

OVERVIEW

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Design Thinking Phases: EMPATHIZE // DEFINE // IDEATE

Topic: “A Crime of the Spirit”

User: Students (Outside)

THIS WEEK’S ACTIVITIES

- (EMPATHIZE) This week, we returned to the empathize phase by conducting three interviews. By doing the interviews as a team, we were able to ask new questions that were missing from our individual approaches. Alongside this, we acted out the user experience (bodystorming) by taking a break at the library benches and using the outside of the library as a “waiting” space.
- (DEFINE) Having gathered more data *together*, we returned to the State Saturate that was previously developed for the “Crime of the Spirit” project. Our new data was added, as well as important notes from the “Furore Teutonico” project. After updating this, we were able to create one additional persona and refine the project’s POV for Anna.
- (IDEATE) With a refined POV, we returned to the ideate phase by brainstorming with users. Participants were shown the mid-fidelity prototype and tasked with reimagining features. Some sticky notes with questions were used to help guide the experience.

KEY FOR GRAPHICS

Week 1: (Introduction)

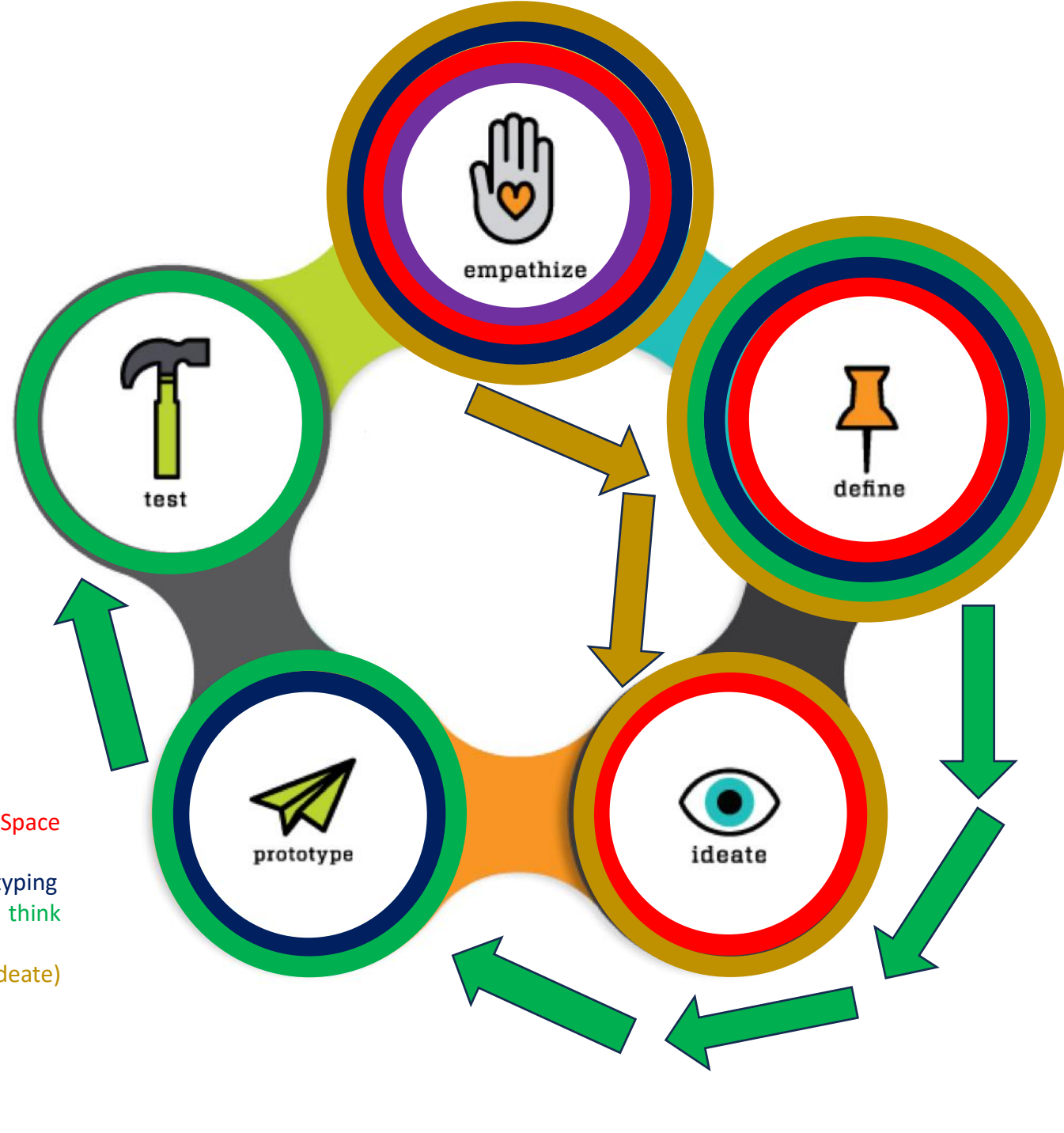
Week 2: (Empathize) Research, Interview, Bodystorming, Capture, Cultural Probe

