

Getting started explains how to run the software in order to use it. It summarizes the features of the system menu and introduces the two modes of game development provided by the software.

Using the software explains in detail how to work with Pick-A-Path to create games. It explains every feature of the system and how to use it for game development.

2.0 System Summary

2.1 System Configuration

Pick-A-Path will operate only on Desktop or Laptop computers; it currently will not support mobile devices. It will be coded and run using primarily Java.

The hardware needed for the game should not be very demanding. You will need to meet the minimum hardware requirements to run our software:

- CPU: Intel Core i3-3210 3.2 GHz / AMD A8-7600 APU 3.1 GHz or equivalent
- RAM: 2GB
- GPU (Integrated): Intel HD Graphics 4000 (Ivy Bridge) or AMD Radeon R5 series (Kaveri line) with OpenGL 4.4*
- HDD: At least 1GB for game core and other files

The basic software requirement for this software would be a computer that can download and run an executable file.

2.2 User Access Levels

Everyone who wishes to create a text-based game can use this software. Anyone who wishes to play a text-based game created using our software can also use this software.

2.3 Contingencies

In case of power outages, the software just retains the most recent saved memory of the game file and does not auto-save. The software does not require an Internet connection in order to be used.

3.0 Getting Started

3.1 Running the program

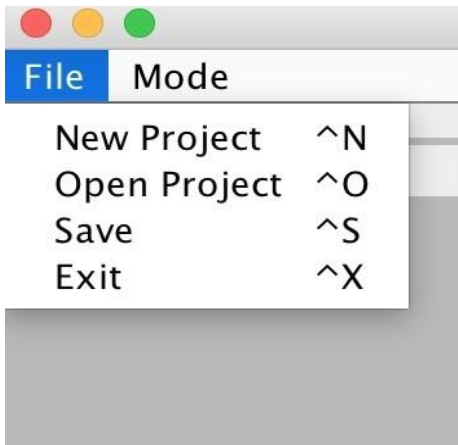
Pick-a-Path can be accessed by obtaining an executable program file. This file can be run on any computer that meets standard requirements. You can access all the features available through the system without a User Id or password.

3.2 System Menu

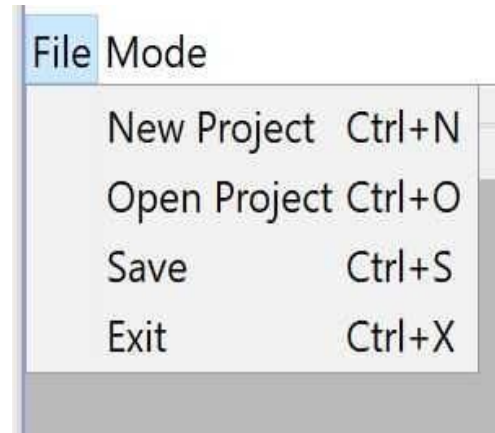
The System Menu consists of two items: File and Mode.

The File Option consists of the following options shown in the figure below:

- The New Project option creates a new .pap file for creating a new game.
- The Open Project option allows you to access and edit an existing .pap file from your computer.
- The Save option saves the file you are currently working on.
- The Exit option allows you to exit the application.



Shortcuts displayed in Mac OS



Shortcuts displayed in Windows

3.3 Two Modes of the program

There are two modes of the program: The Editor Mode and the Player Mode.

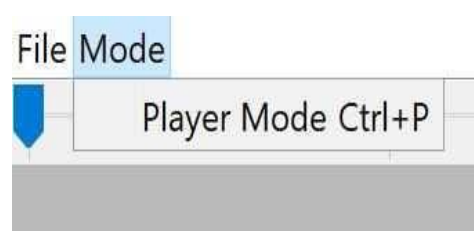
The software is in editor mode by default. To enter playing mode, follow the following instructions:

- You can save the file that you are working on in the editor mode or open an existing file from the computer.
- Select the player mode from the system menu
- A new window will appear with the game for the player.

(Check section 4.2 for instruction on how to play the game.)



