RIP design document for game

This document explains what my game is and my design choices for the game. Think of it as 'experiencing' the game while not playing the game.

Purpose, audience, context:

- **Purpose**: to inform and entertain the audience with the notion that it is actually difficult to talk and express yourself to family in certain circumstances
- **Audience**: people who don't have a good relationship with their family, introverts. These people can be found all over (since this is more of a universal demographic).
- **Context**: mid 2000s (2000-2010) in the USA in some place, and the game will try to reflect the values of those period by making references to politics, history, culture, and cultural values (by having characters mention these)?

Genre/medium, venue (where text), rhetor:

- **Medium**: video game on pc (specifically an executable ; probably no mac support (sorry))
- **Genre**: an adventure game, more of a comedy then a drama. It's a game where you can move a character in the cardinal directions and you can interact with stuff.
- **Venue**: dialog with the other characters your avatar does ingame, or descriptions of objects that character can examine/interact with
- **Rhetor:** there isn't any narrator, but there is a player character and you have thoughts and you talk to other people

Actually what is this game?:

Working title: Money for a payphone
Background story, basic plot:
- You play as a circle that left their hometown (BigCity, USA) due to a dispute with their family. Your parents run a pizza business that spans generations long and it is tradition for the children of the business owners to inherit the shop and run it. You want the opportunity to pursue other interests, but they conflict with your parent's vision, and the other family members expect you to take the shop as well. You thought you had no other opportunity but then you saw a flier from the government encouraging people to become a farmer (they'd give you some money to start a farm) and you took that opportunity and left town without really saying goodbye to your family. You arrived in a rural county (Smalltown, USA) with some money and ambition to start a farm.
- 3 years later your farm is failing, harvests are bad, and you're considering quitting. Then you get a letter in the mail from your parents…
    - Letter is ripped up and in a bad condition … only clear thing is the phone number
    - You go use the payphone (you don't have a phone) in your town but you just paid rent and you have 0 dollars. You need a dollar so you go do some tasks around the town (adventure for 1 dollar).
    - Ultimate goal: to reach your family via phone and talk to them

What's my point?
- You basically have to go through a lot of effort (talking with other people, doing random tasks) in order to even speak with your family (you need to get enough money, $1, to use the payphone to call your family back home)
- You have conversations with other people and you can choose your response, which may yield different outcomes (metaphor for my message or something i dunno)
- "Emely35: talking is just kind of hard." [quote from *Emily is away*]

Model texts, other research:

- *Firewatch* (game) - artifacts and embedded narrative ; basically you can find 'physical' stuff in game that you can interact with, you might easily miss them, but they do tell story sometimes.

Ex: a letter to a person from another person
- *Emily is away* (game) - choices (or illusion of choices)
    - All your choices determines how the ending will play out, if you are mean to emily and you don't offer her support at all, there will be a different ending then if you been nicer.
- *Pikuniku* (game) -the game is wacky and doesn't have a serious tone. The art is very simplistic. The story is deeper though.
- *Mother series* (game, nintendo)- non serious tone x2 and humour in context, also the rpg like system. My game won't have fighting because its focused mainly on dialogue.

Design choices

- Simple game where you can move (W,A,S,D) and you can talk to people and examine stuff. The only real gameplay is interacting with characters and making dialog choices.
- You name your character and everybody will refer to you as that name
- Simplistic art style, silly/pointless dialogue and i try to set a humorous tone for the game
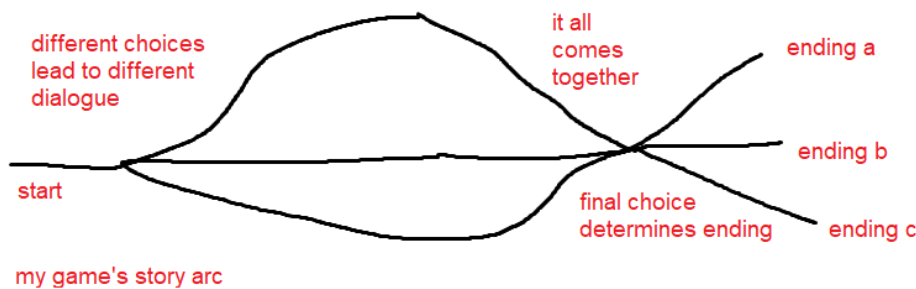
Audio?

- No ; I am musically illiterate, and I don't want to touch stock music with a 50 ft pole. On the bright side, my game is accessible for people with hearing loss.

