

Team Echo

Game Design Document  
for

# Morpheus

“Dreams can be quite puzzling.”

Version 2.0

## Game Design

### Game Design Summary

Morpheus is an isometric puzzle game in which players assume the role of Morpheus, the God of dreams, and must guide Dreams and Nightmares to their correct exit doors, to make sure that they get to the correct sleeping person. Gameplay occurs on a 5x5 grid, and as Dreams and Nightmares can't exactly think on their own, must have their paths drawn out for them by having the player click and drag to draw their paths on the board. Dreams go in the active Dream exit door, Nightmares into the active Nightmare

exit door. Simple. Except, paths can't cross. If Dreams and Nightmares collide with one another, they die, and the player has to try again to create the correct path solution.

What's that about solutions, you say? Glad you asked! Loki, the Trickster God, loves making other's lives miserable. So, to make the players' lives miserable, he's made sure that Dreams and Nightmares are arranged in certain ways - in this sense, which door they're standing in front of, and planted several obstacles on the board in order to make path drawing even harder. So every stage is a unique puzzle for the player to solve.

The win condition for a stage is when every Dream and Nightmare has been sorted to their correct exit door. The lose condition occurs in a few different ways: first is if Dreams and Nightmares collide. Secondly, if they go into the wrong exit door. Third, if any piece is left on the board, then the puzzle hasn't been solved. Similarly, if a piece is trapped by an obstacle, then it's considered the same as leaving one on the board.

The order of operations in the game occurs as such: the player is given a stage to solve. Then, they draw what they think are the correct pathways, including placing the limited number of blank tiles they have, for the Dreams and Nightmares present. Then they hit a button, and the pieces are on their way. They won't deviate from their drawn path (unless they hit a certain obstacle/power up, more on that later).

If like pieces collide with each other (say, a Dream with a Dream), then they combine! And that's good, because some doors with *require* a certain level of Dream or Nightmare in order to win. If they collide on a blank tile, and are of the same level (i.e., two level two dreams collide) then they simply move towards the exit door, though not necessarily in the most efficient path. So here's a hypothetical: the stage starts with two Dreams and three Nightmares. The Nightmares are fine and dandy, but the Dream's exit door requires a level two dream (I guess the person sleeping really needs a good dream). Therefore, the player will have to plan out the paths of the pieces to not only get to their proper exits unscathed, but they also need to properly plot the Dreams combining, and then heading into their exit door. It's tricky, indeed!

As the game progresses, it will naturally increase in difficulty. Later stages (or a challenge mode) will have a timer for the player to plot their paths before the pieces move automatically. That's also in addition to an increase in obstacles, pieces, etc.

## **Gameplay**

The gameplay of Morpheus is a turn based, path drawing puzzle game. Players need to draw the correct paths with their cursor over tiles in order to direct Dreams and

Nightmares to their correct exits, while making sure that they don't collide with each other, or get stuck in obstacles. After the player thinks that they have drawn the correct path (the "optimal solution"), then they press the Move button to initiate the turn. If the player has failed in solving the solution, or thinks they can do it in a more efficient manner, then they can hit Reset to reset the board and try again. At the end of the level, the player is ranked in terms of their puzzle solving: Three leaves means the player solved the puzzle in the optimal method. Two leaves means they're pretty good, but could've done better. One leaf indicates that the player passed the level, but there were much better methods of solving. After the level is beat, the player moves onto the next one, or can retry the level (NOTE: There may be a challenge mode, in which the player is timed to solved the level).

## **Mindset**

The player is thoughtful, methodical, and at times zen like, which we encourage through the use of turns, path drawing, obstacles, and the dream-like atmosphere.

# **Technical**

## **Screens**

1. Title Screen
  - a. Start, Options, Credits
2. Level Select
3. Game
  - a. Assessment/Level Select

## **Controls**

Controls are click and drag to rotate a tile in the desired direction, an action button to move the characters along their path(s), a second to place blank tiles, and a third to reset the level.

