

# PROTOTYPE DOCUMENTATION

# The Mad House

# Table of Contents

Prototype Approach	3
Learning Outcomes	3
Risks & Mitigations	3
Playtest 1	3
Prototype Playtest Record	3
Observations: Playtest Results	3
Iterations	4
Playtest 2	4
Prototype Playtest Record	4
Observations: Playtest Results	4
Iterations	5
Playtest 3	5
Prototype Playtest Record	5
Observations: Playtest Results	5
Iterations	6
Playtest 4	6
Prototype Playtest Record	6
Observations: Playtest Results	6
Iterations	7
Playtest 5	7
Prototype Playtest Record	7
Observations: Playtest Results	7
Iterations	8
Playtest 6	8
Prototype Playtest Record	8
Observations: Playtest Results	8
Iterations	9
Playtest 7	9
Prototype Playtest Record	9
Observations: Playtest Results	9
Iterations	10
Playtest 8	10
Prototype Playtest Record	10
Observations: Playtest Results	10
Iterations	11
Conclusions	11
Original Rules	11
Final Rules	11

# Prototype Approach

## Learning Outcomes

The prototype created as a top-down version of the first floor, also known as the dungeon. The dungeon is comprised of prison cells, the guard's eating area, the guard's living quarters which houses a few guards sleeping or getting ready for their shifts, and a closet. There are also two roaming guards in the hallway that monitor for danger or in this case, Alice, our escape artist. In the corners, there are stairwells that either lead to the second floor or to a hidden location. There are three total hidden rooms on the first floor. In the spirit of the theme, if the correct staircase is chosen, the player will have entered the throne room which is located on the second floor. We wanted to learn how our players would see the game and their playing methods. A lot of the people for the playtest had never done an escape room before, and thus gave us a fresh perspective on their thought process and what they'd typically do. Other than this, we learned more about ourselves and the type of game we envision and would like to create.

## Risks & Mitigations

The risks of translating the identified mechanics to a physical prototype would be the feasibility of the final product and possibly time constraints. These can be mitigated by downsizing the number of items on the final product or "picking and choosing" which items should and can be developed within the 3–6-month timeframe. If we create a backlog or wish list of all the items, we'd like to do but simply don't have time to produce, we could eventually come back and finish those items after the final product is fully running.

# Playtest 1

## Prototype Playtest Record

[Week 1 - Mad House Playtest](#)

## Observations: Playtest Results

The first playtest that was conducted with the original layout that was worked on for the first week. The original layout had the 3 floors (Dungeon, Main Throne Room, and Queens Quarters). The player starts at the dungeon and while observing the player's reaction and their decision-making base on what information that given to them while playing the game. Showing that the player could easily understand the puzzle shown to them and the direction the game was heading. While further along the player use the "Drink Me!" to get smaller and re-used

again to get even smaller to fit under a door. With the knowledge that while being small guards don't spot you, the player took advantage and finished the game. In the end, the player was asked their thoughts about the game. They explained that the beginning of the game felt weird, but they got used to it easily enough. While the player also explained that the puzzles at the beginning of the game were easy to understand and easy to follow what was needed to be done. While they further explained that the game mechanics were interesting and compare them to another Alice in Wonderland that has similar game mechanics when it comes to "Drink Me!" and "Eat Me!". Overall, they gave good feedback and showed excitement for the future development of the game.

## Iterations

The adjustments made based on what was observed during the playtest and feedback presented by the player at that time are following. New game map for the castle, including changes to the layout, with addition to new rooms and textures to better help players, visualize the area for example brick floor texture. There will be some changes in the game mechanic in the limitation in how small the player can be, the limited use of the "Drink Me!" and "Eat Me!" items, guard reaction, and secrete rooms to be explored. The player's response to the following game test was helpful to better understand the reaction to certain information given to them and how they used that information to their advantage. It better showed what changes needed to be made and adding new ways to guide the player toward exploration and puzzle-solving. Their feedback provided us a better understanding of what we desired the player to experience while playing our game.

# Playtest 2

## Prototype Playtest Record

[The Mad House Playtest by Dwight](#)

## Observations: Playtest Results

The second playtest conducted was of the newly designed mock-ups of the throne room and dungeon. I had minor technical difficulties as I was new to the Roll 20 system and didn't have full access to the rest of the mock-ups via the site. However, I was still able to do a full gameplay playtest with my friend from undergrad, Dwight. Dwight is currently studying to be a doctor, specifically an emergency room surgeon, and therefore is not much of a gamer person, and I feel as though that was displayed in his playtest. Although he had a lot of great ideas, his thought process displayed that he has a more technical approach to the gameplay. This made his playtest significantly more different than the others as I can see he's thinking from a doctor's point-of-view in his gameplay choices. Via my observation, he asked very thought-provoking questions such as if he should move the character in a heart shape or change into the guard's

clothing to sneak around the castle freely. Towards the end of the recording, off camera I asked him of his feedback as far as what he liked, disliked, and any other information he'd like to share regarding the game. He said, "I really love what you've got going here. I had a lot of fun and I'm sorry our test took so long. I'm bad at these types of games. (laughs) I think that the game would be a benefit to a lot of people and exceptionally fun. I need to brush up on my Alice in Wonderland facts, but other than that, I loved it! Please keep me posted on when the game is finished. I'd love to play it again."

