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GAME 601

9/7/2021

Chaos Poet

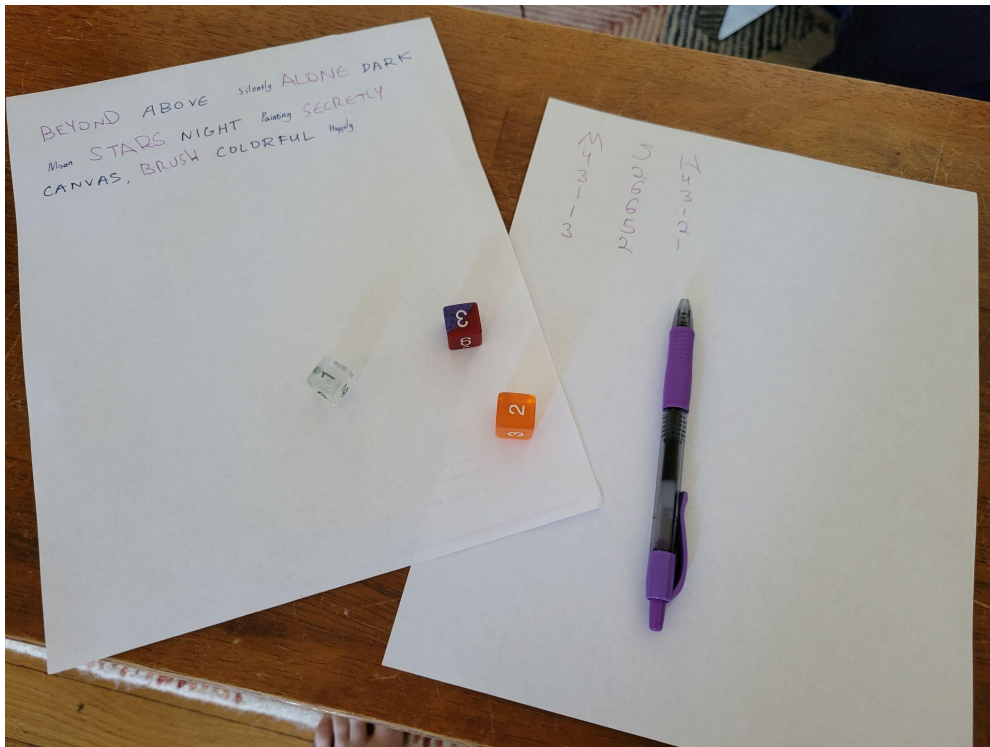
Abstract

Chaos Poet is a game which seeks to generate semi-random poetic compositions through the dice rolls of players. Players take turns rolling dice, contributing words to a composition, and adding up the results of their rolls until someone reaches a total of 20, ending the poem. Once the poem ends, players discuss whether they are happy with the composition that has resulted. The players "win" the game if they succeed in creating something that amuses or pleases all of them. This game is meant to foster cooperative creative activity and experimentation with language, pushing players to circumvent grammatical norms and work together to build a theme as they play.