Dialogue examples (possibly implemented):

It's possibly implemented because dialogue writing is the hardest part for me and it's probably going to go through a lot of revision :/

[examining payphone] i want to call my family but i don't have money right now
[examining window] i have a nice view of the grass outside

[talking with pink triangle dude]
Pink triangle - i'll give you 25 cents but in exchange for mowing my 50 acre lawn
- *Yes, this is a totally acceptable request.*
- *I have better things to do*
- *Don't make me say mean things*

Current roadmap for the game:

- RED = unfinished YELLOW = w.i.p GREEN = finished!
- Exploration (i do tutorials and stuff and figure stuff out because this is literally my first time making a game)
- Main menu (quit, credits, option (change resolution), play)
    - No saving cause this is a short game anyways
- Gameplay:

- Moving character in cardinal directions (up, down, left, right)
- Instructions? Tutorial? (how else would you know how to play)
- Examining objects (by being close to them)
    - Cannot examine walls/boundaries ; collision
    - Can conversate/ examine other tangible stuff you collide with (people/boxes/etc)
- Conversations
    - Conversations have proper text boxes and dialog options
    - Multiple dialogue options
- Counter for keeping track of money
- Map/geography (where do we start, where do we go..)
- Actually an ending
    - Writing more dialogue probably
        - Like in a flowchart … cause branching narrative or something?
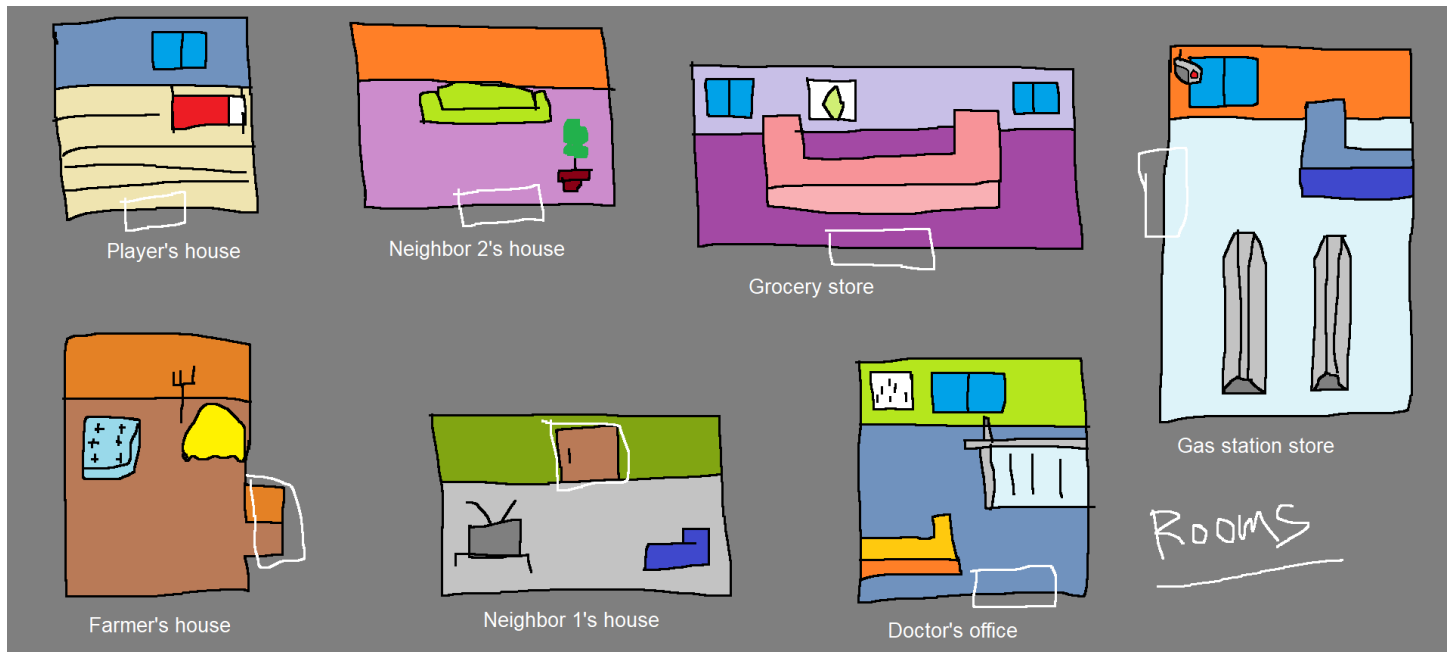
Art:

