

Valerie Kromas

Narrative and Gameplay Design Examples

Introduction	2
Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Line Brief	3
Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Line User Flow and Documentation.....	6
Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Narrative and Dialog Lines	7
Example 2: Crowfall New User Experience Flow	11
Example 2: Crowfall New User Experience Flow Chart and POI Map.....	12
Example 3: Theorycrafting A New Playable Character	14
Javier Peña	15
Example 4: Theorycrafting A New Encounter	19
Example 5: Theorycrafting in The Harry Potter Universe	22

Introduction

The following pages represent years of design work and experience developing player narrative and story driven content. I am quite passionate about the way a story can be portrayed to an end user and try to utilize all the communication tools I can to clearly present an idea to stakeholders and other team members. Each team communicates differently and requires a unique approach in delivering those ideas. I've found that it's easiest to use an overall outline in a word processing document and accompany that brief with flow charts and rudimentary map topdowns.

It's always a fun experience collaborating and working with a team to develop a deliverable and playable piece of content for a live product. In my experience, collaboration is the key to a successful product release, and it's important that as a team we work together and align as early as possible on the release goals, constraints, and expectations. The examples in the following pages are some of the tools I've personally used to achieve this goal of alignment while also developing documentation for reference for all departments including Art, Quality Assurance, and Customer Service. Cross-departmental communication is another collaborative effort I strive to bring to each company and team I work with.

Experience with various types of engines and editors has also been a fun challenge for me. I tend to look at things from an objective point of view and try to use that analytical thinking to master tech and/or time constraints to deliver a polished and fun experience. I've worked in a variety of editors, from Unreal, Unity, to proprietary and studio-specific tech. As a developer, I try my best to stay current on technology and gaming trends, but I also really love learning.

Lastly, I try to utilize common cinematic elements to further develop the player's journey. By using camera cuts, cut scenes, and staging a scene with NPC/ prop placement I've found that those small polish items can really go a long way in helping with player experience. Setting up a shot or developing camera cuts during dialog are some of my favourite polish tasks when finalizing a deliverable. Unfortunately, it's difficult to convey those elements in stills, but if you'd like to have some video examples please reach out and I will do my best to deliver some examples.

The journey in developing content and working with a team are some of the reasons why I love working in game development. Learning together, collaborating, and tackling problems as a team are elements that are unique to the development process, and it feels so gratifying to achieve those goals. Hopefully my knowledge, eagerness to learn, and zeal for development will be a useful fit for your team. Thank you very much for looking through this vertical slice of my own development journey, and if you have any questions or comments please reach out to me at yhead1@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Valerie Kromas

Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Line Brief

Purpose:

The intent is to create a quest line that engages the player with some more content within the first area of the Wildwoods, including some gameplay within the creaky and eerie abandoned Ranger Tower. The goal is to utilize already existing assets and characters to create a quick but fun experience that will keep the player interested in the Wildwoods. Initial release is expected to happen in January of 2021.

Overview:

A side quest within the Wildwoods to add some more content flare while also expanding and exploring on the Jorvik Rangers in the Wildwoods. Creating a quest chain that touches upon each ranger briefly while also adding additional lore and story layers to the uncharted forest.

Development, asset usage, and creation should be kept to a smaller drop size with a suggestion of no more than 10-12 quests within the chain, including fetch quests, as the ideal goal.

Task tracking and other information can be found in Mural: [Redacted]

Quest Chain Synopsis:

Quest Player Requirements: Jorvik Rangers: Redwood Point Reputation of 2+

Major Characters:

Rowan Allaway

Jorvik Ranger Redwood Point Leader. Nonbinary Aussie character with plenty of experience in uncharted exploration and leadership.

Enitan Ladipo

A relative newcomer to the Jorvik Rangers. Born in Nigeria but traveled the world with his family and developed an interest in research and storytelling.

Quest Beat Overview:

Rowan sends the player to collect some items to relight the burned-out campfire near the sleepover tents. During one of the tasks, the player finds a mysterious compass near the Hartwood Lookout and brings it back to Rowan. While the player continues to mend and relight the campfire Rowan does some investigating and thinks the item might be tied to a legendary ranger, Edith Hartwood. They ask Enitan to help provide the player with some more backstory and information in the form of a dialog scene.

Rowan then sends the player back to the creaky and foreboding abandoned Ranger Tower to get some more clues, including a map and a spyglass. Once more items have been collected Rowan finds a letter inside the spyglass. Using the map, the player then goes to an area and finds a journal. Taking this final clue back to Rowan, the full story of Edith Octavia Hartwood is relayed to the player and all the rangers using a cinematic by the campfire.

Once the quests are complete, the player is rewarded with a Jorvik Ranger Jacket that looks like Rowan's.

Quest Beat Breakdown

Quest beats are a generic overview of the major points of the questline within the chain; they may contain typically 1-2 quests per beat.

Beat 1:

The Ranger campfire has burned out. Rowan asks the player to explore the outer edges of the forest. None of the other rangers are willing to go and they need some help collecting campfire supplies, including logs and kindling to relight the campfire. Will the player go to a few locations on the outer ring of the camp and collect some items?

Beat 2:

On the second trip to collect some items, the player stumbles onto an unusual item, a worn compass. The area is further away from camp and includes some ambient animals to add some extra life and movement to the scene. The player then takes the item back to Rowan.

Beat 3:

While Rowan continues to investigate the compass, enlisting the help of another ranger, Enitan, the player returns to the campfire to relight it.

Beat 4:

Rowan then invites the player to listen to the legend of Edith Hartwood, told by Enitan. The story itself is more of an urban legend and has some of the rangers at the station a little spooked. After the player listens to the story, Rowan asks the player if they can continue to help investigate the area and find some more clues.

Beat 5:

Rowan then sends the player to the Ranger Tower. It's an area the current rangers don't want much to do with, for several reasons, including its rickety nature and the abandoned objects within it. The player then does an initial investigation at the bottom of the tower.

Beat 6:

Once at the bottom of the tower a sense of foreboding can be felt, with some audio cues and possible wisp FX to enhance the eerie feeling. The player then goes to the top of the tower to look for some more clues. There, the player finds a worn map and a broken spyglass. It seems to rattle when the player picks it up.

Beat 7:

The player then returns the items to Rowan, further establishing that the mysterious stories of the legendary ranger might have some truth to them. Rowan notices the spyglass rattling and begins to examine it. While they do so, they task the player to follow the markings on the map to investigate the mysterious area for more clues.

