

# Design Photo Journal: Don't Hesitate

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## FIRST WEEK:

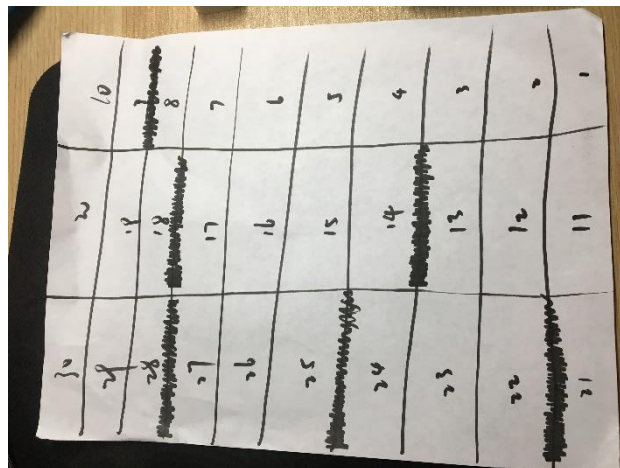
The key words I wrote on the paper were “cry” and “feels pity”. I realized that it is quite difficult to achieve the goal with a board game within about 15 minutes. One possible way to make the players have these feelings is, to set up a wonderful background story and make them immerse in the game.

The first idea I got was to design an RPG like “Call of Cthulhu”. However, this type of game was based on a great story with huge details on every scene, and it is really hard to explain how to play this game to someone who never played before. Usually, a COC game lasts at least one hour. Longer ones can be few days or even weeks. This may not a good choice.

So, I started to think about let the players create the story themselves. I was inspired by “someone do something at somewhere”. I can create those type of cards with various options there and let the players construct a story under some rules. But after attempting to write those key words, I found that it is almost impossible to get a long story with proper story line, still less a story makes them moved.

I started to think about not emphasizing on the story, but the game mechanism. I tried to make a game that contains decisions which will make players regret to what they chose. One may feel pity when he/she almost win the game but defeated in the last second with a wrong choice.

For the prototype, I made a gameboard with about 30 steps. Each player rolls a dice to decide the maximum distance they can move in the turn, which means he/she can choose any number no more than the roll. There are some special locations on the map. The first player who reaches them will make a choice to roll the bonus dice or let the next player roll it. The bonus dice may boost him/her up or the opposite way. People may feel regretful or pity if they give the chance to the next player and he/she makes it. Playtest will be made next week.



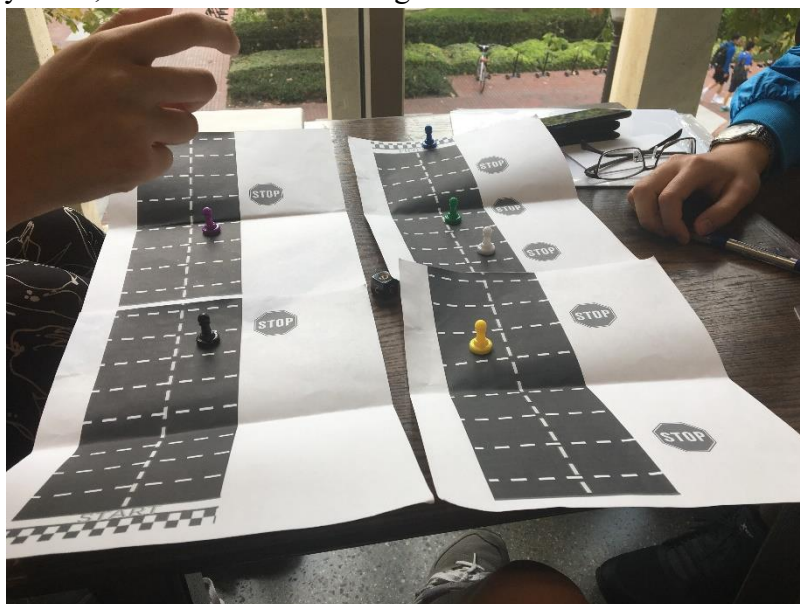
## SECOND WEEK:

I brought the first prototype to the workshop on Tuesday. My partners from the last design helped me make a playtest. Many problems showed up during the playtest. The advantage for the first place is too much, and the mechanism works different to what I want. So, I modified the rules, especially on how the bonus dice works. Good news is that, they found the rules are easy to read (finished in 1 minute), and somewhat felt the motion I want to give. They looked quite enjoy the game and gave me some advices on how to improve the design.

On Friday, Venus, Marshall, and me playtested each other's game. I got a new game board with some nice tokens instead of the draft papers. The first playtest has only three players. We found it a little bit boring and unbalance. The one reaches the stop sign has too much disadvantage on the bonus dice. He/she only has 1/6 chance to go. Although the third player has 1/2 chance to move forward, but it is better to leave the dice back to the one by the stop sign because he/she is highly possible to move back and skipped the turn. Instead of making some instant change on the rules, I decided to see how it works on more players.

So, we played again. But this time, each of us took two tokens and played as "two players". When there are 6 players in game, the bonus dice works very well. In the early game, Marshall asked me that, what if the last place reaches the stop sign and passes the bonus dice to the first place? We thought it might be unfair at that time. But when the game goes on, we found that there's totally no problem with this rule in the late game because the last one won't bother who gets the first place. He/she only needs to worry about how to exceed the one ahead.

After the game, they told me that they did feel regret for some choices and felt pity for losing the first place right in front of the final line. Also, they suggested that maybe I can make the players form teams of two and play as a team fight. This is really a good idea and I will try this way in the next playtest. After the next playtest, the rules can be mostly fixed, and I will start working on more dramatic elements.



### **THIRD WEEK:**

I added a short background story for this game. Although it is not necessary, the story may help the players feel the emotion better. Also, the story may help players to understand the rules better.

In Tuesday's class, the time in class was not enough for everyone to playtest and I had an exam at 12.30 that day, so I couldn't make a playtest.

I made the last playtest with my roommate. Each of us control multiple tokens to behave like multi-players. We tried 8 players this time. During this test, I found that the first stop sign gives too much advantage for players with third and fourth order, and the last orders are hard to play. So, I decided to remove the first stop sign to give players more chances to get some advantage on the bonus dice. Also, I realize that 8 players may be too many for the bonus dice rule. 6 players should be the best under current conditions.

Also, my roommate felt a little difficult to understand the rules. I made some minor modifications on the points he confused.

Till now, the game should be much better than the prototype. There might be some small problems I couldn't find out, but they should not affect the game a lot.

During the whole process, I met challenges when I found that a dramatic way is not doable. When I decide to implement the mechanics, I only had some ideas of some fragments of rules. Suddenly, the game "Up the River" inspired me. I realized that the basic rules don't need to be very complicated as long as the special part is good enough. I will explain more details in the midterm report.



Works:

Everything - me