**PLAYTESTING**
It's never too early

**PRIMARY GOAL**
Evaluate if it's **good**, not if it **works**

**SECONDARY GOALS**

- Identify design flaws
- Gather **positive** & **negative** feedback

**HOW TO PREPARE**

- Fix obvious issues
  - Testers will focus on the first big bug they encounter
  - Poor balancing, controls and user experience will bias feedback
- Make a tutorial
  - In game is ideal
  - In person as a backup
  - Tutorial pitch
  - Not supposed to be a guide of how to win

**HOW TO PREPARE – NICE TO HAVE**

- Data mining and data collection **programmatically**
  - Heat maps
  - Stats
  - Readable logs
  - Will make it easier to analyze data
RUNNING THE SESSION

• Write everything down
  • You will forget the details

• Make conversation with your testers and ask questions
  • What are you doing now?
  • What are you trying to do?
  • What are you thinking about?
  • How’s the difficulty?

RUNNING THE SESSION

• Ask your testers to “Think aloud”
  • Understand their reasoning and thought process.
  • Understand why they made their decisions.

• As you test, you’ll notice if your changes were for the better
  • Iterating over playtesting sessions.
  • Ideally with different people.
  • Easier to measure if survey questions are quantifiable.

A few notes:

• Careful not to lead your players and bias them
• Try not to explain
  • Except of your tutorial
• Only interfere if you see the players failing or getting stuck multiple times
• Keep track of useful stats
  • Number of deaths, location of deaths, play session length, etc.

AFTER THE SESSION

• Ask your testers to fill out a survey/questionnaire.
• Give yourself some time to think about the feedback.
• Analyze the results
  • Find issues and create a plan to fix them
  • Excel is your friend

WHO SHOULD TEST YOUR GAME

• Definitely NOT you!
• Maybe not friends and family
• Friends of friends or people who you don’t know are ideal

INDUSTRY EXAMPLES
MILESTONE 3 - ALPHA

ALPHA PRESENTATION

• Date: October 30th
  • 10 minutes per team for presentation and demo
  • This time I will stop you if you go over
  • Random group order
• Game pitch (again)

• Plan for final sprints
  • What are the missing features
  • How/when you are going to implement them
  • Any risks?

• Plan for playtesting sessions
  • Who, How, When?
  • Remember play testing report due on beta

ALPHA PRESENTATION

• In-class (live) demo of the game
  • Handling over the controller to the panel
  • Prepare your demo in advance
  • Have an executable ready
  • Music & SFX
  • Models and animations
  • No cheat codes

ALPHA BUILD

What you need to present:
• Start Screen
• Main gameplay mechanics
• Win condition(s)
• Lose condition(s)

ALPHA BUILD

A few notes:
• Don’t restart the game between levels or sessions
• Don’t forget to take notes
• Questions?
**MILESTONE 4 - BETA**

**MILESTONE 4 - BETA**

**BETA PRESENTATION**
- Location: Ubisoft Toronto Office
  - 224 Wallace Ave #200
- Dates: November 13th and 14th
  - 3 teams per day
  - 30 minutes per team for presentation, demo & feedback
  - 15 minutes to set up
  - Random group order

**BETA PRESENTATION**
- Game pitch (again)
- Live demo of the completed game
- Animation
- Assets
- Music & SFX
- Hand over controllers to judges to play
- Prepare demos in advance
- Have an executable ready
- Don’t forget to take notes

**PLAYTESTING REPORT**
- Due: November 13th at 10:00 AM
  - 5-10 pages
  - Include:
    - Game description: changes since Alpha
    - Concerns or questions
    - Expected results from the playtest, if any
    - Previous informal playtesting
    - Testing procedure
    - Participants
    - Results
    - Analysis
    - Changes

**RESULTS VS ANALYSIS**
- Results is a raw, summarized listing of what happened, without interpretation
- Given results:
  - Analyze them
  - Implement the changes

**DON’TS**
- Use playtesting to verify that your game is “good”
- Embrace the negative feedback and act on it.
- Ask leading questions
  - “Did you enjoy our fun and amazing starburst mechanic?”
- Take your playtesters too seriously
DOS

- Get specific results from playtesting
  - Example: The jump mechanic feels really fun – we should provide more jumping opportunities
- Ask open-ended questions
  - “How did you feel about the Starburst mechanic?”
- Keep it consistent