Mystery Games Framework - Node Palette User Manual

Welcome to the Mystery Games Framework Editor! This manual provides a detailed explanation of each node type available in the Node Palette. Use these nodes to construct your interactive mystery narratives.

Table of Contents

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1. Story Node

Icon: FileText (Blue)

The **Story Node** is the primary narrative building block of your game. It is used to display text, dialogue, or descriptions to the player.

- **When to use:** Use this whenever you need to advance the plot, describe a scene, or show conversation.
- **Examples:**
  - "Opening Scene description"
  - "Conversation with a Witness"
  - "Description of a spooky room"

2. Suspect Node

Icon: User (Red)

The **Suspect Node** represents a character in the mystery.

- **When to use:** Use this to define a person of interest. Players can interact with this node to view the suspect's dossier, check their alibi, and review their recent actions.
- **Examples:**
  - "Col. Mustard"
  - "The suspicious butler"
  - "Veronica (The Victim's Sister)"

3. Evidence Node

Icon: Search (Yellow)

The **Evidence Node** represents a collectible item found in the game world.

- **When to use:** Use this when the player discovers a clue. When encountered, this evidence is added to the player's inventory and can be referenced later by Logic Nodes to check if the player has found specific items.
- **Examples:**
  - "Bloody Knife"
  - "Encrypted USB Drive"
  - "Crumpled Note found in the trash"

4. Logic Node

Icon: GitMerge (Emerald)

The **Logic Node** controls the flow of the game based on specific conditions.

- **When to use:** Use this to create branching paths. You can check if a player has a specific item, has visited a certain node, or if a variable meets a condition. It supports 'If/Else' logic and 'While' loops (waiting for events).
- **Examples:**
  - "Check if the player has the 'Key Card' before opening the door."
  - "Wait until the player has successfully hacked the terminal."
  - "Branch the story: If the player accuses the Butler, go to Node A; otherwise, go to Node B."

5. Terminal Node

Icon: Terminal (Green)

The **Terminal Node** presents a hacking interface or a command-line challenge to the player.

- **When to use:** Use this to simulate a computer system or a lock that requires a password or specific command to bypass.
- **Examples:**
  - "Password Lock on a laptop"
  - "Database Query Interface"
  - "Security Override Sequence"

6. Message Node

Icon: MessageSquare (Violet)

The **Message Node** simulates an incoming digital communication.

- **When to use:** Use this to deliver hints, urgent plot updates, or messages from NPCs outside the immediate scene. It mimics an email, SMS, or radio transmission.
- **Examples:**
  - "Anonymous Tip via SMS"
  - "Briefing from HQ"
  - "Threatening Text Message"

7. Background Audio

Icon: Music (Pink)

The **Background Audio Node** sets the mood of the scene.

- **When to use:** Use this to change the background music or ambient sound. The specified track will loop while this node is active.
- **Examples:**
  - "Suspense Theme for a crime scene"
  - "High-energy Action Music for a chase"
  - "Eerie Silence"

8. Media Asset

Icon: ImageIcon (Orange)

The **Media Asset Node** displays a visual element to the player.

- **When to use:** Use this to show an image or video that provides visual context or clues.
- **Examples:**
  - "CCTV Footage (embedded YouTube/Video link)"
  - "High-res photo of the Crime Scene"
  - "Scanned image of a secret document"

9. Action Button

Icon: MousePointerClick (Indigo)

The **Action Button Node** creates an interactive choice for the player.

- **When to use:** Use this to create branching options or points of interaction. It presents a button that the player must click to proceed.
- **Examples:**
  - "Open Door"
  - "Talk to Witness"
  - "Examine key under the mat"

10. Identify Culprit

Icon: Fingerprint (Red-600)

The **Identify Culprit Node** is a special challenge node, usually for the endgame.

- **When to use:** Use this when the player is ready to solve the case. It prompts the player to select the guilty suspect from a list of all encountered suspects. Success typically triggers the end of the game.
- **Examples:**
  - "Final Accusation"
  - "Who killed the victim?"

