ENC 1145\_06 TTH 09:30-10:45 Williams 120
Instructor: Rob Stephens

Office: Williams 451

Office Hours: M 12:30-2:30

Board Game Hours: W 12:30-2:30 (in Goldstein Library)

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Writing about **Board Games**

“Playing, as children mean playing, is the most serious thing in the world.”

“You never enjoy a game till you enjoy being beaten at the game.”

– Uncle Chestnut’s Table Gype

**Introduction**
Board games have been culturally important for thousands of years. You've probably had your own experiences with board games too, perhaps growing up playing Monopoly, Chess, Scrabble, or other board games. In this class we will be examining board games as texts; in other words, we will be considering what messages they send and how they appeal to particular audiences. To do this, we will be playing board games outside of class, discussing and writing about board games in class, and reading about board games.

The goal of the class, then, is primarily to improve your skills as a writer and secondarily to improve your critical thinking skills with regard to texts.

**First Year Composition Mission Statement**
First-Year Writing courses at FSU teach writing as a recursive and frequently collaborative process of invention, drafting, and revising. Writing is both personal and social, and students should learn how to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Since writing is a process of making meaning as well as communicating, FYW teachers respond to the content of students' writing as well as to surface errors. Students should expect frequent written and oral response on the content of their writing from both teacher and peers. Classes rely heavily on a workshop format. Instruction emphasizes the connection between writing, reading, and critical thinking; students should give thoughtful, reasoned responses to the readings. Both reading and writing are the subjects of class discussions and workshops, and students are expected to be active participants of the classroom community. Learning from each other will be a large part of the classroom experience.

If you would like further information regarding the First-Year Composition Program, feel free to contact the program director, Dr. Deborah Coxwell Teague ([dteague@english.fsu.edu](http://english3.fsu.edu/writing/dteague%40english.fsu.edu)).

**Course Outcomes** The WPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators) has published an outcome statement for first year writing programs. My goal is to help you start developing these skills in ENC 1101 so that by then end of your ENC 1145 class, you will have made the following achievements:

**Rhetorical Knowledge**

*Rhetorical knowledge* is the ability to analyze contexts and audiences and then to act on that analysis in comprehending and creating texts. Rhetorical knowledge is the basis of composing. Writers develop rhetorical knowledge by negotiating purpose, audience, context, and conventions as they compose a variety of texts for different situations.

*By the end of first-year composition, students should*

* Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts.
* Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes
* Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure
* Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences
* Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations

**Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing**

*Critical thinking* is the ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, situations, and texts. When writers think critically about the materials they use--whether print texts, photographs, data sets, videos, or other materials--they separate assertion from evidence, evaluate sources and evidence, recognize and evaluate underlying assumptions, read across texts for connections and patterns, identify and evaluate chains of reasoning, and compose appropriately qualified and developed claims and generalizations. These practices are foundational for advanced academic writing.

*By the end of first-year composition, students should*

* Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts
* Read a diverse range of texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations
* Locate and evaluate (for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, bias and so on) primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases or archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources
* Use strategies--such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign--to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources

**Processes**

Writers use multiple strategies, or composing processes, to conceptualize, develop, and finalize projects. Composing processes are seldom linear: a writer may research a topic before drafting, then conduct additional research while revising or after consulting a colleague. Composing processes are also flexible: successful writers can adapt their composing processes to different contexts and occasions.

*By the end of first-year composition, students should*

* Develop a writing project through multiple drafts
* Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing
* Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas
* Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
* Learn to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress
* Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities
* Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work

**Knowledge of Conventions**

*Conventions* arise from a history of use and facilitate reading by invoking common expectations between writers and readers. These expectations are not universal; they vary by genre (conventions for lab notebooks and discussion-board exchanges differ), by discipline (conventional moves in literature reviews in Psychology differ from those in English), and by occasion (meeting minutes and executive summaries use different registers). A writer’s grasp of conventions in one context does not mean a firm grasp in another. Successful writers understand, analyze, and negotiate conventions for purpose, audience, and genre, understanding that genres evolve in response to changes in material conditions and composing technologies and attending carefully to emergent conventions.

