Auntie's Fudge

By *Timothy Ruth*

An *All vs All* Strategy Card Game

for *2-5* Players

Ages *12+*

Game Description:

Players share Auntie's *unique* fudge with other players. The player with the least amount of bad fudge after enough fudge has been dolled out is the winner, however, is anyone a winner with Auntie's fudge? Well, maybe if you don't get her "County Fair" fudges…

GRATIS Outline

Goals
- Manage your pile of Fudge cards   - Get rid of as much "bad" fudge as possible   - Have the least amount of Fudge Points when the game ends

Rules
- All decks are shuffled   - The shortest player goes first, then continues clockwise   - Player Actions during their turn are as follows: - Draw one Action card at the start of the turn   - Players may choose to play one or two Excuse card or skip their turn   - Player actions outside of their turn are as follows: - Players may play the Reaction card, Deflect, when an Excuse card is directed towards them   - Players may play the Reaction card, Interrupt, right before the active player plays their first or second card.   - Player wins by having the least amount of fudge points when all of the Fudge cards have been played   - The Ask Auntie card causes all players, but the one who played the card, to draw a Fudge card. The player who played the card draws an Event card   - All Fudge cards are placed face down in front of them   - Action cards are put into the discard pile when played   - When the Action card draw pile is empty, shuffle the discard pile and put them on the Action card pile   - The Reaction Card, Deflect, can be used on an Ask Auntie card to prevent the player of Deflect from draw a Fudge card

Actions

- Draws are only conducted at the beginning of a player's turn
- Action cards are broken up into 3 types: Excuse cards, Reaction cards, and Ask Auntie cards.
- There are 4 types of Excuse cards
  - Swap (Excuse: I like that one better than this)
    - Choose 1 Fudge card to give to chosen player and take 1 Fudge card from them at random
  - Give (Excuse: I think you'll like this more than me)
    - Give a 1 Fudge card to 1 chosen player
  - Burden (Excuse: Don't make Auntie sad, now)
    - Force target player to draw 1 Fudge card
  - Ask Auntie (Excuse: Auntie, bring more fudge)
    - All other players draw one Fudge card each
    - Active player draws an Event card
- There 2 types of Reaction card
  - Deflect (Excuse: Actually… I think they want that more than I do)
    - Alter the target of an Excuse card played against you
  - Interrupt (Hold on for a second)
    - Prevent one action play for active player
- Only one Reaction card can be played per Excuse card

Transitions

- Cards are shuffled and dealt
- Every round, except the first round, starts with every player drawing a fudge card. The first round of the game starts with players drawing two fudge cards
- Players turn ends after the having played one or two cards, or skipping
- Game ends after the last fudge card has been drawn and the round finishes

Items

- **40 Fudge Cards (Total of 100 pts)**
    - **5 0pt cards (Pure Fudge)**
    - **6 pt cards (Almond-Banana Fudge)**
    - **8 2pt cards (Lemon-Craisin Fudge)**
    - **9 3pt cards (County Fair Broccoli Fudge)**
    - **12 4pt cards (County Fair Fish Fudge)**
- **72 Action Cards**
    - **48 Excuse**
        - **12 Swap**
        - **12 Give**
        - **12 Burden**
        - **12 Ask Auntie**
    - **24 Reaction**
        - **12 Deflect**
        - **12 Interrupt**
- **10 Event Cards**
    - **5 "Good"**
    - **5 "Bad"**

Setup

- The Action, Fudge, and Event stacks are shuffled and placed in the center
- Each player draws or is dealt seven cards from the Action card stack
- Each player draws two Fudge cards
- Players decide who is the shortest amongst them
- When everyone has taken a turn, the round ends. At the start of every round, every player draws a fudge card.

Identify Meaningful Choices

Meaningful Choices

Meaningful Choice #1 (To play one or two Excuse card or to skip)

- The choice to play zero, one, or two cards allows for more freedom in how the game goes. Mainly in the sense that no player is forced into playing the card they have just because they have cards. Rather, a player who decides it's not worth the risk of swapping one of their Fudge with another player doesn't have to. However, most players will choose to play two cards for the sake of hoping to come out on top. The choice to risk it is up to them.
- This opportunity occurs every round

Meaningful Choice #2 (Play an Ask Auntie card)

- The Ask Auntie card has two primary outcomes from being played. One, to cause other players to draw fudge and, two, to shorten the game. More turns means more plays, but less turns may give them a win. Not to mention not all fudge is bad fudge. However, each Ask Auntie card comes with the risk of an Event card which has a chance of being either good or bad.
- This opportunity occurs on the player's turn when they have said card.

Meaningful Choice #3 (Choosing which fudge to give or swap)

- All fudge cards are worth different points and only the player knows what their fudge cards are worth. So, what fudge the player chooses to give is important. Unless the player is highly observant, they won't know what cards the opponents have. Therefore, the risk of holding onto a 4 point card may be worthwhile if the opponent picks it for their swap action.
- This opportunity occurs every round

Explanation (answer in at least **one paragraph**)

How do the Meaningful Choices listed above impact your game? How do they improve the gameplay? What would the gameplay be like without these choices?

The choices stated above all add to the strategic complexity of the game. The option to skip a turn eliminates part of the game "playing the player" risk. Skipping allows the player the chance to not play when the current options are more detrimental to their score. The Ask Auntie card has the opportunity to drastically change the current scores. While the outcome is more or less uncertain and random in nature, the impact the choice has on the total length of the game is certain. Not to mention the potential to benefit from an Event card. Fudge cards having scores creates an innate need to strategize what fudge card is given and when. For example, it may be worthwhile to hold onto a 4 point card over a 3 point card in the event of a swap in the future. Of course, the choice is based on the current round, distribution of Fudge cards, et cetera. Without it, a player's score would be obvious to the opponents like in UNO and generate games where players gang up on the player with the least Fudge cards.

Single Player Playtest #1 Photo

On the right side is the fudge pile, on the left is the action card and discard pile. Top and bottom have player hands and fudge piles. The tools I used to draw didn't work as expected, so I made another prototype for self test two.

Single Player Playtest #1 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1. In 2 or 3 sentences, how would you quickly (but accurately) describe your game to others?
The idea is to have as little of Auntie's fudge as possible. You can give, trade, or steal fudge on your turn, and you can deny or deflect when being targeted. The one with the smallest point value of fudge when all fudge has been dealt out wins.

2.Did you run into any loopholes or dominant strategies with your design? If so, how did you alter the design to fix these issues? If not, what about your design prevented those loopholes?
I realized early on that both Deny and Deflect effectively do the same thing in a two player game, which makes the game more about luck of the draw than any actual strategy. If there are more than two players then it's fine, otherwise it's both redundant and boring. Before I even got started I removed a mechanic that specified who was given fudge each round because it was both luck of the draw and difficult to decide on the different options to be drawn from.

