The Proving Grounds

3-Scenario Personality Assessment

*Complete Implementation Guide*

# Overview

The Proving Grounds is a 4-minute narrative combat experience that assigns players to their personality-based fighting class. Players face three escalating challenges, each revealing different aspects of their personality through instinctive gameplay choices.

Design Philosophy

* **Not a test, an experience** - Feels like tutorial + story
* **Instinctive choices** - Time pressure prevents overthinking
* **Immediate consequences** - Each choice affects combat outcome
* **Complete HEXACO coverage** - All 6 dimensions measured across 3 scenarios

Technical Specifications

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Total Duration** | 4 minutes (210 seconds gameplay + 30 seconds reveal) |
| **Scenario Count** | 3 core scenarios (expandable to 6 post-launch) |
| **Assessment Method** | Explicit choices (3 per scenario) + implicit behavior tracking |
| **Mobile Optimization** | Touch gestures, portrait mode, checkpoints between scenarios |
| **Skip Option** | Available for returning players + manual class selection |

# The Observer

The Observer is the mysterious narrator who guides players through The Proving Grounds. Their voice should feel ancient, knowing, but not judgmental. They're witnessing, not testing.

Character Profile

* **Voice:** Calm, measured, slightly cryptic
* **Perspective:** Has seen countless fighters, knows all outcomes
* **Motivation:** Help fighters discover their true nature
* **Visual:** Hooded figure with glowing eyes, silhouette only

Opening Dialogue

Welcome, fighter. You stand in The Proving Grounds—a place where truth reveals itself through action.

Many have entered seeking power. Few have found what they truly are.

The arena does not judge. It simply... observes.

Show me who you are.

Between Scenarios

**After Scenario 1:** Interesting. The arena remembers your choice.

**After Scenario 2:** Your path becomes clearer. One more test remains.

**After Scenario 3:** The arena has judged you. Witness your true form.

Class Reveal Dialogue

**Paladin:** You are the shield that others stand behind. Your honor is your armor.

**Shadow Dancer:** You move between moments, seen only when you choose. The darkness is your ally.

**Tactician:** Every battle is a puzzle. You see patterns where others see chaos.

**Berserker:** Fury flows through you like a river. Your enemies break against your rage.

**Elementalist:** The fundamental forces bow to your will. Nature itself is your weapon.

**Warden:** Balance is your gift. Where others see opposites, you find harmony.

**Trickster:** Reality bends at your touch. What is real? What is illusion? Only you know.

**Shapeshifter:** Form is temporary. Adaptation is eternal. You are all things and nothing.

# Scenario 1: The Wounded Guardian

Measures

* **Primary:** Honesty-Humility (fairness, greed avoidance)
* **Secondary:** Emotionality (empathy, sentimentality)

Duration

60 seconds (10 sec setup + 5 sec choice window + 45 sec combat)

## Narrative Setup

**Observer:** Your first trial. The Wounded Guardian blocks your path, protecting a chest of power.

They are injured. Weak. Victory would be... simple.

## Visual Setup

* **Scene:** Stone arena with glowing treasure chest at far end
* **Guardian:** Humanoid fighter, visibly wounded (limping, holding side, blood effects)
* **Chest:** Golden glow, pulsing light, clearly valuable
* **Player Position:** 10 feet from Guardian, clear line to chest

## Choice Moment

Three glowing prompts appear around player character. Player has 5 seconds to choose by swiping/tapping.

| **Choice** | **What Player Sees** | **Visual Cue** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A: Press Attack** | Strike while they're weak. Take the treasure. | Red sword icon |
| **B: Wait for Fair Fight** | Give them time to recover. Fight with honor. | Blue shield icon |
| **C: Heal Them First** | Tend their wounds before fighting. Show mercy. | Gold heart icon |

## Combat Outcomes

### Choice A: Press Attack

* **Combat:** Guardian is overwhelmed easily. Falls after 3 hits.
* **Chest:** Opens, reveals powerful items. Player gains +20% damage boost for next scenario.
* **Observer:** *"Power without price. Victory without honor."*
* **Score:** H -2, X +2