Shortcut displayed in Mac OS



Shortcut displayed in Windows

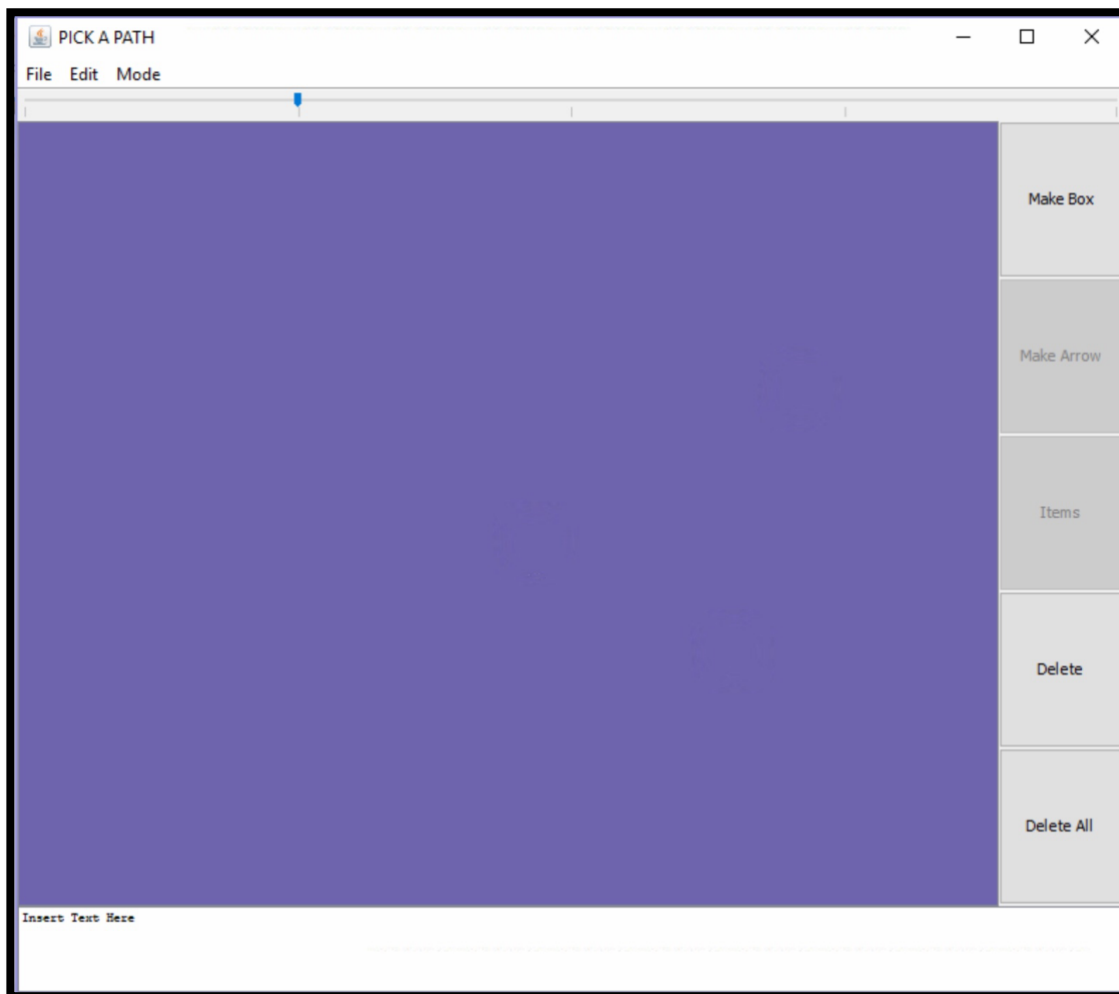
4.0 Using the Software

4.1 Editor Mode

The Editor mode of Pick-A-Path is where the game is created. This section explains all the features of the system and how they can be used to create a game.

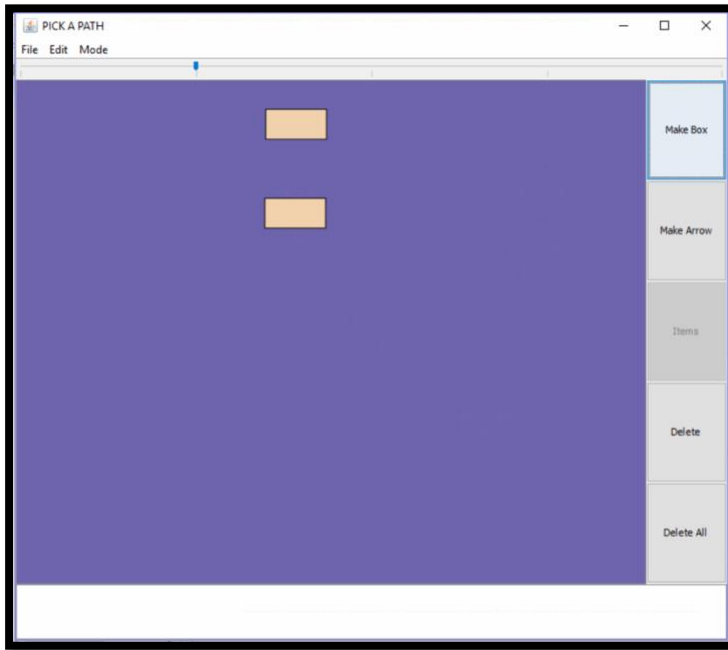
4.1.1 Canvas

The figure below shows the starting window of the software. The purple area is known as the Canvas and is where your game is created.