Beat 8:

The player makes their way to the marked area on the map and continues to search for more clues. After some more investigation the player finds a discarded and well-used journal hidden in some brambles.

Beat 9:

Upon the player's return, Rowan has been able to unlock what's inside the spyglass. It appears to be the last page of the found journal. Rowan then suggests that the player and all the rangers join soon to learn of the entire story of Edith Hartwood.

Beat 10:

Upon meeting the rangers at the campfire, the beat closes with a cinematic of all the rangers listening to Rowan and Enitan tell the final chapter of Edith Hartwood. While the legends suggest cryptid involvement or some other dreadful demise, the truth is that Edith decided to live a more secluded life further into the forest, forgoing continued communication with the outside world. The player is then rewarded with a legendary item upon completion of this quest.

Post-Suggested Beats Stretch Goal:

A scattering of other relics that can be turned into Enitan for a quick story about Jorvik Folklore or about other aspects of the Wildwoods. These items would only appear after the player has completed the above quest line and add more of a "Find and seek" sort of additional gameplay. Less heavy on narrative, will use current art assets, and can act as a weekly or daily quest addition.

Asset requests:***Environmental assets***

- A campfire with two states
 - State one - Burned out
 - State Two - Fully lit

Animation assets

- Sitting Idle and Sitting Talk animations for the following Jorvik Ranger models:
 - MistfallGenericBoy2
 - MistfallGenericGirl2
 - MistfallGenericWoman

Relics/Found Objects

The following will require a 3D asset, an inventory icon, and inventory description text.

- A worn compass
- old map
- broken spyglass
- well-used journal

Player reward item

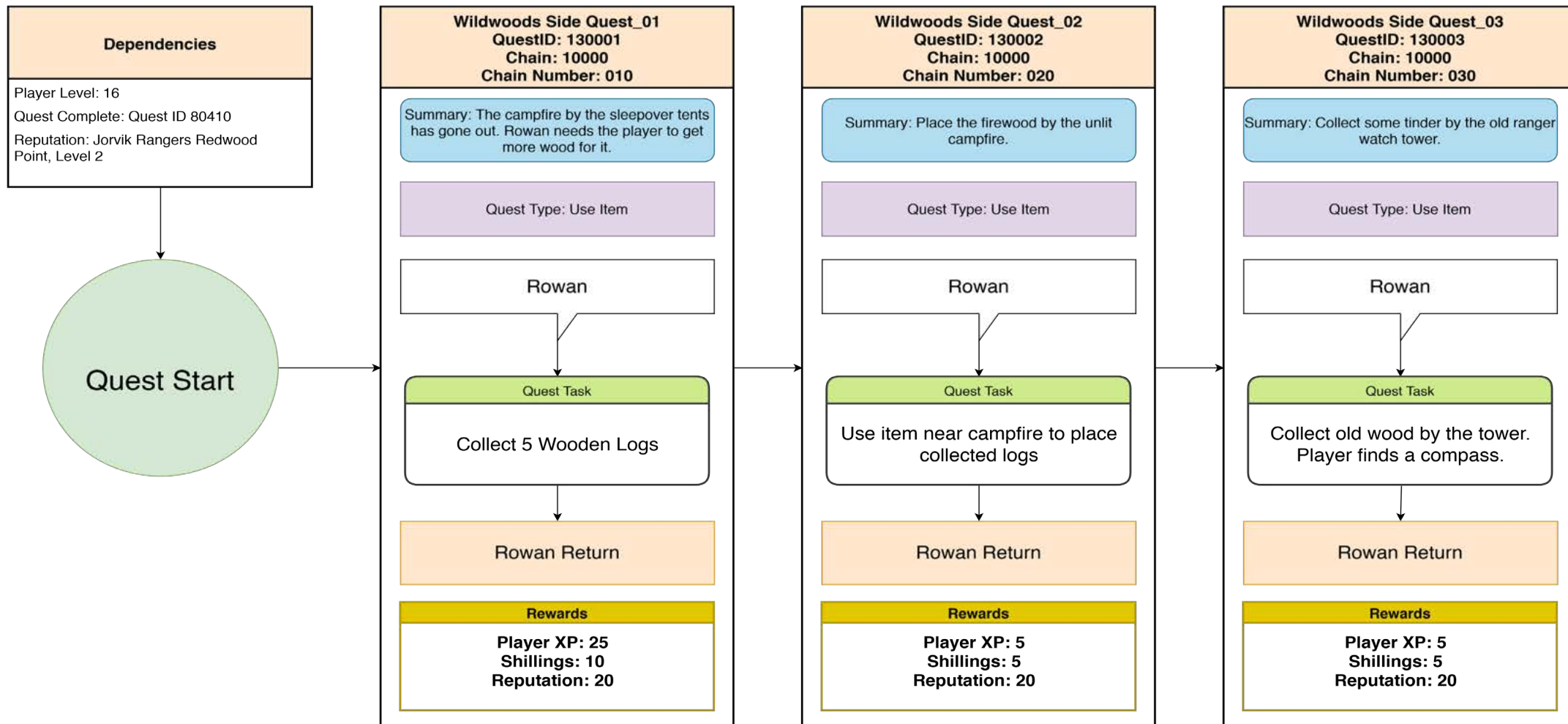
The following will require a stat package, inventory icon, and inventory description text.

- A special Jorvik Ranger jacket

Risks:

- Quest line could potentially be narrative heavy.
- Future sustainability? Will we want to continue to add more campfire stories in the future? Should we expand on the possibility of adding more objects throughout the Wildwoods to continue to allow the player to hear backstory and more lore? If so, how can we plan for this?
- Will this satiate the player need for more content?

Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Line User Flow and Documentation



Excerpt from Example Quest Chain Chart

Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Narrative and Dialog Lines

Overview:

Star Stable Online is an online game played by players all over the world. Part of the experience in writing for the product includes passing dialog and string text to a translation group for further processing. It is the narrative writer's job to not only update all text but include any information that may need colloquial translations or further detailed information. Below is a list of game text for the Ranger Stories quest line, including information for the Translations Department.

