



What are games?

Game Design Workshop

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What are we going to discuss?

- What games are, and what is game design
- How to design game rule systems and improve them in an iterative manner
- What is a rapid prototyping mindset for game design
- Other gamerelated things that come up and that you are interested in

What is play?

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” *Play* is free movement *within* a more *rigid* structure.”
– Rules of Play (Salen & Zimmerman)

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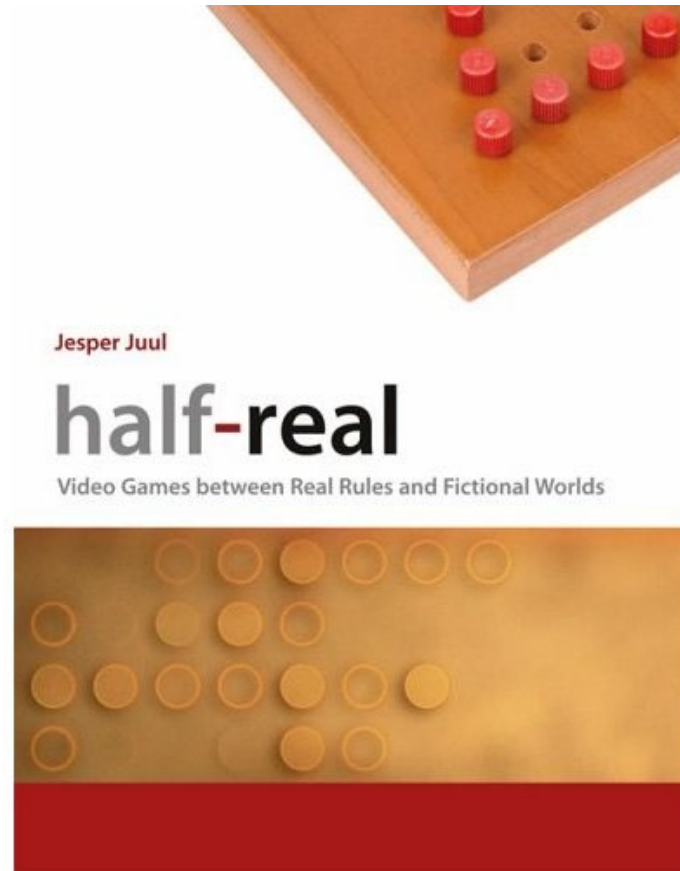
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More about game definitions: Half-Real



Conclusion

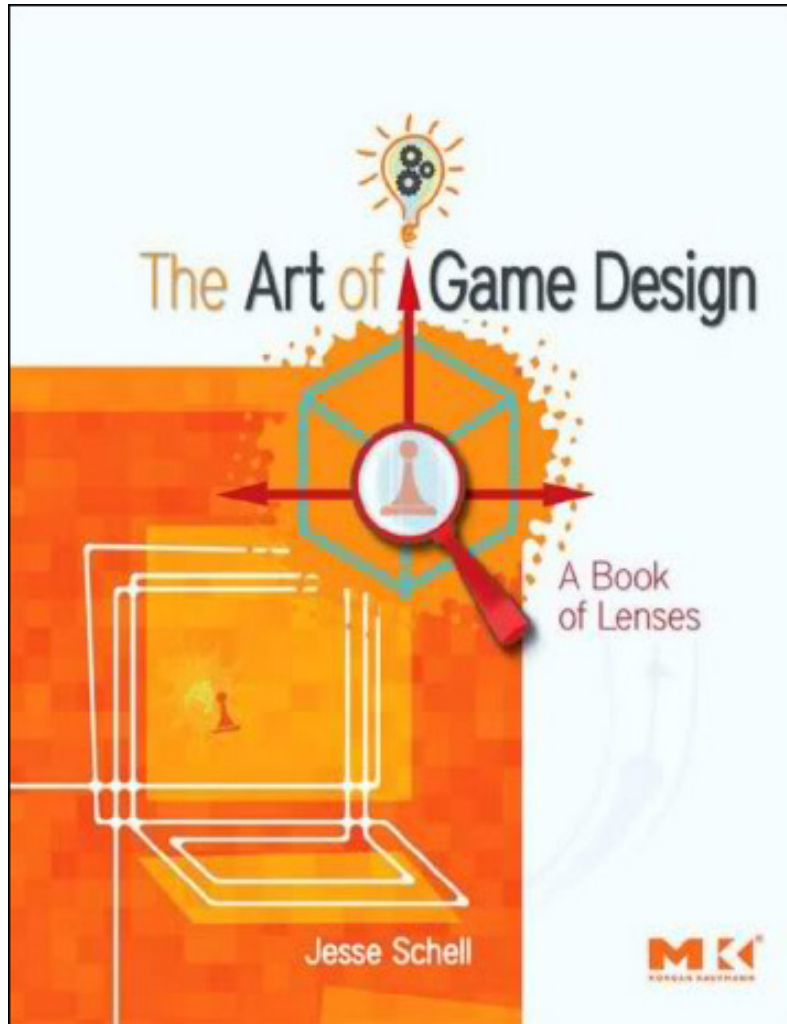
- As game designers, we need to focus on
 - Interactivity
 - Rules
 - Meaning
 - Challenge
 - Goals

Conclusion

And of course be ready to experiment to extend the boundaries of games, while keeping these basics in mind!

