

# Topic on a Page

for Unit F163: Game Development

Cambridge Advanced National (Extended Certificate)

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*All posters are provided in both A3 and A4 formats*

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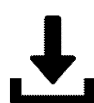
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# Teacher's Introduction

This resource is intended for use by students studying the **OCR Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification: Cambridge Advanced National in Computing: Application Development: Unit F163: Game development**, first teaching 2025. This is an optional external unit for this qualification and is assessed by an assignment.

*It is important to always check the exam board website for any new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.*

The intention of this resource is to provide a condensed 'Topic on a Page' which provides an overview of the content of each topic area, which will enable students to review their learning and apply it to the supplied activity sheets.

## How to use this resource

The resource consists of:

- 7 A3 posters covering the topics as listed below, labelled: 1 — 7
- 7 A3 activity posters which are partially completed and provide opportunities for students to fill in gaps to show their understanding of the topics and key terms, or as a planning tool to make notes for what they will do in their assessment task. These are labelled: 1 — 7

Opportunities for use:

- Printed out and displayed on classroom walls
- Individual copies to be given to students as the topic area is delivered
- Activity sheets can be given out at the end of topic delivery to check understanding
- Used as a planning or note-making tool for the assessment task

## Topic Area 1: Game design

1

1.1 Types and genres of digital games

1.1.1 Types of game

1.1.2 Genres of game

1.1.3 Gaming platforms

1.1.4 Pan European Game Information (PEGI) Certificates

2

1.2 Principles of game design

1.2.1 Game concept

1.2.2 Game and gameplay elements

3

1.2.3 Game assets

1.2.4 Game mechanics

## Topic Area 2: Plan and design high-fidelity game prototypes

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2.1 Game Design Documents (GDDs)

2.2 Game planning and design tools

## Topic Area 3: Create high-fidelity game prototypes

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3.1 Tools and techniques to source and prepare assets

3.2 Technical skills to create game environments and game functionality

## Topic Area 4: Test high-fidelity game prototypes

6

4.1 Game prototype testing

## Topic Area 5: Review and improve high-fidelity game prototypes

7

5.1 Techniques to review the fitness for purpose of game prototypes

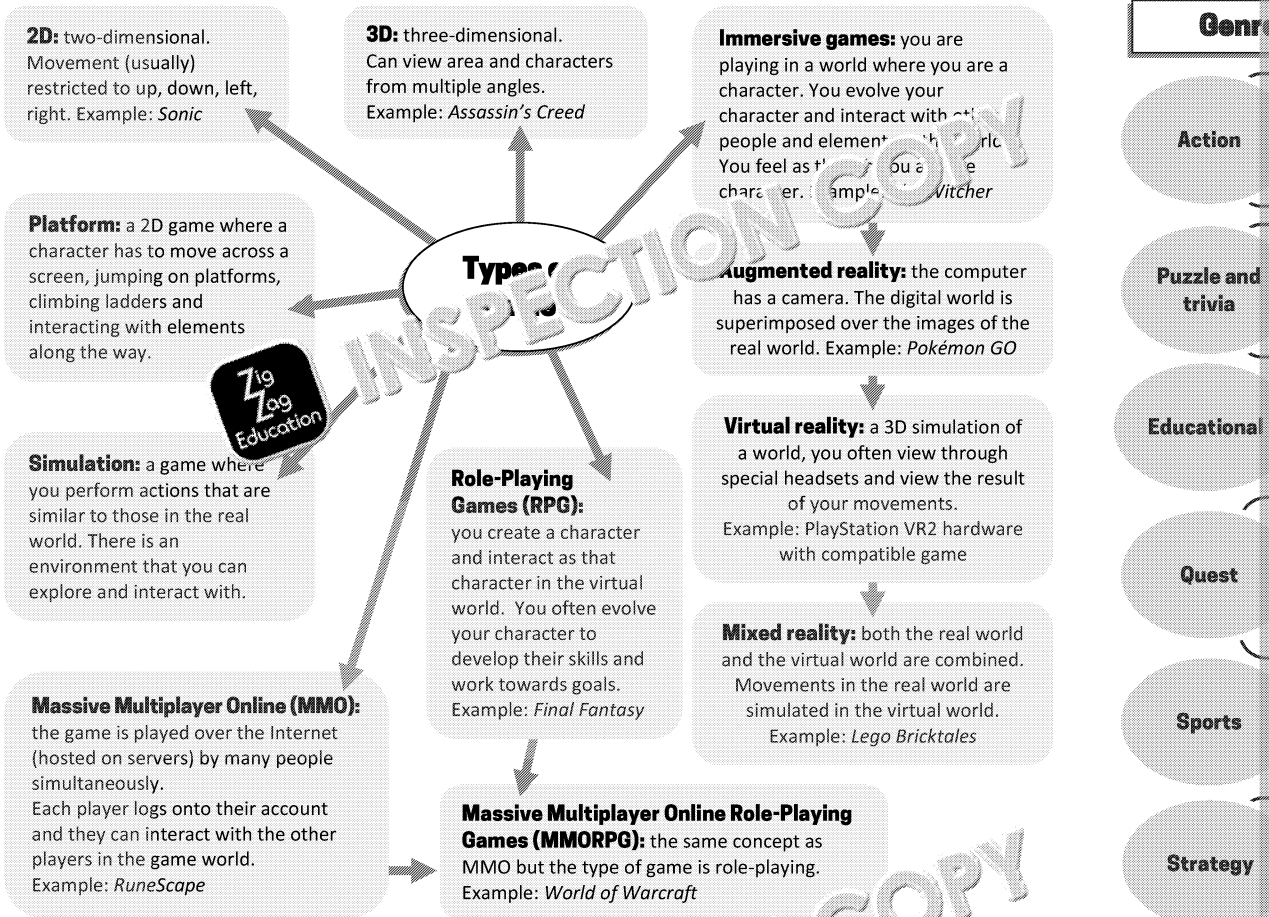
5.2 Improvements to, and further developments for, game prototypes

5.2.1 Improvements

5.2.2 Further development opportunities

June 2025

# TYPES AND GENRES



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## Gaming platforms

The hardware or systems used to play a game.