*By the end of first-year composition, students should*

* Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising
* Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics vary
* Gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions
* Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of texts
* Explore the concepts of intellectual property (such as fair use and copyright) that motivate documentation conventions
* Practice applying citation conventions systematically in their own work

**Course Goals**
This course aims to help you improve your writing skills in all areas: discovering what you have to say, organizing your thoughts for a variety of audiences, and improving fluency and rhetorical sophistication. You will write and revise three papers, write sustained exploratory blogs, devise your own purposes and structures for those papers, work directly with the audience of your peers to practice critical reading and response, and learn many new writing techniques.

**Required Materials**

* *The New McGraw-Hill Handbook* (The McGraw-Hill Company, 2014).
* Access to a computer (the university provides a number of computer labs).
* A (free) Board Game Arena account (I will provide you information on how to sign up during the first week of class).
* Access to the physical board game you choose to analyze for paper 1. This may mean buying the game, getting it from home, or borrowing it from the SLC.
* Access to printing. You will need to print a lot in this class, so please budget accordingly. This is non-negotiable. If you don't have a printer, you can print in Strozier, Goldstein, or William-Johnson.
* Access to a stapler. I deduct points for unstapled papers.

**Requirements of Course**
All of the formal written assignments below must be turned in to me in order to pass the course. Attendance is also a requirement*. More than four absences in a TTH class is grounds for failure*.

* Three papers, edited and polished
* Three drafts and revisions of each of the three formal papers
* 25 blog posts, as outlined below in the “major assignments” section.
* Two individual conferences.
* Thoughtful, active, and responsible participation and citizenship, including discussion, preparation for class, and in-class informal writing.
* Engaged board game play. In other words, I expect you to play board games weekly, alone or with your peers, and I expect you to think critically about the games you are playing.

**Paper by Paper Evaluation**
Percentage Split for this Class: FSU/GPA Local Grading Tradition

Paper 1 (Board Game Breakdown) – 25 % A = 4.0 93-100% C+ = 2.5 77-79%
Paper 2 (Board Games in Culture) – 30 % A- = 3.75 90-92% C = 2.0 73-76%
Paper 3 (Promoting Board Games)– 25 % B+ = 3.5 87-89% C- = 1.75 70-72%
Board Game Blog - 20% B = 3.0 83-86% D+ = 1.5 67-69%
 B- = 2.75 80-82% D = 1.0 63-66%
 F = 0 0-62%

*Papers and Final Project:* Paper grading will be based on drafts and final papers. Drafts will be graded on completeness and potential-not on editing, coherence, or other mechanical issues. Final papers will be graded on audience-awareness, organization, thoughtfulness, and editing. For more specific grading for each paper, refer to that paper’s grading rubric.

 *Late Papers*: I will allow you to have an extension on one final of a paper during the semester, no questions asked. After that, each paper that is turned in late will lose a third of a grade for each late day (one day late starts at an A-, two days late starts at a B+, three days a B, four days a B-, etc.). However, if you miss a workshop draft, you will lose 2 points on the final draft of that paper no matter what (no excuses), and you must still use the late draft.

**ALL FORMAL PAPERS AND THEIR DRAFTS MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN TO EARN A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE!**

**Attendance**
I keep strict attendance and will adhere to the First-Year Writing rule that **an excess of four absences in a TTH class [that's the equivalent of 20% of this course] is grounds for failure**. Save your absences for when you get sick (it will happen, trust me) or for family emergencies. If you are late to class three times, it will be counted as an absence. **Not showing up for a conference counts as two absences** as well.