4.1.2 Make a Box

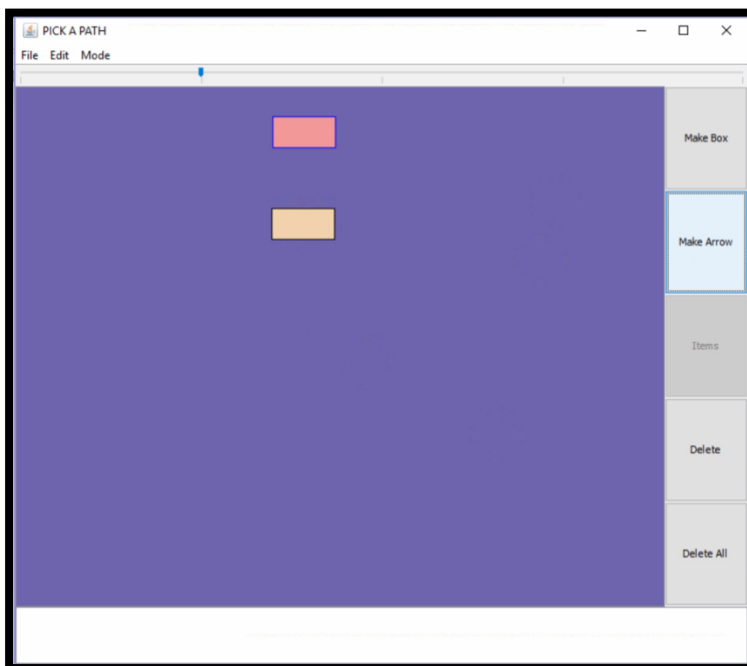
The boxes in Pick-A-Path represent the scenarios that you want to create. Follow the following steps to create a box.



First, click “Make Box” to make at least two boxes. These will serve as your scenarios.

4.1.3 Select a Box

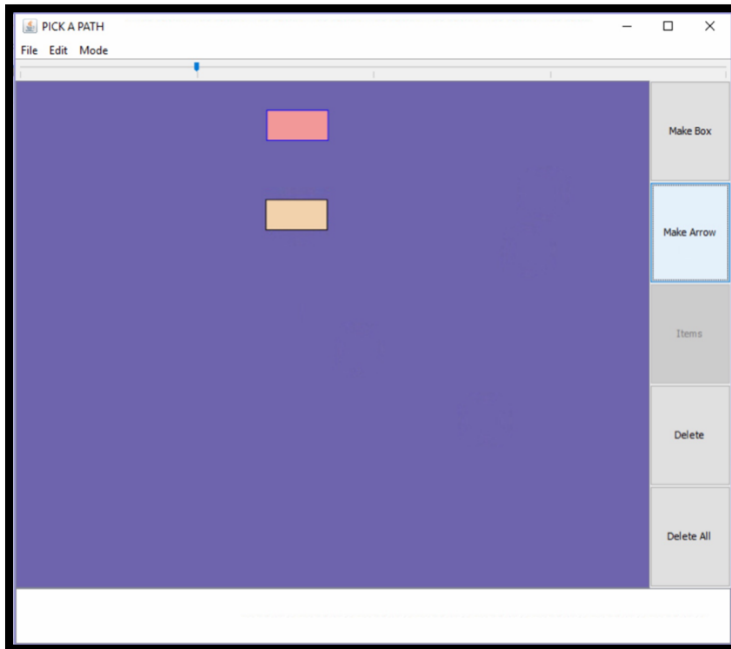
A box can be selected by clicking on the box. A selected box is going to appear in a shade of red.



Once you’ve selected a box, you can enter its scenario text into the blank white space at the bottom.

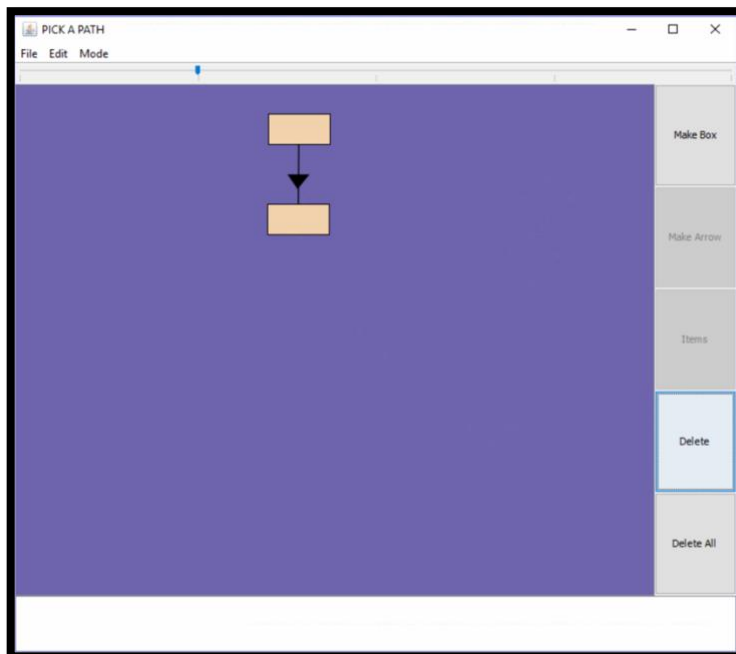
4.1.4 Make an Arrow

The Arrows allow the boxes to be connected in a logical flow. These arrows represent options, to move forward from one scenario (box) to another. Follow the following steps in order to make an arrow.