**Gaming console:** designed for high processor speed and graphics. Provide a dedicated interface for interacting with games. Games are often specific to one brand.

**PC gaming:** use of a personal computer or laptop. Usually controlled using a keyboard and mouse.

**Virtual reality (VR):** headset and other devices, may connect to pre-existing console or PC.

**Cross-platform:** game that exists on multiple platforms, e.g. PC and console. Controls and interaction may differ depending on platform.

**Online streaming:** game is played over the Internet hosted on servers. Players interact with other players on the same server. Game does not need downloading or running on the computer where it is played.

**Smart mobile gaming:** playing a game using a smartphone (or tablet). Game may be streamed or downloaded. Processing power and memory are constrained by device.

**Television streaming:** playing a game through a television as the computer. Game is accessed on a server through the Internet.

# PRINCIPLES OF GAME DESIGN

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**Purpose**  
Is the game to be educational?  
Exciting? Problem-solving? Engaging? Collaborative?

**Audience**  
Is the audience a set age? All ages? Over 7? Over 15? Adults only?  
Is it aimed at a specific demographic? People who like specific genres or activities?

**Story**  
What is the story of the game? Who are the characters? What is going to happen? How does the game progress the story? A book has a start, a middle and an end – a game needs the same planning.

**Unique (sell point)**  
What does your game have that other games don't? What will set it apart from other games?  
Why will people want this game and not others?

## Game elements

*Decisions need to be made on your game elements and how these all interact; a decision in one element will impact decisions in other elements.*

### Goals and objectives

- What is the game setting out to achieve? What is the player trying to do in the game? What is the end and along the way?
- What should the players be doing to interact with the game? How will the player be interacting?
- All the game elements and gameplay elements should support the goals and objectives.

### Aesthetics and visuals

- What is the game going to look like? Is it going to be 2D or 3D? Is it a cartoon-style image? Is it a vector? Or a 3D real-life simulation? How does this fit from or into the theme?

### Theme and story

- What is the focus of the game? What type and genre of game is it? Is it a quest? Strategy? Educational? Or is it a combination?
- What is the storyline of the game? What world is it set in? Who are the characters? What is the backstory (what has happened before this game)?
- How do the theme and story influence how the game works? The controls? The **goals and objectives**. The tactics that the user needs to employ, e.g. a theme of assassins will have the need for stealth built into all aspects of the game design.

## Gameplay elements

*Decisions need to be made on how the game will be played by the user. These will be based on your concept and elements, but you may need to amend some previous decisions based on new ideas in the gameplay elements.*

### Player interaction

- How will the player and the game communicate? How will the player input commands and directions? What movements and actions can they make? These may come from the **goals and objectives**.
- How will the results be given to the player?
- What hardware will the player use, and how will this dictate the methods of interaction?
- How does player interaction support the **immersion**, and how does the **story** change the interaction required?

### Reward and accomplishment

- What rewards will be given to the player? Will they be able to move forward in the game? Add skills to their characters? Build new aspects in the world? Explore new areas? Does the **story** require players to visit new areas or to collect items?
- How will a player be able to measure and check their accomplishments? Are there goals to meet? Are there quests that are completed? Are there levels to move through?

### Scoring

- How are the player's successes and failures measured? How are **goals** met through the scoring? What does scoring provide to the player? How does it contribute to the **story**?
- Are players awarded points for completing tasks? Are they given new skills? Money? Objects?
- How will the user access and use the scores/points, etc.? How will they know what to do with them?
- Does the scoring affect how the player progresses in the game?

### Player immersion

- How is the player going to be made to feel as though they are 'in' the game? How will they feel like they are the character they are playing and forget about the real world?
- How does this feed from the **story**? How will you keep the player engaged and enthusiastic about continuing with the game? How do the **aesthetics** support the player immersion? Which elements increase the immersion?

### Competition

- Is the game overall a competitive one? Are there smaller competitive elements?
- How will players compete and interact? What will happen if a player wins or loses?
- How will the player's progress be measured through the game? This will come from the **goals and objectives**. Which goals involve or require competition?

### Outcome and feedback

- How will the player know the outcome of their decisions? Will they see these visually? Will it change what they can do next in the game?
- How will the result of player actions and decisions be given to the player? How will they know what they have achieved and the outcomes of their decisions?

## Strategy and chance

Strategy requires making decisions. What decisions will the player need to make? What are the alternatives? How do each of these decisions impact the future of the game for that player? How does it determine what happens next?

Which parts of the game are a combination of strategy and chance? How are the **different** outcomes calculated from the two? How does the strategy chosen affect the chance?

succeed that impact the difference

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# PRINCIPLES OF GAME DESIGN

## Main characters

Who or what are the main characters? This could be the character(s) the user controls as well as other characters (both on your side and against you). How are the characters going to interact? What is their role in the game and the story?

## Non-player characters (NPCs)

Characters in the game not controlled by the player. These could be characters you interact with during the story. They may only be interacted with once, or they could appear multiple times. They could provide help to you or you may need to fight them.

## Scenery

Where is the game set, and how does this affect the scenery? What is needed to make the game immersive? Are there trees and plants? Mountains? Are there planets in space? Is there a city with buildings and cars? Which of these are interactive? Can the player move through the scenery, or does it stop them going into areas that they are not supposed to?

## Video

What part of the game video that cannot be interacted with? Are there cutscenes that introduce parts of the story? How do the videos continue the story? How do they add to the game?

## Backgrounds

Background designs can engage and distract players. Backgrounds can be 2D or 3D. They may need to change as the player moves through the game.

## Objects

What individual objects will appear in the game? How will the player interact with them? How will they move them? Can they be picked up? Can they be thrown?

## Personification

– the assignment of living characteristics to inanimate objects. Giving game characters emotions – how do they feel? How do they display these feelings? How do they react? How is the environment personified? How is time portrayed? How is a scary environment made to affect the other elements in the game?