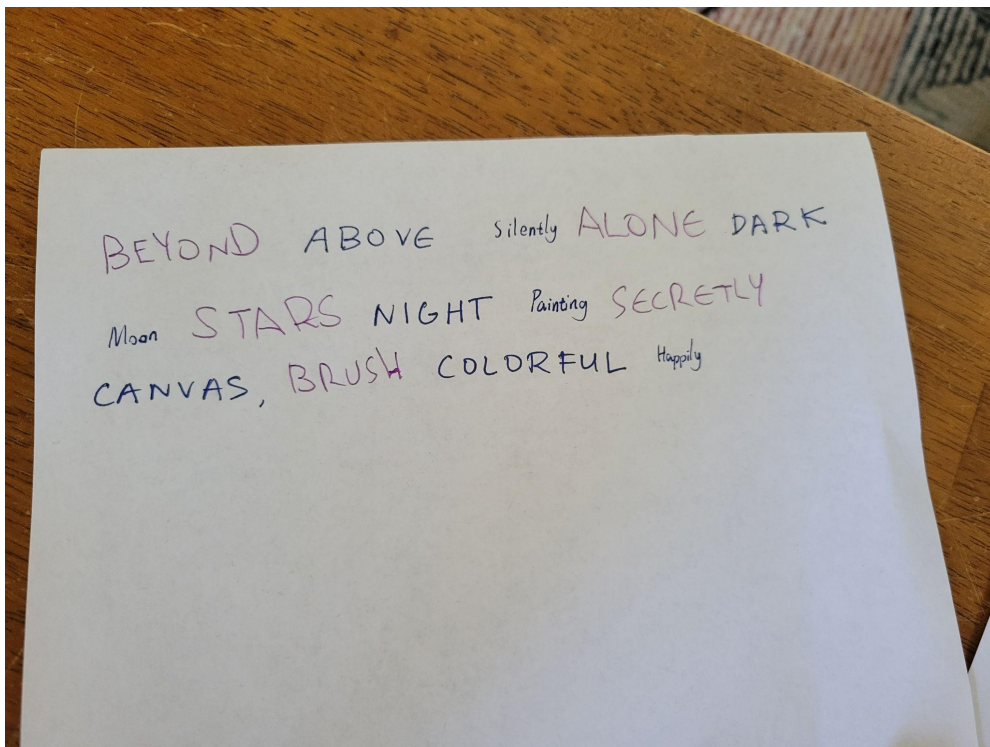
Game Rules

- On their turn, each player rolls a six-sided die.
- The player adds the result to their total score.
- Then the player adds a word to the composition based on their roll.
 - 1 or 2 - Add a **noun** or an **adjective**.
 - **Nouns**: These are words that name a person, place, or thing. They can be abstract or concrete, general or specific, etc. For the purpose of the game, players can add a noun with an article, like "a boat" or "the boat".
 - **Adjectives**: These are words that can be used to describe nouns and add more detail or texture to another word, like "elegant", "short", "heartfelt", "angry", etc.
 - 3 or 4 - Add an **adverb** or a **preposition**.
 - **Adverbs**: These words are used to describe how an action is done or to intensify a description. Many adverbs end in "-ly" ("lovingly", "crucially", "brutally").
 - **Preposition**: These are words used to describe proximity, location
 - 5 - Add a **punctuation mark** or **line break**, like . / , ? " "
 - 6 - Add any word, punctuation mark, or spacing of the player's choice.
- The player then passes the die left to the next player.
- Players continue rolling, totalling up their scores, and adding new words to the composition until a player reaches a total score of 20, at which point the game ends.
- Players vote on whether they approve of or dislike the composition. A well-liked composition means a win for the group, while a failed composition is a loss.

Gameplay Photos



The Materials of a Successfully Completed Game



A Finished Poem

IN! FREELY glorious WARFARE I BOLD
Caveman.
?
Incredulous! BAFFLED Walrus MUSTACHE!
CHAOTIC Miserable MONSTROUS?

Results of Two Successful Rounds

Design Process Statement

I developed this idea based on a desire to create a game modification that wasn't overly weighty or complicated. I enjoy tabletop story games and emergent narrative generators, so the randomization possibilities available in the dice-rolling game immediately interested me. At first I wanted to design a random story game, where each player would roll and then add a new sentence to the story based on their roll. But given the short development window available for this project and the heavy imaginative demand this put on players, I decided to simplify the idea, searching around for a form that I could randomize without placing undue strain on my innocent classmates. Thus, the move to word-by-word generation of free verse poetry.

The gameplay process remains almost as simple as the original dice-rolling game, merely attaching a new secondary action to every roll, and otherwise retaining the same structure of taking turns and adding up scores. The negotiated randomization of each turn, which determines the kind of word the player will add but not the word itself, streamlines the players' thought process while allowing for plenty of creativity. I also hope that the design will foment a new element of cooperative play, where players must attend to each other's contributions to the composition if they want to end the game with an entertaining or interesting composition.

I assigned the parts of speech to the results of the dice in the way that I thought would best facilitate interesting results. I chose to enfold articles into the noun result as an optional addition in order to make the game more flexible and more easily adaptable to use with other languages, some of which I know do not use articles or use them as part of a noun. Theoretically, there is no rule in the game governing the use of any one language for the creation of compositions, and it could be fun to intermingle.

My ultimate goal with this game, besides completing the assignment to the best of my abilities, is to offer an avenue by which players can experiment with language and enjoy speaking and writing without the need to make sense. I find that using language for play allows one to appreciate the visual and aural qualities of words in a new way, separate from their meaning or purpose.

After playtesting with two classmates, I made a few final adjustments to the project. While we had fun playing the original version together, the rigidity of the system of rolls mapping to specific parts of speech sometimes proved more frustrating than I intended. I've decided to try a different method, assigning two parts of speech to a range of rolls, giving players

a little more flexibility while keeping the original spirit of the design. Hopefully this change will make the game a bit more easy and pleasurable for players, while still providing an element of surprise and challenge.