

## SCRIPT

### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time today to help me with this project. As a Sims and Games major, one of my required courses is Game Design Laboratory, in which we are designing our own games to prototype. I have created a board game by the name of Treatise, and today you will be playing a rough, paper-prototype of this game. Treatise is designed to be like Risk if it was played as a game show delivered via board game. I will be giving you the rules and procedures for Treatise, a brief explanation of some variations to the game specific to this playtest, and then your challenge is to play the game without my assistance.

### Warm-Up Discussion

First, I have some questions regarding your play styles and gaming interests, and then I'll set you loose to read the instructions and play the game.

What kind of games do you like to play? What are some of your favorite games? In what settings do you play games?

### Play Session

This is the first time this game has been tested, and as such you will likely run into some player-experience issues. I ask that you do your best to solve any problems that may come up and play the game to the best of your ability. I encourage you to think aloud while you play and to give any feedback as it comes up. Any ideas or thoughts you have will help me develop the game further. For this particular test I will be participating in the game as the Host, the role of which will be explained in the directions. With that being said, please begin.

### Discussion of Game Experience

Now that you've had a chance to play and discuss the game, I have a few questions for you.

What are your overall thoughts of the game?

What did you like the most about the game? The least?

What do you think of the gameplay?

Were the instructions clear? If not, what was confusing? What did you think of each of the challenge categories? How would you describe this game to others?

What would you add to or change in this game?

Thank you all so much for playing my game and giving me such great feedback. Your thoughts on everything we discussed will be very helpful for me in the development of this game, and I look forward to showing you any improved iterations and later a more complete prototype!

## NOTES

### Warm-Up Discussion

#### What kind of games do you play?

- FPS, MMO, sandbox, trivia, party games, puzzle games

#### What are some of your favorite games?

- Trivial Pursuit, Skyrim, Modern Warfare, Battlefield 2, Kerbal Space Program

#### In what settings do you play games?

- alone, w/ online group (socially inclusive games), w/ a large group

### Play Session - General Notes/Observations

#### Reading Rules and Set-Up

##### Intro/Overview:

- Tongue twisty intro, (but we like it!)
- Hooked on premise
- No Disadvantage Card rules (oops)

##### Game Pieces

- Frustrating that markers are one-sided
- “Disadvantage Cards” sounds misleading, (but we like them!)

##### Set-up

- Selected kingdom cards secretly/nonspecifically
- Markers unclear (capital marker undefined)
- Not sure they claim territories in this step
- Seems there’s “no advantage to where markers are placed”
- Flaw in claiming territories - nothing to prevent players from blocking each other
- Had to reposition markers, but figured it out based on the rules about placement

#### Post-setup

- After reading rules, it was clear they had to claim all the territories prior to playing
- Said they “learn by playing”
- In summary, “attack, use disadvantage, if you win you take territory you had”
- Decided that since poor names had different syllables, they’d make their own 2-word phrase to shout instead (examples used were mostly not family-friendly, so I won’t write them down)

#### Gameplay

- I was busy being the Host and didn’t take very many notes during this part
- They seemed to enjoy each of the challenges, and were certainly challenged by each of them
- They were surprised by The Joust challenges
- Slightly confused by order of play (after Advantage Rounds)

- Came up with “balance and your dominant leg while taking your sock off the foot you are balancing on” for Joust

### Discussion

#### What are your overall thoughts of the game?

- Long!
- But fun!
- liked liked how disadvantages could be useless

#### What did you think of each of the challenge categories?

##### Witch’s Brew

- Liked it!
- Understood why it was called Witch’s Brew without explanation
- Liked the “go and get” cards (considered them unexpected)

##### Joust

- Liked it!
- Liked getting up and moving; weird challenges

##### Math

- Like the word questions
- could be trick questions

#### What did you like the most about the game?

- Fun trivia!
- Liked the trivia element, variety of questions (especially unusual ones like etiquette)
- The name # \_\_\_\_\_ from Witch’s Brew

#### The least?

- First impressions, hard to understand w/out reading directions yourself (only negative; had fun!)
- I hate anthem but that’s because I’m bad at math.
- Slow, but \*fixes listed\* would help
- I didn’t hate anything, but choosing territories I had a strategy and broke the game LOL

#### Were the instructions clear? If not, what was confusing?

- Sort of answered during the setup

#### What would you add to or change in this game?

- Potentially reduce board size
- If challenger loses they lose a territory
- Would like to see more variety in disadvantages (pig latin, say it backwards)
- More premise integrated into the questions/trivia
- Random trivia
- Riddles would be good with proper time allowances • History trivia? “The Courts”

## CHANGES

After the initial playtest, it's apparent that many of the flaws are in the balance of the game: the most arresting of these being the time it takes to play the game. The following list of changes will be made in response to this problem, as well as that of the game-breaking territory claims. Their implementation will also increase the variety in the challenge categories and disadvantage cards.

### Division of Territories

- The Problem: Originally, I had planned on implementing a "regional advantage," but for the first iteration I wanted to be feature free, to make sure the mechanics themselves were fun. While I would still like to implement this feature (it does sound pretty cool, and would add more strategic elements to the game) it turns out that the way in which I implemented this, and the resulting claiming of territories component, broke the game.
- The Solution: Pre-determined territories, with different arrangements depending on how many (contestant) players there are.

### Length of Game

- The Problem: After an hour of playing (post set-up) the map hadn't changed very much. It seemed the end of the game wouldn't ever come.
- The Solution: First, reduce the board size to 24 territories (12 for 2 players, 8 for 3, 6 for 4, 4 for 5 - w/ 4 island territories, 4 for 6). Then, implement a ruling such that if the challenger of a round loses, they must relinquish a territory to the player they challenged. I may consider designing a mechanic for a third party to take a territory if neither player wins a 1v1 challenge.

### Naming

- I'm probably going to rename the Disadvantage Cards, the Advantage Round, and the Challenge Round so that they better match the premise. This work will be grouped with creating distinct kingdoms for the contestants to play as.

### Variety

- Based on feedback from my playtest group I will be creating larger decks of challenge cards, leaning towards the types of challenges they preferred and straying away from the ones that confused or did not interest them. I will do the same for the disadvantage cards.