First: select the box that the arrow will be coming from.
(The scenario where the choice will be located)

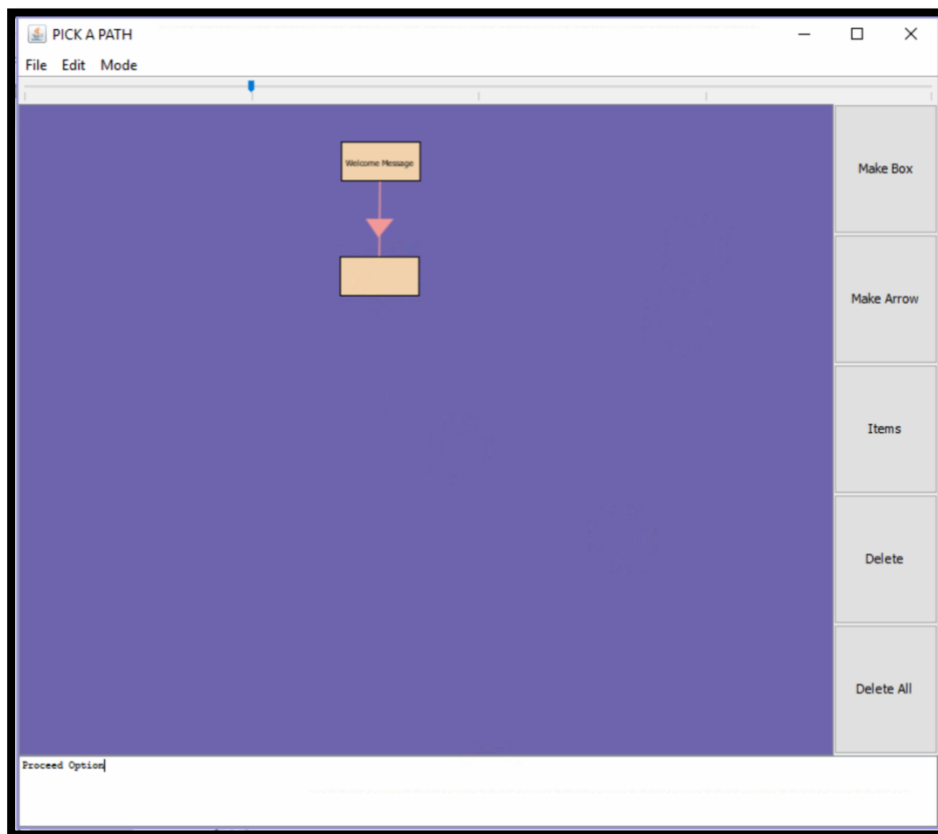
Then: select the “Make Arrow” button.



Next: select the box that the arrow will be going to.
(The scenario where the choice will take you)

4.1.5 Select an Arrow

An Arrow can be selected by clicking on the arrow. A selected arrow is going to appear red in color as opposed to all the black arrows. This where you can put the text of the choice in the white box at the bottom.

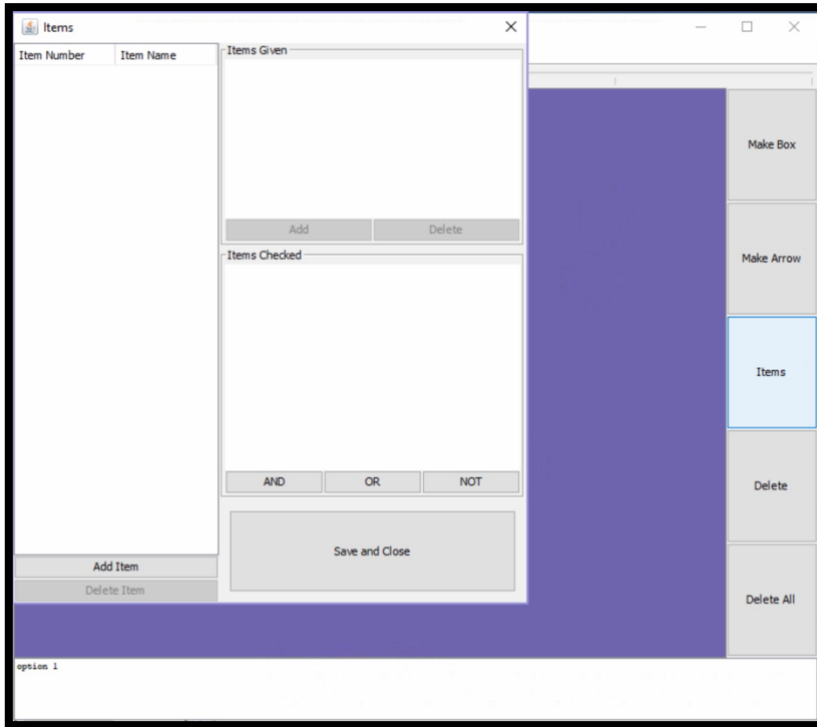


Helpful tip:

