“Degree Project with Specialisation in Subject”
15 Credits, Second Cycle

Game mechanics, Role play, and Narrative
critically learning values through games

Sebastian Öhman

Master of Science, 60 Credits
Media Technology
Date for the Opposition Seminar (4th June 2019)

Examiner: Bahtijar Vogel
Supervisor: Eric Pineiro
Abstract

In 2018, the Swedish Parliament decided to make the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child a civil law, which will be implemented in the year 2020. The consequences of the decision are not unproblematic. The public debate, as well as research, shows that parents have a problem seeing how their style of parenting could correlate with the Convention’s legal text. The parents express hopelessness towards the notion of child upbringing.

This thesis is an exploratory pilot study aiming to prepare and generate new knowledge for a project commissioned by Save the Children with the goal to develop a game to decrease the knowledge gap between parents and children regarding what the Convention means for their relationship. The thesis also asks the question: how can a game, played by parents and children meant to teach them about soft values in accordance with the Convention look like.

Beyond traditional qualitative research methods, this thesis used Research through Design and developed a presumptive prototype for the project in order to explore the research subject. Findings showed that the game’s narrative and the power to change the narrative through player choices play an essential part in the participant’s ability to immerse in the game, and that this interactive narrative is closely connected with the ability to learn. The thesis also shows designer directions to consider when developing a game meant to teach the players about soft values.

Keywords

Role-playing games, Simulation, Narratology, Game-based learning, Convention of the Rights of the Child, Table top role-playing games, Immersion
Foreword

I have during my previous two theses taken this opportunity to thank the people that made it possible for me to study. Especially have I thanked those who could babysit my children during the most critical periods of writing. Today, my kids are the ones that should be thanked, for lending me their time, and sat nicely and played the prototype over and over during the development phase. For encouraging me and for letting me sit and write when they actually wanted me to play with them.

Thank you professor Gunilla Svingby for helping me structuring this mess, and to my supervisor for at least trying to get me to write academical, maybe one day I’ll learn.
# Table of content

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... 2

1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
1.1 Can children’s upbringing be enhanced by game play? ........................................... 3
1.2 Objective of the study ............................................................................................... 4
1.3 The Research question .............................................................................................. 5
1.4 Limitation of the study ............................................................................................ 5
1.5 Disposion .................................................................................................................... 6

2 Methodology ................................................................................................................ 7
2.1 Research design ........................................................................................................ 8
2.2 Discover and Define phase ...................................................................................... 9
2.2.1 Semi-structured interviews ................................................................................. 10
2.2.2 Focus group ......................................................................................................... 12
2.3 Develop and Deliver phase ..................................................................................... 14
2.4 Ethical considerations .............................................................................................. 16

3 Literature review ........................................................................................................ 17
3.1 What is a game? ....................................................................................................... 17
3.2 Entertaining games .................................................................................................. 19
3.3 Simulations and Role-playing games, what is the difference? ................................. 21
3.3.1 Simulations ......................................................................................................... 21
3.3.2 Role-playing games ............................................................................................ 22
3.3.3 A summary of the terms ...................................................................................... 23
3.4 Children and abstract thinking .............................................................................. 24
3.5 Games as a tool for learning ................................................................................... 25
3.6 Reflection of the literature review .......................................................................... 27

4 Qualitative interviews, focus groups, and prototyping ............................................... 28
4.1 The Prototyping preface ......................................................................................... 29
4.1.1 Finding situations to encounter- the first interviews session. ................................. 29
4.1.2 Real-life situations in accordance with the Convention- continuation of the interview sessions .................................................................................................................. 31
4.1.3 Decisions of directions for the prototype ........................................................... 34
4.1.4 Researching playing with Role Playing Games ................................................... 34
4.1.5 Description and analysis of playing the games .................................................... 35
4.2 The development phase of the prototype .............................................................. 49
4.2.1 The narrative ....................................................................................................... 49
4.2.2 An interview with an TRPG author .................................................................... 50
4.2.3 A summary of the narrative in the prototype ...................................................... 52
4.2.4 The characters the Creature .............................................................................. 54
4.2.5 The game-mechanics and role-play .................................................................... 55
4.2.6 The final play-test of the prototype .................................................................... 58
5 Discussion ............................................................................................................................................... 62
  5.1 Roleplay in relation to narrative ........................................................................................................ 62
  5.2 Roleplay facilitating learning with the help from the parent ................................................................ 63
  5.3 Two directions for games regarding UNCRC ....................................................................................... 64
  5.4 Turning the game mechanics into a narrative discussion ................................................................... 64
  5.5 Acting bad in order to learn how to be good ....................................................................................... 65
  5.6 The constraints of a game meant to facilitate learning ........................................................................ 66
  5.7 Lessons learned from a designer perspective ..................................................................................... 68
6 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................................... 69
  6.1 Further studies ..................................................................................................................................... 69
References .................................................................................................................................................. 71
Appendix 1 – Consent form ....................................................................................................................... 80
Appendix 2 – The prototype ........................................................................................................................ 82

Table of figures
Figure 1 Double diamond .......................................................................................................................... 8
Figure 2 Research design .......................................................................................................................... 9
Figure 3 Entertaining games (based on Tang et al., 2009) ......................................................................... 20
Figure 4 War simulation, different levels of abstraction in descending order ............................................. 22
Figure 5 Civilization the board game and its digital counterpart ................................................................. 28
Figure 6 The components of a table top role playing game ....................................................................... 38
Figure 7 The components of a storytelling board game ............................................................................ 40
Figure 8 The components of a role centred board game .......................................................................... 42
Figure 9 Large chunks of text in RPGSA ................................................................................................. 43
Figure 10 The components of RPGSA ..................................................................................................... 45
Figure 11 Revision of the creature ........................................................................................................... 54
Figure 12 Revision of the player characters ............................................................................................. 55
Figure 13 The hierarchy between Role play, immersion and discussion ................................................. 63
Figure 14 The project’s triangle of constraints .......................................................................................... 67

Table of Tables
Table 1 Summary of the interview persons in the Discover and Define phase ........................................ 11
Table 2 Summary of the participants in the focus group ........................................................................ 14
Table 3 The result from the play-test research ......................................................................................... 48
1 Introduction

Morally children have had a special position in society in almost every culture in every time period. Children are vulnerable, innocent and it is the moral and ethical undertaking of parents and other adults protect them from harm, at least until they are able to protect them self. (Rachels & Rachels, 2015) Today the moral development of the young generation is recognized as a growing problem by western countries. As lives of young people are characterized by moral ambivalence and competing moral discourses, values seem to be increasingly uncertain and fragmented. In Sweden the debate of how to educate our children at home and in school is vivid. The discussion has intensified as a result of the decision to make The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) a civil law in 2018. However, many of the governmental instances that govern over social institutes concerning children: the Swedish School Act, the Parental Code, and the Social Services Act, are already based on and adapted to the UNCRC. (Unicef, 2018) There is no understatement that Sweden takes this convention and morality regarding children seriously. The UNCRC formulates a series of rules that among other things influences how parents can govern their children. The convention has strengthened the ongoing debate on how to bring up your children in a modern world. What are you allowed to do? What can you do when a child does not listen to you, violates the rules or hits his/her little sister? The discussion and frustration are notable even in renowned newspapers like Dagens Nyheter. In a recent article the author describes his observation of two ways of bringing up children. One of them is the infamous: children are told to behave and do as you tell them. If they do not, they are to be punished. The result of this upbringing would yield a well-behaved child. The second way of raising children is described as a bringing them up without rules and with no consequences. The parents are overwhelmed and do not know what to do. (Valden, 2019) Also, research studies have showed that parents are frustrated, confused and feels that they do not understand how to raise their children. (Boukaz, 2008).

What then is the meaning of the Convention? The question is presented in a review made by Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie and Vandevelde (2009) at Ghent University College in Belgium. The researchers have reviewed research literature on Children´s Rights since the adoption of the UNCRC. They identify three themes:

1. Autonomy and participation rights as the new norm in children´s rights practice and policy,

2. Children´s rights vs parental rights
3. The global rights industry.

The authors draw attention to the dominant position in recent research of the image of the “competent child” and a “person in being”. The researchers state that this childhood image is now the norm in many countries. This image is seen as a reaction against the image of the incompetent child, that is an object in need of protection. The view of the child as a “being” represents a rights perspective on childhood, which underlines the center of the children’s rights paradigm as the recognition of the child as an autonomous subject (Hemrica, & Heyting, 2004). The innovative aspect of the UNCRC is that it imposes legally binding norms on states which become accountable for realizing children’s rights (Hammarberg, 1990; 1997). The convention has led to highlighting the image of the competent child as a reaction against the incompetent child. “The image of the autonomous child is considered as an evolution to a more human dealing with children in both practice and policy” (Reynart et al., 2009, p. 522).

There is, however, also criticism of the shift towards autonomy for children. The model points to an increasing emphasis on negotiation between parents and children as the norm of parenting. This will not necessarily guarantee any greater empowerment for either the children nor the parents. Some researchers describe it as a white, western, middle-class model that fits a particular group of children better than others (Howe and Covell, 2003). The model is thus ignoring the differences in children’s cultural backgrounds (Morrow, 1999).

The separation of rights in the UNCR of children’s rights is also criticized. The recognition of children as rights-holders separated from their parents implies an implicit mistrust of parents. This has been described as a dichotomy whereby children’s rights are in conflict with the rights of parents. The rights of children would thus undermine parental responsibility. But parents still have parental responsibility. The focus on rights and individual autonomy obstructs a thoughtful group collaboration between parents, children and the state in reaching a solution that can be favorable to all.

From a theoretical point of departure, the problems were analyzed already in 1975 in a widely spread article by Basil Bernstein. According to Bernstein an "invisible pedagogy" is established among educated upper class parents in England. The pedagogy is realized through what he calls "weak classification and framing”, which means that parents’ interferences are hardly visual but may still be important and effective. At the other end is the Visible Pedagogy, which is characterized by pronounced and clear rules and consequences including physical punishment. Bernstein show that the two perspectives are firmly associated with class, meaning that visible
pedagogy is used in the lower classes and climbing up the class ladder successively transforms to invisible.

The demand for help in the upbringing of children in countries like Sweden is growing. A sign of this is the publication of popular books on what is allowed and what is effective in bringing up children (e.g., Martin Forster: Fem gånger mer kärlek, 2013). Organizations like Save the Children and Unicef also publish folders and even games meant to be used by schools and preschools (Hussaini, 2008).

1.1 Can children’s upbringing be enhanced by game play?

The question may seem absurd. Games do not presumably foster moral sensitivity or good behaviour. On the contrary, the player often takes the role of gangsters, thieves and warmongering colonizers etc. with the primary aim of winning at any cost. And yet, digital games carry great potentials for learning and upbringing. The possibility to engage and act in virtual situations may be used with the aim of handling difficult moral dilemmas. Now, as games are part of the every-day life of many young persons it can be argued that the experience of digital gaming is part of the construction of a child’s identity and morality. (Svingby, 2005) Researchers argue that games have a great potential for learning by linking virtual world problems to problems in the real world and by allowing players to test different roles. (Jenkins, 2005; Gee, 2006). Being involved in simulated situations which are modelled on real world situations, the player can test out consequences in the virtual world before acting in the real world. (Gee, 2006) Gee argues in line with this:

”Since video games are ‘action-and-goal-directed preparations for, and simulations of, embodied experience’ they allow language to be put into the context of dialogue, experience, images, and actions. They allow language to be situated. Furthermore, good video games give verbal information ‘just in time’- near the time it can actually be used - or “on demand”- when the player feels a need for it and is ready for it” (Gee, 2006, p. 17).
Taking in account that we live in a society that may be classified as guided both by visible moral rules and invisible moral standards it is a challenge both to children and to parents to develop a coherent and reflected morality that meets the requirements of the Convention. To make this possible people have to meet with, discuss and experience a variety of complex situations with other people to arrive to a deepened moral sensitivity. This is also true for children - and also their parents! (Bagnall, 1998; Nussbaum, 1990)

What sort of educational experiences may contribute to moral sensitivity in a world of conflicting moralities and life styles? Earlier research at Malmö university, has shown positive effects of using games to influence the development of pro-social values in children (Bergman & Svingby, 2006; Jönsson & Svingby, 2007; Jönsson, 2008 Svingby, 2013). Earlier research on school-children who had to act in life-like situations showed, however, that when the acceptance and understanding of Human Rights was tested on students aged 15, many boys shifted from altruistic values to an egoistic position (Oscarsson & Svingby, 2005).

1.2 Objective of the study

This thesis is an exploratory pilot study as a part of a research project in collaboration with professor emerita Gunilla Svingby and Save the Children, aiming to aid the knowledge about children rights between parents and children living in Sweden and to research what effect game design can have on situational learning of values. Because of the scope, I was asked to join the project, to first write my thesis about the subject of game-based learning, and then use the findings to be a part of a forthcoming article. With that said, this thesis should be seen as a stand-alone instance of the research project where the findings of the thesis will be used as a base for the development of a game that, according to the project goal, should be easy to pick up and play that deals with the confusion about children upbringing in accordance to the UNCRC.

In addition to the project goal this thesis will also research game design as a tool for learning soft values like morals and ethics. The previous research about game-based learning have already established that games can enhance learning in various ways, there is also studies that explains how games does this. There is, however, little information on which part of game design that is vital to learning. A game can be many things, and there are many different parts that makes up a complete game. This thesis will explore what aspect of games are important and related to the learning process for children and adults.
1.3 The Research question

The thesis will attempt to answer:

- how can a game mean to teach soft values to parents and children in accordance to UNCRC look like?

The thesis is going to answer this question with the method of Research through Design, where I will research the subject of game-based learning during the development of a game prototype. I will also use traditional qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews with professionals in the field of parent-children relationship, and focus group research where I will observe the research subject while they play various games and afterwards interview them about their experience.

1.4 Limitation of the study

Due to the nature of an exploratory research and the scope of the project this thesis only scratches on the surface on the subjects for studying. One can say it is a lateral study, rather than vertical, meaning that the thesis would not conclude any exhaustive answers. I agree with this assertion, and state that no final conclusions can be made until a lager study in the subject is conducted.

Noteworthy is also that all the methods used in this thesis is qualitative. During the time of playthrough with the focus group, no discussion analysis nor ludology analysis method where used. Both of the analysis method could have yielded a richer result and is something to take into account for further studies. Another limitation is the sampling size of the final prototype play-test (4.2.6. The final play-test of the prototype). Conclusions based on the result from this play-test have to be viewed with this in mind. A final limitation of the thesis is the length of the research, and due to this no longitudinal effect of learning could be examined. So, when the thesis points to the positive effect narrative in games have on discussion and learning in extension, further long-term studies have to be conducted to prove these proposals.
1.5 Disposision

This study follows a rather classical thesis structure with Introduction, Methodology, and Literature Review. The results from the thesis two phases of empirical study is presented in chapter 4. The combined material from both phases was then analysed with the attempt to answer the research question in Chapter 5, and to open up the discussion to further studies within the subject in chapter 6.
2 Methodology

Taken the research question into consideration, this thesis acts as a starting point in the research project that will start after this research is completed. During the project a game will be developed with the purpose of having the players learn about the convention while experiencing the game. This thesis makes an exploratory research attempt, in the sense that there is not a clear path to take to find the link between parent-child relation, teaching and learning soft values, and game design. An exploratory methodology is a preferred method whenever the researcher wants to understand the context of what is going to be studied later on and is generally conducted as a pilot study. (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013) The objective is not to find an answer to a problem, in the context of analyzing whether or not a hypothesis is right or wrong. The aim for exploratory research could be to develop a process to collect data, explore the nature of a problem further, or to formulate a hypothesis for the primary research later on. (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013) The objective for this study is to prepare material for the research project. Within the boundary for an exploratory method and to attempt to answer how a game teaching soft values to parents and children could look like, this thesis used secondary research and formal qualitative research techniques for doing so. The reason for an exclusively qualitative method was to establish a rich understanding of the field of game design and the presumptive players that a quantitative approach would not be able to achieve. (Strauss & Corbin, 2008)

This thesis uses prototyping as a tool for data collection and also as a mean to explore the research question during the development phase. This was done with focus group studies and qualitative interviews when people played the game. With that said, during the prototyping phase, this thesis used Research through Design methodology to explore the combined field of game design, parent-child relation and learning soft values. (Zimmerman, Forlizzi & Evenson, 2007).

The work process has been inductive, where the result from interviews, focus group and design approach have led the direction for the literature review, to deepen the understanding and create a theoretical frame to base the findings on. With this in mind and with the exploratory nature of the research, it is important to note that this thesis does not use grounded theory (GT) as an analysis method, though its close resemblance. The critique directed to GTs analysis method, especially how students more than often misuse the method (Timonen, Foley, & Conlons, 2018), is the reason for why this thesis have chosen to use a phenomenographical analysis method. In the context of this thesis, the phenomenographical studies, though not exclusively, the experience of playing a game and the players thoughts about the experience. (Marton, 1986)
All the findings from the empirical study were categorized and analyzed to make connections of experiences related to the phenomenon (game design, parent-child relation, learning soft values), rather than settle with analyzing the experience from distinctive interview persons. (Svensson, 1997)

### 2.1 Research design

The overall structure of this thesis was divided into two distinct, though overlapping phases. Because of the creative nature of game design and the development of the prototype, I chose to take inspiration from the design field and structure the thesis like a design project illustrated with the help of the “double diamond” (Design Council, 2015)

![Double diamond](image)

**Figure 1 Double diamond**

As seen in figure 3 the double diamond consists of two adjoining diamond shapes. This symbol is to represent the divergent and convergent iterative phases in a creative process. A project starts with a problem, and the design process is a process where the designer tries to find the best solution to that problem. The first quarter is labelled Discover, which is the first divergent stage of the creative process, where the designer gathers information and looks at the problem from different perspectives. The second quarter represents the stage when the information gathered from the first quarter is analyzed, and a direction for the project is chosen. The third stage is the development phase, and the project takes another divergent turn. Now the project focuses on creating or developing a solution to the problem with prototypes, also iterating and testing said prototypes. In the last quarter, and the last convergent stage, the project is focusing on delivering a finalized solution to the problem stated in the beginning. (Design Council, 2015)

As the double diamond this thesis has two divergent, and two convergent quarters incorporated in two major phases, as seen in figure 4. Both the first phase – Discover and Define, as well as the second phase – Develop and Deliver, where clear explorative phases where the aim was to
explore how a game like in the project's description could look. In the first phase, professionals that work with children as well as adults were interviewed. The interview persons had insight on the parent-child relation, and the goal was to try to understand what the focus on a game that should teach soft values in accordance to the UNCRC should be. The second part of the first phase was a focus group study where five different kinds of games where tested, followed by interviews where the focus of the questions was on the experience of playing the games. The questions that arose from these interviews led to the literature review and the analysis stage, where a direction for the prototype was chosen. In the second phase, Develop and Deliver, the prototype was constructed. This phase was not intended to deliver a finalized product to the project owner, rather to ask more questions while developing the prototype. Also, to gather information through observation from when players tested the prototype, as well as asking them about their experience through interviews.

