



# THE BESTIARY

UX/ UI Case Study  
Mobile Game Design



## Griffin

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle and the body, tail, and hind legs of a lion.

Biography   Journal   Inventory  
Poisons   Weapons   Armor   Food

## The Bestiary - what is it?

The Bestiary is designed to be a component of a mobile fantasy game in which a player encounters different monsters. Each level's monsters are more challenging than the last, and it is up to the player to study them (their weaknesses, strengths, etc.). As they advance, they will build a reference guide - the Bestiary - of what they have learned.

## Inspirational Games & Projects

The Witcher games and Horizon Zero Dawn are known worldwide for being immersive.

The experience involves looking up cryptids in these universes and finding relevant gameplay and worldbuilding information.

## Horizon Zero Dawn



## The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt

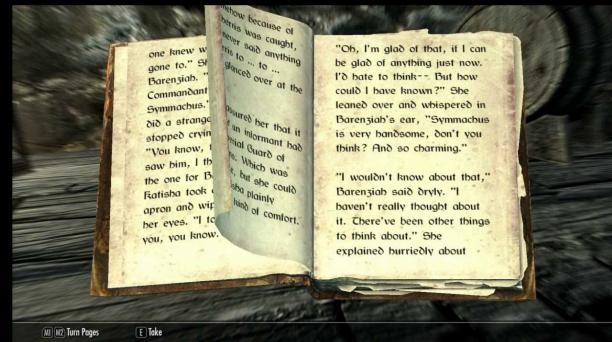


CD Projekt Red is the developer of the Witcher: Wild Hunt game, which is the best known videogame that features its own bestiary.

Bethesda is the developer of Elder Scrolls Online, which scatters information about its mythical monsters in books found throughout the game.

Neither of these are interactive.

## Functional Competitor



## Inspirational Project

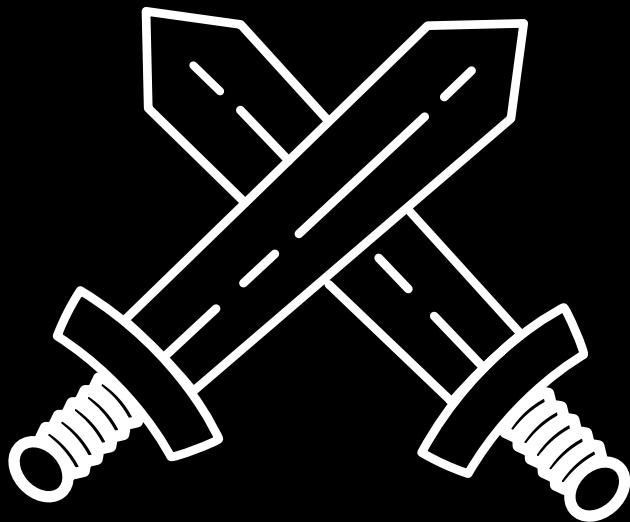


## Why did I choose this project?

This project combines my passions for art, storytelling and design. The backdrop of the interface is a stock photo, but the rest of the artwork is mine. The storytelling aspect had me brainstorming about my passions for fantasy, which in turn fine-tunes the user experience and design process.

## Why is it important?

A game maker wants a user to come back to their game. They want them to purchase other games. But unless a gamer is deeply dedicated to the world, they're often averse to reading giant blocks of text, which many interfaces still have. In the age of instant gratification, this might stop someone from playing altogether. Understanding a gamer's mindset and creating an interactive interface will incentivize them to participate in/look more closely at the worldbuilding.



## Demographic

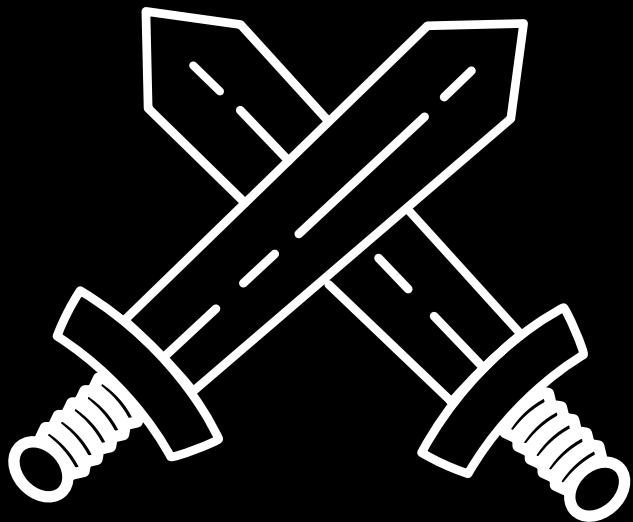
Adults 20-35

Videogame enthusiasts of  
the following categories:  
Fantasy, Sci-fi, Open world,  
RPG, MMO

Married or single

Educated

Working professionals



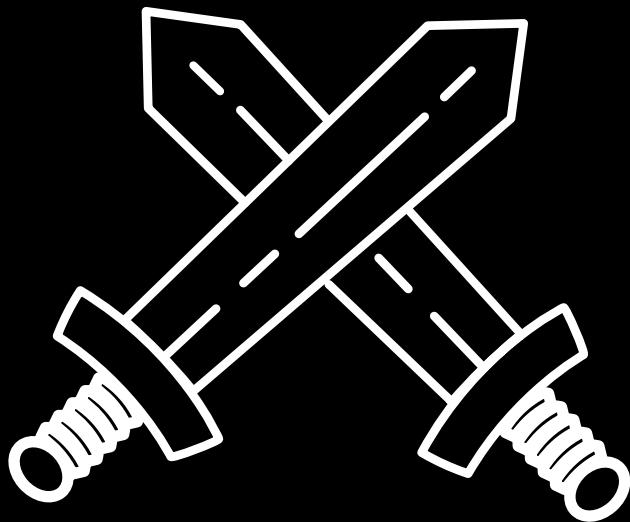
## User Needs

Videogame interface that is simple yet immersive

Clear relaying of information without blocks of text

High entertainment value

Contextualized interface based on game



## Hypothesis

The more immersive an experience for any given user, the more likely they are to consume and retain information from the interface conveying it.

## Objective

Determining whether immersion outweighs utility in the importance of interface design.

