

Pre-Production document (Project concept document)  
XB3992 Honours Project  
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PATH TO DEITY  
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## Contents

The purpose of this document is to provide a fast and clear overview of the game, as well as looking more in depth at the project as a whole, including why this project was chosen, the project aims and outcomes, the target demographic and what resources are required. The document will be more in depth than the project plan, however, will discuss the reasoning behind the project, rather than the game itself, which will be covered in the design document.

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## Game name/ Working title

Path to Deity

## Genre

The game will predominantly identify as an exploratory puzzle adventure game, relying on player's logic and reflex skills in order to complete puzzles, before using these skills in the open-world.

## Game Introduction/ Overview

Path to Deity is a single player, open-world puzzle adventure game, played through a first-person perspective and will be designed for PC and console platforms. The project will last roughly 32 weeks (including Christmas and Easter holidays), with the primary focus being on level and puzzle design.

Set in a Vibrant 'Witness' influenced environmental space, the players will have to explore the landscape searching for 8 unique special abilities, placed within 8 distinctly coloured sub-sections. Once the players have found a puzzle area, containing a new ability, they will take on a series of puzzles, each hand-crafted around the ability the player just found.



*The image to the left shows a landscape image from 'The Witness', one of the influences for the landscape and aesthetic for Path to Deity. The image displays a variety of colour, low poly and stylised assets and clear focal points to draw the players eye.*

Upon completing the series of puzzles, the player will have gained the knowledge of how to use this ability and will have access to it within the open landscape to use how they wish. When the player has found all 8 abilities, they can make their way to the final tower, where they will need to combine all the abilities which they have attained, in order to complete the ultimate test of reaching the top of the tower.

If the player can complete this, they will become a 'demigod', transforming from mortal to divine rank, allowing them to become the light of the world, shining from the peak of the tower over the world.

## **Purpose of project**

The purpose of this project is to learn, develop and hone my skills in level design within different areas, all of which will be useful tools post-graduation as a level designer in the industry. The main areas of design which this project will cover include:

### ***Exterior/ World design***

The exterior and world design sections of the project will be mainly focusing on methods of indirect control through the spacing, pacing, focal points and signposting to create a unique and interesting landscape to explore and using exterior techniques such as verticality, architecture, side quests and splitting the map into sub sections, in order to create an open 3D world space which plays on the players sense of discovery. These techniques will be influenced through a range of sources such as Zelda B.O.T.W's puzzle shrines, open discovery and puzzle systems, Pokémon progression system of collecting badges from gyms (the puzzle areas in Path to Deity) and The Witness, which will be lending inspiration to the colour scheme and low poly aesthetics.

These sections will be implemented into the game throughout the world/ landscape and will be accessible to the player through the game. The reason these sections have been included in the project is because I want to demonstrate that I can create an interesting open world experience for the player to explore, guiding them towards key locations, such as integrated puzzle areas, without directly telling the player exactly where to go with a waypoint, as this can lead to players becoming more invested and immersed in the game through exploration and discovering elements of the game such as geographical locations and narrative insights by themselves, which will make the players feel more rewarded as they find aspects which they feel a lot of people may not discover; in turn pleasing a lot of the explorer personality types and achievers.

The aspect of not using a waypoint in the game also encourages players to look around the screen and explore the landscape, meaning they are not just heading straight for the objective, which can cause players to miss big chunks of the game as they head from A to B, instead, making the player have to think for themselves and search for focal points and more subtle guides, such as coloured sub sections and signposting to get to the next intended location.

### ***Puzzle design***

Puzzle design and flow is one of the core aspects of this project. In total, there will be 27 puzzles, 8 abilities with 3 puzzles, leading from one to the next until all 3 are complete, designed around each mechanic plus the 3 puzzles for the final tower, where the abilities will need to be combined. These puzzles will be placed into designated puzzle areas, each area being within a separate sub section of the map, usually found near the edge of the landscape. The player will be searching for these puzzle areas in order to collect all 8 abilities, however, will be required to explore in order to find them.