Week 3: (Empathize) Interview, Cultural Probe, Observation (Define) Personas, Space Saturate, POV (Ideate) Brainstorming session with friends via Miro

Week 4: (Empathize) Observation (Define) Personas, POV (Prototype) low-fidelity prototyping

Week 5: (Prototype) low-fidelity prototyping, mid-level prototyping (Test/Evaluate) think aloud protocol, feedback capture grid (Define) Empathy Map, POV

Week 6: (Empathize) Interview, Bodystorming (Define) Space Saturate, Persona, POV (Ideate) Brainstorming



METHODOLOGY

Method(s) used: (EMPATHIZE) Interviews, Bodystorming (DEFINE) Space Saturate, Persona, POV (IDEATE) Brainstorming

EMPATHIZE

- Interviews:* Three interviews were conducted outside the (right and left) library entrances around 12:30. Structured in a semi-formal fashion, we had nine questions prepared with the hope that users’ answers would simultaneously inspire new conversation along the way. In part, our interviews were intended to double-check the accuracy of our personas, but we also wanted to learn more about how much time/effort our user would be willing to spend on our design. Our prepared questions included the following: 1.) Where are you from and what are you studying? 2.) Why did you choose to sit outside the library and how often/how long do you find yourself here? 3.) What do you do while you’re sitting here and why? and 4.) Do you wish you knew more about the library? Discussion of our mid-fidelity prototype was not actively talked about at this point and all feedback was captured via a recording device.
- Bodystorming:* Before the interviews, one member acted out the user experience (i.e. bodystorming) by going early and waiting outside the library for the other. The waiting member specifically focused on what it would be like for Anna (Persona #1) who often waits for friends outside the library. Additionally, on a later date, we also acted out the user experience by treating the outside of the library as a place for a study-break. While looking over our WDP in the library, we went to the benches to sit and refresh, observing others and interrogating the different feelings born out of the experience.

DEFINE

- Space Saturate:* A space saturate for the “A Crime of the Spirit” project had previously been developed on a Miro board and was now returned to in a team setting. Our new data was added via the platform’s digital sticky notes and new groupings of ideas were made. Importantly, the “Furore Teutonico” project also worked with students outside the library, allowing other data to be incorporated.
- POV:* Each team member had previously developed multiple POV’s for their individual projects. Each of these were re-examined alongside the respective feedback provided in class/previous WDPs. By working with this information as well as our updated space saturate, we refined the POV with a special focus on our Anna’s (Persona #1) NEED.

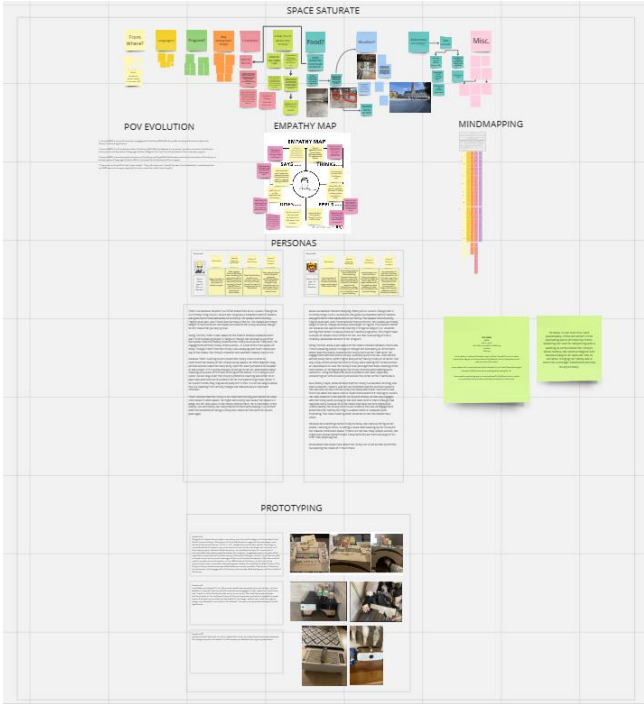
IDEATE

- Brainstorming:* Brainstorming took place outside the library and blurred together with some techniques from the test phase. With our mid-level prototype, we stopped students walking by the right and center entrances of the library and asked them if they would engage with it. After this, we would have them imagine that one piece was missing (i.e. the sliding books, the book “tracks”, the button, etc.) and help us ideate something new. Ideas were then captured on sticky notes and kept for our records.

