

# Inkwell Realms

## High concept statement

"Inkwell Realms" is a roguelike card-based narrative-driven game that employs advanced AI algorithms for story generation. Players take on the role of an aspiring author who has no creativity. Luckily, one day he finds a pair of ancient virtual reality goggles. These goggles, powered by advanced AI, transport the player into diverse fictional worlds. Through firsthand experiences in these AI-crafted narratives, players gather inspiration to write best-selling books.

### 1. Setting and theme

Set in the modern world with a twist of magical realism, the protagonist discovers ancient VR goggles. These goggles, containing remnants of an AI from a lost civilization, become the conduit to countless narratives, each more intricate than the last. The narratives could be any fiction: sci-fi, horror, detective, horror etc.

### 2. Core ideas

#### - AI-driven VR Dive:

Players enter a realm of AI-generated story instances. The advanced AI algorithm tailors settings, themes, characters, and plots dynamically, ensuring each narrative feels both unpredictable and engaging.

#### - Deck creation & customization

Before each dive, players curate a deck from combat and dialogue cards, influencing the story's flow and resolution within the AI-crafted narrative. Not all cards are available to the player, instead he is presented an option to choose from randomly "dropped" cards after each dive, like in Slay the Spire.

#### - Combat System

Engage in turn-based strategy combat with NPCs. Use combat cards, ranging from offense to defense, and form combos for maximum effect.

#### - Dialogue System

Interact with in-game characters using dialogue cards. Your choices can lead to alliances, betrayals, secrets, and other narrative twists. Illogical choices (such as allying with the main antagonist) could make finishing the dive easier, but also lower the quality of the book.

#### - Book Crafting:

Upon exiting the VR, players craft a book based on their experiences. Books earn revenue based on the cohesiveness and quality of the stories within. Over time, players can build a library of their creations. Quality of the book and real-world trends affects the sales. Powerful "corruption" cards - called Plot Holes - make the combat/dialogue significantly easier, but also lower the book quality, resulting in fewer sales.

- In-Game Economy:

Use earnings from book sales to purchase new cards, enhance existing cards, or invest in other assets that can enhance future dives into the VR.

### 3. Progression System:

- Earnings and Reputation:

Successful books earn more money and increase the author's reputation. A higher reputation can unlock special cards or unique story instances.

- Skill & Equipment Upgrades:

Use earnings to purchase new writing tools or software, each providing different bonuses. For instance, a better pen might increase the chances of epic cards appearing in the next VR dive.

- Deck Expansion:

As players progress, they can hold more cards in their deck, allowing for more complex strategies and narratives.

### 4. Quality of a book

Quality would be determined by various factors, such as story cohesiveness or its complexity. Lower quality books are written faster, allowing the player to hop on existing trends, while higher quality books are more successful overall, but require more time and planning.

Target audience of a book also plays a factor. For example, writing a high-complexity book that is intended for children, or writing a book full of plot-holes intended for mature audiences would result in lower sales.

### Inspiration

The idea of simulated worlds (VR dives) comes from the Netflix show *The Midnight Gospel*, where the main character has a simulator and visits various worlds, about which he then makes podcasts.

Creating a high-quality book would be similar to the game "Game Dev Tycoon", where player creates games and makes various choices (gameplay, graphics, sound etc.), which then decides whether the game is successful or not. The book trends would work similarly as the game trends, for example horror books are popular now, while children books are not. The player could write sequels, make books that happen in the same world he wrote about before etc.

Deckbuilding is heavily inspired by *Slay the Spire* (evil game).