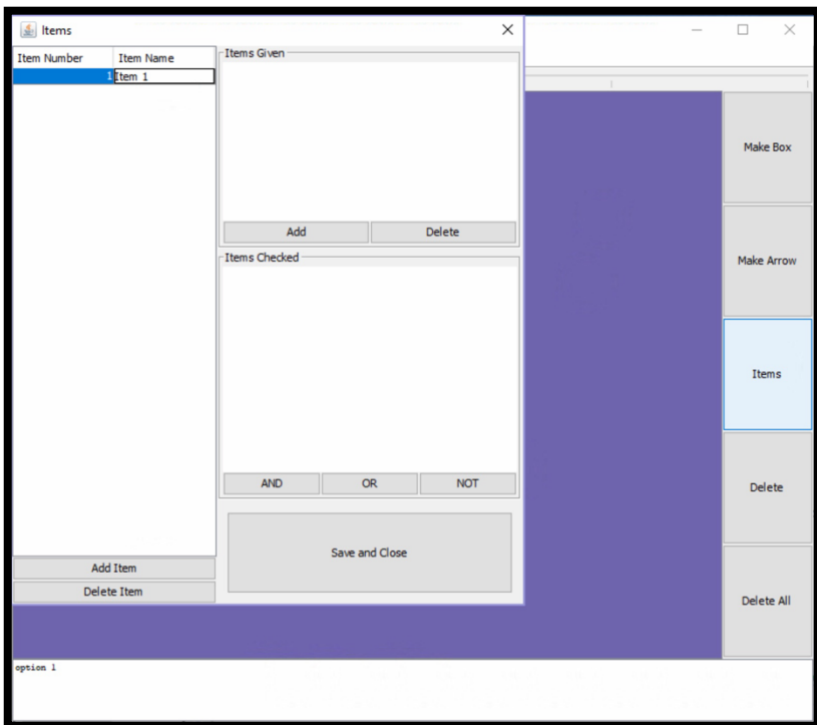
The first box of your game cannot have any arrows going back to it, so we recommend making the first box a welcome message or intro section so you can loop back to the beginning of your game if you wish.

4.1.6 Items

Items can be added to any arrow you create to add more dimension to your game. You can use these items to block off certain paths of your game until a specific item has been collected.



To pull up the item menu, select an arrow where you would like to put an item, and then click the “Items” button.



Then click “Add Item” in the bottom left corner, and select the item created to give a name.

This is also where you can select an item and click “Delete Item” if you would like to remove the item completely.

The screenshot shows a software interface titled 'Items'. It has a table with two columns: 'Item Number' and 'Item Name'. The first row contains '1' and 'Item 1'. To the right of the table is a section labeled 'Items Given' with a sub-label '1: Item 1'. Below this is an 'Add' button (highlighted in blue) and a 'Delete' button. Further down is an 'Items Checked' section, followed by 'AND', 'OR', and 'NOT' buttons, and a 'Save and Close' button. On the far right, there is a vertical toolbar with buttons: 'Make Box', 'Make Arrow', 'Items' (highlighted in blue), 'Delete', and 'Delete All'. At the bottom left, there are 'Add Item' and 'Delete Item' buttons, and a label 'option 1'.

Next, select the item you created, and click “Add” if you would like that item to be given to the player when they have landed on that arrow (Chosen the choice that corresponds to that arrow).

You can add as many items to any arrow as you would like.

This is also where you can “Delete” an item from the “Item Given” category (this will not delete the item from your items list).

This screenshot is similar to the one above, but the 'Add' button is no longer highlighted. Instead, the 'Save and Close' button is highlighted in blue. The rest of the interface, including the 'Items' table, 'Items Given' section, and the right-hand toolbar, remains the same.

If you would like to block off that arrow choice unless the player has been given a specific item, type the corresponding item number into the “Items Checked” section.

You can click “AND” if you would like to make sure a player has more than 1 specific item.

You can click “OR” if you would like to make sure a player has at least 1 specific item in a set of items.

