TLASS Playtest Guide Online

Introductions

There are a ton of things that could influence a players decisions when impacting the economies - game rules, basic number comparisons, narrative incentives, short-term predictions, long-term strategies, incorrect assumptions, confusing visual aids, and more. It's important to understand how these affect players so we can help them achieve a feeling of successful resource management, one of our game pillars.

Objectives

The objective of this playtest is to gather information about the player's interactions with their resources, narrative choices, strategies, and win conditions.
Minigames will also be tested for usability, methods, and understanding.

Research Questions:

1. What player observations impact the decisions they make that affect economies? How do they interpret these observations?
2. What prevents players from learning how to succeed in both minigames and resource management?
3. When playing any aspect of the game, what prevents or distracts players from enjoying their experience?

Playtest set up

Moderators will negotiate a time and date for meeting, and ask if the playtester is willing to share their facial reactions through a webcam to provide better information. They will also be informed that during the playtest they must share their screen, and that their playtest (including voice) will be recorded. Guests will play from home on their own computer. Playtesters will record observations on paper.

Equipment

web camera (playtester's side) (optional)	OBS Studio (moderator's side)	Playtesting Build (playtester's side)
computer setup (chair, mouse/keyboard, etc.)	pencil & notebook (ensure writing utensil works and have extra)	Screenshare / Voice Chat Software (ex: Discord) (playtester and moderator)

Metrics

Deaths

Resources at different stages

Occurence rate of Random Events

Day reached before game end

Instructions

Online

1. Before inviting the playtester,
    a. open OBS studio.
    b. Ensure that the correct monitor is being captured.
    c. Set "mic/aux" and "desktop audio" to full, ensuring that it isn't muted.
2. Enter voice chat with the playtester, greet them and thank them for volunteering. Possibly chat with them to relieve tension.
3. Ensure your playtester is properly situated:
    a. They have the proper game build
    b. They can cast their screen
    c. They can join a voice call
    d. If they are comfortable with it, they can broadcast their webcam
4. Explain the purpose of the test:

a. The purpose of this playtest session is to gather information that can help us improve the game. We want as much information about your thoughts and experience as possible so that the game can be improved. Remember that criticism is especially useful because problems that are critiqued can be improved. Speaking any thought process or reactions out loud is also extremely valuable, so we encourage you to think out loud as you play. Your feedback is extremely valuable to us and will help us improve this game moving forward.

5. Present pre-test survey found at https://forms.gle/4fQ1iK6pGvcGuckR6, explaining it won't take long
6. When pre-test survey is done, explain the following:
7. "We can start testing the game. Some things to note. I can't help you with questions about how to play the game, or else I won't be testing whether the game is usable. Remember that this is to gather unfiltered opinions about the game, however critical they might be. While I can't help you with issues, thinking aloud is an invaluable tool to help us understand your thought process, so please remember that questions, reactions, guesses, strategies, anything at all that pops into your mind can be spoken out loud as a constant dialogue."
8. Invite them to share their screen (and webcam if they chose to do so) and begin playing.
9. Ready clip-board and take notes. Write down the time and have them play for at least 15 minutes.
10. Open discussion questions:
    a. Is anything that you're trying to do going wrong?
    b. Was that choice made for any particular reasons?
    c. What are your expectations for your success?
    d. Is there anything that's confusing you?
    e. Is anything surprising you?
    f. Is there anything that you had to re-interpret to understand properly?
    g. Does anything seem like it should work differently from how it does?
11. After you're finished playtesting, invite them to close the game, stop recording with OBS studio, and send them the post-test survey link: https://forms.gle/RvhSQDSsGghPqupB9 . Have the player complete it.
12. Remind them how valuable they are to the game's quality, and thank them for their time.
13. After the playtester has left,

a. Enter OBS studio, and mute microphone if you're used to it muted so you don't accidentally record it later. Then, navigate to File > Remux Recordings. Remux the most recent file in the folder. Place the file in the folder titled "videos" found at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11IrVQ11W2qgT9TkCimy4ezULGWNIfAKB?usp=sharing

b. Take photos of your playtest observation notes. Place the image files in the folder titled "observations"