

# SporeStorm

Developed by Emma Scott, Ava Kopchak, and Brianne Engel

<https://github.com/kava117/CMS320-Fall2025>

## Introduction:

- What is this game about/background, and why are you choosing it? What is the motivation?

The game Spore Storm was designed as a point-and-click system to immerse players in a horror RPG experience. We wanted to really focus on players interacting with NPCs, making choices that shape their unique stories, and then enhancing the story and increasing replayability. We chose this because it combines all of our group's interests, such as Poor aesthetics, meaningful themes, character-centric designs, and a diverse skill set required for game creation.

- Who are the target users?

Generally speaking, the game is designed for players aged 13 and up. This is because the game focuses on many mature moral choices and complex themes. And younger players might find some of the challenges difficult to relate to or understand in terms of our storytelling. There's also some choice language or more grown-up things that the player might encounter on their journey.

- What is the context/game world?

The game is set in 1990s America, and the sports storm was designed to immerse players in a nostalgic yet somewhat Eerie environment, where many societal Dynamics and cultural references can shape the story and gameplay experience. The whole idea is that the country has been hit by a deadly infectious storm full of these spores, and anyone caught in it is in danger, as it can affect them and possibly expose others to infection. The goal of the game is to outrun this infectious storm by reaching a safe zone or a bunker within that designated time frame. Each day, the player has to decide what's worth taking the time to stop for, or who is worth helping.

- What is the game rule?

The game rules were set up around who you help, where you stop, and what impact your decisions have on those around you, as well as your own self. Are you willing to help a stranded mother who just wants her child saved, or would you rather not risk anyone in your car getting infected? Do you go out of your way to pick up your friend, or do you get to the bunker sooner? These are just some questions that the player might have to grapple with.

- What are the controls (keyboard, mouse, joystick, etc)?

The game's controls are, as mentioned earlier, a point-and-click interface. Mainly focusing on the player selecting the options that they want and then pressing space to accept.

- Provide a rough sketch plan if you have any.



g. What would be the task distribution among teammates?

The task distribution was Ava as lead programmer, Emma as sound design and assistant programmer, and finally Brianne as artist and assistant programmer.

### **Game Development:**

Because our team had a variety of tasks, we all started work on our respective tasks. There was no need for one person to wait for another in order to complete the majority of their work, so we were able to diversify and bring our work together near the end of the project. Brianne got to work on assets, Emma on music/SFX and writing, and Ava on game logic/building the Unity project.

Ava worked from Unity documentation and various YouTube tutorials, building a foundation for the basic mechanics of the game and then adding more complex details later. The majority of the work for the game was done incrementally week to week, with crunch periods around the first playtest and the week of Thanksgiving break. The last week back was bug fixes, polish, and logic-checking, which Emma contributed to greatly.

Emma was able to use her background in music production and sound mixing to create an original soundtrack for the game. Using Apple's Garageband, she combined loops as well as individual MIDI recordings to produce the music. Since all the recordings were digitized, she was able to customize the key and tempo to fit the custom aesthetic of the game. As for sound effects, she did record them herself but due to the shift in games direction many of the sound effects were not able to be used. The most prominent sound effect that was kept in the game was the typing. Originally, we planned to have various lengths of typing SFX used depending on the length of the current dialogue. After some implementation issues, we found it easier to use one effect which plays until the complete dialogue has been printed.

### **Final Game:**

A Windows executable version of our game is available on our GitHub (see link above). Gameplay link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpGQ4iUn1qs>

### **Discussion and Future work:**

Developing this game was a large undertaking, but we as a team agreed to the challenge. It was difficult, but engaging and fun to work on such a project with others.

Early on, Ava encountered issues in producing “playable” versions for early playtests, and it threw a lot of early plans out the window. The previous gameplay plan had to be scrapped and rebuilt, but the final version is simpler and cleaner than the original idea.

Brianne also encountered many challenges with the original art style. Initially, she was creating several pieces of pixel art, but found it was much more time-consuming than anticipated. Additionally, as she was unable to do it on her standard platforms, she tried several different software programs to find the best results, which caused some time delays. Ultimately, the switch in art styles to a much more realistic style was beneficial.

As developers, we also learned a lot from our critiques (both from classmates and other players of our game). Even in the final version, we were told our buttons feel unintuitive at times (why doesn't the space bar work to select every button?) so in a more polished version in the

game, we would solve that issue by differentiating between buttons either in aesthetic or shape so the user understands which are for clicking. We also got comments about wanting more consequences for certain actions (not bringing someone in your car, doing what someone wants, etc.), and we would also love to add these in a future version.

For the future, our first goal would be implementing the resource management aspect that we originally included in our game, but had to be cut last-minute due to time issues. This would mean that the player is balancing food, water, gas, and time on top of who to bring or not bring in their car. It adds more importance to the player's decisions, and allows for the incorporation of new mechanics (do you feed the people in your car every day, and if not, what happens? Do they leave/die? Do they steal your resources?). These new mechanics would help elevate the already present themes of our game, and are already half-implemented within our scripts.