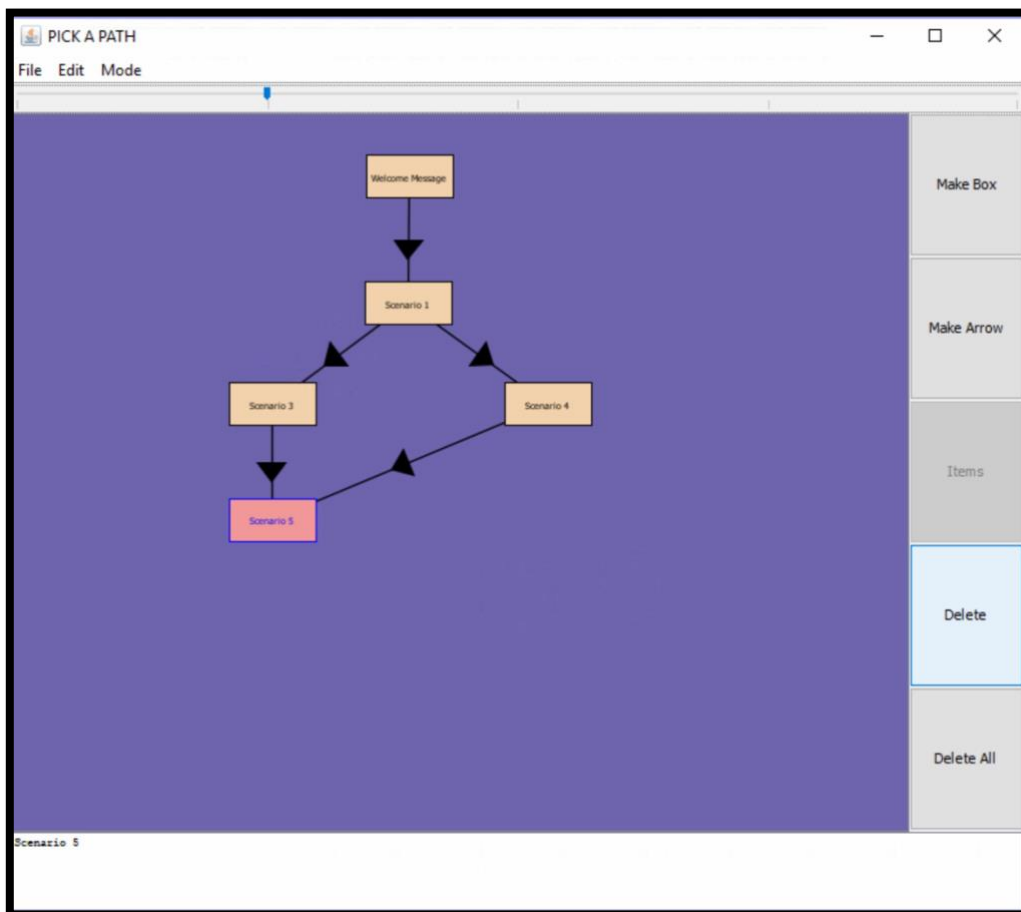
You can click “NOT” if you would like to make sure a player does not have a specific item.

BE SURE TO “SAVE AND CLOSE”

4.1.7 Delete and Delete All

To delete a box or an arrow, you need to select the respective item and click on delete.

When the delete button is used for an arrow, it only deletes an arrow. However, when the delete button is used for a box, it deletes the box along with all the incoming arrows to the box.

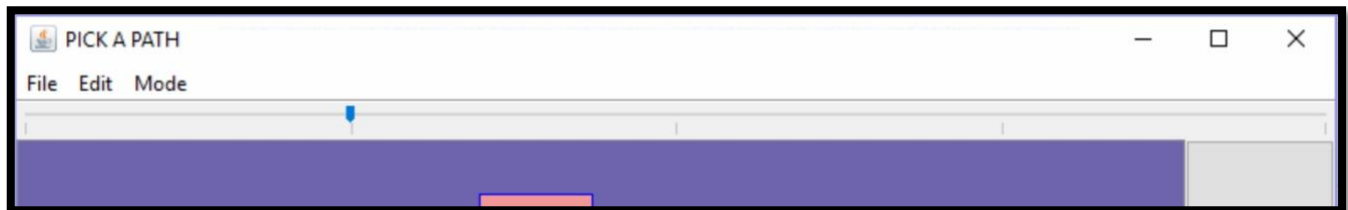


Select the arrow or box you want to delete, and then select the “Delete” button.

To delete everything, you can select the “Delete All” button or start a New Project from the File menu.

4.1.8 Zoom

The top of the window contains a slider that can zoom in and out to get an overall or specific view of the game. You can zoom into your boxes to focus on a specific area or you can zoom out to see the whole game.