3.What are some of your thoughts on your design? Did the mechanics you made on paper translate well when actually playing the game? *For example: What were the most used actions, least used actions?*

In my head and on paper, the design seemed fluid and functional until I got to creating the prototype where I realized there were many flaws due to lack of consideration of how it would go with two players. Too many ways to create rounds where nothing happens.

4 Did the player choices in your game feel meaningful? If so, how were they meaningful? If not, why not? What can you do to improve the meaningful choices available to the player?

While the choices themselves were meaningful, there were too many ways for opponents to make the players options mean next to nothing.

5 How long did your game setup take? How was the presentation and usability of your materials? What improvements can you make for the next playtest to go more smoothly and look more professional? *For example: did you use card sleeves, were you trying to shuffle loose leaf paper?*

I used smooth cardstock for the original prototype which left me with sharp corners and difficulty in shuffling. What's necessary to setup is easy, but the material wasn't as ideal as expected.

Single Player Playtest #2 Photo
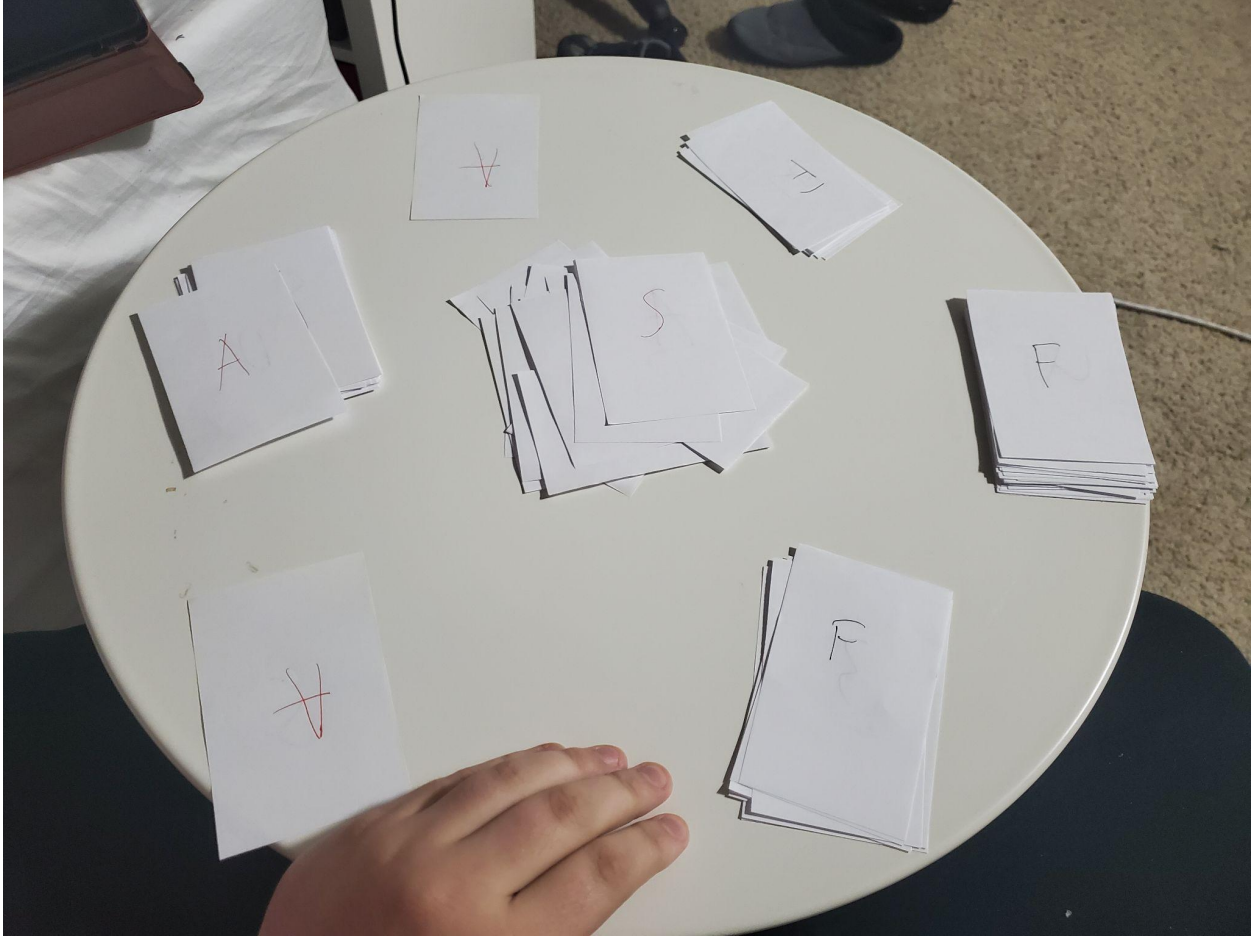
Same setup as before, but better labeled. Left are Action card stack, right is fudge card stack, middle is play area. Both players have action cards in hand, and a stack of fudge cards

Single Player Playtest #2 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1.After a second playthrough, did you run into any new loopholes or dominant strategies with your design? If so, how did you alter the design to fix these issues? If not, what about your design prevented those loopholes?

In the redesign, I heavily altered the ratio of Reaction cards to Excuse cards almost 1:4 which drastically decreased the potential of a turn having no changes occur. I also changed the players actions to allow them to play two Excuse cards a turn which increased the flow of fudge cards around the board. Even playing against myself, the winner was a surprise. I did not spy any loopholes as of yet, however, perhaps loopholes will be more present in games with three or more players. I think simplifying and restructuring the rules to be more free than before actually assisted in encouraging the intended playstyle and preventing most possible loopholes.

2 After a second playthrough, what are your new thoughts on the design? Did the changes you make from the first playtest improve your game? Explain some of those changes and how they improved or detracted from the game experience.

The changes were both necessary and incredibly helpful. Having the option to play two cards a turn while allowing only one reaction per turn prevents any rounds from being devoid of changes. Also, making Swap cards more likely to be drawn than Give cards forces more thought into player actions since there will always be a risk of swapping for a higher point card. Removing the Steal card helped simplify options, however that mechanic may return in the future.

After your presentation updates from playtest #1, how did your play experience improve? Were there any issues with the user experience? How can you continue to improve the flow of your game for the next test? If you did not make presentation updates, what should you do before the next playtest?

Changing from cardstock to printer paper made shuffling less painful, however it is still difficult to draw from sometimes due to the thinness of the paper. They can also see through the paper to see numbers and letters which is not an intended feature, but it does not seem like an easy fix at this point. I will be testing and sampling other options to make cards out of, including trying to find premade blank cards online.

4.Which actions did you use the most, which did you use the least? Were some not used at all? How can you balance out your actions to create multiple, interesting paths to victory?

