

Market 19

Game Design Document

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Summary

Describe the game in 2-5 sentences.

3D, stylized, casual game that teaches players how to practice safe social distancing while maintaining healthy relationships. You play as a young adult who visits the market each day to socialize and help the people who live and work there. Balancing the player and NPCs' happiness levels with the risk of getting COVID-19, you must spend your limited time each day wisely to ensure the player makes it home happy and safe without contracting or spreading COVID.

What is the feature set?

Watch out for feature creep! Which features are required for the game to function and make the Core stronger?

For the slice:

- A marketplace to explore
- Several NPCs to talk to
- At least three tasks for the player to complete
- The loneliness/risk mechanic
- The loneliness and risk meter UI
- System for tracking exposure times to individual NPCs each day. The more time you spend with any one NPC, the higher your chances of contracting or passing COVID.
- End-of-day summary
- An end state

Unnecessary features that might be added later:

- Real-world social distancing/COVID-19 resources.
 - Could this perhaps be pulled/updated via API from an NHS site? Would require internet connection to play.
- Weather/Seasons: rain, leaves, etc.
- Dogs, birds, and other animals.
- If there is a barrier between NPC and player, no line for risk
- Difficulty setting changes age of main character (child, young adult, old)

MVP

Describe the minimal viable product:

- A single NPC you can interact with to talk to.
- The mechanic that increases risk but lowers loneliness based on the player's distance from NPCs while talking to them.
- Receive a task from the NPC to go fetch something.

- Ability to interact with/pick up the object and bring it back to the NPC.

Story

Overview

This game doesn't have a traditional story, rather it takes place during a particular time in history - the current COVID-19 pandemic - and allows players to learn and experience social distancing best practices and how to maintain healthy relationships in a time where being close to others is difficult.

Setting

The game takes place in a rural market in a small village in the UK called **Harriesbrough**. Even though the game takes place circa 2020, the village is old and feels timeless. Many of its residents don't rely heavily on technology and neighbors here try hard to support each other.

Fun Fact: Harriesbrough is named after Dr. Jenny Harries, chief executive of the UK Health Security Agency and head of NHS Test and Trace.

Narrative, Characters, and Quests

Primarily provided through the tasks the player receives from NPCs, some environmental signage, and the "end of day summary" that recaps the consequences of their actions each day.

See the [Narrative and Quest Design Document](#) for more information.

Gameplay

Design Pillars

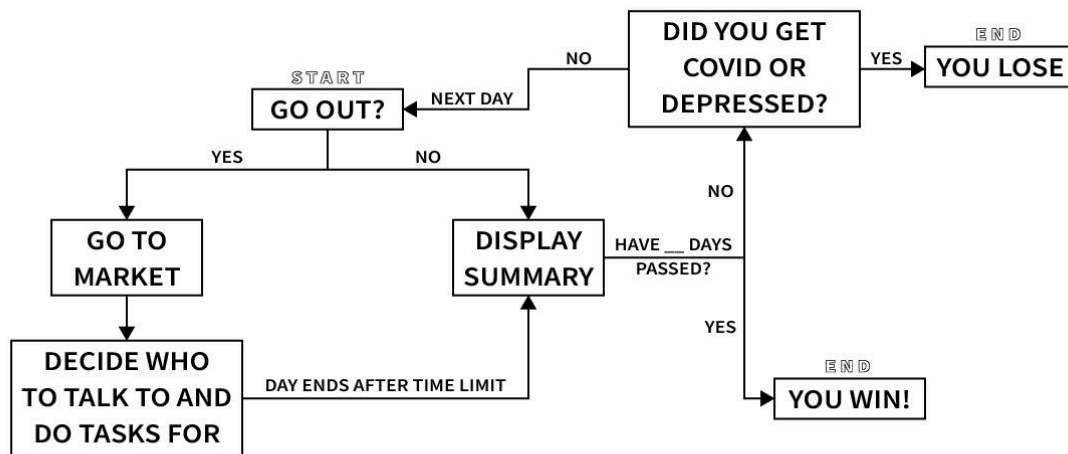
- Educational
- Stylized
- Charming
- Fun

Core Loop

What is the core gameplay loop of the game?
Revisit this often, but don't revise it.

You play as a young person in a small village.
The core of this game is to socialize without getting or spreading COVID.

