GAME TESTING

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Inherent in the concepts of prototyping and iteration is an understanding that high-quality testing is absolutely necessary to good game design.

Topics

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- **Why Playtest?**

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  - **Formal Individual Testing**
  - **Online Playtesting**

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- **Successful Student Playtesting Example: *Skyrates***

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- **Other Types of Game Testing**

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  - Schell suggests saying: "I need your help. This game has some real problems, but we're not sure what they are. Please, if there is anything at all you don't like about this game, it will be a great help to me if you let me know."

PLAYTESTERS VS. INVESTIGATORS

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  - It's better to say "I feel happy because the jumping mechanic makes me feel powerful and joyful."

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  - Both game design and playtesting are about checking your ego at the door

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  - However, you eventually need to show your game to others

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    - This will often also be the first real test of the server if it's an online game

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    - **Farmers markets / Community events / Parties**

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  - **If you're developing an online game, you're eventually going to have to reach out to the Internet and see what happens**
    - Internet users will find the most rarified bugs
    - Make sure that they have an easy way to report them
  - **You must also have automated data and user tracking in place**
    - Collect information on every single play session of your game
    - Much of the best information from this circle will be aggregate data
    - Covered in the "Online Playtesting" section that follows

Methods of Playtesting

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    - Automated analysis of thousands of online play sessions

Methods of Playtesting: Informal Individual Testing

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    - If only one playtester said something, don't worry about it as much

Methods of Playtesting: Formal Group Testing

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  - **"How much would you pay for this game? / How much would you charge for this game?"**
  - **"What were the three most confusing things about the game?"**

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  - **What specific survey questions should be asked of the playtester once the playtest is complete?**

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Methods of Playtesting: Formal Individual Testing

Methods of Playtesting: Formal Individual Testing

- **A detailed analysis of a single playtester's experience playing the game**

Methods of Playtesting: Formal Individual Testing

- **A detailed analysis of a single playtester's experience playing the game**

- **Based on the practices of Usability Testing**

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- **Record several different simultaneous data streams**

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- **A detailed analysis of a single playtester's experience playing the game**

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- **Record several different simultaneous data streams**
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    - Covered later in the "Automatic Data Logging" section

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