## Methods

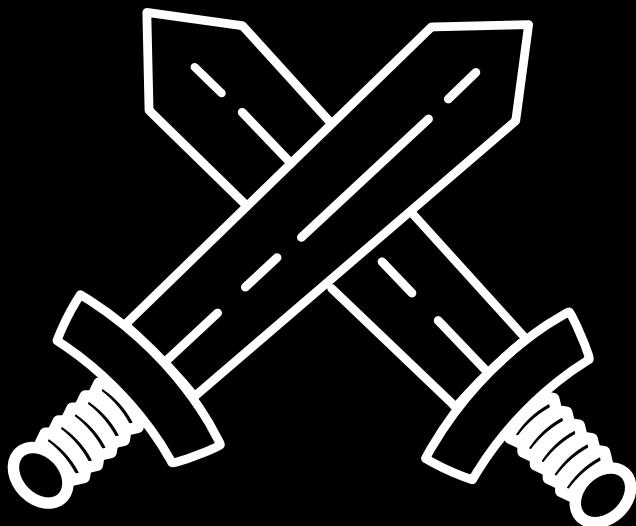
Interviews

## Questions for Target Audience

-  How much do you value immersion in your videogame experience, on a scale of 1-10?
-  Would you enjoy an interface that takes time to navigate around, so long as it is immersive to you?
-  Would you spend more time with an interface if it had many features and options, or would you be eager to return to the game?
-  Based on average videogame information presentation, how much of the information would you say you actually pay attention to?
-  How much of the information you pay attention to it videogame interfaces is carried back into the main game?
-  Do you ever retain any of the information in real life? If so, do you recall more visual aspects of it or the texts of it?
-  Would you rather have a complex interface with many interesting features, or minimalistic design with less features?

## Questions for Expert

-  Would you rather have a complex interface with many interesting features, or minimalistic design with less features?
-  How often do you jump from the main game to the menu interface (in other words, how much utility do you find from the menus? How much value do they have to the gaming experience)?
-  Do you think it takes away from a gamer's experience to be tempted to stay and explore a complex interface?
-  How much value would you assign to the artistic design of an interface, which would keep users in the interface and have them exploring?
-  Would you assign more importance to artistry or utility in interface design?
-  Would you respond more to visual aspects of a design or the content itself?
-  How willing would you be to sacrifice artistry for time spent in this particular interface?



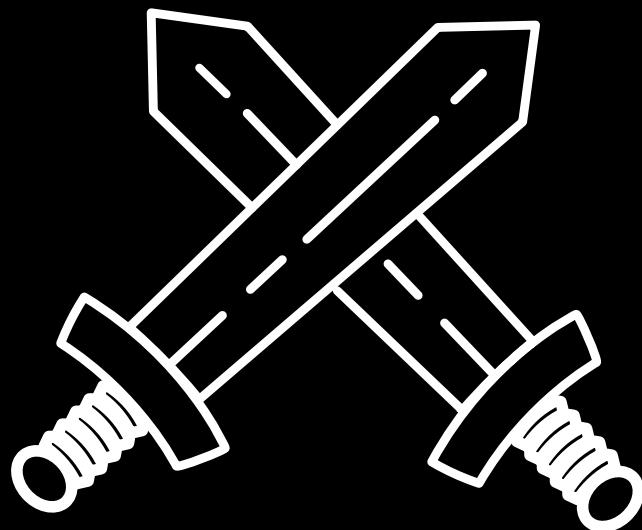
**Basic Info:** Kristen, 26,  
Monterey, Communications  
Student

**Key Interview Feedback:**

Immersion motivates replaying and revisiting interface (vs. avoiding)

Retention depends on presentation

Too much interface breaks immersion



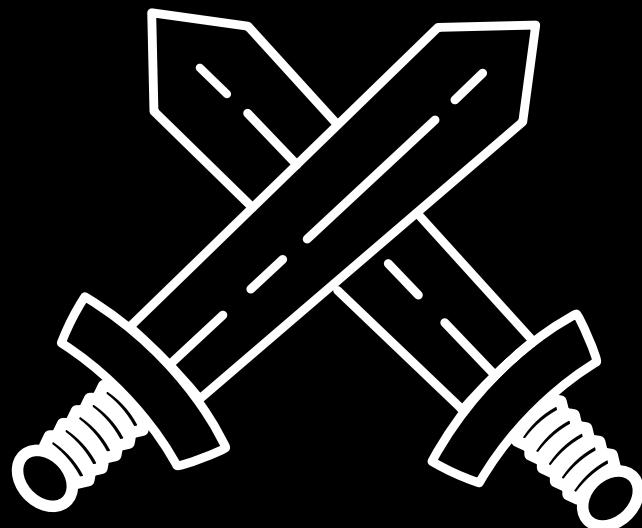
**Basic Info:** Annie, 30, Washington DC, Graduate Student

**Key Interview Feedback:**

Accessibility is overlooked in interfaces

Interfaces should cater to our shortening attention span

“Quick grab” information is most effective for retention



**Basic Info:** Jenny, 21,  
San Francisco, Law School Student

**Key feedback:**

Emotional experiences tend to connect,  
regardless of interface

The more realistic, the better

Overbearing “textual” information is no  
good--the more visual/artistic, the better

## Consultant & Expert Interview Summary

Benjamin Brown, 32  
Bay Area  
Ex-Videogame Livestreamer

### Key feedback:

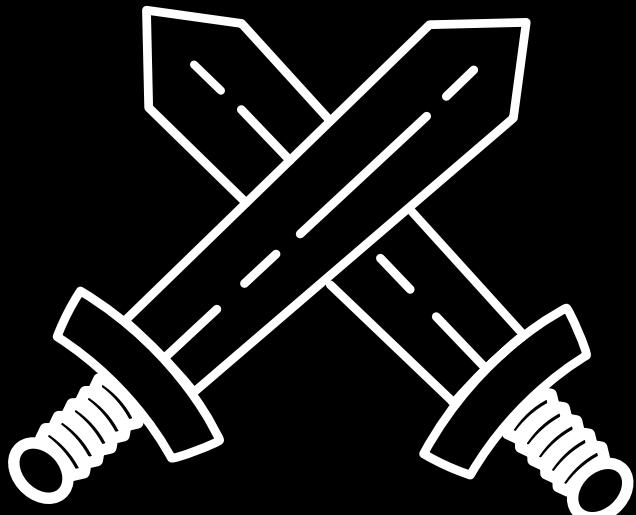
The balance of utility versus artistry in the interface design is completely dependent on the type of game being played

