

This is a weekly diary for self-reflection on work done in projects. Please build on and submit this document as a pdf weekly.

Requirements:

- Submitted as pdf
- Use and build off same document (keep editable version)
- One well-thought paragraph or a detailed series of bullets per entry will suffice, as long as the responses are clear and understandable
- Covers work YOU did for the team/project week before diary due date
- Submitted before first class in a given week

These diary entries are private. Only instructors will see them unless you voluntarily share them.

Content should cover work you conducted in your team in the prior week (focus on the ‘I’ over the ‘we’, unless you’re discussing how you collaborated with your teammates or issues you ran into with them).

Starting guidance is given below, based on the modules list in Canvas.

Week 3 (No entries first 2 weeks): Prototyping & Playtesting

We reached an agreement on the type of game we want to develop and I listed some features I want to add to the prototype to test. I wanted to add features like enemies, upgrades, and obstacles. I quickly drew a small map on grid paper with some random platforms and we started playtesting before Tuesday by ourselves. While playtesting ourselves and with the instructor, we realized we should not explain the rules beforehand. I didn’t really like the idea of echolocation in the beginning when my teammate suggested it, but we tested it with the prototype and ended up not rejecting it. I ended up agreeing with this feature that it supports the audio theme and adds some distinct features to the games out there. After testing one feature, I expanded the map a little more by drawing more platforms to test out the vision upgrade feature as suggested by the instructor. I voiced out my idea that the upgrade should be hidden on the map somewhere based on games I’ve played to my teammate, and we ended up liking and wanting to test more about vision features such as creating a part of the map to be reachable only after getting the upgrade.

Week 4: Ending Project 1 – How was your team?

During the last playtesting day where I have to facilitate the game alone, I learned that sometimes what causes player confusion can be internal disagreement of the developers. I try to say as little as I can while guiding the players during the tutorial level, but my teammate came back from playtesting and said I should just be more direct about the hint. We spent about half of our prototyping time on game features/mechanics and the other half discussing the directness of instruction when we discovered players mostly forgot to use ‘echo’. This

reminded me of the reading for one of the discussions, where the game can only progress if the team comes to an agreement. I ended up agreeing with being more direct with my words for guiding the player. I also drew a tutorial map that focuses on teaching the core mechanics, mainly using echo more often and sticking to walls, for players to navigate, and redrew a cleaner, smaller, and easy map for the player to test play on. Players were confused by how many doors there are on the original level map, thinking it's the keys. I spent most of my time adding things to the prototype to resolve issues we see in playtesting again and again, which is the life cycle of prototyping as I learned in class.

Week 5: Project 2 Team Formation, Digital Prototyping in Unity

In project 1, we only have two people and want to retain the project, and so after the class's presentations, I pitched our game again to individuals whose team members left them. Inspired by steps in the Scrum method and the importance of shared vision from a previous discussion, I explained the game's vision, gameplay, and our feature list to the new members. Then I created a really simple checklist with dates to timebox tasks the team needed to finish before Tuesday. I discussed with my team an agreement on what features should be prioritized to be created for the demo on Thursday, and we agreed upon the player movement mechanics and echolocation feature. From previous project experiences, I know it can be hard for someone who didn't come up with the game idea to have the visual of the gameplay in their head. Therefore, I created separate documents loaded with guiding questions and thoughts from all team members for each feature ID, so whoever wants to take care of the feature has somewhere to start with. While creating the documents, I learned that some of my teammates are still somewhat confused on the vision of the game and don't have much background on game development. I don't see this as a problem, but as something like a sprint retrospective where we reflect on each other's strengths, assign the right roles, and prevent future communication problems to improve team work efficiency.

Week 6: Usability, Working Collaboratively in Unity

I learned a lot of new things about Unity since it's only through this class I started to use it. Over the week, I was able to create platforms, sprites, animations, and coding for character movement mechanics. I saw how Unity allows multiple physical and coding scripts to be bound to characters to let creating games easier without worrying about physics and boundaries.