Part of the game is naturally luck of the draw since it is a one in four chance of drawing a Deflect card and a lesser chance of getting an Ask Auntie card. However, the variability of when to use either Give or Swap cards gives enough variation to be called simple. Perhaps adjusting the ratio to give more Deflect or Ask Auntie cards may be worthwhile? Creating a single special fudge card that is worth negative points may mix up results as well.

5 Describe the decisions you made throughout a few example turns in your game. Point out each major decision, and quickly describe how that decision was meaningful.

The first turn I had four Give cards and a single Swap card. However, the two fudge cards I started with were 0 and 2. Because I had the 0 card, I didn't want to use two Excuse cards, so I chose to Give the 2 away so I would have zero points total.

I could have opted to skip since my point cost was so low, but I was feeling greedy. The fact that I had the option to skip makes it a meaningful choice. Because had I skipped then the opponent would have had less fudge to throw back at me.

On the opponent's turn, he had three Give cards and two Swap. He also had a 0 fudge and a 2 fudge. However, since I gave him my 2 card, he used two Give cards to give them away.

We then both drew more fudge and I drew a card since I went first.

At this point, I decided using a Swap would be more beneficial, so I used the one I drew and the one in my hand. I gave him both 2's and I shuffled his fudge stack and took two without looking.

The rest of the game went on similarly until seven rounds passed where I cut it off to see what the results were. This was due to the fact that for a two player game, sixty fudge cards would lead to approximately twenty eight rounds depending on the Ask Auntie cards. Perhaps adding a rule to cut the fudge stack down depending on player count would be worthwhile.
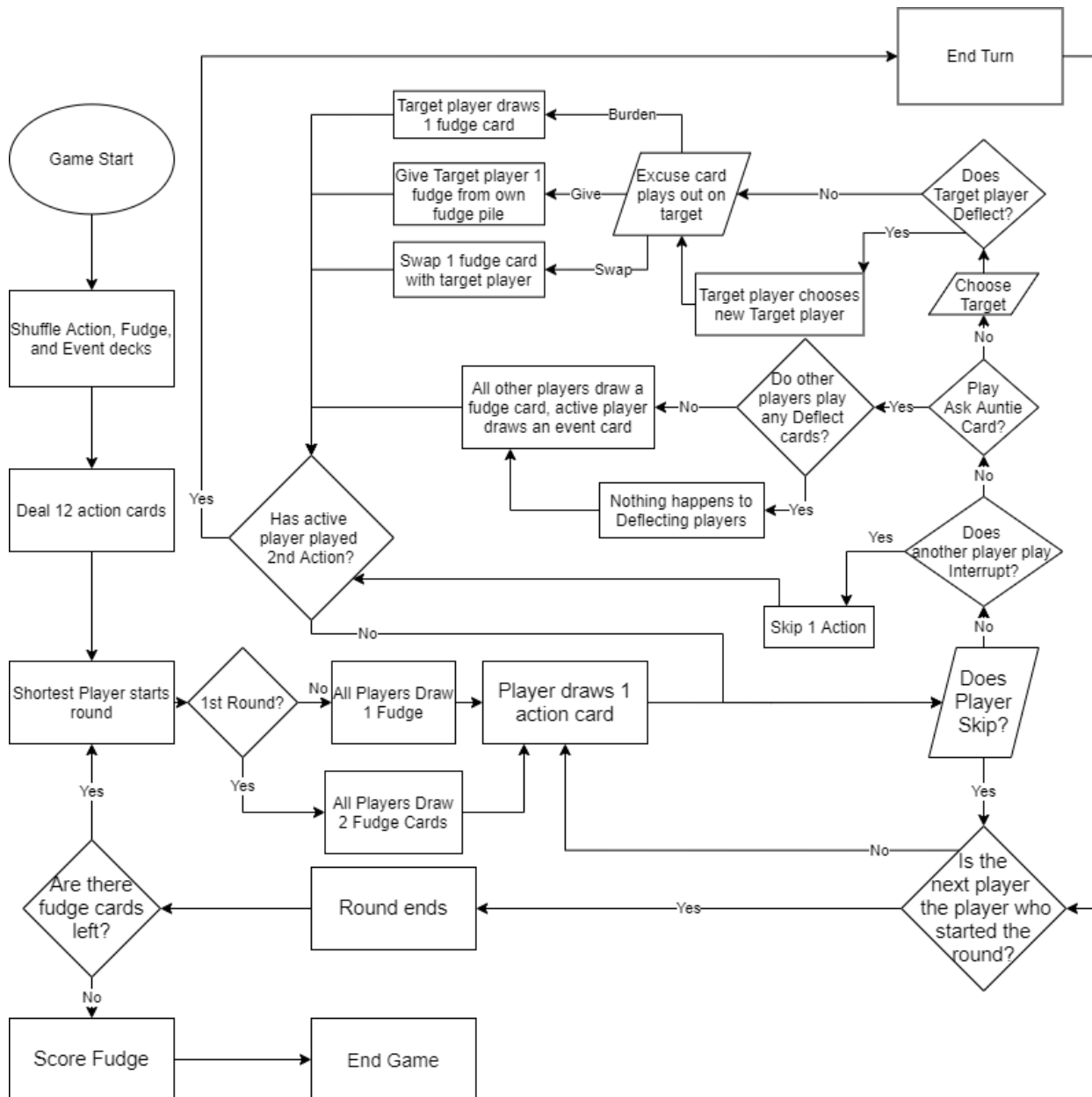
I wound up having 12 total points, and the opponent had 23 total points.

Depending on how I played it, and my luck with Swap cards, it could have been a closer game. I feel like an actual game would end up closer due to the nature of solo playtesting.

Week 3 - Assignment 3

Flowchart, Game Components and Group Playtesting

Flowchart

Group Playtest Photo #1

My Grandmother, Middle Sister, and Myself playing.

Group Playtest #1 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1.   Describe the Meaningful Choices available to your players during this playtest. Did these choices lead to interesting strategies, or was there a dominant strategy / obvious choice always available? Were there multiple viable ways for players to achieve victory? What improvements can you make from these observations to enhance the Meaningful Choices available?

 To play 0, 1, or 2 cards per turn, total cards in hand allowing. I realized that having five cards in hand to start makes it difficult to make 2 actions per turn later on. Also, having Reaction cards made the player less able to play due to having less on turn actions to play. The relationships between players naturally creates a bias in who gets played against the most, but witty players may be able to use that to their advantage.

Ultimately, creating larger hands of action cards will allow for more choices to be made. Considering between increasing card draws and simply starting with more cards.

2.   Did your Flowchart do a good job of explaining the player actions and overall flow of the game? What questions did your players ask you during the playtest about your rules? What steps will you take to clarify those areas? Were there any instances or situations that were not covered by the rules or Flowchart at all?

 The flowchart wasn't of much use as a reference sheet for the others, but rather assisted me in presenting the rules and structure of the game. The biggest question I had was for the Reaction Card concept. I feel that having more options of cards to react with would better give opportunity to learn the concept. Using a Reaction card on the Ask Auntie card was not considered until this playtest, so the rules will need to be updated to allow and explain how that functions.