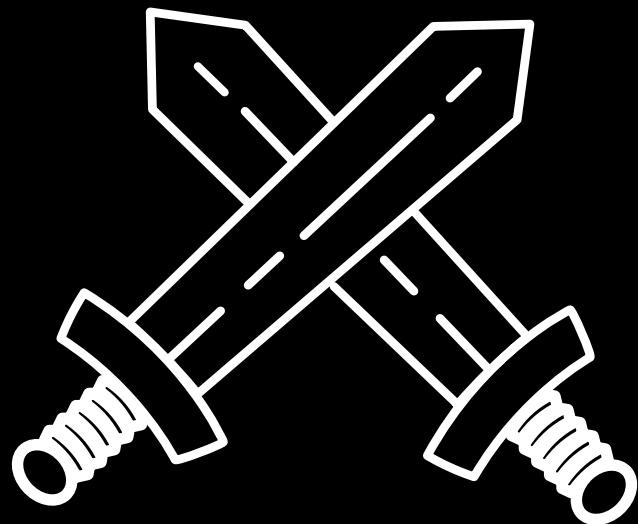
Fast-paced games need to be quick and strategy based, therefore they need to convey information quickly

As long as the artistic theme fits the game, it won't take away from the utility

There is a common mistake in many videogame designs where interface designers will attempt to create utility through complexity, but even for strategic players this can get exhausting

The story that you're telling in an interface directly relates to how well the player will connect with it, and in what amount of time





## Alexander

Age: 28

Occupation: Student/Journalist

Income: \$30K+

Alexander is an avid gamer. He loves games that challenge him to think critically and strategically, rather than games that allow plenty of room for exploration and aimless escapism. Therefore, he prefers RPG games that unlock new parts of the world - as opposed to open world games.

## Primary MVP Wireframes

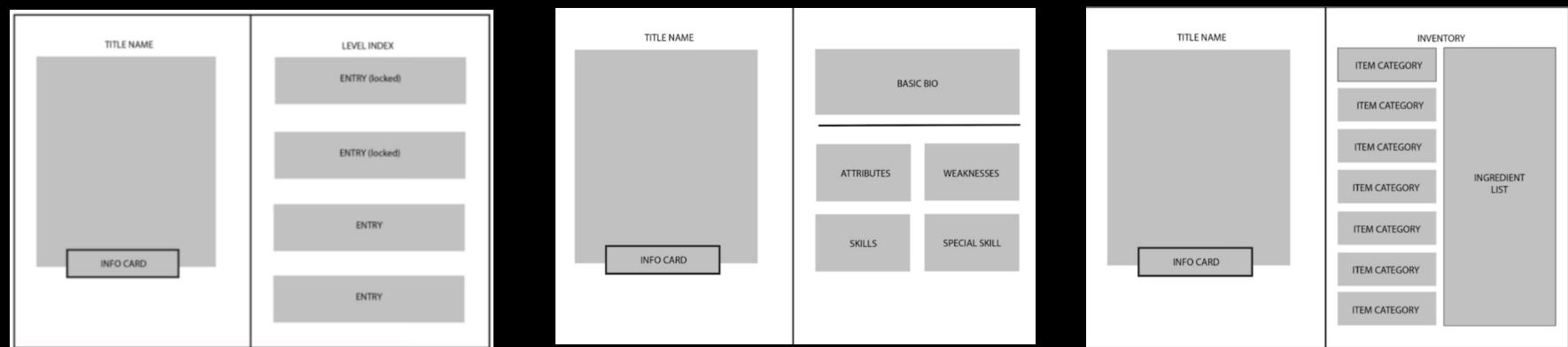
Three “base” pages of the bestiary - the inventory page, the biography, and the journal.

Key Points:

The journal and the biography pages are the most critical ones in the bestiary.

The inventory page is a utility page which will have an interactive component pertaining to the user's chosen weapon.

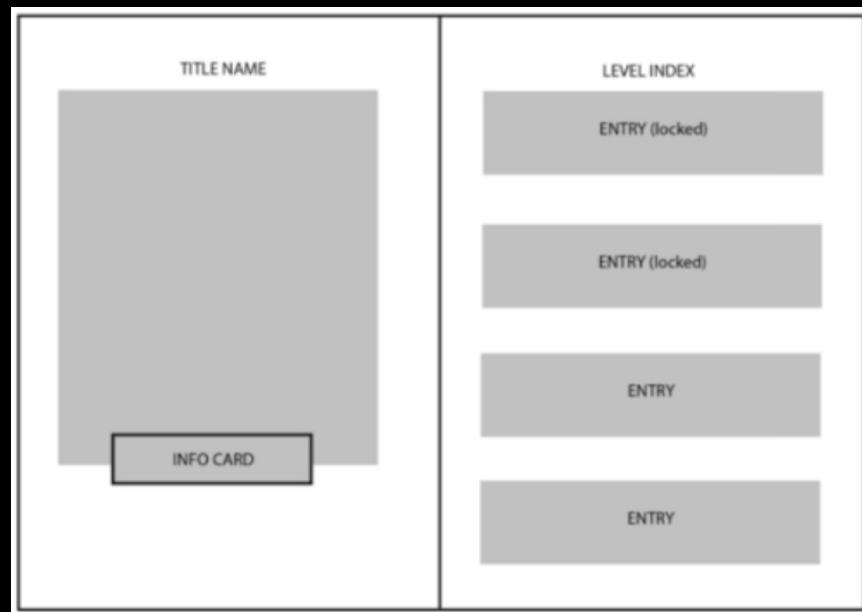
Depending on what they document in the journal and discover in the biography page, the user will go to the inventory and use what they find to defeat the cryptid on higher levels.