Prototype art:
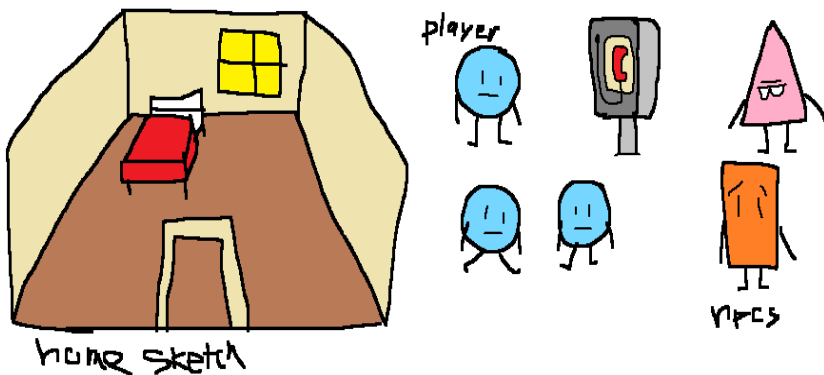
Very basic prototype sketches (seen above) - this is just a concept, final versions seen below.
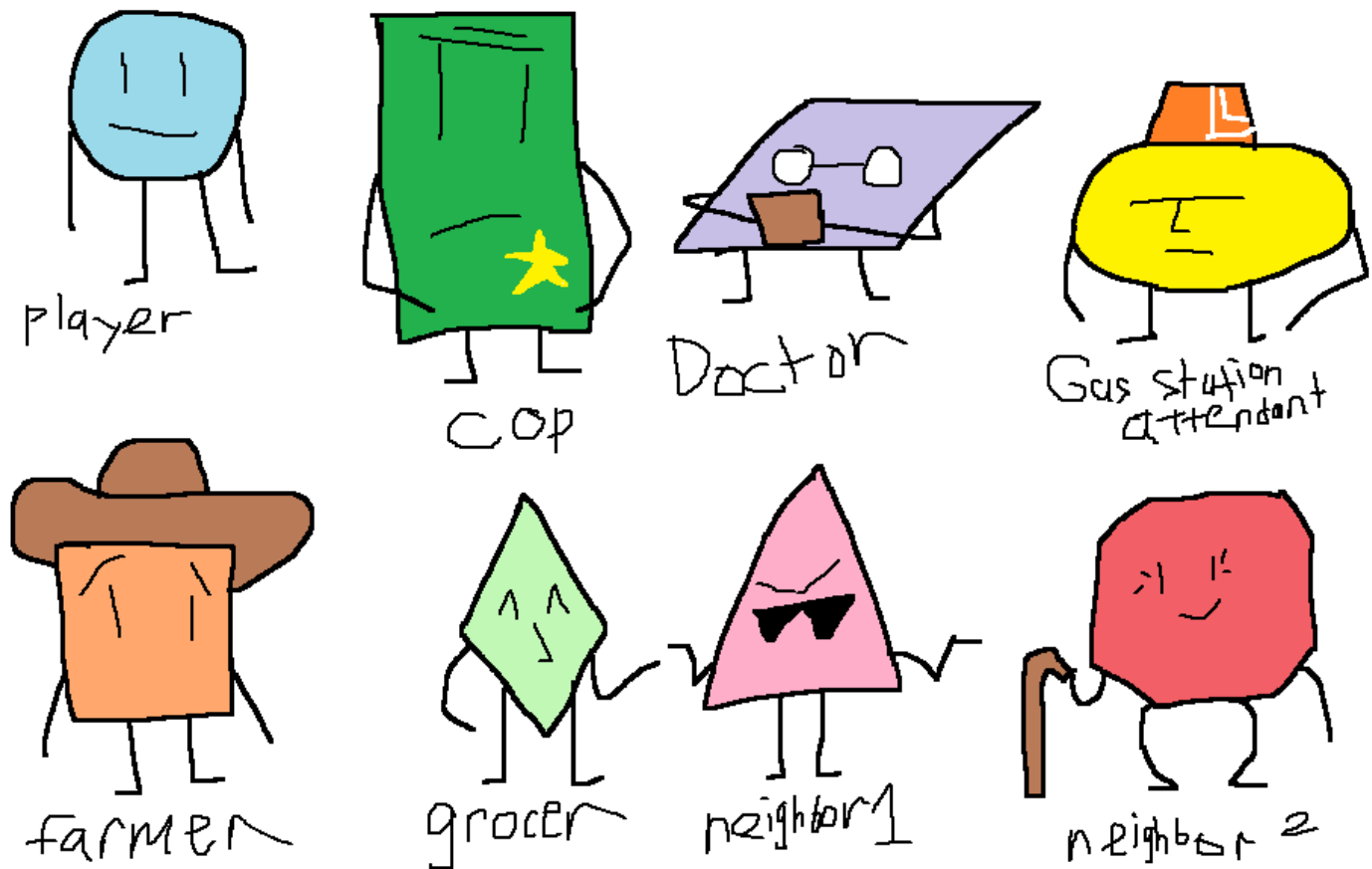
Map:

Rooms of buildings:

Character designs:

You would interact with these characters … and these are the people that may give you 20 cents depending on your dialogue choices (20 cents per person … you need $1).

player

cop

Doctor

Gas station attendant

farmer

grocer

neighbor1

neighbor 2

Dialogue

- Flowchart purgatory
- **It's a work in progress in Microsoft Visio … I'll append it here once its finished**
- **This section includes the 'examination thoughts' comments when you examine objects**
- **It will includes the character inner thoughts at the beginning and literally any other conversation text**

Drafting stuff

Spoilers below:

5 endings

1. NO PHONE CALL
    a. Player leaves town and makes a new life (player happy, family ?).
    b. Player doesn't earn enough money and stays in town ; stays in status quo. Barely makes enough to stay afloat. (player happy? Family ?)
2. PHONE CALL
    a. Player and family can't communicate .. no common values .. player and family both gets angry and will never talk to each other again (Player unhappy and family unhappy)
    b. player returns home, concedes to family, and becomes a pizza chef (Player unhappy, but family happy)
    c. player conveys to family about their beliefs, and family accepts them … player lives elsewhere but occasionally returns home to visit (Player and family are both happy)