3.   What are some of your thoughts on your design? Did your players have any contributions or thoughts on your design? Are you planning on changing your design based on those observations? Explain your decision.

The game felt long due to the number of fudge cards, so I will be cutting the stack down to a more reasonable size. Otherwise, the game felt like a proper game, just a bit simple in terms of what actions can be taken. The players advised that I consider more options for Reactions, to which I agree. To that end, I am considering an "Interruption" Reaction that can cancel out the current player's action as they play it, putting the action card back in the player's hand.

While writing this I had the epiphany of adding cards that force another player to draw fudge cards. Unsure why I didn't consider it before. However, I feel I must be careful to not create too many similarities to UNO for many obvious reasons.

Ultimately I will be adding to the design while tweaking some logistics.

Group Playtest Photo #2
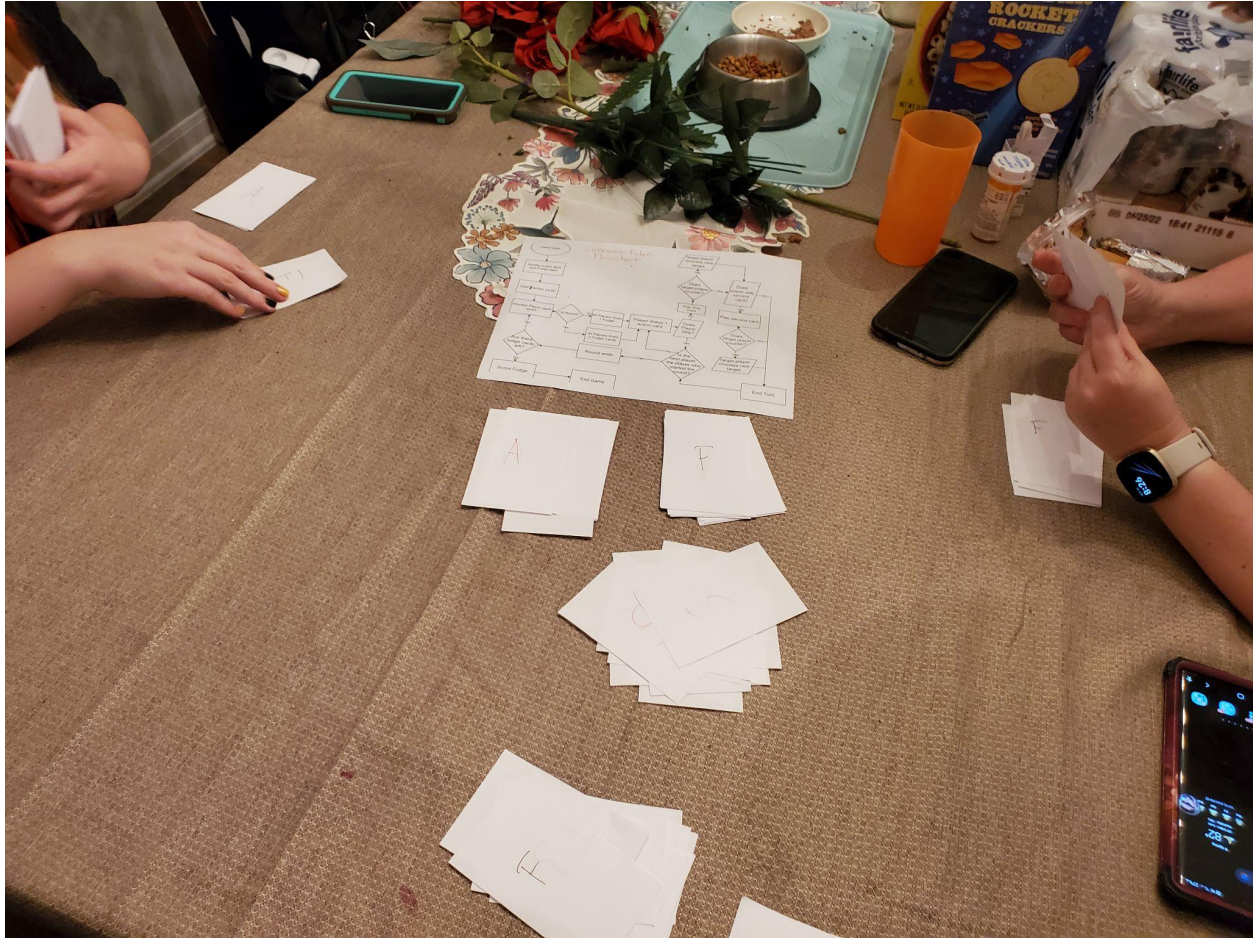
Mother, Youngest Sister, and Myself.

Group Playtest #2 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1.   After your updates from the first playtest this week, describe the Meaningful Choices your players made this time. Did these choices lead to interesting strategies? Did you eliminate any dominant strategies, or are they still present? What other improvements can be made to the mechanics of the game?

 After adjusting figures and adding two new cards, the Interrupt and Burden cards, the game felt more active than before. Seems to be a lack of much strategy due to current balancing, however, as both playtesters called the game "Mindless with some strategy". Both thought up the idea of an Event card pile to offset how powerful the Ask Auntie card is. Event cards being either good or bad depending on the card drawn.

Current issue is mainly with balancing. I want Reaction cards to be used, but so far they have been few and far between, which means I need to increase their ratio to the Excuse cards. Adding Event cards seems viable for adding risk to playing the powerful Ask Auntie card.

2.   After updating your rules and Flowchart, did players understand how the game was to be played? Did you encounter new questions that were not addressed in the rules? How can you continue to clarify and simplify the explanation of your rules?

 Flowchart did a good job of expressing game flow, but fails to accurately represent the rules. Decided that a cheat sheet was needed to properly explain each card type and what they do. I feel like the cheat sheet alone made actions understood easily enough mid game.

A new question I faced was the rule regarding the Swap Excuse, specifically with how a random card is drawn. Should target player fan out their fudge cards, or should active player just pick a random card from target player's stack of fudge? I feel it works either way and will be putting in somewhere that it can be done either way.

3.   How did your design changes after the previous playtest alter the gameplay? Were these good changes, or did they negatively affect the game? Are you finding that these iterations are smaller tweaks or larger mechanical changes? With this in mind, do you feel like you are close to the "final design" of your game?

The changes helped, for sure, but it's not quite enough. Hence I need to rethink both balancing and the proposed Event cards. So far the changes have been both big and small, but all with good reason. I've also strongly considered how to adjust things in ways that still make sense with the current lore behind Auntie's Fudge.

