Concept Document Format

# **1 Game Title**

Up Above

# **2 Razor Statement**

Climb high in the sky as a boy who can grapple birds while avoiding obstacles.

# **3 High Concept**

Climb as high as you can by shooting a grapple to hook objects in the sky. With strategy and timing, use them to boost yourself through the clouds, out of the atmosphere, and beyond. Reach outer space and discover new things to hook with your grapple to climb even higher.

# **4 Player Role**

The player is a small boy who has a hat that allows him to shoot a grapple onto any solid object he wants. The player needs to use this to climb through the sky.

The player clicks to decide where to shoot a grapple. Grapple birds to launch the player higher. The player can be knocked down by obstacles, and must avoid them. Accurately time the shots in order to pull yourself up.

# **5 Primary Gameplay Mode**

2D side perspective with an extremely high ceiling and side scrolling level wrapping. A climb-as-high-as-you-can game, where the screen follows the player up as they climb until they reach the ceiling at the end. There is no lose condition, and the player can keep trying until they make it to the top without falling.

# **6 Genre**

Climbing game with an end.

# **7 Target Audience**

The target audience enjoys casual games that don’t take a lot of time and are more atmospheric than competitive. This is a one-button games, so it’s not mechanically difficult. It might do well on a mobile platform or something else where people can play without stress. Kids at their school computer lab looking for a timewaster on gamesnotblockedbyschool.com would enjoy it.

# **8 Platforms**

Touch controls on a mobile platform will work well, but will not be possible in this version. Mouse control on the PC platform will be the only available option for this release. The game wont work well with a gamepad, so consoles are not a target platform.

# **9 Licenses**

No IP licenses. The Apple dev license to publish to the App store.

# **10 Competition Modes**

No competition. Single player gameplay where you either get to the top or you don’t.

# **11 Progression**

Gradually progress from a sky theme to a space theme as the player climbs higher, obstacles and environment changes with the background to represent height progression.

The player grapples birds first, then clouds, then hot air balloons and airplanes as they get higher. Entering space, the player is able to grapple stars, comets, and UFOs.

# **12 Game World**

The player character is a child who seems to have an active imagination. He has the ability to shoot a grapple that can attach to birds and fling him up. Outer space is unusually populated with space junk and aliens.

# **13 Features**

Gameplay centers around the mastery of the grapple physics, which allow you to shoot a grapple and attach to things.

Simplicity

The game only requires the methodic pressing of one accurate button, so the game is very easy to play. Almost anyone will be able to get the hang of it in minutes. The skills required to succeed are not hard to develop.

Short gameplay times

The game doesn’t require a long time commitment to any play session, making it easy to pick up in the moment and put it down if you need to. Some gamers can be put off by games that require too much commitment, even if they don’t mind playing for a long time.

# **14 Competitive Analysis**

Doodle Jump, [Fly Guy](https://www.crazygames.com/games/fly-guy), and Double Wires

# **15 Risk Analysis**

Engaging animations and implementing realistic grapple physics are the most difficult parts of development. Level design will need to balance a frequency of “hookable” objects to gauge the difficulty of the game and speed at which the player can climb. The game is will be very artistically oriented, so while we want the gameplay to be fun and challenging, we don’t want frustration to take away from the feeling of being in a child’s ascending imagination.

# **16 Layered Tetrad**

## **16.1 The Inscribed Layer**

### **16.1.1 Inscribed Mechanics**

#### **16.1.1.1 Objectives:**

Player shoots a grapple accurately to attach to birds and climb themselves higher in the sky. They need to grapple quickly enough that they don’t start falling at a rate that makes it too difficult to grapple onto another object.

#### **16.1.1.2 Player Relationships:**

Not applicable as there is only one character in the game, the child.

#### **16.1.1.3 Rules:**

After shooting the grapple and hitting a hookable object, you will be flung towards that object and pass right by it, causing you to ascend. However, if you miss, the grapple will take some time before returning, losing time, which will cause you to lose height. Use these mechanics to ascend to the top.

#### **16.1.1.4 Boundaries:**

The player starts on the floor and climbs up into space where there is a ceiling that ends the game. The level loops as you move side to side, giving the illusion that the level goes on horizontally infinitely.

#### **16.1.1.5 Resources:**

The player can only shoot one grapple at a time before needing to recover.

#### **16.1.1.6 Spaces:**

The game includes only one level, which has a very large area of playspace, both horizontally and vertically.

#### **16.1.1.7 Tables:**

Will not be used for such a simple game.

### **16.1.2 Inscribed Aesthetics**

#### **16.1.2.1 Aesthetic Senses:**

Vision: The graphics have a simplistic color scheme with reasonably detailed silhouettes.

