

Personal Contributions

Prior to this course, I had very little experience with board games in general. The extent only goes as far as playing Catan a handful of times in high school, and various standard card games. Needless to say, I was not very experienced, nor was I particularly sure of what initial steps to take.

To make up for my lack of experience, I immediately put a lot of effort into designing the way our cards would play, starting with '**Event Cards**'. The design process is explored further in the next chapter.

In an attempt to ease the burden of tracking potentially hundreds of cards, and making it easy to quickly make proposed changes to a card, including its name, description, effects, icon, and the amount of instances of it in the deck, [I created an excel sheet](#) with easily implementable cards, and automatic tracking of existing cards.

Furthermore, I was consistently bringing new design perspectives to the table during discussions, explaining my reasoning for and against various topics and mechanics. I was always very open to hearing and discussing my teammates perspective on perceived flaws in our game, because as designers, we tend to tunnel vision on our own ideas a lot, without realizing or disregarding fundamental flaws in the concept.

Most writing was done either by me entirely, or rewritten for clarity and grammar. That includes the titles, flavour text, descriptors, and more, on all cards, as well as the rule book.

Name	Description	Option 1 (Prep)	Option 2 (Resource)	Option 3 (Health)	Image	Count
Bear Attack	A bear has been spotted! You must act quickly before things take a turn for the worse!	You find your only bullet at the base of a nearby tree. (-1 Gun, +5 Health)		The bear stole some food from the base of a nearby tree. (-5 Health)		1
Rainstorm	Heavy Rain™ has enveloped the camp and is wetting everything. Find a way to protect your most valuable resources before they become unusable!	Use your Tarp to cover all resources from the rain. (-1 Tarp)		Work together to collect sticks and twigs along the riverbank. Everyone becomes sick from the rain. (-5 Health)		1
Mysterious Noise	The party is awoken during the night by a suspicious noise. Listen closely through the dark forest; you see a faint silhouette of what appears to be a person.	Use your Flashlight to illuminate the strange figure. (-1 Flashlight)	Use your torches to light the campfire. (-1 Torch)	Everyone remains back to the camp. Cold and dark. (-5 Health)		1
Heatstroke	A sudden heatwave hits the camp grounds. Consume enough fluids before you all suffer from heatstroke!	Use your Hydration Pack to cool yourself down. (-1 Hydration Pack)	Consume half your supply of rations in order to stay hydrated. (-1 Ration)	No one can move. Next turn, no repair actions are permitted. Wait for the weather to cool off.		1

FRIDAY THE 17 TH

The Story

It was supposed to be a peaceful weekend getaway. Four friends set out on a camping trip deep in the woods, leaving their phones behind. They were lost, but on the night of Friday the 17th, something ancient stirred beneath the forest floor. One camper wandered off, lured by a whispering voice. The others were shocked, but they weren't quite the same. Now, a strange event unfolded as the group tried to figure out what had happened. The "Curse," works in secret to destroy them. **Objectives**

- Innocents: Work together to gather resources and repair all three locations before ration's run out.

- Cursed: Secretly sabotage the groups efforts to gather resources and deplete all rations before the three locations are repaired.

Game Setup

- Place the Playing Board Map at the center of the table. - Place Ration Boxes on each player's side of the map space. Begin with 20 rations. - Shuffle and place the Action Card deck face down. - Deal 5 Action Cards to each player before shuffling. - Deal 5 Event Cards separately. - Shuffle the Event Cards and place them into the Action Card deck. - Shuffle the Event Cards without changing their order. - Repeat this process 4 more times. Pay attention while shuffling to prevent mishaps.

REMEMBER!
Keep your intentions for yourself; you never know who might be listening.

Refer to the chapter "Repairing & Voting" for more information about what happens at the end of a turn.

Playing the Game

Preparation Cards

Powerful lantern cards which can quickly turn the tide of an event, or provide a beneficial boost to resources.

Draw Action Cards until you hold a maximum of 5. If you have more than 5 Action Cards, you may draw 1 or 2 more cards until you reach the limit of 5. Draw cards in clockwise fashion.

Resolve Event Cards as they are drawn.

Example:
Bare Attack: This action will allow the party to fight a bear. Fishing Rod: With its passive effect, you gain 2x ration from the "To Fishing" action.

Action Cards

Action Cards drive the main gameplay. Each card has two distinct sides, split in half. The side facing up is the action, and the side facing down is the resource. Use your Action Cards to move around the play board. Line up your desired half with the arrows.