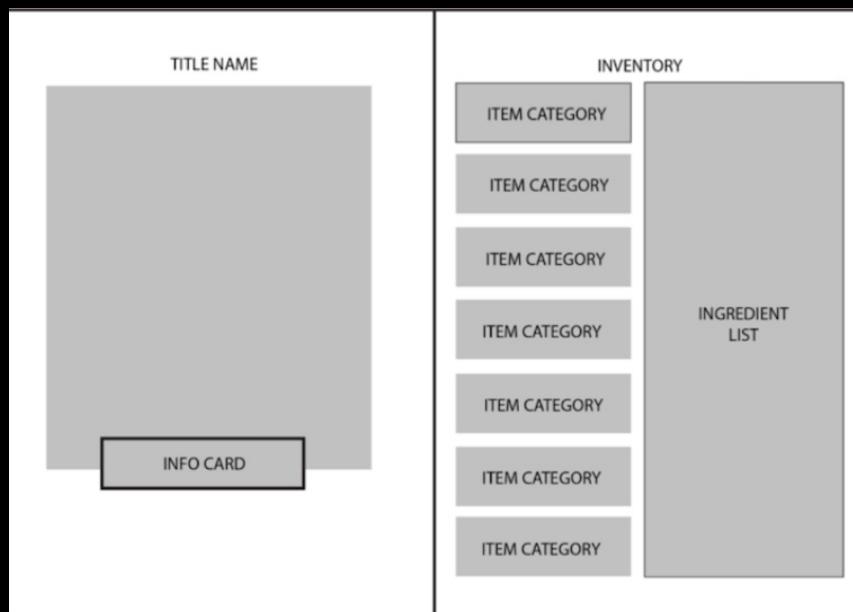
## The Biography

This is the introductory page to the bestiary - the user's first stop after the search page. This is where they will find information on the cryptid.



## The Journal

The journal is where the users will get to select a new entry to create - this is integral to their experience in the game, as they will use it as a reference guide for later levels.



## The Inventory

The inventory is the third primary page in the bestiary. It will feature a list of ingredients that the player has collected and may use in later levels.



The bestiary can be broken down into three diagram pieces - the game itself, generated by the game engine, the interface content, and the content generated by the user.

## Defining the Features

Art pages with information

Chart of ingredients

Tabs leading to various pages within each MVP

Map of creature's well-known whereabouts  
Strength tab, weakness tab

Personalized journal option

## Defining the Outcome

Player will be able to log their experience with the cryptid

Player will be able to interact with various screens showing strengths, weaknesses, etc.

Player will be able to look through/sift through various cousins of the cryptid

Player will be able to see their own inventory in relation to the cryptid

### Game Generator

Mythology Content  
Pre-generated data set

Game Engine  
Creates/generates outside game

### Non-User Generated Content

Monster Biography  
Pre-set inputs for insight fields

### User-Generated Content

Journal Entries  
Typed by gamer

Inventory  
Inventory slots generated by gamer



## MVP One: The Bio

This is the accompanying page to the cryptid image. Interactive index for user to browse information in.

Descriptive index, will contain “secret” hints and clues for the player to work out while they are fighting monster.

Engage the user and try to make them piece together what they can do to beat the monster.



## MVP Two: The Journal

An interactive journal/entry log. Player will use this to document their personal notes about the cryptid they faced at lower levels.

Entry-making feature for later reference.

Player feels immersed, has information to look back on when they face upper-level monster.

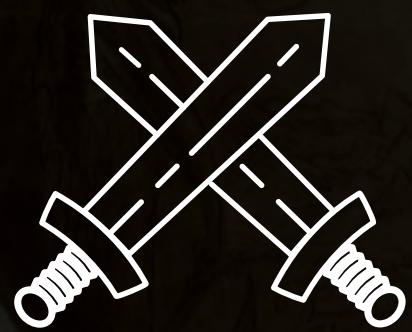


## MVP Three: The Inventory

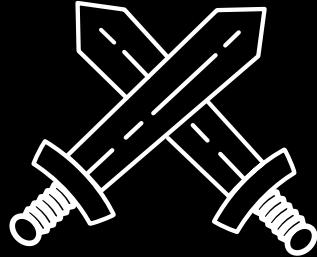
Inventory map. Based on the hints and clues that the bio page gives them, the user can look at what they have in their inventory that will help them beat the monster.

Chart of ingredients that the user has to use against cryptid.

Works like a puzzle for the user to figure out what to utilize.



Proof of Concept



## User Flow One: Document Your Battle

User will document the battle they just encountered and the monster they defeated.

**Outcome:** User will navigate to the journal entry in the bestiary and create a new entry documenting everything they learned.

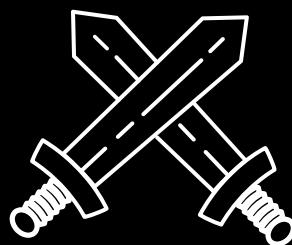
**1** Open journal to document your experience.

**2** Inspect the monster you faced in the journal.

**3** Unlock new available entry based on level passed.

**4** Document the battle, noting hints and info.

**5** Save your entry for later reference.



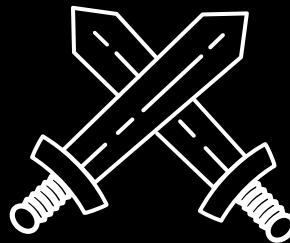
## User Flow One: Document Your Battle

Step No. (1/5)

Page: Bestiary Entry Page

Outcome: User open Bestiary and be directed to the search page, where they can search for the cryptid they just fought. This is the Bestiary entry.





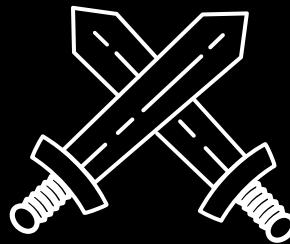
## User Flow One: Document Your Battle

Step No. (2/5)

Page: Bio Page

**Outcome:** User be directed to the cryptid's bio page, where they will find several options on what to do next.

A screenshot of a mobile application interface designed to look like an old, open book. The left page features a detailed line drawing of a Griffin, a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion. Below the illustration, the word "Griffin" is written in a serif font. A paragraph of text describes the creature: "A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion." The right page contains a navigation bar with three tabs: "Biography" (which is active, indicated by a blue circle), "Journal", and "Inventory". Below the tabs is a small map with a red dot and a path. The page is divided into sections: "Attributes" and "Weaknesses", each with three unlockable items (indicated by padlock icons and the word "[locked]"); "Battle Tactics" and "Special Skills", each also with three unlockable items. A large feather is visible in the bottom right corner of the right page. At the bottom left of the left page, there is a "Back" button with a left arrow icon.



