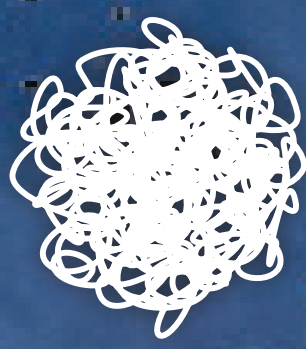


Curse Breakers

GAME



Chaos



Order



Water



Wind



Fire



Earth

My Capstone project is the design and creation of a the game “Curse Breakers”. Curse Breakers allows up to 4 players. The players take on the role of mages attempting to restore a cursed artifact. The main mechanics involve rolling dice and amassing upgrades in order to increase your chances at restoring the cursed item.

This project has included research into game design and iterative design processes, the creation of game mechanics, the visual design of the pieces, and the creation of a comprehensive rules document.

The game design process started by trying to come up with the main concept for the game. I took inspiration from many games that I love. I wanted to combine the feel of a short party game with the strategic depth of longer games. I settled on a concept where the main game play involves drawing cards and rolling dice, so it was easy to jump in without being overwhelmed with pieces and game setup, but allowing for more depth in the selection of which cards to use and which to throw away.

The general game play involves a deck of unique cards with different abilities and six sided dice with six different results. The player is able to discard cards, from a hand of cards, that they don't want in order to “upgrade” themselves with cards they do want. These upgrades allow the player to roll higher quantities of dice in order to meet requirements to surpass challenges, with the ultimate goal of amassing enough upgrades to “break the curse.” Completing these challenges involve rolling symbols which match different combinations as listed on various “challenge cards.”

In my research, I've really focused on the iterative approach to board game designer and game design in general. I found throughout reading that there was a lot of overlap with all the experience I garnered with the design process for apps and such from other classes at RIT. The process of prototyping designs for different school projects when I was learning mobile design, really helped in allowing for a thorough application of feedback and a method for improving the game.

In terms of game mechanics I was able to refine a lot of mechanics in my game by taking multiple different

examples and theories from the different sources. In particular I found the idea of “action theory” as applied to game design, which I read about in Games, Design, and Play by Colleen Macklin and John Sharp, to be the most prevalent in brainstorming for this game, which really emphasizes taking into account what players expect to get out of the game and providing that experience in the core game play loop.

More impactful points used in my iteration process:

The balance between challenge and skill, where a well-designed game strikes a delicate equilibrium to maintain player interest and motivation.

Balancing elements like feedback loops, rewards, and pacing to captivate players and keep them invested in the gaming experience.

Continuous play testing, feedback incorporation, and refinement.

The narrative and thematic elements of a game contribute significantly to this experience, adding layers of meaning and engagement.

I have conducted multiple play tests of my game:

Once with my roommates, just to get my own feel of the game play and get some preliminary feedback on the concept of the game and from people who don't play board games as often.

Next with some other people I know at a board game store that I play with, some of which who constantly play test other board games. This was to get real feedback into the mechanics of the game from people who play a lot of board games and who I play games with.

I have also conducted more play tests where I don't participate to make sure everyone understands without my input or help in explaining rules, in order to ensure that the process of playing the game is communicated by the rulebook and the card design.