The puzzle areas will be found using focal points, as the player will see a tower when they are close by with a flashing light on top; flashing red when the player has not explored the area and green when they have. They will also be guided through the sub section ground colour, as each puzzle area, within the sub section, holds it's own pastel colour.

The main reasons why I have chosen to create the project based on puzzles is because I feel that it is a key aspect of level design, as seen in the level design job listing from Sumo Digital below, however, it is an area which is currently lacking within my portfolio and also because as puzzle games such as Spyro, Zelda and Banjo Kazooie are becoming very popular again, being able to create enjoyable but challenging reflex and logical puzzles with a professional flow could be a very handy skill to possess within the industry.

### ***Interior design***

For the interior design, this will be shown through the insides of buildings within the world space and through the puzzle areas which require an indoor space in order to be completed. These spaces will be placed around the map, with buildings available for players to enter and explore, some holding lore and narrative pieces for players who wish to explore the narrative further.

This will be covered, as interior design can be an important factor in level design and covering this area, even only briefly, can portray my ability in this area. Interior spaces will also allow the space to feel more believable, as players can enter the spaces within the landscape in order to explore. In terms of the interiors for the puzzle areas, any area which requires an interior space will require it to add to the atmosphere of the puzzle, be used to stop players from escaping the puzzle area prior to finishing the puzzles or be implemented to add more to the puzzles.

### ***Level Design***

Despite puzzle design falling under level design, the primary purpose of this project is to illustrate and improve my current level design skills and gain new ones through the course of this project. The main aspects which will be portraying these skills fall under spacing, pacing, asset/ key location placement, tone, ambience, gameplay mechanics and others mentioned above.

To begin with, the level design will be shown through the 2D sketches of the puzzles, sub areas and map. From there, these will be displayed through RPG Maker, where these designs will be shown more clearly than they will be portrayed on paper. After this stage, the designs will move into Unreal, where the puzzles will become playable in a 3D space, surrounded by an environment for the player to explore.

As the puzzles will first be created in 2D, this will allow for a cheap way to get the puzzles critiqued, prior to taking the time to create them in Unreal, which would be more time consuming and expensive to modify at this point. As for the RPG Maker stage, this allows for a more clear and accurate representation of each of the puzzles and areas, which will allow for a clearer vision and faster implementation time when going into UE4, as the designs will be created prior and not made spontaneously. This also provides a more professional workflow, which is one of the requirements to illustrate within the Sumo Digital job listing below.

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the role of pacing, narrative, theme and mechanics in creating compelling gameplay experiences.</li> <li>• Realise the high-level vision of your levels through all stages of development from initial block out through to final shipped product.</li> <li>• Plan, execute and refine your levels from high-level concept to low-level scripting.</li> <li>• Use player feedback and design direction to hone the gameplay experience.</li> <li>• Show an ability to weave narrative and artistic themes with gameplay mechanics to build engaging levels.</li> <li>• Be able to propose creative solutions to complex design problems and importantly “bring the team with you”.</li> <li>• Experience of developing gameplay mechanics.</li> <li>• Experience of designing and integrating puzzles into your levels.</li> <li>• Experience with Unreal Blueprints or other visual scripting tools.</li> </ul> |
|--|

*This job listing is one of the influences on the project, as it covers the aspects required in a Level Design role.*

### ***Other purposes for the project***

Some of the other reasons why this project has been chosen is due to it being the biggest project I have undertaken, proving that I can take on challenges of this scale, whilst sticking to deadlines, milestones and schedules; maintaining a professional workflow throughout, from detailed research and documentations through to the final product. It also provides a range of fun but challenging obstacles, both throughout production and for the players, e.g. working on aesthetics to create a finished product for the forefront of my portfolio, using colour as a design technique.

### Intended outcomes/ aims

The main intended outcome of the project is to complete all of the deliverables to a professional standard; delivering them on time, to a high standard and maintaining a professional workflow.

