



Story'Hood

Session 3 - Core Idea

Overview

During this session, participants will be introduced to the fundamental elements of games. Participants are then broken into teams and collaborate to create core ideas, based on our theme, around which a Taleblazer game can be produced. As a group, they will present their core ideas and vote for their favorites, then begin developing story and game mechanics for the final game utilizing the fundamental elements.

Learning Objectives

After completing these workshops, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the elements of games, including Goals, Space, Mechanics, Components, and Rules
2. Describe facts about the history of the local area
3. Develop core ideas around which games can be built that incorporate a theme
4. Generate mechanics and story for a Taleblazer game

Materials

Games can be played in 'tap to visit' mode if there is no GPS, or without tablets via emulation on the Taleblazer site, but this sacrifices the experience of playing the games on location.

- Writing Utensils
- Newsprint
- Scratch Paper
- Whiteboard
- Dry Erase Maker

Time / 90 Minutes / 1 Hour & 30 Minutes

Agenda

The agenda of this workshops should be outlined as follows:

1. Icebreaker (**10 minutes**) 2:00 - 2:10
2. Elements of a Game (**10 minutes**) 2:10 - 2:20
3. High Point History (**15 minutes**) 2:20 - 2:35
4. Decide on Theme (**10 mins**) 2:35 - 2:45
5. Mind Mapping (**10 mins**) 2:45 - 2:55
6. Game Core Idea (**10 mins**) 2:55 - 3:15
7. Group Presentations (**10 mins**) 3:15 - 3:25
8. Combining Ideas Into 1 Story

The total time resulting from the suggested minute count for each section is approx. **1.5 hours**.

Icebreaker / 10 Minutes / 2:00 - 2:10

Question of the day: What do you know about High Point?

Elements of Game / 10 Minutes / 2:10 - 2:20

Introduce elements of a game:

- Space (Where does the game take place?)
- Components (What people/things are incorporated into the game)
- Mechanics (What actions take place during the game?)
- Rules (What constraints are imposed on the players?)
- Goals (What is the purpose? How do you win? What is the reward?)

Use a sport (basketball, soccer) or Rock, Paper, Scissors to demonstrate each element and how they relate to a game.

High Point History / 15 Minutes / 2:20 - 2:35

Presentation about High Point based on material researched at the Seattle Room.

During this section, present your research findings about the area to the participants in an age-appropriate fashion. Including visuals and asking them questions about how they understand the fundamental concepts is important. Check their understanding. For example, in the history of High Point (see below) a good question to make sure they understand the fundamental concepts would be "Why was World War 2 a world war?"

Decide on Theme / 10 Minutes / 2:35 - 2:45

Review the concept of a theme from last week. Elicit: examples of themes in different kind of media (e.g., books films, games, etc.)

Can you define them in one of your favorite books, games, and movies? Ask the participants to list themes based on the new information about High Point and its history. Using different strategies: show of hands or voting with dots, students decide on the central theme for their game.

Mind Mapping / 10 Minutes / 2:45 - 2:55

Use the mind mapping activity to generate related material / ideas that would be used to create the core idea for their game. In the mind map, start with the theme, and have the students 'branch out' to different one-word ideas by free association. If they bring up a concept with lots of potential for development, start a new branch from there.

Game Core Idea / 10 Minutes / 2:55 - 3:15

Explain what is the core idea for a game:

- The core idea expresses **what happens** in the game, and to **whom**.

For example, the core idea of Super Mario Bros could be expressed as follows:

- "Mario and Luigi go to save the princess in the Mushroom kingdom by running and jumping over obstacles to the end of each level."

The core idea of Yahtzee could be expressed like this:

- "Players take turns rolling dice to score points based on particular sequences of numbers until a certain number of turns has passed, then the player with the high score wins."

The core idea of Pokemon GO is:

- The player walks around collecting Pokemon. They join a team and get medals rewarding your progress. There are Pokestops that give you objects to help you in the game, and Gyms where you can battle and become the Gym Leader.

It is ok if the core idea does not express all of the who/what/when/where/why/how questions, but it will include some. In groups, participants will write the core idea for their game based on the theme and the mind mapping activity, the expand the core idea with a story for their game and game mechanics. Explain that in this activity they will write 2-3 paragraphs for the core idea of their game. Give them the following prompt:

- "My game takes place at _____, where the player has to do _____, in order to _____."

Group Presentation / 10 Minutes / 3:15 - 3:25

Have each group present their core idea for the potential game.

Combining Ideas Into 1 Story

Based on all of the group's ideas and feedback, present a single story which unifies these group ideas. Note: this part should be done without the participants. The single concept idea will be introduced to the participants during the next session.

If you have time, you can have the participants work more on their Taleblazer game from the previous session, in particular:

- Participants will create a third character and then create a simple script for a sequential game:
- Only character A appears first
- B character appears only after visiting character A
- C character appears only after visiting character B

Playtest the game to make sure it works.

Appendix A: Material on High Point

It is not known that Native Americans ever lived directly on what is now High Point, since they preferred to be on the coast: they did however probably at least cross the site. The land was first owned in the US by Isaac Ellis. In 1928 the land was sold to be developed into housing, but fewer than 5 lots were completed. During the depression the area had a few roads, but was mostly woods, where some residents collected kindling for fires.

That all changed in 1941. The United States had entered World War II and the Defense Housing Project acquired the area to be used for housing for people who worked at the shipyards and at Boeing (Might be good to ask if the participants know where these sites are). The neighborhood was integrated from the beginning, people of different colors and backgrounds were there to support the war, but not as much as planned the neighborhood was 90% white in 1949..

In 1953 the neighborhood was turned over to the Seattle Housing Authority and became a low income housing project for the city. Residents reported a strong sense of community in the 1950s and 1960s, children reported having 'multiple mothers': everyone's parents looked out for everyone else's kids. The mothers of High Point were an influential political force.

The neighborhood had its share of problems with drugs and gang violence during the period from the 1970s to the 2000s. There was however still strength in the community. In 1981, the city lost tax money because the economy was bad, so they had less funding for the library. The city librarian proposed closing the High Point Library and two others to save money, however, residents protested at a City Council meeting. Dolly Dunstone presented the council with signatures of 600 residents who supported the library. The libraries stayed open.

The biggest change in High Point's history occurred in 2003. \$550 million was spent replacing the old houses and rebuilding High Point from scratch. 100 trees were kept that had been growing in the neighborhood for years, and 2,500 more were planted. Pavement, ponds and swales were designed so that any water that goes to the Longfellow Creek will be clean and healthy for wildlife.