## Iterations

After filming Dwight's playtest and reviewing the video extensively, I decided that there needs to be restrictions on the "Drink me!" potion and "Eat me!" treats. After talking to Frances, we decided that there will be only one treat and one potion with five times to be used each. We then decided that each item would only be done for a select timeframe, making the game more complex and fun for the player. This would add some suspense to the gameplay and give the player more of a "run for their money." The time frame that we selected was between 20 and 40 seconds as we wanted to give the players enough time to make a split-second decision and act on it. However, we didn't want the timeframe to be too long. Therefore, we ended with 25 seconds for the player to decide, devise an escape plan, and act fast. This forces our players to use and develop critical thinking skills.

# Playtest 3

## Prototype Playtest Record

[Week 2 - Mad House Playtest](#)

## Observations: Playtest Results

The third playtest that was conducted that used the newly edited game map that was mentioned in the interaction of the first-week playtest. As a result of what was observed from the player's actions with the given information. Just like the first week at the start of the playtest, Alice wakes up in the prison. while everything like normal, the players easily understood the puzzles and instructions given. She easily understood the layout and with the help of the texture better visualize their surroundings. While new rooms were added and some areas making the player having to use their Eat Me! to get back to regular since most would stay small. When the game was completed the player said they liked the map and game art. The puzzle was a bit too simple or straight forward but they expressed excitement for the future development of the game.

## Iterations

What has been observed from the playtesting and player opinion of the game showed some interesting results. The first being that the player liked the new map, and the textures added a better understanding of the layout. These help the player better visualize the areas of the map and location of some objects for example the beds. These gave me an idea when we start the level design of the game further work on certain placement of items. The player also asks if we planned to add more puzzles and that something that needs to be worked on as well further in the development of the game.

# Playtest 4

## Prototype Playtest Record

[The Mad House Playtest 4 with Junae at IGDA-F](#)

## Observations: Playtest Results

Playtest number four was conducted using the mock-up of the dungeon from Roll20. The throne room, or phase two, is currently in the edit phase. This test was steered by an executive member with the International Game Developers Association Foundation named Junae. Junae, who identifies as she and her, is an avid gamer and as a result, her playtest was thoroughly enjoyable as we can see the gamer thinking displayed. Her first step was to click on Alice's icon for hints, tips, or tricks to figure out how to exit the dungeon cell. She is the only one who has thought of this idea, and it was refreshing as we hadn't thought about creating something like that for the main character. She also mentioned checking the other bed and desk area within Alice's cell to see if the key unlocks a drawer connected to it. Before the end of the video, I asked for any feedback or constructive criticism, to which she asked if she drinks more of the potion would she have more time or if the timeframe would increase from 25 seconds to 50 seconds, essentially. I hadn't thought of this and took note of this as it was a great question and would be a wonderful twist to the game. She mentioned that she didn't have much criticism and liked the game so far. The only thing she mentioned was that she wanted to go down towards the guard by the lower-left staircase, however, she wasn't sure if she had enough time with the 25-second interval.

## Iterations

From this playtest, a lot of well-thought-out questions were asked and as a result, I decided that there are a few more things that should be talked about before we enter the development phase such as if the timeframe should increase from 25 seconds to 50 seconds if the player decides to double drink or drink the potion again. I also thought about whether this

would be a conflict as if the player decides to double drink, will they become even smaller? Should we put a cap on how small and/or big the player can be? If we decided to do this, would these rules apply to the "Eat Me!" treats? Will there be more conflicts, in terms of the "Eat Me!" treats, if the player decides to double eat such as getting caught faster or being too big to exit a location? A lot of these questions are mostly what-if or hypothetical ones, however, I will bring them up to my partner.

## Playtest 5

### Prototype Playtest Record

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaf78-qDHnl>

### Observations: Playtest Results

The fifth playtest that was conducted used the edited map with a recently added feature. The game starts the same way as always while this time the player investigated the jail cells a bit closer. While some changes were added to see what kind of reaction the player, toward finding a small hole in the wall in one of the jail rooms. The area took you to a hidden room that was added and inside where small drink me. Once the player had discovered a way out and manage to leave the dungeon room. The player then starts explaining that they liked the idea of finding more items but that having found that item made them question if they should try and save as much possible or use more now. Adding that tension of what the best time to use set items. While they also complimented the new map and that they looked forward to playing more of the game.