![Figure 2 Research design](image)

### 2.2 Discover and Define phase

This phase consisted of several semi-structured interviews, meant to open up the question on what to focus on when developing a game with the relation between parent and child in mind. The phase also comprised of a focus group research, where the focus lied on the observation of the interpersonal discussion and experience from playing several types of games. During the collection and analysis of these phases, the literature review was written to attempt to analyze the findings from the research. These steps are discussed more thorough in following sections.
2.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

The thesis started to focus on the presumptive players. The project's problem touches on the dissonance between the parent and the child when it comes to the understanding of the UNCRC. For that reason, several interviews with professionals working with either just children or both children and parents were conducted. The questions to the interviewees were around the convention and the relationship between the child and the parent in accordance with the convention. I structured the question by first reading through the UNCRC, and single out the articles that brought up the parent-child relation. The purpose for the interview was to find real-life situations where the rights of the child were infringed upon, it was therefore important to base the questions on what is written in the Convention. However, I wanted the participants to speak freely about rights and parent-child relation in general, and it became important that I did not ask leading questions. The questions were open ended, and was used to start a conversation with the interviewee. An example of the questions asked was: “Have you come across situations where a child’s rights have been infringed upon in your profession?”; “If so, can you elaborate about that encounter?” The interviews were also there to secure that the start of this pilot study was not based on the authors, preconception of the convention, rights, and parenting, all in accordance with the open-minded divergent approach of the double diamond. (Design Council, 2015)

2.2.1.1 Sampling

Some criticism can be directed towards sampling process in this study, this because the author's personal relation with most of the participants. To defend the choice of interview persons, personal relationships should not affect the validity of the thesis as it must be seen in relation to the purpose of the thesis. (Hartman, 2004) In no way did the participants gain anything monetarily to partake in the study, and according to Arhne and Svensson (2014) it is of the thesis interest to choose interview persons that possesses knowledge in the area that is being studied. Also, according to Stake (1995) the already established relation between the interviewer and interviewee can contribute to a more comprehensive data collection, that perhaps would not be possible otherwise, which is an essential criterion in the sampling process. A summary of the participants can be seen in table 1. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 1</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Is a parent?</th>
<th>Work with children?</th>
<th>Work with parents?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family therapist</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 2</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Is a parent?</th>
<th>Work with children?</th>
<th>Work with parents?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth pedagogue</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 3</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Is a parent?</th>
<th>Work with children?</th>
<th>Work with parents?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool teacher</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 4</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Is a parent?</th>
<th>Work with children?</th>
<th>Work with parents?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant vicar</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 5</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Is a parent?</th>
<th>Work with children?</th>
<th>Work with parents?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teacher</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1.2 Data collection

All the interviews except for participant 3 was conducted in person. The duration of the interviews was around 60 minutes. The interviews with participant 1, 2 and 4, was done in their respective workplaces. The interview with participant 5 was done in the person's home, and participant 3 was conducted over telephone. All of the interviews were recorded (just the audio) and during the interviews, notes, and timestamps were taken to streamline the analysis process. In accordance with the exploratory methodology it is common to conduct informal interviews with customers and stakeholders in order to establish a starting place for the study. (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013) If we at the same time observe Harboe’s (2010) statement that the semi-structured interview form requires that the interviewer is theoretically well-oriented in the research field, a choice of how inductive this thesis was going to be had to be made. A middle-ground was found, and under the preparation for the interviews, a review of was written about the convention was done. To only focus on the core subject led to a flexible discussion and also let me steer the discussion into tangent topics as well as to let the interview person share insights that led the discussion into themes that could not be prepared in forehead. The literature
critically learning values through games

2.2.1.3 Analysis

Harboe (2010) suggests that the entire interview should be transcribed in order to work with the material. This work process is, however, time-consuming and the work process for the analysis in this thesis was done in a somewhat different manner. After the interview was done, the recording was reviewed, and further notes and timestamps was added for easier analysis. I then listened for themes and categories that was constant throughout the interviews, which was then presented in the thesis. All the original files were saved and stored on a USB-drive that was stored safely during the entire work process, this to follow the guidelines for GDPR.

2.2.2 Focus group

The second part of the first phase of this pilot study was a focus group research where the participants played different types of games that all focused round storytelling, communication, cooperation, and role-play. The primary purpose of this part of the study was to analyse the different elements in the games and compare them to the experience of playing the games. This part of the study had three steps. First, the focus group played the games. I was during the time both a player, a notetaker, and the one that taught the players how to play the game. Critique should be directed to the authors conflicted roles in this stage of research. How observant could one be if the author is also a player, and can the choice of me participating taint the result? To combat this critique, the play-through was not the only data collecting method during this stage. The importance was for the players to experience playing the games, and their reflection on said experience. (Marton,1986) One could say that the first part of the study could in fact be viewed as an observation study, though because of my conflictive roles I have decided to name the study a focus group study. Also, in an observation, the researcher does not know what he/she are looking for, and tend to make minute notes about every single impression. I however looked for specific expressions of experience from the participants, which is more in line with a focus group study. The player's reflection was all explored during the semi-structured interviews conducted after the play-through. During the playtest notes were taken on what the players talked about and how the players reacted in certain situations. These notes were later used in the interviews to remind the interviewed person on what came up during the playtest. Between the playtest and the interview, I analysed the games that had been played together with game design literature in order to get a grounded understanding of what elements in the game design that
triggered specific emotions or thoughts in the players. The analyse method of the interviews was done in the same approach as the ones from the first stage of the Discover and Define phase.

2.2.2.1 Sampling

There were two groups of participants in this playtest focus group. One group consisted of four friends where half of the group had played these types of games before, and the other half were new to the realms of role-playing. The participants were in their 30s and consisted of two males and two females. Three of the participants were parents. The second group consisted of a group with three family members, one mother in her 30s and two children, a seven-year-old boy and a five-year-old girl. As stated before, the already established relationship between the author and the participants should be seen as something that could possibly generate a richer result than if the participants and the author would have to start the group meetings with getting to know each other first to build a sense of trust. (Stake, 1995) The reason for having two groups was to get a child perspective as well as a general perspective on the experience from playing. Critique should be directed toward the nonexisting spread of the participant's age; All of the adult participants where in their 30s. This means that the result from this research cannot be generalized in a way that would be desirable. Though for the scope of this exploratory pilot study, the result can still give directions for further studies. A summary of the participants from the study is shown in table 2.

The games that were chosen where all different types of role-playing games. They were chosen due to their good reception on the world largest community for board games-boardgamegeek.com. The games will get a more detailed presentation in chapter 4.
Table 2 summary of the participants in the focus group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Is a parent?</th>
<th>Experience with Roleplaying games</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant 1</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 2</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 3</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 4</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 5</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 6</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 7</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 8</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2.2 Data collection

Playtest with Group 1 was conducted over the course of a week where the players played one game each evening for five days. We met at the different participant’s homes, and the games took between 1.5-3 hours to play. I prepared the games, knew the rules for them, and taught the other players how to play them. A week after the playtest, semi-structured interviews with the participants were conducted, which explored their experience from playing the games. The method of interview and the analysis is described in an earlier section in this chapter.

Playtesting with Group 2 was conducted over the course of a month during the weekends. The children's mother and I had to translate all the text because it was in English, and their native tongue is Swedish. Other than that exception, the focus group was conducted the same way as in Group 2. We also did not play the games to the end because of the children's attention span. The interviews with the children were held on the same day as the, so not to confound the games they had played.

2.3 Develop and Deliver phase

The aim for this phase was to take on a game designer role and develop a prototype too, once again, explore the possibilities of combining what came up in phase one with the scope of the
future project. According to the Interaction Design Foundation (n.d.) the general intention of design work is to “produce a feasible solution to improve a given situation.” Researchers like Zimmerman (2003) states that the design process, where the designer ideates, make prototypes, iterate, and test the prototype, is not a process solely for designers. Research through Design is a good method to generate new knowledge in the field that is studied. In this study, Research through Design methodology was adopted to explore how a game tailored to the problem description could look like for further studies. What is essential to bear in mind is that the prototype is not there to prove a hypothesis, rather to learn something from the development and ideation, and also use the prototype to open up the discussion while people played the game. The development of the prototype was the last divergent stage before the work of analysing all the results and come to a conclusion of what the next steps or directions for further studies would be.

Because of the narrative focus of the prototype, during the development, a professional RPG author was interviewed that suggested different narrative directions to observe. Also, the creative decisions were based on various academic sources on game design and narratology to give the prototype reliability rather than to be based on personal preference. The prototype had two iterations, where a focus group was used to give feedback on the game which was taken into consideration. First, there prototype consisted of sketches. After the first focus group meeting a low fidelity prototype consisted of small parts of playable content was developed. After the last meeting with the focus group, the prototype was finalized and is a fully playable game. During the iteration focus group process, I mostly listened to what the group said when they were testing out the prototype. I observed how the focus group reacted when playing and looked at ways to improve the games, both mechanically and narratively. To further extend the result, I let one group play the game while I took notes and recorded the players. After the playthrough, I interviewed the participants where the focus was on the experience of playing the prototype as well as the subjects that had come up during gameplay.

### 2.3.1.1 Sampling

The iteration focus group consisted of 9 children at the age between 11 and 12 years old. The children were a part of a church youth group where the focus group was done in conjunction with their ordinary activities. I wanted to create an open environment where the children could try out the prototype, give their feedback, and then run off to do something else. The group in itself had a lot of infected hierarchy conflicts, which meant that a misjudgement from my side when pairing the wrong persons together to play the prototype would lead to a silent discussion.
I took the executive discussion of the open, come-as-you-please approach to the focus group, which led to an inconsistent group, though the contrary would have yielded no result at all.

Lastly, the prototype playtest group consisted of three persons, a mother, and her two children, seven and five years old. The data collection and the analysis were conducted in accordance with the previous playtest and analysis sessions.

2.4 Ethical considerations

The ethical principles this thesis has observed to work from outside are the requirement of consent, the requirement of confidentiality, the requirement of use and information, all based on the Research Council's (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002) research ethics principles. All the participants, including the children, were giving a full explanation of their rights before doing any data collection. The persons were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary, that they at any time could refrain from participating and reject specific statement from the final study, and that the statements would be anonymized in the thesis. The consent form that the participants had to sig can be seen in appendix 1. Children under 15 years of age had their parents’ consent before presenting the data. All the stored data will be destroyed after the submission of the thesis; something all of the participants was informed about.
3 Literature review

The use of digital games as a mean for education is not a new concept. The Oregon Trail, a computer game simulating the American history of the emigrant trail between Missouri and Oregon in the 19th century, became a popular and well-received learning tool in American schools in the early 1980s. (Bigelow, 1997) Even before computers became so small they could fit on a desktop, (analog) games and education have had a close relationship with one another. This relationship can be seen as far back as in the 19th century when the inventor of kindergarten, Friedrich Fröbel, wanted to integrate play and games in the practice as a method for learning. (Salen, Torres, Rufo-Tepper, Shapiro, & Wolozin, 2010) We are going to touch on the subject of real-life play and games later on in this chapter, however, let us focus on digital games for a moment and the research of digital games together with education.

When Ke (2011) published a meta-analysis of the literature on the subject, she found more than 600 hundred articles, and also that the publication dates stretched over two decades. A search query in an academic article database today, only nine years later, would yield a far greater result. This probably has to do with the increased interest of gamification and other terms in other areas than education. Because of the notion I will provide a brief overview of what games are and of the different definitions of games used for learning.

3.1 What is a game?

The central point of the thesis starts and ends with games, I think it is essential to define what constitutes a game. At least to show the frames I have been working round when developing the prototype.

Fullerton, Swain, and Hoffman (2008) define games as a closed formal system. What they mean by that is that the rules outside the game, in your real life, does not apply in the game and vice versa. You cannot bring a dice to a job interview and roll to see if you will get the job or not. Also, what happens in a game does not affect the real world. Fullerton et al. (2008) explain systems as an interaction between connected elements. “Systems exist throughout the natural and human-made world wherever we see complex behaviour emerging from the interaction between discrete elements. Systems can be found in many different forms. They can be mechanical, biological, or social in nature, among other possibilities. A system can be as simple as a stapler or as complex as a government. In each case, when the system is put in motion, its elements interact to produce the desired goal, for example, stapling papers or governing
society.” (Fullerton et al., 2008, p. 111) A game is a formal system because the players agree on the specified terms for play. That is the rules, and the system is the underlying mechanics in the game. Salen et al., (2010) does not differentiate between the rules and the system, and describe the rules as something fixed, binding, repeatable and something that limits the player's actions. What the rules does is to put boundaries around the players, restraining them from doing whatever they want. Salen et al., (2010) also categorize different sort of rules, where explicit rules are the most apparent ones. Explicit rules are the ones you will find in a rule book, the ones that tell you how many moves you can make on your turn. Implicit rules have to do with the social structures outside of a game. Those rules kids are taught by the adults, telling them not to cheat or being a sore loser. The reason why Salen et al. (2010) did not differ between the rules and the game mechanics is that they see the mechanics as rules, constitutive rules. To summarize, Fullerton et al. (2008) see games as a system of intricate parts that are moving together and are dependent on one another. Salen et al. (2010) see games as a set of actions, actions among the players, actions the players can take in the game, and actions the game takes towards the players.

If the goal of the system in the stapler is to staple paper, the goal of the game is to entertain the players. At least to engage them in some way. Games do this by constructing conflicts and entertaining and dramatic means to resolve those conflicts. (Fullerton et al., 2008) The entertainment and drama come from well-structured constitutive- and explicit rules, or according to Salen et al. (2010) when the rules are so elegant that the players don't need to focus on them but instead the experience the rules provide. Salen et al. (2010) describe the interaction and dependence between a game and its players that it generates meaningful play. This play is separated from general play, like playing in a band, or free-form play on the schoolyard, and it has to do with the limitations on the play coming from the set of rules; That every action in a game generates variable measurable outcomes. Also, that every outcome is assigned with a different set of values where some of them are positive to the player and some of them are negative. (Juul, 2018) Fullerton et al. (2008) simplify this by saying that games produce uncertain outcomes and that it is a fundamental part of gameplay. Players will win or lose, and that is uncertain from the start. According to Juul (2018), this uncertainty is what makes players invest their time and effort into the game, and also makes players attached to the outcome. This investment is not only a cognitive investment but an emotional. (Fullerton et al., 2008) When designing for meaningful play in a game Salen et al. (2010) points out the importance of interactivity and choice. The system itself should allow the players to make choices, Choices that matter for the player or the narrative. (Saleen et al., 2010; Fullerton et al., 2008) Choices are so central in games that game theorists describe games as contests of decision making.
(Burgun, 2015) Also, this contest usually consists of a set of objectives to complete or conditions to be met before the game ends, and a game makes it difficult for a player to complete his/her objectives. (Fullerton et al., 2008; Juul, 2018) That is, a game challenging the players, and the challenge can come from the game itself and from other players competing to complete said objectives.

3.2 Entertaining games

Edutainment is an umbrella term describing the use of different media other than textbooks in order to facilitate learning. (Tang, Hanneghan, & Rhalibi, 2009) By Prensky’s (2001) definition edutainment is supposed to be fun, or at least aim to educate the user in an entertaining way. Although this thesis is focusing on digital games as media, mind that whenever your teacher rolled in the big TV and VHS player from the AV-room into the classroom as a use for learning, that could also classify as edutainment. Even slide projectors could fall into this category. It all comes down to whether or not the slides or the VHS-tape was meant to be entertaining as well as educational. Prensky (2001) makes it clear that even though most edutainment games are developed for children, there are still game titles targeted towards adults. When exploring various educational games, I found that there is a distinction between adults and kids products. This distinction is something Prensky (2001) also addresses; in general kids titles are closely linked with school subjects, and educational games for adults is in the areas of self-improvement and obtaining new skills. When games for children teaches the child phonetics and how to spell in the child's native language, games for adults might teach them an additional language instead.

Within edutainment several research areas intersect. Game-based learning for example, which is a learning approach coined by Prensky (2001) where computer games are used to provide educational benefits. Although Prensky is talking about computer games, Game-based learning also includes videogames, and analog games like board- and card games as educational media. (Baker, Navarro, & Hoek, 2005) The games used in Game-based learning is sometimes referred to as educational games (Tang, Hanneghan, & Rhalibi, 2009) and how they differ from recreational games has to do with the goals the player wants to achieve and the outcomes the player receives from playing them. In recreational games, the goals and outcomes from playing are among other things hedonistic pleasures. (Huotari and Hamari, 2012) In short, players plays games to have fun. In educational games, the goals are as already explained, an enhanced learning experienced through entertainment (Prensky, 2001). Here I think it is important to point out that we are observing the developer’s goals and not the player’s. The players still play
the game because it is entertaining, like in the case of recreational games, and in general not because it is educational. (Prensky, 2001) That aspect is an additional bonus. Adults might choose to play a game instead of, for example, reading a book with the goals of learning something in mind. However, if the players do not feel that the game is amusing, they will not play it if they do not have to. (Prensky, 2001) Then, Serious Games is another term to describe digital games with an educational aspect; although some of the games on the market could be categorized as Edutainment, this is not the case for all of them. (Tang et al., 2009) Take the puzzle game Foldit as an example; it is a puzzle game about protein folding. Peak (2019) is a cognitive skill trainer, and in Papers please you play as a customs officer deciding whether or not people can enter your country. (Dukope, n.d.) All of them can fall under the category of Serious Game, and this because the primary purpose of the games is not entertainment, even if they can be entertaining to play. (Tang et al., 2009) The observant viewer will notice that in figure 1 is a circle with the title Training Simulator. The reason why I have not brought up simulators at all in this section is that I believe it needs a more thorough review due to the different views on the subject — more on Simulators under the part where I am going through different types of games.

