

Save the Garden

2 + Players
A magical journey is ahead!

From the outside, the garden is beautiful. Peace and sunshine exude from the flowers and sprouting vegetables. However, this is not the case for its inhabitants. The creatures living in the garden have been living in a world of turmoil and distress since the drought has taken away a majority of their resources. In these critical times, despite their differences, the creatures of the garden must come together to survive.

Supplies

© A deck of cards

♥ The player who pulled the card creates a solution

♠ All creatures work together and agree on the next action/solution

♦ Each creature states what they would do and the group decides on the best action

♣ The player who's turn it is selects one creature to respond to the obstacle

Obstacles

1. Each player must come up with a magical garden creature and share with the group. Include special abilities. Shuffle the deck.

Round 1

After deciding which player goes first, the player who's turn it is draws a card from the deck of cards. The card's number is assigned an obstacle. The player reads the obstacle aloud to the group.

After the obstacle is read out loud, the player to the left of the player who's turn it is draws another card. The suite of this card determines how the creatures react and handle the situation. (These can be seen under the Supplies)

According to the suite, the creatures work together to respond to the obstacle.

Repeat for as many rounds as enjoyable!

1. All of the fruits and veggies have shriveled up. So the snails have eaten the mushrooms just outside the garden. The snails start to feel funny. They attack the frogs, causing a war in the rose garden.

2. The tomatoes have rotbed, bringing in an entire family of unfriendly squirrels. They trample the little that's left of the tomatoes.

3. Due to the lack of water, a fire has started to spread. If this fire is not stopped, there will be no food for the wildlife.

4. The soil is dry and not fertile. In an effort to revive it, the creatures have started using their own special fertilizer. It resulted in toxic veggies.

5. Due to starvation, the creatures broke out into a fight over the last strawberry. Each side has compelling arguments.

6. The pond in the garden has completely dried up, causing the fish to grow legs. But since they have never had legs before, they are clumsy and wreak havoc in the garden.

7. The raccoons have arrived for their monthly raid. There is no food, so instead they start to take the creature children.

8. The leader of the garden quits out of frustration. The garden creatures crumble out of the lack of guidance.

9. The dog comes into the garden and leaves a surprise... The creatures of the garden take it as a source of nutrients.

10. Severe climate change has caused a sudden snow storm. The crops freeze over and everyone is shivering.

ace: The garden cat brings in her kitten. One of them accidentally swallows the last blue berry.

jack: The gardener cuts off all of the dead leaves from the bush. The creatures get angry and create a plan for revenge.

queen: The dry soil cracks and creates a massive trench in the middle of the garden, creating a dangerous gap.

king: A garden fairy comes to visit the garden, but accidentally leaves her magic wand.

Milena Pesic

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Save the Garden Playtest Report

I playtested my one page role playing game with my three roommates. I gave them the game with as little preface as possible, in efforts to not bias them or give them an idea of what to do. I tried to do this so I could see their honest responses and reactions to my game mechanics and ruleset. When I created this game, I had the intention of evoking an enjoyable, whimsical, and slightly humorous experience. I wanted my players to have the freedom to have fun with their responses as well as their character creations. In order to do this, I created the mechanic of each suite representing a different player to player interaction. I thought that this would ensure fun responses, and also not feel as repetitive from round to round. The obstacles I created were also in efforts to keep the game light, and guide the game with a less serious feeling. I left them open ended so the players had room to be creative.

As I was observing the playtest, I noticed that this room for creativity was successfully achieved, but at the same time, it left my playtesters with the sense that they needed more instruction. At times they struggled to come up with solutions to the obstacles, and also agreeing on a good response took quite a bit of discussion. I also noticed that some obstacles worked better than others, some created awkward pauses and others flowed and evoked some great reactions. One thing that stood out to me was the way the players were interacting with each other. What I was not expecting to happen was that, at times, it almost felt like the creatures they created were going against each other instead of working together to fight the drought. Although this was not necessarily my intention, it created fun banter. One thing that my playtesters suggested I change is the aspect of the creatures having “abilities” since they didn’t really come into use in my rules. Overall, I got some really great feedback from my roommates and it was really awesome to see how they interpreted and interacted with the narrative.