

Development of a web-based resource for users to create their own online games

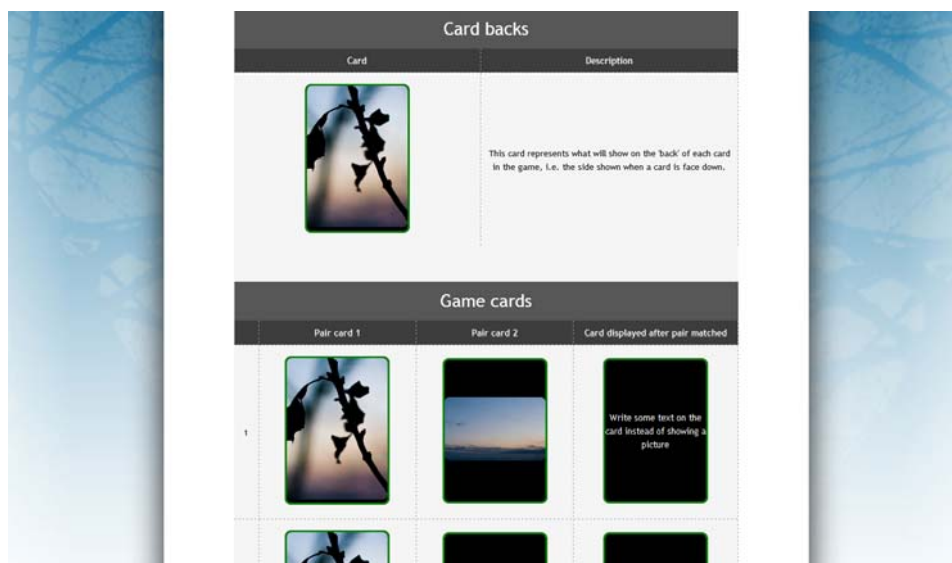
Interim Report to IATL (Strategic Project Grant)

1. Progress to date

Phase 1: Design and development

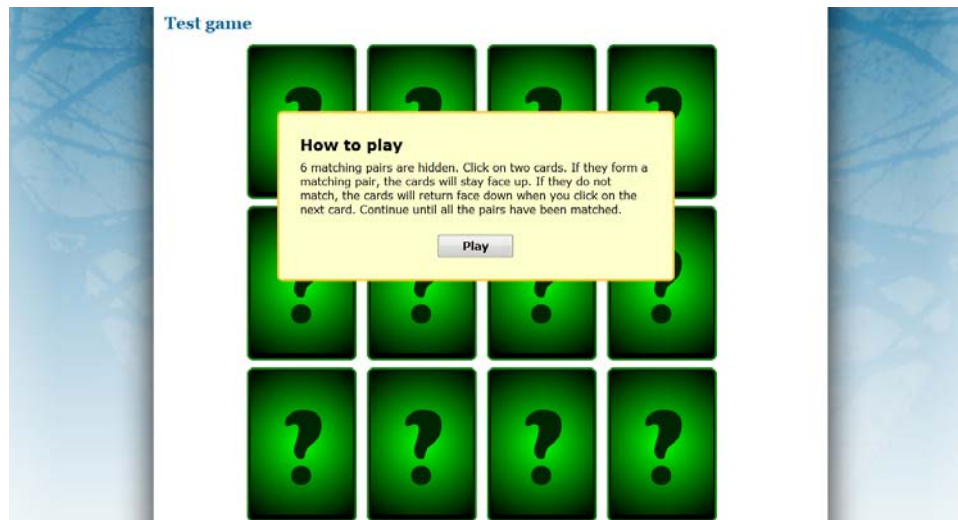
The design and development phase of the project is nearing completion. There will be two separate interfaces for the e-learning game-designing web page, one in which users will design their own games and the other for playing those games. A mechanism has been designed and tested for displaying the game-design interface in SiteBuilder edit mode and the game-playing interface in page viewing mode by using alternative CSS stylesheets. This means that only one web page will be needed to serve both functions.

After a successful recruitment campaign with 11 high quality applicants of which 5 were interviewed, a 3rd year Physics undergraduate (Adam Lack) has been recruited to design and develop the game-designing interface. He has progressed the design well and contributed some great ideas.



Screenshot showing initial design ideas for the game-designing interface

The development of the game playing interface has also made good progress, with almost all of the ActionScript code from the previous Flash games transferred into JavaScript, and modified to allow dynamic loading of images and/or text for the individual cards.



Screenshot showing initial design for the game-playing interface

Adam and I have met and discussed ideas and strategies so that the two interfaces will work seamlessly together. The design and development phase is scheduled to be completed by April 10th 2014, when the first test takes place.

Other

A date for the first software test has been set for April 10th 2014. Emma King from the Learning and Development Centre has agreed to support and promote the game after the project ends at the end of May, and she will be one of the participants in the first test.

2. Next steps

Phase 2: Testing and further development

One or two more participants need to be found for the first test on April 10th 2014.

The second test will take place on the 1st or 2nd of May. 3 students need to be recruited to build outreach games during this second test – a recruitment advertisement will be circulated by the end of this week.

Feedback will be collected at each of these tests will be used to inform a round of alterations and improvements to the software.

Phase 3: Evaluation, dissemination and writing up

The final workshop will take place during the last 2 weeks of May; the exact date is dependent on Adam's exam commitments, which have yet to be confirmed. In addition, I will demonstrate the game-designing software at the Games Based Learning workshop run by Emma King on April 28th and refer participants to the workshop we will be holding in May.

3. Conclusion

The project is on target to be completed by the end of May and student participation in the design and development has been a very positive feature so far. I look forward to working further with Adam and with the other 3 students who will be recruited for the second test.