Process & Decision Documentation

Project/Assignment Decisions

I chose to redesign the blob's movement and environment to express fear rather than adding enemies or explicit threats. I focused on subtle instability in movement, faster "breathing," and reduced visibility in dark areas to communicate anxiety while keeping the game playable. This decision allowed fear to emerge through interaction and atmosphere rather than punishment or difficulty spikes.

Role-Based Process Evidence

Name: Josh Metivier
Role(s): Designer, Programmer
Primary responsibility for this work: Gameplay behaviour, emotional expression through movement and environment

Goal of Work Session

To redesign an existing p5.js blob platformer so that the blob's movement and the surrounding environment communicate a feeling of fear.

Tools, Resources, or Inputs Used

- p5.js platformer starter code
- Lecture materials for Side Quests
- ChatGPT (GenAI) for brainstorming and debugging
- Iterative testing in browser (Chrome)

GenAI Documentation

Date Used: January 25, 2026
Tool Disclosure: ChatGPT 5.2

Purpose of Use:
To brainstorm ways of expressing fear through movement and environment, and to assist with debugging and refining p5.js code.

Summary of Interaction:
ChatGPT was used to generate design ideas for fear-based movement and environmental cues, and to help diagnose and fix platforming bugs during implementation.

Human Decision Point(s):
I selected a design approach focused on anxious movement and lighting rather than enemies or damage. I modified and simplified suggested mechanics to maintain playability.

Integrity & Verification Note:
All GenAI suggestions were reviewed, tested, and adjusted manually. Final decisions about mechanics and tuning were made through playtesting.

Scope of GenAI Use:
GenAI supported ideation and debugging but did not independently complete the assignment.

Limitations or Misfires:
Some suggested mechanics introduced unintended bugs or reduced playability and were revised or removed.

Summary of Process (Human + Tool)

I began by identifying fear as an emotion best expressed through instability rather than speed or power. I iteratively implemented movement jitter, panic-based animation changes, and environmental lighting, testing each change to ensure the platforming remained functional. Bugs related to collision and platform interaction were resolved through incremental debugging and refinement.

Decision Points & Trade-offs

I chose not to include enemies or failure states in order to focus on emotional expression through movement and atmosphere. This trade-off reduced complexity while keeping the redesign aligned with the assignment's goals.

Verification & Judgement

I evaluated the effectiveness of the redesign through repeated playtesting, focusing on whether fear was communicated without making the game frustrating. The final result consistently conveyed anxiety through motion and lighting while remaining playable.

Limitations, Dead Ends, or Open Questions

Additional elements such as sound design or enemy behaviour could further enhance fear, but these were excluded due to time and scope constraints.

Appendix

User Prompt:

I have this code for a blob that you can see here at the end of the prompt. Redesign the blob's movement and environment to express fear. Give me some ideas for this that we can brainstorm and then we'll mess around with the code to see what works best.

Summary of GenAI Response:
ChatGPT proposed multiple design directions for expressing fear through movement and environment, including jittery motion, skittish acceleration, trembling while idle, reduced visibility through darkness, and environmental cues such as shadows. These ideas were grouped into conceptual "packages," from which a direction focused on anxious movement and lighting ("Package A") was selected.

Design Direction Selection

User Prompt:

i want to do package A.

Summary of GenAI Response:
ChatGPT outlined how "Package A" could be implemented using a panic variable affecting movement stability, animation speed, and environmental lighting, while maintaining player control and avoiding enemies.

Implementation & Debugging – Hitbox and Visual Issues

User Prompt:

the blob is huge and there isnt really even dark or light areas, its all just the same. The hitbox for the blob is also smaller than the blob so the majority of it can go through the platforms

Summary of GenAI Response:
ChatGPT identified that the blob's visual wobble exceeded its collision radius and that lighting cues were not clearly visible. Suggested fixes included visually rendering light pools and adjusting collision logic so the hitbox better matched the perceived size of the blob.

Implementation & Debugging – Hitbox Too Large

User Prompt:

everything is looking real good right now. The issue i have found is that the hitbox for the blob is now bigger than the blob itself

Summary of GenAI Response:
ChatGPT explained that using the maximum wobble radius for collision caused an oversized hitbox. A revised collision radius based on an averaged visual size was suggested, along with an optional debug toggle to visualize the hitbox.

Implementation & Debugging – Teleporting / Snapping Bug

User Prompt:

When the blob goes a certain distance over to the right, it glitches and shoots back to the left corner where it started.

Summary of GenAI Response:
ChatGPT identified that the floor platform was being treated as a horizontal collider, causing unintended collision resolution. The fix involved excluding the floor from horizontal collision checks and adding a safety clamp after vertical collision resolution.

Implementation & Debugging – Platform Landing Issues

User Prompt:

there is a glitch with jumping on the platform… i can jump on the rightmost platform but not the leftmost one

Summary of GenAI Response:
ChatGPT diagnosed the issue as instability caused by dynamically changing hitbox size and fear-induced jitter. The solution involved stabilizing the physics hitbox and limiting tremble effects while grounded to preserve platforming reliability.

Human Role in Decision-Making

All GenAI suggestions were selectively implemented, modified, or rejected based on manual testing and alignment with assignment goals. Final tuning decisions regarding collision behavior, movement feel, and environmental visibility were made by the student through iterative playtesting.