### Deliverables recap

<b>Pre- Production</b>	Project plan	Pre-Production doc.	Research doc	Burndown Chart	Schedule
<b>Production</b>	Paper designs	RPG Maker designs	(Level) Design doc	Final UE4 level	Presentations
<b>Post- Production</b>	Trailer video	Walkthrough video	Website portfolio	Process journal	Eval. report

These deliverables have been chosen to portray the points written about in the previous section, however, some of the other intended outcomes include:

- Creating a professional flowing level design intertwined in an environment, using correct pacing to guide players to the shrines, before solving challenging but enjoyable puzzles within. To achieve this, I must research how to create puzzles efficiently and put the game through rigorous playtesting, with the intent of creating puzzles leading to a sense of accomplishment.
- Creating thoughtful puzzles and an intriguing environment, allowing for deeper exploration with each solved shrine, will make players plan their actions and consider how to approach and solve challenges with new mechanics, in turn, immersing them into the gameplay.
- The aim on a personal level is to learn UE4's landscape editor, get better with blueprinting and level design, learn how to effectively go through the level design workflow; running through paper, 2D and 3D level design and honing software skills such as Maya and Photoshop in a professional manner.

The main overall intended outcome is to place the project at the forefront of my portfolio of work. This project has been designed to cover aspects of level design I have not previously covered, requires strengthening, e.g. pure puzzle/ environmental design, and to portray my abilities in level design within environments, puzzles and interiors, in a way that follows real world job listings.

### What I would like to learn from this project

There are several aspects I would like to learn through the course of this project including:

- UE4's landscape editor: *Having never previously used the landscape editor, I feel this is a key section of the engine which I am lacking, therefore, this is how the exterior will be created.*
- Modelling in Maya: *Maya can be an important tool for level designers in order to block out certain areas of the map, so honing my Maya skills will be an important aspect of this project.*
- Blueprinting: *An extensive knowledge of Blueprinting can assist with level design positions in the industry, meaning it is important to learn and possess as many technical skills as possible.*
- Level Design techniques: *This project will require different skills to all the previous projects I have undertaken, meaning new level design skills will be learned and used throughout.*
- Feedback: *I would like to learn how to use feedback more productively than previous projects.*
- Pre- Production: *This project will aid in learning how to build a good foundation and base.*
- Flow: *As this project is an integration of different design types, it will require learning some useful techniques in flow, spacing, pacing, player understanding and other design areas.*
- Puzzles: *As the first puzzle game I have ever created, it will be a good platform to learn how to create challenging but enjoyable puzzles for the players to experience.*

## Player experience

Each section of the game will provide a separate experience for the player, which will impact their emotions and experience in different ways. Some of these sections include:

- *Puzzles: Whilst in the puzzle sections of the game, the player's main focus should be on searching the area to discover how to solve the puzzle or quickly using their reflex skills when prompted in order to complete a reflex task. This experience should be enjoyable for the player, as they attempt to discover how to complete the task, slightly tense in some of the puzzles which require the player to think quickly and enlightening when they discover how to complete it or manage to get the timing correct. The puzzles should become increasingly challenging throughout the course of each puzzle series and upon completing a puzzle, the player should feel a sense of achievement.*
- *Exploration of the world: Whilst exploring the world space, the players should feel a sense of discovery, as they search for new geographical locations, narrative, mechanics and content. This sense of discovery should lead to a feeling of anticipation and wonder, as the players head towards their goal, aided by focal points, paths and signposting. Whilst just exploring the world, the players should feel free to go wherever they please, leading to a sense of freedom and relaxation, as they wander through the bright and vibrant game space at their own pace.*
- *Mechanics: As the players collect the mechanics at their own pace (by entering puzzle areas), and in their own order, this gives the players a feeling of choice as to where to go in the game map and which puzzle area to enter first. When the players gain the new mechanic, disguised as an ability, they will be taught how to use it through the series of puzzles which will lay before them based around this mechanic. Through this time, the player should become more courageous and confident with the mechanics as they learn how to use them.*
- *Narrative: The game narrative will offer lore and history to the game world. The players can search for as much of this as they wish, which could lead to a more enriching experience for the players, as they begin to understand the reasoning for certain design decisions.*
- *Game experience: As the game allows the players to go at their own pace and explore where they wish without a dedicated waypoint, whilst discovering as much or little as they want, the game trusts the players to find the key areas and trusts them to ensure they are content with the experience they put upon themselves. In the end, the game could have caused the players to be surprised at their own gaming capabilities, happy as to having achieved everything which they have achieved and will serve as a reflection, as they complete the game and think back over their time within this game world.*

