

Set up/decisions:

Chronological Narrative:

Someone purchased food from Nathan's, brought it to the lab, heated it up, ate it, immediately got a stomach ache, had some bad gas, and everyone fled the lab, screaming.

- What is the player experience goal? (*Given it's not the primary playtest focus*)
 - Observing organic curiosity and motivation to interact with photos and environment given recognition the two match.
 - Suspense, amusement, curiosity, investment, empathetic emotional response
- Who took the photos?
 - Playtest facilitator
 - Link to the past like in-game, in a loose sense.
- How do we want to provide more photos for the player?
 - They are found in the "past."
 - The player starts with them in their "album."
 - The player finds them in the "present."
 - Collectibles have photos.

~~How do we want to alter the environment to diegetically convey this narrative?~~

-
- How do we do this in a replicable and timely manner in a live playtest?
 - Establish a maximum time that 'turning back the time' cannot pass.

Narrative (Player POV):

Every photo needs to add new information to the narrative.

1)

- Stummy Ache
 - Crumpled napkins
 - Maybe have the next photograph hidden in there?
 - Excess sweat prints on the table

2/3)

- Microwave
 - Food inside
 - *Make it look like the food is inside by taping a picture of the food to the inside of the microwave door.*
 - First visual introduction to buffo chicky soup.
 - Have someone look curious at the smell, plugging their nose.

3/2)

- Establishing Shot
 - People
 - In-Person Team Members & Mitch, the External Artist
 - Location
 - At Nathan's
 - Interactables
 - Introduced along with receipt and/or bag.

4)

- Gas
 - Someone toots
 - Everyone else looks nauseous & running away
 - Have someone's shoe fall off, hide the photo in there
 - Chairs strewn about, backpacks tossed

5)

- Crawling POV
 - Crawling for dear life and other people fall on their way out the door
 - Febreze that's in the trash can gets moved to the desk

Set-Up:

How to make things "natural"

//Flick food into microwave - Napkins in trashcan

Left ID to imply rush and allow player back into lab

Place photos in manner that seems real

Materials needed:

Photos - Wren Goes to Walgreens tonight

Album - Goodwill?

Food/Food remnants - Nathan's/Tandoor?

Backpacks

Febreze - ~~shit i have some at my apartment but i forgot to bring it~~

Blue Recycling Bin - put Nathan's photo in there when testers replace it

Order of process day of:

Label pictures on the back? $\frac{1}{6}$ kind of thing

Place photos around the lab (outside of others' playtests so no interruption) (Trail of photos, lead to the next)

Hand player (cloroxed) photo album

Stalk them for notes

Order of what players interact with:

1. Grumpy stummy - *gets you* headphones, water bottle, sammy foil, nathan's bag, coke bottle and next photo
2. bag microwave - *gets you* jacket and next photo
3. Jacket juggle - *gets you* backpack, juggling balls and next photo
4. Backpack struggle - *gets you* rrrrr
5. Febreze trash selfie - recycle bin, "febreze" bottle

5 PHOTOS IN TOTAL

1. **INITIAL PHOTO:** Upset stomach at chair
 - a. Line up - *gets you* headphones, water bottle, sammy foil, nathan's bag, coke bottle and next photo
2. **NEXT PHOTO:** Microwave and jacket (DON'T FORGET INNER MICROWAVE PIC)
 - a. Line up - *gets you* jacket and next photo
3. **NEXT PHOTO:** Running from chair with backpack
 - a. Line up: *gets you* backpack, juggling balls and next photo
4. **NEXT PHOTO:** leaving door reaching for febreze
 - a. Line up: *gets you* febreze bottle and **final Nathan's photo**

Questions: Overall Concept “Player Motivation with Photos”

How do players react to photos?

What do they do with the photos upon acquisition (into the photo album, abandon them, etc)?

Does the player understand how the photos connect?

Are the players motivated to follow the “steps”?

Day of Notes:

Multiple option shot = the image where Gav is running from the group and David is juggling

Test 1: (Weez)

Describes the photo out loud, starts doing spatial work, quick to find the scene

Figured out the microwave, collecting photos and putting them in album when done, doesn't talk about them again.

Gets lost when given vague location, perhaps a spatial thing with similar backgrounds for multiple places

Wants to interact with items that appear which is good

Led self with minimal direction,

Photos were out more, big cue



Test 2: (Pulkit)

Quick, didn't think too much about it
Holds photo up and compares it to world
Photos not in album, abandoned album
Again confused by multiple identifiers, point of conflict
Confused by update when not able to see next token
Needed cue, so perhaps change



Test 3: (Shubham)

Excited for moving around, likes the puzzle, likes to look at specifics, needs cue for interactions
First to interact with things, once learned interactions is much faster
Stumped by multiple option shot
Wants to interact with everything which is good! But gets distracted too
More cues
Many cues haha Needed to play Hot v Cold to eventually get to the end
Can be confusion when not deliberately shown "changes"





Test 4: done as a group of 3. (Kyle, Veronica, Triton)

Story is Gav's depressed. They can tell that he's having gastrointestinal distress.

