Labyrinthian Games
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Enter Castle Shadowgate, and traverse the trap filled and monster infested lair of the evil Warlock Lord. Attempt to survive alone, or race against your fellow adventurers to defeat the Warlock Lord and become the next Prince of Tyragon!

STARTING AND FINISHING THE GAME

Begin by setting the five dungeon tiles, known as screens, in the center of the play area in ascending order, with the tile numbered one at the bottom and the tile numbered five at the top. Then determine the number of players. If playing with 2-6 players, continue here. If adventuring alone, skip to the Single Player Variant section.

Each player should take one of the colored player tokens and a set of six six-sided dice. The colored player tokens should be placed on the first screen, and each player should roll a single die to determine who will begin play. The player who rolls highest goes first, and play continues clockwise.

The first player to successfully clear the fifth screen begins the last round of the game, at which point each player receives one final turn to attempt to escape the Castle.

THE GAME TURN

On each player's turn, the player will begin by rolling all six of their dice, with the goal of matching the roll of their dice to the symbols marked on the current screen. The numbers on the dice correspond to different objects found within the Castle which can be used to solve the puzzles, avoid the traps, and defeat the monsters that stand in the adventurers' way. The relation between the numbers and symbols is shown here and is also displayed on each screen in the Goods Menu in the top right corner.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Torch	Key	Sword	Scroll	Coin	Gem

After the initial roll of all six dice, the player can set aside any number of dice, and reroll the remaining dice to progress closer to the goal of the current screen. In order to reroll these dice, the player must expend a Torch, represented by a roll of a 1 on any given die.

For example:
On the first screen, the adventurer must find two Keys, represented by two rolls of 2.
On the adventurer's initial roll, they receive the following results: 1,2,3,4,5,6. Setting aside the Key - the 2 - and noticing the existence of a spare Torch - the 1 - the adventurer can reroll the remaining five dice.
On the reroll, the adventurer receives the following results: 3,3,4,5,6. Lacking the second Key needed to clear the first screen, the adventurer must look to reroll, but lacking a Torch, the adventurer is unable to reroll, and ends their turn.

The player may continue to reroll as long as they possess Torches to reroll. Note that the Torch used to reroll must be rerolled along with the remaining dice, though excess Torches can be withheld to ensure the ability to reroll on subsequent rolls that turn.

> For example:
> On Screen 2, the adventurer must find a Torch, a Sword, and a Gem in order to progress.
> On the adventurer's initial roll, they receive 1,1,1,3,4,5. The adventurer keeps a 1 (Torch) and 3 (Sword) to move towards progress, a second 1 to ensure an extra reroll, and uses the third 1 to reroll the remaining three dice.
> On the adventurer's second roll, they receive 2,4,4. Using the second 1, which the adventurer had withheld from their initial roll, they can reroll the remaining four dice.
> On the third roll, they receive 2,2,4,4. Still not yet reaching the requirements to progress, the player must use the 1 they had withheld for progression to reroll, and hope they roll both a 1 and a 6 in order to clear the screen.

THE END OF THE GAME

When an adventurer clears the fifth screen, the final round begins, and each adventurer is given one final chance to escape the Castle. If by the end of this final round, multiple adventurer's have cleared the final screen, then each player should roll all six of their dice. The results of these dice should then be added to represent the value of the treasure the adventurer managed to leave the Castle with. The adventurer with the highest total dice roll is the winner.

SINGLE PLAYER VARIANT

If playing with only a single adventurer, the remaining six colored tokens should be placed next to the dungeon screens, representing the number of lit torches the adventurer brought with them into the Castle. Each time the adventurer runs out of torches before clearing the current screen, the adventurer should flip one of these tokens over, representing one of their torches going out. Each time the adventurer clears a screen, if there are leftover torches, that many tokens should be flipped back to the colored side, representing new torches the adventurer has found.

> For example:
> On Screen 3, the adventurer has 4 lit torches and must find a Sword, a Coin, and a Gem.
> If after rolling a number of times, the results of the dice are 2,2,4,4,5,6, then a Torch is extinguished and a token is flipped over.
> If instead, the results of the dice are 1,1,2,3,5,6. Then the adventurer clears the screen - as the required 3,5, and 6 have been rolled - and the two spare Torches, the two 1s, are converted into spare Torches and two tokens are flipped back to their colored sides.