As for tardies: I do keep track of them. Be here by the time your name is called, or you are tardy. **3 Tardies counts as an absence.**

**First-Year Composition Course Drop Policy**
This course is NOT eligible to be dropped in accordance with the “Drop Policy” adopted by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2004. The Undergraduate Studies Dean will not consider drop requests for a First-Year Composition course unless there are extraordinary and extenuating circumstances utterly beyond the student's control (e.g.:death of a parent or sibling, illness requiring hospitalization, etc.). The Faculty Senate specifically eliminated First-Year Composition courses from the University Drop Policy because of the overriding requirement that First-Year Composition be completed during students' initial enrollment at FSU.

**Civility**
I will tolerate neither disruptive language nor disruptive behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent and/or belligerent and/or insulting remarks, including sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-ethnic slurs, bigotry, and disparaging commentary, either spoken or written (offensive slang is included in this category).

While I do not disagree that you each have a right to your own opinions, inflammatory language founded in ignorance or hate is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.

Disruptive behavior includes the use of cell phones, pagers or any other form of electronic communication during the class session (e-mail, web-browsing). Disruptive behavior also includes whispering or talking when another member of the class is speaking or engaged in relevant conversation (remember that I am a member of this class as well). This classroom functions on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom if you violate any part of this statement on civility.

If you engage in disruptive behavior, I reserve the right to make you leave class and count you absent. In the event that this is a continued behavior, it will lower your final grade.

**Cell Phone and Computer Policy**
Students are not allowed to use cell phones or computers in class unless I give them permission. All electronic devices must be kept in backpacks or pockets -- not on desks or in view. A lull in class is not permission to use a cellphone, tablet, computer, or other electronic device.

If a student is caught using an electronic device without permission, he or she will be issued a warning. After that warning, any subsequent violations of this policy will result in a loss of .5 points toward that student's grade.

In the event that you feel you need your cell phone due to an emergency situation, please let me know ASAP and before class so that we can make arrangements.

**Drafts, Revisions, and Final Papers**
You'll always need to make three copies of your drafts and revisions (not final papers) before you come to class on days we workshop. I require that all drafts and revisions and revision to be typed (MLA format, 1-inch margins). You have access to a number of computer labs around campus, so if you don't have your own computer, take advantage of one of FSU's. Final papers do not need covers or title pages. All your written work must have your name, my name, and the date at the top of the first page: You will be responsible for some photocopying expense for this class in order to share your writing with your peers, but you can also take advantage of any of the campus computer labs to print additional copies of your papers. You will generally be choosing your own topics and structures for the drafts and papers in this class (after the first week). Your audience, though, is not always your peers present in this class or myself; rather, I prefer that a larger audience such as a literary journal, an editorial board, or online readers. You will be required to share your work with your classmates-take care in what you choose to write about. Your writing for this class is nearly always public writing in the sense that others will be reading, hearing, and commenting on it.

**Reading/Writing Center (RWC)**
The Reading/Writing Center, located in Williams 222-C, is devoted to individualized instruction in reading and writing. Part of the English Department, the RWC serves Florida State University students at all levels and from all majors. Its clients include a cross-section of the campus: first-year students writing for composition class, upper level students writing term papers, seniors composing letters of applications for jobs and graduate schools, graduate students working on theses and dissertations, multilingual students mastering English, and a variety of others. The RWC serves mostly walk-in tutoring appointments, however it also offers three different courses for credit that specifically target reading, undergraduate-level writing, and graduate-level writing.

The tutors in the RWC, all graduate students in English with training and experience in teaching composition, use a process-centered approach to help students at any stage of writing: from generating ideas, to drafting, organizing and revising. While the RWC does not provide editing or proofreading services, its tutors can help writers build their own editing and proofreading skills. Our approach to tutoring is to provide guidance to help students grow as writers, readers and critical thinkers by developing strategies to help you write in a variety of situations.

During the fall and spring semesters, the RWC is open Monday through Thursday from 10 - 6 and Friday from 10 -2. Hours of operation vary in summer. Visit the RWC web site [website](http://writing.fsu.edu/rwc/) or call 644-6495 for information.