Figure 3: Entertaining games (based on Tang et al., 2009)
3.3 Simulations and Role-playing games, what is the difference?

Now that we have defined what constitutes a game, there is only one more step of clarification I want to do. The reader will find that a big part of the prototyping phase was dedicated to defining the different aspect of the game I was developing. Because the academical literature of game-based learning sometimes doesn't differentiate between simulations and role-play and in some case does not view simulations as games at all, this section is necessary to rule out common misconceptions and to understand what this thesis mean when I, later on, write “simulation” or “role-play.”

3.3.1 Simulations

If we look at Banks, Carson, Nelson, and Nicol’s (2005) well-cited definition, they define simulations as a close imitation of the actions or activities within a system or a process. I am going to question this definition later in this section; however, let us first examine the different fields and uses for simulations. Simulation can be used in finance or in science to test a theory in a controlled environment without the risk of losing money or causing casualties. (French, 2017) They can be used in business to train people for specific tasks or in education to teach specific skills. (Tang et al., 2009) They can also be found in games. (Prensky, 2001) It is interesting that when Tang et al. (2009) tried to classify game-based learning, they struggled with simulation (training simulator) and wrote: "although training simulators share many similarities with computer games they lack elements of game-play that disqualify them from being classified as a game." (p. 7) Prensky (2001) oppose this kind of statement and explains that simulators are not in them self a game, but if a game simulates something, it is a simulation as well as a game. He states that everything can be a simulation as long as its simulating something. A racing game is a game about racing and also a simulation. Miniature wargames are games about war and also a simulation. Can the same be said with chess? Let us elaborate a bit more an come back to that question. By Prensky’s definition simulation is not part of the game mechanics or the rules part of a game, but instead the frame, like the story of a game. (Prensky, 2001) However, if a simulation is only a simulation and nothing else, in terms of what makes up a game, it is boring and loses its value regarding enjoyment and play. (Prensky, 2001; Tang et al.,2009; Fullerton et al., 2008)

According to Hill and Miller (2017), we humans have been using simulations as long as we have had conflicts between people competing and battling over resources. Those people have
used simulation in order to understand the conflict, their opponent and how to get the upper hand in the possible battle. I cannot vouch for the truth in that statement; however, the military has been using models on a grid to simulate war for a long time. (Hill, & Miller, 2017) Hill & Miller even goes so far as to say that “Trying to plan and understand combat requires the use of models, or abstractions, of the battle or military campaign.” (2017, p. 346) I find the word abstraction particularly interesting. The military doesn't mean that moving pieces on a battle map is any less of a simulation than a major field exercise; what changes is the abstraction or fidelity. (Hill, & Miller, 2017) Taking this into account I would like to redefine Banks et al. (2005) definition by saying that simulations are a representation of the actions or activities within a system or a process. It does not need to be a close imitation. Let’s go back to my question about chess. Yes, by Prensky’s (2001) definition and with the understanding from Hill and Miller (2017), chess is a feudal war simulator (illustrated in figure 2). A crude one, but a simulator nonetheless.

Figure 4 War simulation, different levels of abstraction in descending order

3.3.2 Role-playing games

Role-playing games (RPG) was invented by Gary Gygax in a basement in Wisconsin US in the early 1970s. (Witwer, Newman, Peterson, Witwer, & Manganelli, 2018) Gygax was a passionate miniature wargame gamer, a game where you move units of small armies on a big
table with buildings and terrains and try to win a battle against your opponent's army. You can see a representation of this in the lower left corner in figure 2. What Gygax did was to change the focus on the battlefield, from large units to a single character, and changed the setting from historical re-enactment to fantasy sword and sorcery, and he had created Dungeons and Dragons. (Witwer et al., 2018) Today Dungeon and Dragons is still a wildly popular game, although it is referred to as Table top RPG (TRPG) because you usually play it around a table. What we now mean by RPG is generally the digital games that are based around creating and building up a character or characters. (Fullerton et al., 2008) Games like the online RPG (MMORPG) World of Warcraft, or the epic Final Fantasy series from Japan (JRPG). Although the games are built around character customization, the games tend to put a great effort into the narrative. (Fullerton et al., 2008) In TRPGs the narrative can come from prewritten campaign books where the storyline can take anywhere from a few play session to a year to complete (Witwer et al., 2018) In RPGs the main story is regularly constructed round smaller quests that involve exploration which you have to finish in order for your character to get experience and upgradable items. (Fullerton et al., 2008) Role-playing is to play a role, and usually RPGs have different roles the player can choose to play. These roles typically have different abilities. A player can choose to be a Human magician or a sword fighting Elf, and those roles create different types of play which mean that the players will often create multiple characters in order to get to experience the entirety of the game. (Fullerton et al., 2008)

3.3.3 A summary of the terms

If we were to summarize this section, game genres could be quite hard to distinguish from one another; this is because they share similar components. However, they usually focus on a specific game aspect which makes it easier to identify them from one another. When it comes to simulations, on the other hand, that is typically not a genre. It is a frame like the setting or narrative. If a game is focusing on the simulation part, it must utilize other play or competition like aspect in order to be categorized as a game. Still, because anything can be a simulation if it simulates something, an RPG can be a simulation, and this is easier to imagine when looking at the TRPGs that still have the miniature wargame mechanics incorporated. In those case, TRPGs are war simulators on a micro level. However, if a simulation is just a simulation, it is probably not a game, but if it is, it is usually something else as well.
3.4 Children and abstract thinking

What now follows is a section on how children learn to think abstractly followed by a section about how games can be utilized in a learning environment. This is to pave the way for what this thesis has to consider when constructing a prototype for a game teaching values to both children and adults. I propose that a right is something that could be considered as abstract, at least to someone that has not experienced the absence of rights.

Children begin to apprehend and to cope with abstract thinking early in their development, and they do it while playing. (Poole, Miller, & Church, 2005) They can take their pretend play and imagination into sophisticated levels of abstraction where they will try on different roles which aid them in developing problem-solving skills. (Poole, Miller, & Church, 2005) What Poole, Miller, and Church are saying is that in order to understand something abstract, children in the kindergarten age project that abstraction onto objects so it can be played around. Children do this when playing house, or hosting tea parties with their stuffed animals. After a talk with my children’s kindergarten teachers about pretend play and abstraction, they said that it is not uncommon at all that the children arrange pretend funerals for their friends to attend if a relative die. They do this to cope with something as abstract as death. It helps kids solve problems mentally later on, without real hands-on experience, because they will have experience in the field, imagined expertise. (Poole, Miller, & Church, 2005) Later in the child’s development, in the early grade school, the free form pretend play seems to disappear in favour of more rule-heavy games and sport. (Golomb, 2011) Golomb (2011) paraphrases the well-renowned child psychologist Jean Piaget when she explains the reason for this change in nature: “[...]with the growth of logical thinking the elementary school child distances himself from the earlier subjective and unrealistic world of make-believe that provided short-term emotional satisfaction to the younger and more powerless self. In the early school grades, the child encounters a different social world where rules, reason, and arguments play an increasingly important role in the regulation of social relations. Among the games children now favour are checkers, candy-land, monopoly, clue, card games, and chess, and of course, the popular computer and video games that conquer the market, and the outdoor games of rule-governed team sports.” (p.131) Piaget (1999) recognized that pretend play and role-playing is two essential functions in a child’s cognitive development.
3.5 Games as a tool for learning

What are the secret ingredients for getting kids to learn? According to Gladwell (2007), the creators of the popular educational kids show Sesame street thought about the same question and came to an understanding that it has to do about retaining the kid's attention. They had a child psychologist on hand and did a lot of screen tests with children to understand when they paid attention and when their minds started to wonder, and they came to one conclusion. Kids pay attention and retains that attention when they are entertained. The problems the producers had was that the children were too amused with the big yellow bird and the homeless grouser living in the dumpster, that they were too distracted to receive the educational segments of the show. The child psychologist then found that when they toned down the excitement from the educational component and kept the puppets away from those segments, the kids learned more and because they were entertained from before they still kept their attention. (Gladwell, 2007) If we also look at Menn's (1993) research, he states that when a student reads, he/she can only remember 10 percent of what they have just read. The number doubles when the student instead listens to information, then they remember 20 percent of what they heard. If the student also had related visuals to the audio, like watching a movie or looking at pictures when hearing a story, they would retain 30 percent. However, if the student were to engage with something interactive or take an active role in the teaching they could remember nearly 90 percent. Both Gladwell and Menn’s research gives a good indication that games are a great possibility when it comes to learning. Games are, as we already showed, both entertaining and interactive.

It was Bonwell and Eison (1991) that classified this interactive participatory learning process as active learning, and Gee (2003) expanded on this thought of learning saying that it lets the students experiencing the world in new ways, helps them forming new affiliations and preparing them for future learning. Gee (2003) continues by saying that active learning by itself does not facilitate what he defined as critical learning. Critical learning happens when the student not only understands what the different concepts or processes are within the subject they are learning, but also produce meaning at a meta level, seeing the subject as a system of intricate parts. (Gee, 2003) However, the fact that a game facilitate learning does not explain how it does it. According to Kolb (2014), learning comes from conceptualizing a cognitive process with experience. Or rather the other way around. First comes the experience- a person experiencing something, then the reflection - the person thinks about what he/she just experienced, and then the conceptualization - the person put the experience into context. (Kolb, 2014) Games simulate experiences and it has the player think critically about that simulation because every choice the player does in the simulation has a consequence (Gee, 2003; Salen et al., 2010) Or as we stated
before, games are systems with intricate interdependent parts which all strive to maintain stability through feedback loops. If we look at the study of Squier (Squire & Barab, 2004), he let low-performing students play Civilization III as an afterschool activity. Civilization is a strategic game where the player plays as a historic civilization and tries to expand its territory and evolve it from the early stone age into the modern time. The player achieves this endeavour with war, diplomacy and resource management. Squire found that these underachieving students started to grow their vocabulary and also started to ask questions, unlike them, like “Why is it that Europeans colonized the Americas, and why did Africans and Asians not colonize America or Europe?” (Squire, 2006, p. 21) What had happened in the students was that the experience came first, then came the reflection. (Kolb, 2014; Salen et al, 2010)

Gee (2003) compare the contemporary method of learning, learning by reading, with the analogy of an instruction manual of a game. Players do not read game manuals and are still able to play the game. Take the same analogy and review Squires (2006) underachieving students. They had been reading their entire life; however, it was not until they started to experience thing first they started to question what they had experienced and put it into the context of the real world. Scientist and teachers have of course questioned the effectiveness of games in learning environments and some research suggests that games might not be as effective as one might think. At least not in every subject and with every type of game (Ke 2011; Tang et al., 2009) I do agree that both Ke and Tang et al. studies show that research in the past about game-based learning have had biased data and that a long-termed research would be preferred before changing the entire educational system. A nightmare to conservative educators, although a farfetched one according to Prensky (2001) that states we have a long way to go before we reform the way we teach and learn. It is also my understanding that Tang et al., (2009) is focusing their concerns on sheer academical results and forgetting studies that have suggested that games can improve how people work together, and also how they could increase the feeling of empathy for other people. (Wright-Maley, 2015; Saez-Lopez, Miller, Vazquez-Cano, & Dominguez-Garrido, 2015) Soft skills that does not get much attention when it comes to research about game-based learning and is also the reason for this thesis. I'm going to end this chapter with Squire’s (2008) contribution to the debate on whether or not we should be using games in school. He stated that” it is not the notion of learning through playing that is strange; it is the notion of sitting in rows of chairs, faced forward, everyone locked on to a fixed speaker or content provider that is strange”. (p. 3)
3.6 Reflection of the literature review

When reviewing the literature there is, despite the critique, indications of the positive effect games have on learning, and also to teach soft skills to the players. Researchers like to connect the interactivity aspect of games to learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Gee, 2003), while others point to the act of making choices in a simulated environment. (Gee, 2003; Salen et al., 2010). However, the fact that a medium is simulating something does not make it a game, as we have already explored. The same can be said for the interactivity, there is a lot of interactive mediums that would not be considered a game, like books and TV-shows for example. There is, as I have stated, little research on what part of gaming that facilitate learning, though to be able to measure learning this thesis is going to use Kolb’s (2013) critical learning. This is not to say that Kolb’s model is better than other models, or the only model to define learning. I used it because of its sheer methodical aspect of measuring learning in four steps or levels. The reader will also see how I put a great emphasis on immersion when going further in the research, this comes from what the creators of Sesame street had to say about attention (Gladwell, 2007). That keeping a child’s attention facilitate learning. I wondered if the same was true but with immersion instead.
4 Qualitative interviews, focus groups, and prototyping

This chapter is the presentation of the result from the qualitative empirical study, as well as the development of the game prototype. It is important to note that even though the research project this thesis is a part of is aiming to create a fully developed game, and that the common perception is for it to be a digital game, this thesis will focus on prototyping said game to use it as a tool for data collection as well as to use the design methodology to generate new knowledge in the field of game design, as well as for future studies for the project.

The thesis agrees with Fullerton, Swain, and Hoffman’s (2008) stance of what a suitable prototype for game design is. The use of a prototype is to show and try out different features of a game, and this could be done in various methods. Physical as well as digital. Paper prototypes as well as software prototype. The prototype is the representation of the designer’s ideas or issues, so it could be tried out before moving on to a finalized development stage. (Fullerton, et al., 2008) Digital role-playing-games like Diablo II, Baldurs’s Gate, and World of Warcraft all borrowed ideas and aspects from the analogue pen and paper counterpart Dungeons and Dragons. (Fullerton, et al., 2008) More on that game later on in this chapter. Also, the digital strategy game Civilization, is based on a board game with the same name, see figure 5.

Fullerton, et al. explains that “The designers and programmers of these games used the paper-based originals to figure out what would work electronically.” (2008, p. 178) To summarize, a prototype can be a pen and paper analogue of a digital game, and a analogue game can later be interpret into a digital game. The thesis is now going to describe what went in to developing the prototype.

Figure 5 Civilization the board game and its digital counterpart.
4.1 The Prototyping preface

When designing for a game, Salen et al. (2004) states that:” Design is the process by which a designer creates a context to be encountered by a participant, from which meanings emerges”. (p. 41) This statement is straight forward; however, it could be explained further. The context could be the frame of the game, the narrative or the type of game, as we talked about in the literature review. It could also mean the nature of a game as in the serious game Foldit where the developers had the players fold protein chains that later would be used for science. (Peak, 2019) The context in Foldits case is both a puzzle game and a game about protein folding. In Salens et al. (2004) statement they use the word encounter as the mediator between the player and the context of the game. It is the way the player experiences the game and also how they experience it. It is both the actual interaction and the underlying mechanics of the game that facilitate the interaction. (Salen et al., 2010; Fullerton et al., 2008) It is when the context and the interaction with the context correspond, or in lack of a better word “ works”, that players want to invest their time an effort in the game and also when they start to care about the results that comes from the interactions. (Juul, 2018) I would also want to add another dimension to this and lift in Gees (2003) theory about how games can facilitate critical learning if they are well designed, to Salens et al. statement. Working backwards, if you want critical learning to happen a game must have well designed game mechanics and a solid frame.

4.1.1 Finding situations to encounter- the first interviews session.

The nature of the game the project I am a part of want to develop, is to put the players into situations around the UNCRC. Because of this notion, I wanted a professional contribution before working on the context of the game. I conducted an interview with a family therapist, that had years of experience working with dysfunctional family relations. The first part of the interview was a discussion concerning rights in general. What kinds of rights does a child have contra the rights a parent have. Here I want to disclosure my preconception of the concept of rights. A conception called contractualism and is taken from the ethical philosophers from the age of enlightenment like Hobbes, Kant and Locke. Contractualism is the thought that every right is followed by ethical responsibilities. To be able to expect some kind of human dignity, a citizen must also agree to uphold ethical standards that would not infringe on others citizens dignity. (Rachels & Rachels, 2015) When asking whether or not a child also has these kinds of responsibilities the interviewee responded with both yes and no. She elaborated on this concept
by taking a bullying situation as an example. If the bully is around the age of grade school he/she does most definitely know that the actions is morally wrong and could be held accountable for those actions. However, there are two dimensions of misconduct going on in a bullying situation. The first is the criminal aspect in which the parents undertake the criminal responsivities. The second is the moral infringement on the victim’s human rights. Here the interviewee thought that the blame was on the bullying child, however it is the child parent’s responsibility to guide their children to become moral citizens. In that case the parents are morally responsible for their children bullying other children. When continuing this interview about parental rights versus child rights, she said that one of the most difficult corporation to be a part of is the family corporation (figuratively speaking). Sometimes the roles between parents and child are not as defined as it needs to be, and in most cases than others the communication between both parts is lacking. I wondered why that is, and she explained that is sometimes has to do about the outside pressure. The pressure of being a good parent and the same time being a successful business woman/man, and also keeping a spotless home intact. On top of that, you’ll have the moral responsibility over a child that does not want to do as you expect them to. And with all this pressure it is understandable, not excusable, that a parent lashes out or scream at their children instead of trying to communicate with them. According to the interviewee this miscommunication starts from a very young age. To take an example, a child is being told not to play with the water tap in the bathroom and being educated that water waste is bad. A day later the child sees the parent letting the bath tap run in order to get the water to the right temperature, but the child does not know this and starts to imitate the parent, telling him/her not to waste water. The right thing to do in this situation would perhaps be to praise the child for being perceptive and then maybe explain how the water heater works. Instead we usually laugh at the children, thinking they are cute for impersonating an adult, and not taking them seriously. Another classic situation of miscommunication the interviewee brought up is when a child, the moment he/she wakes up on a Saturday, asks the parents what they are to do today. The parents generally feel a pressure when hearing this demand of things to do and, sometimes unwillingly brings the child to an activity. What parents often misses is that the children does not ask for things to do, on the contrary. They are asking to see if they are allowed to relax and to stay at home. They are checking to see if they will have a day off, the thing that most people want to have after a stressful work week. Instead children and parents are ending up at an activity no one wants to do, and both parties are wondering why they all are arguing.