Group Playtest Photo #3
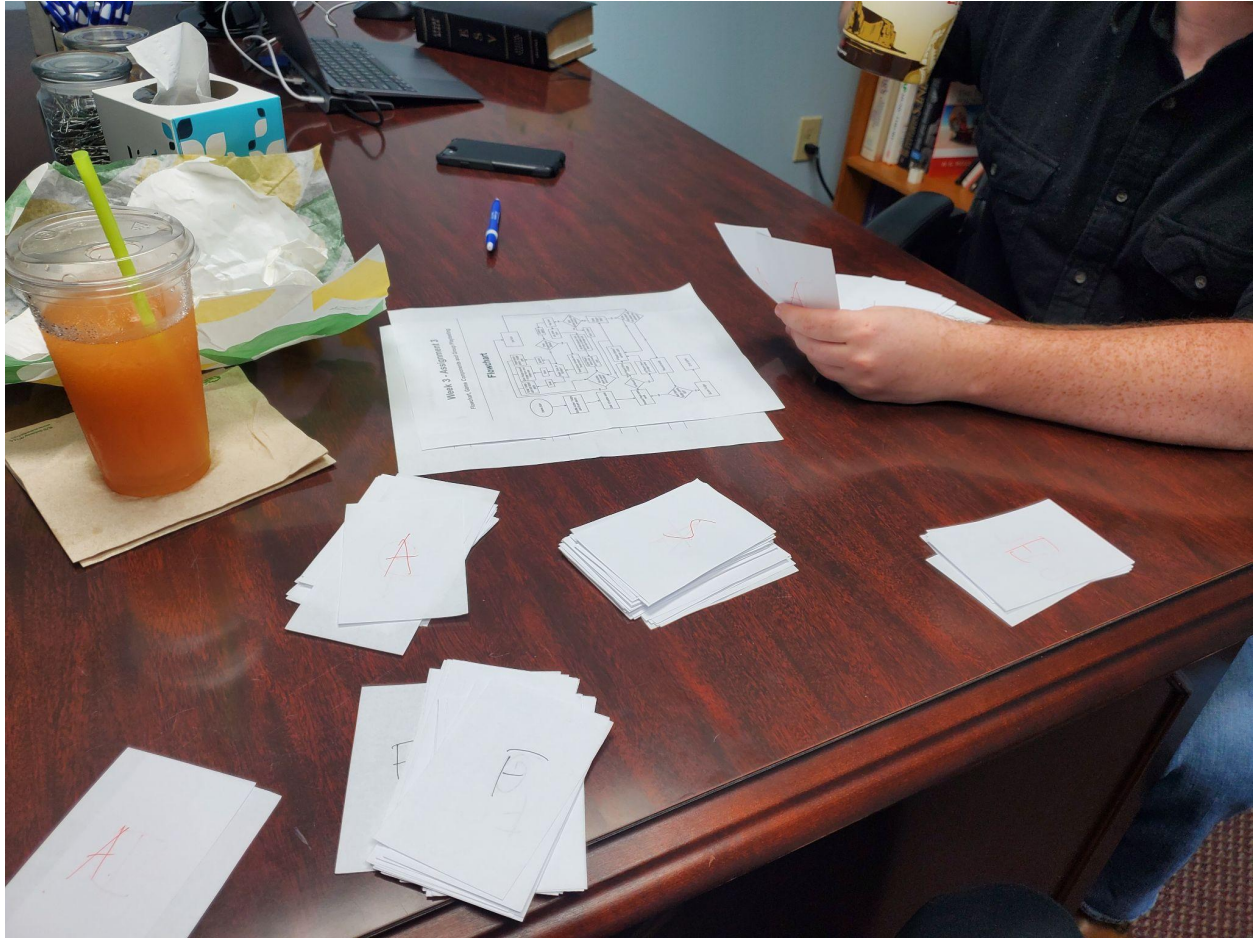
My Friend and I

Group Playtest #3 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1.   What type of gameplay emerged from this next playtest? Did you encounter different Meaningful Choices for your players, or were they the same as last time? Is the gameplay varied enough to remain interesting for multiple playthroughs?

 After further adjusting the ratio of cards, the game felt more impactful and active than before, which is promising. So far, everyone who has tried it thought it was fun and engaging, and this time my friend said it was due to the fudge management component. There are still adjustments I want to make, mainly to the fudge draw mechanic. Considering an alternate, more difficult style of play that limits the fudge draws to the first round and the use of Burden and Ask Auntie cards.

2.   Were you able to explain your game by only reading from the Rules and Flowchart? Did you need to supplement your rulebook with clarifications and examples? If so, how could you incorporate that information into a more effective set of rules for the next playtest?

 So far, the instructions I've given, and since written down, have succinctly taught the game to my playtesters. Considering adding a simplified flowchart to the rulebook, but I want to put more thought into it first.

3.   How has the game changed since your original design? Reflect back on the changes and iterations you've made since your single player playtests. Think about the critiques and feedback you have gained from other players and how their input has shaped your game.

 The game feels much more fleshed out than before, thankfully. I feel that the additions I've made have all been good, and the ideas I got from my playtesters were useful in that regard. Without playtesting, I am certain that the game would have fallen short since I don't actually play many card games, so I feel like my approach is inherently different from others.

Week 4 - Assignment 4

Rulebook, Quick Reference, Observed Playtest and Final Reflection

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Rulebook

Thematic Backstory
Auntie has come over to share her homemade fudge, oh no! This means she's bringing her county fair winners: broccoli fudge and fish fudge… No one can say no to Auntie, but she's so blind that she won't notice what's on your plate, or what's not on your plate! Take turns making excuses for giving away the fudge you don't want, the county fair fudges, but watch out for others reacting to your excuses! At the end of the day, you want the least amount of horrible fudge. So, do your best to get rid of your fudge and hope that the others don't give you the worst of their own fudge.

List of Game Components

Included Components

- 122 Cards
  - 40 Fudge Cards
    - 5 0pt cards (Pure Fudge)
    - 6 pt cards (Almond-Banana Fudge)
    - 8 2pt cards (Lemon-Craisin Fudge)
    - 9 3pt cards (County Fair Broccoli Fudge)
    - 12 4pt cards (County Fair Fish Fudge)
  - 72 Action Cards
    - 12 Each of Give, Swap, Burden, Ask Auntie, Interrupt, and Deflect
  - 10 Event Cards
- Rule Book
- Cheat Sheets

Game Setup

Shuffle the Fudge, Action, and Event decks.

Deal 12 action cards per player.

Place decks within reach of all players.

Shortest player starts, and for the first round all players draw 2 fudge cards.

When everyone has taken a turn, the round ends. At the start of every round, every player draws a fudge card.

Objective

Players take turns dishing out their fudge. The player with the fewest fudge points when all fudge has been drawn wins.

Turn Overview

1. At the start of each turn, draw one Action card.
2. Active player can play up to two Excuse cards, unless another player plays and Interrupt card, in which case the active player can play up to one Excuse card.
3. Active player plays a card towards targeted player, the card enters the discard pile in the middle of all the players.
4. If targeted player plays a Deflect card, then targeted player chooses a new target.
5. Excuse card plays out and, if possible, the active player may play another Excuse card towards another target player and step #4 may play out again.
6. When all actions have been played, or active player skips, then the turn ends.

