1. Team Name: Umbrella Whales

   Team Members: Josh Hahn - Artist

                          Kirk Martinez - Programmer

                          Hugh McGinley - Artist

                          Kate Orr – Producer/Designer

2. Design History

   v. 1.1: The Volcano Game.   We conceptualized a game based on a theme that miners were

   digging minerals out of a volcanic mountain to earn material-based victory points. We

   incorporated a spinner for the movement. We used randomly placed cards on the game board

   to move players up, down, or forward on the board. The random cards also contained the

   minerals collected by the players. There were absolutely no elements of choice in this game,

   and we needed to fix it. Without choice, our game was a dictatorship and we were in need of a

   coup d'etat.

   v. 1.2: R.I.P. Volcano Game. We hate this game. There is no element of choice that we have

   tried to implement that counteracts the overwhelming amount of randomness. We did change

   to shape of the board to circular, with concentric rings to represent different heights. We added

   the idea of multiple starting points for player choice. We also changed the options on the

   spinner, but the randomness didn't really decrease and the concept itself is boring us, with no

   Sense of Urgency or motivation within the game to want to finish. On our last gameplay, we just

   wanted someone to luck out and finally win, so we could finish the game and never have to play

   it again. Lesson learned.

v. 2.1 The Pirate Game: After scrapping the Volcano Game, we decided to start with a fresh brainstorming session. We wanted a game that was more personal to individual players , but definitely competitive, with more choices and more diverse mechanics.

We began with the idea of creating something throughout gameplay: Creature building or vehicle building were the primary choices, and we decided that by making a vehicle of some kind, we could then use them to race our opponents.

We went with the idea of building ships and being able to actually draw a picture of your own ship, and drawing or erasing ship parts as you win or lose them throughout game play.

A "historical pirate theme" came about naturally because:

a) Pirates are very popular on the market and in pop culture right now, increasing consumer appeal.

b) Pirates would justify the battling and "treasure seeking" concept.

The Pieces/Resources:

a) A circular, 2ft diameter playing board with 1.5 inch movement spaces

b) Each player has a dry erase board on which their ship is drawn.

c) Each player has a playing piece on the board, representing their progress toward their goals.

d) Movement is determined by cards, drawn from a master deck in increments of 1 ,2, or 3 spaces.

e) Players can land on a "?" space to draw either a ship damage card or a ship bonus part card

f) Players can land on a Treasure Island/space to earn gold by drawing from a card pile with increments of 1, 2, 3, or 4 pieces/card

g) Some spaces on the board are blocked off from player movement, but not attack lines.

h) There is also a die to facilitate players ability to attack each other and the odds of the outcome.

i) The game is designed for 2-6 players.

v. 2.2:

a) We are adding more of the Treasure Map locations. There are now an even 20 spots, 5 for each 4 person game. If a game has less than 4 players, 5 cards representing the islands are dealt to each player.

b) There are 4 "ports," one for each player for starting positions. The game is now for 2-4 players.

c) We are considering adding more "?" spots. After the playtest by our classmates, more "?" spots would make the playing field more dynamic.

v. 2.3

a) We are making a draw pile space in the center of the board for the Movement Cards. This is to increase physical accessibility for all players

b) We have added "Sea Storm" cards to the Shipwreck Cards draw pile to enable another element of game play. Players now have the chance to use a Sea Storm card on any opponent. That opponent loses their next turn. Players may collect Sea Storm cards and use them on multiple opponents at once, but no more than one card may be used on the same opponent at the same time.

c) We have a total of 8 ports now, so players have more options to choose from for their starting position.

d) There are more "coral reefs"/movement blocking spaces so players have more strategy to place in their movement.

e) We are varying the gold cost amounts to buy/sell ship parts. We are going to play through with different variations.

