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| RIFT  Venkatesh Nitin Vayachal |

# Game Summary

RIFT is an adventure, mystery, RPG game with a focus on exploration and mystery solving rather than combat. You will play as two characters – Nathan and Lex. The game alternates between the two characters as the story progresses and the mystery unfolds. You will investigate the death and disappearance of Nathan’s mom that took place 20 years ago and get to the truth.

## Game Design Pillars

1. Exploration – the majority of the gameplay is the player exploring the woods, trying to find clues and get pieces of the story
2. Puzzle Solving – the player will need to piece together the pieces of the puzzle and get the bigger picture to get to the truth
3. Adventure – The player must escape certain dangers in the environment while exploring the small town of Hallowridge, including the lake located near the town, Lake Hallow.

## User Experiences

The players will feel a sense of accomplishment after solving the puzzles. The exploration and adventure will give a sense of urgency to the game, keeping players on their toes. The story and the time-traveling element would appear interesting to the player.

# Core Gameplay

## Aim of the Game

* The core gameplay will be achieved by a series of game mechanics like running, jumping, sliding, rowing a boat, swimming, and puzzle solving.
* The players are trying to unveil the story by gathering clues to a puzzle. The players will gather these clues by exploring and investigating the village and the surrounding area, including the lake.
* The captivating story and investigations are the USP of the game.
* When playing RIFT, the players will feel accomplishment when solving puzzles, fear or anxiety when in a hostile environment like chase sequences, and joy or sorrow when they unveil the complete story.
* The target audience will be from young adults to adults.
* The game takes you through the lives of Nathan and Lex. You get to experience their journey to the truth with them as you progress in the game.

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## Game Design Goals

* The primary objective in the game is to get to the truth about Nathan’s mom’s disappearance and death that happened 20 years ago, and find out where Lex’s and Nathan’s stories meet.
* The players should get a sense of accomplishment when solving puzzles and unveiling the mystery. The players will experience anxiety and fear in hostile situations, aided by visual and sound effects. At the end of the game, the players will either feel joy or sorrow when they know the whole truth.
* Key Mechanics –
  + Exploring –
    - Walking, Jogging, Running, and Jumping to Traverse the map
    - Sliding and crouching to escape the dangers
  + Puzzle Solving –
    - Sneak up to listen to eavesdrop on conversations to get clues
    - Gather clues and piece them together to reveal the story and/or the next clue
* Player Engagement –
  + Puzzle Solving – Gathering clues, solving puzzles, and progressing further in the story will keep players engaged
  + Story – The captivating story of Lex and Nathan will help increase player engagement
  + Time Travel – Traveling through time and experiencing a world from ages past will be appealing to players
* The game will have a low-poly 3D art style.
* The time travel element combined with the problem solving and exploration makes the game unique and appealing to the players.
* The game will be playable on PC and Mac and will be free to download on Steam.

# Features

## Game Mechanics

### Movement

1. Walk/Jog/Run – Players will move using the W-A-S-D keys or the left joystick on their controllers. The movement mechanic will allow players to explore the game world, gather clues, and escape hostile environments.
2. Jump/Slide – These actions enable players to navigate obstacles while exploring or escaping hostile environments.

### Puzzle Solving

1. Eavesdropping – Players can eavesdrop on conversations when close to their target to gather important information for their investigations.
2. Collecting Clues – Players will interact with objects in the game world that serve as crucial clues in their investigation.

## Characters

### Nathan

Nathan is one of the characters you’ll play as. The story begins with the disappearance and death of his mother. He still mourns the loss of his mother and yearns for closure. He will stop at nothing to learn the truth about her disappearance. When playing with him, you will share his loss and his undying want for the truth.

### Lex

Lex is the second playable character in the game. She is a young girl living with her mother, stepfather, and stepsister. After being blamed for the disappearance of her stepsister, she sets out to find the truth and prove her innocence.

## Environments

### The Town of Hallowridge

This is a small town by a lake where people live their lives happily. There’s unusual activities being reported lately, like appearances of animal species that haven’t been seen there for 20 years. This town has an unsettling atmosphere.

### Lake Hallow

This man-made lake is filled with cypress trees that have adapted to the still-water ecosystem. There are various dangers in and around the lake, including crocodiles, poachers, and mysterious animals that appear out of nowhere. Being misty and creepy at night, you want to stay away from this lake during the dark hours.

## User Interface

The game's user interface will be minimal. With only the necessary information displayed on the scene at any given time, players will have the most immersive experience.

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## Unique Features

The game features unique elements such as time travel and puzzle-solving, making it a distinct experience for players. The game switches between two characters, which is unlike most other games on the market.

## Perspective

The game will feature a third-person camera perspective, allowing players to focus on and enjoy the game world around them. When interacting with features like time travel through the rift, players will feel excited about discovering a new world and exploring it to find potential clues.