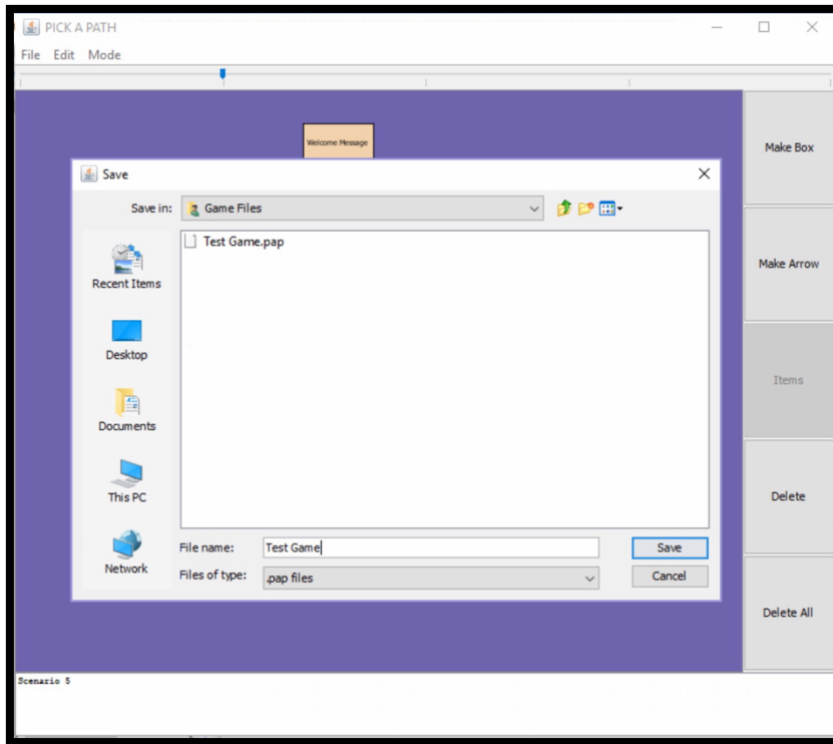
4.1.9 Scroll Bar

While zoomed in you can use the scroll bar to scroll around the screen at that same zoom resolution to see your game without zooming back out.



4.1.10 Saving and Loading Files

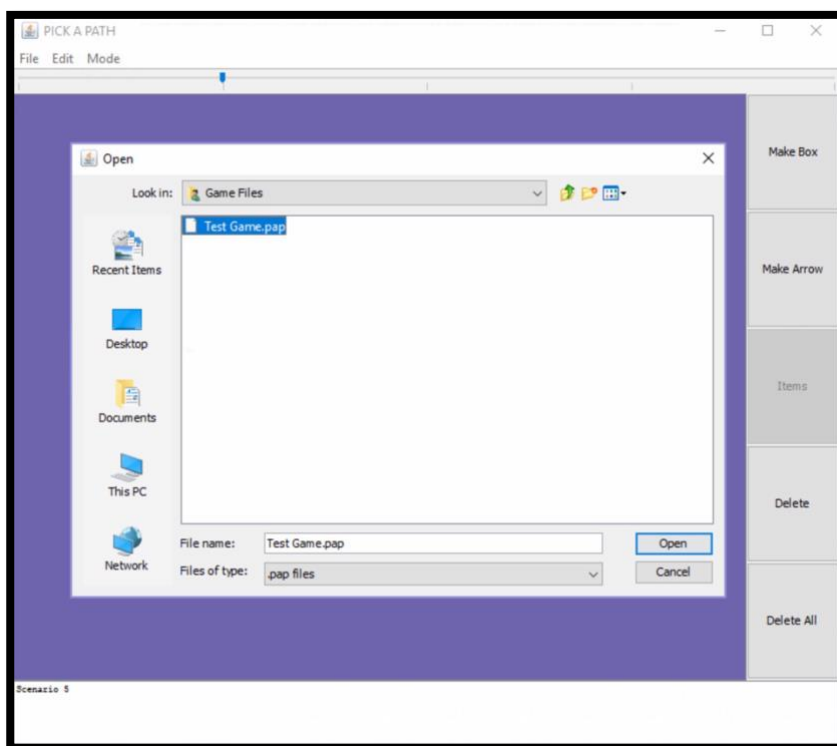
Once you have come to a point in creating your game, you can save your progress for later. File that are saved will have a .pap extension and you can then open these back up to play or to continue to work on.



To save your work, either press CTRL+S or click “Save” from the File menu.

From here you can choose a destination for your file to be saved, and may call it whatever you want.

You do not need to label the file extension, it will do this automatically for you



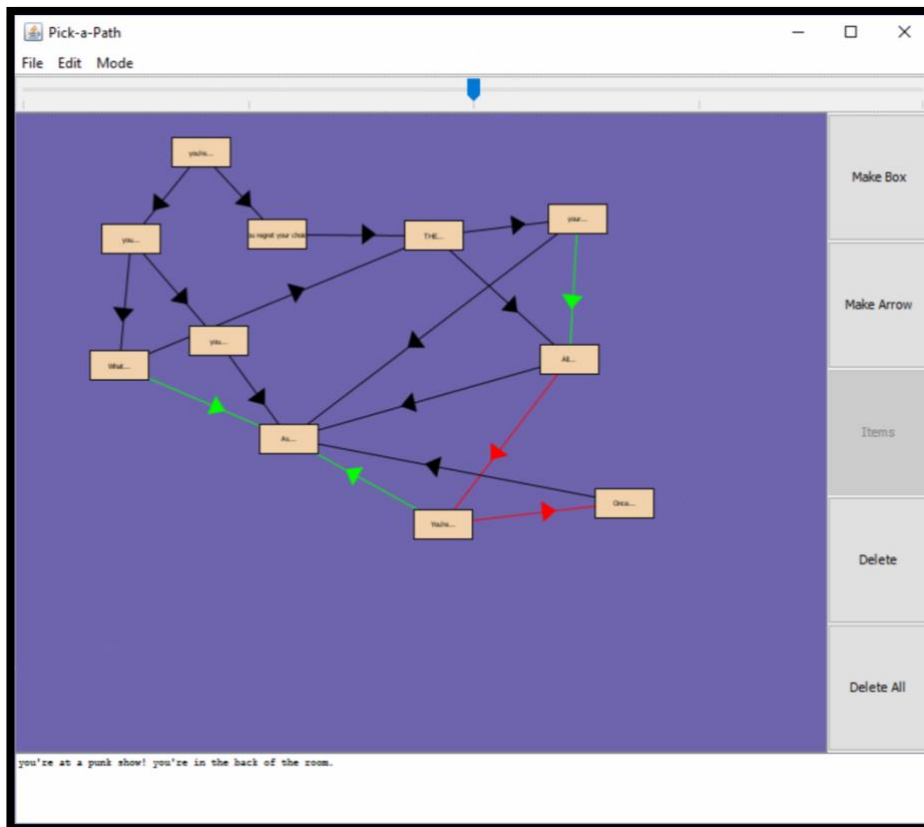
To load your saved work, either press CTRL+O or click “Open” from the File menu.