V 2.4

a) We are eliminating the buried treasure/gold cards. We are going to standardize the amount one receives when landing on an island, based on the amount of ship parts equipped. This will eliminate the randomness in the buried treasure mechanic.

b) We are implementing personal movement decks. This also lessens the randomness and encourages players to budget their movement more carefully.

c) Movement decks are now placed in front of each player, with the center draw pile now used for Shipwreck Cards and Treasure Maps.

d) We are going to refine the cannon fire mechanic. We need to be more specific and define rules for battles between players on adjacent spaces.

e) Players are able to implement more choice when drawing their Treasure Map Cards. At the beginning of the game, each player draws a card and keeps it for the first round. For the Second through Fifth rounds, players draw one card, decide whether to keep or discard. If the player keeps the first card, they must discard the second. If they decide to discard the first card, they must keep the second.

f) We are trying out the name "Plunder" instead of referring to our game as "the pirate game." We're still working on the title.

g) Sea Storm cards, as part of the Shipwreck Deck are going to be tried as a means to slow down/subtract movement for the player to use on themselves or their opponents.

h) Players may shoot a cannon at any time, at nothing in particular, to move one space. (Effectively buying a space by exchanging gold for a cannon) This is the only way one may purchase movement with gold.

3. Executive Summary:

Plunder is a racing game. Players are Pirate Ship Captains navigating around the Game Board to find Treasure Islands before their opponents. The sense of discovery heightens the personal involvement and motivation to drive gameplay.

The element of drawing one's ship, is a unique feature to *Plunder*. This aspect adds a more personal element to the player's experience because they are creating their own pirate ship. Based on feedback from other play groups as well as that of our own team, drawing heightens the personal involvement and expression during gameplay and is one of the favored features *Plunder* offers.

Both the Sense of Urgency and drawing aspects heighten the fun and personal enjoyment had by players. The competitive interaction adds a playful element that sustains the pirate theme.

4. Audience, Platform, Genre, Components, Play Parameters

Audience: We are marketing "*Plunder*" for ages 10 and up. The idea behind our primary target audience is that parents can play with their children with either party feeling like the game is a comfortable challenge. Because the game is gender and age neutral in the artwork and descriptions, we can appeal to a larger target audience. Our game is a racing game at heart, but with the added bonus of ship battles, we are definitely looking at a demographic that likes speed, action and multiple players. We are not targeting the Chess crowd, or those who might be looking for a quiet or solitary game. There is no room for "Sudoku" in *Plunder*.

Children should be at about a 5th grade reading level, so that the game play mechanics are thoroughly understood. The game is also good for developing skills for children, teenagers, and perhaps certain adults:

- o Resource Management: Players must balance funds and ship parts to affect speed, attacking power and maneuverability.

- o Visual Representation: Players draw their own ship and the parts they win, buy or lose.

- o Action/Reaction: Players are able to choose (within their hand) the amount of spaces they want to move, and what amounts to save for subsequent movements.

- The game is not about collecting the most money to win, but to achieve your goals before other players. Players without a large amount of gold have just as much of a chance to win as those who do, if they choose their movement and treasure maps wisely.

Platform: *Plunder* is a board game, played on any horizontal surface able to accommodate playing pieces and cards. Our inspiration for some of our gameplay features come from several different game sources:

- The boardgame *Labyrinth* is the inspiration for having multiple destination objectives

- Our own Volcano Game concept was the inspiration for a circular board with numerous starting position options.

- The card game *Spades* is the inspiration for how the Treasure Map cards are self-dealt

- The board game *Ave Caesar!* Is the inspiration for having identical player decks of movement cards

- Since all of the design team is enrolled in an art school, our field of study was the inspiration for including a sketch/draw element for the boat creation.

- Our love of adventure, role playing and fantasy games. and general geekiness is our inspiration for making our game Pirate themed. (Arrrrrr)

- Our inspiration for shooting a cannon to move a space comes from the end of the movie "Star Trek" when they fire into the black hole to propel the ship away.