A satellite RWC location at Strozier Library provides tutoring to students where they congregate most often, and where writing and research can co-develop. This location includes more evening hours to align with student needs. Late-night tutoring is also offered at this location during peak times in the semester when students are up late writing mid-term or final papers.

The Strozier location serves only walk-in appointments on a first-come, first-served basis, but students can sign up in advance the same day they want an appointment at the tutoring area. Hours vary by semester, but are updated on both the RWC web site and the Strozier Library web site at the start of each semester. The Center is a great asset; please take advantage of it.

**Digital Studio**
The Digital Studio provides support to students working individually or in groups on a variety of digital projects, such as designing a web site, developing an electronic portfolio for a class, creating a blog, selecting images for a visual essay, adding voiceover to a presentation, or writing a script for a podcast. Tutors who staff the Digital Studio can help students brainstorm essay ideas, provide feedback on the content and design of a digital project, or facilitate collaboration for group projects and presentations.

Students can use the Digital Studio to work on their own to complete class assignments or to improve overall capabilities in digital communication without a tutoring appointment if a work station is available. However, tutor availability and workspace are limited so appointments are recommended.

To make an appointment e-mail us at fsudigitalstudio@gmail.com or visit the Digital Studio in Williams 222-B. Hours vary by semester and are updated at [website](http://english.fsu.edu/rhetcomp/digital.html).

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is grounds for suspension from the university as well as for failure in this course. It will not be tolerated. Any instance of plagiarism (including self-plagiarism) must be reported to the Director of First-Year Writing and the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Plagiarism is a counterproductive, non-writing behavior that is unacceptable in a course intended to aid the growth of individual writers.

Plagiarism is included among the violations defined in the Academic Honor Code, section b), paragraph 2, as follows: "Regarding academic assignments, violations of the Academic Honor Code shall include representing another's work or any part thereof, be it published or unpublished, as one's own." A plagiarism education assignment that further explains this issue will be administered in all first-year writing courses during the second week of class. Each student will be responsible for completing the assignment and asking questions regarding any parts they do not fully understand.

**ADA**
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should in the FIRST WEEK OF CLASS 1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) and 2) bring a letter to the instructor from SDRC indicating the need for academic accommodations. This and all other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

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**Description of Major Assignments**

## Board Game Blog, 20%

Writing about board games takes practice, so I want you to keep a blog about board games. Here are the steps for doing so:

1. Play 1-2 Board Games at least 2x each

You may either play the games on Board Game Arena or with me and classmates during Board Game Hour. I will check to make sure you are playing the assigned games.

2. Blog 300+ words on **each** game you played

The blog entry can be a brief analysis, discussion, or investigation into one of the board games for the week. Relate it to your everyday life, talk about the rhetorical decisions the game designers make, talk about how well the rules/design of them game function, talk about your experience playing the game.

3. Respond to your peer’s blogs, 250+

You will be doing this 10x from week 3-13.

Blog posts will be due most Mondays at noon. By the end of the semester you will have 15 posts and 10 responses.

Each blog worth 75 points x 15 = 1125 points

Playing games each week worth 25 points x 15 = 375 points

Each response worth 50 points x 10 = 500 points

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Total 2000 points

## Paper 1: Board Game Breakdown, 25%

Length: 5-7 Pages, 2 Page Process Memo

Sources: None required. If you do use other sources, cite them using MLA format.

When creating new games, designers are constantly making choices about what building blocks they want to include in games, what message they want to send wit the game, and what lessons they want players to learn.