From here you can locate the destination where your file was saved.

It will show you files with any extension, but will only open files with a .pap extension.

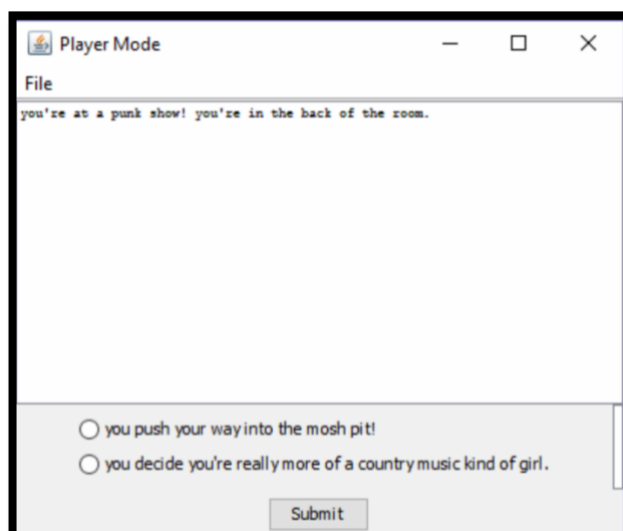
4.2 Player Mode

The Player Mode in Pick-a-Path is where you can play the game. The figures below show how the same game looks in the editor mode and the player mode. By clicking on the button next to the option that you want, you are going to be directed towards different scenarios in the game.



A finished game in editor mode.

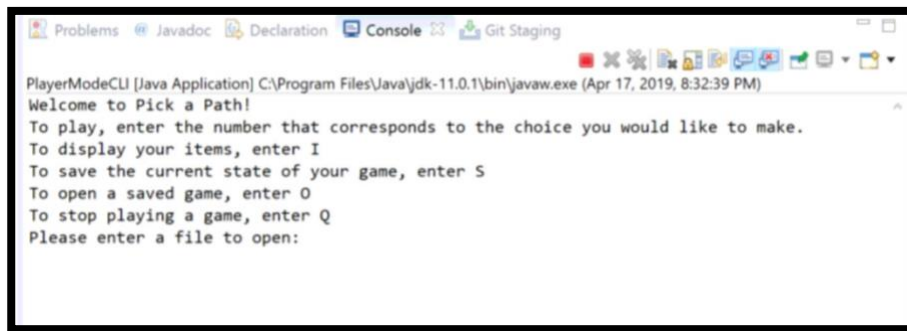
The green arrows correspond to an item being given at that arrow, and the red arrows check whether or not a specific item has been received.



Click CTRL+P or “Player mode” from the Mode menu to play your game.

This is what your game will look like when being played though the software.

You can also play this game through the console by running Pick-a-Path.exe in a command prompt. It will look something like this:

A screenshot of a Java IDE's console window. The title bar shows 'Problems', 'Javadoc', 'Declaration', 'Console', and 'Git Staging'. The console output for 'PlayerModeCLI [Java Application] C:\Program Files\Java\jdk-11.0.1\bin\javaw.exe (Apr 17, 2019, 8:32:39 PM)' displays the following text:

```
Welcome to Pick a Path!  
To play, enter the number that corresponds to the choice you would like to make.  
To display your items, enter I  
To save the current state of your game, enter S  
To open a saved game, enter O  
To stop playing a game, enter Q  
Please enter a file to open:
```

You can also save your progress while playing a game to come back to later by following the same instructions for saving a file in the previous section while in player mode. These files will be saved with a .ppp extension.

To open a saved progress game, follow the same instructions for opening a project in the previous section while in player mode. Files you can open in this section will have a .ppp extension.

5.0 Addendum

There are a few improvements that we hope to make to Pick-A-Path moving forward:

1. Auto-save: We want to add this software feature so that you do not need to worry about losing any data in case of any contingencies.
2. Images: We want to add images as another dimension to building your own games.