Game Design Document for a VR Escape Room

One of us has a secret

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Confidential Disclaimer

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Overview of the Game

Synopsis: A top student in Valley High School is wrongly accused of hacking the teachers' files. Given one suspicious chance to prove their innocence, the student must solve hidden clues – all while the real prankster mocks her every move and the clock ticks down.

My genre for this VR escape room is thriller and mystery, school drama and pranks. Mainly to spark enthusiasm in the player while playing the game. However, there is no violence involves in keeping the school-friendly rules. Since there is no violence involved, the surroundings of each puzzle will give out the effect of thriller and mystery to the player. The challenge is to find the hidden clues and manage the time limit effectively. Consequences will be given accordingly to each wrong move by the player – a reduction in the time limit and screen shake violently.

This concept is 100% inspired by the book title "One of Us Is Lying" by Karen M. McManus. It is a story of five high school students who enter a detention room but only four of them come out alive. It takes place in Bayview High School's detention room which involved Bronwyn Rojas, Addy Prentiss, Nate Macauley, Cooper Clay and Simon Kelleher. During detention, Simon suddenly dies from an allergic reaction. It soon comes out that he was planning to post secrets about each of the other four the next day. This makes Bronwyn, Addy, Nate and Cooper the prime suspects in what may not be an accident but a murder.

BASIC NARRATIVE:

The player has been unfairly accused of hacking into the teacher's files and is currently stuck in detention. Someone (The real prankster) has hidden a series of clues around the room to manipulate the player and watch the player's every action.

The player's only goal is to resolve the riddles and clues to prove their innocence and reveal the prankster's hidden confession before the principal returns.

Along the way, the player needs to tackle various interactive challenges to uncover hidden hints left by the prankster. Yet, the prankster continually mocks the player for trying to clear their name only after being caught, delighting in their struggle and frustration. In the end, despite the player's efforts, no solid proof - only the single timeline found in the last puzzle room suggests the reality.

The secret message: *"Congratulations! You have found evidence… or did you actually?*

Solving my game means nothing if no one believes you. Better luck next time! See you soon!"

After reading the secret message, the screen fades to black - leaving the player with no opportunity to reveal the truth to anyone. This ending creates a dramatic cliffhanger, hinting at more to come in the story.

INSPIRATIONAL ART OF THE CONCEPT:

Unique Selling Points

1) TELEPORTATION MECHANICS BETWEEN PUZZLES

- After solving each puzzle or finding a hidden clue, the player will be immediately teleported to the next room puzzle, creating a surprising and immersive transition instead of unlocking a door or walking towards another room.

DIFFERENCE:

- Most escape rooms rely on physical movement only – teleportation adds a dramatic and keeps the pacing exciting.

2) CINEMATIC FINALE WITH FULL BLACKOUT

- When the player reads the final secret message from the prankster, the screen will be black 10 seconds after the secret message is out indicating that she is never given the chance to reveal the truth. This ending leaves players with a chilling cliffhanger, subtly hinting at a possible sequel.

THE SECRET MESSAGE:

*"Congratulations! You have found evidence… or did you actually? Solving my game means nothing if no one believes you. Better luck next time! See you **soon**!"*

DIFFERENCE:
- Unlike typical "You win!" or "You lose!" endings, this psychological twist adds suspense and a narrative punch.

3) TIME-LIMITED PUZZLE PRESSURE
- Each puzzle must be solved within a 6-minute time. If time runs out, the player risks being caught by the principal and fails the game.

EFFECT:
- Big tense timer in the corner
- Red coloured

DIFFERENCE:
- This keeps tension alive and demands quick thinking, enhancing replay potential for quicker and smarter efforts.

4) NARRATIVE-DRIVEN MULTI ROOM MYSTERY
- The whole game blends a young adult mystery plot with traditional escape room puzzles, hidden clues and storytelling – inspired by "One of Us Is Lying" but with no real crime just mind games.

DIFFERENCE:
- It's school-friendly, suspenseful and makes players feel like detectives in their thriller.
- Trying to solve the situation the issue occurring such as false confessions moving around the school and pinpointing the culprit on their own.

WHY PLAYERS WILL CHOOSE IT:
- Fast-paced teleporting keeps gameplay fresh
- The unexpected psychological conclusion leaves a lasting impression
- The combination of mistake feedback and the timer will enhance the genuine adrenaline rush
- School-friendly while remaining thrilling and intense

Game loop

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND OF THE CHARACTER (PLAYER)

Name: Vero Miler

Personality: smart but quiet - not very socialize, good with computers and top grades, often stay late to help teachers with class projects or computer lab tasks

1ST BACKGROUND STORY BEFORE STARTING GAME

"You are one of the top students at Valley High School who always get on the honor roll. Recently, you started tutoring classmates after school at the computer lab. You are keeping lowkey but a few schoolmates envy your grades and how teachers trust in you. Yesterday, someone spread a rumor that you were using your computer skills to peek at test answers."

2ND BACKGROUND STORY BEFORE STARTING THE GAME – TO THE DETENTION ROOM

"For reasons you don't even understand, someone has been unhappy with you. This morning, you were called to the office and informed that someone had hacked into the teachers' files, and your name appeared repeatedly in the login history. You swear you didn't do it, but no one believes you. Now you're stuck in detention, alone with a single goal: **prove your innocence before the principal returns and calls your parents.**"

DETENTION ROOM:

But something feels off… a note slipped under the door

Note message: "If you want the truth, follow the clues. But hurry – your time is running out…"

1) The player will then click on the note and read it
2) Player will have to go to the back where the lockers are and hover over the glowing turquoise telepad – lead to the 1st puzzle room

1ST PUZZLE OF THE ESCAPE ROOM
Title: *THE LOCKED LOCKER*

Location: Abandoned school locker hallway
Settings: light from the sunlight through the windows only, long and few lockers are unlocked

- A hallway of empty lockers and some random books on the shelf with just the riddle

note for the player to solve

1) Player will follow the telepad on the scene to the destination (the number padlock)
2) Once reached, the player noticed a small, battered locker in the corner. It's locked with 3-digit code.
- The scribbled note is taped on the locker – *"Numbers don't lie but tricks hide within them. Solve these and open the path to the truth"*