Many themes can be taken from this interview. First of all, the concept of a right is not as black or white as either you have it, or you do not, especially when it comes to minors. The understanding of the therapist is that the rights for a minor have a receiver, the child, as well as
a facilitator, the parent that have to be accountable for upholding their own child’s rights as well as being responsible for when the child is undermining another child’s right. If the child is facing a moral situation of choosing between right or wrong and makes the wrong decision, the parent is morally responsible for that action. At least according to the interviewed person. What we see here is a confliction of position. Authoritative, the parent has by its share position more power in the relationship towards the child. Morally, on the other hand, the parent should take the blame for when situations go wrong. Analysing the parents and children situation from the problem description in the introduction chapter in the light of the therapist statement, one could make the assumption that there has been a misperception of authority, confusing authority with the concept of rights. This statement makes sense when again referring to what the therapist said, that the roles of the parent and the child is not as clear as it needs to be. The question then becomes, how can the game help with that notion? Something that we will explore further.

The concept of pressure and miscommunication was also something that the therapist often returned to during the interview. In one case, the pressure was the result of being the moral facilitator as well as the authoritative figure. Sometimes both concepts were interdependent, for instance, the example of the Sunday excursion. The story about the child and the water heater is also something that could be categorized as miscommunication, where the child is trying to show the parent that he/she have learned something which the parent misunderstands as a cute imitation. As we saw in the literature review, children imitate and role-play to make sense of a situation, to put it into context. The concept of miscommunication led to two more questions. How could the game facilitate discussion between the parent and the children, and could role-play be utilized in order to learn something about the relation between the rights and authority, to understand the role between child and parent? These questions became a ground to stand on during the entire empirical study and the development of the prototype.

**4.1.2 Real-life situations in accordance with the Convention-continuation of the interview sessions.**

The situation in the game should simulate real situations that the players have experienced or could experience. Also, I would have to find situations that were not in agreement with the UNCRC in order to fulfil the criterion from the project description. The situation was found by conducting interviews with 4 parents that also worked with children professionally, as well as consulting the convention. I also used the book by the researcher and psychologist Martin Forster (2013) to look at which situations he chose to bring up. Forster’s book is a straight
forward parenting book that describes ordinary family situations and problem hand how to cope with them.

Unicef (2015) describe human rights as standards that protect the dignity of all human beings and also govern how individuals interact with each other, as well as how the state interacts with the citizens. The problem with the convention is that it is written as a formal legal document. There is not always a clear direction for the reader on which situation that could be categorized as an infringement on human dignity. Also, most of the convention expresses the relation between the state and the children, so for a parent seeking guidance on his/her parenting style in the convention would get disappointed. Article 5 in the convention states:

“States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present convention.” (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 2)

This excerpt states that for all the countries that signed the convention, the parent is, in fact, the right facilitator that we discussed earlier. The text also states that it is up to the parent to teach the children about their rights and what they mean for the children. To problematize this notion, the text does not specify the authoritative confliction with the rights receiver-the child. It specifies what the parent has to do, not what the relation between the rights receiver and the rights facilitator are. It would on the other hand, not make sense for the convention to define a parenting template because the level of parental authority is decided on the parenting style. To make the division between rights and authority clear the parent and children have to discuss this matter amongst them self. They have to define what it means to be a child or a parent in their relation.

What Forster (2013) writes about, and the experiences of the persons I interviewed corresponded with one another. Infringement of human rights can occur when a conflict is about a disagreement on who has the authoritative power and when conflicts escalate. It is a power struggle, when a parent wants the child to do something for the sake of their wellbeing, like going to bed, and the child feels like he/she can govern over his/her own wellbeing. It is in these situations where the infringement can happen, especially when one or both parts in the conflict are stressed, tired or hungry- or pressured as the therapist described earlier. Forster (2013) list the most common situations where conflicts can happen between a parent and child. Mainly,
this is about child tantrums and defiance, when the child refuse to eat, problems around sleeping
and chaos during the morning routine These conflicts are mostly concerning a power struggle,
however it is not the whole truth. Studies have shown that conflicts can be a rehearsed way of
interaction, where the parents escalate the conflicts and also, because they are tired of
fighting, letting the children have the last say in the conflict (Snyder, & Patterson, 1995) In this
vicious cycle the parents normalize fights as the established way of communicating, and the
children, because they win the arguments by fighting, will enter the next conflict with this
mindset. The notion that children imitates parents is a well-established phenomenon, and this is
also true for emotions; a child imitates the parents emotional state in different situations.
(Bandura, Grusec, & Menlove, 1966; Spinrad et al. 1999) Studies have also shown that children
throw tantrums when parents aren’t behaving in a predictable way. (Cerezo, & D’Ocon, 1999)
That is to say when the parents are refraining from acting round a rehearsed pattern the children
recognize. That conflicts happening between the child and the parent is not in itself negative. It
is when the conflicts escalate that the physical and psychological abuse can transpire, and what
Forster (2013) brings forth as a solution for these conflicts is pre-emptive actions. That parents
should build a solid relation with their children, by spending time together and establish a good
communication.

When I asked the interviewees if they remember when or if their parents infringed on their
human dignity in any way, two different kinds of situations came up. The first one had to do
with the violation of privacy, namely to that the parent entered one of the persons room without
permission and couch him/her in a private moment. Another person described that his/her parent
had read the person's diary. The second kind of situation had to do with the parent not letting the
person decide over their own life choices. This person wanted to study an arts program in the
upper secondary school and the mother didn’t let him/her because she thought that it could be
difficult for further academical pursuits. This situation is an interesting contrast to other
contemporary interpretation to what it means to be able to decide or have influence over
decisions that concerns your own life. The family therapist and the preschool teacher, born in
the 1950s and 1960s, both described that children have more decision-making power over the
household now than when they were young. To exemplify, decision over what the family was
going to eat was not even a question for the interviewees when they were children, you had
what was served or you did not eat at all. Now, on the other hand, the parents ask the children
for their preference and could sometimes make three different courses in order to satisfy the
whole family. The teacher stated that an abundance of choices or options are not good for
children. The therapist, on the other hand, had a more nuanced view and elaborated that
decisions over choices that matters are not only good for children, they are important. So, with
this ambiguity over whether or not choices are good for the children between the interviewees that works with children professionally, it is interesting to highlight the story of the person that was not able to choose over his/her school situation. This is something that he/she to this day, has not forgiven the parent for. I argue that this person does not have the same feelings towards the parent in a memory concerning whether or not the person got the food he/she wanted for dinner. When this thesis later talks about infringement on rights regarding the child’s choices over his/her life situation, it is the choices more in tune with the story of the interview person rather than choices regarding food preference that this thesis is indicating. Conflict escalation, privacy infringement and the power to govern over individual life choices could be found in Article 2,5,12-15,16 and 19 in the Convention (UN General Assembly, 1989)

4.1.3 Decisions of directions for the prototype.

Taken the project description and the previous interview sessions in to consideration, the context of the game was to be constructed around situations that the players could experience. It should also be centered around discussion between the child and the parent. Reviewing Kolb’s (2014) model for learning, the discussion context of the game could be related with his reflection part of learning. It is the reflection that helps the person conceptualize an experience, so by having a mechanic or a frame that requires the players to talk with one another about what they just have experienced, this could supposedly aid the players to attain critical learning. The closest game genre that facilitate the experience of situations is RPGs, however, which type of RPG facilitate relevant discussion? The literature I’ve been using in this thesis all states that when developing the rules and mechanics of the game, it should be constructed in the way that the player doesn’t think about them. They should be present so the player can immerse in the game experience, and not contemplating over the rules. (Fullerton et al., 2008; Prensky, 2003; Bates, 2001) The same analogy was used and was applied on discussion. Relevant discussion occurs when the players talks about the experience in the game, not about the game itself. With this in mind I constructed a research design for the study of different types of RPGs with the purpose of study (1) which components or element constitute the games, (2) if and when relevant discussions occur, and (3) the players experience from playing the game.

4.1.4 Researching playing with Role Playing Games

The research was conducted over the course of a month. 8 persons in two groups: an adult player group and a family player group, were involved in the study. The focus group study
included 8 periods of play that each took between 1.5 to 3 hours. One group of players where around 30 years and all of them except one had children aged 4 to 8. The other group contained a mother and 2 children, five and seven years old. The players had various experience with playing board games and Role Playing Games. The collection of data consisted of taking notes from when the participants played the game. Analyzing the boardgames, and interviewing the participants.

The participants played 4 different kinds of role playing games: Table Top Role Playing Games (TRPG) Storytelling Board Games (SBG) Role Centered Board Games (RCBG). After playing a game the participants discussed their experiences regarding immersion, game mechanics and type of discussions initiated by the game. After the research was done I found another type of role-playing game called Role-playing Game Solitary Adventure (RPGSA). I let the Family group play one game of that category during three sessions that all were half an hour long. The games that where played is explained in their specific chapters.

4.1.5 Description and analysis of playing the games

In the following sections I will describe and analyze (1) characteristics of each game type and (2) the experiences encountered by the participants by playing each type of game.

4.1.5.1 Table top Role Playing Game (TRPG)

(1) Game characteristics.

A TRPG is different from a contemporary board game in that sense that the players are not constricted to a game board. What also differs from a board game is that in a TRPG there are not any winning conditions, which board games usually have. The concept of the game is constructed round storytelling (which I from now on is going to note as narrative). The players control a character that they have created and play as this character when interacting with the narrative. In contemporary games the narrative is, if it even exists, predefined. However, in TRPG the narrative is created and ruled over by a judge, sometimes referred to as the Game Master (GM). To simplify, a TRPG is a game where several players govern over different characters and one player govern over the world the other players interact with. The game mechanic of the game is constructed round simulation with rules that decide what the character can and cannot do. In the cases where the rules do not specify the actions the players want to take, it is up to the GM to rule over whether or not it can be done. The settings of the game
differ from game to game. “Dungeon and Dragons” (Mearls, Crawford, Thompson, Lee, Wyatt, Schwalb, Cordell, Carter, Sims, Gray, Perkins, & Bilsland, 2014) has a fantasy setting, “Coriolis” (Härenstam, Karlén, Kostulas, & Granath, 2016) is a Sci-fi game and in “Mutant year zero” (Härenstam, Birch, Bengtsson, & Rosenberg, 2014) the players are the mutated offsprings of a nuclear winter that happened during the cold war era. The settings of the game also change between different GMs playing the same game, Dungeons and Dragons could be played as an epic fantasy game like the world Tolkien created, or like a sword and sorcery setting like the one in Hubbard’s Conan the barbarian. So even if people play the same game, they are possibly experiencing completely different games. And this has to do with the narrative not being fixed.

In TRPG mechanics are constructed so that the GM is describing a situation and then ask the players “what do you want to do?”. This question in itself is a game mechanic, a mechanic that is affecting the narrative in a way that is significant for TRPGs. What happens is that the GM is describing the narrative, and then putting the narrative in the hands of the players for them to decide. I have chosen to call this notion ”active narrative”. Active because everybody that plays the game has a part in how the narrative changes. The GM has the last word, stated by the rules, however for the players their choices matter for the narrative in that case that a different set of players would create a different narrative presented with the same story.

At the start of a game, each player has to create his/her character. A character usually consists of a set of skills and abilities represented by numeric values on a piece of paper; the character sheet. The numbers simulate the characters physical and mental abilities, as well as denotes how well he/she can handle different situations. If the character is strong, they usually have a high number on the ability noting strength, and a low number on intelligence describes a character that has minor cognitive ability. The numbers that represent the skill of the character has a narrative as well as functional aspects. A high numeric value on driving skill, for example, represents a player that has had training in this skill or have been practicing the skill for a long time. The function of a high number on a particular skill means that the player will have a higher chance of succeeding whenever the character is faced with the challenge of handling a car. It all comes down to luck. Almost every obstacle the GM puts in front of the player will be resolved with a roll of one or many different sided dice. Different TRPG has different ways of ruling over the success or failure of an action, though in general the GM decides on a difficult threshold the player has to meet with the dice, and the numbers on the character sheet are added or deducted on the result of the dice roll. Then, there is the role-play. Besides from all the dice rolls, the player takes on the role of the character he/she created, this aspect of TRPG can be done in various ways. Both groups in this study played Dungeons and Dragons, a game that have become synonym with TRPG because of its popularity.
(2) The participants’ experiences

When I conducted this study, I asked questions to the participants of player immersion. In what level are the players immersed in the narrative? I couldn’t get any conclusive answers from the participants. Some of them experienced the narrative from a third person’s point of view, observing the characters from above. Some of them experienced the narrative from a first-person’s point of view, sort of looking through the eyes of the character. When playing a fight, or battle encounter as it is generally described, one player explained that the immersion took place on multiple levels - all at the same time. He/she was looking through the eyes of the character, and observing the battle encounter from a bird's eye view, and was at the same time very aware that he/she was playing a game and had to make decisions for the character so that it wouldn’t die.

This conflict of immersion can possibly be related to the representation of the simulation. I had already stated that the players of a TRPG are not constricted to a game board. Though sometimes the battle encounters are played out on a battle grid as shown in figure 6. The players fight the battles with a miniature game piece of their characters and although this is an abstraction of a real-life fight, there is still a more restrictive way of fighting than to imagine the fight inside the players head without the representation. An encounter that is taking place inside the player's imagination is called theatre of the mind, and with the except from battle encounters, this is the normative way of playing TRPG. This relates back to the theory chapter when Gygax invented TRPG as a derivative from miniature wargame. In wargames the players take on the role of a complete military unit, and Gygax experimented with the notion of a wargame on a micro level. What he found out was that when the player governed over a single unit other questions became more apparent. What does my character feel about certain situations? what is my characters goals and dreams? Character development and progression became more important than winning a game of war. The thrill of the game became the ongoing narrative. For one player it could make sense to speak with an imaginative barmaid working in a tavern than fighting a battle, and that dialogue is difficult to represent on a game board.
One of the players had interesting things to say about the narrative; the person had never played TRPG before and was thrilled about the experience. He was, when we discussed, custom to digital RPGs, so the questions become to define the differences between TRPG and the digital counterpart. “It has to do with the friction between my needs to make decisions and the framework and rules of the game. The reality I had wanted to play might not exist in the game.” I asked about the reality the player experienced in the TRPG. “Well, I started to think about the framework. Take Heart of Darkness [a novel by Joseph Conrad] for example, it is a book that does not contain any portrayals of the characters, there is only a narrative framework, and I think that when you dare to leave large holes in the plot that people like to fill them.” I then asked whether or not this was true for all people. “I do not think so; I can imagine that some people can manage to fill up large holes, while some can only manage small holes.” So how can you relate that to playing TRPG, I asked the person. “[...]If you as a game master are focusing on the rules more than the story, then there is not any room for my choices. Well, it is, but it does not matter. [...] The sandbox [a term that relates to an open world game where the player can choose where to go and does not have to follow a strict narrative] effect shrinks when the hole gets smaller, and I think that the social aspect suffers from that. [...] Take me playing a character in a story, on one side I can choose to pick a lock, and the other side I can travel across a desert. [...] One of the tasks give me more space to tell my own story.” I asked whether or not the person got the same space when playing a digital RPG, and the person started to compare how the narrative worked differently. The player can make choices though still end up at the same place as someone that made other choices. I asked if the player can be immersed in the story when the narrative is fixed. “Of course, you can. The passive storytelling is
something that we as humans has always done. If it would not be compelling, then nobody would read books. [...] We have only started to scrape on the surface on active storytelling if you think about it.”

During the playtest one player was really into the role-playing aspect. I asked what happens to the story when the player role-play in it. “it feels like I create a micro-story, and it is what releases that good feeling.” I wondered whether or not it is interesting for the person to listen to the other players “micro-stories. “Yes, it is the other players that creates that interactivity; without them, I could do something else instead, draw a picture or something. [...] It is together with others that you create the story.”

The two children that also was a part of this study both said that they liked TRPG the best from all of the games that they played. “I liked the story best [...] I liked that the story was fun and that I was able to be somebody else.” When asking the child why it is fun to pretend to be somebody else, the person said, “When I play, I can do whatever I want.”

4.1.5.2 Storytelling Board game (STBG)

(1) Game characteristics.

STBG can be divided into two categories. In the first category, the players are prompted by the game to make up stories as they play. The other category of STBG has the players, not create a narrative, rather experience a predefined narrative. It is in the latter category “Near and Far” (Laukat, 2017), and “Tales of the Arabian nights” (Gallela, Goldberg, Maroney, Shlasinger, 2009) falls into which is the games used in the research. What the two games had in common was that they both had a storybook in which the narrative resided. The players moved around a game board as a character until certain conditions were met, then the player had a snippet of a narrative been read to them from a storybook, and had to make a decision on what to go from there. A story snippet could be in the lines of:” You are standing in front of a big crystal. Do you want to touch it or do you want to leave it alone?” The player then turns to the page according to the choice he/she made and gets to hear how the narrative progress. In some games, the player acquires different skills that will change the narrative. If we take the same example with the crystal from before, if a player had the skills of a thief, he/she might be able to steal the crystal without setting off a trap. The resolution of the player's choices always ends with them receiving points, gold, items or a game alternating condition. The game ends when the players reach a specific amount of points, and the player with the most points is often the winner. An overview of the game set up can be seen in figure 7.
(2) The participants’ experiences

The discussion around the game table was sometimes about the game mechanics and sometimes about the narrative, however it was heavily geared towards the game mechanics. The dialog was in the lines of: “If I move my character to this area, I will have a greater chance to acquiring more gold”. The players never spoke in character or acted in any ways during play. One of the players explained his/her thought on why that is:” there is rarely talk about the narrative because the game is limiting […]The narrative is so short-hacked because the focus is on winning the game […]From the time you read the rules to the time you sit down and play there is a preconception that the game will end”. He/she felt this notion to be negative. However, it made him/her get into a more strategic state of mind, rather than feeling completely immersed. Another player said that it wasn’t the top-down perspective of a game board that kept him/her from feeling immersed in the narrative, rather the lack of character development. In these kinds of games, the players are dealt a character with a game piece associated with the character. When asking why this is a problem for immersion, the answer I got was: “[…] I don’t know my character, it is just a pawn.” When asked, the children did not think that STBG had any role-play aspect at all. “Role-play is when you pretend to be someone, and you have a game master that tells you what to do, or you have a character almost like a theatre, and that is also a role-playing game.” I wondered why the children did not think there were any role-play elements.

“I thought it was boring because, I do not know. […] You said I could be the princess, but princesses have long hair and long dresses, but this girl did not.” The other child said: “I did not feel like I was the robot. I think I am more important than a robot. […] I did not get to make the robot more important than me.”
4.1.5.3 Role centred board game (RCBG)

(1) Game characteristics.