## Textures

A texture could be the rough surface of a wooden box, or a path may change from soft to smooth and affect a character's movement. What elements do not need detailed texture? The background may be generic but the objects that the player interacts with will be more detailed.

## Animation

What is going to move, and how is it going to move? Are there objects that move? Are objects that move as a whole or do individual parts of them need animating individually?

## Sounds

Is there background music in the game? Does this change depending on what is happening in the game? Are there other sounds for the environment? If it is in a jungle are there animals? In a city are there people talking, and cars? How do the sounds impact the atmosphere?

## Character and object movement

- How are the main characters going to move? Can they walk? Run? Jump? Crawl?
- How do objects move? How do they interact with characters?
- Which objects can move? Can objects be pulled? What happens if they are run into? How and when can the player interact with objects?

## Game actions and events

- What events and actions take place in the game? Should come from the story.
- How do the actions/events move the game forward? What do players need to do in these events? What actions do players need to take? What happens if they take the wrong action?

## Game start mechanisms

- How does the game begin? How is the player introduced to the story and the character? How does the player learn how to control the game? Does the player have specific options before they can start?

## Inputs and outputs

- How is data input by the user? What hardware is needed? What specific buttons need to be pressed? Are there buttons or options that are not always available?
- How are the results of the player's actions communicated? Is there a visual result on screen? Is there a vibration?

## Player interaction and feedback

- How does the player interact with the game? How does the player know what actions are available? This comes from the outputs.
- How does the player interact with other players? Do they communicate through chat? Is this ad hoc, or are there set events?

## Shortcuts and cheats

- Are there any opportunities for the player to cheat? Where do they come from?
- Is there a way for the player to cheat? Can the player make it easier? Can the player change the game?

## Pass

**P2: Identify** the assets required for the game prototype.

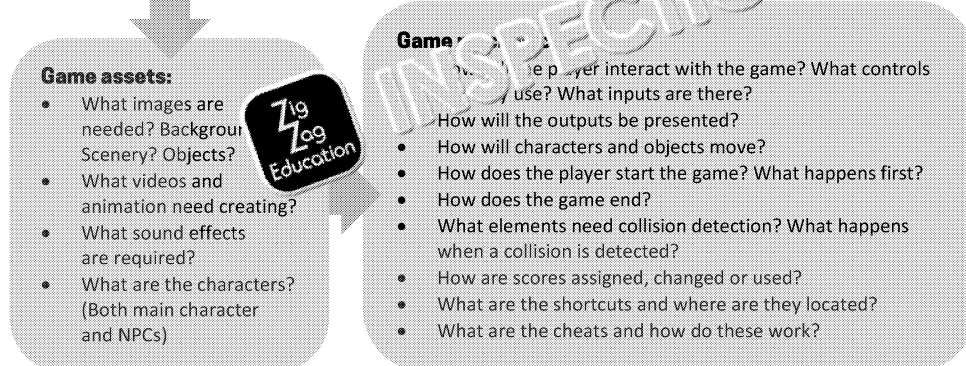
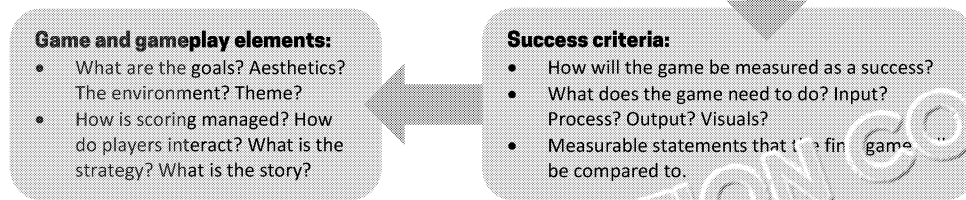
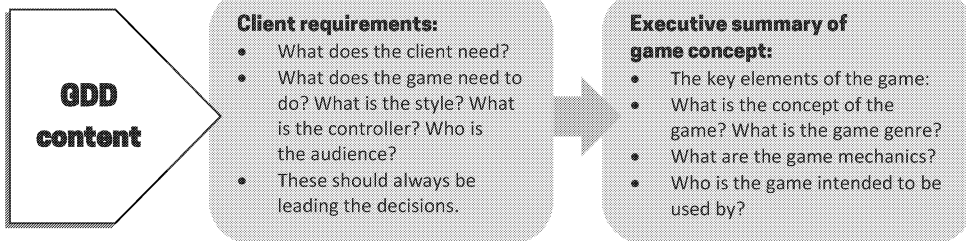
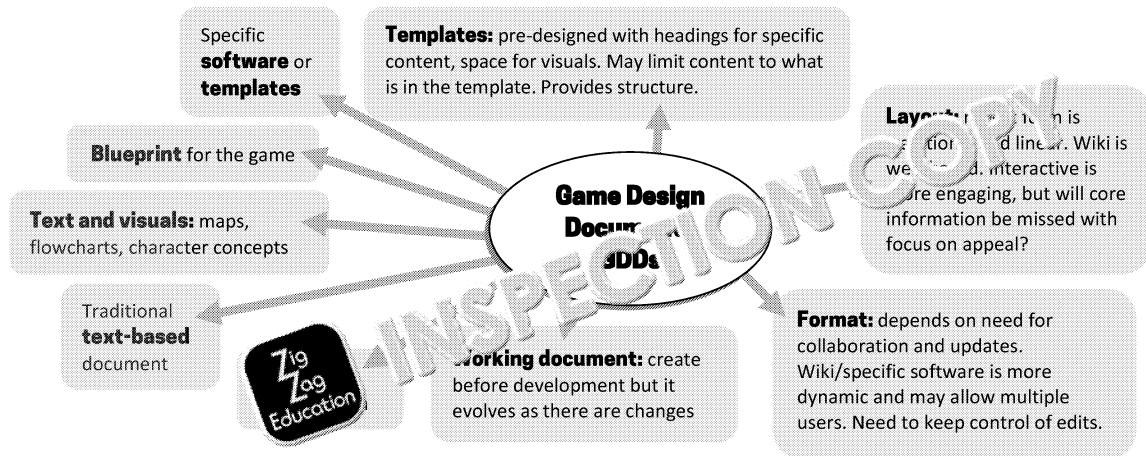
**P4: Describe** the game mechanics to be used in the game prototype.