I also learned more about team communication and stress handling. I was the only one working on Unity to create the first demo for my original team Echoformer even though I asked my teammates and sent them reminders in discord about the deadlines. I was surprised at how I have to ask and text around 5 times before anyone actually gets back to me on the team. Team communication is always emphasized in the discussion and readings as the main problem, and I try sending as many messages as I can to the team. I was able to get some progress in the team by asking if anyone needed help setting up Unity and receiving the code. However, trying doesn't mean I actually get much of a response. As I find myself getting more frustrated and with verbal violence from my teammate, I'm also learning and

realizing that this isn't what I want for myself.

Week 7: Focus Testing

I helped and redesigned the NPC dialogue system for the project so it's expandable for as much as NPC we need. With the dialogue, I also included proximity and spatial sound for all the NPCs to help guide the player to find their location in order to interact with them. Other miscellaneous and walking sound effects were added by me as well to emphasize on the theme of echolocation for the game. The reason why I redesigned the NPC/prompt dialogue system is because it wasn't expandable in the beginning, and the game requires multiple NPC as well as multiple different instruction prompts to guide the players. The UI/UX of the original dialogue was limiting and anti-intuitive when we hosted focus testing on Thursday. Players expected auto-continue dialogue and auto-popping keypads on-screen for the users. From the survey, players also revealed how they're confused with the direction of the sound effects because of the poor background sound I chose that includes things not in the map, and isn't sync with player movements. The focus test really made me see how other players, who don't know anything about our game, would navigate through our game. It's only under their feedback from focus testing we can see the flaws and importance of UI/UX.

Week 8: Finishing Project 2

I added all the sound sources for all the game objects and made them spatial and proximity-aware of where the player is. I edited the sound sources so each clip only consists of one kind of sound and synced sound effects like footsteps and pickup. These edits were done from the survey result we got for the last test to improve user experience. Not only that, I was also testing all kinds of combinations of actions a possible player might do to see the possible important bugs that might disrupt the gameplay after our latest merge. I was able to find two bugs where the pebble can be thrown outside of the map where they can't reach it, and pebbles don't disappear from the tool hotbar when thrown. These two bugs would defeat the purpose of the game feature, unlimited amount of pebble throwing inside the map but limited number of pebble, leading to a different user experience. Working with The Minds Eye team is really chill because we are all friends and roommates. We would say our preferred task immediately and everyone doesn't mind any task. We don't really meet but text often to keep each other updated with what we added to the branch based on our task. There was no issue working with the team at all except in the beginning where we have some branching issue on github. I just texted the group and ask them to create a new 'main' branch from the last working push to main due to my bad merging to main. For the next project, I'm looking for responsiveness and time/task timing skills in a team. I think from this project, we can do better in starting the implementation of the task earlier, so we have more times for bug finding and testing in our game.

Week 9: Team formation for Project 3, Concepting & Pre-production

After we formed our team on Thursday, one of my teammates already had some idea of what she is looking for in a game already, puzzle and audio manipulating solution. I originally wanted some kind of action between sprites in project 3 and hoping to practice developing action-based and attention-needing games, because that's just my interest. However, our

group came into an agreement that not all puzzles have to be sound-related, and I can still create mini-games that might involve more actions from the player. I really want to practice on creating enemy/player mechanics where both of them can fight for a while such that no one overpowers the other, and it depends on the player's skills. I'm also looking for a more polished game in project 3 as in like no bugs or less bugs, smoother control, and actually feel fun or challenged to even audiences who are teenagers and up.

We also had a new teammate so I'm expecting more communication is needed for project 3. I'm still working with the same teammates as in project 2, because of how easy and comforting we are with each other to share our ideas. With free and loyalty-free assets, we don't really need artists and our team is expecting to focus more on programming and learning how manipulating audio works in Unity.

Week 10: Game Engines, Project 3 Concepting & Pre-production

Write your Week 10 journal response here.

Week 11: Game Feel, Transition from Pre-production into Production

Write your Week 11 journal response here.

Week 12: Project 3 Collaborative processes – Talk about how you work with your team!

Write your Week 12 journal response here.

Week 13: Focus Testing and Narrative

Write your Week 13 journal response here.

Week 14: Preparing for the holiday – what concerns do you have for Project 3

Write your Week 14 journal response here.

Week 15: Finishing Project 3 – getting to the final build!

Write your Week 15 journal response here.