Tag	Text	Type	Character	Max Length	Comment
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Name	The legendary Edith Octavia Hartwood	Quest Name			
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Text	Listen to Enitan's retelling of the legend of Edith Hartwood	Quest Description			
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Giver	"Oh, I think I hear them now!"	Dialogue	Player		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Complete	It really is true, eh? Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction.	Dialogue	RowanAllaway		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_01	Okay everyone, let's settle down now.	Dialogue	RowanAllaway		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_02	Edith was a legendary ranger who spent years studying and protecting the Jorvik Wilds. She spent a lot of time specifically learning about the different types of animals and plants all over Jorvik.	Dialogue	Enitan		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_03	At some point, people stopped hearing from Edith. She just stopped communicating with people. As time went on, rumors started to appear. Rumors like, "Sasquatch took her and held her hostage", "she was turned into a moth person", and my personal favorite, "ALIENS"!	Dialogue	Enitan		"Sasquatch" is another term for "Bigfoot". Any monster lore could work here, like "Yeti"
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_04	Those types of creatures are referred to as "Cryptids"!	Dialogue	Tiera		"Cryptid" is the English scientific word for a legendary monster or creature whose existence can't be proven.
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_05	Interesting. Anyway, no one really knows what happened to her!	Dialogue	Enitan		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_06	Alas, that is all we have of Edith Octavia Hartwood's mysterious story. Whether she spent the rest of her days wandering the Wildwoods, or headed back home and settled in for a peaceful life, we will never know. I suppose that's what keeps the legend alive: knowing.	Dialogue	Enitan		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_07	Hold on, the story doesn't end there. Look what I found in the spyglass while fiddling around with the old thing? The final page of Edith's diary. Go on, Enitan, you do the honours of reading it.	Dialogue	RowanAllaway		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_08	Huh, would you look at that? Turns out, she wasn't captured by aliens or turned into a creature at all. She just became one with the forest. Almost like she found her true home and never wanted to leave it. Seems she just wanted to stop communication with other humans by her own choice.	Dialogue	Enitan		
E01_Quest_L01_C10000_110_Dialog_09	This journal and the final page Rowan found inside the telescope helps us fully see the true life of Edith Octavia Hartwood. While it's fun to think something mysterious happened to her, the truth is even more fascinating. We really couldn't have done it without %%Player%% and %%Horse%%.		Enitan		

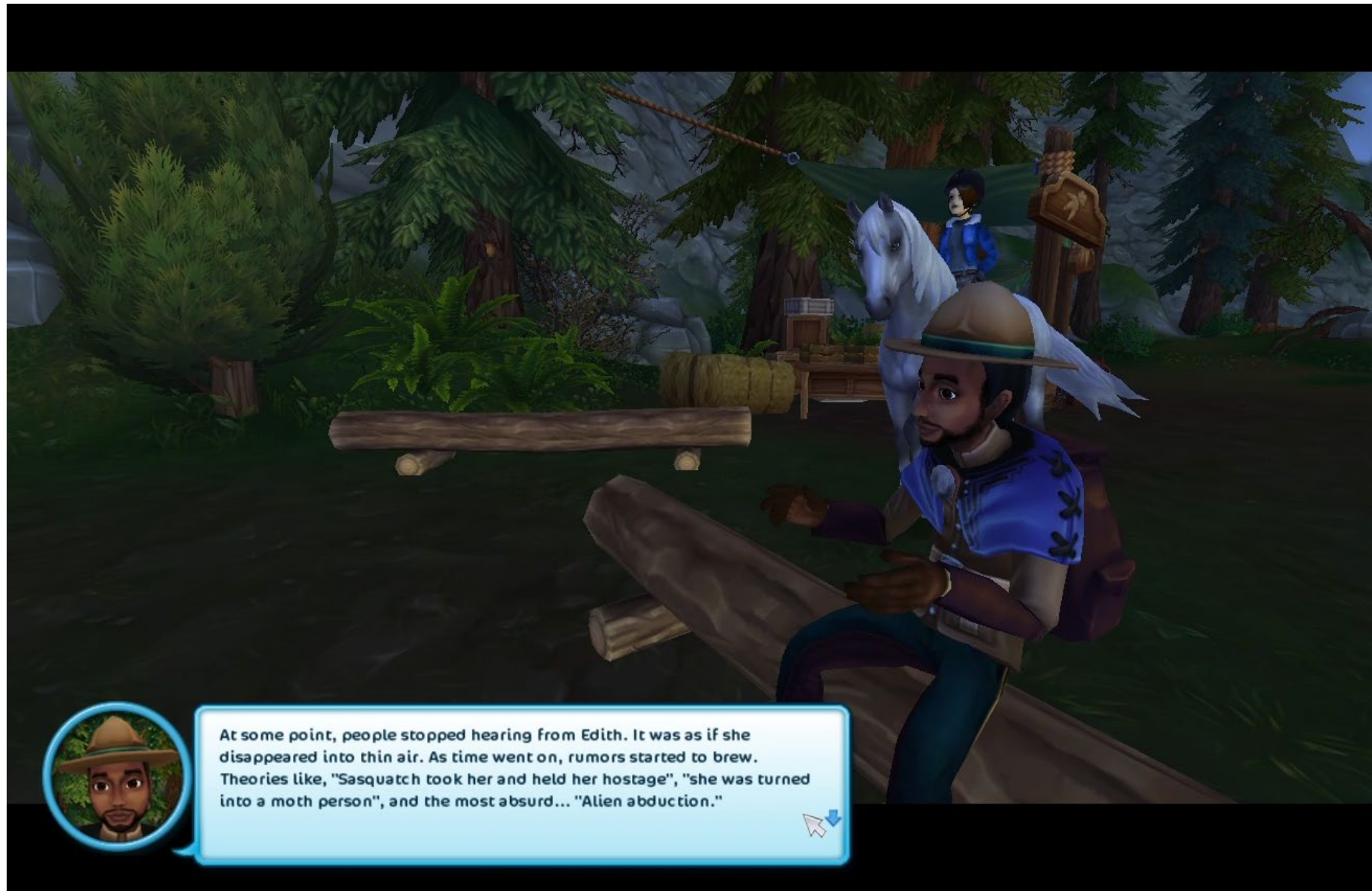
Excerpt from Quest Dialog Sheet

In Depth Quest Dialog Example

Text	Character	Comment
It really is true, eh? Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction.	RowanAllaway	
Okay everyone, let's settle down now.	RowanAllaway	
Edith was a legendary ranger who spent years studying and protecting the Jorvik Wilds. She spent a lot of time specifically learning about the different types of animals and plants all over Jorvik.	Enitan	
At some point, people stopped hearing from Edith. She just stopped communicating with people. As time went on, rumors started to appear. Rumors like, "Sasquatch took her and held her hostage", "she was turned into a moth person", and my personal favorite, "ALIENS"!	Enitan	"Sasquatch" is another term for "Bigfoot". Any monster lore could work here, like "Yeti"
Those types of creatures are referred to as "Cryptids"!	Tiera	"Cryptid" is the English scientific word for a legendary monster or creature whose existence can't be proven.
...		
Interesting. Anyway, no one really knows what happened to her!	Enitan	
Alas, that is all we have of Edith Octavia Hartwood's mysterious story. Whether she spent the rest of her days wandering the Wildwoods or headed back home and settled in for a peaceful life, we will never know. I suppose that's what keeps the legend alive: knowing.	Enitan	
Hold on, the story doesn't end there. Look what I found in the spyglass while fiddling around with the old thing? The final page of Edith's diary. Go on, Enitan, you do the honours of reading it.	RowanAllaway	
Huh, would you look at that?		
Turns out, she wasn't captured by aliens or turned into a creature at all. She just became one with the forest. Almost like she found her true home and never wanted to leave it. Seems she just wanted to stop communication with other humans by her own choice.	Enitan	

