

## Synopsis

You are a train conductor who moved to a rural village, and they are faced with the station's impending doom when a notice comes in that the station is going to have to shut down soon if there are no improvements in train purchases to the station within the next 7 days. Faced with this impending doom and growing sense of home in this village, you do what you can to save the station—helping the village flourish again.

Throughout each day (each day is a level), the protagonists' overall goal is to prevent the evil greedy railroad company from shutting the station down while also helping the village gain more people and stronger relationships. This will be done through puzzles which allow the protagonist to learn more about the rural village and its former liveliness. You can use some of your gained knowledge to construct a mini museum / community village at the train station to encourage activity there.



## Game Information

*Genre:* puzzle + walking simulator

*Core experience:* the rural vibe and story. Puzzles drive player exploration, exploration provides info for puzzles, thus creating a loop.

*Target Audience:* Adults who enjoy puzzles and walking sims / enjoy games similar to Stardew Valley / enjoy cozy, casual atmosphere

*Background:* Fictional, Japanese-inspired, a terminal station of a local train line

*Platform:* Laptops / PC

*Game Engine:* Unity



**Setting and Style:**

The overall setting consists of a village sitting at the end of a rail line, both of which are well past its most lively days. The village consists of some run down houses and a few rural buildings and contraptions, specifically a pub, restaurant, cafe, and a playground that is worn down and with graffiti left by children not long ago. As the protagonist learns more about the village, the historical artifacts of the village will be presented in an abandoned waiting room of the train station, transforming it into a community museum that helps keep the station alive and encourages villagers to visit and use the station’s services.

There are some nature’s elements as well, such as a mountain, a forest (with rare birds that you can interact with). Some additional elements we may include are hot springs, flower fields, a sea, lake, a sanatorium, and historical ruins.

*Art style:* Chicory: A Colorful Tale

*Characters:* human / animal / humanoids / furry

*Main vibe:* utopia - natural, peaceful, cozy. (Stardew Valley, Animal Crossing), Appropriate suspense

*Things we want to avoid:* horror, fantasy, excessive interpersonal conflict

**Story:**

Protagonist: play as stationmaster, within 7 days, increase passenger traffic, save the station from closure.

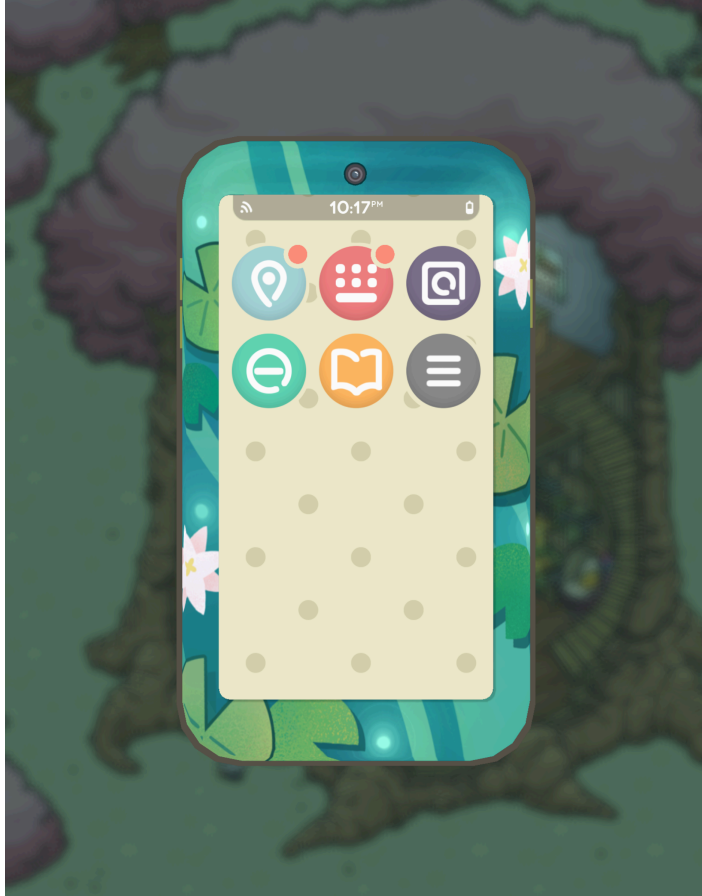
Also need a main plot, embedded in the environment, connecting various clues, for example:

- History of the village (comparison past vs today, like the playground )
- Why is there a station (in a remote village)? Maybe there is a secret contract, find it and use it to convey the railway company.
- Big greedy company wants to shut down the station / railway, even move all the villagers away
- Make the station a mini museum, describe the history of this village
- Emotional connection - passengers & main character with this village (not relationship between villagers)
- Mystery: a sanatorium on the mountain, said that people who enter can never leave (the magic mountain)



