Process & Decision Documentation

Project/Assignment Decisions

Side Quests and A4 (Individual Work)

Key Decision:

- I redesigned the starter multi-screen example into a branching "choose your own adventure" story using a decision tree structure (start → instructions → flavour choice → outcome paths).
- A key decision I made was to replace the original random win/lose system with player choice-based outcomes. Instead of chance, the story now progresses based on flavour selection (Strawberry vs. Chocolate) and a second decision in each path.
- This change improved clarity and intentionality because the outcomes now feel like consequences of the player's decisions rather than luck, making the interaction more meaningful.

Role-Based Process Evidence

Name: Jenny South

Role(s): Designer + Developer (Individual Side Quest)

Primary responsibility for this work: Designing the story structure and implementing a multi-state interactive system in p5.js using separate files for each screen.

Goal of Work Session

I wanted to transform the example game-state project into a narrative-driven interaction. My goal was to:

- Practice using multiple game states
- Organize code across files (one file per scene)
- Create a branching decision tree instead of a single linear or random outcome
- Communicate the story through UI layout, text hierarchy, and visual feedback

Tools, Resources, or Inputs Used

- p5.js (drawing, interaction, state switching)
- Visual Studio Code
- Course example multi-screen starter code
- ChatGPT 5.2 (used for structural explanations and debugging support)

GenAI Documentation

Date Used: Jan 29, 2026

Tool Disclosure: ChatGPT 5.2 (OpenAI)

Purpose of Use:

- Understanding how to extend the existing game-state routing system
- Debugging layout issues (button text overflow, alignment)
- Learning how to structure scene files consistently

Summary of Interaction: ChatGPT explained how to add new screen states to main.js, how to connect files through index.html, and how to adjust UI layout (button sizing, text alignment). Later, I asked about visual feedback ideas (confetti for a win, emoji feedback for a loss) and implemented those with my own placement adjustments.

Human Decision Point(s):

- I chose the theme (ice cream + magical shop)
- I defined the story structure and outcomes
- I selected which interactions lead to a win/lose
- I adjusted button sizes, colours, and text placement for readability
- I decided to add celebratory feedback (confetti) and negative feedback (thumbs down emoji)

Integrity & Verification Note: I tested each state change by clicking and using keyboard inputs to ensure transitions worked correctly. I also iterated on the layout by adjusting text size and button width when labels overflowed.

Scope of GenAI Use: GenAI supported technical explanations and debugging, but narrative design, visual style choices, state structure, and iteration decisions were my own.

Limitations or Misfires: Some early suggestions focused on random outcomes or overly complex systems. I redirected the focus to a simple decision-tree structure to stay aligned with the assignment.

Summary of Process (Human + Tool)

I began with a narrative idea (magical ice cream shop) and mapped it to a decision tree. I used the course example as a base and extended the existing currentScreen routing system to include new scenes. ChatGPT helped clarify how to connect files and manage layout issues, but I made all story and design decisions. I iterated by refining button layout, improving visual hierarchy, and adding feedback elements to make win and lose outcomes feel distinct.

Decision Points & Trade-offs

1. Random outcome vs. player choice
   - Options considered: keep random win/lose vs. decision-based outcomes
   - Decision: use player choice
   - Why: It creates clearer cause-and-effect in the story.
2. One file vs. multiple files
   - Options considered: all code in one file vs. file-per-scene
   - Decision: separate files
   - Why: Easier to organize, debug, and scale.
3. Static vs. animated feedback
   - Options considered: plain win/lose screens vs. visual feedback
   - Decision: add confetti and emoji
   - Why: Improves emotional clarity of outcomes.

Verification & Judgement

I verified functionality by:

- Testing every branch path
- Checking keyboard inputs
- Ensuring each screen rendered correctly and text remained readable

I evaluated success based on whether the story flow felt clear and whether players could easily understand the consequences of their choices.

Limitations, Dead Ends, or Open Questions

One challenge was keeping text readable inside buttons, which required resizing or adjusting the layout. Another consideration was balancing visual effects (like confetti), so they added feedback without cluttering the screen.

Appendix

Link to my Chat: https://chatgpt.com/share/697bf81c-0a60-8007-96ae-f8a7af3473a6