> ➔ Solve 6/2(2+1)
>   Answer: 1
> ➔ I am the number of sides on a square. What number am I?
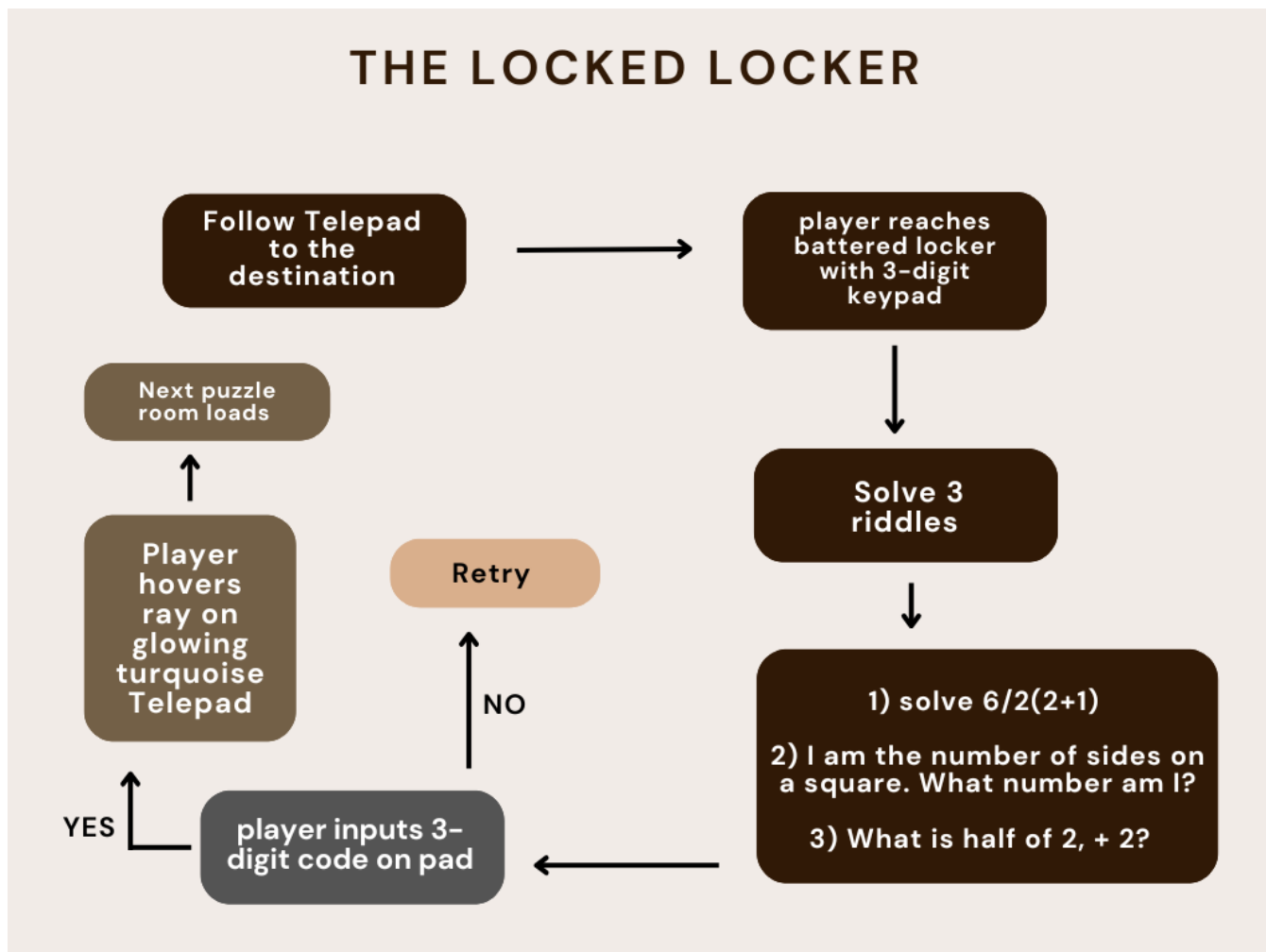>   Answer: **4**
> ➔ What is half of 2, + 2?
>   Answer: half of 2 = 1, 1+ 2 = 3

3) Player to input the **3 digits** on the number pad that is on the door – **must figure out which number goes first and last**
4) Once the player got it correct, a successful message will appear *"You manage to unlock it. Time for the next thrill!"* and the player must hover the ray to the glowing turquoise telepad to move to the next puzzle room

THE LOCKED LOCKER

Follow Telepad to the destination → **player reaches battered locker with 3-digit keypad**

↓

Solve 3 riddles

↓

1) solve 6/2(2+1)

2) I am the number of sides on a square. What number am I?

3) What is half of 2, + 2?

←

player inputs 3-digit code on pad

Retry

NO ↑

YES → **Player hovers ray on glowing turquoise Telepad** ↑ **Next puzzle room loads**

2ᴺᴰ PUZZLE OF THE ESCAPE ROOM
Title: *THE EMPTY ROOM*

Location: spear classroom (old classroom)
Setting: dimly colored light, empty room

1) Player to look around the room and figure what needs to be done
2) Player must click on each of the unpuzzled pieces of the clue
3) Clue states – *"The truth is hidden in the pages WE ARE IN..."*
4) **Once the player clicks in correct order, a message will appear on the board**
   ➔ "Once you were an UNOPENED BOOK, now you are EVERYONE'S inspiration"

THE EMPTY ROOM

Follow Telepad to the destination → **explore room & observe surroundings**

↓

Click on puzzle pieces

↓

Message clue of the pieces: "The truth is hidden in the pages WE ARE IN...."

Player clicks puzzle pieces in correct order?