## System:

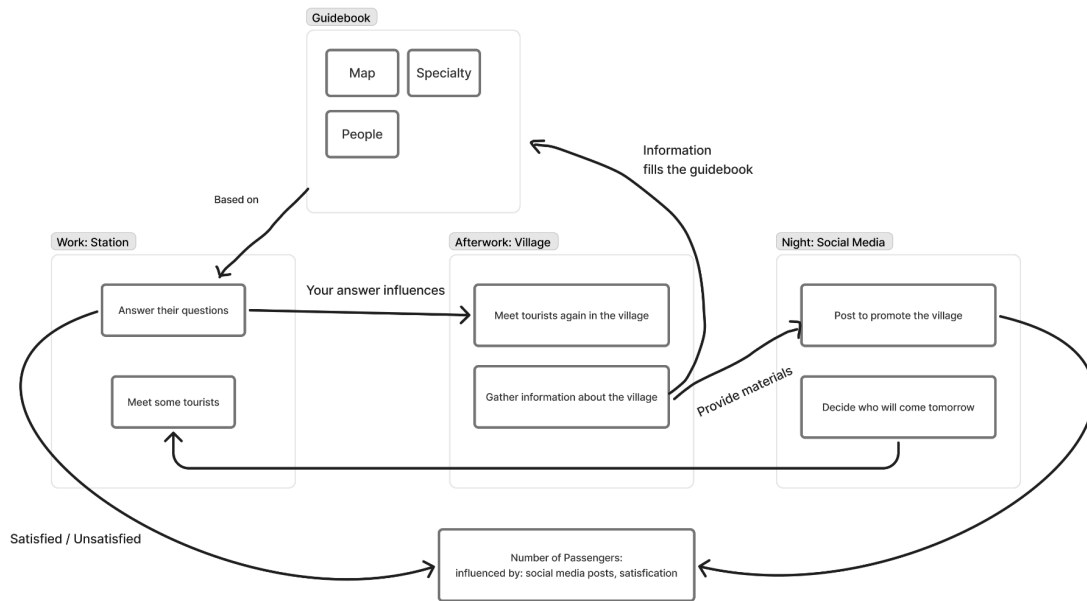
Cellphone: The main tool of the protagonist, it contains ticketing software to process ticket purchases for the passenger, a map of the village with GPS, a social media app where certain discoveries of the player (as well as some NPCs) will be posted.



Example from Tsuki's Odyssey

Tourbook system [Maybe change to museum system]. Initially a brief booklet, content becomes richer as the protagonist explores the village deeper. [Handwritten notes style, can have some sketches/stickers] Includes three parts: map, character roster, local specialty catalog. During the game, the protagonist will collect more entries, as well as detailed info about the entries.

**Core loop:**



## Loop in 1 day:

**During the daytime**, the player works at the station. For each passenger (arriving or departing), the player needs to provide a ticket, and answer their questions. They will answer questions using info in the tourbook, directly flipping through the tourbook and clicking keywords. [gameplay similar to Strange Horticulture]

Based on the answer, get real-time feedback (satisfied/not satisfied).

- Example: tourist: I heard this village has very beautiful birds, can you tell me where they are?
- Player: click tourbook-map-forest

**After work**, the player wanders around the village. The goal is to collect info for social media posts.

Reaching specific locations, triggering specific dialogues, investigating specific items, will automatically update the tourbook (collecting clues).

- For example: after the player investigates birds in the forest, "suitable for bird watching" will be added to the detailed info of tourbook-map-forest.

**At night**, the player posts on social media.

Based on new content discovered today, the system automatically drafts some topics. Max 3 posts per day.

If previous posts are repeated, fewer tourists will be attracted.

Posted topics influence the questions tourists ask tomorrow. Therefore, best to post topics that have been investigated in sufficient detail.

## **Loop in 7 days:**

Day 1: Player just started work, receives info that the station is about to close, and the requirement of "1000 new passengers within 7 days"; player finds the existing tourbook very rudimentary.

After work, the player thinks of a way to attract tourists: posting on social media. Therefore, starts exploring the village, looking for materials.

At night, the player starts posting on social media.

Day 2: Social media takes effect, some tourists arrive, their interests mainly related to the posts the player made (player answers their questions through a more detailed tourbook). Also some new content (driving the player to explore new scenes).

After work, explore. Nighttime, post on social media.

Day 3/Day 4: Unexpected events. For example, the required number of tourists increases; a tree falls on the railway and needs fixing; some mysteries or conspiracies. [Main plot]

Day 7: If the goal is not met, the player should get an extension, rather than a real game over. If the goal is met, you can set new goals, for example "complete main plot investigation", "100% tourbook completion", etc.

## **Appendix:**

### *Individual Submissions*

Thet:

<https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2026/05/05/checkpoint-1-concept-doc-individual-deliverables-2/>

Justin:

<https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2026/05/05/checkpoint-1-individual-concept-doc-8/>

Tianze:

<https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2026/05/05/p2-concept-doc-individual-tianze/>

Hongyi:

<https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2026/05/04/p2-checkpoint-1-individual-post-2/>