Event Cards

If any player draws an Event Card from the deck, they must resolve it immediately before continuing the turn.

Good Events: Provide unexpected help.

Example: Supply Cache Gain 1 Prep Card. Red Bear: Gain 1 Action Card.

Bad Events: Provide unexpected harm.

Example: Mysterious Noise Lose 1 Flashlight and +2 Rations.

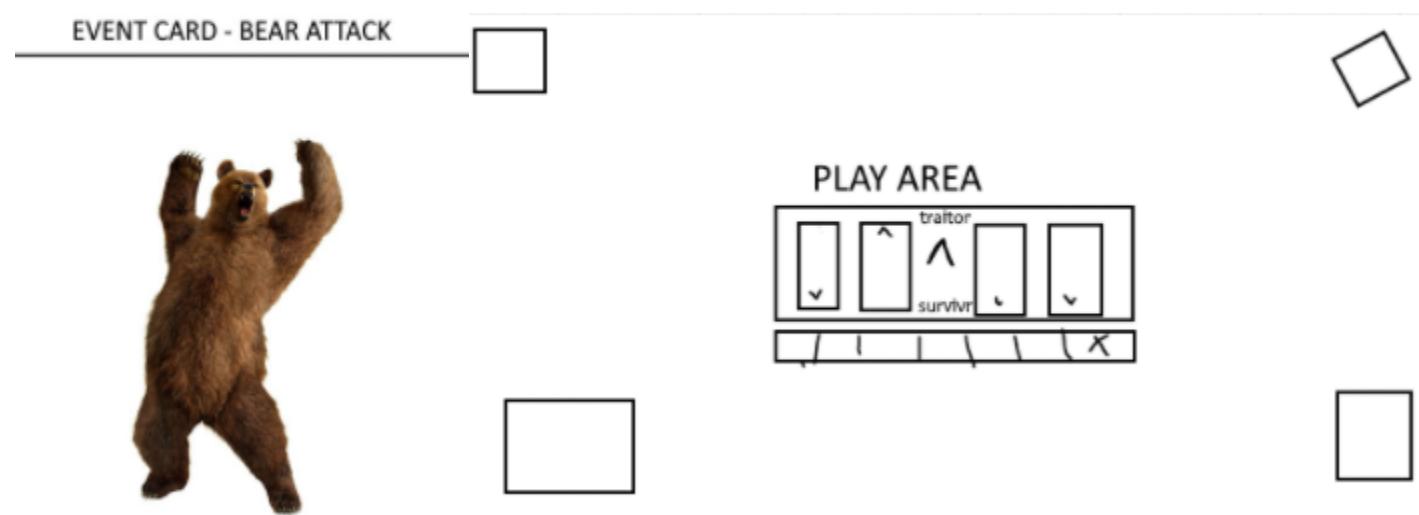
Design Reflection

Our initial game concept was broadly based on a handful of board games and video games that we had either played together on the inauguration day of the course, or throughout our lifespan. Some reference games include Among Us, [Deep Sea Adventure](#), Dead by Daylight, and [Three Cheers for Master](#).

From these reference games, I looked at what made them stand out, and what their main gameplay loop was about, and *why* they are so addicting.

The aspect I identified was most engaging with Deep Sea Adventure, was how collaborative, yet destructive the game was. You are on your own, but you share a health resource with your opposing players.

I felt like this mechanic was really gripping and proposed a similar idea to the team. Collectively we agreed, and work began on what eventually became “Friday the 17th”.



1. Use [GUN] to kill bear. +5 rations.

2. Spend 5 [Stones] to fend off the bear

3. Bear attacks and steals 5 rations.

Depictions of the prototyped event card and play board. The general gameplay loop remained the same throughout the whole project, but major design and balancing choices were made to make the game more engaging and enjoyable.

