Powderkeg Playtest-4-Spring 2020-

1/16/20

Teacher/Photographer (plays videos & takes photos)

- Susan

Players

- Marissa Drew
- Devon Lawson
- Sarah Ray
- Hieu Ngeyun (Green)
- Emily Debler

Play Assistants

- Susan

Observer Note-Takers

- Susan (instructions observer)(will have a booklet)(blue)
- Katherine Kehoe (Interpersonal communications observer)(yellow)
- Susan (timer)(pink)

Timer

Started at 1:17pm, Ended about 2:40ish

Intro Video

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

- Player attentiveness (such as; percent that watched all the way through?) -Player Enjoyment (how many were “leaning in” to the media?)
  All seemed to be watching. Seemed interested/ happy.

How to Play Video

Photo:

Time: Swipe here and type

- Player attentiveness (such as; percent that watched all the way through?) Player Enjoyment (how many were “leaning in” to the media?).
  Most were watching, enjoyed it. Laughing, smiling. One who was given the instruction booklet was reading it more than watching the video, but she started watching during the instructions.

Instruction Book

Photo:

Time: Swipe here and type

Ask for a volunteer player to be the game master. They hold and reference the instruction book as needed.

- How many volunteered? 2, one was reluctant so the other took charge.
- How was it decided who it was going to be? She took charge and said she would do it.
- Did the players need to reference the book to get started, or was the video information enough? Yes, they referenced the book.

Epic character cards are dealt

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

- What percentage of the Epic Character cards were read aloud (which is called for by the instructions) The instruction master started, and everyone read their epic character outloud.

Powderkeg Setup (players do this)

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

- Were the cards set up as shown in the instruction booklet? Yes, with help from the “teacher” putting up the layout on the tv
- How much help, if any, did they need? none?

Powderkeg Gameplay

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

- Did the players understand how item cards are used? Explain. Yes. They understood that you paired them up with character cards.
- Did the Players understand how events affected them as Epic characters? Yes, though it had to be explained that each player gets to pick a card.
- What percentage of Event Cards were read aloud?? all
    - At what point did they start or stop? Started at the first event
- Describe the card reading interpersonal interactions, for example:-
    - Embarrassed?
    - Coerced?
    - Interested?
    - Surprised by the story?
    - Dramatized?
    - Other?

There was a collective friendly groan when one player realized he would lose two allied characters.

Players seem enthusiastic to play, nobody seems bored or uninterested.
Players happy when they got a +one
Players were very strategic with their cards

- Did the players understand how to do the math of adding items to Allied Character PowerPoints? Explain. They needed a reminder that all players get to pick a character card, and they didn't realize at first that everyone picks one character first, then they go around again and +one or -one
- Do the players think Phases are different than Rounds? Explain. There was confusion between rounds and phases
- Did the players understand how to take turns? Explain. yes
- If turn-taking is different than in the instruction booklet? Explain. They understood how to take turns (but that could be put earlier in the booklet)

Declarations

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

Players ended up being 3 toris and 2 whigs.

- Can the rule book reader see the cards in the instruction book well enough to tell what kind they are? Yes

- Write down what the players are saying at this point in the game. Talking about making alliances, do they want to “send him(the sole whig) home crying?” (it later changed to 2 whigs

Trading

Photo:
Time:
Players took longer than the 5 minutes said to take; however, they really seemed to be enjoying the trade phase and were very strategic about their trades.

- What percentage of cards were traded? A couple. About 3 trades- there was much discussion though

- Were trades only between allies? No, there were other trades.
- Were some trades between Whigs and Tories? Yes, after some thought.

War

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

Player slightly confused about war points- thought the number on the war cards was a point value.
Slight confusion over how the war phase is done- worked through confusion with instruction master.
Players are having a lot of fun, excited about War.
Observer interjected about tiebreaker medals counting as points
Players have NOT been reading their character cards out loud

- Did the players understand how to set up and play the cards by referencing the pictures in the instructions booklet? Are the pictures large enough to tell what they are? They understood from reading the booklet.
- Did any players appear to feel disappointed due to losing consistently? no
- Explain how they expressed their disappointment and how the rest of the table addressed it. Nobody was really disappointed
- Did the players understand how to tally up points? Yes they did.
- Explain if the players tallied up points differently than in the instruction booklet.
- Were there enough Tiebreaker cards? Explain. yes
- Explain how the players felt about tiebreakers? Tense

Winning The Revolution

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

- Who won? The Tories or the Whigs? Whigs
- For those players that did not win the war: Did they still feel like they had fun? All players expressed having a lot of fun during the game, especially during the War phase

Winning Most Decorated Epic Character

Photo:
Time: Swipe here and type

- Who won? Devon (a whig)
- How did they feel about that? Players enjoyed how there was a turn in the battle at the end
- How did they express their winning physically? There were claps, whoops and happy laughs.

Overview

Did the new point allocation system help to even out the potential for any allied character to help win the war? Explain:

Ideas for Improvement: Swipe here and type

What was the total time: Swipe here and type

Ideas for shortening the time:

Swipe here and type

Where would we be a good place to stop and start the game to accommodate a 2 session gameplay

Swipe here and type

How effective was the Instruction Video

- We were not sure if we were supposed to hide our cards in the beginning - there were open hands in the video that helped.
- We got the layout and got it from the video
- But the plus one minus one character item order was confusing. - it played it in the video but I did not rewatch the video.
- Didn't get the game until we were playing the game.
- We made some house rules but adapted.
- The rules are in the booklet they are just in weird spots.