Example 1: Star Stable Online Quest Images





Example 2: Crowfall New User Experience Flow

Purpose:

Map out a zone and the overall user flow structure using questing tools to quickly onboard a new player. Introductions to major systems, story lore, and important Points of Interest are a must have.

Overview:

The player wakes up in a crypt below the city hub. They are then greeted by a Guinecean Priest who gives them an introduction to the passive skill training system to regain the memories they lost from a previous vessel. Passive skill training refers to the overall skills the player can train to gain proficiencies and bonuses in combat, harvesting, crafting, economy boosts, and guild collaboration. The player is then sent to a Sun Sentinel, the guardian of the city, who will serve as the player's onboarding experience ambassador.

The player is then introduced to their talent tree, which is a series of trainable nodes that unlock through level progression. These nodes are class and power specific, allowing for more customizable combat gameplay mechanics.

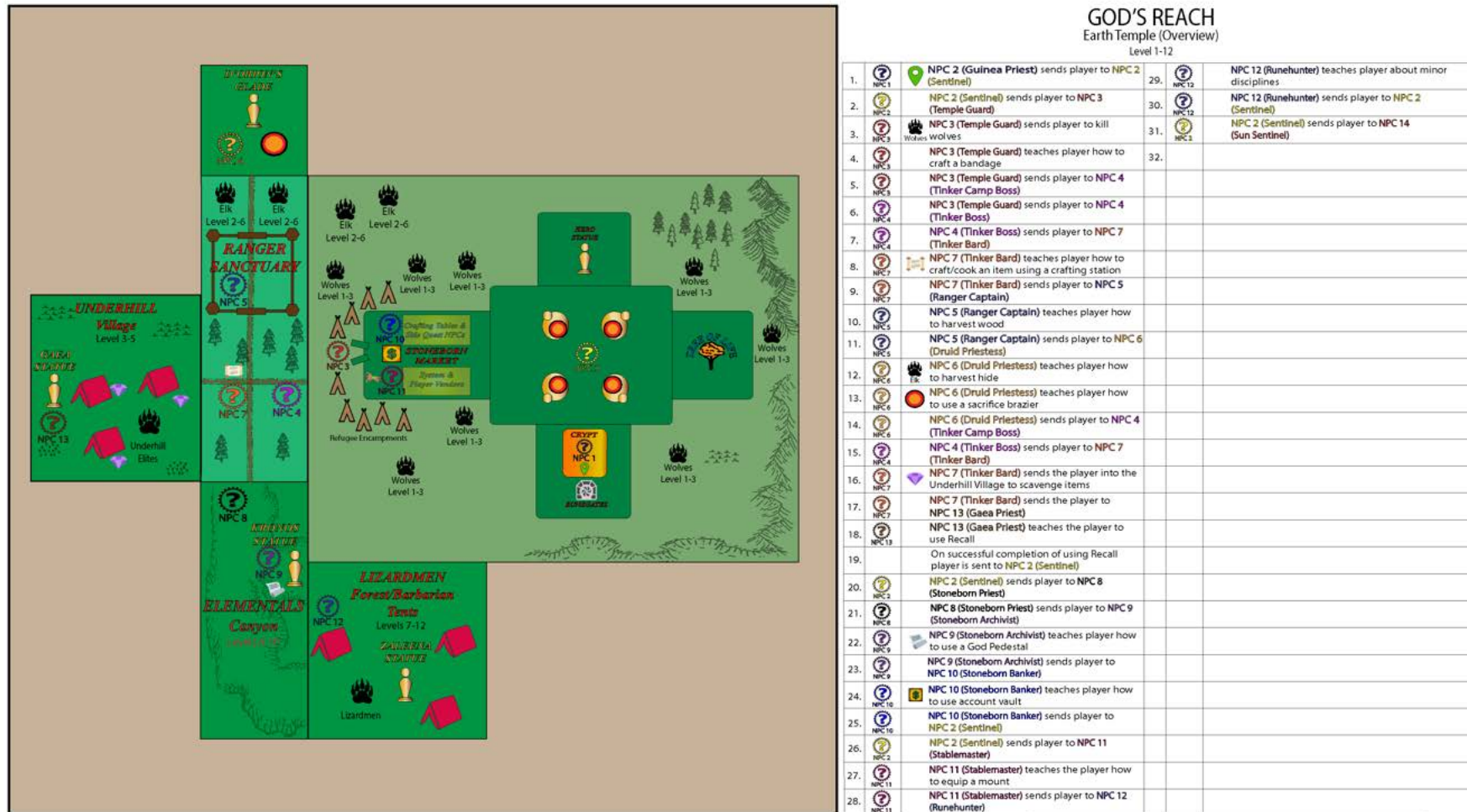
With two major systems introduced within the first few minutes of gameplay, the player is then encouraged to explore outside of the city and offer aid to the local residents seeking shelter from the oncoming Hunger elements of the overarching story line and lore. By doing so, the player is introduced to other game play mechanics such as sacrificing looted items to gain XP, harvesting, crafting, and respawn. Other major game systems, such as the player vault, which holds player items they choose to store in the vault that can be transferred to different campaign modes, and mounts.

After the initial introduction, the player then learns more advanced gameplay mechanics such as minor and major discipline runestones, which are slottable character equipment items that unlock passive, combat, and harvesting powers.

Upon completion of this first area, the player is sent by the Sentinel to the next zone to learn about city building, territory capture mechanics, and the caravan system. The first step in introducing the player to these mechanics is by showing the player how to utilize Runegates, a series of teleporters that allow the player to quickly transport to different zone clusters with varied types of gameplay and biomes.