## Context of the game

Set within a semi-fantasy world, players will take the role of a mortal from a very powerful blood line. The player character's father, currently positioned at the top of the center tower, has lent his soul to the Gods in exchange for a life of contempt within the afterlife. His soul, powered by the Gods, overlooks the land and provides light to the world, allowing all civilians to live freely within the world. However, as your father has been in this position for so long, his power is slowly dying out, meaning the player character is required to take up the position as next of kin. Hidden around the world are several challenges, which can only be accessed and completed by a current or upcoming demigod. Upon completion, the player will have access to these abilities to use how they wish and be powerful enough to guide them to the tower peak to replace their father. This lighting of the world is why the landscape and skies are so vibrant and filled with colour.

## Resources and research

This section is going to be very short due to this being written about within the research document, Development log and (Level) Design Document. However, as a quick overview:

### *Resources*

The main resources which I will be using for this project will be:

- Mechanics: Mainly tutorial videos where required in order to aid with the development of the ability mechanics.
- Aesthetic: Mainly Substance Painter and Maya tutorials in order to get a better insight into how to design the assets and world structure for the project.
- Previous projects: These will aid with understanding how similar mechanics and elements have been created, which can save time when creating them again.
- Landscape: Tutorial videos, articles and advice pages from Epic Games and users of UE4 will be important resources to look at in order to learn how to use and hone these skills.
- Puzzles: Jesse Schell's book on 'The Art of Game Design' has a section dedicated to puzzle design which will aid the development of this. Along with this, Mark Brown's 'GameMaker's Toolkit' and Extra Credit's series on Game Development will also be interesting resources to look at.

### *Research*

In terms of primary research, there are some images in the research document in order to cover this, e.g. images of train stations and hilly landscapes, however, the bulk of this research will be found within the testing sheets, questionnaires and the development log, which will be found as supporting materials after completing testing sessions, getting players to fill out questionnaires and completing discussions with peers and tutors about the ideas outlined within the pre-production and design documents.

In terms of secondary research, this can all be found in the research document, under the headings of Job Listings, Environment, Exterior, Interior, Puzzle, Aesthetic, Mechanics, UI and Narrative, before listing the resources and references in a bibliography list.

### **Key influences**

A page on this section can be found in the research document, however, a few of the key influences which have impacted this project include:



#### **Aesthetic**

The Witness  
The Elder Scrolls Online

#### **Puzzles/ Puzzle areas**

Death Squared  
Portal 2  
Zelda Breath of the Wild

#### **Progression system**

Pokémon

#### **Religious narrative: Demigods**

Greek, Christianity and  
Hinduism religions and faiths



## Elemental tetrad

This section is an overview of the different sections which will be covered in this project, with a more detailed version of this being found in the (Level) Design Document.

## Mechanics

The main mechanics found in the project include the main abilities which the players can find within the puzzle areas, the game's economy, the ability to interact with certain elements in the world, the ability to catch a train to different locations etc, which will all be blueprinted in UE4.