- **Is it appropriate for the target audience?**
  - Yes - once you understand and play the game it will go faster too.
  - It has a homemade youtube video feel which the young kids can relate to
  - The narrator helps us to understand
  - Voices were clear thought they were ADR
- Is the work meeting the functional goals?
  - It is an introduction to the game more than a true how to.
  - It is a first impression - 75% instructional.
  - Have seen some instruction video games
  - Have seen some heads up in play through but with a digital game.
- Is the work meeting the aesthetic (emotional) goals?

    - Aesthetic - serves as a demo. - might feel a little too homemade and youtube - perhaps detached from the whole.
    - Emotional - goofy - it makes me feel more light hearted about the game since it was about a war the humor helped me connect to it since the characters were comical. Makes history fun even though it is a heavy subject.
- Do you think the work is right for the brand (will it be memorable)?
    - No - they don't do that with most things
    - It is the game that is memorable - not the video.= that goal is too much. We played revolutionary.

How effective was the Instruction Booklet

- Is it appropriate for the target audience?
    - I didn't see it very much
    - It is very plain -the white is hard to keep track of
    - It is hard to differentiate footnote from steps, having a colored background might help - stages. - that would be super helpful.
    - Titles could be different font or underlined or different color
    - In terms of target audience being 8th graders the wording is fine - the layout is not as well defined.
- Is the work meeting the functional goals?
    - Phase 1 repeats in the book
    - Phase and round in the book is confusing
    - Everything past Phase 3 war makes sense

    - The beginning and middle did not make sense - for the action orders.
- Is the work meeting the aesthetic (emotional) goals?
    - Font choice for brown text is legible
    - There is some inconsistency with title heading - if it is intended it is hard to know why.
    - Characters don't look like they are saying the instructions
- Do you think the work is right for the brand (will it be memorable)?
    - Arrows off brand
    - Circles
    - Item association: make bigger

Other observations?

- Swipe here and type

- Confusion about the winners- are there 2? Who wins?
- Question: Is this an "open faced game?" (do you show your hand) it isn't explicitly said in the booklet, players assumed it is open faced.
-Text may be too small on Epic character cards; issue for international/ non-native english speakers.
- the +ones -ones were confusing at first. Observer had to interject and remind players that every player gets to pick a character, and the +ones got an extra character. (May need better clarification in booklet) - They don't understand the order of Effects then turning the page in the rule book to Phase 1 continued where it says every player picks up a card ---- then somewhere in the rules it says effects have positive effects give up a cards - the rule book is not clear that an epic character gets negative effects that they must give up a card from their hand - although it is in the rule book - perhaps it should be in the video.
- Players picked cards after flipping the event card (should've picked before)
- Powderkeg #4 needs adjustment, faint text can be seen and causes confusion. Check all powderkeg cards for text issue at bottom.
- Players mentioned there being a lot of whig cards- shuffling issue?

- Questions that were asked, the instruction master would consult the rulebook and usually the confusion/question was answered. (Some things need to be moved around for better clarity though)
- Booklet typo on tiebreaker:
- Change for Gameplay: up to 5 players, not 6
- Trading should say that you can just give players a card without getting something in return.
- 3rd War card typo- “itas” there needs a space between “it” and “as”
- In regards to tiebreakers, players suggested that players only get the tiebreaker they won rather than all of the tiebreaker cards.
-Different colors for different stages/phases & different fonts
-Size of booklet is perfect
Question at the table - If you chose tory and I choose whigs can you and I be allies? - rule book consulted and it solved their question.
-Point system of medals should be more clear, especially in regards to tiebreakers.

IMPROV PLAYTEST 2 Observations:

- Swipe here and type

OVERVIEW OF PLAYTEST 1

-As far as the instruction video went, the players thought it was a good intro to the game and gave a gist of how the game was laid out and played, but they all agreed that it didn’t contain enough information to play without referring back to the rulebook.

-The rulebook was referenced frequently, especially when there was confusion or a question from another player, but the instruction master would get lost or confused trying to navigate the booklet during some instances.

-There are rules that need to be made much clearer in the rule booklet than they currently are; for instance, players picked up character cards after flipping an event card when they should've picked cards up BEFORE flipping.

-The middle part of the booklet is what needs the most improvement to help solve player confusion. Information needs to be moved around and important rules should be bolded or highlighted better.

-Overall, once the players got the hang of the game, they seemed to really enjoy playing. They all agreed that the War Phase was the most fun, and even though the Tori's won both the War and Most Decorated, they still said they had a good time.

-Confusion caused by the booklet was probably the main reason it took so long for the players to start having fun. Though players were able to overcome most of their problems and questions by consulting the booklet and searching for the answer, it still needs to be noted that these were people over the age of 20. Middle schoolers may not have the same level of patience, therefore it's extremely important that the booklet gets a makeover and a better layout of rules and information.

-There are typos in the booklet and a few cards that need to be addressed, as well as the Powderkeg cards' indesign files looked at for faint text that shows up on printed cards.