By breaking up the introduction into multiple zones, the overall goal is to introduce the player to major themes that are required to understand the various campaign types within Crowfall. The cadence is paced to allow the player to learn at their own intervals, with an intent to avoid a forced grind. Each zone has a specific theme that is planned to allow for exploration but also a guided adventure.

Example 2: Crowfall New User Experience Flow Chart and POI Map



Zone 1 Topdown and Player Flow



GOD'S REACH

Sun Temple (Overview)

Level 10+

1.	NPC 1	Start: player enters zone through Rune-Gate and sent to talk to NPC 1 (Sun Sentinel)	29.	
2.	NPC 1	NPC 1 sends player to NPC 2 in Small Keep	30.	
3.	NPC 2	NPC 2 sends player to NPC 3 talk to about collecting a pack pig to fortify keep buildings	31.	
4.	NPC 3	NPC 3 sends player to find NPC 4 in the Quarry	32.	
5.	NPC 4	NPC 4 sends player to find NPC 5 in the Quarry		
6.	NPC 5	NPC 5 sends player to find NPC 6 in the Quarry		
7.	NPC 6	NPC 6 sends the player to collect some pack pigs		
8.	NPC 6	NPC 6 sends the player back to NPC 3		
9.	NPC 3	NPC 3 sends player to use Caravansary to collect building resources from pack pig		
10.	NPC 3	NPC 3 sends player to build/reinforce a stronghold building (ie Barracks, Bell Tower, Shrine)		
11.	NPC 3	NPC 3 sends player to NPC 2		
12.	NPC 2	NPC 2 sends player to NPC 7 to learn about advanced armor crafting		
13.	NPC 7	NPC 7 sends player to NPC 8 to learn about Motherlode Harvesting		
14.	NPC 8	NPC 8 sends player to harvest from Motherlodes		
15.	NPC 8	NPC 8 sends player to NPC 7		
16.	NPC 7	NPC 7 sends player to NPC 9 to learn about Refining Building materials		
17.	NPC 9	NPC 9 asks the player to collect building materials for refining		
18.	NPC 9	NPC 9 sends player to use a Refinery Station to convert building mats to crafting mats		
19.	NPC 9	NPC 9 sends player to NPC 7		
20.	NPC 7	NPC 7 sends player to use a crafting station to craft armor		
21.	NPC 7	NPC 7 sends player to NPC 2		
22.	NPC 2	NPC 2 sends player to use Stronghold War Table		
23.	NPC 2	NPC 2 sends player to Earth Temple to return to Earth Sentinel (Zone 1 NPC 2)		
24.	NPC 2	Earth Sentinel (Zone 1 NPC 2) sends the player to Brak (Zone 1 NPC 3)		
25.	NPC 3	Brak (Zone 1 NPC 3) sends the player to purchase a minor discipline		
26.	NPC 3	Brak (Zone 1 NPC 3) sends the player to Earth Sentinel (Zone 1 NPC 2)		
27.	NPC 2	Earth Sentinel (Zone 1 NPC 2) sends the player to Moon Sentinel (Zone 3 NPC 1)		
28.				

Zone 2 Topdown and User Flow

Example 3: Theorycrafting A New Playable Character

Scenario:

You are working on a co-op FPS game based on your favorite TV show or movie. You have been tasked with creating a new character class.

- a. State what show/movie you have chosen*
- b. Describe, in detail, your created character (playstyle, abilities, stats, etc.). Provide any reference material as needed.*

The Netflix original series *Narcos* is one of my favorite shows and is a perfect option to use as the basis for creating a playable character in a first-person co-operative shooter. The first two seasons of *Narcos* revolve around the American Drug Enforcement Administration agents, Stephen Murphy, and Javier Peña, in their journeys to stop Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar.

Murphy and Pena are the main playable characters in this game, which takes place in Colombia during the 1980s and early 90s. As the player progresses through the game, more characters are unlocked. Like Mass Effect, this game will include variable interaction abilities with NPCs (non-playable characters) which can change the outcome of the game's narrative. The playable characters have common RPG and FPS attributes that can be increased through completion of missions and include two specialization talent trees that expand on the base character abilities and their reputations with different organizations and groups.



Agents Javier Pena and Stephen "Steve" Murphy from the Netflix series *Narcos*.

Character Sheet



Javier Peña

Class: Special Agent

Proficiencies

Close-combat, and small squad tactics. Proficient in small arms and assault rifles.
Bonus proficiency in translation, communication, and negotiation.

Skills

Charisma:	10/10
Accuracy:	7/10
Dexterity:	9/10
Endurance:	8/10
Intelligence:	8/10

Talent Specializations

Rogue Agent, Advanced Negotiator

Service Weapons

Glock 17, Rock River Arms LAR-15, Tactical vest.

"Sometimes you gotta do bad things to catch bad people."

Javier Peña's attributes as a playable character are very similar to many other soldier classes in common first-person shooters. With average height and run speed, Peña's special physical abilities are most noticeable in close combat. Proficient with smaller arms, such as pistols, this character can produce rapid-fire bursts at distances lower than 20 meters and has a higher probability of countering when in melee combat. Naturally a wildcard, this player character may occasionally override a player's interaction choice or create conflict, sometimes through sarcastic remarks, at an inopportune moment.

With the environment set in 1980s to early 90s Colombia, Peña's ability to speak and translate Spanish allows for alternate dialog with NPCs. His charismatic nature also provides for bonuses in negotiation and informant communications, allowing for additional opportunities. Receiving more detailed informant tips, utilizing informants in covert missions, and easier persuasion tactics during negotiations are all unique attributes exclusive to Peña in this game.

The inclusion of a set of Talent Trees provides the player with character investment and adds additional rewards upon mission completions. There are two selectable talent trees that are trainable for the player: Rogue Agent and Advanced Negotiator. These two talent trees provide the player with a way to expand upon the unique attributes of this character granted at the start of the game.

- The Rogue Agent talent tree specializes in developing greater proficiency in combat and physical attributes. The focus is on Peña's physical attributes and developing combat gameplay, allowing for further weapon proficiency and specialization, including the ability to unlock certain weapons and combat missions. Training in the Rogue Agent tree can also improve the character's range and accuracy but only slightly quells the wildcard aspect of this character.
- The Advanced Negotiator talent tree specializes in NPC interaction, persuasion, reputation, and conflict management. The focus is on Peña's charisma and NPC interaction, which can also unlock informant missions and opportunities. Training in the Advanced Negotiator tree can also assist in preventing the wildcard aspect of this character but only slightly boosts his combat proficiencies. This tree also unlocks a new weapon, a Satellite Phone (based on the Motorola 9500 Iridium model), which can be used to negotiate a Sicario assist in combat.

