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Story Idea Generation Exercise

Advanced Topics Interactive Design

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<p align="center">**TITLE:** Olive's Island</p>

TARGET:

My game will be a survival-based, community-building simulation that will test a player's leadership and decision-making skills. I hope to be able to provide players with a sense of accomplishment and help them improve their leadership skills by learning that there are no 'win-win' decisions; most often, both sides of a choice can have consequences.

UNIQUE SELLING POINT:

It will have the adventure, adrenaline-rush appeal of typical survival games with an added element of community-progression.

GAME INFORMATION:

It will be a social simulation game, taking direct inspiration from games such as Animal Crossing and Stardew Valley. The game will also have some 'survival genre' aspects, especially in the beginning, like Minecraft. The intended audience is for players who love making challenging decisions and 'found family' tropes.

SUMMARY:

You are a normal college student who one day wakes up on a deserted island. The only items you have with you are the clothes on your back and a strange glowing orb. You have no idea how you got there, where you are, nor how to get back to your normal life.

There are two main paths of the story; to either survive long enough to get off the island, or to make something out of your new life.

STORY, PLOT, & NARRATIVE

STORY:

Players will wake up as Olive, a normal college student who suddenly is stranded on a deserted island. Players will be able to play two primary routes, with multiple endings for each: you can choose to attempt to get off the island alive, or throw your old life behind and make the island your new home.

PLOT:

The game will start with the player alone and confused on an unknown island. They will try to survive on their own, but ultimately realize that it is nearly impossible. They will meet additional characters along their journey and will have the option to recruit them. As the player progresses through relationships with their companions, their chances of survival will increase. If they fail to lead their companions correctly, their (and their companions) livelihoods will be at stake.

NARRATIVE:

INTERACTIONS W/ OTHER CHARACTERS:

Additional characters will be found based on different choices the player makes. Each character has a unique set of skills that would be beneficial for the player to recruit. Some characters will have knowledge or secrets about the island and how they all got there, providing context and lore to the story.

CHOICES:

Choices in dialogue will directly impact a character's relationship with the player. If the player makes too many choices that their companions disapprove of, they will either leave or, if enough companions are in this state, turn against the player. Choices in actions directly impact the success of the player and additional characters' survival.

VISUALS:

There will be an illustration of the map of the island at all times and will change based on the player's actions and progression. The map will indicate the location of the player as well as the physical state of the island. There will be a few side bars to shown the player their health/hunger/dehydration/etc. needs, as well as how many members are in a player's 'party'.

AUDIO:

Music will be used to convey the overall tone of the scene and will change based on the player's decisions. Sound effects will be used to emphasize important actions, such as murder.

TONE:

The tone will be semi-serious, with light-hearted humor scattered in between life-or-death implications.

STORY FUEL

GOALS/OBJECTIVES:

Ultimately, the player needs to survive the dangers of the island long enough to progress either back to their old life or to start their new one. There are several other smaller objectives, such as recruiting and maintaining enough members in your community/crew to accomplish your primary goal.

CONFLICT:

The primary conflict is the player versus nature. The player most make sound decisions to escape and survive the dangers of the island. Additional characters can pose conflict as well, depending on their approval rating of the player's choices.

STAKES:

The biggest stake for the game is that if the player fails to achieve their objectives, they and/or their companions will perish. Other stakes include the possibility of being abandoned or turned upon by your companions if you make the wrong decisions.

STORY STRUCTURE

PLOT ESCALATIONS:

The plot will escalate in any of these possible ways: being attacked by animals, getting injured, getting food poisoning, arguments with companions, etc. Any and all of these outcomes may produce the introduction or exit of a companion.

TIMELINE:

BEGINNING:

You wake up on a beach, without any clue of where you are or how you got there. You try to figure out how to call for help or to gather vital supplies, but quickly learn that surviving alone is nearly impossible. You meet your first companion, who will give you some insight as to where you are and what you

need to do moving forward. You make the primary route choice here: to either stay on the island and build a community or find a way off of it and retreat to your past life.