11. Notification

Icon: Bell (Sky)

The **Notification Node** shows a modal popup to alert the player.

- **When to use:** Use this for meta-game information, tutorial tips, or critical alerts that pause the game flow until acknowledged.
- **Examples:**
  - "Achievement Unlocked: Master Detective"

- "System Alert: Security Breach"
- "Tutorial Tip: Click on items to examine them"

12. Question

Icon: HelpCircle (Fuchsia)

The **Question Node** presents a quiz or specific question to the player.

- **When to use:** Use this to test the player's knowledge or deductions. You can define single or multiple correct answers.
- **Examples:**
  - "Riddle: What has keys but no locks?"
  - "Knowledge Check: What was the time of death?"
  - "Code Decryption challenge"

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13. Tutorial: Building Your First Mystery

In this example, we will build a short mystery game: **"The Cyber Heist"**.

Premise: A corporate server has been hacked from the inside. The player must identify the mole before the data is leaked.

Step 1: Setting the Scene (Story Node)

1. Drag a **Story Node** to the canvas.
   - **Label:** "Mission Briefing"
   - **Content:** "HQ here. We have a breach at CorpTech. Someone inside bypassed the firewall at 03:00 AM. You have 15 minutes to find the culprit."
2. Drag a **Background Audio Node** and connect it to the Story Node.
   - **Track:** Select "Suspense Theme" to set the mood immediately.

Step 2: The Hub & Suspects

1. Create a new **Story Node** called "Main Lobby". Connect the Briefing node to this one. This will serve as your central hub.
2. Drag three **Suspect Nodes** onto the canvas:
   - **Suspect A:** "SysAdmin Dave" (Alibi: Sleeping at home)
   - **Suspect B:** "Manager Alice" (Alibi: Working late in office)
   - **Suspect C:** "Intern Bob" (Alibi: At a party)
3. Connect the "Main Lobby" node to each Suspect Node.
   - **Edge Labels:** Click on the connecting lines and label them "Interrogate Dave", "Question Alice", etc.

Step 3: Leaving Clues (Evidence & Logic)

We want the player to find a log file that contradicts Alice's alibi.

1. Create a **Terminal Node** called "Server Room PC".
   - **Challenge:** "Enter password" (Set answer to 'admin123').
2. Connect "Main Lobby" to this Terminal Node with label "Inspect Server Room".
3. Create an **Evidence Node** called "Access Logs".
   - **Description:** "The logs show a login from Alice's terminal at 03:05 AM."

4. Connect the Terminal Node to this Evidence Node. This means the player must hack the PC to get the evidence.

Step 4: Connecting the Dots (Logic Node)

Now, let's make Alice reveal more info *only if* the player has the evidence.

1. Drag a **Logic Node** near Alice.
    - **Condition:** Check if player has "Access Logs" (Evidence).
2. Create a connection from "Suspect Alice" to this Logic Node.
    - **Label:** "Press for details"
3. **True Path:** Connect the Logic Node (Handle: True) to a new **Story Node** called "Alice Confesses".
    - **Content:** "Fine! I was here, but I didn't steal the data! I saw Bob sneaking into the server room!"
4. **False Path:** Connect the Logic Node (Handle: False) to a new **Story Node** called "Alice Denies".
    - **Content:** "I told you, I was working. I don't know anything else."

Step 5: The Climax (Identify Culprit)

1. Create a **Story Node** called "Final Deduction".
    - **Content:** "You have gathered enough clues. Who is the mole?"
2. Connect your various paths back to this node (or make it accessible from the Hub).
3. Drag an **Identify Culprit Node** and connect it to the Final Deduction node.
    - **Configuration:** Mark "Intern Bob" as the correct answer (based on Alice's witness account).

Congratulations! You have built a dynamic mystery game with branching dialogue, inventory-based logic, and a challenging conclusion.

This manual was generated for the Mystery Games Framework.