Scenario:

Using the character you created in Task #1, create a new weapon that fits within the narrative and the character's

- personality. a. Write a quick 1-2 paragraph summary of the weapon.*
- b. If you were to prepare the design to be sent into the production pipeline, what sections do you include in your design write-up and why?*
-



Talent Tree Unlock: Satellite Phone

Appearance: Like the Motorola9500 Iridium Satellite Phone (pictured)

Ability: Contact Los PePes and negotiate an assist.

Use: Extended cooldown time and may also damage reputation with other organizations. Limited Use and can only be used during certain gameplay scenarios.

Backstory:

One of Javier Peña's unique attributes is his ability to negotiate and develop better informant relationships. Part of a developing story in the *Narcos* timeline is the uneasy relationship Peña develops with a vigilante organization made up of other dealers and traffickers called Los PePes ("Persecuted by Pablo Escobar"). Incorporating this aspect of the story into the gameplay narrative would add a risk vs. reward dynamic and can also impact the overall trajectory of the game's narrative. This item is unlocked as a reward from the talent tree by completing a negotiation task with an insider of Los Pepes. During the time period in which the show takes place, these types of phones were extremely costly, rare, and often only afforded by the richest of people.

Functionality:

An equippable secondary game item that is available only during certain gameplay scenarios. A notification to the player is displayed during these scenarios in which the player is given an option to use the item. This notification will have a limited time frame to interact, and if the player does not do so within the allotted time the choice will default to “No”.

When the player does choose to use the phone, an NPC is summoned and fires upon a designated target with 100% accuracy. The amount of time between interact and summon should be within a short time frame (5-10 seconds). After firing at the designated target, the NPC then leaves, and the item is set to a prolonged cooldown time. Depending on the target, reputation with other organizations, like the DEA, and armed forces, may become damaged and could impact certain story elements.

I created the above information as a general overview of a weapon design for my game. It's an ideal snapshot of what I'd like to achieve and how it could impact the game overall. If this was to go into the production pipeline, I would need to add a few more elements that could help expand upon the general design. I would use this as a reference document and would need to keep it updated with any potential changes. Having a document that is easy to locate and reference makes it accessible for all parties involved to get the general vision of the task. A bonus is that additional comments and input can be made using notes, tagging, and highlights, when using Word or Google Docs.

I would also need to create an action items list including dependencies and requests requirements. Some of those items I would include within that list are:

- Any new tech required to make the new weapon functional.
- Art asset requests, such as any new animations, models, and UI elements and any necessary reference materials.
- Story implications and any narrative requirements such as dialog and voice overs.

One of the most important aspects to also include is the implementation processes and how they are interlinked with the action items noted-. Estimating implementation time and phases while also including any potential blocks are also really important elements to include in the overall pipeline submission. Trying to account for potential risks are also important to call out just so they're on the radar.

Example 4: Theorcrafting A New Encounter

OVERVIEW

The Shadowpact has called upon the players to help stop a new villain that goes by the name of The Illusionist. Nightshade has gained intelligence that The Illusionist is holding Ragman captive in a secret hideout. Join the Shadowpact and stop The Illusionist from gaining control of the Pact and becoming an even bigger menace to Gotham!

This is a midlevel Alert for four players set within Gotham City.

INITIAL QUEST

NPC: Nightshade

Quest title: Dark Magic

POI: Illusionist's Hideout (Instanced Area)

Nightshade is the initial quest giver and starter for this quest. The player soon learns of a plot hatched by The Illusionist to steal Ragman's suit, as he currently has Ragman trapped in a cell in a secret hideout. The player must help Nightshade and Detective Chimp to locate the hideout and save Ragman.

This quest should lead to a location within Gotham City that leads to an instanced area for The Illusionist's Hideout. When the player enters the instanced area they will be accompanied by Nightshade and Detective Chimp.

Upon arrival of the hideout, The Illusionist has dispatched beguiled thugs and a miniboss to slow down the pact and hinder their progress. The player must clear the room and defeat the miniboss before moving on to the next room where Ragman is being held captive.

Once in the containment room, the player must engage in a series of switches to disable the cell's lock system. This should be a short puzzle that involves flipping switches in a sequential order with a hint displayed using wall markings.

After the puzzle is completed the Shadowpact members enter the containment cell to recover Ragman. Unfortunately for them, the Ragman being held in captivity is an illusion, a trick done by The Illusionist to make one of his thugs appear as the hero. It is here that the player and the Shadowpact members realize the phony distress call was meant to capture Nightshade and Detective Chimp within this special cell. The player must then go find Ragman and team up with other heroes to free Detective Chimp and Nightshade.

Upon completion of this instance will make the Alert available to the player. After queue, the player is transported to the Inner Sanctum of the Illusionist.

ALERT COMPOSITION

Quest Title: Illusions of Grandeur

POI: Inner Sanctum of the Illusionist Antechamber and First Mob Room

The players are accompanied by Ragman upon arrival of the antechamber. He quickly leaves the group to scout the area while the players manage the wave of beguiled thugs.

POI: Sanctum Hallways

Upon completion of defeating the wave, players gain access to the next room, which is a large puzzle room with a series of hallways. Each hallway leads to an area the captives are being held in by The Illusionist. There are four locks that must be disengaged by an accompanying puzzle the players must manage to complete within a given time limit. The players must all split up and take on a unique puzzle to continue to the next phase. Each puzzle should be relatively easy to solve but requires proper timing and communication among the players.

Each puzzle is located at the end of each hallway in front of a locked gate and each gate leads into the holding room where Nightshade and Detective Chimp are being held. Each puzzle is a goal within the quest and should display in the quest journal and UI. If a player makes the wrong choice in solving the puzzle an elite mob will spawn. Defeating this mob will also unlock the puzzle but will not allow players access to the optional miniboss.

First puzzle: Four image kiosks are visible that are all interactable. The player must choose the proper image that represents the clue described in an image on the wall.

Second puzzle: A player must move from one area of the hallway to the end of it without triggering any of the traps and obstacles. This is more of an agility puzzle than an interactive puzzle.

Third puzzle: An interactable Minotaur awaits the player at the end of this hallway along with various objects behind it. The player must correctly answer the question the Minotaur asks by selecting the proper item.

Fourth puzzle: Using barrels, the player must throw and hit a specific target at the end of the fourth hallway to unlock this puzzle. Random obstacles such as other barrels and boxes block a clear path to the designated target.