Links & Resources

- Games you can try
 - Snowman in Hell: <http://mlab.uiah.fi/snowman>
 - Tear: From any supermarket close to you
 - Veden varassa: Ask me
- Books & articles mentioned
 - Greg Costikyan: I Have No Mouth And I Must Design:
<http://www.digra.org/dl/db/05164.51146.pdf>
 - Johan Huizinga: Homo Ludens
 - Jesper Juul: Half-Real
 - Jesse Schell: The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses
 - Aki Järvinen: Games Without Frontiers:
<http://acta.uta.fi/english/teos.php?id=11046>
 - Drachen & Canossa: Towards Gameplay Analysis via Gameplay Metrics:
<http://andersdrachen.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/p202-drachen.pdf>



<http://artofgamedesign.com/cards/>

What is game design?

A dark blue sweater with colorful geometric patterns, a ball of green yarn, and knitting needles. The sweater features a large, colorful geometric pattern on the front, and a smaller, similar pattern on the sleeve. A ball of green yarn is positioned in the lower right, and a pair of knitting needles is visible near the top right. The background is plain white.

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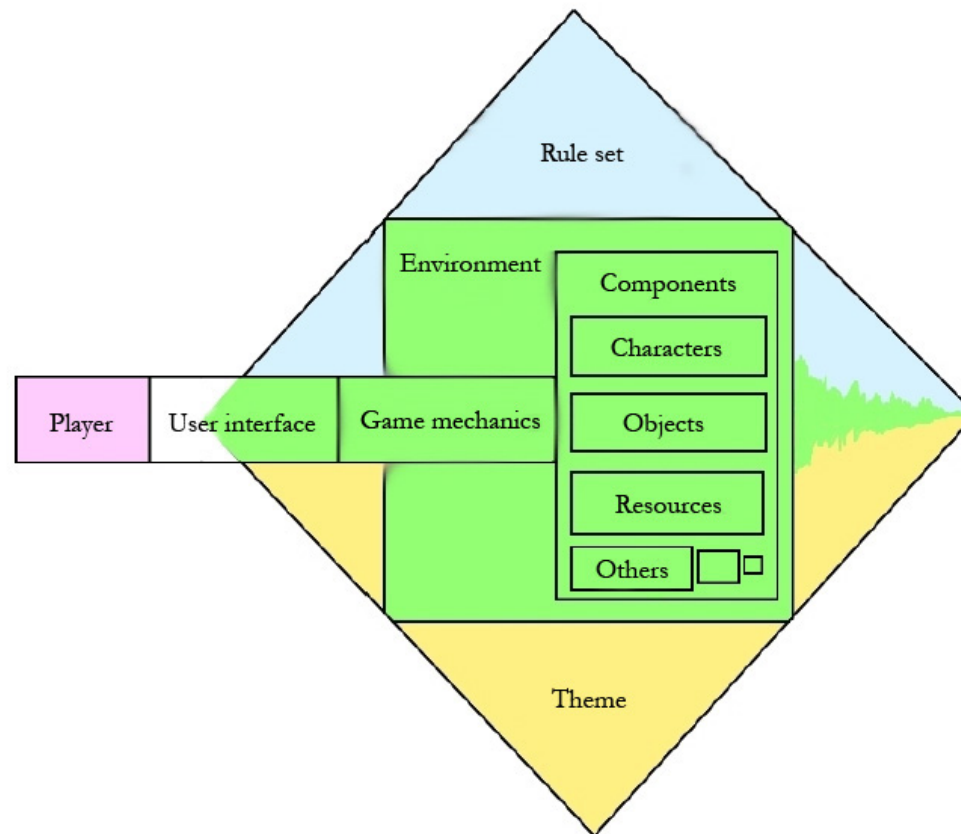
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What is game design?

