



# PLAYTESTING PERSUADE

Resources will be posted at: [playtestingworkshops.com](http://playtestingworkshops.com)

## This workshop is for you if:

1. You have a playable prototype that...
  - a. you can make claims about.
  - b. aligns with your audience's expectations.
2. You know who you want to convince.
3. You know what the benefit is of convincing them.

## Ask yourself:

Do my claims about the game align with the player's experience?  
What evidence might substantiate my claim?  
Who do I need to persuade and why?

## Playtesting Methods in Persuade:

1. Expertise
  - a. Designers judgment to communicate your process, especially reframings
  - b. Expert panel to communicate credibility
2. Experiment
  - a. Pre/Post Testing to communicate a transformation
  - b. A/B Testing to communicate a comparison



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**Persuade Bridge Activity**  
**Claim/Evidence/Stakeholder**

Create a poster with 3 columns:

Column 1: CLAIM	Column 2: STAKEHOLDER	Column 3: STAKEHOLDER
<p>Refer back to your player experience goals. What claims can you make about the impact or affect of your experience?</p> <p>What other claims can you make about what your game does or how it works?</p> <p>Do you offer a technical innovation?</p> <p>Do you offer a new approach to the design or play of this type of experience?</p>	<p>For each claim, ask yourself:</p> <p>Who do you need to persuade that this claim is valid?</p> <p>Who do you think will find this claim important and valuable?</p>	<p>What kind of evidence do you need to support your claim?</p> <p>Also consider, what type of evidence will be persuasive to your stakeholders? Different stakeholders may require different evidence at different levels of detail.</p> <p>Think about the unique features of your design. Can you test, measure, demonstrate or observe how these unique features support your claims?</p>

### **A/B Testing:**

Use A/B testing to test two possible versions of your game. Choose this method to help your design team make a difficult design decision.

1. What is your claim?
2. Describe version A:
3. Describe version B:
4. Who are your playtesters?
5. Will the same players play game A and game B or will you ask different groups of testers to play each game (within subject or between subject experimental design)? Why?
6. Where will conduct your playtest?
7. How will you collect the data? Observation, survey, in-game metrics, evidence of learning, a combination?
8. List a few sample survey questions, observation topics, in-game metrics or evidence of learning...etc.
9. Why will this evidence be convincing to your design team or stakeholders?

### **Expert Panels:**

Ask experts to review your game. This may be a great way to get credible feedback.

1. What is your claim?

2. What is your timeline for receiving feedback from your experts? Be realistic.

3. Who are your experts? Some examples of experts include:

- Might be subject matter experts (e.g., science game)
- Might be awards panel (IndieCade, GDC, etc.)
- Might be convenient (e.g., Jesse Schell and other ETC game professionals, for Carnegie Mellon)

4. How will you find and reach out to your experts?

5. Persuade the experts that they should provide you feedback on your game. Why is your game unique? What kind of impact will your game have? Why will this particular expert be interested in your game? List three persuasive arguments.

6. List three focused questions for the experts. Consider how these will provide evidence to support (or reject) your claim.

7. Why will this evidence be convincing to your design team or stakeholders?

**Pre/Post Tests:**

Testing before and after playing your game could be an effective way to playtest educational games or games that are intended to evoke a particular response.

1. What is your claim?
2. Who are your playtesters?
3. How will you find your playtesters?
4. How will you find your playtesters?
5. Where will you conduct your playtest?
6. Form a hypothesis: what difference do you expect to see between the pre- and post-test?
7. Describe your pre/post test. If a survey, draft at least three sample questions. If a task, outline the instructions for completing the task. Consider how these will provide evidence to support (or reject) your claim.
8. Why will this evidence be convincing to your design team or stakeholders?

**Time Series Tests:**

Testing your game repeatedly over your time allows you to track long-term changes in your game and the players. This is a reliable way to test and track in-game metrics and could generate research-worthy data.

1. What is your claim?
2. Who are your playtesters?
3. How will you find your playtesters?
4. How often will you conduct your playtest?
5. Where will you conduct your playtest?
6. What will motivate your players to continue to test over time?
7. How will you collect the data? Observation, survey, in-game metrics, a combination?
8. List a few sample survey questions, observation criteria, or in-game metrics. Consider how these will provide evidence to support (or reject) your claim.
9. Why will this evidence be convincing to your design team or stakeholders?

### Plan B:

Imagine that you have completed your playtest and discovered that the evidence does **NOT** support your claim.

- What will you have learned about your game?
- Moving forward, what will be your next step?

### Designer's Judgment:

Your game is more than statistical data and user surveys. It's important to remember what **YOU** find compelling.

- When you play your game or watch others play it, what do you find stimulating, surprising, evocative, memorable, touching, unique, compelling, in other words, meaningful about it?
- Recall what inspired you to make the game. Has your inspiration changed? How is your inspiration (original, or new) embodied in the game?

*"Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing **existing situations into preferred ones.**" -Herb Simon*

- What is the preferred future situation that you want your game to engender?

### When playtesting, ask yourself:

- Why is this type of playtest the best choice to test my claim?
- Am I testing with the "right" players—the players that will teach me the most about my game?
- How am I collecting data? Will the data provide me with evidence I need to support (or reject) my claim?
- How will I communicate what's successful (unique, amazing, fun, innovative) about my game persuasively? Consider: who am I communicating my successes to and what type of evidence will they find persuasive?