(DEFINE)
Bodystorming
15/11



(DEFINE)
Space Saturate



RESULTS

EMPATHIZE

- *Interviews:* The interviews were helpful in that they confirmed many dimensions of our personas. For instance, students reported either waiting for a friend (Interviewee #2 and #3) or being on a study break (Interviewee #1). Interviewees #1 and #3 also discussed their particular interest in history and expressed a desire to learn more about the library on their breaks (preferably something they could do instead of scrolling on their phones, according to Interviewee #1). Additionally, we confirmed that students only use this space in short spurts of time, especially as it relates to study breaks – breaks longer than 10-15 minutes were described as running the risk of demotivating the student from going back to their studies. Our design must take this into account.
- *Bodystorming:* Acting out the user experience was particularly helpful in that it clarified how the weather plays a role in the way students engage with the outside of the library. While waiting outside for one team member, it was quite cold, making it hard to stay there for too long. Removing gloves to play a game at this time would have been uncomfortable, revealing that winter attire must also be considered in how the prototype is designed... Interestingly, dynamics changed when we acted out the user experience while on a study break. The library is a rather warm, stuffy building, and moving outside to the colder air (for a short period) was refreshing rather than debilitating.

DEFINE

- *Space Saturate:* Expanding our space saturate was important for our POV. In particular, we used data from the “Furore Teutonico” project to develop a new persona (“Beth”). This not only taught us more about our student users in general but also helped us clearly define what Anna (the persona our POV is based on) *is not*.
- *(New) POV:* Anna needs a creative, enthusiastic way to distract herself from her studies because her degree is too theoretical and she feels her brain is drained and can’t take any more information

IDEATE

- *Brainstorming:* Our approach to brainstorming had both pros and cons. On the one hand, we ended up directly working with users in the general setting of where the final design will be deployed. This allowed a level of practicality to user ideation as they could actively see the context in which we were designing. Additionally, all users ideated with us while on a break from studying, so they could easily imagine what they would be (or would not be) willing to do. This affected their ideas in a positive way. For instance, when prompted with the task of reimagining our mid-fidelity prototype without the button, one user suggested a series of hints hidden under flaps or hidden within the design of the board itself. He said users who would play on a break might desire a level of challenge to it (of course, something not too hard, but also not too easy). If the clues are appropriately hidden, users may be drawn to playing it until they have solved which books go to each university. ... On other hand, some users were hesitant to suggest new ideas after playing the game. For instance, the two users in the picture above provided constructive criticism but were very hesitant to suggest new ideas when prompted to. Perhaps this method did not have enough emphasis on the established ideation methods from week 3. In the future, a more formal setting (such as a focus group at the library) might help us get stronger responses.
- NOTE: We did end up speaking with others who participated in the first round of brainstorming in week 3. However, this was short and fairly informal, as we had spent most of our attention on ideating with users as described above.

(IDEATE)
Brainstorming



FUTURE ACTIONS

IDEATE

Ideating with students in front of the library was insightful, but a formal setting might help us get more direct answers/ideas. In the future, we will consider setting up a focus group with students in which we can brainstorm together. In doing so, participants come with the expectation of needing to ideate, and therefore may be more willing to speak.

Our methods so far have relied heavily on what users tell us. However, it is not always productive to directly believe what they say. Observing how students outside the library engage with a small cultural probe could tell us more, and we are considering deploying one near the right and left benches. Then we can actually watch and see if user’s do what they say they would do.

PROTOTYPING and TESTING

The mid-fidelity prototype came up short in that user instructions were missing. This was made clear in our mid-semester presentations and the user ideation this week. As mentioned, some students emphasized the need to include “hints” or hidden answers in the game. Next week, it would be nice to incorporate some of these user ideas into our prototype and conduct tests *without* needing to give too much guidance.

Additionally, it might be worth testing the prototype in different locations. So far, our data has pushed us to focus on the right and left entrances of the library. Nevertheless, the center entrance of the library may also be a good spot for the design. As the picture on the left (and previous slide) show, students often gather at either the steps or just outside the steps.



(OBSERVATION)
Students at center entrance of the library