NO → **Retry**

YES → **Message appear: "Once you were an UNOPENED BOOK, now you are EVERYONE'S inspiration."**

↑

**Next puzzle room loads**
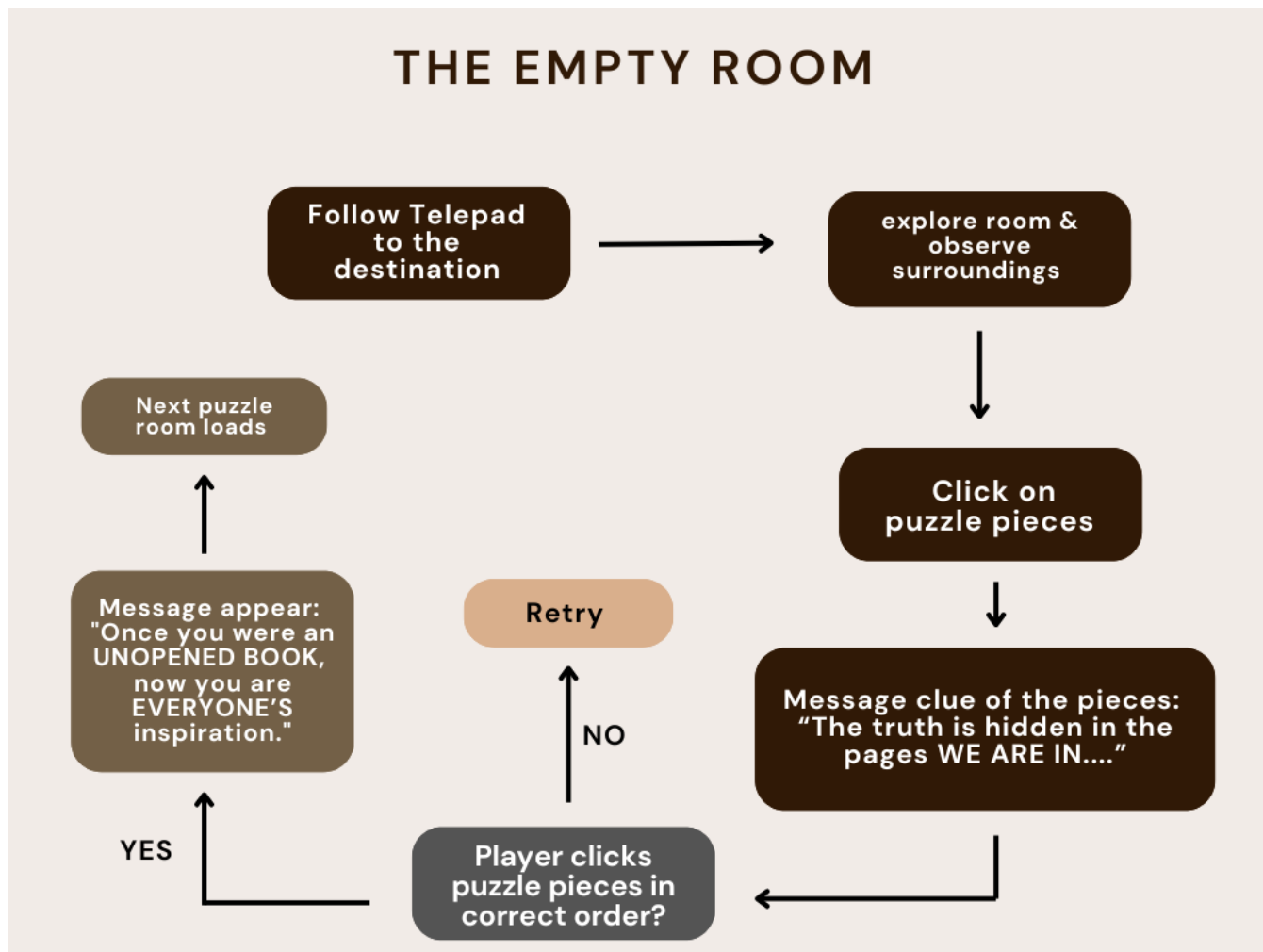
3ᴿᴰ PUZZLE OF THE ESCAPE ROOM
Title: *THE SECRET CODE*

Location: school library
Setting: a secluded space no light from the sunray or the bulb

- There is a card on the cabinet at the back of the library stating– *"Your name holds the truth – start where it all began"*
1) Once player at the area where the card is, the player moves to the book shelf on the right and clicks on the bright colored books in order
   ➔ The books have a number – numerical or alphabet
   ➔ Player to click on the books accordingly

2) Once correctly done, a message will appear – **"Do you KNOW what these digits stands for? we were SO fine back then....."**
3) Afterwards, player moves to the front door area and clicks on the objects that have the same color

➔ Glowing turquoise color object – to click in order – **capsule, sphere, cube**

4) Once the player did it correctly, a message will appear on the wall next to it

➔ *CONFESS*

- *"confess" appear as to tell the player (Vero Miler) to confess her wrong doings when it is not her doing at all*