## User Flow One: Document Your Battle

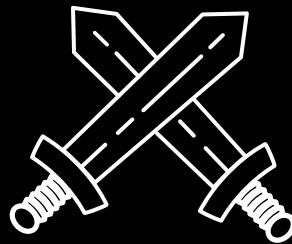
Step No. (3/5)

Page: Journal

**Outcome:** User will navigate to the journal entry. A new entry for that level will be unlocked. The user will have the option to write in it.

The screenshot shows an open journal with two pages. The left page features a detailed line drawing of a Griffin, a mythical creature with the head, wings, and tail of an eagle and the body, front legs, and back legs of a lion. Below the illustration, the word "Griffin" is written in a serif font. A descriptive paragraph follows: "A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion." The right page is a menu titled "Biography" with tabs for "Journal" and "Inventory". It lists ten levels from "Level One" to "Level Nine", each accompanied by a feather icon and the word "[locked]". A red ribbon bookmark is pinned to the right edge of the left page. A large feather quill pen lies across the bottom right corner of the journal. In the bottom left corner of the left page, there is a small "Back" button with a left arrow icon.

Level	Status
Level One	[locked]
Level Two	[locked]
Level Three	[locked]
Level Four	[locked]
Level Five	[locked]
Level Six	[locked]
Level Seven	[locked]
Level Eight	[locked]
Level Nine	[locked]



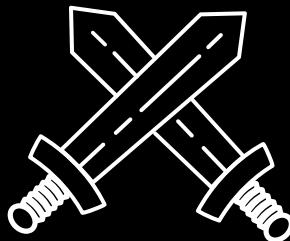
## User Flow One: Document Your Battle

Step No. (4/5)

Page: Entry Page

**Outcome:** User will document their experience, noting any specific events or outliers - as is instructed for them to pay attention to during the game.

A screenshot of a game's bestiary or journal system. The left page shows a detailed line drawing of a griffin, a mythical creature with the head, wings, and tail of an eagle and the body, legs, and claws of a lion. Below the illustration is the name "Griffin". A descriptive paragraph follows: "A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion." At the bottom left of the left page is a small "Back" button with a left arrow. The right page is titled "Level One" and contains a large text input field with the placeholder "Type here...". Above the input field are three tabs: "Biography" (underlined), "Journal", and "Inventory". At the bottom right of the right page is a brown "Save" button. The entire interface is styled like an old, worn book with a dark red cover.



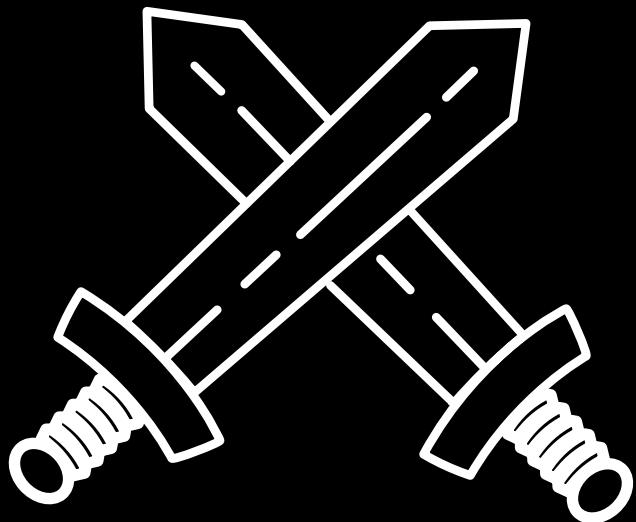
## User Flow One: Document Your Battle

Step No. (5/5)

Page: Entry Page

Outcome: User will finish typing and save their entry.

The screenshot shows an open journal with two pages. The left page features a detailed black-and-white illustration of a griffin, a mythical creature with the head, wings, and tail of an eagle and the body, legs, and claws of a lion. Below the illustration, the word "Griffin" is written in a serif font. A descriptive paragraph follows: "A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion." The right page contains a narrative entry in a box with a red ribbon tab: "The griffin attacked when I was on my way out of the ridge. It struck three times from the air before landing on the ground. Fire didn't do anything to stop it. Neither did the oil I applied to my weapon." Above the entry, there are tabs for "Biography", "Journal" (which is underlined), and "Inventory". At the bottom of the right page, a dark button with the word "Saved!" in white is partially visible, along with a feather quill pen resting on the bottom edge of the page.



Moderator: Lora

Tester: Annie

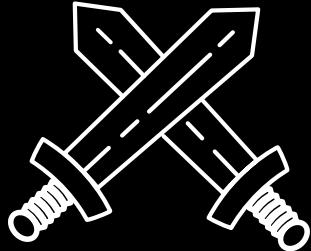
Task One: "Document Your Battle"

Key Feedback:

The "locked" icon should be unlocked, or otherwise swapped out for more icon variation.

The journal interface seems pretty simplistic in terms of design - some "toggling" variation would feel more interactive.

Some variation in the "locked" and "unlocked" journal entries would be helpful, visually.

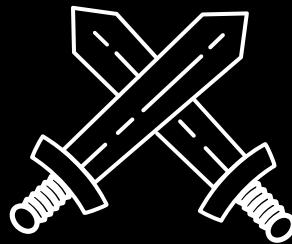


## User Flow Two: Learn About The Monster

In the cryptid biography, user will use the bestiary to learn more about the attributes and weaknesses of the monster they just faced.

**Outcome:** User will unlock new insights about the monster in preparation for the next confrontation on the following level.

- 1 Open journal.
- 2 Inspect the monster you faced in the journal.
- 3 Find monster's attributes and weakness boxes.
- 4 Select attribute or weakness box to unlock.