### Iterations

For the playtest some ideas came to mind and some interesting changes that could be added to the gameplay. While discussing with the player, they had some interesting ideas, and one of them was what will happen if the player tried using the same item two times. For example, using the drink me two times to get even smaller and fit under doors. They suggested if that happened that a message of the character saying something like "Best not drink that again". These gave me a fun idea to add some dialog to Alice when either she finds something or does something. This might give Alice a personality some players might find her one-liners funny.

# Playtest 6

## Prototype Playtest Record

[The Mad House Playtest by Brianna's Mom, Carlene](#)

## Observations: Playtest Results

Playtest number six was conducted by my mother, Carlene. Ms. Carlene is not technically savvy, and usually steers away from technology products that are too extensive or appear complex. With this in mind, I wanted our playtest to be easy for her to understand and navigate as the ideal audience demographic is E 10+ or T. This essentially means that our game's design, layout, and functionality needs to be easy enough to understand that someone of the older generation(s) or who is not that great with technology like my mother, can easily pick up on the game and its hints/riddles. For my mom, she was pretty much relaxed with the game in the beginning but grew visibly frustrated towards the end. From getting her feedback after the recording ended, she said that she's not all that great with games like ours and it would possibly be too much thinking for her as she's not too familiar with Alice in Wonderland, preference-wise. This is not to say that she couldn't do the game, but it possibly wouldn't be her first choice. However, she mentioned that she liked the layout and the game's message; it just might be what she calls a "young person's game".

## Iterations

The number one thing that my mother's playtest taught me was that some people will not be able to get into the game and that's okay. It also brought to my attention that maybe we need to explain the rules and concept of the game in a more general way and possibly include a hint area for players that may have more trouble than others. Another thing we could think about or try doing is adding more information about Alice in Wonderland before the game starts. From the second elevator pitch and the prior playtests, a good portion of the players hadn't seen Alice in Wonderland in a while and thus made or broke their thought process during the playtest. By adding more information or a storyline to the game, I think we'd be able to reach more people and the game would be more competitive if we were to ship it professionally.

# Playtest 7

## Prototype Playtest Record

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwahDICEzhU>



## Observations: Playtest Results

The seventh playtest that was conducted used the edited map with a recently added feature. The game starts the same way as always while this time player did things a bit out of order compared to the last playtest. While they discover a new hidden room and player tried to sneak around the soldier. Further, the player managed to escape the game level successfully and showed a way of using peeking to look around for what the soldier was doing. While discussing their thoughts on the game, they ask if there will be an area in the map in which you become tall to get somewhere? They also talk about a sneaking system and how will I be implementing the use of a pocket watch to keep how much time has passed. While we also talk about that they liked the game map and how it overall looked. While the player said that they will be interested in the actual game.

## Iterations

The discussion with player suggestions and questions gave me some ideas and things that either need to be added to the game development or figure out a way to surely be able to better visualize the level design for when it comes to spotting certain puzzles or hidden rooms. There is the idea of Alice trying to be quiet while walking around and if she fails that might alert some guards. There was something I noticed and it was how much time passed by while you were in a different size. For example, if you are small running around the map may take longer than if you would have been regular size. Meaning that something we have to implement when we start working in the development of the game.

# Playtest 8

## Prototype Playtest Record

[The Mad House Playtest by Sierra](#)

## Observations: Playtest Results

The last playtest was conducted by one of my best friends, Sierra. Sierra is not much of a gamer, however, like me she also plays a lot of The Sims 4, especially on PC/Mac. She has a bit of gamer in her and through her playtest, she was thinking logically and a bit technically as well. With Sierra in particular, she is also a mother of a one-year-old active baby girl, Ariya, and doesn't really have much time in the day to play games. As a result, she must play her games at night when she has peace and quiet. Unlike my mother's test, she didn't need much guidance and was able to understand the "gist" of the game very quickly. I think the game would be perfect for her especially with the crazy schedule of motherhood as she understood the role Alice plays in her own demise or escape. As for feedback, she didn't really have any for us. She

liked the gameplay and mentioned the Queen of Hearts card she found under the bed as she wasn't sure what to do with it just yet. I can see how this can be confusing, however, she also mentioned that she's sure that the card will come to play later in the game and that it'll eventually all come full circle and make sense. She said that she's very excited about the game and can't wait to learn more about it and play the fully finished product.

## Iterations

Sierra's playtest got me thinking about the things we want to add to the game and the storyline's development process. As a result of this, I decided that we should incorporate more of a storyline for our future playtests so that everything sounds very simple and concise. However, I am also unsure about how to start this. What I observed from her playtest was that she didn't have much trouble, however, some people may not be as lucky as her. I think we should develop a help or troubleshooting area outside of the hints for technical help and feedback overall. I tried my best to find a person that is versed or unversed when it comes to computer games, technology, and gaming in general so that our information was reviewed more, and feedback was further detailed and more competitive. For the storyline, I think that the game should have a lot of text; not necessarily to make the game wordy or adding in reading, but to give the game more of a roleplaying story feel.