THE SECRET CODE
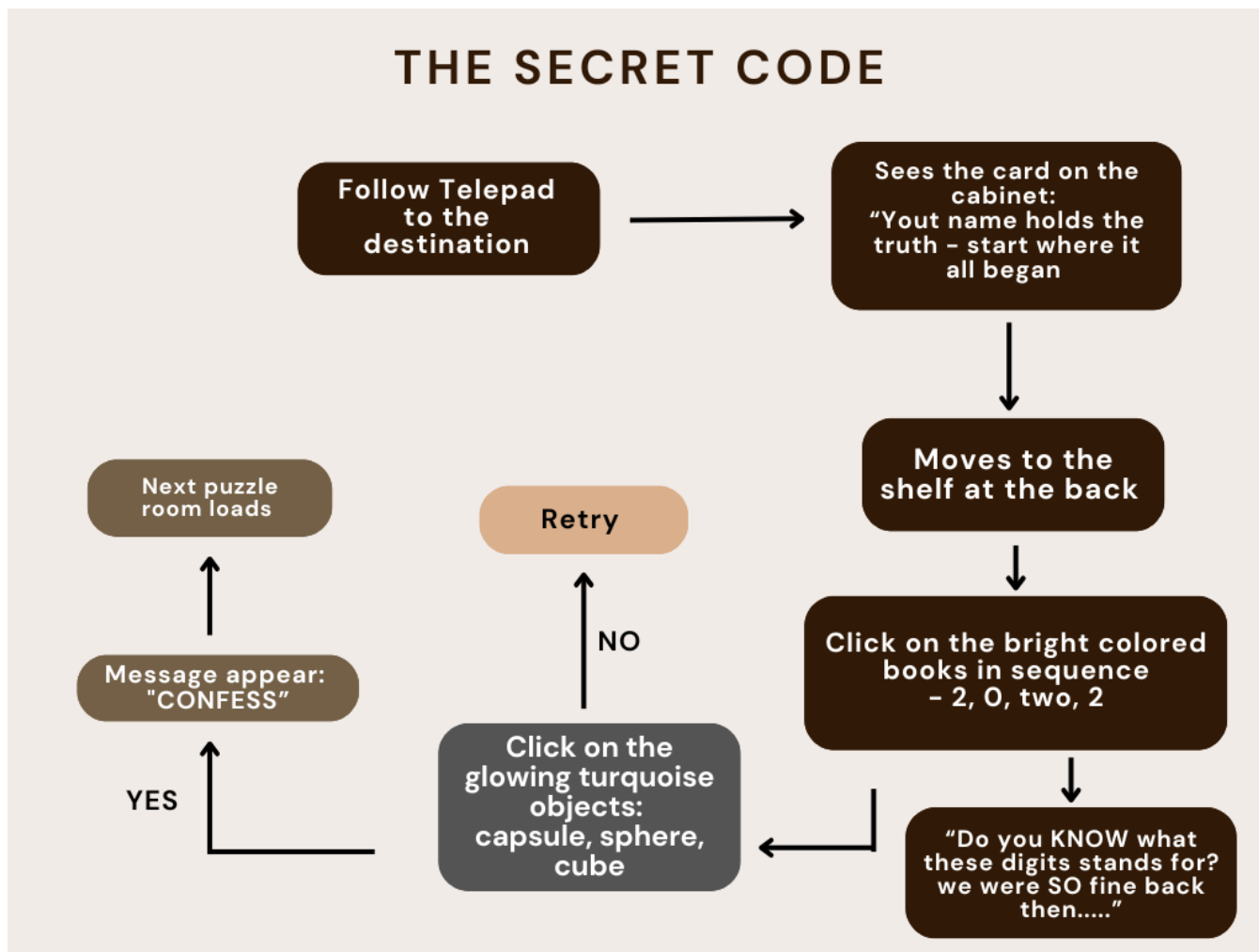
4ᵀᴴ PUZZLE OF THE ESCAPE ROOM
Title: *THE FINAL TRUTH*

Location: Staff room
Setting: dimly lit – timeline cards around the room

- A locked *"Confession Box"* sits on the cabinet (glowing bright yellow)

1) Players must observe the timeline cards properly and look for the clue to the code to unlock the box
2) The code to the colour code pad is the colours of the timeline cards

Code order: blue, green, brown

Timeline – the only hidden evidence that could prove Vero's innocence but it is not enough if no one believes her
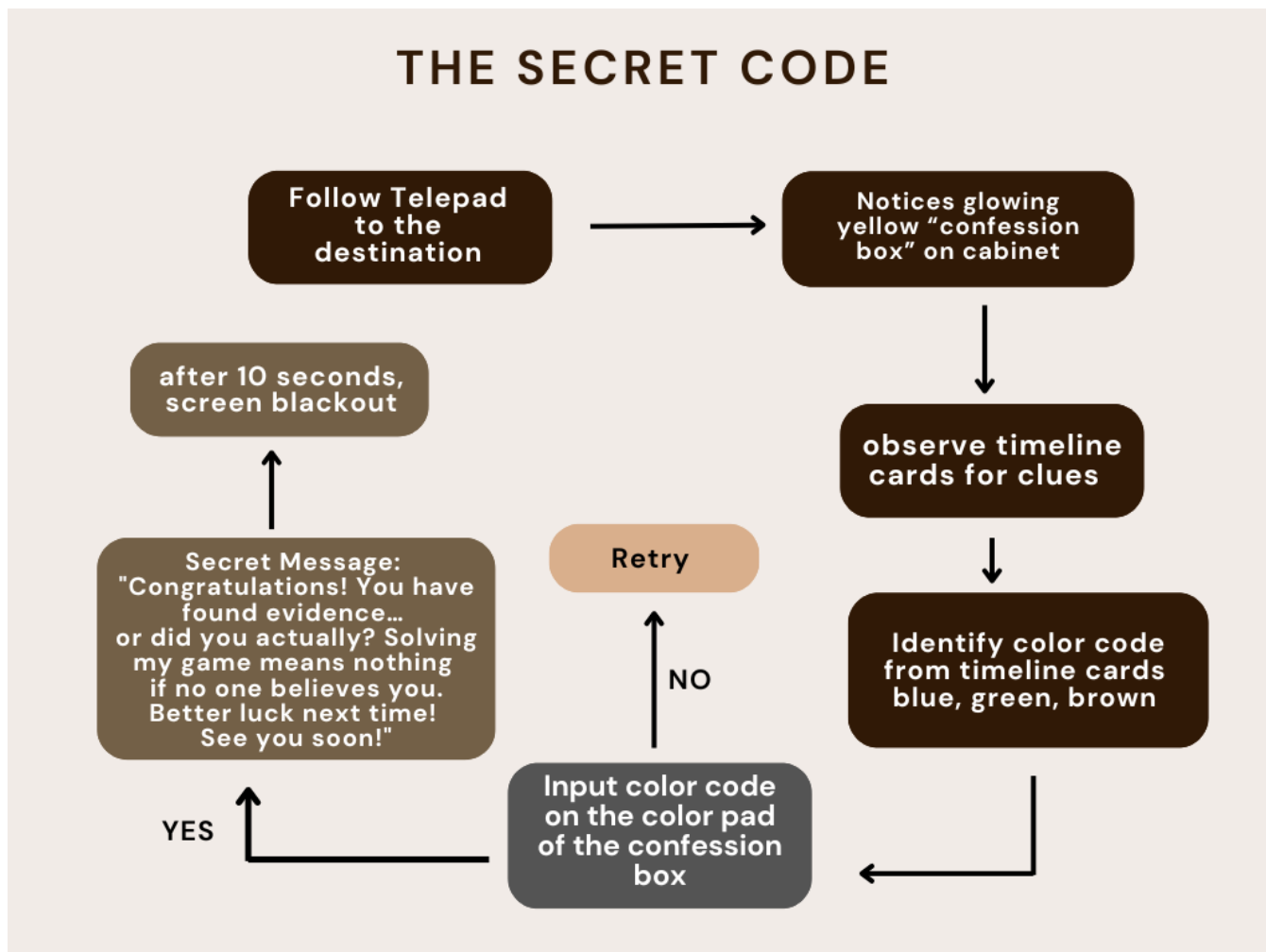
Time stamp - 5 AM, 25th June 2025 Friday

