



## CIS 5640: Introduction to Game Design

# Lab 4: Crazy Eights, Story Mode, Part 2

Welcome back to Lab 4! In this lab, we will continue refining your themed Crazy Eights prototype into a polished game, incorporating playtest feedback and documenting your design process.

### Small Tips:

- Pay attention to not fall back to pure intuition-based design. Try incorporating MDA & game loop frameworks to analyze and guide your changes!
- Incorporating the ideas from 4 designers is hard. Try to let go of idea ownership and just go with one thing at a time. Not every great idea is going to fit into one game, and that's ok. When in doubt, stop debating and prototype.
- Playtest regularly to assess effectiveness and gather feedback.
- Ensure theme and gameplay work together for a cohesive experience

## Original Rules: Crazy Eights

**Objective:** Be the first player to get rid of all their cards.

**Setup:** The game is played with a standard 52-card deck and 4 players. Each player is dealt 7 cards, and the rest of the deck forms a draw pile. One card is placed face-up to start the discard pile.

### Gameplay:

- On their turn, a player must play a card that matches the top card of the discard pile in **rank** or **suit**.
- If they **cannot play**, they must draw a card from the deck.
- **Eights are wild:** A player may play an **8** at any time during your turn and choose a new suit for the next player to follow.
- Play continues clockwise.

**Winning:** The first player to play all their cards wins the round. The game may continue for multiple rounds, with players keeping score based on the value of cards left in opponents' hands.

## **1. Finalize Your Design (20 mins)**

If you didn't get a chance to actually playtest last session. Start by playing the last prototype of your game.

Go back to your original playtest notes from Lab 3 Part 1. What worked? What broke the game loop or confused players? Are the themes and constraints working well together? Did the players not engage with the mechanics?

Based on your observations, make ONE change per concrete observation. Limit changes so that the game doesn't get overcomplicated!

## **2. Playtest and Iterate! (40 mins)**

Split your group into two pairs. Have one pair group up with a pair from another team. Playtest both your and their prototypes. Write down your observations.

Group back up with your team. Compare notes, and determine if your iterations solved the problems that arose previously.

Pay attention to player dynamics and aesthetics! Does the game loop feel engaging and replayable?

Some more questions to think about post-playtest:

- Were players clear about their roles/goals in the context of the theme?
- Was the win condition intuitive and satisfying?
- Did the new mechanics create strategic depth or frustration?
- Are all players able to enjoy the game? Or do you perceive a gap between roles & skills?

Try your best to get one more iteration in – make a few changes to your game to improve on the experience with the above questions in mind. If you can, playtest with another group again! If no other groups are available, playtest with your group once more.

## **3. Reflection Time with Class (15 mins)**

Share with the class your final iteration of the game!!

What did you change and why?

Did you have to pivot from a particular design?

How's the theme & gameplay working together?

## 4. Assignment

If there is extra time towards the end, you can begin by continuing to refine your design doc in [homework assignment](#)