The lone adventurer begins with six lit torches, and can carry at most six torches. If the adventurer clears the final screen with any torches still lit, then the adventurer wins. If at any point all torches are extinguished, then the adventurer loses.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Single Player Game

Player: Screen 1, Req: 2,2   Lit Torches: 6
  Rolls: 1,1,1,5,6,6 Keeps: 1,1   Rerolls: 1,5,6,6

  Rolls: 1,2,4,5.   Keeps: 1,1,2 Rerolls: 1,4,5

  Rolls: 2,3,4   Keeps: 2,2   Progresses to Screen 2

Player: Screen 2, Req: 1,3,6   Lit Torches 6
  Rolls: 2,2,3,5,5,5 Keeps: 3   No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 2, Req: 1,3,6   Lit Torches 5
  Rolls: 2,4,4,4,4,6 Keeps: 6   No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 2, Req: 1,3,6   Lit Torches 4
  Rolls: 1,3,5,5,5,6 Keeps: 1,3,6 Progresses to Screen 3

Player: Screen 3, Req: 3,5,6   Lit Torches 4
  Rolls: 1,1,1,1,4,5 Keeps: 1,1,5 Rerolls: 1,1,4

  Rolls: 1,2,3   Keeps: 1,1,3,5 Rerolls: 1,2

  Rolls: 4,6   Keeps: 1,1,3,5,6 Progresses to Screen 4 with +2 Torches

Player: Screen 4, Req: 1,2,4,5 Lit Torches 6
  Rolls: 2,3,3,4,4,5 Keeps: 2,4,5 No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 4, Req: 1,2,4,5 Lit Torches 5
  Rolls: 1,3,3,3,5,6 Keeps: 5   Rerolls: 1,3,3,3,6

  Rolls: 2,2,2,6,6 Keeps: 2, 5   No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 4, Req: 1,2,4,5 Lit Torches 4
  Rolls: 1,1,2,3,4,6 Keeps: 1,2,4 Rerolls: 1,3,6

  Rolls: 2,4,5   Keeps: 1,2,4,5 Progresses to Screen 5

Player: Screen 5, Req: 3,3,4,4,6 Lit Torches 4
  Rolls: 2,2,3,3,3,6 Keeps: 3,3,6 No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 5, Req: 3,3,4,4,6 Lit Torches 3
  Rolls: 2,2,2,3,5,6 Keeps: 3,6   No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 5, Req: 3,3,4,4,6 Lit Torches 2
  Rolls: 2,3,4,5,6,6 Keeps: 3,4,6 No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player: Screen 5, Req: 3,3,4,4,6 Lit Torches 1
  Rolls: 1,2,3,4,5,6 Keeps: 3,4,6 Rerolls: 1,2,5

  Rolls: 2,3,5   Keeps: 3,3,4,6 No Torches, Cannot Reroll

Player is out of Lit Torches, Player Loses!

ABOUT SHADOWGATE

Shadowgate is a point-and-click, puzzle adventure game set in the fantasy realm of Tyragon. Initially released in 1987 on the Apple Macintosh, the game was later released for the Amiga, the Atari ST, and in 1989 for the NES. The game is notorious for the number and frequency of player deaths, as the game requires a relatively strict order of progression be followed to not be killed by the myriad of puzzles, traps, and monsters the player encounters during their adventure. As such, a system of trial and error became the primary gameplay loop, enabled by the ability to save the current state of the game. The game also increased in difficulty the further the player progressed, both in terms of the complexity of the puzzles and through a lessening of the helpfulness of the game's hint system. A notably unique mechanic within the game was the system of torches, which could be collected during the player's exploration of Castle Shadowgate with the stipulation that entering a new room without a lit torch would result in the player's death.

In order to capture the game of Shadowgate in an analog form, we chose to implement the puzzles in the form of a dice game in order to simplify the means by which the player progresses through the game. While this implementation causes the adaptation to lose much of the interactivity and exploration that defined the original, the repetitive action of rolling dice in an attempt to obtain the correct combination of items captures a similar feel to trying similar actions to try and solve the puzzles of Shadowgate. An analogue can also be drawn between the different phases of a turn and the gameplay loop of the original, with rerolls acting as the player looking in different rooms for more items, and the end of a turn acting as an equivalent to a player death and the reloading of a save, both of which are triggered by the player running out of torches. The similarity in the mechanic of the torch can be seen most clearly in the single player version of this adaptation, as in both instances the number of lit torches act as a sort of time limit towards the completion of the game, which can be mitigated through adequate exploration in the case of the original or lucky rolls in the case of the dice game.