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# PLAN AND DESIGN A GAME PROJECT



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# CREATE HIGH-FIDELITY GAME P

**Internet:** pre-made images, sound, videos. Check copyright.

**Stock library:** pre-made image, sound, videos. May have to pay.

**File format and properties:**  
what file types are compatible with the software or language you are using to develop the program?  
Consider the resolution and depth of images vs file size.  
Need to find a balance.

## Game engine tools

### Asset management

Provides organisation for a location of files, formats.

### Animation systems

- Renders the images to
- Allows the creation of manipulates its movement

### Rendering engine

This generates and displays does the processing and moving around an object d

### Scripting environment

- The area where you works with the engine
- It may have features debugging, e.g. autoco

**Libraries:** These provide having to rewrite and test download additional librari

## Source and prepare assets

**Naming conventions:** will images be a specific set of characters, e.g. img? Will images for a scene so you know which they are?

## Programming techniques

### Variables

A variable is a space in memory that can store a value. The value can change while the program is running. The space in memory is given an identifier (name).

- Variables are used to store data in the program, e.g. the input from a user, the current score, the health of a character, the coordinates of the character.

### Assignment

Values are assigned to data structures (variables, constant, arrays). In the assignment statement the identifier of the data structure is written, then an = sign and then the value that is being stored.

### Constant

- A constant is the same as a variable – except the value it stores is set when the program starts and cannot change unless you stop the program and rewrite the code.
- Constants are used to store values that should not change. These are often mathematical, such as the value of pi, or it could store the gravity setting for the game.

### Iteration

Iteration means to repeat. Iteration is when the code runs a set number of times, e.g. 10 times. The condition could state that the code runs until a condition

### Subprograms (subroutines/ functions/procedures)

A subprogram (subroutine) is an independent part of code that can be called from other parts of the program (or other programs). Subroutines can be used when there is code that may need to run multiple times. Instead of writing it each time, the subroutine can be called. Values can be passed to subroutines; these are called parameters. A procedure is a subroutine that does not return a value to the program that called it. A function is a subroutine that returns one or more values to the program that called it.

### Conditions

- Conditions are statements that equate to either true or false.
- They can include mathematical and Boolean operators.
- For example:  $10 \leq 20$  AND  $10 < 30$  will equate to TRUE because both sides are true.

### Inputs and outputs

- An input is data read from the user. This could be a button press, the movement of a controller, the entering of text.
- The input data needs to be stored somewhere, then assigned to a variable and can then be used in the program.
- Outputs is data being given to the user. This could be a visual output, e.g. text on the screen. In a game, it could be movement of the character, camera movement, perspective, sound effects.

### Arithmetic

Arithmetic operators perform mathematical and logical processes on data. Mathematical operators include addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. There are also operators for other processes such as modulus division, integer division and power of. Logical operators are Boolean AND, OR and NOT.

### Sequence

A sequence is when lines of code are written to be executed once from start to finish. The first line is executed, then the second, then the third, etc.

**Resizing/cropping** – changing image/video dimensions. Cropping removes part of the image/video. Cropping so reduces length.

**Changing resolution** – lower resolution removes pixels and details but reduces complexity and file size.

**Animating objects** – a non-animated asset may need altering to animate it, e.g. changing an image of a bird to make it look as though it is flying.

**Duplicating** – taking one element and using it multiple times, e.g. an image of a tree can be used multiple times to create a forest.

**Changing duration** – removing part of video/sound to make it shorter. Select only the part you need.

### Creating multiple versions

– a character or object that moves will need different version for each movement. A detailed movement may have multiple separate images, each showing the object from a slightly different position.

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# TEST HIGH-FIDELITY GAME PRO

**Test plan** – A document that identifies how you are going to test the program. It identifies the different elements that need to be tested, how they will be tested, and the test data that needs to be used to test it.

**Dry run** – Walk through the program without running it. Follow each line of code and write down the values in the variables and data structures.

**Trace table** – Used with a dry run. The table has a column for each data structure and the output. Follow the program one line at a time and write the changes in values in the



## Testing

...ing repeatedly throughout the program. Each time you make a change, or add something, test the program again. Test with different data and different run-throughs because one small change could affect other elements of the program.

**Actions and events** – each action that the player can make, e.g. making a movement, opening a door, climbing a wall. Test each action in each place where the action can occur, just because they can open one door doesn't mean they can open every door. Each event that takes place, e.g. each collision, each change in scenery, each movement into a new area, each encounter with an NPC.

**Game progression/levels** – does the game play through as it should? Does the player move from the start of the game to the next section as intended? Can the player move between different areas within the game or progress to the next level?

**Player interaction and feedback** – is the player able to interact (input and output) with the game as expected and required through the game? Does each input the player makes produce the correct output?

**Compatibility testing** – the game is tested on different hardware and software. Does the game still function as it should? Does the performance of the game change depending on each system?

**Performance testing** – how well does the program respond in terms of speed? Responsiveness? Scalability?

- Is there any lag in the game? Does it pause for any amount of time, e.g. when loading? Is this excessive and unreasonable?
- How effectively is the game making use of the processor and graphics processor? Is there excessive use at a time when it is not important?
- If online, does the game crash when there are a certain number of consecutive players? Does the response time decrease?
- Does the game stop working at any time?

**Play testing** – the game is tested by potential users. They may have specific goals or they may be asked to play as they want to. The testing is monitored and problems or areas for improvement identified.

## Testing types

**Functional testing** – test the program perform the actions it was designed to perform?

- When the left arrow on the keyboard is pressed, does the character move a step to the left? Does the background move with them?
- When a specific object is hit, does the character stop?
- Do the character's points increase by the correct quantity when they open a box?