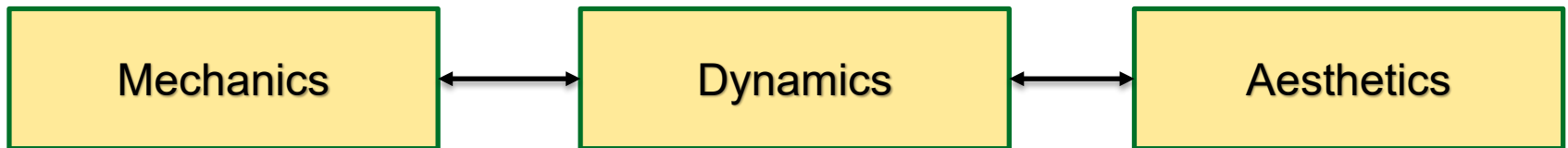
Game design is

- the process of creating the rules and content of a game
- (within restrictions)
- aiming for a compelling experience
- to the target group

Elements of games



The MDA Framework



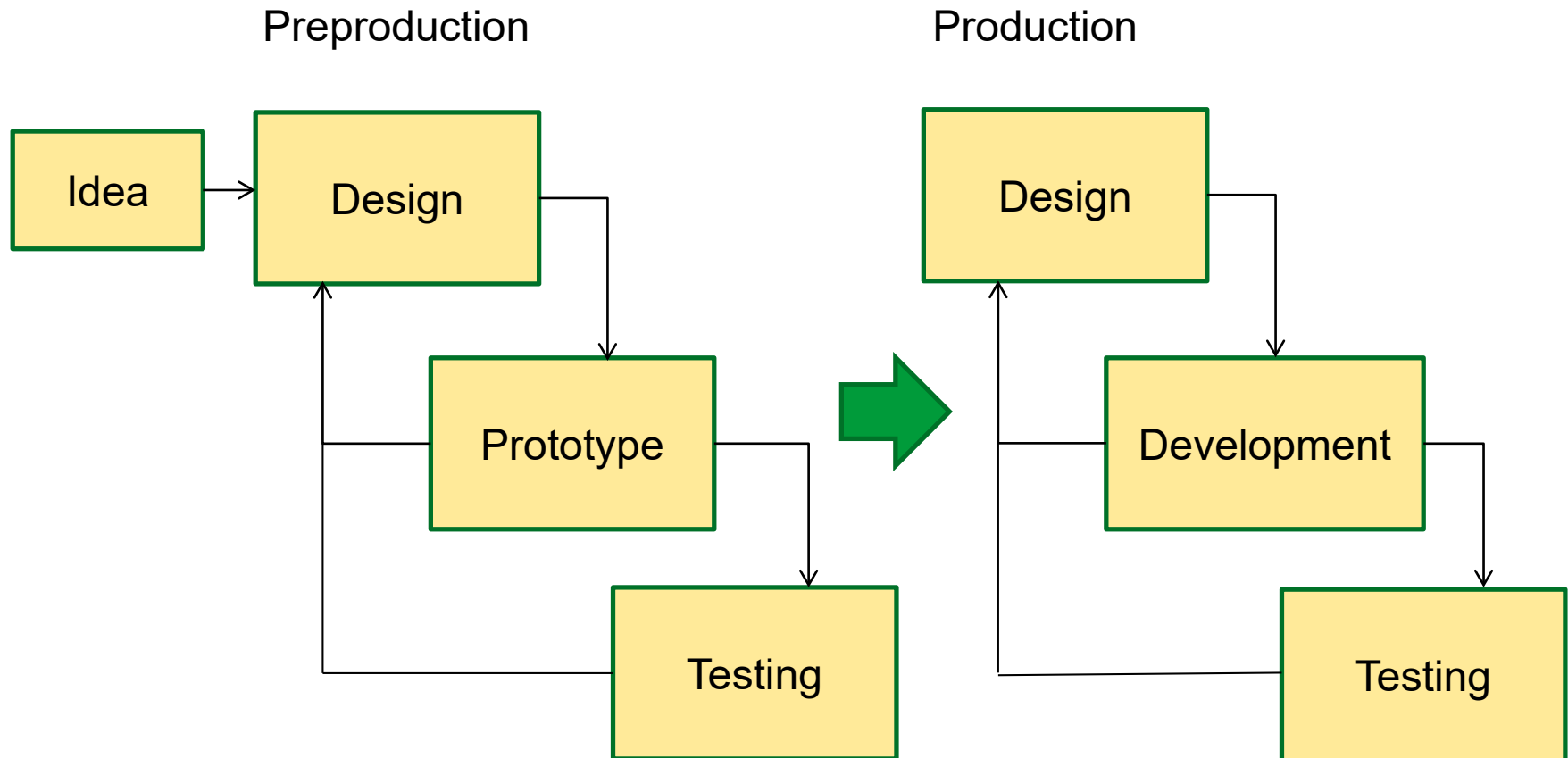
Aspects of game design

- Gameplay (game system/mechanics) design
- Narrative design
- Level/World design
- User interface design
- Monetization design