Short event - Someone accessed the teacher's files

Clue – Red hoodie spotted on camera, muddy footprint, size 270mm on the pathway near staff room and coloured hair

➔ Once code is entered correctly, a secret message will appear

Secret message:

"Congratulations! You have found evidence… or did you actually? Solving my game means nothing if no one believes you. Better luck next time! See you **soon***!"*

THE SECRET CODE

```
Follow Telepad          →          Notices glowing
to the                             yellow "confession
destination                        box" on cabinet
                                          ↓
after 10 seconds,                  observe timeline
screen blackout                    cards for clues
      ↑                                   ↓
Secret Message:         Retry       Identify color code
"Congratulations! You have                 from timeline cards
found evidence…                     blue, green, brown
or did you actually? Solving    ↑
my game means nothing          NO
if no one believes you.
Better luck next time!
See you soon!"

      ↑                 Input color code          ←
YES                     on the color pad
                        of the confession
                        box
```

Gameplay Scope

For each puzzle, the player will be given about 6 minutes to complete all tasks.
30 – 45 mins to complete the entire escape room.

In this escape room, there are no levels. The player simply needs to understand the background story and complete the task to retrieve clues for the next puzzle in another room. If the player makes an incorrect move, they will receive subtle feedback indicating the mistake, encouraging them to reconsider their actions. This maintains suspense and tension in line with the thriller concept, while allowing the player to progress through the experience at their own pace.

The objective is to prove innocence and reveal the real prankster's secret and the evidence of the suspect who hacks the teacher's files before the principal returns. The timeline cards in the final room puzzle are the only evidence that can help to catch the culprit who hacked into the teachers' files. However, the player was ever given the

chance to speak the truth.

There will not be any character upgrades, as this is mainly to collect lots of clues and finding evidence to catch the real prankster of the school. It is a thriller and mystery concept inspired by "One of us Is Lying" by Karen M. McManus.

For each room puzzle, it will be a 4-sided room (3D) where each of the sides will be filled with objects that is related to the clues. It will be a 360 view where the player can move around the room by teleporting and turn wherever he/she wants. The player will be able to pick things that may not be needed to solve the clue in the room. This is to create confusion and harder for the player to solve.

For the number pad lock, the player will be given **3 tries** to input the correct number. Otherwise, the player will be locked in the room and will never get another chance to escape.

MISTAKES	CONSEQUENCES
Input incorrect code < 3 times	NIL
Input incorrect code for the 3rd time	Will be stuck in the game, unable to progress, until the mystery is unraveled.

Art Style

The concept of my escape room is thrill and mystery while being student friendly, ensuring that no violence involves. It features clues, unsettling environments and suspicious movement that will spark enthusiasm in the player. Since this idea is inspired by my favourite book, I would like to have a

similar setting as the flow of the story.