# **Level Design**

## **Theme**

1. Dreamspace
  - a. Mood
    - i. Calm, pleasant, ethereal
  - b. Objects
    - i. *Ambient*
      1. Stars
      2. Vines
      3. Particles
    - ii. *Interactive*
      1. Tiles
      2. Exit Doors
      3. Dreams
      4. Nightmares
      5. Obstacles
        - a. Walls
        - b. Gates
        - c. Checkpoints
        - d. Teleportation Tiles
        - e. Nonrotatable Tiles

## Game Flow

1. Player starts with a view of the board
2. Dreams and Nightmares are in the entrance doors, idle
3. Across from them are their exit doors
4. Arrows are on several tiles of the board
5. Player must draw paths for Dreams and Nightmares
6. Obstacles are on the board, so they have to avoid those
7. Paths can't cause Dreams and Nightmares to collide, so they have to be mindful
8. Blank tiles can be placed as needed, and as long as some are available
9. If Dreams or Nightmares need to combine/downgrade, then the player needs to account for that
10. If a checkpoint needs to be passed, then the player needs to plan the paths accordingly
11. If Teleportation Tiles are on the board, then the player can take advantage of them
12. If Gates are present, then the player needs to plan for the correct character to go through it
13. Dreams and Nightmares don't move on their own, so the player has to hit the button for them to move

14. The player has either solved the level to a certain degree, or needs to restart

# Graphics

## Style Attributes

Morpheus is heavily inspired by Art Nouveau, specifically the useage of framing, arches, vines, and color. The graphics are to be reflexive of the dreamstate; that is, ethereal, somewhat abstract, and stylized. Characters are colorful, but don't have thick outlines, and are floral. With the exception of the board itself, curves are emphasized over sharp lines. The board itself does not seem too "sharp" due to the arrows being reflexive of the environment, and the plants surrounding the board. Obstacles should similarly be reminiscent of nature.

To give player feedback, particles, and lights, will be used to highlight tiles that are currently selected. Exit doors will also have particles and light effects. When characters combine, effects will play in combination with the animations. Obstacles will have effects appropriate to their nature - for example, a teleporting tile will not have the same effects as a gate. When a character has passed a checkpoint, then the graphics will also reflect this progression.

## Graphics Needed

1. Characters
  - a. Dreams
    - i. Super-Dreams (Crown)
  - b. Nightmares
    - i. Super-Nightmares (Crown)
2. Obstacles
  - a. Walls
  - b. Gates
  - c. Checkpoints
  - d. Teleportation Tiles
  - e. Nonrotatable Tiles
3. Ambient
  - a. Vines
  - b. Skybox
  - c. Board walls

4. Board
  - a. Tiles
  - b. Arrows
  - c. Entrance Doors
  - d. Exit Doors
5. GUI
  - a. Move Button
  - b. Reset Button
  - c. Score
  - d. Hearts
  - e. Door Counter (for when certain characters need to go through a specific door)
  - f. Timer (for challenge mode)
  - g. Path Colors

# Sound Design

## Style Attributes

As Morpheus takes place in a dream environment, the sound should reflect this quality. The game is musical in nature - the ambient noise, effects, even the characters all add up to a symphonic soundtrack that evokes the feeling of being asleep. Thus, there are no “true” character sound effects: characters play notes that are reflexive of their nature when they move, collide, exit, etc. The soundtrack should keep the player engaged, but also try to keep them in a zen mindset.

## Sounds Needed

1. Board
  - a. Tiles
    - i. Rotate
    - ii. Fail
  - b. Walls hit
  - c. Checkpoint passed
  - d. Gate opened/closed
  - e. Teleportation
2. Characters
  - a. Dream

- i. Combine
    - ii. Exit
    - iii. Death
    - iv. Movement
  - b. Nightmare
    - i. Combine
    - ii. Exit
    - iii. Death
    - iv. Movement
- 3. GUI
  - a. Score tally
  - b. Button pressed
  - c. Level select
  - d. Menu select
- 4. Ambient
  - a. Particles
  - b. Wind
  - c. Leaves
  - d. Normal Soundtrack 1-4
  - e. Challenge Mode Soundtrack
  - f. Timer