The narrative of the original Shadowgate is relatively simple. The player assumes the role of "The Seed of Prophecy," the last of a line of kings, who is tasked by the wizard Lakhmir to travel to Castle Shadowgate and save the world by stopping the evil Warlock Lord from summoning the demon Behemoth. The single player variant of this adaptation maintains this narrative. The multiplayer version of this game, however, required some tweaking of the narrative in order to make sense. Instead of acting as the "Seed of Prophecy," the hand selected champion of Tyragon, the players act as generic adventurers who responded to the wizard Lakhmir's call for aid, who travel to Castle Shadowgate for the honor of being the one to defeat the Warlock Lord and the reward of being betrothed to the King's daughter and of being named High Lord of the Westland. This, ultimately, is a minor change to enable the presence of multiple rival adventurers, and does not change the progression of the story itself.

The art of Shadowgate consisted of very detailed pixel depictions of the various rooms, enemies, and objects within Castle Shadowgate, as well as UI menus representing player inventory and the controls through which the player could modify how they interacted with the world of the game. This layout is core to the visual image of the original game, and as such, we chose to mimic this layout in the design of our board pieces. We took the images of various scenes throughout the game, and modified the UI elements to act as a reference for the relation of the dice to objects within the game as well as to communicate the requirements to progress past each screen. The symbols representing both the requirements and the objects were designed by our artist and modeled after some of the objects found within the original game.

Screen 1

GOODS
KEY 1

MOVE
LOOK ■TAKE CARD
OPEN CLOSE
USE HIT SELF
LEAVE SPEAK SAVE

Screen 2

GOODS
1 TORCH
2 KEY
3 SWORD
4 SCROLL
5 COIN
6 GEM

THE SOUND OF MANIACAL LAUGHTER ECHOES IN YOUR EARS.

1

REQUIRED ITEMS:

Screen 3

GOODS
KEY 1
TORCH=7
KEY 2
ARROW
BOTTLE 2
SWORD
SLING

MOVE
LOOK ■TAKE CARD
OPEN CLOSE
USE HIT SELF
LEAVE SPEAK SAVE

Screen 4

GOODS
1 TORCH
2 KEY
3 SWORD
4 SCROLL
5 COIN
6 GEM

FEAR GRIPS YOU AS YOU ENTER THIS HOT ROOM!!

2

REQUIRED ITEMS:

Screen 5

GOODS
STONE
RED GEM
SHIELD
HAMMER
SKULL
HELMET
KEY 3

MOVE
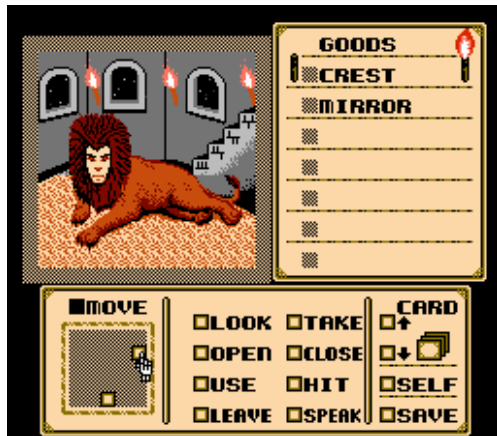LOOK TAKE CARD
OPEN CLOSE
■USE HIT SELF
LEAVE SPEAK SAVE

Screen 6

GOODS
1 TORCH
2 KEY
3 SWORD
4 SCROLL
5 COIN
6 GEM

THE MOON CASTS A BRILLIANT SHADOW OVER THE GROUNDS OF THE COURTYARD.

3

REQUIRED ITEMS:

GOODS
CREST
MIRROR

MOVE

LOOK TAKE CARD
OPEN CLOSE
USE HIT SELF
LEAVE SPEAK SAVE

GOODS
1 TORCH
2 KEY
3 SWORD
4 SCROLL
5 COIN
6 GEM

IT APPEARS TO BE A SPHINX.
IT LOOKS AT YOU INDIFFERENTLY.