Genre:

- Our game Is primarily a non-linear based Racing game, with elements of Conflict and Battle. *Plunder* also provides an element of strategically planning one's moves, but since players only keep 3 Movement cards in their hands at a time, speed and tempo are still kept at a higher pace. This keeps the length of players' turns short and drives gameplay to be quick, therefore heightening the players' sense of excitement.

- Attacking – players are able to "attack" other players' ships in order to slow them down.

- Building – Players are able to build their own ships by drawing the features on their individual dry-erase boards.

- Buying – players are able to buy parts for their ships.

- Choosing – Players are able to choose the direction they'd like to travel on the board, who to attack if they wish to attack another player, and whether to purchase more ship parts or move during a turn.

- Controlling – Players are able to use the Sea Storm card at their discretion.

- Maneuvering – Players are able to choose the direction they'd like to travel on the board.

- Upgrading/Downgrading – Players may choose to upgrade their ships with weapons or other components. Players' ships will be "downgraded" if they are hit by an attack from another player or a Sea Monster Shipwreck card.

- Drawing – Players are required to draw their ship at the beginning of the game on their individual dry erase board. As the game progresses, players either add or subtract components from their drawing, depending on what happens to them during gameplay.

Components:

- Game Board: The visual representation and platform on which one's playing piece progresses toward positions represented by fixed locations illustrated and defined within.

- Playing Pieces: The tangible representative figurine used by the player to signify their location on the Game Board.

- Movement Card Decks: Cards in increments of 1, 2 and 3 spaces to be used at the discretion of each player out of the 3 kept in their hand. Every movement turn results in a discard from the hand, followed by a draw from the deck. Only when all cards are gone from the hand may players re-shuffle their decks and begin with the full deck.

- Shipwreck Cards: These cards are obtained when players choose to land on specified spaces defined by the Game Board. Three options result: Either a player loses a ship part, gains a ship part, or is able to alter a movement card in their hand in combination with the drawn card. The drawn card will specify which type.

- Treasure Map Cards: These are the Victory Points of the game. The first player to reach all 5 places determined by their cards wins the game.

o   Gold Coins: The coins have a 1 to 1 ratio of earned gold. Players start with a specified amount and may obtain gold throughout gameplay by movement or battle.

o   Drawing Boards and Pens: This is the Captain's Log of your journey. Record the damage/additions made to your ship by drawing and erasing components as gameplay indicates. A list of prices and a list of movement choices is included on each board, to facilitate easier understanding of how each functions.

Play Parameters: *Plunder* is designed for 2 to 4 players, with an average expected playing time of 30 to 40 minutes.

5. Gameplay

2 to 4 cool people decide to play the most amazing game since man discovered rock crushed scissors so they turn to their game cupboard and find *Plunder* awaiting them. The game begins by unrolling the board on a flat surface and players choosing which playing piece will represent their movement in their quest and placing them on the port of their choice. No player may occupy a space already taken by another player, at any time, including ports.

Individual movement decks are collected and distributed to each player, shuffled and placed face down on the playing surface, outside of the board.   Next, each player takes a dry erase board and draws the base of their boat with their dry erase marker. Each player is also given 3 pieces of gold to start their funds, which are then placed on their boards in the appropriate spot. Individual boards must remain visible to all players for the duration of the game. The Shipwreck cards are shuffled, face down, and placed in the center of the Game Board, (face down) in the "draw" pile. As Shipwreck cards are drawn throughout the game, they

are then discarded in a separate pile, shuffled, and placed face down back on the draw pile, once the draw pile is empty.