## Results analysis and remedial action

- What do they show?
- Which tests worked and which identified a problem?
- What does the feedback show?
- Statistical analysis of results, e.g. % of performance testing that was successful

### Summarise the results

- Which features are successful?
- Which features do not work?
- What needs improving?
- Which of these points are critical, which are preferable, and which are minor?

### Remedial action

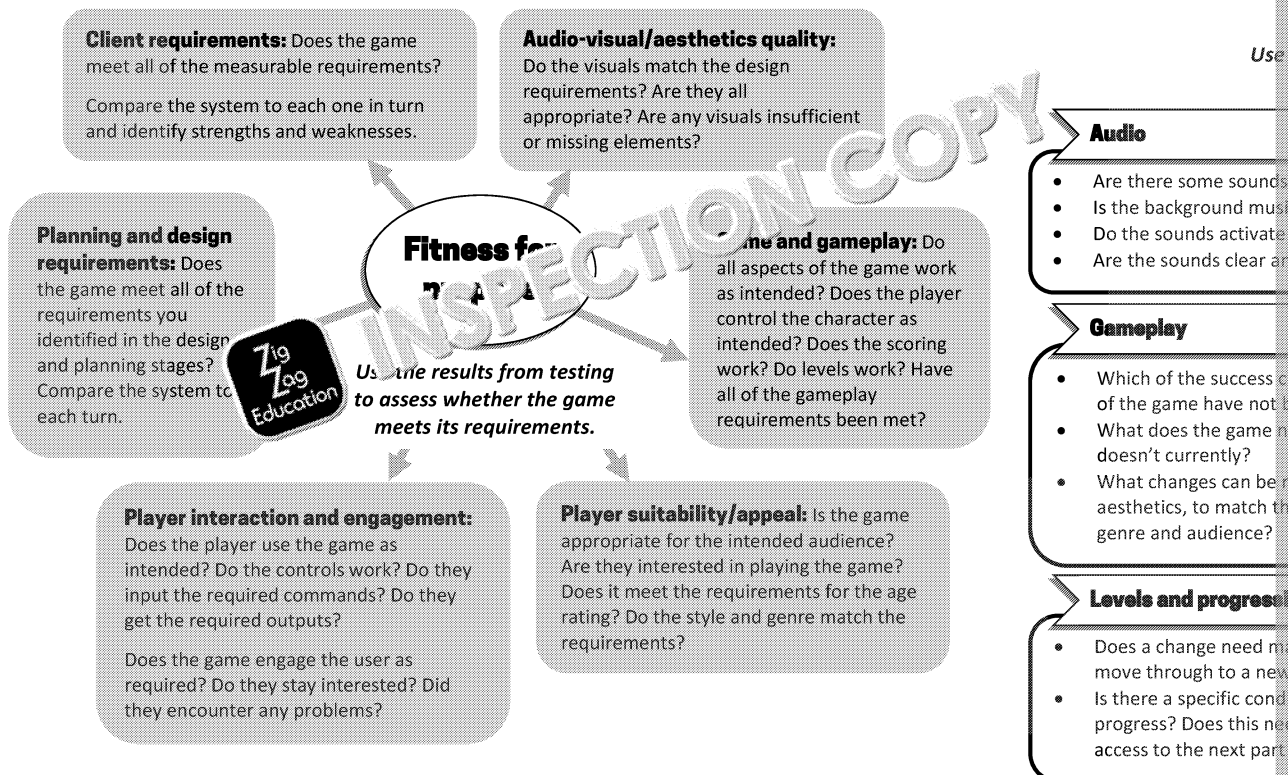
Based on the results – what changes need to be made to the game? What can be fixed? What areas need changing to improve them?

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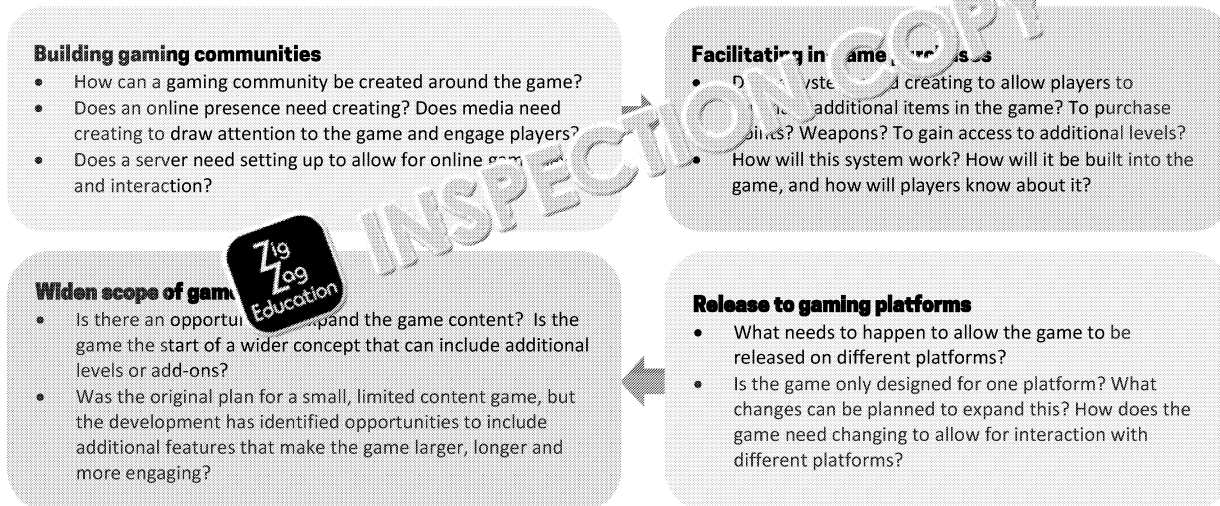
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# REVIEW AND IMPROVE HIGH-FIDELITY C



