The End is Only The Beginning
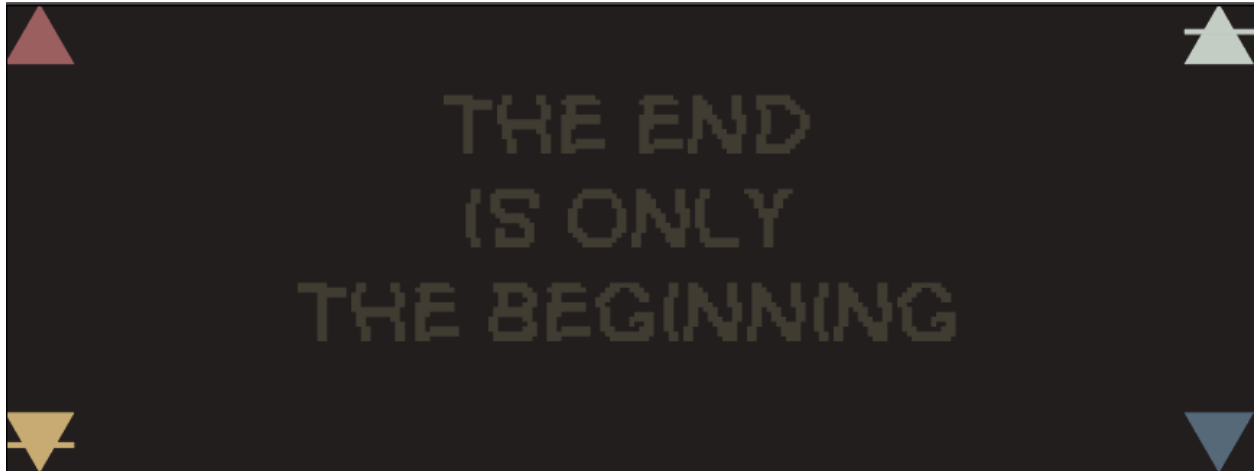## DESIGN DOCUMENT

By ArakATK for the 15th Pirate Software Game Jam

Introduction

Game Summary Pitch

The End is Only the Beginning is a different kind of post-apocalyptic world-reconstruction game where you use alchemy to break down some more common materials into their constituent alchemical elements in order to construct the fundamentals required to scrub the skies, water the soil, and bring life back to the world.

Inspiration

Regrowth

Regrowth is a modpack with quest involvement made for Minecraft, in which you spawn in a dead world, with nothing but cracked clay to work with, and have to use various physical and esoteric crafting techniques to create a lush life-filled world out of the post-apocalyptic hellscape you find yourself in.

Equivalent Exchange

This is another Minecraft mod, no pack this time, which uses alchemical circles to reduce any material into "energy" and then convert that energy into other items. This resulted in some balance issues depending on which build you used, but the idea is sound, and with the limited scope of this project I think the idea can definitely work.

Settlers of Catan

The idea of representing resources as cards, and spending them (though not Reducing them) came from the board game Settlers of Catan, though I plan to have many more resource types than Settlers does.

Player Experience

For this purpose I'm trying to keep it very limited, because this is my first game ever so the player experience will mostly be bare bones. The idea is to have card-based gameplay, with draw decks in places that have resources, the number of cards in each draw deck will represent the amount of resources in that pile (some are unlimited) the player can either use a card directly, or break it down into Air, Fire, Earth, and Water energy (based on the ratios in its makeup!) to make a new card. Some card types will spawn other card types naturally (most plant life cards will spawn seeds, for example) The player will need to judge what it is best to consume for energy, and what to use for its physical

purposes. The end goal is to clear the cloud cover that is making the world's surface unsustainable.

Platform

The game is developed for browser release

Development Software

- Gamemaker Studio
- Pixlart for graphics and UI
- beepbox for all music and SFX

Genre

Singleplayer, Incremental, casual

Target Audience

The game really doesn't have a 'loose' state, it's just a question of how quickly you can make the number go up and the clouds come down. This lends itself to a very casual audience. The art style and card-based play will probably make it best received by millennial and older audience.

Concept

Gameplay overview

The player has a number of cards at their disposal they can either alchemically reduce for elemental energy, or play in their natural state (wood + metal to make a tool) in order to transform a barren post-apocalyptic wasteland into a hopefully thriving green landscape.

Theme Interpretation (Alchemy and Shadow)

The premise of the game starts with a world where the skies are covered in clouds. All the time, like a storm that just refuses to rain. Since the goal of the player is to restore the world, the 'score' or proximity to the win condition, is represented by the shadow cast over the play field. And the core gameplay mechanic is the use of alchemy to convert materials the player has a good amount of into materials the player sorely needs (though this is always at a loss, no conversion happens for free!)