Players now begin to play by choosing the objectives they need to accomplish, as determined by the Treasure Map Cards. The players take turns rolling the die to determine the order of Treasure Map drawing. The player with the lowest number shuffles the cards. The player with the highest number draws first. The first player draws the top card, and players continue to draw one card from the top of the pile, clockwise, until everyone has one card. Treasure Map cards must remain hidden from all other players. Next round of map drawing consists of each player choosing between the next two cards in the deck. The first player looks at the top card and chooses whether or not to add this to their hand. If the player adds this card to their deck, they must then look at the next card discard it, face down in a pile next to the draw pile. If the player does not want the first card, and discards it, they must take the second card. Each player follows in this fashion, moving to the discard pile once the original pile is exhausted, until all players have 5 cards. The remaining cards, if any, are then placed back in the box (without everyone seeing their faces) as they will not be used for the remainder of gameplay.

Now that all of the players have their resources, players draw three cards each from their own movement decks, and the first player plays one card to move away from their port. All turns have two parts: The first part is either movement OR attack. The second is the buying/selling portion. A player's turn is concluded by announcing that they are finished to the rest of the players, and (if applicable) drawing the next card in their deck, to maintain 3 cards in their hand.

Movement: Cards come in increments of 1, 2, or 3 spaces. Movement of a player's piece is based upon the card played as well as the ship parts equipped on their ship. Movement guidelines are printed on the individual player boards as well as in the Game Rules. Players can choose to expand the number of spaces to move by buying and equipping another piece of ship. The highest number of spaces provided from the cards is 3. By purchasing all possible upgrades/ship parts, players can move up to 3 more spaces, making the highest possible number of movement spaces 6. Players cannot move diagonally, but may manipulate direction to attain their goals. Players may not back-track on their movement path within the same turn, but may change direction/circle around to land on a desired spot.

Attacking: If players have purchased and equipped a cannon and are within 5 adjacent spaces from any other ship, they may choose to attack. With the purchase of a cannon, players are given 2 shots. The player announces they will be attacking and identifies the victim. The attacker rolls the die to determine a hit or miss. If the die rolls 1-3 the ship is not hit, but "boarded" by the attacker and half of the victim's gold is taken by the attacker. If the die rolls 4-6, the shot is a hit, and the victim not only looses a part of their ship (if applicable) but half of their gold as well. If the attacked ship has a cannon shot left after the attacker's first shot, they may choose to shoot back. The same die rules apply. Players may not purchase or equip more than one cannon (2 shots) at a time, so battles would not last more than 4 shots maximum. The attacking player then continues to the purchasing portion of their turn, if they have sufficient funds, regardless of the outcome of the attack/battle.

Purchasing/Selling: Players may purchase, in order, parts for their ship. The prices are listed on the player boards as well as in the game rules. Players may not sell parts of their ship that have been "equipped," but may sell parts that have been won from the Shipwreck cards.

Ship parts are equipped by drawing them on the board. The order of parts is boat (you can never lose your boat base, no matter how many times you are shot or attacked by sea monsters), mast, sail and flag (whether or not you draw the Jolly Roger is up to you).

Players move in this fashion until they reach the islands represented in their Treasure Map hand. Once a player lands on an island that is one of their goals, they then display the representative card, face up, on the left side of their player board to signify their superiority over their peers and display their earned Victory Point.

Once one player has traveled to all of their destinations, they are the most victorious pirate, and have won the game.

6. **Theme/Story/World:**

In the world of the swashbuckling pirate, time is of the essence, with booty and territory to claim for your fame, fortune and reputation. Pirates are ruthless seafarers and competition to become the most famous sea-faring scurvy dog is high and fast.

As captain of your ship, your goal is to reach all of the islands determined by the Treasure Maps your crew acquired. (It's better not to ask how your smarmy crew found them.) Other Pirates are searching for treasure and their hiding places as well. Since your reputation as The Most Notorious Pirate is on the line, speed and destruction are your allies as you outrace, outwit and outmaneuver the other pirate captains.

Along the way, your ship may encounter Coral Reefs. These are shallow areas on the high seas that your ship cannot pass through, but you definitely can shoot across them to blast other ships with your cannons.