I have chosen to categorize the last two games that were used in the research as RCBG. On the world’s largest forum for board games (boardgamegeek.com, n.d.) they categorized the games as both storytelling games as well as role-playing games. The problem with this classification is that there is so little storytelling and role-playing when comparing them to the other types of games. In both betrayal at house on the hill (Daviau et al., 2004; the left picture in figure 8) and last night on earth (Hill, 2007; the right picture in figure 8), the players chose to play a classic character from a horror movie. In betrayal at house on the hill, the character has different abilities noted on the hexagonal character tile which decide how many dice a player can roll when prompted to act. That is to say, a higher number on an ability increase the chance to succeed on the task that been laid in front of the player. These numbers are closely tied to how we perceive the character. To give an example, the crazy scientist character has a low number value in strength but a high number value in intellect which makes the player act accordingly. If the player has chosen the scientist as a character, he/she might not want to put the character in a situation where the scientist has to rely on strength to complete the task. In last night on earth, the players instead have items and traits associated with the character, as well as health points. The sheriff character has a gun and three health points. The young high school sweetheart has fewer health points though more traits than the sheriff. This variation between what you can do and how much damage you can take balances the game and lets the players both choose a character in a strategic way or just for fun. You can choose the sheriff because he starts with a gun or because you think he looks cool. Both games have different scenarios with conditions that have to be met in order to complete the game. In one of the scenarios in last night on earth, you have to fix a broken truck and find gasoline for it in order to get out of town in the middle of a zombie outbreak. There is not a complete narrative in any of the games. There isn’t a scripted beginning a middle and an end. However, there is small pieces of scripted ambiance or descriptive text on the playing cards that help the player get into the mood of a horror movie.
(2) The participants’ experiences

The discussion during play was only about the game mechanics and never on the narrative. One player explained his/her feelings about the discussion during gameplay with: “The discussion became very technical. It could be because the rules were awfully difficult in one of the games. You had no GM as in role playing games that you can trust. […] The discussion was very much about which tiles you had to put where, and what would happen when you entered a room. But it wasn’t so captivating. I experienced that the game was not so well written.” I also asked questions about how immersive the players felt in the games, and the answers were almost the same as with storytelling board games. That it is hard to fully emerge when you know that a game will end in a couple of hours. That the premise is to win the game not to experience a story. One of the players said “I think that you would have gained a lot if you had role-played by yourself, but you are never encouraged to do this in these games.” One of the children discussed whether or not it was easy to pretend to be the character in the game. “It is more fun to decide by yourself, then it feels like you are an adult because adults make decisions all the time” I then asked when the person pretends to be someone that already exist during playtime, the child can’t make decisions then because the role is already fixed. “But I know Sofia [Sofia the first, a princess in a TV-show with the same name], I know how to be her.”

4.1.5.4 Role playing game solitary adventure (RPGSA)

(1) Game characteristics.

RPGSA is a type of gamebook, an interactive novel, where the reader can make choices in the story that affects the narrative. It is not the text in the book that changes, rather that the reader gets to experience different parts of the narrative dependent on his/her choices. An example
could be that the character in the book is standing at a crossroad. Now the reader can choose which direction the character in the book should walk. If the reader chooses to go west, he/she will not get to experience what would happen in the other directions. According to Katz (n.d.) gamebooks comes in different categories. One of the categories is what he calls branching-plot novels. The most famous series of branching-plot novels is the choose your own adventure series, and without the exception of choosing which branch of the narrative to experience the books works like a regular novel. This type of gamebooks should not be confused with RPGSA. Katz explains these books as a mix between the branching plot and an RPG, that allows a single player to role-play without an GM. (Katz, n.d.) RPGSA has flaws from the perspective of using it with children. The first problem was that the books were text-based, with big paragraphs of text chunks, as seen in figure 9. To an inexperienced reader as the target group for the project generally is, this could be troublesome. One option was that the parent could read the text for the child, although this could jeopardize the immersion. An alternative RPGSA is constructed in the style of a graphic novel or a comics/serial magazine. These types of books were received very positively by my test group.

A comic RPGSA has the reader (from now on referred to as player) experience a story through jumping back and forth different comic panels. The panels are numbered in sequence although the panels don’t follow a chronological order. Panel number two is not a narrative continuum of panel number one, and so on. Instead, a panel has one or more numbers in them that the players can flip to as can be seen in the top left corner in figure 10. The game is done in this fashion so the player cannot cheat and see what the consequences of his/her actions would be in forehand. I used three comic RPGSA in my research, “Knights club” (Shuky, Waltch, Novy & Hardy,
2018), “Loup Garou” (Moon, & Gagné, 2018), and “Captive” (MC & Manuro, 2016). The rules
of the games are printed inside the book so everything you need to play is included. Also, all the
books have character sheets where the player can note down the progress and what items he/she
have in the inventory (see the top right corner in figure 10). At the start of all of the games, the
player gets to set out point on their character sheet that stands for their characters abilities. In
the books, the player has three modes of interactivity, exploration, choices and skill checks. In
the exploratory game mode, the player can choose where to go, whom to talk to, or chose to
search for items. When dialog occurs, it is presented in a speech bubble, and the player has
different options to react on what's been presented. The skill checks have the player roll dices to
see whether or not he/she succeeded. In Loup Garou (Moon & Gagné, 2018) these skill checks
are combats where the number value on the foe are matched with the numbers on your character
sheet which decides which number you should role above with the dice (as seen in the lower left
corner in figure 10). Also, in Loop Garou (ibid.) every time you defeat a foe you get experience
point which you can exchange for character upgrades. All of the upgrades make it easier to
complete skill checks in some way. The narrative is fixed, and you progress in the narrative in
various ways. In Captive and Knights club, you have to note down time progression on the
character sheet which lets you know when the story ends. In Loup Garou, the player completes
the game when he/she have reached a specific place through skill checks and exploration.
Initially, there is an obvious problem of choosing RPGSA as the prototype for the research
project. The games are solitary adventures, and I needed to develop a game for multiple players.
Secondly, it seemed as if the choices you make in the books played no part in the story. All of
the books had character creation as a part of the beginning of the game, although it was only in
Loup Garoup where these values came into play, and not even then did it feel like it mattered
which type of character you had chosen to be. When asking professionals within the realm of
TRPG-publishing and printing they all stated that it has to do with printing costs. Each plot
branch you create increase the page numbers, so you either have to keep the player choices to a
minimum or you will have an end product that no one can afford. The game that the test group
tried to play was Knights club.
(2) The participants’ experiences

I asked the parent of her overall experience from playing the game with a child. The parent said that they probably had different experiences: “A child has other habits [than adults], not different capacity, but a different habit of directly engulf himself in a story.” As the game they played basically was a solitary game, I was curious whether or not they could share the story. Her answer was that they had not been able to share it. “It became very much his story and I think it has to do with the relation between an adult and a child. I let him have the story. […] Because this being a story written for a child, I could see quite fast, as an adult, where the story would lead us. So, if we went into the forest, this is what will happen, if we went to the house, that could happen.”

I wondered if there were any role-playing aspects in the game and the interviewee saw a connection between the role-play and player choices. “[…] the role-play aspect is in the choices you make. You get a role assigned, but then the rest of the narrative deals with your choices.” This answer was in line with the literature about digital RPGs, that concludes that the choices a player does are prominent. However, according to the rules of Dungeon and Dragons (Mearls et al.2014), to play RPG is playing a role, that is acting out emotions and telling the story through the role of the character. In accordance, I asked the parent if they had experienced any role play in the game. “No, not really. I think that a lot of it has to do with us seeing it from the outside. It was like we read a story. More than, like, play a game. But if you came across a gangster, then you would speak with a gangster voice. I myself have read ‘can you survive the zombie
apocalypse’ [a text-based RPGSA] and it is more like reading than it is playing games.” When asking the parent what it would have taken for the game to feel like an RPG, she answered that she wanted to get to know her character. She felt like she was given a ready-made character. The child on the other hand said that it didn’t matter as much that the character was premade, because the child believed that he/she could customize the character to fit the child’s liking.

On the question of how the discussion was between her and her son during the game, she answered: “[…] when I played with my child we have still discussed ‘in which direction should we go, there seems to be a house over there’ and he has been reflecting on it. Saying ’Ah, if there is a house over there then there are probably people there as well, or if we go into the forest it might only be animals in there.’”

Having deconstructed the gamebook, it was obvious that the player choices were minimal. I thus asked the parent if she felt that the choices they made had some significance for the development of history? She had the same feeling as I had when playing through the game, that the choices didn’t matter. She thought, however, that her child didn’t think the same way. Her experience was that the child believed that the story adapted to his choices or at least that his choices mattered. The child on the other hand told me that he/she in fact knew that the choices didn’t matter for the story, though it was a good story and that was the important part, the child thought. I asked whether or not this knowledge would spoil the feeling for the adult, that only the child is having an immersive feeling while the parent is just reading a story for the child? She answered: “It is always like that when you play games with children. As an adult you do not have fun in the same way the child does, considering that the games are designed for children. It is mostly moving game pieces forward and then keeping track so that no one cheats or no one starts to cry.” I asked her why she bothered to play games with her children if she didn’t enjoy it:“Because the children think it is fun, and it is a way of socializing. Something to do with each other. Fights between the children happen any way, it's part of being a parent. […] If I want to get something out from playing a game, I would probably have to play with other adults and with a game that is made for adults. […] I have tried playing role playing games [TRPG] with children. It is probably the only time you can actually level with the kid and meet in the fun and in the story. […] you just have to keep track of all the rules and figures and things so that the child can focus on role play.”
4.1.5.5 A summarize of the play test research

An important aim of researching the various types of I Role Play Games was to find which type of RPG that facilitated both player immersion and relevant discussion, discussion round the experience in the game rather than the games mechanical aspect. I found that both of the terms were interdependent on one another. The players didn’t have a discussion about their experience if they were not immersed in the game. Many of the participants said that when the games became technical, rather than having a storytelling focus, it then became hard to immerse. Also, that role-play is both a device for creating micro-narrative, as well as aid to keep the players immersed. I was apparent that both immersion and relevant discussion happened in TRPG rather than the board game counterparts. This was true across all the players in the study, the children as well as the adults. According to the players, this had to do with the concept of the game as such. As a TRPG does not have a set of criteria to complete in order to win the game, which the other game-types have. Also, there is something with the narrative, a non-fixed active narrative that ties together with the act of role-play and making choices that matters for the narrative, which cannot occur in an ordinary board game.

One of the players explained what he/she felt when playing a board games like this: “When playing these kinds of games it feels like it’s missing something […] I think I’m missing the things from the role-playing games […] the things that have to do with pretending to be someone else that helps to immerse in a cool story.”

The same experience has been pointed out by the other players. A conclusion might be that the open, changeable narrative alone doesn’t facilitate immersion and good discussion. There has to be room for role-play, where the player can adjust his/her character and pretend that he/she is that character. In the following table all of the game types are compared on eight criteria. The criterions where all found during the interviews with the participants when they talked about their experience from playing the games.
Table 3 The result from the play-test research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Criteria</strong></th>
<th><strong>Tabletop role playing game</strong></th>
<th><strong>Storytelling board games</strong></th>
<th><strong>Role centered board games</strong></th>
<th><strong>Role playing game solitary adventure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skill based encounters</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character development</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Mostly No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In character choices</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus on Narrative</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed Narrative</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roleplay</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imersiveness</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevant discussion</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mostly No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 demonstrates that the relevant discussion I wanted to find was in the realms of TRPG and did not occur in a board game. I could not, however, develop a TRPG because as the study shows it did not include cooperation between parent and child and thus did not correspond with the description of the project I was a part of. In a TRPG one of the players are the GM and has a separate role from the other players, a dominating leading role. The chosen type of game would have to be something that a child and its parent effortlessly could pick up and play together without the one dominating the other. Also, the GM has to spend a lot of time and effort to prepare each game session. One player would experience the narrative and the other would have to create or at least prepare the narrative. These problems of a TRPG were difficult to overcome and I had to find a middle ground, that is a scripted role-playing game that you could pick up and play without preparation. RPGSA had also relevant discussion during the play test, however, Seen from the aims of this research, RPGSA have flaws that are hard to overcome. It is a one player game where the player choices do not matter. RPGSA have a similar result on the criteria list as the board game RPG. It is, however, closer to TRPG than STBG as seen in table 3. From the interview, the parent talked about the discussion between the child and adult that I wanted to find, where the players discussed what they are experiencing rather than the game mechanics. The fixed narrative is nothing you can change, it’s in the nature of the medium. However, it seems like the narrative is as important for the immersion as role-playing
when tanking the entire gameplay research into account and also consulting the table. I decided to go forth with the RPGSA and create a multiplayer version with a focus on developing means for role-play and character creation and development. As it was something that been lifted during the interviews. That the players want to create their characters and not be handed a pre-made one. If the focus laid on those criterions, though still kept a focus on the narrative, it would come as close to a GM-less TRPG as possible, and with that pave the way for player immersion and relevant discussion.

4.2 The development phase of the prototype.

Taking into account the research overview and the focus group study described above, it became apparent that the development a prototype would have to be divided into different parts. One part was the creation of the narrative, where I would have to implement the three situations stated in the situations chapter. That is conflict escalation, privacy infringement and the power to govern over individual life choices.

The second part was the design of the game mechanics, where I would have to implement room for multiplayer ability, and also to create a game mechanic that runs smoothly so the players can focus on the narrative and the role play. (Fullerton et al., 2008; Prensky, 2003; Bates, 2001) The third and last part was to design a way to facilitate role-play amongst the players. The development was done in several iterations which included a group of children between the age of 11-12 years old who tested the prototype throughout the development phase.

4.2.1 The narrative

First of all, I want to clarify the term itself. A narrative is something that is narrated (Webster, 20003) And narration is the art of telling a story. A more detailed explanation of the term is given by Hühn and Sommer stating that narration is an: “[…] communicative act in which a chain of happenings is meaningfully structured and transmitted in a particular medium and from a particular point of view […]” (2009, p. 419). The narrator is from where the narrative is coming from, and what is interesting in the interactive medium which is a game, and especially an RPG is that the player is both receiving the narrative from a narrator (the character) and is the narrator him/herself. This line of thought will be important for my decisions later on.

I needed the narrative to facilitate immersion, and in the field of narratology, the process of immersion in a narrative is called “Narrative transportation”. This process occurs when the
receiver of the narrative is getting vivid imagery of the story plot inside his/her mind, and it is attained through empathy. It is when the receiver starts to feel for the characters in the narrative that he/she starts to lose track of reality and gets fully immersed in the story (Green & Brock, 2002; Van laer, De Ruyter, Visconti & Wetzels, 2013).

When writing the narrative for the prototype I consulted scholarly articles on the subject of narratology and wanted to find what makes up a good story. I found a conglomeration of thoughts contradicting each other. I also found a set of criteria on how the receiver of the narrative should feel to give the narrative a qualitative status instead of a narrative that would engage said feelings in the receiver. I stated earlier that constructing a narrative is an art form, which means that even if there was a list of criterions on which to construct the narrative around to achieve a good story, it could still be terrible in the eyes of the receiver. Also, in the case of telling a good story in an RPG, I stated that the player was both a receiver and a narrator. Which makes the developer as responsible as the role player for telling a good story. Baroni (2014) makes a comment on the current situation of the field of narratology, stating: “Since a good story poorly told can be ruined or, conversely, the most insignificant incident can become captivating when told by a skilful narrator, some critics find it difficult to consider any aspect of narrative (sequence, plot, tellability, point, interest, etc.) independently from its discursive or textual manifestation.”

To summarise, the narrative is interdependent on both its narrator and the receiver, and it is hard to pick apart the narrative in order to observe the different aspects of the narrative from one another. When looking at the narrative in a game perspective, Pearce (2004) states that “At its highest level, the function of narrative in games is to engender compelling, interesting play.” (p.144) The narrative in a game is there for a reason. In a novel, the narrative is there because otherwise, it would not be a novel in the first place. This is not the case with a game. Take Tetris (Pajitnov, 1984) as an example. The game is still a game even though it does not have a narrative, and with the addition of a narrative, the game would not be more or less of a game. The narrative would just possibly enhance the play.

4.2.2 An interview with an TRPG author

I have throughout the development phase been in touch with a published Swedish TRPG author that has been mentoring me in the narrative phase. I have shown him my work, he gave me his remarks, I revised the work, and so forth. A TRPG author could be described as the mediator between the game mechanics and the GM. The author's job is to construct a narrative to fit both
the rules and the setting, and also to make room in the story for the GM. The GM buys a pre-made adventure with a complete story arch. However, to reach the nature of the active narrative that comes from playing a TRPG, the author must construct a flexible story. Or at least the feel of flexibility. “In a regular story, the author takes the reader on a journey from point A to point B […] in a role play story you construct a framework so the GM can take the players from point A to point B”, the author explains.

I had an initial interview with the TRPG author before I started to work with the narrative and after I described the objective of the research project he said: “You want to convey a lesson in the story, sort of like the old European fables, in that case, I think that you should hone that heritage.” The practice of using storytelling to teach the listeners something is not just a European cultural heritage. The same practice of teaching through storytelling can be found in many ancient civilizations and in tribe cultures which might indicate that there is something very human about storytelling. (Hodge, Pasqua, Marques, & Geishirt-Cantrell, 2002) In line with the method used in domestic American and European fables, the RPG author suggested that I should base the narratives round classical archetypes and the basic three-act story structure. The reason for this, according to the author, is to have the players instinctively know what to expect from the story, which means that they do not have to spend time on analyzing the narrative, though instead focus on role-playing.