The challenge is to create it without any violence involves but still gives out a similar eerie feeling to the player with the help of the effects.
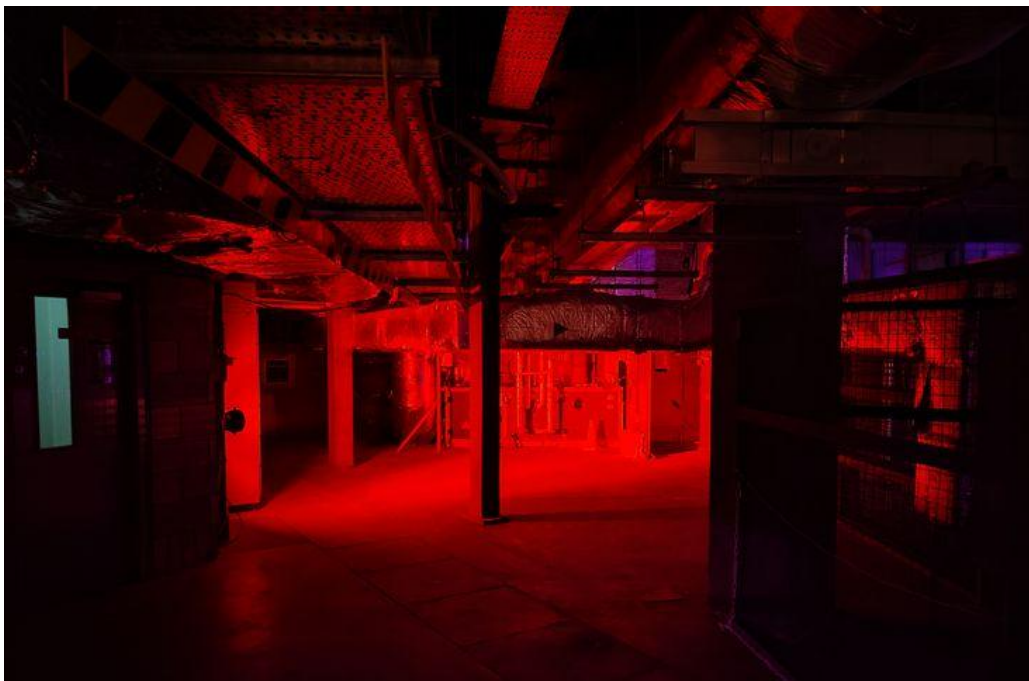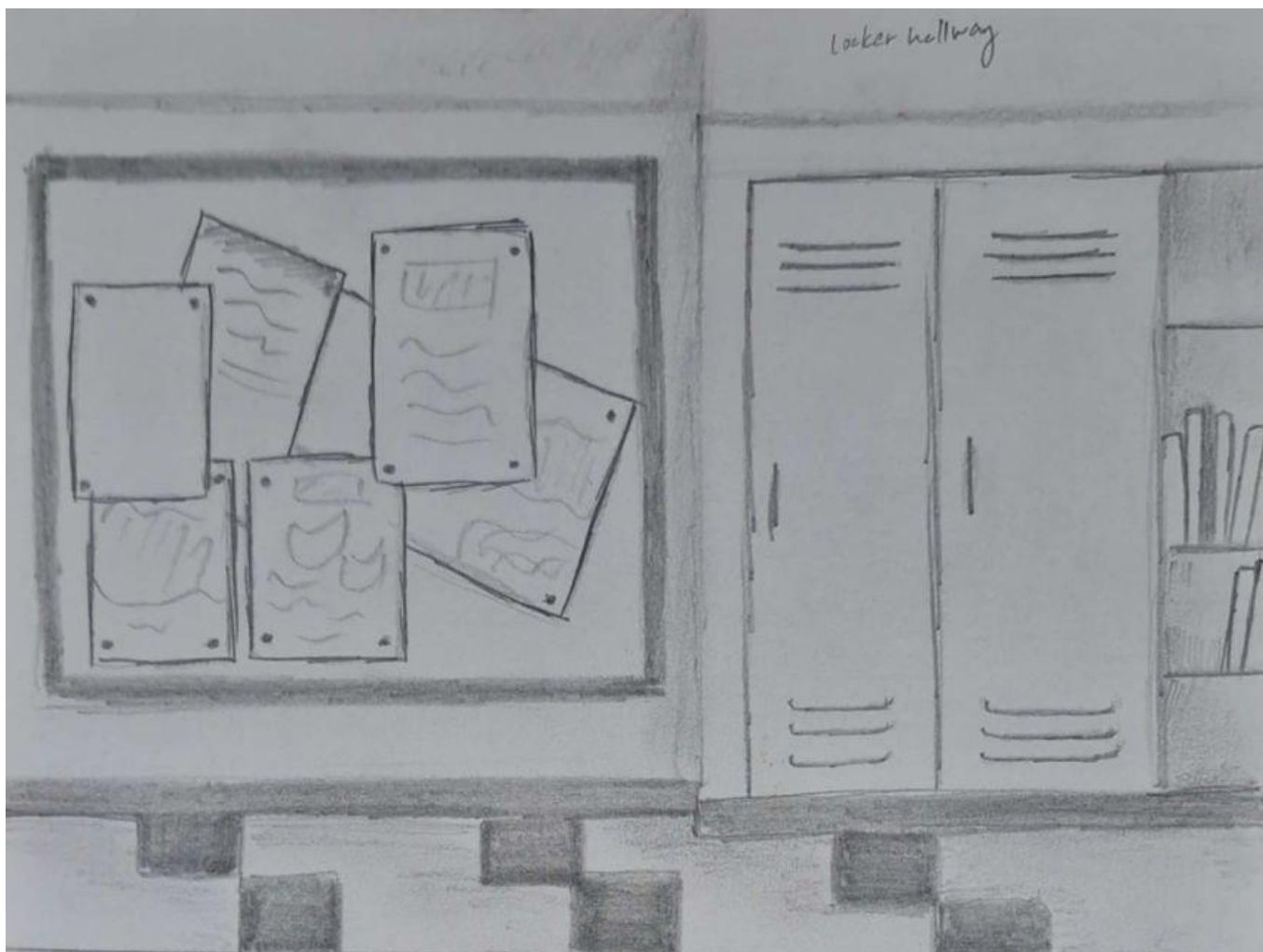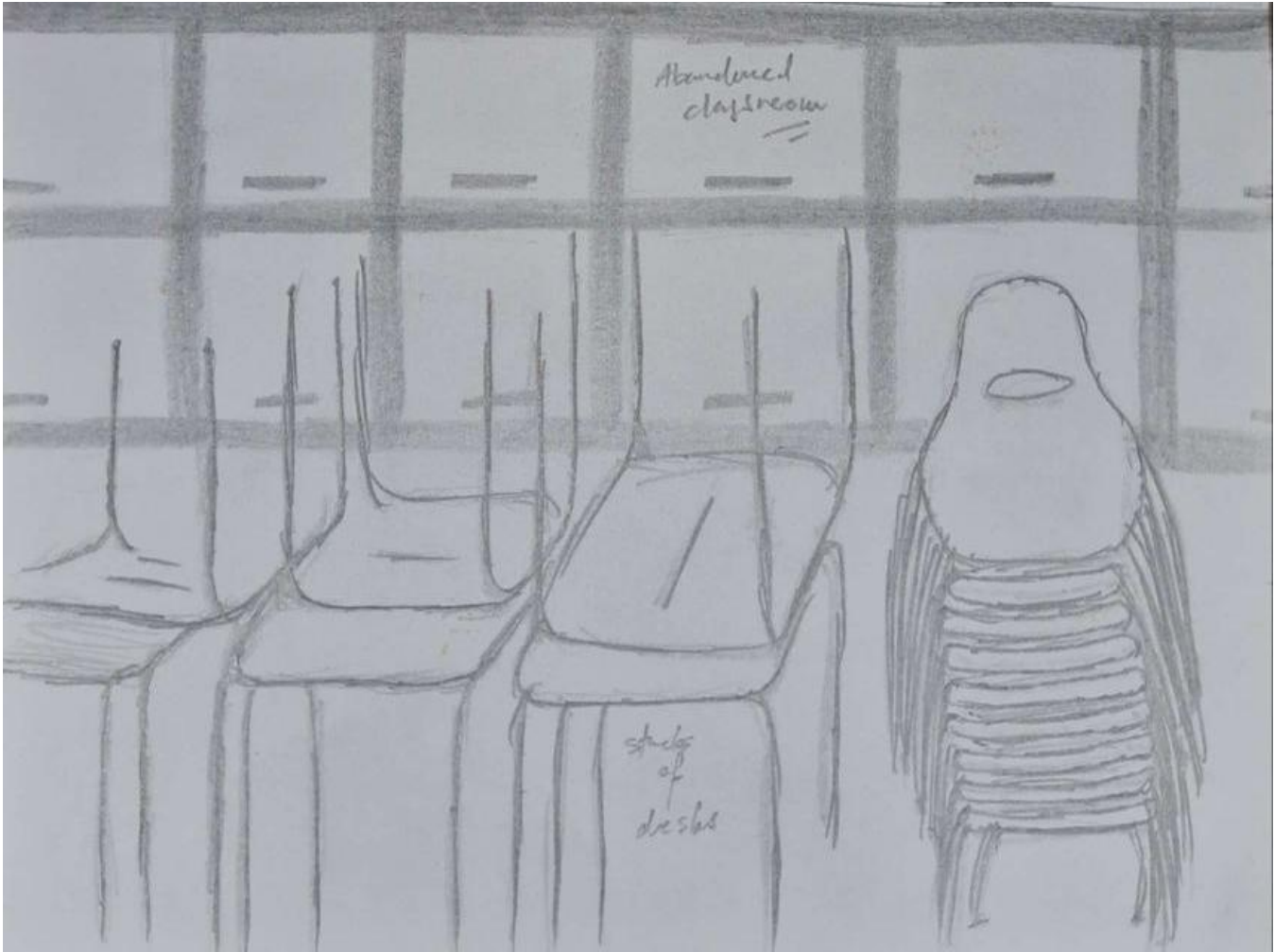
The 3 photos above is a reference of how the effects in the game should look like. This is to have the feel of eeriness and mystery while playing – dimly light, red coloured light, corner area with no direct light.