Details Regarding Various Game Mechanics

Excuse cards are only played by the active player and come in four varieties.
- Give, where active player gives one owned fudge card to target player
- Swap, where active player swaps one owned fudge card with target player
- Burden, where target player draws one fudge card
- Ask Auntie, where active player draws an event card and all other players draw a fudge card

Reaction cards can only be played by non-active players and come in two varieties.
- Deflect,
  - Can only be used when targeted by active player
  - Allows targeted player to choose a different target
  - Only one Deflect can be user per Excuse
- Interrupt,
  - Can only be used before active player plays an Excuse card
  - Only one can be played per turn
  - Reduces the amount of actions active player can take by one

Event cards, drawn when an Ask Auntie card is played, have two defining features. An action and a target.
- Action
  - Give one chosen Fudge card
  - Take one random Fudge card
- Target
  - Left: from player on the left
  - Right: from the player on the right
  - Auntie: from the Fudge card stack
- Event cards cannot be Deflected

Ending the Game

The game ends when all fudge cards have been drawn. For shorter games, choose between five and eight rounds.

Alternate Playstyle
Try playing without drawing Fudge every round for a more difficult time.
Instead of playing till all Fudge has been dolled out, play for around ten rounds.
Be careful not to let your friends know what Fudge you have!

Examples of Play

Example Turns

Player 1 draws an action card and plays the Excuse card Burden against Player 3.

Player 3, lacking any Deflect Reaction cards, is forced to draw one fudge card.

Player 1, knowing he only has a 1pt and 2pt fudge card skips his second action.

Player 2 draws an action card and before playing anything, Player 4 plays an Interrupt Reaction card.

Player 2, now only able to play one card this turn considers between a Give and Ask Auntie card, but ultimately plays the Ask Auntie.

Player 1 plays a Deflect card, preventing themselves from drawing a fudge card.

Players 3 and 4 draw a fudge card and Player 2 draws an Event card.

Event card tells Player 2 to give one fudge to the player on the left. They grab their 3pt fudge card and hand it to Player 3.

Having played their only action for the turn, Player 2 says they end their turn.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: When can I play the Deflect card?

A: Whenever you are targeted by an Excuse card that was not deflected.

Q: What happens when there is not enough Fudge to draw for the last round?

A: No one draws a Fudge, the round plays out, and the game ends.

Q: What happens if there are no Fudge cards left to draw in the last round and someone plays a Burden or Ask Auntie?

A: No one draws a Fudge if there is no Fudge, and if there is not enough Fudge for all players to draw when an Ask Auntie is played, then only the Event card is drawn and played out.

Q: What if we run out of Event or Action cards?

A: Shuffle the discard piles when needed.

Documentation Updates (Patch Notes)

Version 0.1
- Game designed with Give, Trade, Steal, Ask Auntie, Deflect, and Deny cards
- Fudge cards implemented at 60 total cards
- Prototype created using cardstock

Version 0.2 (After solo playtesting)
- Trade card renamed to Swap.
- Steal and Deny cards removed
- Prototype changed materials to printer paper

Version 0.3 (After first group playtesting)
- Reduced total number of Fudge cards to 40
- Reworked ratio of Action cards
- Reworked ratio of Fudge card points

Version 0.4 (After second group playtesting)
- Added Event cards
- Reworked ratio of Action cards to all be 1:1
- Reworked ratio of Fudge card points 5:6:8:9:12

Version 0.5 (After third group playtesting)
- Increased number of Action cards by 12
- Rule Book created
- Cheat Sheet created
- Upgraded prototype card material

Version 0.6 (After 1st rulebook playtest)
- Rule Book updated to include new questions and answers along with missed details

Version 0.7 (After 2nd rulebook playtest)
- Rule Book updated and clarified

Version 0.8 (After 3rd rulebook playtest)
- Rule Book updated to final version

Version 1.0 (Final Finishes)
- Presentable Rule Book designed
- Packaging solution finalized

Quick Reference (Cheat Sheet)

CHEAT SHEET

Excuse Cards

G : Give away a Fudge
S : Swap a Fudge
B : Friend draws a Fudge
AA : All but player draws a
Fudge, player draws Event card

Reaction Cards

D : Deflect an Excuse
to another friend
I : Interrupt someone
before they make one
Excuse

Be a good friend and give your fudge away!

Observed Playtest Photo #1

How long did this playtest last in minutes?

20 Minutes

Observed Playtest #1 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1.   Were your players able to understand the rules and mechanics of your game by reading the rules you provided? What changes would you make to how you present the rules for the next playtest? Did your players use the Quick Reference (Cheat Sheet)? Did they find the information clear and useful? What changes could be made to improve the Quick Reference?

The Cheat Sheet seemed to be good as is, thankfully. I'm not sure if I'd be able to fit anything else. The Rulebook, unfortunately, was missing some things, mostly minor, but still important things such as the draw fudge every round rule. After inputting the missing info, I also added info on an alternate playstyle that I will be testing, as well as what to do in a 2 player game so the game doesn't feel as tedious and long.

2.   Tell us about some of your observations from the playtest. Were players getting frustrated, when and where? Were they excited? What were some notable reactions to the game? Try to explain why you think these reactions happened and if they were a part of the design goals of the game.

So far, every playtest has resulted in laughs and smiles, thankfully. There was some confusion before the game started and in the first round, but after they understood the rules they quickly got into it. This playtest included a pair of younger kids, and I was glad to see the rules were simple enough for them to understand easily. One of the kids made the mistake of saying they were out of Deflect cards, which ultimately made him a target of the others. However, there's no way to control that, so it doesn't damage the intended playstyle of the game anyways.

3.   How was the user experience of the game? Were players able to shuffle and deal cards easily? Were the descriptions and text on the cards, rules, and Quick Reference clear? What can be improved here for the next playtest?

 With the upgrade to double sided blank bicycle cards, play was smooth and easy. The designs are pretty simplistic as well, utilizing both letters and single words on the cards, but since they are all drawn by hand, there's always a very minor chance where other players can keep track of what fudge is where by recognizing the differences in text size or shape on the back. It's so minor that I'm not concerned too much. Aside from upgrading further to printed cards, I'm unsure what else can be changed at this point.

4.   Describe the meaningful choices you provide for your players. Are they using all of those meaningful choices, or only some? What changes to your design could further improve your game?