When asking about why he uses archetypes in his work, he explained that he has a traditional Jungian view on the matter; stating he believes that archetypes and fables say something about what it is to be a human. According to Jung, an archetype is an image, a pattern or concept that reflects the collective unconsciousness of a culture. (Feist & Feist, 2009) In a three-act story structure, the first act is the introduction. (Trottier, 1998) It is where the protagonist is presented and where the protagonist is confronted with an incident which makes him/her call to action. This call to action is framed around a dramatic question which is the condition for the entire narrative. As an example, the first act of The Lord of the rings (Tolkien, 2002) where Frodo is confronted with the fact that he must embark on a mission to throw the ring into mount doom, the dramatic question is: “will Frodo succeed in throwing the ring into mount doom?” The second act is based on the protagonist actions to resolve the question. Those actions are often interfering with the antagonist, which will make the job of the protagonist much harder (Trottier, 1998). The third act contains the climax of the story, which may involve the antagonist and protagonist meeting for the last time in a big fight. The importance of the third act is the resolution of the dramatic question (Trottier, 1998).
When going back to Poole, Miller, and Church (2005; first mentioned in 2.4 Children and abstract thinking) and how children construct role-play around something abstract in order to understand it. All the examples that was brought up - playing house, hosting tea parties and pretending funerals, are tools for understanding what it means to be an adult. It is playing with adult subjects, perhaps because when you are an adult you are supposed to know how to handle yourself in these situations. Booker (2004) calls the story-archetype that fits into this theme a “coming-of-age-story” (CoA story). A classic example of a CoA story is the motion picture E.T. (Kennedy & Spielberg, 1982) where the protagonist is a young child, and finds his alter-ego in the form of an alien. The child protagonist must care for the alien and hide it from the adult world that wants to hurt it. The alien wants to go home and the protagonist must embark on a quest to get the alien home. The alien and the child share a metaphysical bond, that is that the alien is a reflection of the protagonist which in order to save the alien, has to change how he acts and grow up. Also, there is a magical aspect of the alien that would suggest that the power to change is within the ego itself (Booker, 2004). The theme “when caring for someone else you both learn things about yourself and grow as a person” was both appealing and possibly suitable for the project.

In the next chapter, I will present how I used the CoA story structure and paraphrased the story of E.T in order to construct a narrative in which the players would experience the three situations: Conflict escalation, violation of privacy, and infringement on rights regarding the child’s choices over his/her life situation. The complete narrative and prototype can be found in Appendix 2.

4.2.3 A summary of the narrative in the prototype

The players can choose to play as up to four different characters. The characters are kids that goes to school and the players can choose the ages of the characters. One character is a sports enthusiast, another character is an outspoken extrovert, one is a gamer, the last character is a book smart thinker. The narrative starts with the characters doing the dishes in the lunch cafeteria in school. They hear a large crash from outside and find a creature and his spaceship. The creature is badly hurt and needs the attention of the characters in order to survive. When the creature is stabilized, they get to encounter the antagonist for the first time. He comes in the form of an adult from the governmental agency for radio reconnaissance and he wants to find out what the characters are up to. If they are smart, they can talk him out from finding the creature. Afterward they get to choose where to go from there. One of the options will trigger two of the project situations (conflict escalation and violation of privacy). The character can
choose to snoop around in the creature’s belongings which will initiate a conflict scene, and how well the character handle that situation will result in how the creature will feel towards the characters. (Conflict escalation) The story continues with the characters taking the creature home and are able to give it a name. The creature does not like any name given to it, and start to argue with the character if it is not pleased with the name. (Conflict escalation; As well as article 7-8 in the Convention about the child’s right to a name). After the name conflict another conflict escalation situation starts. The creature is hungry and will start to express that feeling very loudly. The characters will have to feed the creature in some way; however, the creature is an alien and the characters will have no idea of what it eats. The characters will have to find and try out different kinds of food, the thing is that the creature is a picky eater and have a very peculiar taste in food. If they give it food that it doesn’t like they trigger a conflict scene. The creature refuses to eat and the characters can force feed it the food with the chance of hurting the creature physically. The characters can also scream at the creature with the chance of hurting the creature’s feelings. The creature only like three types of foods so if the characters doesn’t find the right food, the creature just will not eat.

If the characters are able to feed the creature this will trigger a solo scene, when one of the characters are alone with the creature. In this scene, they will experience that the creature can make them achieve tasks they would not think they were able to. The characters life starts to get better with the help of the creature’s magical powers. After the solo scenes the creature shows the characters that it wants to go home. The characters can choose to help the creature fix the spaceship. This will result in a quest of finding how to repair it and also of finding parts suitable for repairing the spaceship. Although, just when the characters thought that they got all the equipment and knowledge gathered, they find out that the spaceship has been stolen from them by the agency for radio reconnaissance. There is a final battle at the antagonist headquarters. The characters will get the spaceship back if they win. Now the final situation arises: will the characters let the creature leave? If they let it leave, they will be normal children again and probably will not achieve the dreams they started to realize were possible when having the creature. Will the characters let the creature be its own person or do they want to infringe on the creature’s life in order to make something out of themselves?(rights regarding the child’s choices over his/her life situation) If they make the morally right decision the creature will say farewell and leave the characters who will return back to their normal and somewhat boring lives. The morally wrong decision will make the creature die or run away.
4.2.4 The characters the Creature

I previously stated that in order to fully immerse in the narrative, the receiver would have to empathize for the characters in the story. (Green & Brock, 2002; Van laer, De Ruyter, Visconti & Wetzels, 2013). What this meant for the prototype was that the players would have to empathize for the creature and that the player would be able to create characters they could project their own feelings on. As a consequence of this notion, I wanted the players to feel motherly in relation to the creature so that it would be easier to care for it. This meant that the players would be involved in the game playing roles as children having to grow up when caring for a child-like creature. Just like a coming of age archetype. (Booker, 2004) The author and I discussed this matter and came to the conclusion that the creature should be humanoid, walking on two legs and be able to do things in a human-like way. This because the players would then easier identify with the creature. I sketched out multiple creatures and the playtest group unanimously was drawn to a single creature. It had large eyes and cat-like features. I refined that creature and the final version can be seen in figure 11.

![Figure 11 Revision of the creature](image)

I worked in the same way with the characters the players could choose to play as. I wanted the target group to be able to identify as the characters, so they could easier play as them. I will present the work with mechanics on facilitating role-play later in this chapter. Right now, I want to show the importance of the look of the character. Initially, the characters looked as shown on the left side of figure 12 and the reception was generally that the characters felt a bit old. The where no consensus on the exact age of the character, just that they felt older than the children in the player test group. After I did a revision of the characters (as seen in figure 12), I found that the players despite their age thought that the character was the same age as the players. A five-year-old player thought that the character was five years old, and the 11-year-old player
thought that the character looked like eleven, and so on. I have no answers to why that is, only that it is important to refine your sketches in order to achieve player identification.

![Image of character sketches]

**Figure 12** Revision of the player characters

I will continue to present how the players can build their characters in the game, and how I used the characters to pave the way for role-play in the next section.

### 4.2.5 The game-mechanics and role-play

I will now present the result from the focus group meetings I had with the iteration focus group (explained more thorough in 3.3 develop and deliver phase)

The creative director of the game company Inkle, Jon Ingold, said in an interview that “the most interesting form of storytelling is a highly adaptable but largely linear story model[…] so the broad arc of the story is reasonably constant, but the moment-to-moment experience of the player is extremely flexible, and that flexibility shapes how the larger story plays out.” (MCV, 2014) It is hard to create a book in any other way because if you, in the beginning, let the character make a choice which will alter the narrative in two ways. Now the book just doubles in size. If you let the player make another branching decision the book becomes four times as large as it would have been if you create a linear narrative.” “Do not let the players change the basic narrative”, this recommendation of Jon Ingold (MCV, 2014) showed to be important in proceeding with the building of the game. I followed Ingold’s words when constructing the choices the players can make in the book, that is to say, that nothing the player does changes the narrative, just the way you experience the narrative from point A to B.
The player can choose to play as four different characters and each character has its own exclusive gamebook. Each character is an archetype of different roles in the classroom. We have the handy dexterous one, thoughtful intelligent, the extrovert and socially skilled, and the athletic character. In the first iteration, the characters were a representation of their abilities and there was a focus on the character major abilities and also their minor abilities. If you have a high number in something you will have a low numeric value in something else. However, the focus group that tried this way of representing a character had a hard time to role play a physically strong person as an example. I then asked them to categorize their school peers and found that the children categorized people, not based on physical attributes but on the basis of their interests. In the first iteration the characters where only a set of abilities: Handiness, athletic ability, intelligence and social ability. After the focus group meeting, I revised the characters and made the athletic character into a football player, the intelligent person into a bookworm, the socially skilled person into a YouTube content creator, and the handy person into a gamer. I also implemented flexibility in the way players could assign values to the character's ability. If the player chooses to play as the gamer, he/she has to put the highest value on the handiness ability, after that the player can assign values on the other abilities I whichever way the player want. Play-test with the iteration focus group showed that it was easier for the group to role-play in a role-centred way rather than in an ability-centred manner. Also, the flexibility of assigning ability scores gave them the chance to play as a smart Extrovert or as an Athletic loner, and so on.

In the first iteration of the game each player had her/his own character sheet and played through the same book. Observations of the players showed that this was not a good way, because the players were silent when they played. They read the text in their heads and they did not role-play with each other. As a result, I made the game into multiple books and put in a disclaimer that the players could not show their books to each other. The role play became better because they started to explain where they were in the book and what they saw to each other. Still, there was no role-play and they did not understand why they could not show the books to each other. In consequence with these comments, in the last iteration I created a side story for each character, which was unique for all characters, and when the player is experiencing his/her side story, the other players are forced to wait and are having a dull day at school. Now the players started to think that their book was special to their character and was keener not show the books to each other. I also had panels in the books where I forced the players to discuss what they had just experienced and urged them to role-play.
Another thing I did was to write in the explanation of the rules that the game requires them to act as their character, and I also had panels where I forced the players to discuss what they had just experienced, in character. As a result of the changes the test group started role-playing, which means that the players made progress in the narrative through player choices and skill checks when acting to be the character they chosen to play as.

4.2.5.1 Dice tossing as a mean to improve skills

The first time I met the iteration focus group they were amazed by all the polyhedral dice I brought with me, and because of that, and because of the lack of dice tossing in the gamebooks I had researched, I wanted to incorporate it in the prototype to close the gap between RPGSA and TRPG. Dice tossing is a big part of TRPG where I found the greatest immersion across the participants in the player test focus groups.

I created a system where the character could put a numeric value on their skill set ranging from 1-4, and they had to put the highest number on their major ability, as described before. Each number represented a six-sided dice, so the Bookworm character was able to toss 4 dice on an intelligence skill check. I painted happy smiley faces on two sides on a plain white dice, which would make the chance for it landing on one of the smiley faces 33.33 percent. When a character was faced with a skill check I had a difficulty number printed in the book, that number represented a different set of dice with sad smiley faces. The player then had to throw his/her ability dice and the difficulty dice together and if the result was a majority of smiley faces, the character was successful. Tests showed that this mechanic was too complicated for the player test group. Every time there was a skill check I had to be there and explained how it should be done. In the last iteration, I completely revised the skill checks. The character sheet and the number of dices still remains, however now the players roll a regular six-sided dice. If the player gets a 5 or a 6 this will constitute as a successful throw. (Just like before but without the smiley faces). Instead of a difficult throw, the player now has a target number printed in the book which depicts how many successful throws a player must have to succeed on the skill check.
4.2.5.2 The magical feature of the Creature - to implement the content of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the game mechanism.

The last mechanic I implemented came from TRPG author. We discussed the CoA story structure of E.T. I had at the time not implemented the magical features of the Creature, that is the feature that meant that the power of change came from within and also made it harder for the players to let go of the creature. This led to the construction of the system of infringement. Every time the player offends the creature in some way this is depicted in the book and you have to write it down on your character cheat. It is shown as a heart, and you have to keep track of how many hearts you have. If you, on the other hand, keep your temper, despite the creature sometimes is behaving badly, then the heart rate increase. Later in the narrative, during the solo play, the players get to utilize the heart dice. The heart dice has hearts printed on four sides on a six-sided dice, and the player is sometimes allowed to use them during skill checks. This result in a dramatic increase in the chance to succeed. While this mechanics is not only implementing the trope of CoA, it is also a pedagogical way of showing the right thing to do, although the players can still manage to complete the game without the heart checks. It is only a lot harder, though the choice is up to the player. This was well received by the iteration focus group that started to analyze the situations that were put in front of them in terms of what it could mean for the relation with the character, instead of making irrational fun decisions. This was something that came up during the first two iterations of the prototype, that the children in the test group wanted to try to hurt the creature. After this last iteration the children were keener to explore different situations rather than try to hurt the creature in different ways.

4.2.6 The final play-test of the prototype

When the prototype was developed, I let a Mother, and her two children, a seven-year-old boy and five year old girl play the game. The research was conducted the same way as the RPG play test focus group research (4.2.7 Researching playing with Role Playing Games). I let the participants play the game while I took notes. Afterwards I interviewed the persons about the discussion topics that arose during the play. The played for 2 hours divided into two 1 hour sessions. This research was still exploratory in the sense of openness to anything new that came up, however, I listened more closely on the discussion about subjects that could be linked back to the three situations- Conflict escalation, violation of privacy, and infringement on rights regarding the child’s choices over his/her life situation.
4.2.6.1 Roleplaying outside the frames of a fixed narrative

The older child and the mother took turns reading and the Mother helped the younger child pointing to the pictures in the game. The mother, later in the interview, said that she thought the five-year-old child was a bit too young to play. It was apparent that she did not role-play to the same extent as the other players though this was not the child’s own experience. According to the child, she thought that she had role-played. To her, she was acting and said that she enjoyed the experience. The boy and mother were more outspoken, and they started to invent their own character traits. “you know it is my birthday tomorrow”, the boy said for example. All of the players were talking in first person perspective. Instead of saying “my character is good with […]”, they were saying “I am good at […]”. The players describe things that happens outside the narrative. They describe the way the disguise the creature and how they biked home to one of the characters in line with what the characters were good at. The intelligent characters came up with the disguise and the athletic character was the one that took all of the other characters on her bike. Also, whenever the players made a good dice roll, the players were complementing the characters instead of the player. When the children were faced with a skill check that just required them to toss a dice, the children still role-played how they performed the task, they acted out a plan and if the skill check was successful, they explained to each other how they managed the challenge. The same was not true, to the same extent, when they failed the skill checks. They role played a plan as before, however when they failed, they became disappointed and eager to move on instead of explaining how they failed the task. Both the mother and boy commented on their ability to role-play in the interviews, stating that they are custom to role-play. The mother said: “He is very good at role-playing, he does not speak with another voice or anything, but he starts to think as the character.” I wondered if the format of the prototype facilitated role-play, the children thought so, that they could elaborate away from the framework of the narrative and adding things to the story. The mother felt the same way to an extent. “I can add things to my characters background which makes the character more real for me, but I think the feeling of role-play comes from the choices you can make which affects the story.”

4.2.6.2 A presentation of the subjects of discussion during the playthrough

The participants went through the game quite effortlessly and did not get faced with as much challenges because they made good decision for the creature right from the start. “I noticed that, but that will happen in any game”, the mother said. “That’s the name of the game when they are based on luck and challenges, I think.” What this means for the study was that there is no data
on how the players discussed the topics of conflict escalation and violation of privacy. Though, they did experience the scene made for the subject of rights regarding the child’s choices over his/her life situation. First when it became apparent for the children that if they let the creature leave their acquired power would disappear, they did not want to let it go. Then the older child said “we don’t want to be normal kids again, but we want for Eva [the name they gave the creature] to go home” The mother than said “If you have a friend that wants to do something, then maybe you will have to let the friend do that thing […] You know I am terrified that you would want to go out in space when you grow up, though I know that when the day come when I stand there at the space station, that I will have to let you go. Otherwise I would be a terrible person […] That would be very selfish of me if I hinder you from doing the coolest thing in the world, that you would become happy from doing.” The child said after the mother’s explanation, “I think we should let It go” The other child agreed to that decision.

During the play the children made a choice for their characters to fetch an adult to help the creature that ad been hurt during the crash to earth. This choice resulted in the grown up calling the police on the creature and the game was over. They started over and now the children reasoned based on their precious experience. “No, we shouldn’t speak with the grown up because I don’t want to get a ‘game over’.”

After the first time the players got to note a heart on their character sheet (For a review of the explanation of the “system of infringement” see 4.2.5.2 ), they start to discussed what it meant before they could even utilize the heart dice. This could be seen in their discussion on how to act towards the creature. They were committed to keep the creature to be happy and satisfied even though it very often behaved very badly towards the characters in the game. When the players had their solo narrative, the children role-played explaining to each other how the creature gave them magical powers and how the harts they collected by being nice to the creature gave them hearts dice that made challenges much easier. This shows a narrative understanding of the game mechanic.

In one of the panels when the games call for a reflection on what the characters just experienced the mother said: “I have learned one thing. You know when we lied to the adult [the antagonist in the game], maybe it was a good thing we did? “The children wondered why and the mother answered that he would had taken the creature otherwise. The boy does not agree, stating that if it would have been a real-life situation, he would not have lied though he would not tell the adult where the creature was. The mother continues” I do not say that it is a good thing to lie, but you should not give out all your information to a grown up you do not know.” The child nods and agrees. Later in the interview the mother said: “It is a good situation to talk to children
when to speak to adults […] like: ‘my friend just told me that he/she get abused at home’, and that is a secret a kid should never be alone with. you could promise the friend that you will not tell his/her parent, but you cannot promise that you will not tell that to any adult” The parent also talked about the importance for children that have a friend that are abused by their parents, or have a parent in jail, to talk about how it feels when the government is after your friend or his/her parents. This discussion subject was outside the frame of the prototype, though it came from the players experience from playing the game. I asked whether or not the parent use to talk about this thing with their children, and the answer was negative. “no never about these kinds of matters”.

To the question if it was obvious that the material in the game directed towards discussion about soft values, she answered no. I also wondered if there even is an incentive of playing a game based round discussion, and she thought that the pick-up-and-play with no preparation aspect was the biggest benefit of the game rather than its content. “This is perfect for those semester days when you don’t want to plan anything major with the children, they can choose to draw something, play a dance game on Nintendo Wii, or we can pick up and play this with no effort at all.” I asked the players to express their experience of the discussion during the play. The children had no opinion on the matter though the mother shared a positive view. “I thought the discussion was good, in a level that a child could understand where you as an adult have to give follow up questions. As an adult you almost have those questions prepared, without being a pedagogue or something else, you have those tools.” I asked if the parent would have wanted a parent guide with already prepared questions to ask the child and she thought that it would be nice to have. “I think it would be even better, if it had more panels with discussion opportunities.” Then I wondered if it would still be a game if the game came with a discussion form. “The discussions will happen anyways; you cannot play “Which witch?” [a classic board game from the 70s] without the child asking ‘which room do you find the scariest?’”, children wants to talk about what they experiencing in the game[…]. I don’t know if it is taught or if it is genetics, but kids that is institutionalized are accustomed to discuss.[…]And I can imagine that when the child is asking about which room is scariest that they what to get a confirmation that an adult also find things scary, and also wants to declare their own fear” I argued that when playing the same game with children, I almost always gets question about the game mechanics, to this the parent said: “I think the children chooses the questions to fit the parent’s interests, kids are smart you know.”
5 Discussion

In this chapter the findings from chapter 4 will be discussed in the light of the literature and the scope of the research project in order to answer the research question.