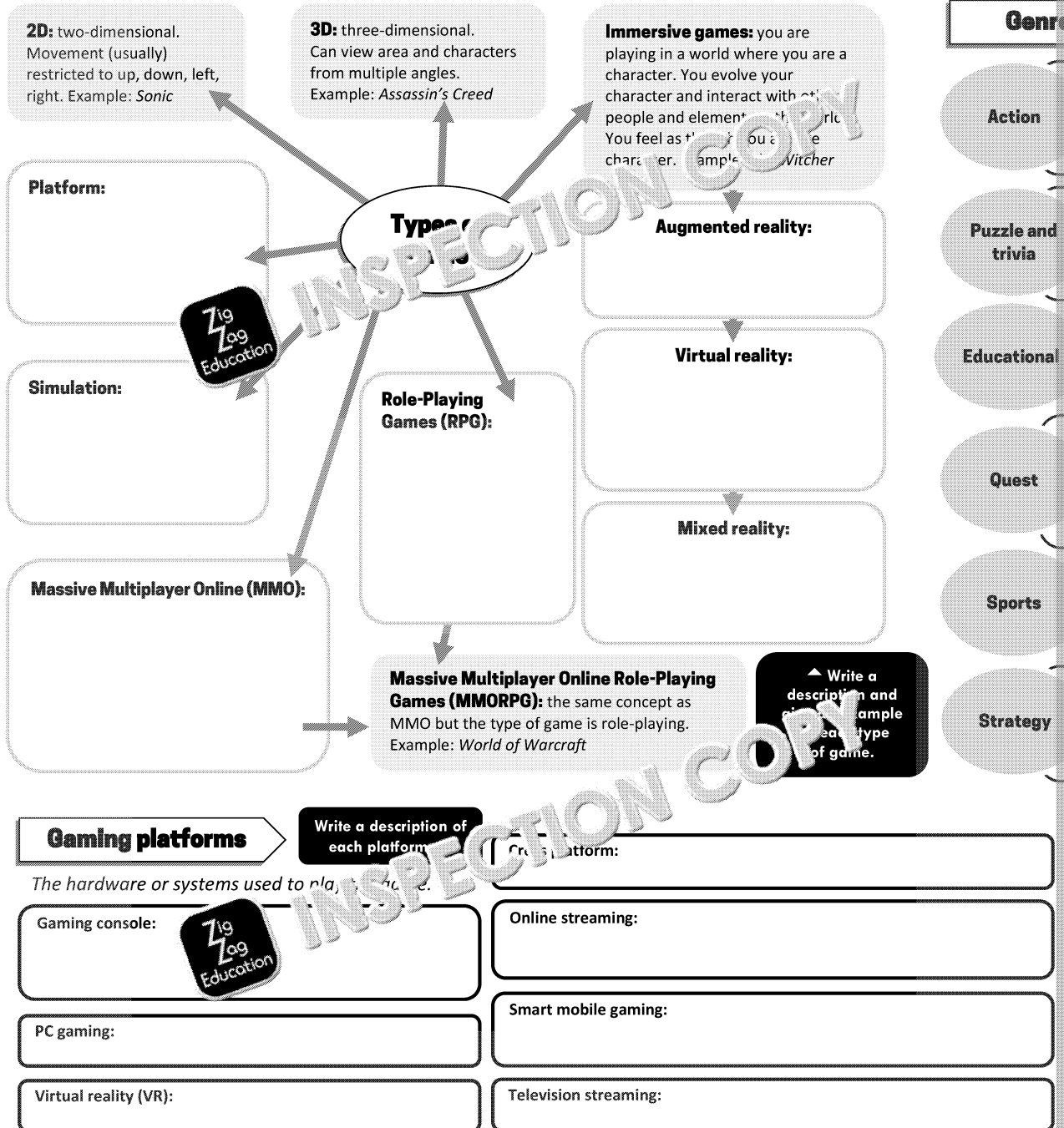
## Further development opportunities



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Purpose

Audience

Game concept

Story



Unique selling point (USP)

## Game elements

Decisions need to be made on your game elements – these decisions will affect the game. A decision in one element will affect decisions in other elements.

Goals and objectives

Aesthetics and visuals

Game and story

Select a game and write its purpose, audience, story and USP. ▲

▲ Complete a description of the game and gameplay elements and add an example for your chosen game. ▼

Player interaction

## Gameplay elements

Decisions need to be made on how the game will be played by the user. These decisions will affect the game. These decisions will be based on your concept and elements, but you may need to amend some previous decisions based on new ideas in the gameplay elements.