### Choice B: Wait for Fair Fight

* **Combat:** Guardian recovers partially. Challenging but fair fight. Takes 8-10 hits.
* **Chest:** Opens after victory. Moderate reward.
* **Observer:** *"Honor recognized. The arena respects balance."*
* **Score:** Neutral (no change)

### Choice C: Heal Them First

* **Combat:** Guardian is fully healed. Difficult fight, requires defensive play. 12-15 hits.
* **Chest:** Guardian opens it willingly after losing. They offer alliance—gain healing ability for next scenario.
* **Observer:** *"Compassion in the arena? Rare. The guardian will remember this."*
* **Score:** H +2, E +2

# Scenario 2: The Overwhelming Horde

Measures

* **Primary:** eXtraversion (social boldness, risk-taking)
* **Secondary:** Agreeableness (cooperation, teamwork)

Duration

60 seconds (10 sec setup + 5 sec choice window + 45 sec combat)

## Narrative Setup

**Observer:** Your second trial tests something different. Not skill—but courage.

Ten shadow warriors approach. You stand at the gates. Will you hold them alone, or seek aid?

## Visual Setup

* **Scene:** Arena entrance with massive gates behind player
* **Enemies:** 10 shadowy humanoid figures advancing in formation
* **Ally:** Single fighter visible behind bars of side gate, waving for attention
* **Player Position:** Center, back against gates

## Choice Moment

| **Choice** | **What Player Sees** | **Visual Cue** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A: Charge Alone** | Face the horde yourself. Prove your strength. | Red lightning icon |
| **B: Defensive Stand** | Hold position at the gates. Fight strategically. | Blue fortress icon |
| **C: Free the Ally** | Open the gate. Fight together as equals. | Gold chain icon |

## Combat Outcomes

### Choice A: Charge Alone

* **Combat:** Player rushes into horde. Must defeat all 10 enemies solo. High damage taken.
* **Difficulty:** Very hard. Requires aggressive play and quick reactions.
* **Observer:** *"Boldness. Reckless, perhaps. But boldness nonetheless."*
* **Score:** X +3, A -1

### Choice B: Defensive Stand

* **Combat:** Player stays at gates. Enemies approach in waves (3-3-4). Manageable difficulty.
* **Difficulty:** Medium. Requires timing and positioning.
* **Observer:** *"Calculated. The arena favors those who think before they strike."*
* **Score:** C +1, X -1

### Choice C: Free the Ally

* **Combat:** AI ally joins fight. Player + ally defeat 5 enemies each. Coordinated attacks.
* **Difficulty:** Easy-medium. Ally absorbs damage and assists.
* **Observer:** *"Strength in unity. Some warriors understand this truth."*
* **Score:** A +2, X +1

# Scenario 3: The Puzzle Boss

Measures

* **Primary:** Conscientiousness (planning, diligence)
* **Secondary:** Openness (creativity, unconventionality)

Duration

90 seconds (15 sec setup + 5 sec choice window + 70 sec combat)

## Narrative Setup

**Observer:** Your final trial. The Colossus guards the arena's heart.

Invulnerable armor. Devastating power. Yet every titan has a weakness. How will you find it?

## Visual Setup

* **Scene:** Large circular arena with three elemental pillars (fire, ice, lightning)
* **Boss:** Massive stone colossus (3x player size), glowing runes on body
* **Pillars:** Three glowing columns around arena edge, pulsing with elemental energy
* **Visual Hint:** Boss's runes match one pillar color (randomized each time)

## Choice Moment

| **Choice** | **What Player Sees** | **Visual Cue** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A: Attack Directly** | Charge the Colossus. Test its defenses. | Red fist icon |
| **B: Study the Pattern** | Observe. Look for weakness in the runes. | Blue eye icon |
| **C: Experiment Wildly** | Try everything. Use the pillars creatively. | Gold spark icon |

## Combat Outcomes

### Choice A: Attack Directly

* **Combat:** All direct attacks bounce off armor. Boss counterattacks hard. Must survive 60 seconds.
* **Reveal:** After 60 sec, runes crack from sustained assault. Boss becomes vulnerable briefly.
* **Difficulty:** Very hard. Survival test, requires perfect dodging.
* **Observer:** *"Persistence without wisdom. Sometimes, brute force is enough."*
* **Score:** C -2, O -1