5.1 Roleplay in relation to narrative

In the article where owners of famous game companies gave their thought about which part a narrative should play in a game, Ingold (MCV, 2014) stated that there were no apparent reasons to open up a fixed narrative; A branching story structure cost more than it enhances the game experience. This statement must be seen from a company owners’ perspective, money matters. Though from a scientific standpoint, I still wonder whether or not one could draw any conclusions from the experience of the active narrative from the findings in this thesis. The first possible understanding was that active narrative and role-play were two separate elements though they were both essential for facilitating immersion, where role-play helped to immerse in the narrative. However, during the playthrough of the prototype, the research subjects added micro-narratives during the play despite the fixed story structure. The micro-narratives consisted of the players telling stories of what the characters were doing between the comic panels. The mother stated that this notion of micro-narrative did not give her a complete sense of role-play because of the lack of agency over the narrative in the context of making choices. What then is role-play, or what is the function of role-play and its relation to the narrative? Pearce (2004) stated that at its highest level, the function of a narrative is there to enhance the play, I will come back to this statement soon. Reviewing the phenomenon of narrative transportation instead, it suggests that the act of empathizing with the characters in the narrative helps the receiver immerse (Green & Brock, 2002; Van laer, De Ruyter, Visconti & Wetzels, 2013). With this background, the research subject’s willingness to add traits and micro-narratives to their characters propose the act of, if not empathize with than at least, understand their characters. From this notion, one can suggest that role-play has two sides concerning the narrative. It is both a tool for narrative transportation and also a medium to change the narrative. This thesis cannot link the act of making choices that affects the narrative to having more or less of an effect on immersion. Several participants in the study stated that it was an element that they missed from the other types of games that were studied, and one participant expressed the great feeling he/she got from making choices in an active narrative. Though, one participant stated a significant fact, that immersion could happen when someone listens passively to a story. Here both the choices and with that an active narrative is gone, and it has no adverse effect on
immersion. The great feeling the participant felt, must with the limitation of this study be viewed as an expression of preference, nothing to build a scientific conclusion on. Going back to Pearce (2004) statement that the function of a narrative is there to enhance the play. The findings of this thesis, the notion of creating micro-narrative resulting in empathy for the character, would also suggest that the act of playing could enhance the narrative, which points to the interdependency of the elements. The thesis concept of the hierarchy of immersion can be viewed in figure 13, however despite the interdependency, roleplay facilitate discussion and the more immersed the players were in the narrative the more they discussed. In the thesis prototype the discussion happened when I implemented character creation and prompted them to roleplay, so without any other empiric results no conclusions could be made on what actually was the reason for roleplaying. Though because of the RPG focus group research the evidence of the importance of narrative and immersion in the narrative is evident.

![Figure 13 The hierarchy between Role play, immersion and discussion](image)

### 5.2 Roleplay facilitating learning with the help from the parent.

This thesis suggests that role-play have other qualities than just immersion. I am now referring to the act of making choices while pretending to be someone else, and not the narrative transportation side of role-play. During the playthrough of the prototype, the child makes a choice in the game to get an adult to help the creature who injured itself in the crash, which results in the game ending. He later refers to this experience while he analyses other situations in the game. According to Kolb (2014), the child has started to analyse his previous experience, which suggests that the child is on his way to critical learning. However, the analysis is done while he is role-playing. The child does not want to face the meta-game consequences for his
character’s actions. It does not mean that the child has made the last application in critical learning. That is to put the analysis of the experience in the context of his own life. This notion cannot be explored in this thesis; it would require a long-term study to make those finding. The absence of long-term findings is as previously stated the major critique to previous studies in the subject of game-based learning. (Ke 2011; Tang et al., 2009) What this suggests though, is that the child applies the learning from playing the game into the context of the game and not the real life. Still, the parent took many of the experience from the game and reasoned with the child when prompted to do so by the game. Here the parent put the child’s experience from the game into a real context, sometimes referring to their own relation, which implies that the critical learning aspects from role-playing could be present as long as the players are required to discuss their experience from the game afterward.

5.3 Two directions for games regarding UNCRC

Booth the literature and findings from interviews showed the lack of communication or miscommunication as a culprit to conflict escalation which could lead to infringement on the rights. Here the developer of a game has to decide if the game should focus to tend to the problem of rights infringement or to educate the players about rights in accordance to the convention. The first option could be seen as a therapeutic game and the other option as a informative game. This thesis made the suggestion that the dissonance between the parent and the child when it comes to the understanding of the UNCRC was actually a confusion about authority and the unclear roles of family members might be the factor for confusion. If the project chooses to proceed with the informative aspect of a game, this notion of authoritative confusion would have to be investigated through to establish if this is the factor for confusion and to decide where the focus of learning should lie on. The findings from playing the prototype would suggest it being suitable for a therapeutic game based on the share communication between the family members during gameplay. This might not be the case if the family members relation where infected, this reason alone suggests more research in the subject before establishing a path to take.

5.4 Turning the game mechanics into a narrative discussion

Another essential finding was the adaptation of the system of infringement. During the development of the mechanics of the game, the thesis observed the statement of Fullerton et al.
(2008), Prensky (2003), and Bates (2001). They all stated that the mechanics should be constructed in a way that the players do not think about them. In the first focus group research, one of the purposes was to find games where the discussion of the mechanics where held at a minimum. Though, the findings from applying the infringement system in the prototype indicate that discussion about mechanics does not have to be to this thesis, or the projects, disadvantage. The children that played the prototype discussed what the function of the hearts and heart dice might be, and adapted their understanding of the mechanics to how they analysed the situations they faced. The players in the iteration playtest group as well as the last play test group, because of the game mechanics, was committed to keep the creature happy despite that it behaved badly towards them. The understanding of the mechanics was the same as adapting to an understanding of the UNCRC, without the game having to explain it narratively. Here the game mechanic has turned into a narrative discussion. More research has to be conducted to conclude if soft values can be taught through game mechanics, though the findings, as stated, point to positive results.

5.5 Acting bad in order to learn how to be good

In the prototype playthrough group, the players did not experience the consequences from the situations they encountered. This because they made decisions in the game that were good for the creature. The Convention is written as a list of right or criteria to uphold said rights. The real-life situations this thesis chose for the players to experience, one would have to act against the rights in the convention in order to learn narratively that it is wrong. The thought was to mind the role-play nature of children, that they naturally role-play in order to put an abstract thing into context. (Poole, Miller, & Church, 2005) To take that notion and put it in the setting of a Coming of Age story structure, so that the players would learn about the convention when facing difficulties when caring for a creature. One could argue that the creature was made to cute so the players did not want to hurt it; however, this was not the case. During several of the iteration playtests, the players set out to hurt the creature. It was not until the system of infringement was implemented that the players stopped to try to hurt it entirely. This system could be iterated more so it keeps the mechanical way of learning without removing the incentive to interact with the creature in a bad way; although that would counteract the purpose. The problem was not that the players where acting good, the problem was that the players had to act badly in order to trigger encounters for learning. Players that want to role-play nice character, as in the case of the last playthrough group, have to find themselves in ethical
situations where they are forced to act, not seeking up the action. The problems concerning this are discussed in the next section.

5.6 The constraints of a game meant to facilitate learning

What the developer now faces is a complicacy of choosing between a fixed narrative and an active one — the difference between forcing the players into situations or having them find the situations through player agency. In the sense of immersion, this choice does not matter. As explained before, with the limitation of this study, this has to be seen as a preference, that the player favours one narrative over the other. However, what the study showed was that the active narrative in a TRPG facilitated more relevant discussion than the boardgame counterparts a game type with a lot of player agency. Also, the general opinion when asking about the games with a fixed narrative where that they felt that the choices did not matter, and this was said with a negative connotation. The children, on the other hand, did not show any negativity towards the game choices being limiting. One child even said that he/she understood that the choices did not matter, though was happy to play nonetheless. Still, when asked, they favoured TRPG and this because of the act of pretending to be someone else. In a game like the prototype player agency would be solved by branching the choices the players could make, and by that being faced with an expensive product. This is also true for a digital game, to deviate from a linear narrative would make the game more expensive. (MCV, 2014) Alternatively, the project could develop a TRPG, and with that gain all the advantage connected to learning and discussion and player choices, though loose the pick-up-and-play element that the project was asking for and that the parent in the study enjoyed with the prototype. What we see here is a variant of the famous project management triangle from the 50s, an analysing tool meant to illustrate the quality of a project together with the project’s interdependent constraints -scope, cost, and timeframe. A game as the one the project wants to develop, on the other hand, are based around discussion and learning (instead of quality) and imply that the constraints of the project consist of the cost, player choices, and playability as seen in figure 14. The triangle depicts the interconnection between the constraints, as have been discussed in this section.
Whatever choice the developer of a game like this would make, even if the game would have a linear narrative like the prototype, the players still make choices, and those choices could generate topics of discussions that the developers might not have thought about. This was the case when the mother and her children discussed whether or not a child is obligated to inform an adult the child does not know. This topic of discussion was not planned for. The mother later said that a printed parent guide would have been useful, to help with the discussion along with more comic panels of obligated discussion. This was the opinion from one person, and due to the limitation of this study, there has to be more investigation whether or not parental guidance to lead the conversation is suitable for a game like this. However, one could argue that this would decrease the pick-up-and-play criterion if the parent has to prepare him/herself before playing. Also, if that is the solution, the question if one should not make a solid TRPG in the first place becomes apparent. If the preparation of a narrative instead turned into the preparation of discussion, then there is no difference in terms of playability. The question becomes then if it is the criterion that has to be changed instead. Perhaps the game should not focus on the parents and children playing together. Perhaps the purpose of developing a pick-up-and-play game without the need for preparation should be changed. Alternatively, it could possibly be the environment that should change, from the home of a parent and their child to a school environment with a teacher acting as a game leader. This is all something that has to be taken into consideration, going into the project that follows this exploratory pilot study.

Figure 14 The project’s triangle of constraints.
5.7 Lessons learned from a designer perspective

When designing whiles researching, the questions become which part should be prioritized? When working on the thesis it became a problem when I wanted to implement three different categories of infringement. I did this to be able to observe how the players discussed the different situations but found that a player could run through the entire game without encountering the consequences of a bad choice. The ambition of implementing too much research material made the prototype too big, and as I stated in the previous section the constraints of the prototype became a nuisance to complete. I would suggest for both designers and researchers working with a similar project to narrow the scope during the prototype phase, and only when having reliable results should the developer/researcher extend the scope.

In game design, user test groups are used in extent to measure the enjoyment of a game as well as finding trouble areas to focus on during the development. However, I would want to highlight the quality of qualitative focus groups as where used in this thesis. Not to be used instead of the, most often quantitative, user test groups, but as a compliment. It was never important for this research to measure the enjoyment of either the RPGs or the prototype, though rather to use the material to ask questions about their experience. The answers to those questions led the thesis in a direction I wouldn’t have thought of before. Though this direction was needed to satisfy the needs I saw, both for the project and what the participants described when they were elaborating about narrative, immersion, and roleplay. An experienced game developer might understand what direction a game should take by sheer number from a user test group, however it is my understanding that a lot of information would be missed by not asking the test group why they are enjoying the game, or not.

Furthermore, I discovered that a game designer’s creation ceases to belong to the designer in the moment that a player interprets the design. In the prototype, I created an extra-terrestrial character. I aimed for the character to be cute and likeable, but had no thoughts about what species the character should be seen as. All of the players, all ages included, interpreted the character as a cat. A designer needs to be aware of this, that the game and game design always will be what the players decide it to be. You can create rules, dice rolls, characters and settings, but you can never rule the thoughts and imagination of the players, nor should you aim for it to be so.
6 Conclusion

This thesis was an explorative pilot study meant to generate a starting point for further studies for a specific project. Because of the nature of a thesis and a pilot study we were only able to scratch on the surface. The thesis is not conducted in order to come up with ground-breaking conclusion, still the findings could be and interesting contribution to the subject of game-design and media technology. The thesis aimed to answer how a game mean to teach soft values to parents and children in accordance to UNCRC could look like. Though I showed an example of a successful prototype, I think that the questions that arose during the prototyping phase that I also tried to answer have a greater importance to the research community for both media technology, pedagogy and game design. This thesis points to games inherent element to facilitate the learning of soft values, and though the scares material in the research subject the thesis stands behind with an agreement to the research of Wright-Maley (2015) and Saez-Lopez et al. (2015) The findings showed the intricate interdependence between role-play and the narrative in order to facilitate immersion. These findings would be found useful to overall discourse in the TRPG industry about which element in the role-play that is most essential to engagement. Also, despite what the game literature said about letting the game mechanics having a low-profile role in a game, refraining from this notion turned out to be successful. That game mechanics and the discussion about game mechanics while playing could possibly be a way to implement learning experience as long as the mechanics are resembling the thing you want to teach. Returning back to the research problem, a game developed to teach children and parents about the convention could be a possible solution to the dissonance between the parent and the child when it comes to the understanding of the UNCRC. This thesis has showed booth the communicative and learning aspects of a role-playing game. To further prove whether or not role-playing games is suitable for learning, long-term studies in the subject has to be conducted to see if the last factor of Kolb’s (2014) critical learning has been applied, to see if the player has taken what he/she has learned and put it into the context of their real life, outside of the context of the game. This thesis’ findings point towards that direction though cannot make any final conclusions.

6.1 Further studies

Despite that the thesis could not find any advantage in immersion observing the different types of narrative styles, active or fixed, it gave an indication that immersion plays a big part in the discussion. I would suggest to explore the importance of immersion to facilitate discussion
about experience as a hypothesis for further studies. It would also be interesting to go deeper into the findings of the system of infringement to iterate the mechanics to see how it can support a narrative discussion, and also to see if the mechanics alone is enough to facilitate learning.

And of course, to use this pilot study as beginning to further studies for the project of developing a game to learn about the Convention of the Rights of the Child. As the research project wants to create a digital game, there is in my understanding a short way to adapt my prototype to a digitalized point-and-click game. Though I think that the project would miss a great opportunity of discussion to not explore how a traditional, analogue, TRPG in some form, could be utilized instead.
References


Feist, J., & Feist, G. J. (2009). *Theories of personality*.


Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2002). *In the mind's eye: Transportation-imagery model of narrative persuasion*.


Juul, J. (2018). *The game, the player, the world: Looking for a heart of gameness*. PLURAIS-Revista Multidisciplinar, 1(2).


Appendix 1 – Consent form

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Title of study
Game mechanics, Simulation, and Narrative - critically learning values through games

Researcher
Sebastian Öhman
Computer Science and Media Technology
+46701431742
sebastian@boomshakalack.com

Study location
Malmö, Sweden

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY
Below you find the key information provided about the research.

Participation is voluntary
You have been asked to participate in a research study. Participation is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand. The researcher above will be available to answer your questions.

Study purpose
The purpose of this research study has been to observe how board games and table top role playing games stimulates children and adults to discuss ethical issues. Both children and adults have been asked to participate in both play sessions and interviews, as groups and as individuals.

Study procedures
This study has involved the researcher observing you and/or your child/children as a part of a group playing different kinds of board games and table top role playing games. The researcher has observed the way you have interpreted the game mechanics as well as the discussion you and/or your child/children have had around eventual ethical issues that the game play has awoken. You might have also been asked to be interviewed separately from the group.

Duration
The fieldwork of the research (observations and interviews) has been conducted over the period of 8 weeks from February 2019 to April 2019.

Possible risks or discomforts of participation
Your participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you and/or your child beyond that of everyday life. The research has responsibly aimed to respect you as a participants by ensuring your privacy and protecting your anonymity in the best possible way. All of the participants have been granted anonymity. No names and/or locations are mentioned in the data or the thesis. However, in the recordings made during the interviews, the voices of the participants may be recognised.

Benefits to participants
You will not directly benefit from participation in this study.

Alternative procedures or treatments
There are no alternative procedures available. The only alternative is not to participate in this study.
HOW DO I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY?
You should not sign this consent form until all of your questions about this study have been answered by the researcher listed at the top of this form. You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from participating in the research without any penalty and are free to do so at any time. If you decide to withdraw from this study you should notify the researcher immediately.

☐ Yes, I have agreed to allow the researcher to record (audio) me during a session of game play
☐ No, I do not agree to allow the researcher to record (audio) me during a session of game play
☐ Yes, I have agreed to allow the researcher to record (audio) my child __________________________ during a session of game play
☐ No, I do not agree to allow the researcher to record (audio) my child __________________________ during a session of game play
☐ Yes, I have agreed to allow the researcher to record (audio) my interview that I have been invited to.
☐ Yes, I have agreed to allow the researcher to record (audio) the interview that my child __________________________ was invited to.
☐ No, I do not agree to allow the researcher to record (audio) my interview that I have been invited to.
☐ No, I do not agree to allow the researcher to record (audio) the interview that my child __________________________ have been invited to.

Your signature below indicates you have read the information in this consent form and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about this study.

I agree my participation in the study.

__________________________________________ __________________
Participant signature Date

__________________________________________
Printed name of participant
Appendix 2 – The prototype

Jorden! Den blå planeten i vintergatan. Fylld av liv, växter, människor och djur. Här snurrar vi, aldeles ensamma i universum.


Åh nej! Kometen smälde rakt in i farkosten.

Farkosten är helt ur kurs...

...och den faller rätt mot jorden!
Men på Björkenässkolan är allt som vanligt!

En av dom är du!

Den som är proffs på att fixa saker.

Den som kan snacka sig ur alla situationer.

Den som helst låter råstyrka och smidighet få sköta snacket.

Den som gillar att läsa och ta reda på information.

Välj den karaktären du vill vara genom att ta rätt bok.

Döp din karaktär och skriv ner det på karaktärsbladet.

När du spelar spelet ska du låtsas att du är den personen och prata med de andra spelarna som din karaktär.

Visa inte din bok för de andra spelarna!

Varje spelare måste också sätta ut poäng för sina egenskaper

Du får sätta en 4 på en egenskap, 3 på en, 2 på en och 1 på en.

Fixaren måste sätta sin 4 på händighet. Snackaren på karisma Sporttjelen på kroppskontroll Smartisen på intelligens. De andra får du sätta ut bäst du vill!


Fy! Det är hur mycket disk som helst!