### *Preliminary list of mechanics:*

Grappling hook	Sprint	Carry items	Crouch	Inspect items
Triple jump	Freeze time	Manipulate time	Reverse time	Teleport
Economy	World interactions	Final tower	Menus	Controller support

## Level Design

This section is covered completely within the (Level) Design Document and above, however, the main areas of level design which will be looked at include puzzle, exterior, interior, 2D, 3D and landscape design. The level design will also be focused on creating the rules of the world; guided through the mechanics, working on the interaction models, working on the spacing of the terrain, which elements will be included and where they will be placed, what objects will be placed into the world and where they can be collected.

## Aesthetics

In terms of the aesthetics, the colour palette is in a 'Witness' style, with the landscape being brightly coloured through the ground, grass, trees, water and skyline, in order to stick with the narrative aspect of the world being light due to the sacrifice the player character's father made. In terms of the look and feel, the game will have a stylized and low poly look and will be striving to give a sense of adventure to the players through its openness. The world should also give more of a sense of immersion through the player perceiving the game in first person.

For the audio, the players will experience calm, ambient and relaxing music whilst exploring, with more intense music and sound cues through the puzzles. These sound cues will be vital for some of the puzzles. This will be explained more in the Design document.

Other aesthetic aspects include touch, which will be available for console players or players who use a controller to play, as there will be periods of time, usually in the puzzle areas, where they will experience a controller rumble through the controller to warn the player of obstacles and play at the same time as puzzle sound cues.

Finally, of the eight types of Aesthetics stated by Hunicke, LeBlanc and Zubek, Path to Deity will mainly cover 4 of them including:

- Fantasy (Game as make-believe) through the narrative, puzzles and low poly world space.
- Narrative (Game as drama) as this will be prominent throughout the game space.
- Challenge (Game as obstacle) as players will want to master the puzzles to finish the game.
- Discovery (Game as uncharted territory) as players will be willing to/ urged to explore.

## Engine/ Technology

This project is going to be a single player game using Unreal Engine 4, set up for PC and consoles. As this is the case, the game will be both keyboard and controller compatible. In order to create this project, I will require a functional PC, internet connection, power source to run it, lighting etc.

Although covered in the project plan, the software required for this project includes:



**Unreal Engine 4:** Game Engine (inc. tools such as the landscape editor, foliage tool etc).

**Photoshop:** Illustrations, PDFs, documentation, conceiving.

**Maya/ Substance Painter:** Creating and texturing new/ previously created assets.

- **Microsoft Office:** (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) Documentation and presentations.
- **Wix:** Creating the online portfolio.
- **RPG Maker VX Ace:** Used to visualise the level design in a 2D space quickly, this can be useful for visualising the whole map, sub-areas and shrine interiors. This program shows a clean and more accurate look at the level design, following the paper design stage.

## Narrative overviews

The narrative will begin with a cut scene at the beginning of the game when the player presses to play from the menu. This will tell the player the initial information they need to know. From here, the game will let the player find their own sections of narrative through exploration, as they will discover the world's lore throughout the world space, e.g. puzzles, books, environment etc. This will teach the player the backstory of the world, how the location came to be, people who have lived there and their story. The environment will also present the player with architecture; caves, buildings and spaces, all with their own stories and narrative attached for the player to explore.

As the game is in first person, the player will not be able to see their own character, making it more immersive, as the player can imagine themselves in the world and create their own stories and path through the game. As the player goes from one location to the next, a pop up will appear on the screen telling the player where they are and will possibly give the player a reward for their discovery, making them want to find more.

Once the player has the abilities, they will be able to use those mechanics to make choices as to where to go, how fast they wish to get there and what to do, as they will be able to access places which they could not access prior.

## UI

For the UI, players will need to receive a lot of feedback through the puzzles and the course of the game (e.g. buttons to activate abilities, timers, interaction buttons etc). Although maps and waypoints will not appear to allow for a bigger sense of discovery, the player will get pop ups through the game (such as location) and will be able to check on certain stats such as currency.