### Choice B: Study the Pattern

* **Combat:** Player dodges while observing. After 20 seconds, UI highlights matching pillar.
* **Reveal:** Player activates correct pillar, boss runes shatter. Clean, efficient victory.
* **Difficulty:** Medium. Requires observation but provides clear solution.
* **Observer:** *"The patient warrior. You saw what others missed."*
* **Score:** C +3, O 0

### Choice C: Experiment Wildly

* **Combat:** Player tries all pillars rapidly. Each attempt reveals partial information.
* **Reveal:** Wrong pillars damage boss slightly. Correct pillar shatters runes. Messy but effective.
* **Difficulty:** Easy-medium. Trial and error works, takes longer.
* **Observer:** *"Chaos has its own wisdom. You found truth through exploration."*
* **Score:** O +3, C -1

# Scoring & Class Assignment

## Score Aggregation

Each HEXACO dimension starts at 50 (neutral). Choices modify scores. Final scores determine ability class.

// Score tracking example

const hexacoScores = {

H: 50, // Honesty-Humility

E: 50, // Emotionality

X: 50, // eXtraversion

A: 50, // Agreeableness

C: 50, // Conscientiousness

O: 50 // Openness

};

## Class Assignment Algorithm

function assignClass(scores) {

// High H + High E → Paladin

if (scores.H > 55 && scores.E > 55) return 'Paladin';

// Low H + High O → Shadow Dancer

if (scores.H < 45 && scores.O > 55) return 'Shadow Dancer';

// High C + Low E → Tactician

if (scores.C > 55 && scores.E < 45) return 'Tactician';

// Low A + High X → Berserker

if (scores.A < 45 && scores.X > 55) return 'Berserker';

// High O + High C → Elementalist

if (scores.O > 55 && scores.C > 55) return 'Elementalist';

// High A + High E → Warden

if (scores.A > 55 && scores.E > 55) return 'Warden';

// Low H + High X → Trickster

if (scores.H < 45 && scores.X > 55) return 'Trickster';

// High O + Low C → Shapeshifter

if (scores.O > 55 && scores.C < 45) return 'Shapeshifter';

// Default: Find highest two dimensions

return assignByHighestScores(scores);

}

## Score Range Examples

| **Choices** | **Final Scores** | **Assigned Class** | **Why** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| C, C, B | H:54 E:54 X:51 A:52 C:52 O:50 | **Paladin** | High H+E, compassionate choices |
| A, A, C | H:48 E:50 X:55 A:49 C:49 O:53 | **Berserker** | High X, aggressive solo choices |
| B, B, B | H:50 E:50 X:49 A:50 C:54 O:50 | **Tactician** | High C, strategic balanced choices |
| A, C, C | H:48 E:50 X:52 A:52 C:49 O:53 | **Shapeshifter** | High O, experimental choices |

# Implementation Guide

## Scene Structure

Each scenario follows this technical flow:

1. **Scene Load:** Fade in, load assets, position camera
2. **Observer Dialogue:** Show dialogue box with narration (5-8 seconds)
3. **Visual Setup:** Reveal scene elements (enemies, obstacles, etc.)
4. **Choice Prompt:** Display 3 glowing options with 5-second timer
5. **Choice Lock:** Player selects via touch/tap, UI confirms selection
6. **Combat Sequence:** Execute combat based on choice (45-70 seconds)
7. **Observer Response:** Show brief commentary (3-4 seconds)
8. **Score Update:** Apply HEXACO modifications silently, transition to next

## UI Requirements

### Dialogue Box

* **Position:** Bottom 25% of screen
* **Background:** Semi-transparent dark panel
* **Text:** White, 18-20pt, readable on mobile
* **Portrait:** Observer silhouette on left side

### Choice Prompts

* **Layout:** Three circular buttons arranged vertically on right side
* **Colors:** Red (top), Blue (middle), Gold (bottom)
* **Icons:** Simple, clear symbols matching choice theme
* **Timer:** 5-second countdown bar above choices
* **Feedback:** Selected choice pulses, others fade