Vill ni göra ett bra jobb och imponera på Mattanterna? Gå till 46

Vill ni istället slacka och kanske leka vattenkrig istället. Gå till 10

Du sparkar fotboll ett tag. Det är ganska roligt!

Välj en färdighet på ditt karaktärsblad som du kan lägga till en siffra på, eftersom du sparkat så duktigt och allt.

OK, du har ett gäng nycklar! Undrar vad du ska använda dem till? Gå till 71

Glöm inte att skriva upp det på din lapp!

Du hör konstiga ljud från trädet!

Säg till den att hålla tyst! 169

Ge den något att äta? 36

"Tsss, glöm, det! Ta en morot i stället så att du inte blir mätt innan maten"

"Vad sjutton tror ni att ni sysslar med?! Leker på jobbet! Nu är det ju vatten över allt. Ni får stanna kvar och göra om allt jobb. Skitungar!"

Ni för ett sånt liv att mattanten Ilse springer in till er.

Den viftar med fingrarna och imiterar något som kryper. Sedan pekar den på sig själv och ser sött ut. Den kanske gillar söta saker som kryper?!

Melon. Gott! Skriv upp det om du vill ta den!

Nu är det kört! Mamma och Pappa klampade in i rummet och uptäckte din nya vän. De ringde till myndigheterna som kom och hämtade den. Vill du försöka igen går du till 159
16

Vad ska ni göra nu?

Göm undan farkosten 70

Rota igenom varelsens grejer för att få reda på information 93

Ta hem varelsen 159

17

Har du lagat datorm? 32

Anmärks gå till 122

18

Mjölk alltså! Skriv upp att du tog det och gå till 122

19

Din nya kompis överlevde den första dagen och den blev inte påkommen av någon.

Diskutera med varandra om hur ni kunde gjort annorlunda. Eller varför ni tror att det gick så bra

Gå till 100 för att se vad som händer sen!

20

21

Det där var precis vad den ville ha! Den tittar lyckligt mot dig och spinner som en katt.

22

Mycket i boken har du redan läst innan. Men du hittar något om antihistamin, en medicin som kan hjälpa om man får en allergisk reaktion. Denna kunskap kan komma till användning senare. Gå till 28
Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

När ni tog hem Varelsens första gången, var ni hemma hos dig då?

Ja 130
Nej 167

Så himla onödigt. Nu får ni ju göra om allt igen.

Diska ännu mer äckliga tallrikar. 148

Oj, vad den låter! Om du inte får tyst på den kommer föräldrarna komma upp och upptäcka den!


Snabbt cyklar ni hem. Hur gömmer ni varelsen på vägen från skolan?

Mamma sitter på nedervåningen och pappa är inte hemma än. Själva springer ni in på rummet och stänger dörren. 131
Kom ihåg att inte visa boken för de andra!

Du får själv bestämma om du vill berätta vad som händer, vid ett senare tillfälle.

Åh, du är ju fantastisk! Du kan få min fjärilsamling som tack. Jag behöver den inte längre efter som min dator fungerar igen.

Det är inte klokt. Ni kan inte tro era ögon, men det ligger en varelse i gränden som ser väldigt skadad ut.

Kom ihåg att inte visa boken för de andra!
Du får själv bestämma om du vill berätta vad som händer, vid ett senare tillfälle.

"Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig."


"Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig."

Vad kan du ge den?

Vet du vad du letar efter? Ta det i så fall och skriv upp det.
Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

Vill du försöka ta nyckeln?

Farväl kompis.

Och farväl ni som spe-
-

Livet flyter på med er vän. Kraft-
-

Du lyckades! Berätta för dina vänner vad du gjorde för detta var ett verkligt genidrag.

Den verkar inte alls gilla hur namn-
-

Vill du försöka ta nyckeln?

Ändra namn! Behåll namnet

Farväl kompis. Och farväl ni som spe-
lade!

Diskutera er upplevel-
-

Den gillar inte att du fortsätter kalla den för det nam-
-

141
13
"Nu har ni varit duktiga, ungar! Man kan spegla sig i tallrikarna. Ta var sin glass från frysen och ta lite rast. Det har ni verkligen förtjänat!"

Mattanten Ilse kommer in och berömmer ert slit.

Ketchup fixat! Skriv upp det. Gå till 122

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

"Tsss, glöm, det! Ta en morot i stället så att du inte blir mätt innan maten"
54

"Vad ska du med den till? Jag behöver den till mäten!"

Vill du övertala honom? Annars går du till 122

55

Det är riktigt fint väder idag. Ni diskuterar vad ni ska göra efter skolan idag.

56

Han tror inte ett ögonblick på er historia och springer mot gränsen.

Han tar med sig varelsen och slänger in den i sin skåpbil och det är sista gången du ser den. Vill du spela igen går du till 1

57

Den kvittrar och verkar gilla hur namnet låter.

58

Du sitter och tittar på en ny dator. Men de är dyra.

Du kanske skulle fråga mamma om hon kunde hjälpa dig. Hon kommer svara nej, men det skadar inte att prova

59

"Vad ska du med den till? Jag behöver den till mäten!"

60

Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!
Woops, Det där var ju inte så bra.

Försök att förstå vad den vill ha av dig

Försök att övertala den

Den pekar upp mot natthimlen och ni förstår att den vill åka hem.

NEJ! VAD HAR HÄNT? DEN HAR FÄTT UTSLAG KRING HELA KROPPEN OCH VERKAR HA SVÅRT ATT ANDAS!

Mmm, apelsinjuice... Skriv upp det om du vill ta den!

Knack-Knack-Knack

"Det är mat", ropar Pappa från andra sidan dörren.

Om du har plockat på dig någon medicin du kan ge den? 81

Den börjar låta och skruva på sig. Använd din intelligens för att komma på en lösning.

Var gömmer ni varel- sen medan ni går och äter? Bestäm en bra plats och gå och ät!

När ni åtit färdigt, gå till 114
"Jag tror någon har sparkat omkull soptunnorna. Ni får gå och kolla efter, för här gör ni ingen nytta!"

Det spelade ingen roll att ni inte ville titta efter. Vuxna, вал Gå till 31

Ush det här blir nog jobbigt.

Vill ni ta något ur kylskåpet?

Bacon 165
Kyckling 158
Biff 59

Han ser lite skum ut!

Ska ni säga som det är? 175

Ska ni ljuga för honom? 136

Om detta är första gången du går in i köket, gå till 140

Annars, 171

Boken är jättelång, men det kanske finns något viktigt i den. Vill du inte läsa, går du till 28
Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

Den tittar på dig med sina stora ögon och pekar på sin mage.

Vill du försöka hjälpa den?
Vill du hämta en vuxen som kan hjälpa?
Vill ni bara springa där ifrån?
Antihistamin! Du visste att kunskapen skulle komma till användning, för varelsen ser mycket bättre ut nu.

Gott med sallad! Skriv upp det om du vill ta den!

Ni minns den kraschade farkosten ni gomde.
Det skulle ta hur mycket tid som helst att laga den.

Vill ni göra ett försök att hitta alla delar och laga den?
Dina föräldrar hittade din nya kompis och polisen kom och tog den iväg från dig. Om du vill kan du börja om från 159.

Nu har du gjort bort dig! Du fick utegångsförbud i en månad för den krossade rutan.

Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

"Du är för rolig du", skrattar mamma. "Du får inte en ny dator av mig, men du kan få hälften av pengarna"

Vad ska man säga, du halvlyckades med det omöjliga.

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni ser hur han åker iväg i sin skåpbil. Undrar vem det var!? Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!

"Okay då", säger han, men han verkar inte tro er riktigt.

Ni pratar om det en stund. Vad er högsta önskan är att bli. Och tänk att det faktiskt är möjligt!
Det är väl klart att du ska få en ny dator, min lille gulleponke. Du behöver ju den till dina studier.

Vad ska man säga, du lyckades med det omöjliga.

Det där skulle du inte ha gjort. Medan du rotar igenom varelsens prylar känner du en smärta i ditt ben.

Här slutar historien, vill ni prova igen går ni till 38.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktig småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.

Då hör ni en riktigt småll, som verkar komma från gränsen där man slängar sopor.

Vill ni titta efter? Annars gå till 177.

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Gå till 21.
Wow, en låda full med godis! Inte konstigt att pappa vaktat nyckeln så noga. Sniket av honom! Plocka fickorna fulla så lär han sig nog en läxa.

Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

När varelsen reser iväg kommer dens krafter att försvinna ifrån er. Då blir ni bara vanliga barn igen. Alla er drömmar kommer förmodligen inte att gå i uppfyllelse.

Ska ni verkligen låta den åka iväg?

Ja 44 Nej 108

Du gör ett hyfsat jobb, men det syns spår efter farkosten. Men det kommer ju ingen att hitta, eller?!

"du är för rolig du", skrattar mamma. "Du får inte en ny dator av mig, men du kan få hälften av pengarna"

Vad ska man säga, du halvlyckades med det omöjliga. 83

"eum, har ni sett något skumt här i krokar-" frågar en man och tittar mot gränden.

Han ser lite skum ut!

Ska ni sätta som det är? 175

Ska ni ljuga för honom? 52

Efter ett tag slutar krafterna att fungera.

En liten stund senare försvinner varelsen. Ni ser den aldrig mer igen

Här slutar historien, vill ni prova igen går ni till 38
Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

115

Ush, hela jordhögen är full av maskar. Vill du plocka upp dem gå till 49. Annars gå till 77

116

Du hör någon ropa från skolgården. “Hallå, är det någon där?”

111

Ska ni möta den som ropar? 106

Ska ni stanna kvar där ni är? 127

Du är redo för snacka brallorna av morsan.

112

Denna gången får du lägga till så många hjärttärningar som visas på ditt karaktärsblad.

113

Det skriker så högt av smärta att dina föräldrar kommer in.

110


114

När ni kommer tillbaka till gömstället efter maten märker ni att den har somnat.

115


109

Du är redo för snacka brallorna av morsan.

112


110

Den skriker så högt av smärta att dina föräldrar kommer in.

115

Dina föräldrar ringer till någon myndighet som kommer och hämtar upp din vän. Tyvärr klarar sig inte. Vad gjorde ni för fel? Vill ni prova igen går ni till 159

114
Du hör någon ropa från skolgården. "Hallå, är det någon där?"

Ska ni möta den som ropar? 106

Ska ni stanna kvar där ni är? 127


Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet! 65

Men va händer nu? 124

Varelsen verkar göra något underligt. Den liksom vibrerar. Och av någon underlig anledning känner du hur du blir snabbtänkt och har vettiga saker att säga! 112

Idag tappade Johanna en tallrik i matsalen, alla klappade händerna och hon började gråta. Stackarn!

På lunchen pratade ni om vad det mest pinsammaste ni ha varit med om.

Där din kompis är klar med sin sidohistoria går ni till 100

Vilken dag va!
Diskutera med varandra om vad som hänt och om det är något ni kunde gjort annorlunda.

Är ni klara? Gå till 1211

Men va händer nu?

Varelsen verkar göra något underligt. Den liksom vibrerar. Och av någon underlig anledning känner du hur du blir snabbtänkt och har vettiga saker att säga! 112
Mamma kommer in. Hon vet direkt vad det handlar om. ”Ska du tigga pengar nu igen”, frågar hon?

Detta kommer bli en svår förhandling. 160

Inget du gör verkar funka. Tråkigt!

”Tsss, glöm, det! Ta en morot i stället så att du inte blir mätt innan maten”

Den som ropar låter sig inte väntas på och kommer in i gränden.

Han tar med sig varelsen och slänger in den i sin skåpbil och det är sista gången du ser den. Vill du spela igen går du till 1

”Jag har haft en jättedålig dag på jobbet och det hjälpe inte att springa av mig. Jag ska laga mat nu, det kanske gör mig gladare. Håll koll på klockan för jag kommer upp till dig när maten är klar.”

Mamma var så upptagen att hon inte märkte att ni hade med er... Ja... vad sjutton ska ni kalla den för? 155
Denna gången får du lägga till så många hjärtätningar som visas på ditt karaktärsblad.

Du är redo för snacka bral-lorna av morsan.

Denna gången får du lägga till så många hjärtätningar som visas på ditt karaktärsblad.


De ringer till någon myndighet som kommer och hämtar upp din vän. Tyvärr klarar den sig inte. Vad gjorde ni för fel? Vill ni prova igen går ni till 159

Du trycker in mat i truten på den för att den ska bli tyst.

Har du nyckeln och vill öppna? 102

Annars får du leta vidare 23

Medan ni berättar om hur ni absolut inte sett något hör ni varelsen skrika till av smärta från gränden.

"Vad var det där", undrar den skumma mannen?

Hitta på något att säga, snabbt!

Du trycker in mat i truten på den för att den ska bli tyst.

Johnny kommer inspringandes i köket. Han ser svettig ut.

Den kvitrar och verkar gilla hur namnet låter.

Johnny kommer inspringandes i köket. Han ser svettig ut.
143

"Va' sysslar du med?! Gå ut ur mitt kök!"

Vad arg han blev. Du får inte gå in i köket mer. Spring där ifrån nu.

144

Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

Vad... det verkar inte sällsynt. Den rolar sig långsammare, skrattar inte så mycket och sover ganska mycket.

145

"Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig."

Man får faktiskt inte bitas. Skäll på den! 29

NEJ NU! Bit tillbaka. 184

Be om ursäkt för att du snoka de runt. 153

Gör ingenting. 16

146

"Tsss, glöm, det! Ta en morot i stället så att du inte blir mätt innan maten"

147

Men det verkar som att varelsen inte är lika glad längre. Den rör sig långsammare, skrattar inte så mycket och sover ganska mycket.

148

Medan ni diskar hör ni en hög småll. Vill ni kolla efter var ljudet kom ifrån, gå till 31

Annars gå till 69
Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!

Nu är datorn trasig igen. Det verkar vara ett virus. Vill du försöka laga den?

Stackare, det där gjorde säkert ont! Gå in och sätt på ett plåster.

Den förstår inte vad du säger, men verkar förstå att du ber om ursäkt.

Den nickar på huvudet och gör ett konstigt läte.

Vilket namn ska ni ge den? Är det ett:

- Sött namn? 57
- Roligt namn? 98
- Coolt namn? 104
- Fult namn? 50
- Fint namn? 138
- Underligt namn? 79
- Vanligt namn? 172

Strunta i att ge den ett namn 13

"App, app app! Ingen läskeblask innan maten!"

Vill du övertala honom? Annars gå till 122
Men va händer nu?
Varelsen verkar göra något underligt. Den liksom vibrerar. Och på någon underlig anledning känner du hur du blir snabbtänkt och har vettiga saker att säga!

Detta blev ju verkligen inte en dag som alla andra. Diskutera med varandra om vad som hänt hittills. kanske finns det något att lära?

Har ni snackat klart?!
Bestäm mellan er vem av er ni ska ta hem den till först, och gå till 166

Vill du ta något ur kylskåpet?

Okay, ta den då, men är du mätt när det är mat blir jag sur på dig.

Du lyckades! Nu blir nog mamma glad.

Ni andra är med om en helt vanlig skodag. Charlie i parallellklassen läser in sig på toan hela dagen. Det är väl det mest spännande som händer

På rasten pratar ni om vilka appar ni inte kan leva utan.

Där din kompis är klar med sin sidohistoria går ni till 100

Ni andra är med om en helt vanlig skoldag. Charlie i parallellklassen läser in sig på toan hela dagen. Det är väl det mest spännande som händer

Det här har du läst om, du vet exakt hur man lägger ett förband. Gå till 117

Vill du övertala honom? Annars gå till 122
Mamma kommer in. Hon vet direkt vad det handlar om. "Ska du tigga pengar nu igen", frågar hon?

"Vad ska du med den till? Jag behöver den till maten!"

Ibland stormar Mamma och Pappa in på rummet utan förvarning. Så var försiktig. Vem vet vad de kommer att göra om de hittar varelsen. Gå till 30

Oj! Det där gjorde inte saken bättre. Nu låter den ju ännu högre

Vad sa du egentligen?

Den kvittrar och verkar gilla hur namnet låter.
Du sitter hemma i köket. Din vän är gömd i din skolväska. Det är väl klart att du ska få en ny dator, min lille gulleponke. Du behöver ju den till dina studier!

"Vad ska man säga, du lyckades med det omöjliga."

Inget du gör verkar fungera. Men du har å andra sidan aldrig hjälpt en sådan varelse innan! Gå till 183

Hans ögon lyser upp när han hör er historia. Sedan springer han till gränden.

Han tar med sig varelsen och slängar den i sin skåpbil och det är sista gången du ser den. Vill du spela igen går du till 1

Ni avslutar skoldagen och går sedan hem och gör det ni diskuterade om innan.

Spelet är slut men vill du prova igen gå till 1

Du har aldrig fått en sådan utskäldning innan.


Ni hittar en vuxen som hjälper er genom att ringa polisen?!?!? Polisen kommer och hämtar varelsen och ni ser den aldrig mer igen.

Om du vill prova att spela igen, går du till 1

Lyckades ni med det ni försökte göra? Varför tror ni att det gick som det gick?

När ni diskuterat klart går ni till 38

Vilken underlig vecka ni varit med om! Berätta för varandra vad som hänt när ni varit ensamma med varelsen.

Lyckades ni med det ni försökte göra? Varför tror ni att det gick som det gick?

När ni diskuterat klart går ni till 38

Hans ögon lyser upp när han hör er historia. Sedan springer han till gränden.

Han tar med sig varelsen och slänger in den i sin skåpbil och det är sista gången du ser den. Vill du spela igen går du till 1

Ni avslutar skoldagen och går sedan hem och gör det ni diskuterade om innan.

Spelet är slut men vill du prova igen gå till 1

Du har aldrig fått en sådan utskäldning innan.


Ni hittar en vuxen som hjälper er genom att ringa polisen?!?!? Polisen kommer och hämtar varelsen och ni ser den aldrig mer igen.

Om du vill prova att spela igen, går du till 1

Du sitter hemma i köket. Din vän är gömd i din skolväska.
Du hör någon ropa från skolgården. "Hallå, är det någon där?"

Ska ni möta den som ropar?

Ska ni stanna kvar där ni är?

Brandlarmet gick igång, så ni fick sluta tidigare. Vad hittade ni på då?

Där din kompis är klar med sin sidohistoria går ni till 100

Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!


Nu står ni här ensamma i sopgränden och här slutar även historien. Undrar varför?!

Vill ni prova igen och kanske prova en annan taktik, gå till 1

Nej, den skakar bara på huvudet!