### **What needs to be created**

Even though I will be creating an asset list document and presenting it as a supporting material, a quick overview of what needs working on and creating includes:

#### ***Pre-production***

- Project plan/ schedule
- One Sheet
- Research document
- Burndown chart
- Pre-Production document
- Week 4 Cross-Programme Presentation

#### ***Production***

- Paper designs of puzzles, shrines, sub-sections and overall map layouts
- 2D RPG Maker designs of shrines, sub-sections and overview
- (Level) Design document
- Negotiated portfolio: Final UE4 level (.exe) file (Whiteboxed, Greyboxed and Final art level)
- 10 core mechanics (abilities player can do)
- 27 puzzles (3 puzzles around each of the 8 abilities plus the 3 final integrated tower puzzles)
- Questionnaire form for testing
- Testing (bug report) sheets
- Asset list document
- UI elements
- Any assets required for the puzzles
- Any assets required for the landscape (Modular pieces)
- Signposting
- Any characters want to use (Collect and implement)
- Environment (Exterior and landscape creation)
- Level Flow
- Lighting
- Focal points
- Textures
- Audio
- Narrative
- Menus and bookending
- Week 13 presentation
- Week 23 cross programme presentation

#### ***Post-production***

- Fixes and polish
- Walkthrough/ gameplay video
- Trailer video
- Website portfolio link
- Evaluative report
- Research and process journal (Development log) and any presentations.

### **Initial puzzle concepts and sketches**

As this is a large section to cover due to there being 27 separate puzzles, a dedicated document has been created for this area called 'Puzzle descriptions and sketches' (submitted with this doc).

### **Objective progression: List of objectives/ player challenges**

The main objective for the players is to collect all 8 abilities and complete all of the puzzle areas around the map. From here, the players will have to make their way back to the center tower and complete the final 3 puzzles which will require all of the abilities to complete.

In terms of the minute to minute goals, players will be free to go wherever they choose, meaning some players may want to explore the landscape in order to discover elements to deepen their interest in the game world. They will be guided through the world space by paths and signposting, however, it is up to the players to choose how strictly they follow these methods of design. Once the players have new abilities, they can use them to discover more about the world and get to places to explore which they have previously been unable to get to, e.g. high platforms, behind walls etc.

For the puzzles, the players will have to complete a series of 3 puzzles upon finding the ability, the first teaching the player how to use the ability (meaning this puzzle will be very easy), the second making the player think a little more about how to use the ability and the third being the hardest puzzle, which will leave the player to fend for themselves, whilst dealing with the puzzle being twisted, causing the player to have to use accurate timing skills or thinking of new ways of using the ability in order to complete the puzzle, gather the gem stone for that set of puzzles and escape back into the world.

### **Demographics**

The demographic for this game will be:

- Age: 3+
- Gender: Both

### ***Psychographics***

- Attitude, interests: Players interested in puzzle and adventure games
- Disabilities: Players will be required to use either a controller or keyboard and to fully complete, will need average reflex and logical thinking capabilities.
- Gaming experience: Beginner- Expert.
- Time to play: (Min. 1-hour completion) The game is played at the player's pace and skill level.
- Attention span: As each puzzle is quite short, only taking a couple of minutes to complete, players do not need to focus on it too long and will be able to wander/ explore for new things if they get bored with a constant stream of puzzles. However, as the puzzles are very different from area to area, e.g. some requiring logical skills, whilst others requiring reflex skills, this could be another way to keep players with short attention spans engaged.

### ***Player personality types (Bartle's Taxonomy)***

The types of player personality types which this game will appeal to include:

- Submissive players: Players who let themselves get lost in the game and suspend belief.
- Achievers: Players who want to achieve the game's goals, act on the world and get 100%.
- Socialisers: Players who want to talk to others about their experiences and discoveries with other players or interact with the NPCs within the game world.
- Explorers: Players who want to get to know the game, work out strategies, find all the collectables etc. These players want to interact with the world and find joy in discovering.