4

REQUIRED ITEMS:

GOODS
FLUTE
KEY 4
CREST
MIRROR
BLADE
HORN
GOLDCOIN

MOVE

LOOK TAKE CARD
OPEN CLOSE
USE HIT SELF
LEAVE SPEAK SAVE

GOODS
1 TORCH
2 KEY
3 SWORD
4 SCROLL
5 COIN
6 GEM

FROM THE DEPTHS RISES THE
MOST POWERFUL CREATURE THAT
HAS EVER EXISTED: THE BEHEMOTH!

5

REQUIRED ITEMS:

PLAYTESTING AND ITERATION

v0.0 - Initial Proposal

Shadowgate (NES) is a point and click puzzle adventure game. As an analog game, I propose a 4 player game, in which each player attempts to be the first to progress through a series of 5(?) "screens." On a turn, the current player will roll 6 six-sided dice, attempting to match symbols between the dice and the current screen. Each turn offers three attempts to roll the dice, and dice can be withheld between rolls.

The die faces should represent different items within the game.

Ex: 1 - Torch, 2 - Key, 3 - Sword, 4 - Scroll, 5 - Coin, 6 - Gem

I feel there should be a mechanic of storing results for use on later screens at the cost of available dice, so perhaps at most 2 dice at the completion of a screen can be carried to the next turn.

Ex: If I roll a 1,1,3,4,5,6, and my current screen requires a 3 and a 4, I would use the 3 and 4 to move to the next screen, and then I could keep the 1 and 6 to help solve the next screen on my next turn.

The original game has a mechanic involving torches, in which a lit torch must always be carried or the player dies. This could maybe be represented as a health meter, with 5(?) lit torches at the start of the game. At the end of a turn, a torch goes out. If you roll an extra torch, you can expend it to gain an extra torch.

Ex: Same rolls and screen as before, I could spend the 3 and 4 to complete the screen, keep the 1 and 6 to the next screen, and use the other 1 to offset the loss of a torch at the end of my turn.

In the case that two players complete their last screens in the same round, a tie breaker may be needed. An option for this could be using extra coins to stockpile more points, similar to the torch.

Ex: Same rolls, I could use the 3,4 to complete screen; 1,6 to carry to next screen; 1 to increase torch; 5 to gain a point.

v0.1 - Initial Discussion

Current torch implementation does not capture the importance of the torch in the original game. To increase the player's reliance on torches, the following could be implemented: In the place of the "Torch Health Meter," which currently has no negative effect when the torches run out, a system similar to the dice game Farkle could be implemented. In this dice game, on each of the player's rolls per turn, the player must roll either a 1 or 5, or any scoring combination of dice, or else they immediately end their turn and score no points. In the context of this game, on each of the player's three rolls, they must roll either a torch, or be able to clear the current screen, else their turn immediately ends.

Ex: The criteria to clear the current screen are 3,4,5. On my first roll, I roll 1,1,2,3,4,6. As I have rolled at least a 1, I can make another attempt. I keep the 3 and 4, and roll the remaining four dice.

Ex 2: With the same criteria, if on my first attempt I had instead rolled 2,2,2,3,4,6, my turn would immediately end and I would not progress, as I would have no lit torches and do not yet have the means to clear the room. In this case, I can not save any dice for use on my next turn.

If the player has the means to clear the room prior to their third roll, but does not currently have any torches, then the player progresses to the next screen, but can not make any more rolls this turn or take any stored rolls to their next turn.

Ex 3: 2,2,2,3,4,5 would enable the player to progress past the requirements of the 3,4,5 screen, but - due to the lack of torch - the player cannot take any of the other three dice with them to the next screen.

v0.2 - Questions to Address

Review of the current state of the rules raises concerns.

Issue - Difficulty:

The rolls required as of v0.1 appear to offer very little room for error, especially on later screens. The torch rule introduced in v0.1, while closely tied to the source game, may introduce an issue in reaching the end of game state, and may also cause players to become overly frustrated with the game.

-- PLAYTESTING IS NEEDED TO DETERMINE VALIDITY OF THIS CONCERN --

If this proves to be an issue, a reworking of the torch rule - or its potential removal - may need to be considered.

Issue - Ending the Game:

Rules as of v0.1 require a player to clear all 5 screens in order to end the game. In the case of bad rolls, this could cause the game to have a very large required playtime, which can be detrimental to the game's appeal.

-- PLAYTESTING IS NEEDED TO DETERMINE VALIDITY OF THIS CONCERN --

If this proves to be an issue, a potential fix could be a limited round tracker that would immediately end the game after each player has taken a specified number (10?) of turns. This would require implementation of an alternate scoring method.

