

OPENING REMARKS

Hello again everyone! This has been our final week of ideation. We spoke with our client stakeholders in order to establish what we could make that will be most useful to them in the classroom. We brainstormed design ideas that will assist in teaching the concepts that teachers have indicated are the most important and/or difficult to learn. We also researched technologies that could be used in the SMALLab experience that we're creating.

This week marks the completion of the first quarter of our development cycle. We gave a presentation to faculty (and guests), and received a lot of useful feedback that has shaped our brainstorming process. As we move forward into the prototype phase, our next week will be spent building a functional prototype that can be playtested the following week. Be sure to follow our progress online at <http://www.etc.cmu.edu/projects/skylight/>

WEEKLY BREAKDOWN

As stated in the opening remarks above, this week we focused on speaking with music instructors to find out what they would like our product to do, presenting ideas to faculty for feedback, and ideating on the responses we received from both faculty and our client. Curriculum topics that music instructors would like our product to address include: musical notation and sight-reading, note values and rhythm, or dynamics. They also requested that our game be instrument-independent, particularly with regard to reading music.

We spent a lot of time this week examining music teaching methods for children, looking at other games involving music-making or playing, as well as researching digital signal processing and beat detection technologies that could be integrated into our game design, and the SMALLab setup at the Elizabeth Forward School. We've come up with several design ideas; and we will advance with the one we feel best fulfills our client's request.

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

Our challenge this week was designing games that teach at least one of our client's desired topics and utilize the SMALLab platform to its strengths. We considered several different interaction methods such as pointing the wand at targets, picking things up/moving them around, using the wand to track player position, as well as waving the wands around. We also considered ways to involve the rest of the class in the experience through clapping, stomping, or singing.

We've been given a big challenge and we want to make sure that we create an experience that's intuitive, instructive, engaging, and applicable to musical development across grade levels. We would like to thank the music instructors at Elizabeth Forward for taking the time to meet with us and answer our questions, our faculty for providing us with feedback, and the guests who've visited our project room to contribute ideas and observations. Look forward to a new issue next week!

