

# Paired Game Design Activity

Tapestry 2013

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Lesson adapted from: Creating Games by McGuire and Jenkins

Goals: experience working with a partner/group; stimulate creativity; experience game design

## PART 1: DESIGN (20 min)

You have 20 minutes to design a game that meets the following criterion:

1. Playable to completion in 8 minutes or less.
2. Requires at most 3 players.
3. Completely explained on the provided rule sheet.
4. Contains at most 7 rules.
5. Uses only the provided materials with the game kit.
6. Must use at least three different items from the game kit.

You can use only these materials as raw materials and construction tools for crafting your game. However, you are not required to use them all and you are encouraged to use them in unconventional ways.

Pairing: One person should be *driving* and one person should be *navigating* as you design each feature/mechanic. Choose one person to drive first. That person should choose a feature/mechanic/rule for the game and work it out. The navigator should comment on the feature and help mold it into the rest of the game. The pair should then switch for the next feature and so on until the game is done.

Your goal is to design *a game*, not *a great game*. Nobody expects perfection from such limited materials and time! Be creative and enjoy yourself. Write down your rules on the rule sheet.

## PART 2: PLAYTEST (10 min)

Once everyone has their game ready, then we'll rotate teams and play each other's games. One person will stay with your game to explain it to the other team.

## PART 3: REVISION (10 min)

Tell the team whose game you played what you thought. Then, hear from the team that played your game and make revisions to your game to make it better.

## PART 4: PLAYTEST (10 min)

We'll swap games again to see how it goes! This time, no one stays to explain the game. The rules need to be pretty specific now!

## FOLLOWUP:

Think about what you observed in the playtests and what you learned about game design from the exercise. You are encouraged to revise your game (or one of the ones that you played...) further after the exercise, without any constraints on material, players, or time.

**Game Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Team Members:**

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

For \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ players

**Winning Condition:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Playing Pieces:**

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

**Game Setup:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Rules:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Video Game Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Team Members:**

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**Explain your game in one sentence:**

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**Goal to Achieve:**

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**What “pieces” will you have on the screen? (include sounds)**

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**How will you provide feedback to the player?:**

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**Rules:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Game Design Lecture Notes

### 1. Discuss exactly what a game is

- Have them list games they've played - put them up on the board
- Not just video games - some sports, board games, card games, silly games, etc.
- Write up on the board what makes them all similar
- Why did they like to play the game

### 2. The definition of a game

Every game has:

- A Goal - something you are trying to achieve
- Rules - arbitrary things to keep you from achieving the goal in the easiest way
- Feedback - some way of showing that you are getting closer to the goal
- Voluntary Participation - it's not fun if you're forced to do it!

How does this apply to all of these games?

Imagine basketball without some of the rules

- Dribbling doesn't matter
- Hoop is really low to the ground
- You can foul as much as you want

These rules INTENTIONALLY make the game's goal "harder" to achieve!

So we make up rules to make the experience of the game fun!

Quote to discuss: "Playing a game is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles."

### 3. What sort of rules does a game have?

Have them break into teams and explain the rules of some game

Then have some explain it to the class.

These are called the operational rules - the ones we would find in a rule book.

When we program games, we are programming something called constitutive rules - the mathematical representation of the rules.

### 4. Do game design activity - approx. 1 hour for activity, maybe more.

5. Get into teams and write down the operational rules for your game. Make them simple to understand! How is the game played?

6. Now draw some screenshots. What do you want the game to look like?

7. Assign each person in the group to work on something - movement, graphics, audio, etc. and get to work!