LOCATION: LOCKER HALLWAY

LOCATION: ABANDONED CLASSROOM

The sketches above show two different room concepts for the puzzles in the escape room.

The top sketch shows a locker hallway, focusing only on the side of the hallway where the lockers are located. This serves as the concept for the 1st puzzle (The Locked Locker). To enhance the thriller and mystery atmosphere, this space will be dimly lit, with natural light streaming in through the windows on the other side of the hallway, casting eerie sun rays onto the floor and lockers. Beside the lockers, a pinboard will be cluttered with mysterious, clues will create a tense, uneasy feeling for the player as they search for the key or combination to unlock it.

The bottom sketch illustrates an abandoned classroom which sets the scene for the 2nd puzzle (The Gossip Board). In this puzzle, the player must find hidden clues that will lead them to a crucial piece of information for the next stage. The abandoned classroom is empty, no resources available. Using an unused classroom makes the setup believable – it would be unreasonable for a prankster to hide clues in an active classroom while lessons are in progress and detention is happening during the day. The scattered desks and

hidden corners add to the feeling of suspense and suspicion, encouraging the player to search thoroughly for hidden messages or notes that will advance the puzzle.

Overall, both environments are designed to build a narrative filled with tension and mystery, guiding the player deeper into the story as they unravel the secrets left behind.

LOCATION: LIBRARY
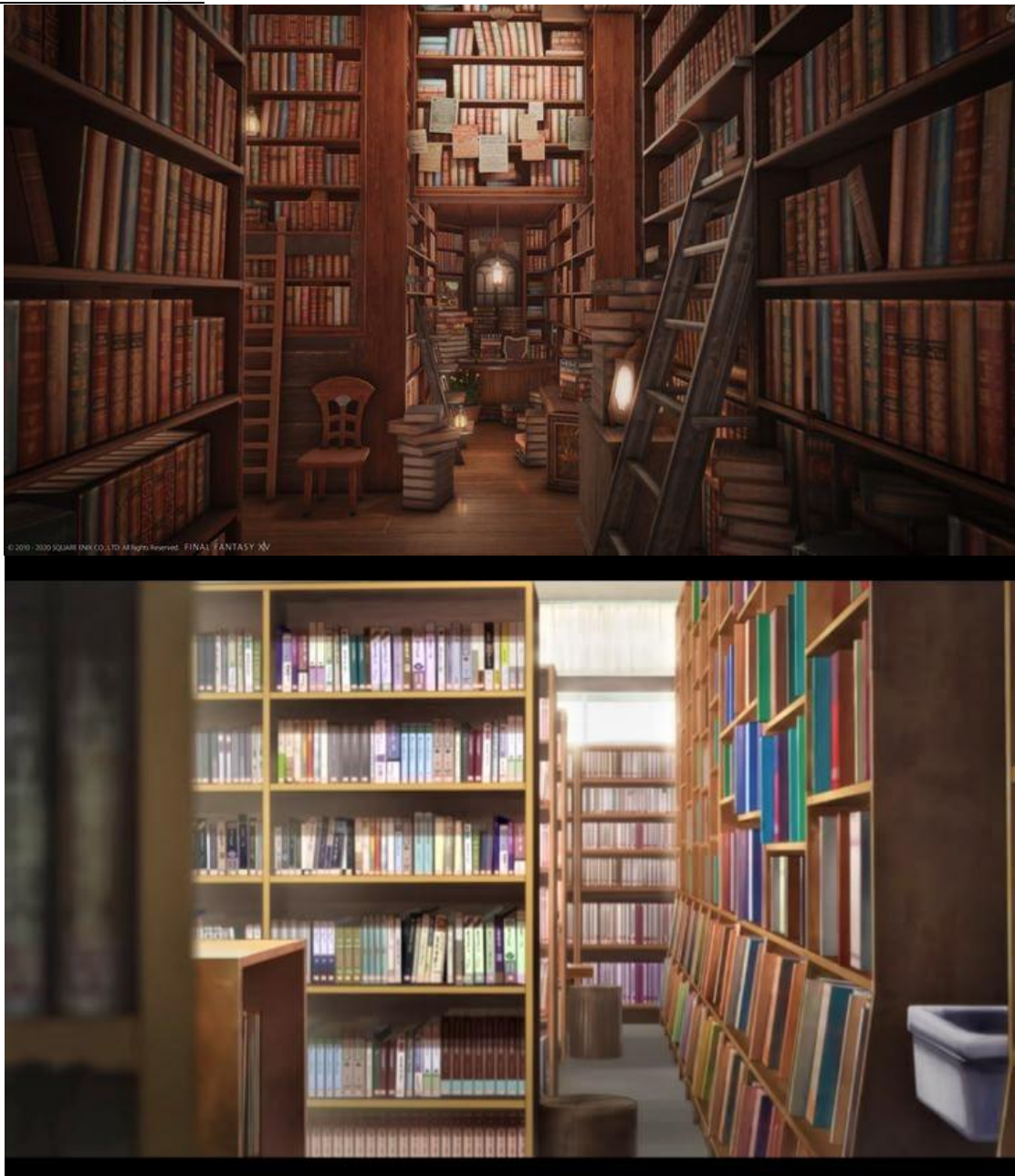
This is a concept for the 3rd room puzzle: The secret code in the yearbook.

