# World and concept development document

This is a planning document that can be used to organize your thoughts for the VR Interactive Story you will be developing this semester. Remember, the key to a successful story this semester is to take the everyday and make it magical. Playing with scale, time, and perspective can be powerful storytelling tools. Consider VR experiences like Moss, Accounting+, Paper Beast, and A Fisherman’s Tale. All of these games create compelling story worlds outside the everyday. They do not recreate reality. Neither will you.

Read through this week’s material, watch the supplementary videos, and then open my lecture and this document. The lecture is meant to be stopped and started so don’t budget only an hour. Give yourself time to be creative and to imagine a world you can commit to for 15 weeks.

1. **Consider an everyday space, place, or experience. Now, play with concepts of scale or perspective to use VR’s capacity for embodiment to introduce the user to a new, unique, and compelling world. Jot down the originating idea here and some ways you might change scale or perspective to make it magical.**
2. **Now that you have a general idea, not a story—we aren’t there yet, don’t rush—it is time to do some research. What are some MYTHS, TRADITIONS, RELIGIONS, POLITICS, or HISTORIES that resonate with your idea. Mark a few of these down with some foundational research. Don’t go overboard here. This shouldn’t be more than 250 – 500 words of bullet points or notes. We are only gathering the fundamental sparks that will inspire your world. Remember, you will not be recreating reality.**
3. **Worlds exist with overlapping systems that have rules. In the table below, write down some of the rules that exist within systems. Think broadly and not how these will impact gameplay. Don’t go overboard here but try to come up with three rules or systems for each in your world.**

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| **Ecosystem and Ecology** | **Social and Cultural** | **Mechanical and Technological** | **Ideological and Political** |
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1. **Looking at the above answers, especially the systems and rules, see where there are intersections where characters exist. For example, social and cultural rules may intersect with ideological and political rules to create judges, lawyers, and politicians. Mechanical and technological rules ay intersect with the ecosystem to create scientists, business folks, and nature lovers. Try to come up with three to five characters. Do not give them names or characteristics. Define them by role and objective. What do they seek to do. For example, a politician seeks to maintain and grow power.**
2. **Now looking at the above, who will the player be? What role will they inhabit in this world you are creating. Are they part of the elites? Are they the equivalent of an office worker? Are they a student? Who are they? In VR, we start our storytelling from the body in space. You have a world, now a body needs to be put into it. Keep it broad. Again, focus on the role and what their objective is.**
3. **You have a world, you have a body, and now we need some spaces and places for that body to move through. Review your previous answers and brainstorming. You’ll want to think of five spaces and places in which ACTIONS in your world might take place. Thinking back to my Chipmunk Financial Analysts, a space would include a trading room floor for nuts and berries. List these spaces/ places and WHAT occurs there.**
4. **Mood Board time. Grab at least 10 visuals that inspire your world.**
5. **Okay, now you can think of a story. Only a little bit though…don’t go too far! You only get five sentences. Each sentence should be considered an Act in your story. Here’s a guide for you following Shakespeare. I’m a fan, what can I say. Remember, only one sentence per act!**

**Act 1: Prologue**

**The prologue is part of a five act play where the characters and setting are made quite clear.** All major characters should have a role here, to introduce everyone. Nothing majorly terrible needs to happen here, it just needs to be something that transitions well into act II. For instance, in Hamlet, ghosts are a topic, and later, the ghost is made into a central focus point.

**Act 2: Conflict**

Now we introduce the conflict. **In a five act play, conflict is when the villain(s) first appears.** Remember, it is crucial to make it a focus now, the issues at hand, but there is more to this later. Don’t go completely overboard, but don’t fully hold back either. Make sure the audience knows the conflict is a major issue, but don’t make it intense until the next act.

**Act 3: Rising Action**

**Rising action, the ultimate climax in a 5 act play is when you add the intensity that was lacking during the previous act.** The conflict is still very much there, only now it has the audience on the edges of their seats. Everything, absolutely everything, needs to connect, and lead to something of value here.

**Act 4: Falling Action**

**Falling action should be a resolution at work in this part of the five-act play, where things reach their conclusion.** No deep points should be made, it should focus on actions. Perhaps a villain becomes a hero, or maybe the hero turns to the dark side. Maybe everyone dies, except your version of Horatio.

**Act 5: Conclusion**

**Denouement, where you establish the tone and morals.** Remember, when plays first began, they were meant to prove a point, or make the audience question their logic over something. This is when things are made pretty clear: the overall message you’re trying to send. Perhaps a character talks to the audience, or talks to himself/herself. Maybe there’s a line that says it all, or a conversation that ties up loose ends, or shines a light on the substance behind your script.