Player immersion

Reward and accomplishment

Competition

Scoring



Outcome and feedback

## Strategy and chance

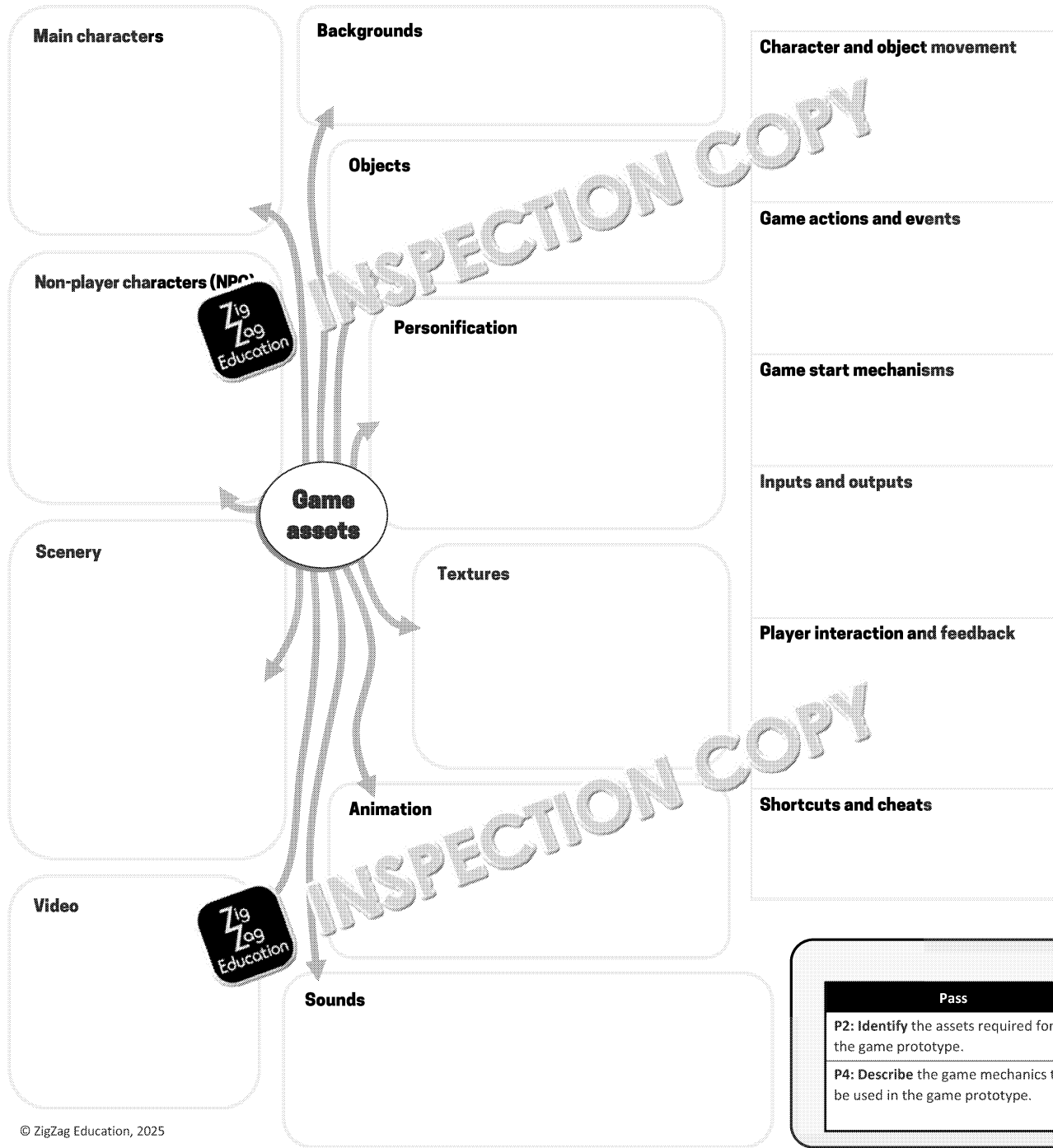
Balance:

100% Strategy

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## ACTIVITY POSTER

# PLAN AND DESIGN A GAME PROJECT

Specific **software or templates**

**Templates:** pre-designed with headings for specific content, space for visuals. May limit content to what is in the template. Provides structure.

**Blueprint** for the game

**Text and visuals:** maps, flowcharts, character concepts

Traditional **text-based** document



**Game Design Document (GDD)**

**Working document:** create before development but it evolves as there are changes

**Layout:** which is linear. Wiki is more engaging, but will core information be missed with focus on appeal?

**Format:** depends on need for collaboration and updates. Wiki/specific software is more dynamic and may allow multiple users. Need to keep control of edits.

Storyboard

Assets list

Doc

**ODD content**

**Client requirements:**

**Executive summary of game concept:**

Complete the descriptions of planning and design tools.

