

ACTE: Individual/Group Digital Game Design Rubric

DIRECTIONS

1. Ask the student/group for the **printed portfolio**. Digital or electronic portfolios are not accepted. Students have no more than 5 minutes for project setup. While they set up, score the printed portfolio using the checklist below.
2. Confirm that the digital game and its production assets are student-created. **AI-generated game content is prohibited.** This includes generative-AI-created code, artwork, sprites, textures, characters, levels, dialogue, music, sound effects, or other assets used in the game. If AI-generated content is suspected or disclosed, pause scoring and refer the entry to ACTE staff.
3. The student/group has a maximum of 10 minutes to present the project. Judge the digital game and presentation using the criteria on page 2. The student may choose which portion of a longer project to show.
4. After the presentation, judges may ask questions for no more than 5 minutes. Judges are not limited to the suggested topics in the rubric.
5. Enter a score for every criterion. Add the Portfolio Score and Project & Oral Presentation Score for the final score, then initial page 2.

PRINTED PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST			Points
Online Orientation Certificate	0 The Online Orientation Certificate is missing.	10 The Online Orientation Certificate is printed and placed as page 1 of the portfolio.	
Printed Portfolio	0 No printed portfolio is submitted, or only a digital/electronic portfolio is provided.	10 A complete printed portfolio is submitted at judging. Digital portfolios are not accepted.	
Required Portfolio Sections	0 Required printed portfolio sections are not provided.	10 Printed portfolio includes these 9 sections: 1. Online Orientation Certificate (first page) 2. Project identification page: student name(s), school, category, level, and region 3. Table of contents 4. Project narrative: purpose, learning, and benefit 5. Software and hardware used 6. Game design document, game rules, objectives, mechanics, level map, flowchart, storyboard, or other planning evidence 7. Screenshots, selected source-code excerpts, prototype evidence, playtesting notes, and revision/testing log 8. Works cited/bibliography and asset/source credits 9. Signed statement that the game, code, and included production assets are student-created and contain no AI-generated content or assets	
Judges Printed Portfolio Checklist Score			/30

This section is valued at 30 points total.

DIGITAL GAME PROJECT & ORAL PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Select the score range that best matches the demonstrated level. Enter one numeric score from 0-10 for each criterion.

PROJECT					Points
Concept, Objectives & Rules					
0 No identifiable game concept, objective, or rules.	1-3 Concept is unclear; goals or rules are missing, confusing, or inconsistent.	4-6 A basic concept, objective, and rules are evident, but explanation or structure is incomplete.	7-9 Clear, engaging concept with understandable objectives, rules, win/loss conditions, and audience.	10 Compelling, original concept with polished rules, meaningful goals, and exceptional player clarity.	
PROJECT					Points
Gameplay Mechanics, Challenge & Balance					
0 No functional gameplay mechanics are demonstrated.	1-3 Mechanics work inconsistently; challenge, progression, rewards, or balance frustrate play.	4-6 Core mechanics function, but difficulty, pacing, feedback, or balance is uneven.	7-9 Responsive mechanics, appropriate challenge, clear feedback, and balanced progression support play.	10 Highly engaging mechanics, refined balance, purposeful progression, and rewarding player choices.	
PROJECT					Points
Functionality, Controls & Technical Performance					
0 Game does not run or cannot be played.	1-3 Major bugs, crashes, broken controls, or loading/performance problems prevent reliable play.	4-6 Game is playable, but noticeable bugs, control issues, or performance problems remain.	7-9 Reliable gameplay with intuitive controls and only minor technical issues.	10 Distribution-ready build with polished controls, stable performance, and no significant defects.	
PROJECT					Points
Visual Design, Interface & Player Experience					
0 No intentional visual design or usable interface is evident.	1-3 Screens, menus, text, navigation, or visual feedback are inconsistent or difficult to use.	4-6 Interface and visuals support basic play but include clarity, consistency, or usability issues.	7-9 Cohesive art style, readable interface, clear navigation, and effective player feedback.	10 Professional visual identity and highly intuitive interface create an immersive, accessible experience.	
PROJECT					Points
Originality, Purpose & Student Authorship					
0 Purpose or student authorship cannot be established.	1-3 Work shows limited original decision-making; sources, code, assets, or process are unclear.	4-6 Purpose and student contribution are evident, though creative choices or documentation are basic.	7-9 Original, purposeful game with clear student ownership and well-supported development evidence.	10 Distinctive creative vision and convincing evidence of independent design, coding, testing, and revision.	
PRESENTATION					Points
Development Process & Professional Delivery					
0 Does not explain the game or development process.	1-3 Explanation is difficult to follow; limited preparation or understanding of the workflow.	4-6 Explains major steps and tools, but detail, organization, or delivery is inconsistent.	7-9 Clearly explains planning, engine/software, coding, asset creation, playtesting, debugging, and revisions.	10 Confident, concise demonstration shows command of the complete game-development workflow.	
QUESTIONS					Points
Knowledge, Testing & Problem-Solving					
0 Does not answer judges' questions.	1-3 Answers are incomplete or show little understanding of design and technical decisions.	4-6 Answers most questions and describes basic testing, coding, design, or debugging challenges.	7-9 Provides specific responses about mechanics, code, assets, playtesting, bugs, revisions, and sources.	10 Insightful responses demonstrate deep technical understanding, reflection, and equal group contribution.	
AI-GENERATED GAME CONTENT PROHIBITED					
Entries may not contain generative-AI-created game code or production assets, including artwork, sprites, textures, characters, levels, dialogue, music, sound effects, or other content used in the game. Judges should not independently penalize suspected use; pause scoring and refer the entry to ACTE staff for review.					
Judges Printed Portfolio Checklist Score					/30
Digital Game Project & Oral Presentation Score					/70
Total Project Score					/100
Ranking (ACTE Staff Only)					

Judges Initials: _____