The puzzle is set in a school library, a space that is typically large and divided into different sections. While most of the library is bright and welcoming, there are corners that feel quiet and slightly eerie – areas where students rarely go to. This section is tucked away in a secluded corner with no study tables, making it an ideal place for the prankster to hide clues without drawing attention during school hours.

In this puzzle, the player goes to the very end to the shelves and observe the difference. These clues are subtle, the number on the book are the small little clue. The area is intentionally dimly lit, no light ray from sunlight, creating an unsettling atmosphere.

To help guide the player towards the correct yearbooks, a slightly brighter, focused light shine directly onto the spines of the yearbooks they need to inspect. This subtle highlight draws the player's attention without making puzzle too obvious, maintaining the feeling of secrecy and discovery.

LOCATION: STAFF ROOM

The environment for the 4th room puzzle – The Final Truth, draws inspiration from soft, anime-style visuals that immediately convey to the player that they in staff room. To enhance thrill and mystery, the surroundings are designed to be in a dim and unsettling. Blinds are partly drawn, only faint light through the windows and a tense atmosphere.

To show the busyness of the staff room during school day, chairs not being pushed and stacks of papers scattered across teachers' desks. Among the mess, the "Confession Box", will be placed on a random area.

As for the timeline cards, the player will interact with the colour pad lock by clicking on the correct colour codes. These codes correspond to the colours of the timelines found around the room. This setting to create an eerie and tense by the clues written on the timeline cards.

Player Profiles Stories

Name: VERO MILER
Position: The player

Vero Miler is an ordinary student in Valley High School who does her work quietly and ignores all the rumors circulating around her. She has never bothered to find out what

the gossip is about or join in with the other students' chatter. She often overhears random students being targeted as victims of the prankster but only has a vague idea why - most of the time, it's because certain students try to act as "leaders" by bullying others and using classmate as their messengers.

Vero is the smartest at Valley High School which makes many of her peers, especially the girls, jealous of her talent. On top of that, she knows how to play the guitar and sings well. She once sang in front of the whole school during the Teacher's Day concert although she only did so because her homeroom teacher insisted.

REASONS SHE WAS ACCUSED:

- She's known for solving challenging problems that aren't just schoolwork – such as fixing computer bugs and troubleshooting technical issues with the projector. She's the go-to "Tech girl" her class.
- Her talent and the teachers' fondness for her annoy other students including the prankster.
- She is unfazed, resilient and self-possessed which makes her an easy target for resentment.

Name: The prankster (He/Him)
Position: The culprit

The prankster is a student at Valley High School. He's an athlete on the Valley High Maverick football team. Although he isn't known for his academics, since he rarely has time to study – whenever he does put in effort, he can easily reach the top of his class and even make the honor roll.

One day, frustrated and bitter after ACL injury forced him to sit out of all sports activities for at least a year, he decided to get revenge. He blamed John Bred, one of the guys on his team, for causing the injury. Out of spite, he wrote a fake rumor about John and spread it throughout the school. Seeing how quickly everyone believed it made him feel powerful and strangely satisfied, so he decided to take it further. This time it's real, he printed a photo of John Bred sitting at a café near the school, surrounded by a group of kids with their faces hidden except for John's. it shows john is happily taking drugs. Not stopping there, he began spreading rumors about other students he disliked or who had ever targeted him. What started as revenge quickly turned into a hobby.

As for Vero Miler, he has no real reason to target her except for the fact that it irritates him to see someone so resilient and responsible — someone who ignores the gossip, does her work and is adored by nearly every teacher. In his eyes, she's an easy challenge — and making her suffer makes his "aching eyes" feel better.

Milestone Schedule

No.	Descriptions	Date	Remarks
1	GDD, sketches of the 1st room puzzle	28/06/2025	Nil
2	Complete the art style	3/07/2025	Nil
3	Searching for assets to be use for the escape room	03/07/2025	Saved the assets & to be used in the puzzles
4	Start creating the room layout for all 5 rooms using 3D objects	08/07/2025	Size them accordingly
5	Working on the 1st puzzle for locker hallway room	14/07/2025 – 16/07/2025	Nil
6	Working on the 2nd puzzle for study room	20/07/2025	Nil
7	Working on 3rd puzzle for library	21/07/2025	Nil
8	Working on 4th puzzle for staff room	23/07/2025	Nil
9	Troubleshooting the puzzles that did not work – keypad in locker hallway	26/07/2025	Change the keypad, previously was an asset keypad – made it from scratch
10	Troubleshooting puzzle for study room	27/07/2025	Drag and drop did not work so change of plan to clicking and a message appear
11	Troubleshooting puzzle for library	28/07/2025	Drag and drop did not work so change it
12	Adding sounds	29/07/2025	Background sound and some sound effect
13	Finalize the entire escape room	29/07/2025	Download Apk file
14	Record on VR headset	29/07/2025	Puzzle for study room did not work

VERTICAL SLICE OF THE ESCAPE ROOM – PROGRESS

For this project, the 1st puzzle toom (The Locked Locker) will be developed as the vertical slice to show final gameplay, visuals, puzzle logic and teleportation mechanic mentioned in this GDD.

This is the layout for my 1st puzzle room (The locker hallway). Most of the objects in here are from the asset store excluding the room and the clickable keypad – build it using 3D objects, size it accordingly.

The keypad is design where once the player enters the code and click "ENTER", a successful message will appear but if it is incorrect, the player will be given 3 tries. The 3 papers pinned on the corkboard are the riddles that player needs to solve and the number that the player gets will be the code for the keypad.

The interior design of this room is to show the thrill and unused/old hallway that been abandoned for a long period of time - the texture and colour of the wall and the locker material.
The movement around the room are by clicking the transparent telepad – the player will be able to click back on the previous telepad to move back. The turquoise telepad is the one that will teleport the player to the next room accordingly.