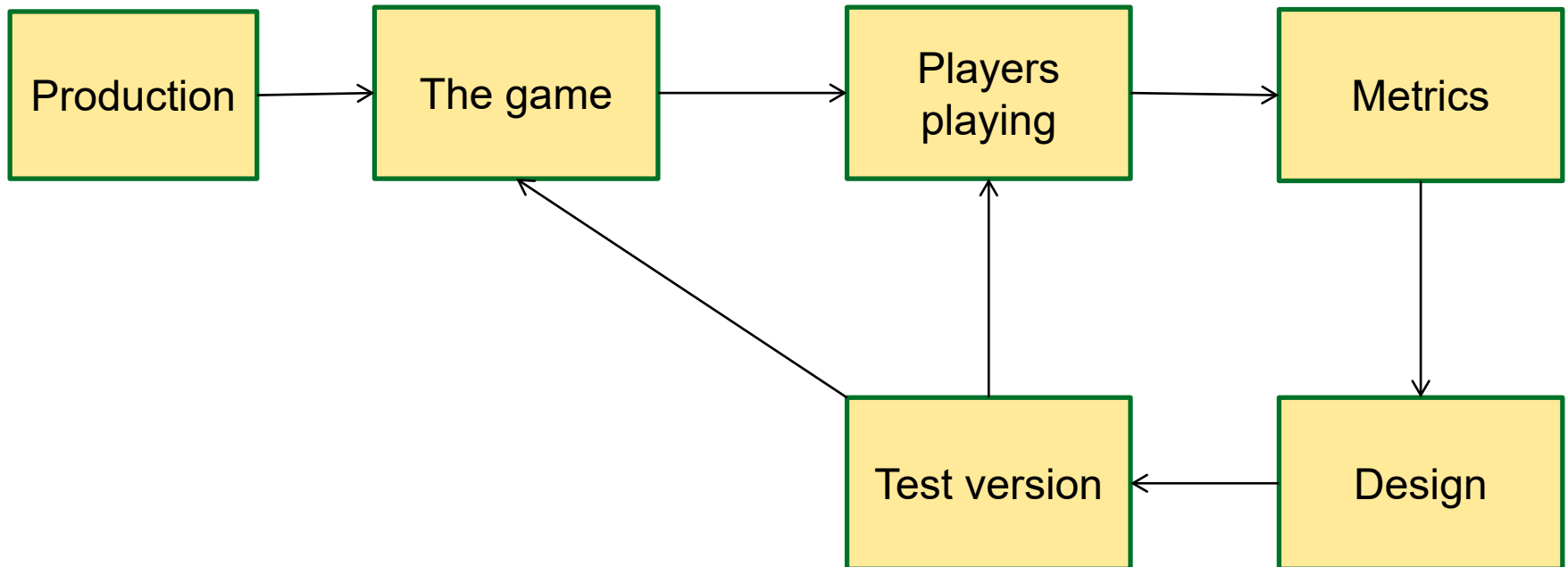
Example: MoiBand



The iterative game development process



Games as a service



Daily "duties" of a game designer

- Depends on the company, but often:
- Designing the game – but not the only guy with ideas
 - Often everyone contributes
 - The game designer tries to keep the vision clear for all, and make the ideas work together towards the common goal
- Lots of communicating!
 - Pitching ideas inside the company
 - Communicating the designs to the ones implementing them
 - Keeping documentation/a Wiki up to date
- Testing to see how the game feels and to see if the designs are actually working

What can make a game fun?

- Reaching and exceeding goals
- Competing against opponents
- Exercising difficult skills
- Making interesting choices
- Living out fantasies
- Social interaction
- Exploration and discovery
- Collecting things
- Sensory stimulation
- Self-expression
- Construction and destruction
- Story

Conclusions

- Game design is creating the rules and the content of a game with restrictions
- Aspects of game design
 - Gameplay design
 - Narrative design
 - Level design
 - User interface design
 - Monetization design
- The game design process requires lots of testing and iteration

Questions?

Zoom Game Design Exercise

- Design a game that can be played by the same amount of people that you are in your group – on Zoom
- The game should take approximately 5-15 minutes
- As game designers you:
 - Figure out the rules
 - Start simple
 - What is the goal? How do you win?
 - What kind of experience are you aiming for and what kind of interaction would create that experience?
 - Test early, test often – crucial!
 - Add a theme (possibly)
 - Create the prototype versions of things needed to play the game (possibly)

A couple of things to remember

- The idea of the exercise is not to get perfect games, but fail in interesting ways (Fail often, fail fast)
- Try to make the best game with the time you have, but don't take extra pressure about "succeeding" – we are here to learn (often from mistakes)
- Also, the focus of this course is in game design – don't make your games pretty, but use the time to playtesting and iterating



Don't forget to
play!

-Alvar Aalto