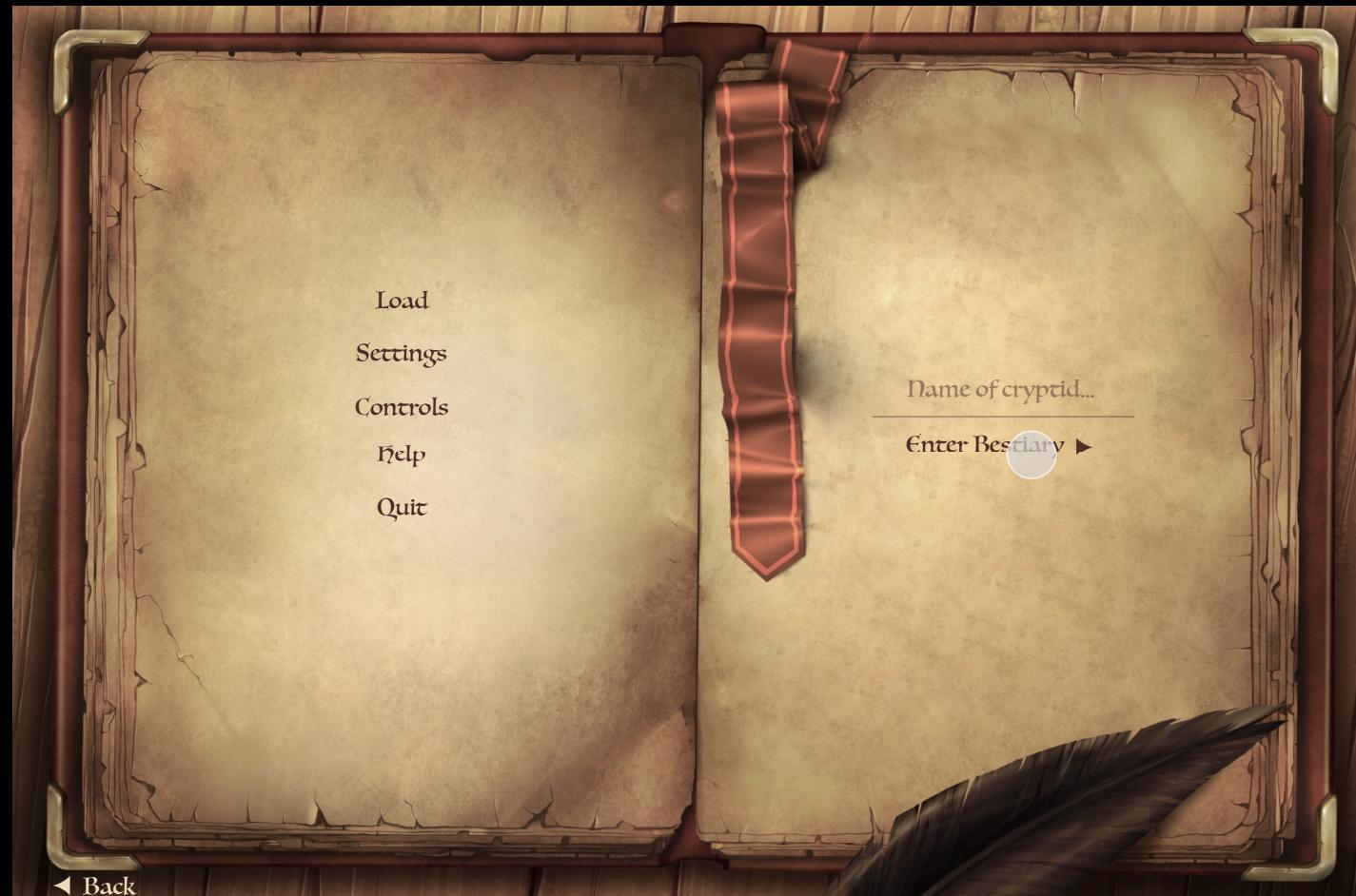


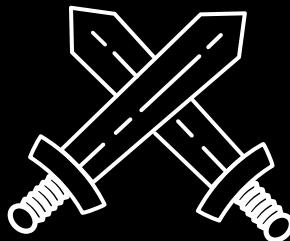
## User Flow Two: “Learn about the cryptid”

Step No. (1/4)

Page: Search

Outcome: User open Bestiary and be directed to the search page, where they can search for the cryptid they just fought. This is the Bestiary entry.





## User Flow Two: “Learn about the cryptid”

Step No. (2/4)

Page: Bio Page

Outcome: User be directed to the cryptids bio page, where they will find information pertinent to the next level.

**Griffin**

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

Attributes      Weaknesses

UNLOCK      UNLOCK

🔒 [locked]      🔒 [locked]

🔒 [locked]      🔒 [locked]

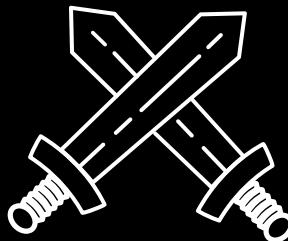
Battle Tactics      Special Skills

🔒 [locked]      🔒 [locked]

🔒 [locked]      🔒 [locked]

🔒 [locked]      🔒 [locked]

◀ Back



## User Flow Two: “Learn about the cryptid”

Step No. (3/4)

Page: Bio Page

Outcome: User will select an attribute to unlock.

The image shows an open book with aged, yellowish-brown pages. The left page is titled "Griffin" and contains a detailed line drawing of the creature. Below the drawing, a paragraph describes it as a legendary creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion. The right page has a header with three tabs: "Biography" (which is selected), "Journal", and "Inventory". It features a small map at the top. Below the map are two columns of information: "Attributes" and "Weaknesses". Under "Attributes", there is a feather icon followed by "Fire resistance" and a lock icon with the text "[locked]". Under "Weaknesses", there are three lock icons. The right column under "Weaknesses" is labeled "UNLOCK". Below these are sections for "Battle Tactics" and "Special Skills", each with three lock icons. A large feather is visible in the bottom right corner of the right page. At the bottom left of the left page, there is a small "Back" button with a triangle icon.

Griffin

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

Biography   Journal   Inventory

Attributes

Fire resistance [locked]

[locked]

[locked]

Weaknesses

UNLOCK

[locked]

[locked]

[locked]

Battle Tactics

[locked]

[locked]

[locked]

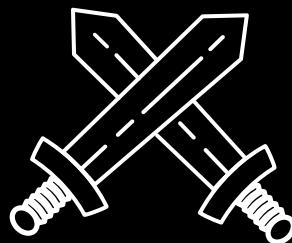
Special Skills

[locked]

[locked]

[locked]

◀ Back



## User Flow Two: “Learn about the cryptid”

Step No. (4/4)

Page: Bio Page

Outcome: User will select weakness to unlock, rendering them ready to face the cryptid again with new information.