After successful completion of the puzzles, all gates to the center holding area should now be unlocked. It is here that the players are rejoined by Ragman. In the midst of Ragman's briefing an agonizing scream can be heard that interrupts his dialog. A camera should pan down to an area where a locked hallway connects with the holding room.

OPTIONAL MINIBOSS

If players choose to explore this area a miniboss by the name of Blackstone can be fought.

Blackstone: This miniboss primarily uses ranged attacks and can summon a minion to steal and drain health. Periodically he will deal AoE damage.

THE ILLUSIONIST BOSS FIGHT

POI: Center of the Sanctum

After freeing Detective Chimp and Nightshade, the group must then head to the central area of the Sanctum where The Illusionist eagerly awaits them. Players will need to fight a few more mobs outside of the

Upon meeting, the first wave of minions must be defeated and soul shards must be collected to decrease The Illusionist's power. One player will need to keep The Illusionist distracted while the other players work alongside the pact to defeat the waves.

Phase Two of the battle begins when the boss's health reaches 50%. The Illusionist has the power to redirect damage back to your teammates by taking hold of a group member using Mind Control. While the group member is under The Illusionist's effects any damage that player deals will be redirected to their team.

The final stage of the battle begins when the boss's health reaches 25% - His mind control will become even more sporadic but also leaves him vulnerable to ranged attacks.

Once The Illusionist is defeated Ragman consumes his soul and rewards the players with various loot.

Example 5: Theorcrafting in The Harry Potter Universe

Overview

Create a playable experience that takes place within the Harry Potter universe, starting in Diagon Alley in Ollivander's Wand Shop. The story then leads the player through the grounds of Hogwarts and to the Forbidden Forest. The story line reaches climax with a boss encounter with a giant spider that they must defeat. Upon completion of the storyline the player is granted an upgraded wand and a few pieces of gold from Garrick Ollivander.

Introduction

The player listens in on a tale Garrick Ollivander is telling a few patrons of his shop. As a boy, Ollivander would seek out the supplies for the cores of his wands, but lately he hasn't been physically up for the task. It turns out that Ollivander has been working with Hagrid, the Care for Magical Creatures professor at Hogwarts, to acquire a few of these materials over time. Ollivander mentions that he's willing to pay a fair price to anyone who wishes to collect some of the unusual materials that fill the cores of his wands, but rarely does he see anyone other than Hagrid able to manage such tasks.

Later, you and a few other fourth year students gather on the train and begin to recall the tales Ollivander regaled you with. The idea of adventure and compensation begins to escalate and eventually the conversation turns into an argument that collecting some of these precious materials cannot be that difficult after all. Eventually this leads you and the other students to wager a bet on collecting the most items for Ollivander while attending Hogwarts. You decide you and your friend, Cesaro, are much savvier and more capable than the rest of the group and you both decide to take on the bet. Sheamus, the other group's leader agrees to the bet also and you all shake on it. Once you arrive at Hogwarts your first task will be to locate some more information on where to find some of these items.

You will begin at the school library which will have a simple puzzle that requires you and your friend to research the best materials for wand cores. You stumble upon an old copy of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, dog-eared and marked with notes. This is a piece of lore that includes notes from Harry and Ron about the giant spiders.

<Library Puzzle>

This puzzle should be simple yet fun. The basic concept is that while you are in the library, you and Cesaro are overwhelmed with the number of books in the school library and you need some way to easily search for what you need. You start by using the *wingardium leviosa* charm on a selection of books from the shelves within a certain amount of time. If you select the wrong book all the current books levitating will fall, and you must clean up the mess and start again.

Upon successful completion of the puzzle you are given Ron's old copy of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find them* with a bit of lore that drops hints about a future encounter later in this story line.

<Lore text>

Ronald Weasley has added a note to a page dedicated to the Acromantula entry. On the page he's added multiple Xs (because Ron is extremely scared of spiders) and has also crossed out the "unconfirmed" at the end of the sentence "Rumours of an Acromantula colony being established in

Scotland are unconfirmed" and replace it with "Confirmed by Harry Potter and Ron Weasley." With an added image of a sick face next to the entry.

You and Cesaro then agree to try and collect a few things like a hair from a unicorn tail, a hair from a centaur tail, and some wood to make a wand from a Bowtruckle's tree.

The Greenhouse

Your next steps will be to locate the first item on your list, a piece of wood from a Bowtruckle's tree. You remember that Professor Longbottom has been fostering a group of Bowtruckles for his students in Herbology to study. You and Cesaro then make your way to the greenhouse on the Hogwarts grounds.

For this aspect of the quest line you will need to feed the creature some woodlice by hitting a series of keys in a timely manner to keep the Bowtruckle distracted while Cesaro collects a piece of wood from the tree. If you fail to keep the Bowtruckle distracted he will attack you and you must try again.

The Forbidden Forest

After successfully collecting a nice sized piece of wood for Ollivander, you consult your notes and realize most of the other items you need come from the inhabitants of the Forbidden Forest. Since the forest is strictly forbidden to the students of Hogwarts you and Cesaro come up with a plan to leave after dark to avoid being caught trespassing.

<Leaving the Castle>

A basic hide and seek puzzle can be used here to encourage interactive gameplay. Using cover of shadows and timing, the player must exit the castle without getting caught by the prefects and Filch keeping watch, otherwise they are given detention and must try again on the next night to get to the forest.

In the Forest

Upon entering the forest, you begin searching for anything you think might make for a good wand core. You see a path of hoofprints along your journey, but you don't know the source from where they came from. You mention it to Cesaro as he points to an empty area. He mentions that he can see some darklooking horses with bat wings, but you don't see anything. According to your book, these beings are called thestrals. Other inhabitants of the forest that you see are a few hippogriffs, and what looks to be an automobile. Although you aren't quite sure. Why would a muggle's form of transportation exist in the forest?

You find some mushrooms and see a few dragonflies in the distance. You and Cesaro make your way toward them and as you get closer you begin to hear what sounds like whispers and hushed tones. You and your friend quietly make your way toward the voices and notice a pair of centaurs in conversation. They seem to be talking about something wrong within the forest. As you eavesdrop a bit more you realize both centaurs are talking about a monster within the forest that has been giving them trouble and they are debating on the best way to handle the situation. As the conversation grows a bit more heated you both make your presence known as the centaurs go into a defensive stance. You've heard mention of what seems to be an aggressive spider, but you feel like you have learned enough to manage the situation.