Primary Mechanics

Mechanic	Mockup *(Art not necessarily final)*
Alchemical Circles Several circles will be available to the player. Each level provides a different level of energy lost on Destroy, and allows more sophisticated Creations to be made.	
Resources All physical resources show up on the playing field as cards, while the four energy types will appear on the UI, energy is manipulated only by the player. Cards may do some behaviors automatically	
Rain As clouds dissipate, they release Rain, Rain increases the rate at which Plant type cards activate (and more plants do the same for Animal types)	
Sunlight As clouds dissipate, they also allow more sunlight to reach the surface. This allows both	

Mechanic	Mockup *(Art not necessarily final)*
Animal and Plant type cards to activate faster.	

Secondary Mechanics

Mechanic	Animated Mockup *(Art not necessarily final)*
Consumption Animal type cards have a Consumption cost, they must consume appropriate Plant cards for sustenance. Any Animal cards for which there is no food are destroyed. The player can prevent this by alchemically reducing excess Animals into Energy.	
Wilt The Sunlight in the play field can only sustain certain types of Plant life. Trying to convert too much energy into too complex of life before the world is ready for it will result in a Wilt effect, each Plant card has a durability, the degree to which the current Sunlight is insufficient will determine the rate at which Wilt reduces a Plant's	

Mechanic	Animated Mockup *(Art not necessarily final)*
durability. When it reaches 0, the Plant is destroyed.	

Art

Theme

While I'm not sure exactly sure where I'm going to go with the entire art direction, my intent is to remain with a mostly desaturated color palette, using greens blues yellows reds and grays. I want to avoid using blacks and whites as much as possible, as in my mind they feel too stark.

Design

As I've got very little skill in art, I intend to use a pixelart style that I hope I can add some of my own style to, to attempt to make it at least charming, in its own way. I do want to design it to be relatively small and lightweight, so more simplistic representative art is my aim.

Audio

Music

I'm going to be playing around with some 8 bit chiptune synthesizers to try and make any and all music for the game, I do have more of a background in music than I do in art or game development, but I'm not sure if that will translate to composition.

Sound Effects

I believe to try and remain consistent, I'll try to use the same 8 bit synthesizers for the game's SFX, having played with it a bit, but I may need to look into other sources for some elements.

Game Experience

UI

I want the UI to be very minimalistic, but ideally to have -some- configuration options (it's daft for me to be thinking about this without any real likelihood of delivering a finished product, but the thought behind it is that streamers always have to move their heads around the UI, I want the UI to be configurable so they don't have to do that.) The only elements that really need to be in the UI is the Sunlight and Rain levels (meters? Numbers?) and the player's current banked Air Water Fire and Earth energy.

Controls

Mouse

Point and click
Gamepad
Dpad + A button

Notes

I should probably explain a few things here because I have yet to get my instructions to work, this is because of a bug I've been unable to solve, where my Instructions room refuses to draw panels anywhere but in the GUI event. So! Instructions are here!

Left click a card to inspect it. While inspecting a card, click the alchemy circle (bottom right) to Reduce it (if you have inventory of it!) click the card again to return it to the play area.

To Create a new card, select the desired card on the left side above the alchemy circle, and click the circle itself. If you have enough stored primal Energy, the new card will be created!

To Craft a card (using physical resources) select the desired card on the right side, and then click the Crafting circle on the bottom right. If you have the physical resources for it, the required resources will be destroyed, and the new resource will be added to your inventory!

Development Timeline

MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
1	Design Document	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,…	
2	Create Card Arts, energy icons	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,…	
3	Main menu theme, menu sfx	Audio ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,…	No music but one sfx

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
4	UI / Main menu	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	
5	Level theme	Audio ▾	Not started ▾	Jul 22,...	Unlikely to get finished before submit
6	Resource Types / Values	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
8	Instructions	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 29,...	Object is skipping draw event.. Can't really finish this without help.
9	Energy Management	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jun 25...	
10	Background	Art ▾	Not started ▾	Jul 29,...	Unlikely to be completed before submit
11	Cloud/Shadow effect	Art ▾	In progress ▾	Jul 30,...	Also some light coding - Unlikely to finish before submit
12	Sunlight/Rain mech	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	Ditching Sunlight
13	Pause menu	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28,...	
14	Controller Support	Coding ▾	Not started ▾	Jul 29,...	Unlikely to finish before submit
15	Wilt/Consumption	Coding ▾	In progress ▾	Jul 29,...	Unlikely to finish before submit
16	Individual resource art	Art ▾	Not started ▾	Jul 30,...	Unlikely to finish before submit
17	Any extra polish	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 31,...	
18	SUBMIT	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 31,...	

BEYOND (if ahead of schedule / extra time)

Save	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Saving game status - not sure how this works in GMS
Settings Menu	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	Volume, fullscreen, think of accessibility needs