Alternate Scoring Method:

Mentioned in v0.0 as a potential tie-breaker, the rolling of excess Coins during a turn could be implemented as a method of building score. This, in addition to a point value attributed to each cleared screen, could be a method of keeping score that enables the game to end before a player clears all screens. This presents a potential issue in method of play, as a player could choose to only attempt to gather Coins, at the cost of progression. If score balance is not properly addressed, this may enable a player to win without progressing past the first screen.

v0.3 - Screen Dice Requirements

Screen 1 - (2,2) 2 Keys

Screen 2 - (1,3,6) 1 Torch, 1 Sword, 1 Gem

Screen 3 - (3,5,6) 1 Sword, 1 Coin, 1 Gem

Screen 4 - (1,2,4,5) 1 Torch, 1 Key, 1 Scroll, 1 Coin

Screen 5 - (3,3,4,4,6) 2 Swords, 2 Scrolls, 1 Gem

v0.4.0 - SinglePlayer Testing of MultiPlayer Mode

Performed by rolling six dice in an attempt to ascertain the number of rounds needed to progress through each screen

- First Round Progression through Screens 1-3

- Multiple Attempts Required to Pass Screens 4 and 5

- Cases in which dice can be held to progress to the next screen are rare.

    - May need reworking

- Clarity needed in torch rule

    - Can held (required) torches be used to enable reroll?

    - If multiple spare torches are rolled, can the torches beyond the first be kept to ensure rerolls?

v0.4.1 - Response to SinglePlayer Testing

Clarifying Torch Rule:

    A lit torch is needed to make a second or third roll on a given turn. If multiple torches are rolled, the lit torches can be held to enable subsequent rerolls. The spent torch must be rerolled with the extra dice.

    Ex 1: On Screen 3 (Req 3,5,6), I roll 1,1,2,3,4,5. I keep the 3,5 to progress towards the screen requirement. I also keep the second 1, to ensure an additional reroll. I spend the first 1 to reroll itself and the 2,4. These three dice give me the result of 2,3,4. I still lack the means to progress to the next screen, so I spend the kept 1 to reroll itself and the 2,3,4. The results of these four dice are 3,4,5,6. I add the 6 to the 3,5 I rolled on my first attempt, and progress to Screen 4.

If the current Screen requires a Torch for progression, the kept torch must be lit and does not enable a reroll.

    Ex 2: On Screen 2 (Req 1,3,6), I roll 1,2,2,3,4,5. I keep the 3, but must reroll the 1 along with the rest of the dice. The five dice give me the result of 1,1,3,4,5. I can keep the first 1 for progression, and use the second 1 to enable me to reroll the rest of the dice. These four dice give me the result of 3,4,5,6. Keeping the 6, I progress to the next Screen.

v0.4.2 - Rules Questions

Should the carry over rule exist?

Should a player be limited to a maximum of 3 rolls per turn, or should they be allowed to continue rolling for as long as they have lit torches?

v0.5 - Single Player Variant

Without the competition of other player's, the challenge of the game must become a race against time. This could be accomplished with the reintroduction of the Torch Health Meter. The player of the single player mode begins with 5 (maybe 10) lit torches. At the end of a turn, if the player did not progress to the next screen, a torch goes out. If the player has additional torches rolled when they progress to the next screen, those torches are converted into extra lit torches.

v0.5.1 - Clarifying Number of Torches on Torch Health Meter

The single player starts with 6 lit torches, and can hold a maximum of 6 lit torches, to fit with present game pieces

v0.6 - Playtesting Response to v0.4.2 - Performed with a group of 3 players

Insight from playtesting suggests that the carry over rule overcomplicates the player's turn, and should be removed.

Allowing additional rerolls as long as torches - rolls of 1 - are available appears more satisfying to the player who is rolling and does not appear to increase the length of a given turn to a point of frustration for other players.

Question of Tie-breaker reintroduced. Previously suggested Coin method was deemed too complicated, as too many things must be tracked throughout the course of the game for this concept to be implemented.

v0.6.1 - Results of v0.6 Playtesting

CarryOver Rule removed.

Removed 3 roll limit per turn, turn ends when screen is cleared or no torches are available to reroll.

Tie-breaker implemented in form of "Treasure Roll"

- Tied Players roll all six dice to determine the value of objects taken from the Castle.