 All the meaningful choices I intended are being used, however, due to the simplicity of the game, the more strategic choices, such as skipping turns and saving reaction cards for end game, are less utilized. I believe this is due to the draw fudge every turn rule, but for standard play I feel it is necessary since it removes reliance on counting rounds. However, I believe the alternate playstyle I introduced will not only further encourage those choices but also add replayability. What I failed to consider overall was the importance of the verbal choices players can make, or rather, the emotional ramifications of their meaningful choices. For example, playing an Interrupt at the beginning of a player's turn actually increases the likelihood of the Interrupt playing player being chosen as the target. Which encourages smart players to play an Interrupt to block the active player's second action. Ultimately, I think this is a good outcome, but for the future I will consider ways of creating this effect. It's in the same vein of gameplay as the "Poker Face", so I am unsure if it's worth the time to develop emotionally impactful choices or to let these kinds of choices emerge from the nature of gameplay.

Observed Playtest Photo #2
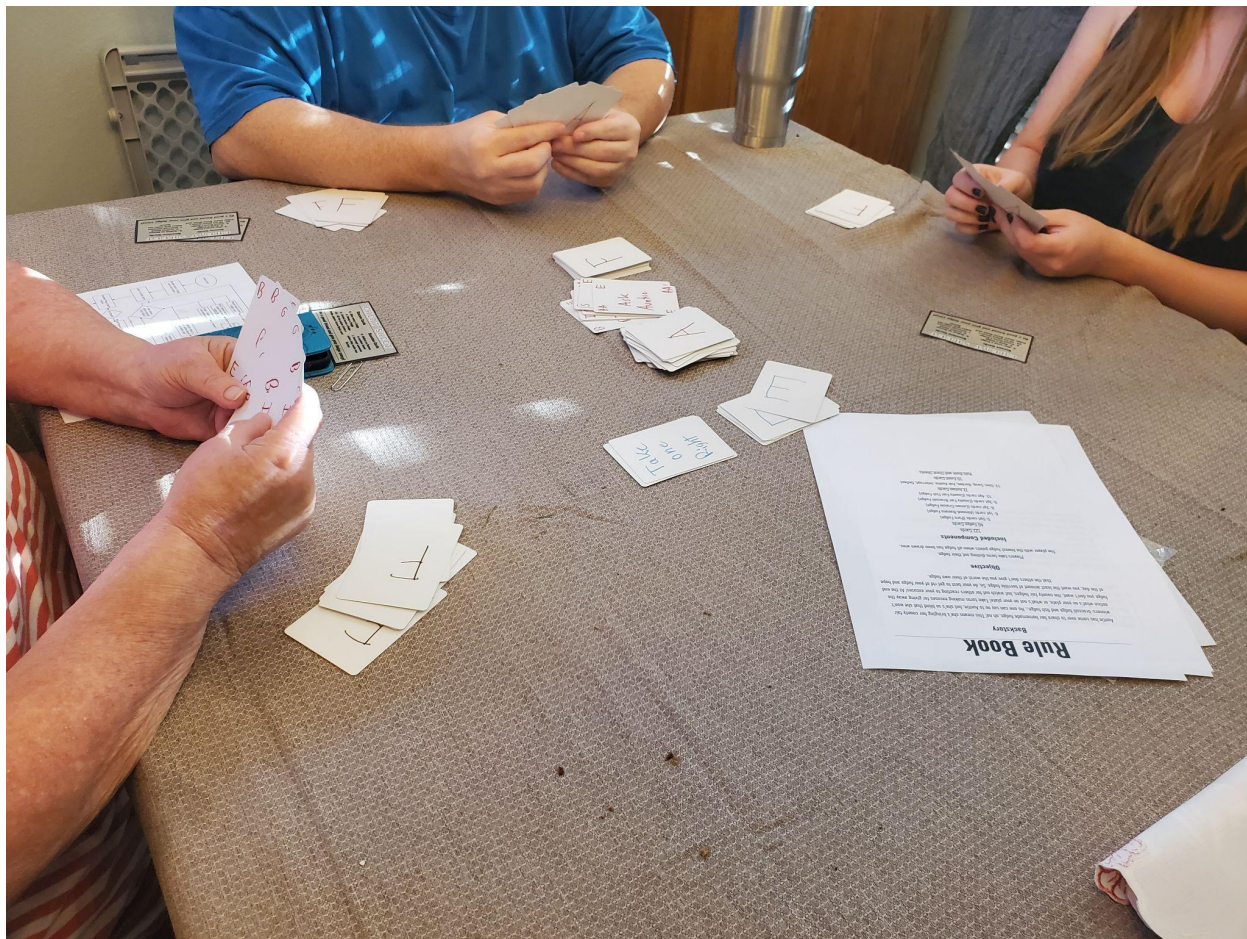
How long did this playtest last in minutes?

17 Minutes

Observed Playtest #2 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1.   Did your group encounter any dominant strategies during the second playtest? Did you encounter any unexpected player strategies?

 Gameplay seems to be so simple that the same kind of things happen over and over, however, it's of a similar vein of simplicity as Uno. No dominant strategies, rather, playing casually seems to be the primary vibe I get from the players. Nothing unexpected came up either. The only real issue I've come across is players forgetting to draw from time to time, but I've seen that happen in other card games as well, so I believe that to be more of a player issue rather than a design issue.

2.   How long did it take for the group to learn your game this time? Were your rules and Quick Reference updates effective? Are there any other iterations you can make to improve the clarity of your game rules? *For Example: Provide a Sample Turn.*

 The only issue that arose, rulebook wise, is that there was some confusion on whether or not players hold their fudge cards or not, so I'll need to specify some structural rules? Not sure how I would describe that, but otherwise there were no rules missing nor anything unexpected.

3.   What sort of gameplay dynamics emerged within this group? How did those dynamics affect the gameplay? Would you encourage or discourage those dynamics for future games?

 This group played more towards the emotional side than the mechanical or strategical side. Due to how one player played, there was some targeting, but since its a player to player reaction, rather than an issue with the rules, there's nothing I can do about it. They seemed to have fun because the emotional side exists, so while it ultimately leads to some targeting, it doesn't ruin the game concept. In the future I think I want to develop more ways to create the emotional aspect.

