Dreamscape

A three-phase development plan

## Mechanical Premise

Dreamscape is a game that answers this problem question: “What if the players could manipulate the environment as the game progressed?” Three “invaders” and one “dreamer” compete for control of a grid of rotating tiles and the possession of the dreamer’s “secrets”.

## Phase 1: Fine Tuning Primary Mechanics

The first phase will strictly involve further testing and fine-tuning of the rotating tiles mechanic in relation to Dreamscape’s other essential mechanics: movement, possession of the “secrets”, and “combat” between the dreamer and the invaders. Three comparisons will be conducted to establish the relationships between them:

1. Rotating Tiles against Movement  
    These are the two most important mechanics to test; Dreamscape does not exist without them. Given two players - one with greater movement, and one with greater tile control - which one can navigate with more freedom? What ratio of movement to tile control results in “equal” freedom?
2. Escape against Combat  
    An age old question for the invader: fight, or flight? Is it better to avoid combatting the dreamer head-on, or meet them toe-to-toe? How much consequence should losing combat have? How much risk of losing combat should there be?
3. Action Economy  
    Another age old adage amongst gamers: the player who can take the most actions may likely win. How much advantage does the dreamer need to have against the invaders? Too much, and the invaders have no hope against the veritable demigod they have chosen to compete with. Too little, and the dreamer is hopelessly outmaneuvered by the more numerous invaders.

## Phase 2: Usability and Secondary Mechanics

Once the core experience is well tuned, development of more intuitive presentation can begin, as well as implementation of secondary mechanics.  
  
 First, it is necessary to establish a clear language for how the game works, and work towards the best way to provide that language. Better instruction papers, as well as cleaner and more intuitive board pieces, will hopefully both serve to make the game’s inner workings more transparent.  
  
 There are, additionally, two suggested secondary mechanics that will also go into testing at this phase:

1. Additional “characters” can be used to provide more variety among the players’ respective capabilities as both dreamer and invader, and can also provide a measure of input randomness if so desired to make separate games more varied as well.
2. “Power ups” at varying points on the board can provide a layer of output randomness, and encourage more exploration of the shifting environment.

## Phase 3: Polishing and Tertiary Mechanics

If the first two phases go well, we should now be ready to polish the game into something resembling a finished product. Higher quality game pieces and packaging can be created at this stage, and distribution for broader playtesting can be explored. Additionally, if potential tertiary mechanics are uncovered by this phase, those can enter into testing as well. With this done, that should leave the tail end of the allotted schedule open to account for unanticipated problems or additional polishing and tuning.