Trying to pinpoint where Gav was sitting in first photo.

Found the chair he was sitting in.

Scene has been rebuilt and they're investigating. Found the photo. Figured out that people in the photos are not brought back. Moved to new scene and quickly rebuilt it.

Noticed the changes and are investigating the microwave.

Think something in the microwave exploded. Moved back to middle of the room.

Next scene found and rebuilt.

Noticed the juggling in the photo and the bean bags left behind

Began investigating the backpack and found photo.

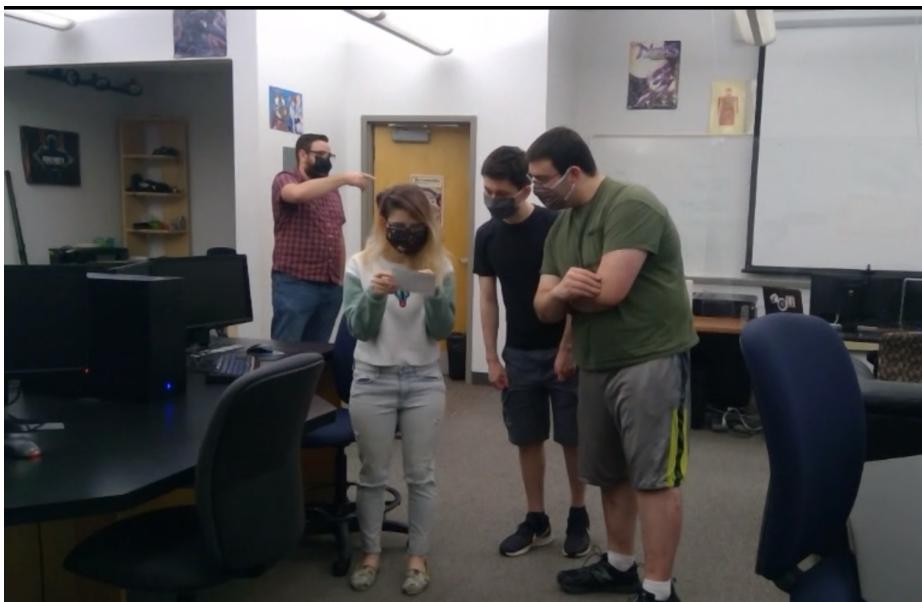
Mimicked the photo's camera angle and rebuilt scene.

Quickly investigated the bin for the last photo.

Enjoyed the scavenger hunt as a group.

Aimed to find a landmark, then an angle. Abby's shaking head served as good guidance at times.

Would have been more coherent if there was an order to it. Will have to work harder to make sure people don't get lost in the order of events.



Test 5: group of 2 (John, Jason)

Found and rebuilt the first scene quickly.
Found photo and moved to microwave area.
Scene rebuilt quickly. Blasting through this.
Questioned if we needed the used photo back (consumable)
Saw the used juggling balls.
Stuck at bag after moving it and not finding photo. Needed a nudge to look inside.
Found the site of Gav's demise by getting on the floor.
Made a break for Nathan's.
Was cool piecing things together. Changes between scenes was easily noticed.
Cool scavenger hunt.



Test 6: (Adi, Trent)

Adi found the nathan's trash hiding in the corner and was confused when he was wrong.
Trent swooped in and found scene 1.
Noticed Gav did not return to the scene.
Thoroughly investigated the scene. Very thorough.
Trent saves the day again
Found scene 2 quickly.
Moved jacket and found scene 3.
"Is Gav in all the photos? Handsome devil." - Adi
Noticed backpack quickly.
Had some issues finding the camera angle of Gav's demise.
Moved to new objects quickly.