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# Player Mechanics

## Core Mechanics

### Movement (Walk, Jog, Run, Jump, Slide)

1. Walk
   1. Keyboard: W forward, A move left, S move backwards, D move right
   2. Controller: Left Joystick Up to move forward, Left Joystick Left to move left, Left Joystick Right to move right, Left Joystick Down to move backwards
2. Jog
   1. Only possible when using a controller
   2. Same directions as Walk and press Left Stick to toggle on/off
3. Run
   1. Keyboard: Press left shift when moving
   2. Controller: Press left joystick twice to toggle on/off
4. Jump
   1. Keyboard: Space Bar
   2. Controller: A on Xbox key scheme, X for playstation key scheme.
5. Slide
   1. Keyboard: Press LCtrl when running
   2. Controller: Press Right Joystick when jogging/running

### Interaction

1. Players will have the ability to interact with in-game objects. Some of these objects will provide vital information to aid the players’ investigations, while others will reveal information depending on the context. Eg, interacting with a sign that shows a spot will trigger a memory the player had in the past in that location
2. Players will interact with the evidence board that is accessible from the game’s main menu screen. Players will be able to monitor their progress in the game and the current part of the story using this board.

### Feedback

1. Haptic: All game actions will trigger a haptic (hardware permitting) or other mechanical feedback (vibration on controllers) to enhance player engagement.
2. Audio:
   1. Background Music: The game features a diverse range of tracks for background music. The tracks will align with the game's situation to enhance the player's experience. Eg: Fast-paced music for chases, escaping, a low, eerie, horror music when exploring the lake at night, etc.
   2. Sound Effects: All player actions will have a corresponding sound effect that plays in the game.

### Accessibility

The game features a story narration mode for the visually impaired, as well as an autoplay mode for players with disabilities, which allows them to watch the game being played automatically, enabling them to enjoy the game's progression still.

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# Game World

When writing about the game world and characters in a game design document (GDD), a game designer should provide detailed and vivid descriptions that convey the setting, atmosphere, and inhabitants of the game. This section should help the development team visualize and understand the environment and characters they will bring to life. Here’s how to effectively write about the game world and characters:

### **Steps to Writing About the Game World**

1. Overview of the Game World:
   * Provide a general overview of the game world, including its name, type (fantasy, sci-fi, historical, etc.), and overall theme.
2. Detailed Descriptions of Key Locations:
   * Describe the major locations or regions within the game world. Highlight their unique characteristics, geography, climate, and any significant landmarks.
3. World History and Lore:
   * Summarize the history and lore of the game world. Include key events, factions, cultures, and any relevant backstory that shapes the current state of the world.
4. Visual Style and Atmosphere:
   * Explain the visual style and atmosphere of the game world. Mention the art style, color palettes, and any specific aesthetic influences.
5. Environmental Interactions:
   * Describe how players can interact with the environment. Include details on dynamic elements such as weather systems, day-night cycles, and interactive objects.

## Characters

### **Steps to Writing About Characters**

1. Overview of Main Characters:
   * Provide a brief overview of the main characters, including the protagonist, antagonist, and key supporting characters.
2. Detailed Character Profiles:
   * For each major character, include detailed profiles that cover their background, personality, motivations, and role in the story.
3. Visual Description and Concept Art:
   * Describe the visual appearance of each character, including their clothing, physical features, and any distinctive traits. Include concept art or reference images if available.
4. Character Relationships:
   * Explain the relationships between characters. Include details on their interactions, alliances, conflicts, and any evolving dynamics.
5. Voice and Dialogue:
   * Provide information on the character’s voice and dialogue style. Mention any specific accents, speech patterns, or catchphrases.

# Enemies (if applicable)

When writing about enemies in a game design document (GDD), game designers should provide detailed and organized information about the various enemies that players will encounter. This section should cover the enemies' characteristics, behaviors, and roles within the game, helping the development team understand how to implement and balance these adversaries. Here’s how to effectively write about enemies in a GDD:

### **Steps to Writing About Enemies**

1. Overview of Enemy Types:
   * Provide a general overview of the different types of enemies in the game. Categorize them based on their roles, behaviors, and threat levels (e.g., common enemies, elite enemies, bosses).
2. Detailed Descriptions:
   * For each enemy type, provide a detailed description that includes their appearance, abilities, behaviors, and weaknesses.
3. Behavior and AI:
   * Explain the behavior patterns and AI logic for each enemy. Describe how they react to player actions, their attack patterns, and any special behaviors.
4. Combat Mechanics:
   * Describe how each enemy fights, including their attack types, range, and damage. Mention any unique combat mechanics they use.
5. Visual and Audio Cues:
   * Detail the visual and audio cues that indicate enemy presence, attacks, and behaviors. This helps players recognize and respond to threats.
6. Context and Lore:
   * Provide context for each enemy within the game world and story. Explain their origins, motivations, and how they fit into the game’s lore.
7. Difficulty and Balancing:
   * Discuss the difficulty level and balancing considerations for each enemy. Mention how they scale with player progression and how they contribute to the game’s challenge.
8. Illustrations and Diagrams:
   * Include concept art, diagrams, or screenshots to visually represent each enemy type and their key features.