***Socio-Economic***

- Income: To be determined upon knowing the game price sold for.
- individual/ family: This game can be played individually or as a family, however, is single player.
- Education: None required.
- Occupation: Any

***Geodemographics and general information***

- Geographic location: Any, as it will be on Itch.io.
- Language: English, however, players will be able to work out what is happening through the gameplay and illustrations.
- Bans/ laws/ censorship: This game should not suffer from any bans or censorship.
- Network: Players will need to download the .exe file, but will also be on disc.
- Mainstream/ niche/ alternate: This game could become mainstream as it is such an extensive project with so many different areas for people to get into, e.g. interiors, exteriors, puzzles etc, however, as it is an indie game, some players may not want to play it or hear about it.
- Platforms: PC but set up for consoles with the key bindings and controller support.

**Legal, cultural, social, ethical considerations**

For the legal considerations, I will have to be careful about using student licensed products when selling the game, such as when I use Maya or Substance Painter. I will also need to read through the Itch.io terms and conditions to see if there are any considerations which I need to consider there and consider the best method if I was to sell the game for currency over selling it for free. Other legal considerations include being careful about the audio, any models, textures etc. I use to make sure it can be used commercially. This also begins to move into the way of copyright obligations and protecting my own product from other people, meaning gaining my own copyright and trademark stamps.

For representation considerations for aspects such as cultural, social and ethical, there will not be many issues surrounding these areas, as the game is more about the landscape exploration and puzzle aspects rather than talking to NPCs or having personality types placed around the world. If NPCs are used, then this will be taken into consideration when creating them in order to make sure the game does not offend anybody and keeps equality in all regards in mind. The game will not have any swearing, drug use or alcohol consumption involved either, meaning these elements will not need to be censored out in order to sell the game to all parts of the world or all ages.

In terms of religion, more research will need to be conducted into demigods from religious groups and such as Polytheism, Ancient Greek, Hinduism and Christianity, in order to not offend any of these groups when discussing the power of Gods and demigods in the game's narrative.

**Unique selling points (USPs)**

The USPs for this game include the fact that there are many different elements, e.g. interior, exterior, landscape, unique puzzles, unique narrative etc. for the players to explore and get immersed into at their own pace, without being guided by a waypoint. Another USP is that there are many different abilities to discover and use instead of just one like many other puzzle games, which can become repetitive. The game will also reward the players the more they progress through the game and the more abilities they collect, as this will lead to being able to reach more difficult places around the bright and vibrant hand-crafted world space. Finally, the game bases its puzzles around a range of unique mechanics and contains a mix of logic and reflex challenges.

**Plan/ Schedule**

A more detailed and weekly breakdown schedule can be found in the project plan, however, the plan for this project consists of:

***Pre- Production (Week 1- Week 6)***

Pre-production will consist of idea generation, researching and creating documentation, providing a sharper and detailed understanding of the project early on, leading to a consistent and achievable project and schedule.

***Production (Week 6- Week 24)***

Production begins with planning out puzzle, shrine, overall and sub-area map designs on paper, before being transferring into 2D and 3D spaces, beginning at week 6. Planning in different formats illustrates professional workflow and allows playtesting and iteration at each stage, providing a smoother design experience later. Iteration of the puzzle design provides a tighter balance between being too easy/ difficult. Using the skill-challenge engagement chart (below), getting this balance correct avoids players becoming bored or frustrated.

With the 9-core mechanics implemented early on in production, the game can be effectively tested with a lower cost to production. With the core mechanics created, production will run through 3 key prototype stages of white-boxing (block-out/ core gameplay), grey-boxing (models, UI, signposting, lighting, environment) and final art (narrative, bookending, audio, polish, each allowing crucial testing, creating a richer, more professional final piece.

***Post-Production (Week 24-26: Including Easter)***

Post-Production consists of creating final documentation (evaluative report, videos), an online portfolio and handing everything in, including presentations/ development log, with the final negotiated project files.