Test 7 team of 3: (Erika, Nick, Emily)

Quickly figured out first spot
Need more dead bodies
Needed cue for interactions at first
Even participated in "past" recreation
Good level of interaction, escape room style
Differing levels of observation, interactables
Acting out the photo for the death scene,
Ignored air freshner

Designer notes:

Wants AR version instead of sit down in place

"Exploring everything for the first time versus seeing it again"

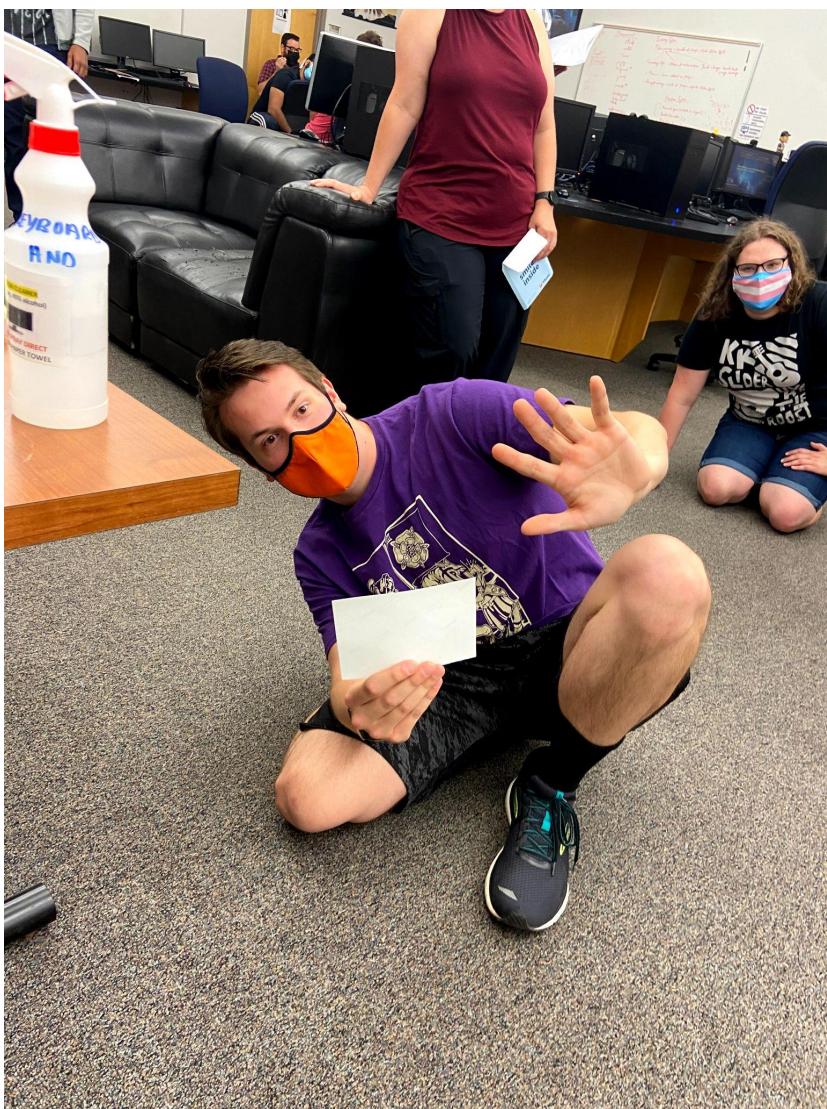
Cues are necessary, especially in the first one. More quest command maybe?

Dialogue for monologue?

Didn't recognize that needed to search the previous items, just thought general search

Almost recreated the scene instead of expecting the game to do it





Test 8: (Ben Snyder)

Used background to line up quickly,
Still playing with photo even when world “reverts”
Figured out the second photo location through exploration
Abandoned album in favor of holding photos directly
Light cue? Accidentally
Tries to match up the pictures together? Into the storyline? And nailing it with only 3 photos
Didn't struggle too much with the middle photo
Recognizes backpack and token
~~Goes to nathan's~~

Understands narrative pretty well while going through the playtest, Not explicitly told but figured narrative out through interactions, curiosity leads to discovery



Answering the Questions

How do players react to photos?

Players were quick to understand that the photographs were of the space around them and that they needed to find the camera person's angle in order to proceed. It was more interaction with common objects in front of them that they seemed to struggle with

What do they do with the photos upon acquisition (into the photo album, abandon them, etc)?

Several people abandoned the photo "album" while investigating other items, or held onto the little folder but never put the pictures back into it once they were done. One group even asked if the photos were "Single Use" and needed to be taken back after they matched the scene.

Does the player understand how the photos connect?

Only one or two tests had people connect the photos together, which means the players were more focused on the spatial element than what was featured in the images. Some did make comments on the featured people in the photos (Adi says Gav's a handsome devil) but there didn't see a connection between the events beyond that. They were more seen as individual events

Are the players motivated to follow the "steps"?

Once they figured out what they were doing, players didn't need much encouragement to continue following the path of photographs. Maybe it's an innate need to follow "breadcrumbs", and there should be further investigation if those same breadcrumbs would be followed if alternative items were included in the mix, or if the breadcrumbs would be prioritized over exploration