

## **The Big Birthday Bash! (Highlighted in Yellow are changes from Prototype 3)**

**Target Audience:** Children aged 3–6

**Estimated Playtime:** 15 minutes

**Platform:** Digital (Figma prototype version).

**Core Mechanic:** Character-focused forced choice, Item Distribution, Deferred Neighborhood Placement

**Primary Data Type:** Behavioral (choice order, spatial grouping, hesitation timing)

### **1. High-Level Concept**

The Big Birthday Bash! is a playful, single-player game where children help individual friends prepare for a birthday party by customizing them with specific items (e.g., hat, clothing toy, snack) one friend at a time, making explicit choices using a forced-choice rule (every item must be used, no repeats). After all the friends are customized, children place them in a neighborhood to reflect their social and spatial choices without introducing bias early.

The game is designed for implicit measurement rather than explicit questioning. Children's actions (who they help first, what items they give, where they place people) become the data that inform researchers about emerging social attitudes.

### **2. Narrative & Setting**

Game Phases & Rules will lay out the facilitator directions (FD) and script more specifically below.

### **3. Visual & Character Design**

- Friends: ~6, diverse in skin tones, presented with gender-neutral features.
- Items: Each child is assigned one hairstyle, one piece of clothing, one toy, and one snack/dish.
- Presentation: Friends start off to the side (do not show their faces initially); the player selects one to begin customizing.
- Neighborhood Map: Hidden or minimized until after all friends are customized. The map features clearly defined, livable buildings and distinct public areas, reflecting realistic living spaces.

### **4. Game Phases & Rules**

**Setup: Picking a Set of 6 Kids to Customize:**

**Facilitator Directions (FD):** Go to the Setup page of the Figma page with the human star figures.

**Narrative:** “It’s your birthday! You’re getting ready for the party with your friends. You’ve been told that you can invite 6 kids to the party. Who do you want to invite? Give them birthday hats to choose who to invite!”

### **Phase 1: Customizing Each Friend**

1. FD: Go to Phase 1 - Hair of the Figma page.

**Narrative:**

“Let’s get each friend party-ready by picking their special look! For hair, you have 8 styles to choose from and 6 friends to help. Which hairstyle do you want to give each friend? Some hairstyles might not get picked—that’s okay!”

After all hair selections, prompt:

“How did you decide who gets what hair? Were there any styles you didn’t want to use?”

2. FD: Go to Phase 1 - Clothes of the Figma page.

**Narrative:** “Now let’s help everyone choose their party costume! You have 8 costumes, but only 6 to give out. You can only give one outfit to each friend—some will be left out.”

After all clothes are assigned, prompt:

“How did you decide who gets what outfit? Were there any you didn’t want to use?”

3. FD: Go to Phase 1 - Gifts of the Figma page.

**Narrative:**

“Now, let’s decide what gift each friend will bring to your party. There are 8 gifts; you’ll only choose 6. Which ones do you most want to see at the party? Who will bring each gift?”

After all gifts are given out, prompt:

“How did you pick who brings each gift? Are there any gifts you didn’t want at the party?”

4. FD: Go to Phase 1 - Dish of the Figma page.

**Narrative:**

“Now let’s help everyone choose the dish they’re bringing for you to the party! You have

8 delicious dishes, but only 6 can come to the party. Decide which friend brings which dish—remember, two dishes will stay behind.”

After all gifts are given out, prompt:

“Yay! Now that everyone is ready, the party has begun!”

**Mechanic:**

- Players select one friend at a time.
- From a present pile, pick one item for each slot (no repeats; every item must be used).
  - E.g., 6 hats, 6 snacks, 6 toys for 6 friends.
- Place each item physically onto the character (e.g., hat on head, toy in hand).
- Repeat for all friends until the pile is empty.

**Facilitator Prompts:**

“Which hat/toy/snack should this friend get?”

“Why did you pick that one for them?”

Encourage verbalization of choices, but do not interfere.

**Rules:**

- The child must use all items, with no doubling up or skipping.
- Items can’t be moved once placed.

**Data Captured:**

- Choice order (who is customized first)
- Item distribution patterns (who gets desirable items)
- Hesitation/decision time
- Rationale for choices verbalized by the child

**Phase 2: Assigning Homes (Deferred Neighborhood Placement)**

**Narrative:**

“Now that the party is over, we should send everyone home! Where does each friend live?”

**Mechanic:**

- Reveal the neighborhood map after all item assignments are complete.
- Children place each friend in a location on the map, including clearly marked houses/apartments or public places like playgrounds and beaches.
- No “wrong” answers; child decides placements freely.

**Facilitator Prompts:**

“Where do you think this friend should live?”

“What makes you want to put them there?”

Encourage the child to explain their choices.

Transformational Game Design Studio

Group 3

Alice Tang, Isabel Yin, Jason Park, Raeshana Sookhoo, Regine DeCossard

Assignment 3 - Prototype 3 Game Rules

**Data Captured:**

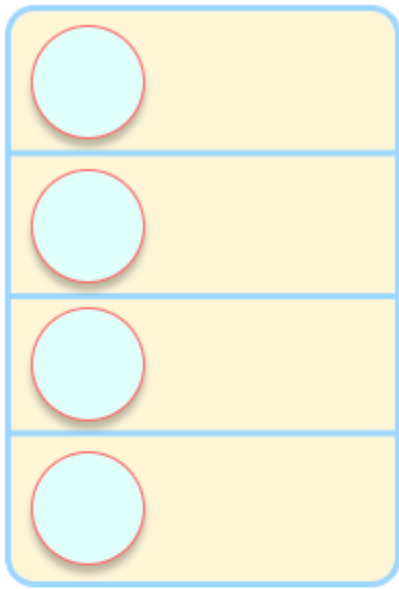
- Spatial proximity/grouping (who lives in which locations)
- Order and hesitation for housing choices
- Rationale for placement decisions

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