# Levels

When writing about levels in a game design document (GDD), a game designer should provide comprehensive details on the structure, layout, and progression of each level. This section should include descriptions of the level's design, objectives, challenges, and any unique elements. Here’s how to effectively write about levels in a GDD:

### **Steps to Writing About Levels**

1. Overview of Level Design:
   * Provide a general overview of the level design philosophy and how levels fit into the overall game structure. Mention the types of levels (e.g., linear, open-world, puzzle-based).
2. Detailed Level Descriptions:
   * Describe each level in detail, covering its setting, layout, objectives, and any unique mechanics or features.
3. Flow and Progression:
   * Explain the flow and progression of the level, including how players move through the space and the pacing of challenges and rewards.
4. Environmental Design:
   * Discuss the visual and thematic elements of the level, including the art style, color palette, and any significant landmarks or environmental storytelling.
5. Gameplay Mechanics and Interactions:
   * Detail the gameplay mechanics and interactions specific to the level, such as puzzles, platforming sections, combat encounters, or exploration areas.
6. Enemy and NPC Placement:
   * Describe the placement and behavior of enemies and NPCs within the level. Mention any scripted events or AI behavior patterns.
7. Challenges and Obstacles:
   * Outline the main challenges and obstacles players will face in the level, including traps, puzzles, and environmental hazards.
8. Rewards and Collectibles:
   * List the rewards and collectibles available in the level, such as power-ups, hidden items, and achievements.
9. Visuals and Layouts:
   * Include maps, diagrams, and concept art to visually represent the level's layout and key elements.

# User Interface

When writing about the user interface (UI) in a game design document (GDD), a game designer should provide detailed and organized information about the layout, functionality, and visual design of the game's UI elements. This section should help the development team understand how the UI will look, how it will function, and how it will enhance the player's experience. Here’s how to effectively write about the UI in a GDD:

### **Steps to Writing About the User Interface**

1. Overview of the UI:
   * Provide a general overview of the UI design philosophy, including its goals (e.g., usability, accessibility, aesthetics) and how it fits into the overall game design.
2. UI Elements and Layouts:
   * List and describe all the major UI elements, such as menus, HUD (heads-up display), inventory screens, and dialogue boxes. Provide details on their layout and placement on the screen.
3. Functionality:
   * Explain the functionality of each UI element, including how players interact with it and what information or actions it provides.
4. Visual Design:
   * Describe the visual style of the UI, including color schemes, typography, icons, and any thematic elements that tie it to the game world.
5. User Flow:
   * Detail the user flow, illustrating how players navigate through the UI, from the main menu to in-game HUD elements and other screens.
6. Wireframes and Mockups:
   * Include wireframes and mockups to visually represent the layout and design of each UI element. These should be detailed enough to guide the development team in implementation.
7. Interactive Elements:
   * Describe any interactive elements, such as buttons, sliders, and text fields. Include details on their states (e.g., default, hover, clicked) and animations.
8. Accessibility Considerations:
   * Discuss accessibility features, such as scalable text, colorblind modes, and keyboard/controller navigation, ensuring the game is accessible to a wider audience.
9. Consistency and Usability:
   * Emphasize the importance of consistency and usability in the UI design. Explain how the design ensures a smooth and intuitive user experience.
10. Feedback and Testing:
    * Outline plans for user feedback and testing to iterate and improve the UI based on player responses and usability tests.

# Player Experience

When writing about the player experience in a game design document (GDD), game designers should focus on describing the intended emotional, psychological, and sensory experiences that players will have while playing the game. This section should encompass the overall feel of the game, how players will interact with it, and the memorable moments and emotions that the game aims to evoke. Here’s how to effectively write about the player experience in a GDD:

### **Steps to Writing About the Player Experience**

1. Overview of the Player Experience:
   * Provide a high-level summary of the desired player experience. This should include the primary emotions and feelings the game aims to evoke (e.g., excitement, tension, joy, curiosity).
2. Emotional Journey:
   * Describe the emotional journey that players will go through as they progress through the game. Highlight key moments that are designed to evoke specific emotions.
3. Player Engagement:
   * Explain how the game will keep players engaged and motivated. Discuss elements like challenges, rewards, progression, and narrative hooks.
4. Interactive Experience:
   * Detail how players will interact with the game world and mechanics. Discuss the control scheme, feedback systems, and the sense of agency and immersion.
5. Sensory Experience:
   * Describe the sensory aspects of the game, including visual aesthetics, sound design, and haptic feedback. Explain how these elements contribute to the overall experience.
6. Memorable Moments:
   * Identify key moments or set pieces in the game that are designed to be particularly impactful or memorable for players.
7. Accessibility and Inclusivity:
   * Discuss how the game is designed to be accessible and inclusive for a diverse audience. Mention any features that cater to players with different abilities or preferences.