CORE GAMEPLAY LOOP FLOWCHART



Core Progression Loop:

How do in-game characters and systems get better as you progress through the game?
What does success look like?

The main character doesn't progress, they just have to maintain loneliness levels for a certain amount of time without getting COVID. If they make it ___ days, they win.

Core Skill Loop:

How do the players get better as they progress through the game?

Players will get a feel for how far away to stand, how long to talk to NPCs, and who to prioritize doing tasks for as they play.

Mechanics

List all relevant mechanics and their use

Main Character:

- Talk to NPCs
- Receive tasks (do you wish to accept? yes/no)
- Interact with objects to complete tasks.

Interactable NPCs:

- "Talk" to the main character (get focus and speak gibberish)
- If the player is talking to them or near them, a line will appear between them

- Green, yellow, or red based on how far away the player is from the NPC.
- Parameters each NPC Needs
 - Loneliness
 - Amount of time exposed to main player
 - Indoors or Outdoors
 - Wearing a mask or not
 - List of tasks: Chance to offer a task to the player is proportional to how lonely they are. If they are so lonely that they are at risk of staying home soon, they will definitely offer a task to the player when they talk to them.

Wandering NPCs:

- Just walk through the market
- If they get close to the main character, a line between them will appear to show risk level
- Main character cannot talk to these NPCs

Dynamics

List and explain how mechanics tie into this

- NPCs that contract COVID or get too lonely/depressed can disappear. If there are not enough NPCs for the player to safely engage with each day, it may be more difficult for them to lower their own loneliness meter.

Game Camera

- Three quarter view: Kind of isometric/top-down.
- Static Follow Camera: Follows the player but players can't rotate or zoom the camera.

Levels

Level Progression

How the player progresses through the game.

The game takes place in a single level, the market, but has room to expand to other areas (such as a park courtyard or residential neighborhood).

Environments

The primary environment is the village market: an open-air square in the middle of town with a fountain and various stalls & vendors. Surrounded by a half-wall with trees, bushes, and grass on one side and a row of shops and apartments on the other, the market feels like a perfect meeting place for neighbors to congregate and socialize.

Art

Summary

[Link to Art Bible](#)

UI, Systems & Options

UI

- **Start/Main Menu:** Includes the title of the game, an image of the market, and a few buttons (Start, Settings, and Quit).
- **Pause menu:** Pressing the **Escape** button will open a pause menu overlay that includes Return to Game, COVID FAQ, Settings, and Quit.
- **Talking to NPCs:** When you speak to an NPC, a speech bubble appears over their head with random symbols and gibberish sounds play (similar to Simlish or the gibberish in Celeste).
 - **Receiving a task:** If an NPC has a task for you, a dialogue box will pop up telling you “[name] would like you to do something for them, would you like to accept?” [Yes/No buttons]
- **To do list:** Located in the top-right. This is where tasks for NPCs will be located.
- Stopwatch
- Nameplates

Systems

What systems are needed to make your features work?

Temporarily only start game function and pause function.

Options & Controls

- Movement: **W/A/S/D**
- Multi-purpose interaction key: **Space**
 - Can be used to initiate conversations with NPCs, pickup/interact with objects/doors, or select highlighted buttons.

Audio

Summary

- Necessary:
 - Market background sound
 - Task completion sound effect
 - Background music
 - Gibberish talking sounds
- Nice to have:
 - Character footsteps
 - Red line warning sound
 - Fountain sound
 - Game over sound
 - Bird sounds
 - Location specific music (would fade between background music and this, not both):
 - Acoustic guitar song (musician playing)
 - Ice cream truck music

Link to Audio Document

Link

Target & Expectations

Target Audience

Young adults, the worst offenders when it comes to spreading COVID-19.

Target Device

PC

Marketing

Brand

As a stylized, black and white, artistic game about a very real global pandemic, it attempts to tackle a serious topic in a wholesome and charming way while educating players. It has a somewhat comic book style to the art that could be carried through to the UI.

Unique Selling Points

What is one innovative thing that games like this have never done before? Does it strengthen the Core?

The core mechanic is a pretty unique system that takes proximity, location, and time into account to determine risk levels and how much of the “loneliness meter” the player should get back.

Resources Used

List of free/paid assets and resources:

- Free font called “Reality Check”
<https://www.dafont.com/reality-check.font>
- Free font called “Hey Comic”
<https://www.dafont.com/hey-comic.font>