As you explain who you are to the centaurs, Chiron and Prygos, hastily introduce themselves to you both. They are rather curt and dismissive of your presence, but you think you can help each other in solving both tasks. The centaurs still don't think much of your abilities, but they point you towards

where the hostile spider was last seen just a few yards down the path. You begin to ascend while Prygos follows. Even though she doesn't believe in you and Cesaro's capabilities, she doesn't feel right letting you both wander into a spider's den alone. After all, you're just a pair of foals.

Krecid's Lair

As you enter the lair you see a litter of bones, fur, and other discards of carrion. Within moments you are staring down at a giant spider who is quick to taunt you. Prygos stands at the ready with her bow aimed on the creature. You and Cesaro immediately pull out your wands and enter combat. This should be a fight that has two phases with multiple attacks, including flinging the hair on his abdomen at the group, and shooting out webs that can trap the player for approximately 3-5 seconds. The final phase should include shooting venom and a "frenzy" mode.

Before dealing the final blow Prygos stops you. As another creature of the wood she does not feel killing Krecid will benefit anyone. Rather, she'd prefer to arrange a truce with the spider; he's been overzealous in his killing spree lately, but the targets of his ire have all been more harmful to the entirety of the forest. They exchange a few lines about coming to an understanding and reaching a balance within the forest.

Unicorns

After her discussion she then turns to you and Cesaro. She mentions that she underestimated your abilities and would like to make it up to you for helping with addressing the Krecid problem. Before you have a chance to reply Cesaro mentions it would be extremely helpful to lead you to a location where you can find a unicorn. She knows exactly where a few live and she takes you to them.

Upon meeting with the unicorns, you become friendly and ask one for a strand of its tail hair. It obliges and you are one step closer to winning your bet. Before leaving the area you then turn to Prygos once more and ask her for the same. She hesitates but then gives you a few strands from her tail. After, she leads you to the edge of the forest and you make your way back to Hogwarts.

Leaving Hogwarts

On the train ride back, you and Cesaro intercept Sheamus and his group. You both describe in detail the adventures you both went through for this bet. Sheamus just grins back at you and sheepishly admits that they gave up after their first encounter with the bowtruckle and were positive you and Cesaro wouldn't succeed. He then concedes to losing the bet and buys you both plenty of snacks and treats from the trolley.

Return to Diagon Alley

You and Cesaro then return to Ollivander and share with him the story of your adventures. Skeptical at first with the stories you relay, he no longer baulks once you show him the treasures you brought back for him. His eyes light up and he quickly goes to work crafting a new wand for you and Cesaro. On top of that, he also gives you a few gold pieces and mentions happily that you and our friend are always more than welcome to keep supplying him with exotic materials. This leaves the option open to build upon this game mechanic system as the player progresses through the rest of the game.

Example Dialog

Excerpts from Garrick Ollivander's tales:

Garrick Ollivander:

"My curiosity often got the best of me. As a young boy I knew I would follow the path of my father and his, but still, a bit of wanderlust always tempted me. I would watch as witches

and wizards would come into the shop looking for replacement wands; you'd be surprised how delicate a wand can be when dueling against a werewolf or flying upon the back of a dragon."

"Once I had completed my studies at Hogwarts, I set out to find the perfect reagents to build the best wands possible. My adventures took me all over the land; from the Forbidden Forest to the heart of Asia. Of course, with any great adventure, great risks also follow. Tell me, have you ever been singed by the fire from a Chinese Fireball? I do not recommend it."

Excerpt from the conversation Chiron and Prygos are having that the player overhears:

Chiron: "The forest is being overrun, Prygos, and I fear if we let it continue without proper contemplation it will be our demise."

Prygos: "The stars have made it clear to us that we must handle the situation now."

Chiron: "The stars never lie, but I fear for our clan's safety. I don't think we can win this."

Prygos: "But to go against the stars means to go against fate, are you not in favor of following what has already been written?"

Chiron: "Being safe and planning accordingly does not mean we are going against fate. If anything, fate is on our side and we must listen to her. The stars will always tell a story with or without our intervention."

Prygos: "But Chiron, to not act when it comes to protecting the others of our forest means exactly that. The stars tell us stories and we are the only ones who truly appreciate them. This entity that has taken over, this Krecid, cannot be stopped by merely watching and waiting. We have to intervene."

Chiron: "You are young and eager, Prygos, I understand, but running into a situation without some kind of plan or understanding will only hinder us."

Prygos: "We have enough strength and we're clever enough. An arachnid, no matter how big it is, cannot outwit us."

It is at this point the player(s) makes their presence known. Chiron then notices them and addresses everyone.

Player: "Ahem, excuse us but I think we may be of some service."

Chiron: "A pair of foals have wandered into our forest once again. Prygos, we will return to this discussion later. Please escort these younglings out of the forest as they are obviously too helpless to be traipsing through our woods alone."

And with that, Chiron turns and walks away. Prygos then addresses the player(s) and begins to listen, with mild amusement, to what they have to say.

Krecid's Taunts

"Ah, just in time. I was hoping for a snack!"

"What is this? A pair of humans and a centaur? No matter, I will deal with you quickly!"

"And just as I was contemplating another meal, fresh meat walks into my domain!"

“My eyes do not deceive me! My next meal has just appeared!”

“Hiiiiiiiiisssssssssssss!”

:Clacks Pincers: and laughs maniacally “Ahahaha!”

“What unfortunate soul has decided to invade my lair? No matter, I will quickly make you regret that decision!”

“Ahhhh, a three-course meal. Just in time!”

“Mmmmm, I’ve been told on occasion not play with my food, but I’ll do so just this once!”

“Fresh meat flavored with fear! My favorite!”

Additional Notes

Your friend, Cesaro, accompanies you along the way. He can also be controlled by another player or acts as an accompanying NPC. He is also sorted into the same house you are and over the years he’s become your best mate.

Point of Interest Locations

On Hogwarts grounds

Library to complete book puzzle

Bowtruckles – need a piece of wood from their tree. Must feed woodlice.

Forbidden Forest

Need mats from unicorn, centaurs, and bowtruckles.

Centaur – tail hair

Unicorn –tail hair

New NPCs

Centaurs:

Chiron: wise and stoic centaur. Even-tempered and well-learned. The most adept at divination in the clan.

Prygos: Female centaur. Athletic, young, confident.

Residents of the forest:

A group of centaurs roam the forest

Thestrals

Unicorns

hippogriffs

Krecid, an Acromantula that has become a problem to the inhabitants of the forest. This giant spider is a descendant of Aragog, the giant spider from the original IP.