For this assignment you will analyze those building blocks, called rhetorical devices, of a single board game to create a coherent thesis about what lesson the game teaches. Here are the three steps for this assignment:

1. Identify the rhetorical choices that the game designers made, and think about why they made those choices. The following is a partial list of some of the important rhetorical devices used in board games:

* Genre: What genre is this game in? (for a list of games genres, see [Board Game Geek's Categories](http://boardgamegeek.com/browse/boardgamecategory)) What type of crowd does this genre attract?
* Color: What do the colors say about the game's tone, audience, and purpose?
* Packaging: How big or small is the box, the cards, the board, etc? Is it easily-transportable or not?
* Visuals: Does the game include images, iconography, or other visual elements? How do these visuals direct, attract, or influence player's thought?
* References: Does the game make cultural references, either to contemporary popular culture or a specific culture of the past? Why are those references important?
* Title: What is the title and what does it mean? What is the font on the game and the font of the title (can you identify it? if not, can you describe it?)? How does this attract potential players?
* Text: Is there a lot of text or a little text in the game? How does this attract players, and what sort of players does this attract?
* Story: Is there a story associated with the game? If so, how do the game's mechanics mesh with the story of the game? Could the game function without the story? Does the story attract certain players? Is the game an adaptation from some other media?
* Rules/Mechanics: How does the game work (for a list of game mechanics see [Board Game Geek's List of Mechanics](http://boardgamegeek.com/browse/boardgamemechanic))? What does the game teach its players (is it fiercely or lightly competitive, cooperative, or a sandbox game)? How long does the game last?
* Purpose: Does the game have a specific purpose (like to teach some skill or language or brain function)? If so, what is it, and how does the game teach this?

2. As the questions above imply, we will be focusing on the audience of the game, too, in this paper. Provide an in-depth analysis of ONE intended audience and the ways in which that audience may relate to the text. By one intended audience, I mean a single demographic, such as adolescent girls, fans of a specific TV show, working mothers, a specific race, etc. How does the game that you chose intellectually or emotionally appeal to its intended audience? How does it use visual and/or textual rhetoric to capture and sustain that audience’s interest and imagination?

3) Consider your experiences with or reactions to the game. This should help you to formulate a coherent thesis as to what the game is doing, and will also make the essay more personable for readers.

Remember, no detail is too miniscule not to mean something.

This paper will go through three drafts before you turn in the final. The first and third drafts will be read for peer response. For the second draft we will have individual conferences, where you meet with me

Your final draft should be 5-7 double spaced pages and should include a Works Cited page where you cite the board game you chose. You do not need to include research in this paper, but if you feel the need to incorporate any outside sources, please cite them in your paper. However, I would prefer that most of the “research” here take place inside your own minds.

**Paper 2: Board Games in Culture, 30%**

Length: 7-9 Pages, 2 Page Proposal, 2 Page Process Memo, Works Cited

Minimum of 6 Sources: 2 must be scholarly, 3 must be non-web sources

In the first paper, you spent time thinking about the parts of a board game to discuss how it is functioning as a text. This second paper will have you explore a board game, board gaming groups, or some other board game related topic in light of broader cultural issues.

Here are the steps to completing this paper:

1. Choose a board game related topic. You may come up with your own, or you may pick one from the list of board game topics I provide. Make sure to pick a topic that you are interested in, one that you don't mind spending a lot of time researching.

2. Write a 2 Page Proposal about why you want to write on the topic you've chosen. For the proposal, I want you to include at least 2 sources that you've already found about the topic, one of which must be scholarly. Pretend, in your proposal, that you are writing to a magazine editor, trying to convince her/him that she/he should publish your article. I will approve or disapprove of your topic based on the scope of the project (it must not be too big or too large) and the research out there.

3. Research, Research, Research Your next step is to do research. You must end up with a total of at least 6 sources, though I imagine you will end up with more than that in many cases. I want you to do research in a few ways:

* Scholarly Sources: In the beginning of this process, we'll be vising the library, where we'll learn about how to find and manage scholarly sources. Find at least 2 scholarly sources from a database that we look at (or another database) that can contribute to your paper. Remember, you may have to
* Web Sources: This part is not required, but looking at message boards, forums, gaming websites, game publisher websites, and other sites will probably be helpful to your research. However, please make sure that the information on the site is appropriate to your topic (we will discuss how to evaluate websites in a class period).
* Print Sources: There are tons of excellent books about the history of board games, board game design, board game culture, etc. Use them. I'll try to have a few on reserve in the library for you.
* Interviews: If you can find somebody to interview about your topic, that is always excellent and I strongly suggest that you include an interview if appropriate. However, please do not use an interview of a family member or close friend (without my prior approval).
* Primary Texts: Although these will not count as a source, you should be analyzing the board game or board games (or other primary texts depending on your topic) at hand, using the rhetorical analysis skills we learned in the first paper to broaden the depth of your paper.
* Videos, Audio, and other Multimedia: Feel free to use Youtube videos or podcasts from the interwebs in your paper. This does count as a source (but not a scholarly source).

4. Rough Drafts: We will be going through three drafts in class: two workshops with your peers and one conference with me. I expect that you will be working hard in revision -- this assignment will require a lot of revision, research, and more revision, and more research. Please do not be scared to scrap entire pages or paragraphs, to reword or revise your thesis, or even to change the whole structure or process of your writing.

5. Final Draft: Your final draft will be 7-9 pages and will include a works cited page (that does not count toward the 7 page minimum). You also will include a Process Memo that will be at least 2 pages long.

**Paper 3: Promoting Board Games, 25%**

Project (3 options) and 4 page process memo

For this assignment you will be helping to spread the gospel of board games to the broader world. In order to do this, you'll be creating your own video, board game proposal, or board game adaptation. There are two steps to this project.

**PART 1**. Choose from one of the following and create a text accordingly:

**Option A: Podcast, Vlog Entry, or Youtube Video**

As you have seen this semester, board games culture is growing, and often people are using Vlogs, podcasts, or Youtube videos to get the word out. Now it's your turn to do the same.

Create a 10-15 minute video or audio file in which you discuss a board game or board game related issue and post it to your blog. Your topic must be different than the first two papers, but can address a topic that would be appropriate for the second paper.

A simple explanation of rules will not due, however. You may BRIEFLY explain a game, but I expect the podcast to creatively pitch the importance of the game instead (or to argue against a game -- that's a form of promotion, too).

**Option B: Create Your Own Board Game Proposal**

You are all fairly knowledgeable about the building blocks of board games now. This project, then, is your opportunity to create your own idea for a board game.

Write a 3-4 page proposal to a board game. You may write the paper in sections, with each section addressing parts of the game (such as design, mechanics, storyline, theme, etc.). Try to keep in mind what your intended audience will be for this game, and be sure to make rhetorical decisions that fit that board game.

Your proposal will start with a "pitch" or "hook" for the game, which is a 1-2 page explanation of the selling points of the game. You must also include the following: a theme, a game title, an explanation of the type of game mechanic you are using (though perhaps not the exact rules), a storyline (if your game has one), and ideas for imagery/items in the game/etc.

You may but are not required to include any of the following: a rulebook, a design for the cover, or any actual parts or pieces for your game.

**Option C: Board Game Adaptation**

As you have seen throughout the semester, board game adaptations have become huge. There have been board games turned into movies (such as Battleship and Clue) and vice versa (such as the Battlestar Galactica Game) as well as books turned into games (such as the Lord of the Rings or Arkham Horror).

This project is your opportunity to start your own adaptation. You do one of the following:

* Choose a board game that you would like to turn into another text. You can turn it into a movie, novel, collection of poems, a musical album or composition, or a piece of visual art. For your proposal you will turn in an excerpt of the new text (if you do a movie or an album, you can turn in the movie poster or album cover OR you can actually film/record some of the piece).
* Choose a book, movie, album, piece of art, or other story that could be turned into a board game. Then follow the steps in OPTION B.

**PART 2**. Write a 3-4 page Process Memo that addresses the following:

* How does your project help to bring board games to a larger audience?
* Who is the audience for your project? What rhetorical devices did you make to appeal to this audience?
* What is the biggest selling point for your project? Why would people want to play it / see it / hear it/ etc.?
* What knowledge did you use that you learned from earlier in the semester?