The image shows an open book with aged, yellowish pages. The left page features a detailed line drawing of a griffin, a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion. Below the drawing, the word "Griffin" is written in a serif font. A paragraph of text describes the creature: "A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion." The right page contains several sections: a map at the top, followed by tables for "Attributes" and "Weaknesses". The "Attributes" table includes "Fire resistance" (locked) and "Water breathing" (locked). The "Weaknesses" table includes "Snowberry" (locked), "Ice breath" (locked), and "Water resistance" (locked). Further down are tables for "Battle Tactics" and "Special Skills", both of which currently show all entries as locked. At the bottom left of the right page, there is a small "Back" button with a left arrow icon.

Griffin

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

Biography Journal Inventory

Attributes

Fire resistance	[locked]
Water breathing	[locked]

Weaknesses

Snowberry	[locked]
Ice breath	[locked]
Water resistance	[locked]

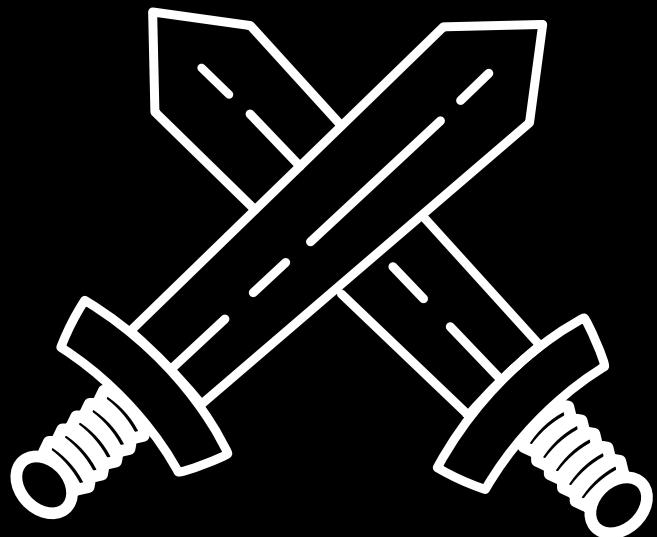
Battle Tactics

[locked]
[locked]
[locked]

Special Skills

[locked]
[locked]
[locked]

◀ Back



Moderator: Lora

Tester: Kristen

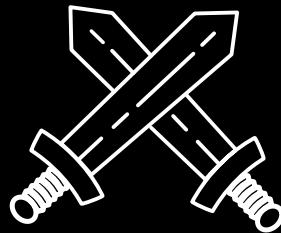
Task: "Learn about the cryptid"

Key Feedback:

The first screen needs to have more narrative.

For some who never plays games, the interface would be confusing as is.

Is there a login? Do we need a username? What do we actually "search" for that the bestiary demands of the user? The monster's name?



### User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

User will select a poison from their inventory to use on the monster in the upper levels.

**Outcome:** User will be better equipped to defeat the monster than they were before, based on the new uncoked weakness/attributes they read about.

1 Open journal.

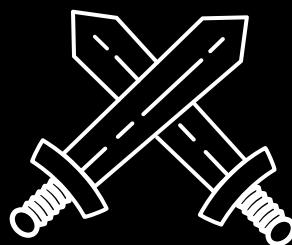
2 Inspect the monster you faced in the journal.

3 Find monster's "weakness" panels.

4 Unlock weakness insight to read.

5 Navigate to inventory page in bestiary.

6 Scroll through ingredients to find weakness.



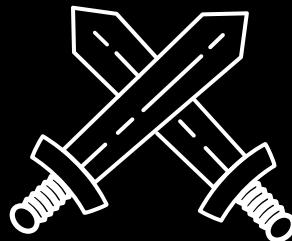
### User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

Step No. (1/6)

Page: Search

Outcome: User open Bestiary and be directed to the search page, where they can search for the cryptid they just fought. This is the Bestiary entry.





## User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

Step No. (2/6)

Page: Bio Page

Outcome: User be directed to the cryptids bio page, where they will find several options on what to do next.

**Griffin**

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

◀ Back

**Biography** **Journal** **Inventory**

**Attributes** **Weaknesses**

UNLOCK UNLOCK

🔒 [locked] 🔒 [locked]

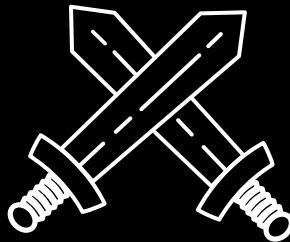
🔒 [locked] 🔒 [locked]

**Battle Tactics** **Special Skills**

🔒 [locked] 🔒 [locked]

🔒 [locked] 🔒 [locked]

🔒 [locked] 🔒 [locked]



## User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

Step No. (3/6)

Page: Journal

**Outcome:** User will unlock one of the “weaknesses” insights, discovering that the cryptid has a weakness to snowberry, which they can find in their inventory.

**Griffin**

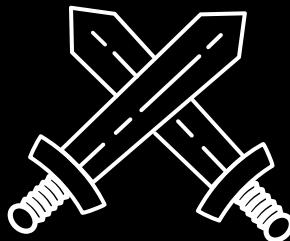
A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

**Biography** **Journal** **Inventory**

Attributes	Weaknesses
UNLOCK	Snowberry
🔒 [locked]	🔒 [locked]
🔒 [locked]	🔒 [locked]

Battle Tactics	Special Skills
🔒 [locked]	🔒 [locked]
🔒 [locked]	🔒 [locked]
🔒 [locked]	🔒 [locked]

◀ Back



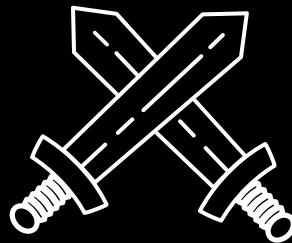
### User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

Step No. (4/6)

Page: Inventory

Outcome: User will navigate to the inventory page, where they can find the ingredient they need.





## User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

Step No. (5/6)

Page: Inventory

Outcome: User will open up the poisons category and find that they have collected snowberry available for application to their weapon.