Observed Playtest Photo #3
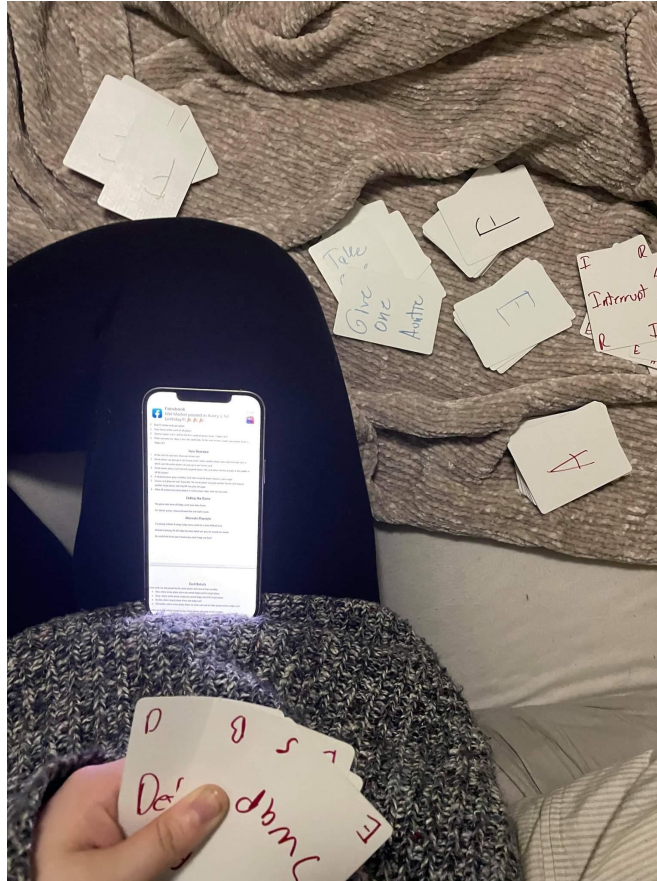
I mailed a card set to my sister and her husband. Unfortunately, she didn't get her husband in the pic and I didn't find that out until it was too late to have her take another picture.

How long did this playtest last in minutes?

18 Minutes

Observed Playtest #3 Questionnaire

(at least **one paragraph per question**)

1. Can you put this version of your game down in front of a group of people, walk away, and have them fully understand how to play the game? If yes, how did you achieve this? If no, what needs to be done to get there? *For Example: Are your Rules clear? Is your Quick Reference helpful? Are the cards concise and descriptive?*

 I believe that I can give this game to people and they can figure it out, however, they do need to read everything properly. The rulebook and cheat sheet are fleshed out enough to make it clear what the players need to do and what they can do. Without the clear and concise documentation I developed over the playtests, I would not be able to share it very easily.

2. Did each gameplay session feel unique? Were new strategies and interactions happening each time a group played, or was the same strategy used every game to win? How can you ensure that your game remains interesting and replayable?

Each session, generally speaking, was the same. The playability and options available improved over time, but since the core concept never changed, it all felt the same. I was lucky enough to get a decent variety of playtesters and was happy to see each playtest having a good reception. As the game became more fleshed out, there were less and less questions and ideas to improve upon it. However, I feel like creating an alternative playing style doubles, essentially, its replayability. Making it more interesting is more difficult by nature, but I feel the unique two actions per turn and reaction mechanics make it stand out. Creating that unique-ness seems almost necessary when wanting a game to be interesting.

3. What feedback did you get from your final group of playtesters? What were their impressions of the game? Did they offer any helpful or unique insights on the design of your game?

They loved the game, but did find a couple typos in the Rulebook, and mentioned a few things about the mechanics. Mainly that Swap was less useful near the end of the game because, "We kept swapping 4's", but that's a well known trait. However, since it's more or less intended to have more 4s shuffling around, I don't want to change it. She also mentioned that Deflect was less eventful in a two player game. It was something I was generally aware of, but I couldn't think of an alternative, and they didn't have any ideas either. While it was worthwhile feedback, nothing has come of it yet.

Final Reflection Questionnaire

(at least **two paragraphs** per question)

Here you will record your experience with documenting, prototyping and testing your first game design. Go into as much detail as possible, this is incredibly helpful when you come back to reference this project in the future.

1.   What did you learn about game design documentation? (two paragraphs minimum)

My foundational knowledge on the what, why, and how game design documents are created and maintained is more solid than it was before. Consistent maintenance was something I hadn't considered in much detail prior, but after this project I can see why it is necessary. Of course, I feel I lack the experience to make the most of it, but now that I see generally how important it is, I will keep better track of my documentation in the future.

Alongside that, the different aspects to keep track of, such as differentiating rules from setup, and having a detailed components page was generally new to me. Considering I spent years strictly writing primarily academic research papers, breaking down things to their bare bones components was refreshing, to say the least. It truly drove home how different a game design document is from all other forms of document writing I've done, but also how simple, yet precise, it is. I look forward to writing more and learning new methods of documentation.

2. What did you learn by using the iterative design process? (two paragraphs minimum)

The iterative process makes a big difference. Simply pushing through a project and calling a game done by the first rendition not only limits the outcome, but stifles the chance to see errors early on. It made such a big difference to the end result that I looked back at other things I've done over the years and can't help but wonder what they would have become had I conducted an iterative process on it. This made the most difference in narrowing down the kinds of actions and reactions I needed to have for the game to be more engaging.

For example, while the Steal mechanic sounded good, after looking it over a few times it was quickly revealed to be a mechanic that went against the end goal. Another card, Interrupt, was devised after looking over the mechanics of the game several times. Logically, it makes sense to have a mechanic to counter the unique two actions per turn rule, however, I never would have considered it if I didn't look back over how things actually worked.

3. What did you learn about play testing? (two paragraphs minimum)

Playtesting was an eye opener in three aspects. Firstly, I had to seriously consider the kinds of, and amount of, people that I know who could assist me in this endeavor. Lack of social skills aside, it forced me to ask people around me if they could help. I got a lot of "yes" answers, but also a few surprising "no" answers. After considering that, I also needed to consider scheduling. The main issue I had was finding times that worked for others. Family was easy, but acquaintances at church was another story entirely. Honestly, I got pretty lucky.

The third thing I learned has to be the benefits playtesting has. Almost half of the mechanics I ultimately had were a result of feedback from the playtests. It was also immensely satisfying to see positive reactions towards the prototypes as they were. Watching people play gave me different ideas, as well, compared to playing it with others. Overall, it was a brand new experience that taught me a lot about interacting with others and the benefits that come with it.

4. What did you like about your game? What didn't you like? (two paragraphs minimum)

I truly loved how simple the game turned out to be. While it could be considered too simple, it's not simple because of a lack of choices. The concept combines ideas from various sources. The low scoring point win is just like golf, and the cards actions themselves are easy to understand. Give a card, swap a card, force a draw, for all to draw, and so forth.

If anything, the only thing I dislike is that I wish there were more strategic options. However, no matter how often I mulled it over, I never could figure out how to make it more complex. Perhaps if I were to, in the future, consider a playing field of some sort, or perhaps different player roles that gave each player a different object? The more experience I gain, the more I'll be able to make things more interesting.

5. How can you improve your process the next time you make a game? (two paragraphs minimum)

I feel that I did a good job with my process this time. While I know that I'm still a novice, and that I can do everything more effectively somehow, I cannot think of anything. Perhaps increasing the number of people I know so I can get a bigger variety of playtesters. Or perhaps I could ask for more input or pay more attention to the tests.

Some other things I could do is try some more extreme ideas to extend the boundaries of the game. Or maybe try working on multiple designs at the same time and see if some combinatorial explosion of ideas occurs. I'll be doing more reflection over the course of my life, I'm sure. As of right now, I don't have any concrete ideas or plans on how I can improve my development process.