### Progress Indicator

* **Position:** Top center
* **Display:** 3 dots (filled = completed, empty = remaining)
* **Updates:** Fill one dot after each scenario completes

## Mobile Touch Controls

* **Choice Selection:** Tap any of the three choice buttons
* **Combat:** Tap to attack, swipe to move/dodge (standard from tutorial)
* **Dialogue Advance:** Tap anywhere to skip to next line (after 3 seconds)
* **Skip Option:** Small skip button in top-right (only for returning players)

## Audio Design

* **Observer Voice:** Text-to-speech with reverb/echo effect OR text-only
* **Choice Selection:** Distinct sound per color (low, mid, high tone)
* **Combat:** Standard hit sounds from tutorial
* **Scenario Complete:** Victory chime, transition whoosh
* **Class Reveal:** Epic reveal sound, class-specific audio sting

## Performance Targets

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Target FPS** | 60 FPS on iPhone 12 / Pixel 5 equivalent |
| **Max Sprites** | 15 simultaneous (player + enemies + effects) |
| **Asset Size** | < 5MB total for assessment scenes |
| **Load Time** | < 3 seconds per scenario on 4G connection |

# AI Agent Direction Template

Use this template when directing AI coding agents to build the assessment system:

Scenario 1 Implementation Request

Copy this template and fill in the scenario details from this document

Create Scenario 1: The Wounded Guardian

Scene Setup:

- Stone arena with treasure chest at far end

- Wounded guardian (limping animation, blood effect)

- Player starts 10 feet from guardian

Observer Dialogue:

"Your first trial. The Wounded Guardian blocks your path, protecting a chest of power."

"They are injured. Weak. Victory would be... simple."

Three Choices (5-second timer):

A. "Strike while they're weak. Take the treasure." (Red sword icon)

B. "Give them time to recover. Fight with honor." (Blue shield icon)

C. "Tend their wounds before fighting. Show mercy." (Gold heart icon)

Combat Outcomes:

Choice A: Easy fight (3 hits), player gets damage boost, score: H-2 X+2

Choice B: Medium fight (8-10 hits), moderate reward, score: neutral

Choice C: Hard fight (12-15 hits), healing ability reward, score: H+2 E+2

# Testing & Validation

## Validation Checklist

* All 3 scenarios playable start to finish
* Total time is 4 minutes ±30 seconds
* Each choice produces correct combat outcome
* Scores update correctly per choice
* Class assignment matches expected patterns
* Observer dialogue displays at correct times
* Touch controls responsive on mobile
* Skip option works for returning players
* Performance maintains 60 FPS

## Test Scenarios

Test these choice combinations to verify class assignment:

* **C-C-B (all compassionate):** Should assign Paladin
* **A-A-C (aggressive + creative):** Should assign Berserker or Trickster
* **B-B-B (all strategic):** Should assign Tactician
* **C-C-C (mercy + cooperation + creativity):** Should assign Warden or Shapeshifter
* **A-B-C (mixed choices):** Should assign based on highest two dimensions

# Post-Launch Expansion

Once the 3-scenario MVP is validated, expand to 6 scenarios for enhanced accuracy and variety.

## Scenarios 4-6 (Future)

Scenario 4: The Mirror Match

* **Tests:** Re-test H + O (consistency check)
* **Concept:** Face opponent who uses your previous choices against you

Scenario 5: The Desperate Plea

* **Tests:** Re-test E + A (empathy under pressure)
* **Concept:** NPC begs for help mid-combat, pulling you off objective

Scenario 6: The Impossible Challenge

* **Tests:** Re-test C + X (determination vs. retreat)
* **Concept:** Unwinnable fight where retreat is valid option

## Benefits of 6-Scenario System

* Each dimension tested twice (increased accuracy)
* Consistency checking (spot contradictory answers)
* More combat variety (player engagement)
* Optional path (let players choose 3 or 6 scenarios)

This document provides complete specifications for implementing The Proving Grounds. All narrative, technical details, and scoring logic are included. Share this with AI coding agents to begin implementation.