On your journey, you may choose to investigate Shipwreck areas. You are a fearsome pirate, but if the Sea Monster that caused the shipwreck is still hanging around, you may lose a piece of your ship as well, so choose wisely. On the other hand, you may be able to salvage a ship part to sell or equip on your own worthy vessel. A third option is that the shipwreck was caused by bad weather, either giving you the opportunity/disadvantage to slow your ship's movement squares, or to dodge the winds and send them to your opponents.

By landing on any island, you have the chance to seek buried treasure. Be careful though! Other pirates are seeking treasure and the more your boat stands out, the less time you have to gather hidden gold.

7. **Game Design Principles:**

Goals/Objectives: The goal of *Plunder* is to earn the most Victory Points. Additional objectives to compliment the primary goal would be to slow down your opponents through battle and use of your Sea storm cards. Gold is obtained to purchase ship parts, enabling players to upgrade the speed of their ships.

Choice/Decisions:

Players can choose which port from whence to begin their quest.

Players choose between Treasure Maps to customize their journey.

Players choose which movement card to use on each turn and whether or not to purchase ship parts at the conclusion of their turn.

Players can choose to land on Shipwreck points.

If a Shipwreck results in the acquisition of a ship part, players may choose to sell, keep or equip said part.

If a Shipwreck results in a Sea Storm, players may choose to use the card on themselves or their opponents at any time during the movement portion of the applicable player's turn.

A player may choose to land on an island not part of their Treasure Map hand to obtain gold.

Players may choose to purchase a cannon for their ship. Players may then choose to attack an opponent, rather than move, for the first part of their turn.

Players may choose to move to an adjacent square occupied by another player to attack them with a 1 shot "feebie" cannon that does not need to be purchased.

Complexity: Players are recommended to be at a 5th Grade Reading Level. The gameplay balances the element of the race with battle, ship construction and allocation of resources/gold. Players must also be willing to face the results of the unknown consequence of the Shipwreck cards. The weight of choosing your Treasure Map cards determines the path of your journey for the rest of the game, so players must be focused throughout setup as well as gameplay. The setup is part of the challenge. Individual movement decks have the same components for all players, but each player chooses how to allocate their movement strategy to individual goals. The game is not difficult to understand, but complex to play.

Resource Design: Game Board, Player Pieces, Movement Cards, Shipwreck Cards, Treasure Map Cards, Gold Pieces, Player Boards, Dry Erase Markers, Die

Reward Structure:

Victory Points are earned through reaching each Treasure Map location as determined by each player's hand.

Players can also successfully slow down their opponents by attacking or using Sea Storm cards.

Successful hits with a cannon result in the acquisition of some of the opponent's gold pieces. Gold pieces are also earned by landing on Treasure Islands, not represented in their individual hands.

Emotional rewards are earned by successes in obtaining victory points, in the successful self-dealing of Treasure Map cards, and in successful hits with your cannons on your opponents.

All feedback is positive, as even Sea Monster Shipwreck cards result in a change to your ship.

Randomness:

There is a combination of randomness and choice in the dealing of the Treasure Map Decks. This enables players to have some control over the path of their journey while retaining an element of mystery(randomness).

Players have a randomly shuffled deck of Movement cards. Even though there is a finite amount of cards a player may use before reshuffling, the order in which cards are present in one's hand, is randomly assigned.

The roll of the die in attacking another player is random.

The draw of the Shipwreck cards is random, as they are randomly shuffled at the beginning of the game.

Player Interaction:

Plunder has a Multilateral-based Player Interaction. The choices a player makes in self-dealing their Treasure Map cards impact other players' options for subsequent draws in the rounds of self-dealing.

Players also are directly competing against each other to reach all of their Treasure Islands first.

Players slow each other down by destroying each others' ship parts and taking gold through directly attacking each other. Players can also slow each other down by using Sea Storm cards.

Balance:

All players begin with the same amount of gold pieces.

Decks are even in number of cards and in ratio of spaces.

Ports are equidistantly placed on the perimeter of the playing field.

All players have 5 Treasure Map objectives.