

Object Oriented Story Design

This activity will help you conceptualize a seemingly non-linear story structure.

Preparation

1. Create a list 10 events from your story's beginning, middle and end
2. Brainstorm a list of 5 other events that would be interesting to add to your game
3. Print out both lists.
4. Cut each of the events from the paper.
5. Find a space that will allow you to organize all 15 slips of paper.

Establish Critical Path

1. Begin by establishing your critical path

How to do it:

1. Organize the events from their intended beginning, middle and end
2. Identify any events that can be removed without effecting the logic of the story.
3. Mark each event with "R", for required, if it must happen to preserve the logic of your story.

These are your critical events. A player will not be able to skip these. They may be cinematic sequences, or game play that is essential to telling your story.

Establish Key Acts (the objects)

2. Establish key "Acts" alternate paths

Group your **critical events** into 3 acts – beginning middle and end.

How to do it:

1. Use an 8.5 x 11" sheet of paper for each act, and label the piece of paper Act 1, 2, and 3.
2. Place each critical event in its corresponding sheet of paper.

Please note:

- Each act must have at least 1 event. You do not have a complete story if you do not have an event in each act.
- Act 1 should establish the game situation and setup the conflict
- Act 2 should bring the conflict to full strength
- Act 3 should conclude with the resolution of conflict

Establish Event Relationships

3. Establish non-critical event relationships

Organize the remaining events relative to the critical events

How to do it:

1. If an event can only logically happen in an act, place it in that act
2. If an event can happen in more than one act, place it between the acts
3. If an event can happen more than once, print out another copy of the event and place it in each act that it can occur.
4. If an event relies on another, tape them together in the sequence in which they must occur (and number them in roman numerals)
5. If an event must occur at the exclusion of another (e.g. the NPC will live or the NPC will die), put them in their corresponding Acts and draw an arrow between them

Please Note:

If you find many events hinge on a single, and that event is not a critical event, you probably need to make it a critical event. If this event truly is not critical to the story, you may need to be thinking flexibly about the relationship of events.

Document the Relationships

4. Describe the relationships

Transcribe the information you have organize into a diagram

How to do it:

1. Open Microsoft Visio and create a new block diagram
2. Use darkened squares for critical path events
3. Use triangles for all other events
4. Use Arrows to connect events
5. Use diamonds between events to create events that require an either / or decision (as in live or die)

Print out your final diagram and check it for logic and spelling errors