

A King's Fate – Game Design Document

By Vitor Oliveira (Alam Karter in the itch.io page) for the 2025 Pirate Software Game Jam 16.

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Introduction

Summary

In this short visual novel, you take on the role of an Excalibur-like sword, with the important task of choosing the next ruler in this fantasy realm. Will your chosen wielder save or destroy the kingdom?

Inspirations

The theme and story are inspired by the legend of King Arthur and the visual novel Fate/Stay Night. For the visuals, by some pixel art games like Megaman X and Celeste.



Images of games that inspired the art, first Fate/ Stay Night, and the second Celeste.

Player Experience

This is a very short story, just for fun, the player should be interested to see the different endings attached to the ruler of choice, each run should be a maximum of around 10 minutes.

Platform

The game will be on PC but will be initially launched in the itch.io page, playable in browser.

Development software

Developed in GameMaker 2, with the help of Crochet and Chatterbox for the dialogue system. The art was created using the GameMaker image editor. Cakewalk by BandLab was used for the music, and Audacity for the sound effects, all sounds captured by me and edited in software.

Genre

A 2D pixel art visual novel with multiple endings, set in a medieval fantasy theme.

Target Audience

Adult and Young adult gamers who enjoy good storytelling, good pixel art and a bit of humor.

Concept

Core Loop

Taking on the role of the sword of selection, you will await the arrival of candidates. As they come, you will have the opportunity to talk and get to know them. Once you are confident in your choice, you can decide to say “yes” or “no” to the current candidate. Choosing “yes” will always trigger one of the endings themed around the new ruler of the land. Selecting “no” will make the candidate leave, and the next one will arrive soon.

After 3 candidates, you will trigger the final ending.

Theme

Since this game is being made for Pirate Software’s Game Jam 16 (hello there judges!), the first theme is “You are the Weapon”. The second theme is about “choices” or the lack thereof. Different wielders will use the power for different reasons and different methods to deal with problems, etc. As the one thing that decides the next ruler, your choice should be important, but the power leaves your hands after you decide.

The writing should be refined over time.

There was the idea of using tarot cards for inspiration for the candidates (like the confidants in the Persona games), but this theme would take too long and require too much research for the game jam's timeframe.

Mechanics

This is a very light game in the mechanics department, basically using the mouse or the arrow keys to choose dialog options and navigate through the dialog system for the main choices. Some dialog options might be hidden behind other options to bring more knowledge about the candidates, but the main choice is available since the beginning of the conversation.

Story

“You are the Ascended Sword of Selection, a holy blade tasked with the mission to select the new Ruler of the kingdom.

Choose wisely!”

Picking from 3 different candidates the Ascended Sword of Selection will talk and decide if they are worthy of the power and right to rule.

Candidates

1. Arthur.

Arthur is a young man from the village near the ruins where the sword of selection is located. He wishes for a world where nobody cries, but is very naive and stubborn about how to make it happen.

2. Trevor.

Trevor is a man around his 30s, leader of a local bandit camp. He wishes for a kingdom where his gang doesn't need to worry about the next meal. He doesn't have much of a sense of justice, but is genuine about protecting his people.

3. Lady Lillian.

Lady Lillian is an aristocrat, versed in the ways of deception and politics. She wishes for the sword of selection so that her family can gain even more political power. Her knowledge of economy and politics might be a great boon for a ruler.

4. AK. (“No choice” ending)

AK is the main character from my other game “Ass Kicker.” He is a scoundrel bard, living off his music and the loot he gathers in his adventures for inspiration for new songs. He is NOT king material and will probably sell the sword of selection at the first opportunity.

Art

Design

The chosen art style is pixel art, simple enough to get the point across, but if there's time, I'll improve it. The main character, the holy sword, will be the most detailed and best animated element of the game. The environment is only one, it should be simple but inspired. A ruined castle during sunset.