Griffin

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

Biography Journal Inventory

Poisons

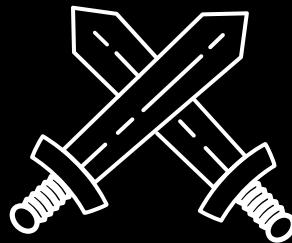
Snowberry  
+1 Damage  
+7 Frost Damage

Weapons

Armor

Food

◀ Back



## User Flow Three: Pick Your Poison

Step No. (6/6)

Page: Inventory

Outcome: The user applies the poison to their weapon and the task is complete. They can return to the game using the “back” button.

Griffin

A griffin is a legendary creature known to have the head and wings of an eagle, and the body, tail, and back legs of a lion.

Biography   Journal   Inventory

Poisons

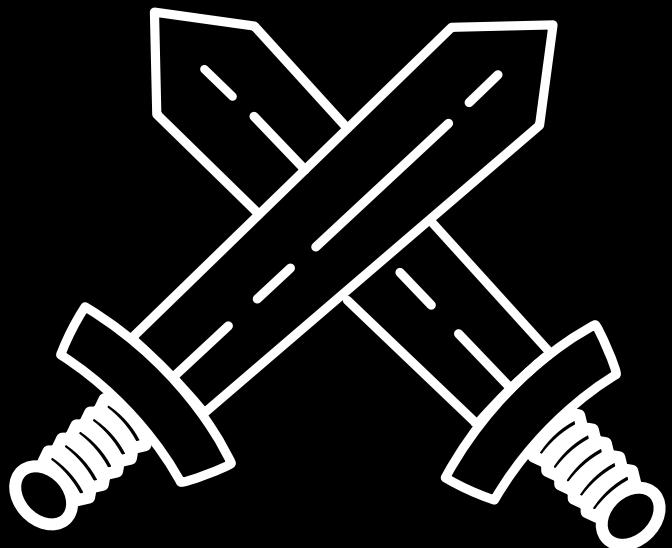
Snowberry  
+1 Damage  
+7 Frost Damage   Applied!

Weapons

Armor

Food

◀ Back



Moderator: Lora

Tester: Jenny

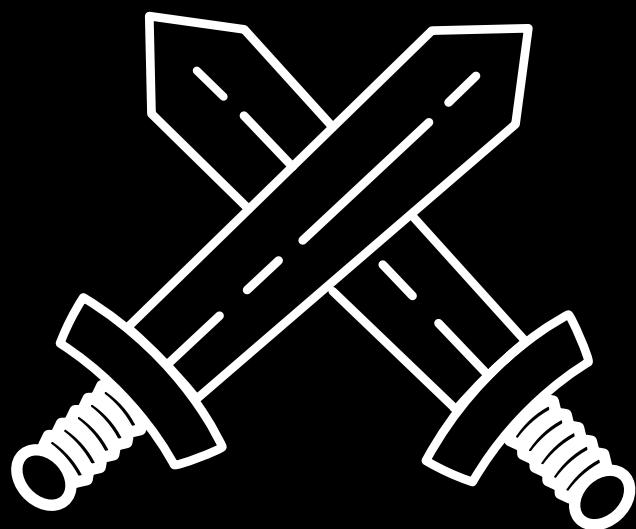
Task: "Pick your poison"

Key Feedback:

There are multiple icons that are being used over and over again - there needs to be some variation.

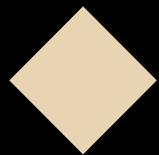
Once we're far enough into the task, don't know how to get back.

There's an inconsistency between the art style of the icons chosen.



## Luminari Text/Thin

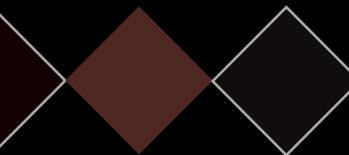
#130002



#E7D3B2

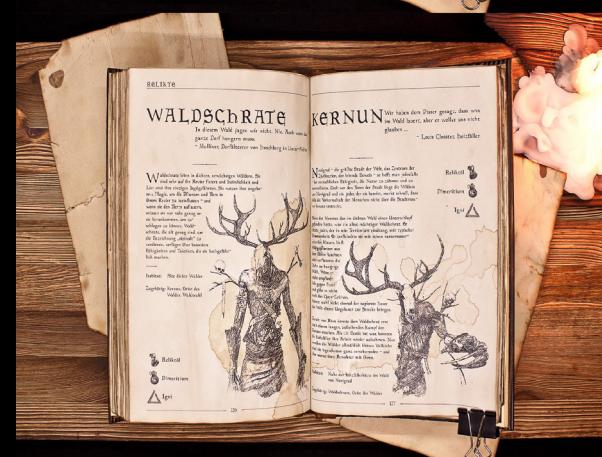
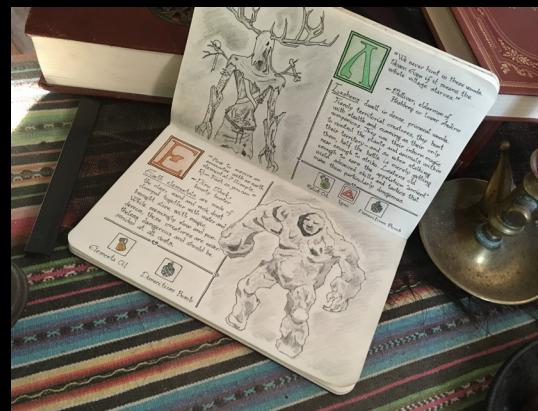
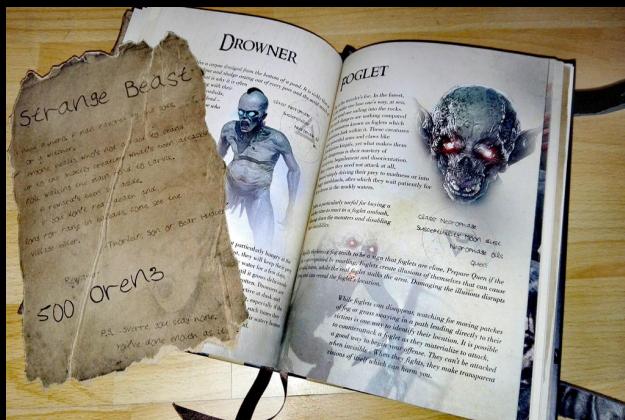


#130E0D



#4E2820







## Prototype

<https://xd.adobe.com/view/9c51973a-391b-475d-bff5-b819e8397ece-c902/>