**Game and gameplay elements:**

**Success criteria:**

**Decision tree**

**Flowchart**

**Pseudocode**

**Game assets:**



**Game assets:**

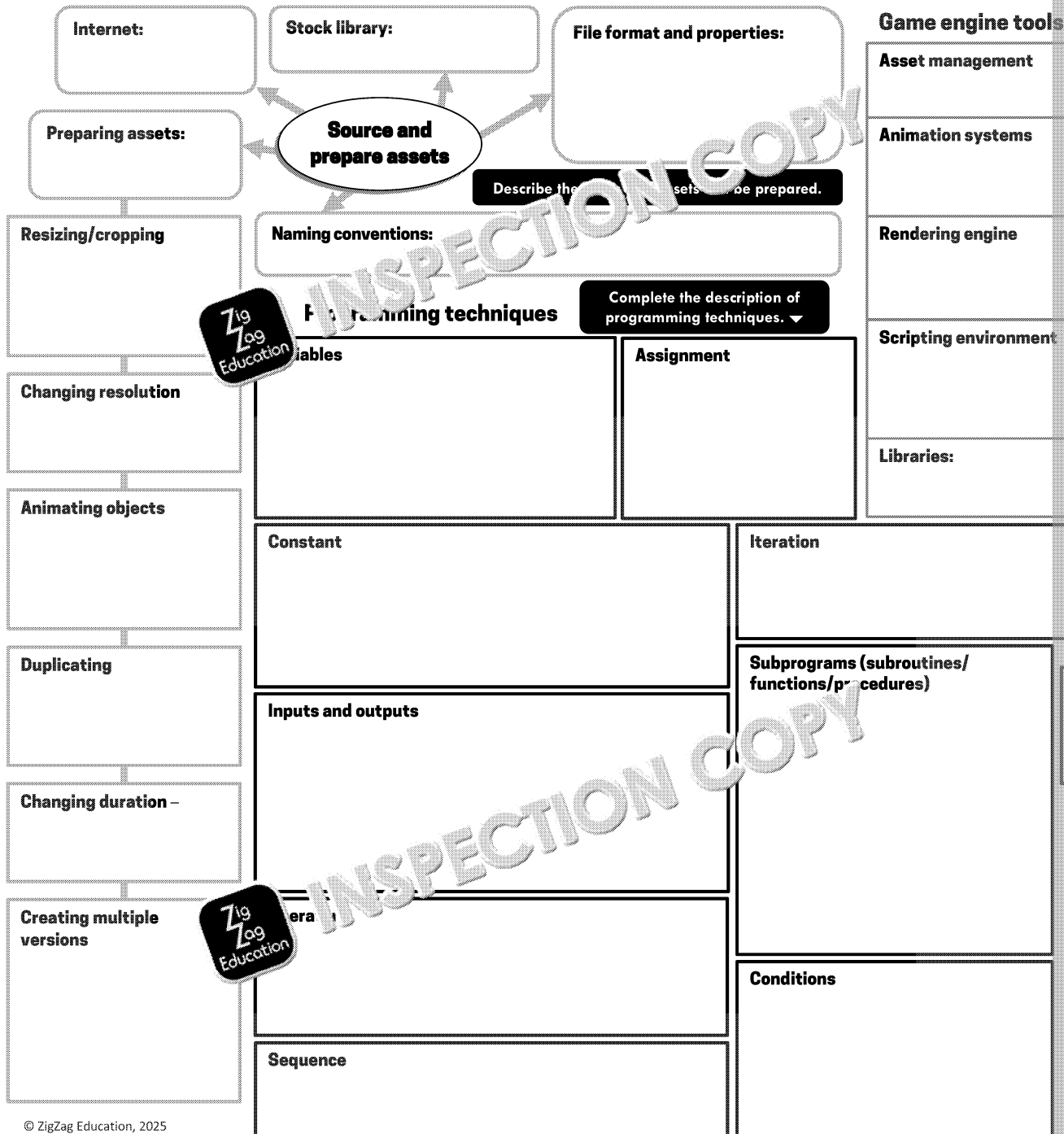
Pass

**P3: Design game visuals appropriate to the game prototype.**

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Test plan

Dry run

How will you test these elements of your prototype?

Actions and events

Game progression/levels

Player interaction and feedback

Trace table

Testing



Describe the testing methods.

Performance testing

Compatibility testing

Play testing

Complete the descriptions of testing types.

Testing types

Results analysis and remedial action

Functional testing



Summarise the results

- Which features are successful?
- Which features do not work?
- What needs improving?
- Which of these points are critical, which are preferable, and which are acceptable?

Remedial action

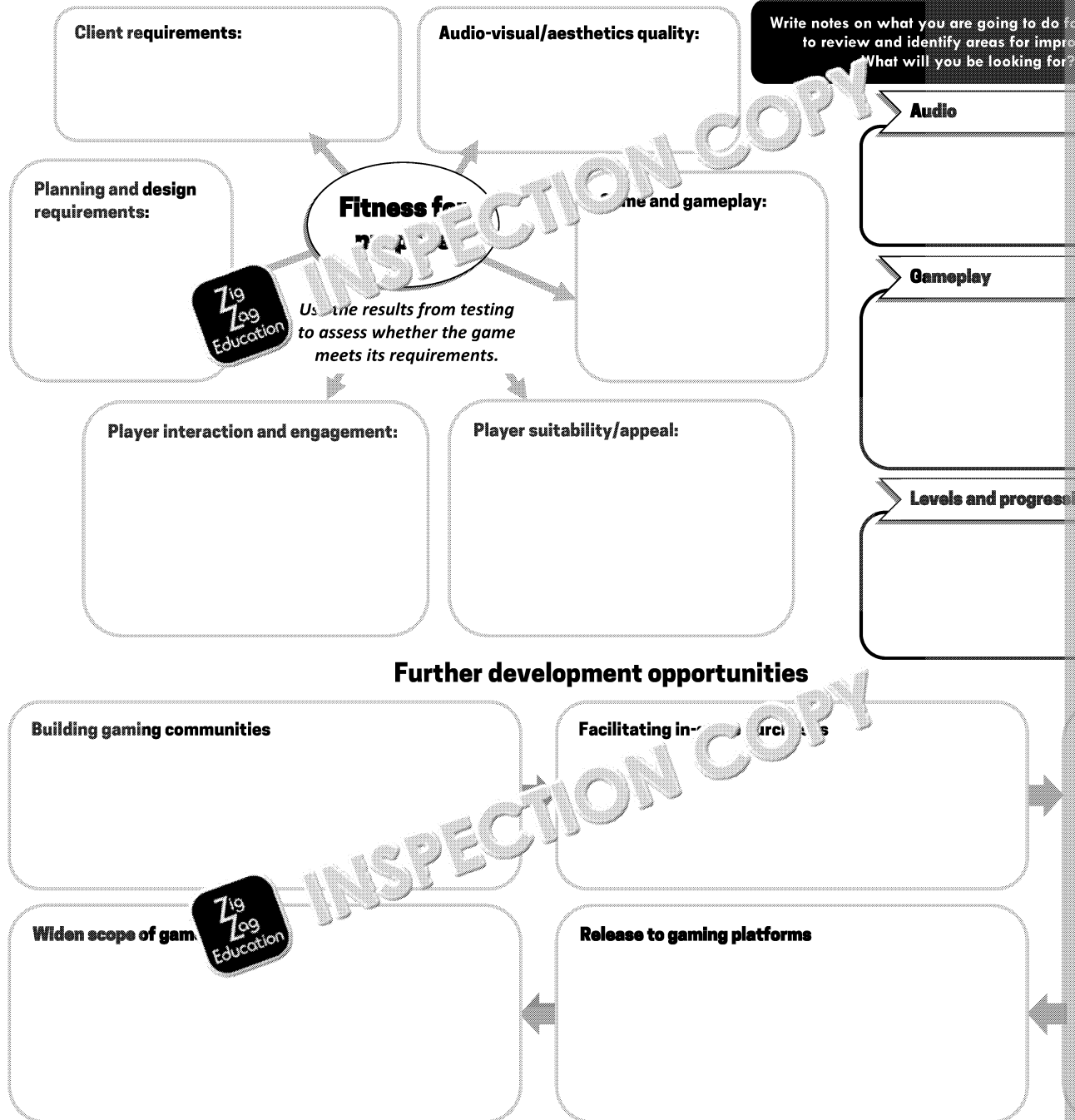
Based on the results – what changes need to be made to the game? What can be fixed? What areas need changing to improve them?

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# REVIEW AND IMPROVE HIGH-FIDELITY C



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