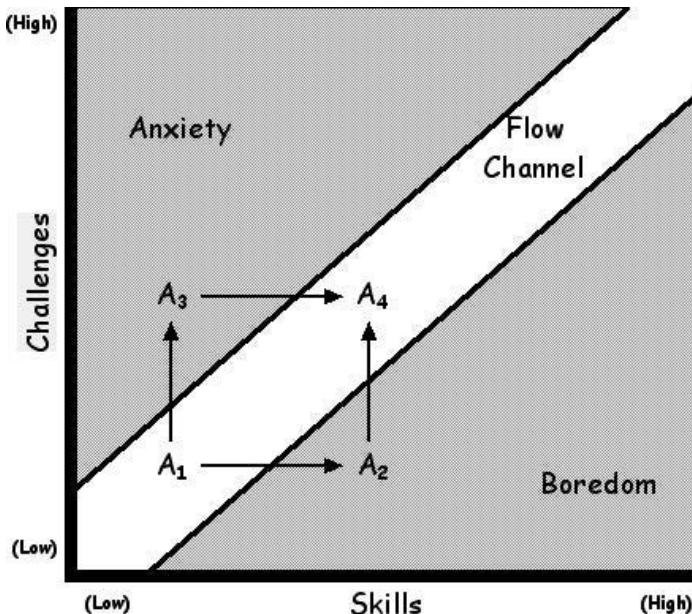
Early on in development we were notified that the traitor role felt lackluster, and unimpactful. As a remedy, I took initiative and proposed using a lesson learned from one of the lectures: *Exploring the extremes*. We granted the traitor unimaginable power

compared to previous iterations, buffing all their cards capabilities, while also granting them entirely new abilities such as destroying fully repaired structures from the survivors, a power so overwhelming it was quickly removed, although it was very fun for the traitor in the moment.

Furthermore, I made sure to always *follow the fun* – a game design principle I often refer to, and for good reason. Whenever I saw playtesters having fun, I took note of what was happening in the game at that moment. For instance, some of our earliest playtesters were all at their most engaged point during each event.

Knowing this, I proposed the following decisions to the group:

1. Randomize when an event card is drawn, by inserting them randomly into the action card deck. This led to increased tensions inbetween player turns, because you never knew if you would be the one to pull a potentially game-changing or destructive event.
2. Increase the dramatic tension between turns, slowly building up with each event. To ease tensions, we added positive events, while easing the crushing impact that some events previously had.



From *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*
by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (page 74)

Iteration &

Playtesting

I know from previous game design experience that playtesting is a superpower that is unmatched, and provides measurable feedback on what in the game feels good vs. what doesn't.

We conducted a total of seven playtests, three of which were internal, and with each subsequent playtest we gathered feedback, analyzed the core criticism, and iterated on the issue until we reached a desirable outcome. A recurring topic that we often discussed was economy balance, so with that in mind I set out to find a solution.

With our new and improved deck of action cards based on playtesting, I randomly drew four cards, noted the resulting actions, and repeated the processes a total of 10 times. The experiment resulted in a few discoveries:

1. We had multiple duplicate cards that were skewing the odds. Those were subsequently removed and replaced with newer, balanced cards.
2. The new odds with the updated cards were not at a desirable split, so I made a handful of changes to resource and ration gains to reach an average 70/30 split (Resources/Rations). This yielded the most fair feeling gameplay result.
3. As a result of the previous discoveries, all resource yields and the amount of cards yielding resources were modified to provide higher average yields. For example, all +1 cards were changed to +2, and the amount of resource cards was adjusted to be evenly distributed, with +5 cards being 50% more rare.

By the end of this study, resource card odds had been adjusted to the following:

Resource	% of total resource value	Feedback
Rations	52 / 175 ≈ 29.7 %	- Event Cards might benefit from a white back face. Prevents you from seeing 'through' the deck, and distinguishing when an event card is about to come up. Importance: 2 (1-5)
Stone	41 / 175 ≈ 23.4 %	- Rule Book images, depiction of cards in the book. Gives better clarity and conveys information better than a wall of text. Importance: 5
Wood	41 / 175 ≈ 23.4 %	- Order of chapters in rule book should adhere to their importance. More important stuff at the start. Importance: 4
Rope	41 / 175 ≈ 23.4 %	- Mirrored board layout so players on both sides of a table can play the game comfortably. Importance: 5
		- Too much text in rule book, centralize/streamline categories. Importance: 5

41 being the total yield contributed by each non-Rations resource (Stone/Wood/Rope). **175** = the total yield from all 59 cards.

This lesson was also something I picked up from the lectures, where the probability of things can be tweaked to reach a more desirable gameplay experience.

To summarize, I have personally contributed by detailing my thought process in discussions about new mechanics or changes to existing ones; applied game design principles and practices to drive the engagement further, resulting in a more fun experience; measured and tweaked the game balance through mathematical probabilities; and frequently pushed for other people to provide their own perspective on our collective creative process. By and large, I am happy with my contribution.