Hearing: there will be a lullaby-like song as background music, likely from the strumming of a ukulele. All objects will make a sound when hit with the grapple: birds will squawk, clouds will go “poof”, etc.

Touch: Regularly paced clicking or tapping

#### **16.1.2.2 Aesthetic Goals:**

Mood: Meant to give a sense of a childlike imagination, where a special tool gives the player the ability to explore an otherworldly environment, giving the sense that the child is trying to escape the boring and stressful confines and rules of reality.

### **16.1.3 Inscribed Narrative**

#### **16.1.3.1 Premise:**

A child has a special hat that allows him to shoot a grapple to objects and climb high into the sky.

#### **16.1.3.2 Setting:**

The child starts on the ground, but is able to ascend through the sky and out into space.

#### **16.1.3.3 Character:**

The main character is a child with a special hat that allows him to shoot grappling hooks. Although no background information is given on the character, he is intended to be a kid who’s fed up with reality and decides to make his own, rising above what others decide is possible.

#### **16.1.3.4 Plot:**

The child discovers he can grapple flying birds to fly himself high in the air. The higher he gets, the less birds he finds, so he starts grappling clouds instead. Above the clouds are hot air balloons and airplanes passing by, and beyond them, he can hook stars, comets, and UFOs. The boy climbs until he reaches the ceiling, a sudden spiked wall that promptly ends his journey. While this will seem unexpected in such a light-hearted game, it is an intentional artistic choice that portrays the message of the game.

### **16.1.4 Inscribed Technology**

Most objects will have a sprite sheet with a few animations. All objects will need colliders, and the grapple will need to be able to stretch and shrink and the player launches it and gets pulled by it, which will work using the Unity 2D physics engine. The player will be the subject of most of the physics.

## **16.2 The Dynamic Layer**

### **16.2.1 Dynamic Mechanics**

#### **16.2.1.1 Procedures:**

Using the grapple will force the player to wait until it recovers to use it again if they miss, meaning that missing the target will cause the player to fall a certain distance before even giving them a chance to catch their fall. Also, grappling an object causes it to fall and disappear, so it’s important for the player to make calculated graples and use each grapple in a meaningful way.

#### **16.2.1.2 Meaningful Play:**

The player must constantly make decisions about when and what to grapple. Being accurate and deliberate with the grapple shots is rewarded. Being hasty and missing will result in the player running out of objects to grapple with and falling back down. Since gravity accelerates the player downward continuously faster, the longer you wait to make your next grapple, the harder it will be to reach the target accurately.

#### **16.2.1.3 Strategy:**

It’s important for the player to develop a rhythm for shooting the grapple, not being too hasty or too slow. Sometimes, making smaller grapples to closer objects is safer rather than taking the risk at a higher jump just to climb a bit faster. You may even time your shots to wait for yourself to move to a more strategic position relative to what you will be grappling.

#### **16.2.1.4 Outcome:**

The only immediate outcome is firing and hitting an object to grapple to it and going higher as a result. The only final outcome is getting to the ceiling of the level. There are no quest or cumulative outcomes.

### **16.2.2 Dynamic Aesthetics**

#### **16.2.2.1 Procedural Aesthetics:**

The main procedural aesthetic is the background. It starts off as a light blue color that graduates darker until it is black. As the player jumps higher, the background gets darker, and stars start to appear, signifying the transition from Earth’s atmosphere into outer space.

#### **16.2.2.2 Environmental Aesthetics:**

All aspects of the environment are meant to appear light-hearted, carefree, and “childish.” Objects will appear drawn on, sound effects won’t be especially loud or hard-hitting, and all art assets will be non-threatening.

### **16.2.3 Dynamic Narrative**

The story doesn’t change with gameplay. The player takes as much time as they need to, but eventually will find their way to the ceiling, ending the game.

### **16.2.4 Dynamic Technology**

Different objects appear as the player climbs higher, requiring different assets. Some objects at different heights will path differently, moving in circles or up and down rather than from one side to the other.

## **16.3 The Cultural Layer**

### **16.3.1 Cultural Mechanics**

#### **16.3.1.1 Game Mods:**

No modding support.

#### **16.3.1.2 Custom Game Levels:**

N/A

### **16.3.2 Cultural Aesthetics**

#### **16.3.2.1 Fan art:**

The character and his hat are the most iconic parts of the game, and would be the mostly likely subjects of fan art, if there is any.

#### **16.3.2.2 Cosplay:**

Not likely.

### **16.3.3 Cultural Narrative**

Not likely.

### ***16.3.4* Cultural Technology**

None.