## Conclusions

From all the playtests, we were able to walk away with tons of questions from our players and for each other. We also gained valuable insight into what the ideal audience or demographic thinks when it comes to our game. What we learned is that there's significantly more to break down and divulge with our game and we have barely scratched the surface. Some of the questions that were asked raised some very good points that I think would lead to an even better game design. We learned that we could finalize our instructions better by making them a bit more specific and literal. Each player, although different styles of gamers, were very similar in many ways. With this in mind, we can safely say that E 10+ is the correct genre for our game. We can also safely say that once we come up with a solid storyline or backstory to add to our current synopsis, the gameplay will be significantly easier to piece together. Using the original rules, we ran into a few problems which we can chalk up to human error. However, playtesting with various people of different backgrounds gave us all the information we need to make a very competitive and intricate game.

## Original Rules

1. If Alice wakes the Queen of Hearts, she will scream "Off with her head!" as a timer is set, and she'll have only 30 seconds to find a way out of the castle. However, this will be significantly harder as the card soldiers have now been alerted and will be trying to capture you. Therefore, be careful not to make too much noise.

2. In various locations, we have “Drink Me” potions and “Eat Me” treats. Drink the potions to shrink or become smaller and eat the treats to grow or become larger. You can use these to help you on your journey.
3. If you are regular sized or larger, Card soldiers will send you back to your cell. However, if you are small, they will not see you. However, they can still catch you if they hear you. You can use this knowledge to sneak past them to the locations you need to go to.
4. There are 6 total deliverables scattered throughout the castle that can help you piece together a way to exit the castle. You must find all six before you can exit as the door will not unlock until you do so.
5. The Queen’s slumber is timed. After a certain timeframe (TBD), she will wake up and begin to move around. Things will get harder so you must work quickly.
6. All the 6 deliverables and clues are “Alice in Wonderland” themed. This includes the animated and live-action films. Although not required, we suggest brushing up on your “Alice in Wonderland” knowledge.
7. There are three floors total and guards on every floor. The queen will be located in her bedroom asleep for most of the game, however, there’s a chance she will wake up early or walk downstairs. Be vigilant.
8. You will be given two items that will start off your journey. These two items will be in plain sight and located somewhere in Alice’s cell.
9. Alice’s cell is the only one that is locked. The other two are open and you can search for clues in there.
10. Lastly, have fun! We created this game to be fun for all. We hoped that our mutual love for Alice in Wonderland will fill you with joy and laughter as it did us.

## Final Rules

1. If Alice wakes the Queen of Hearts, she will scream “Off with her head!” as a timer is set leaving her with 30 seconds to find a way out of the castle. However, this will be significantly harder as the card soldiers have now been alerted and will be trying to capture her when in the same vicinity. Therefore, the player must be careful not to make too much noise.
2. “Drink Me” potions and “Eat Me” treats are in various locations throughout the castle to help the player succeed. Drink the potions to shrink or become smaller and eat the treats to grow or become larger. You can use these to help you on your journey, however, the player must make sure they do not drink or eat too much. Each potion and treat only has up to five uses before it is gone. The potion and treats also only work for about twenty-five seconds before you revert to normal.
3. If you are regular sized or larger, Card soldiers will send you back to your cell. However, if you are small, they will not see you. However, they can still catch you if they hear you. You can use this knowledge to sneak past them to the locations you need to go to.
4. There are 6 total deliverables scattered throughout the castle that can help you piece together a way to exit the castle. You must find all six before you can exit as the door will not unlock until you do so.
5. The game will take roughly forty to sixty minutes to complete in one sitting depending on the user’s level of expertise. The Queen of Hearts’ slumber is timed and after a certain time frame, she will wake up and begin to move around. Things will get harder so you must work

quickly. The timeframe is not a fixed interval, but a variable one; this means that the duration that the Queen of Hearts is asleep is different every time the player plays.

6. All the 6 deliverables and clues are “Alice in Wonderland” themed. This includes the animated and live-action films. Although not required, we suggest brushing up on your “Alice in Wonderland” knowledge to better understand the game.
7. There are three floors total with guards on every floor. The queen will be located in her bedroom on the third floor and should be asleep for most of the game, however, there’s a chance she will wake up early or walk downstairs because of the variable interval. Be vigilant.
8. You will be given two items that will start off your journey. These two items will be in plain sight and located somewhere in Alice’s cell; these items are your first clue.
9. Alice’s cell is the only one that is locked. The others are open and can searched for clues.