MIDDLE:

You spend most of the game recruiting companions and building up supplies to either call for help or establish a colony. If you make too many of the wrong decisions, you will fail to achieve the goal of your route and there will be dire consequences.

END:

If you make it to the primary endings, you will either be able to leave the island or become the proud leader of a well-off community.

PRIMARY PATHS:

PRIMARY ROUTE ONE: Finding a way off the island

Secondary Path 1 Ending (one version, multiple companion variations): Gathering enough companions, maintaining good relationships with them, and gathering enough supplies will successfully get the player off the island.

Secondary Path 2 Ending (several variations): If any of the above are not met in time, the player and/or their companions will either be stuck on the island forever or die.

PRIMARY ROUTE TWO: Building a community on the island

Secondary Path 1 Ending (one version, multiple companion variations): Gathering enough companions, maintaining good relationships with them, and

gathering enough supplies will successfully keep player in a leadership role in a thriving community.

Secondary Path 2 Ending (several variations): If any of the above are not met in time, the player and/or their companions may die, or the player will be ostracized from the community.

STORY WORLD

RULES OF THE WORLD:

You cannot leave the island unless you have three companions to aid you, whereas one must be skillful in engineering and technology. You cannot start a settlement unless you have five companions to aid you, one must be skillful at providing food.

SETTING:

The main setting of the game is on a vast, mostly uninhabited island. The official name of the island is up to the player.

LANGUAGE:

There will be no additional jargon besides common English.

LANDSCAPE/ENVIRONMENT:

The island is very tropical and lush, full of fruits and fish. Some areas will be more dangerous than others, such as an area with steep, rocky cliffs.

SOCIETY:

The society the player builds will be completely survival-based with a hint of democracy, which may lead to brutal consequences.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

There will be subtle hints that the island is a simulation and the characters were put there to test a community-building experiment.

MAIN CHARACTER DESIGN

"WHO" IS THE PLAYER:

You are the main character of the game, named Olive. You are a typical college student that accidentally washes up on a deserted island.

MAIN CHARACTER'S GOALS:

There are two main goals of the story. You can ultimately choose to either get off the island and back to your old life, or to restore the island and build a community.

CHARACTER CONFLICTS:

You face typical dangers that come with surviving in an unknown wild area; starvation, dehydration, finding shelter, and possibly unfriendly beasts. You can also face conflict amongst your companions based on your decisions.

CHARACTER STAKES:

The stakes are determined by which route you would like to take in the game.

> a. If you decide you want to leave the island, there is a chance you will not be able to signal for help. If that happens, and you have not progressed the island enough to sustain yourself, you will likely die.

> b. If you decide you want to restore the island, you will need to lead a community of villagers effectively to remain in control. If you are not a good enough leader, your villagers will turn against you OR the community itself will die out.

APPEARANCE:

The main character is in their early twenties. They are scrawny and unfit, and are not made to survive in deserted locations. The main character is nonbinary, and will be referred to with they/them pronouns if not spoken directly to (whereas 'you' will be used).

DIALOGUE/BEHAVIOR/PERSONALITY:

The main character is an average college student, and barely knows anything about what it takes to survive on an island. You will quickly realize that you cannot survive off the island alone, and will need help of side characters to survive and progress. While you may be an awkward young adult at the start of the game, you will eventually morph into someone with great leadership skills (or very bad ones, depending on the route).

<p align="center">ADDITIONAL CHARACTERS</p>

"WHO" ARE THEY:

Throughout the story, there will be several people you can meet that you can choose to accompany you in your journey. These companions will become villagers in your community, should you choose to do so.

GOALS/CONFLICTS:

The common goal amongst the side characters in the story is to survive, whether that is on or off the island. They will be helpful, unless you make a decision that they disagree with or is immorally wrong. If you make enough bad decisions, they will turn against you.

APPEARANCE:

They are average humans, who washed up on the island in a similar way. Most people you meet have been living on the island longer than you have.

BEHAVIOR/PERSONALITY:

Each villager has various skills and personalities. Some may be good at fishing, medicine, hunting, raising morale, gathering, farming, etc. The villagers will appear based on your decision-making.