Music

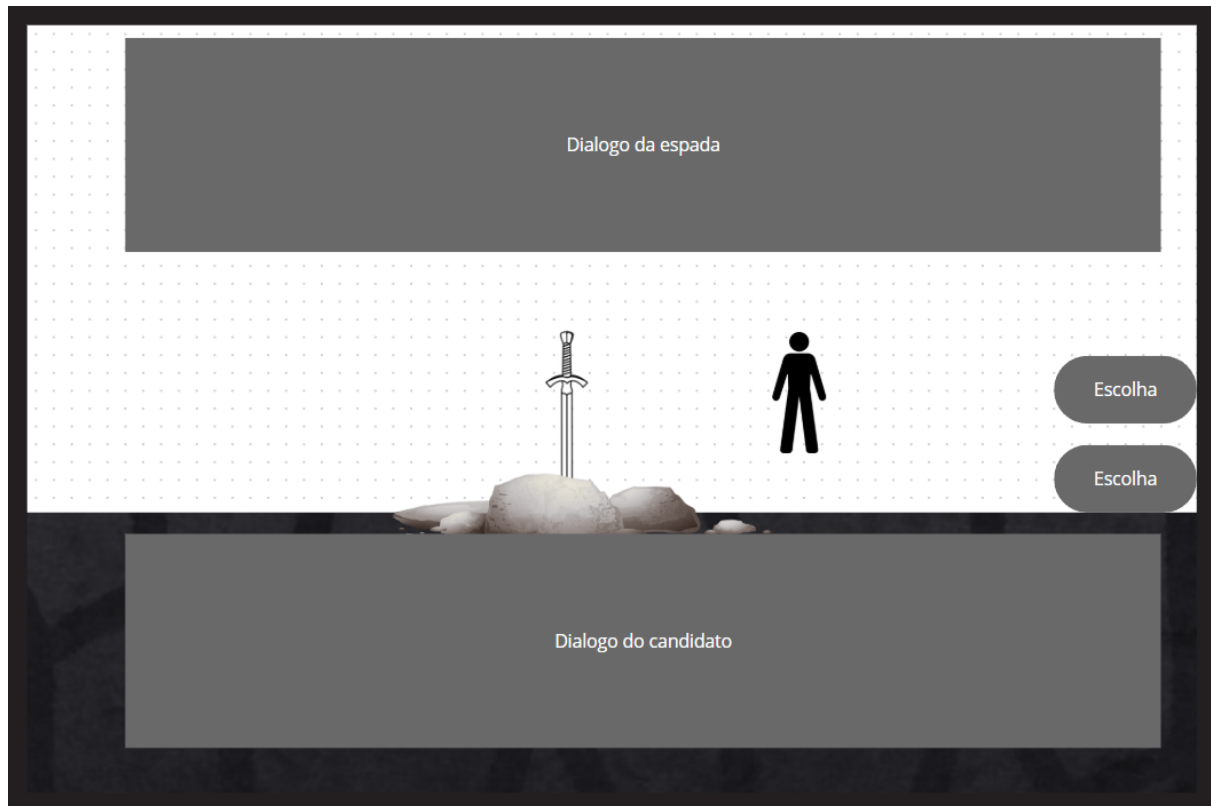
For the music, I will be using music created by me for my other game "Ass Kicker." It would be nice to have it made specifically for this project, but there will not be enough time for that.

Sound Effects

The game will need sound effects for:

- Menu SFX.
- Birds.
- Waterfall.
- Footsteps.
- People talking. (not full voice acting, just some noises to help with the tone of some dialog).

UI/UX



First draft of the UI, written in portuguese because it is my native language.

The HUD should appear as needed, with dialog boxes appearing at the bottom of the screen, and dialog options and main choices appearing in the middle.

Controls

Since it is a simple experience, the game will use just the mouse, arrow keys, and space button as controls.

Menu

For this game the only menu necessary will be the starting menu, it should be a simple starting screen with the title and a “Start” button.