

# ADVENTURE CRAFT

## Teaching Kids to Love Collaborative Creativity

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### Problem and Solution Overview

Elementary and middle school children love to tell a story. These stories often capture the ingenuity and spontaneous creativity of children that we grown-ups sometimes wish we had. Sadly, children also often simply forgets about their stories soon after expressing them verbally. Parents of these children also want their kids to capture this creativity and turn it into something concrete, usually in the form of writing that others can read.

However, the current way of teaching writing in school and at home ultimately fails at teaching children to fully express and explore their creativity because they often fail at making writing “fun,” and as such many children will shy away from ever writing creatively outside of school. As the result, children wind up spending time on activities that fail to develop their keenly creative and explorative senses.

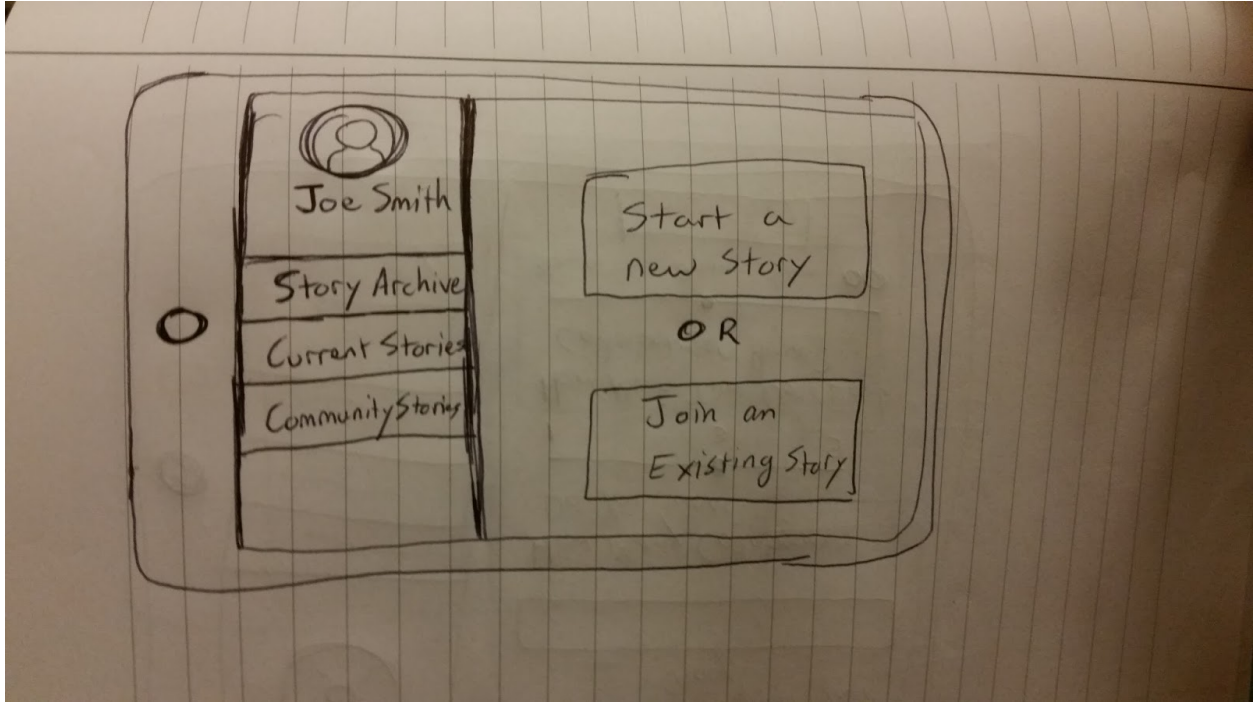
We aim to solve this problem by making writing a fun thing to do - first through lowering the barrier to writing itself by helping them to get started on their stories, and then using collaborative writing to help them build on their stories. The fun part comes from the fact that the children will feel that they are no longer writing a story, but participating in a greater collaborative game. Finally, through an immense amount of practice, feedback, and occasional automated suggestions, we hope to get children to improve their writing quality over the long term.

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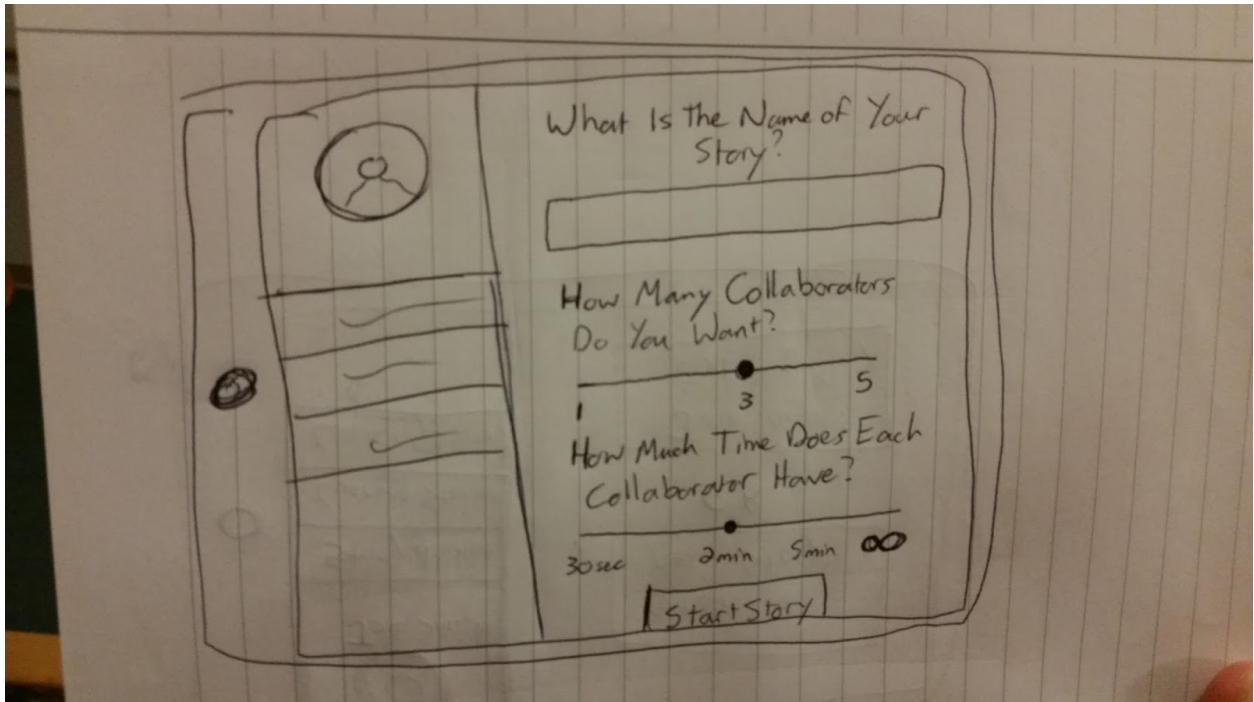
# UI Sketches

## Design #1:

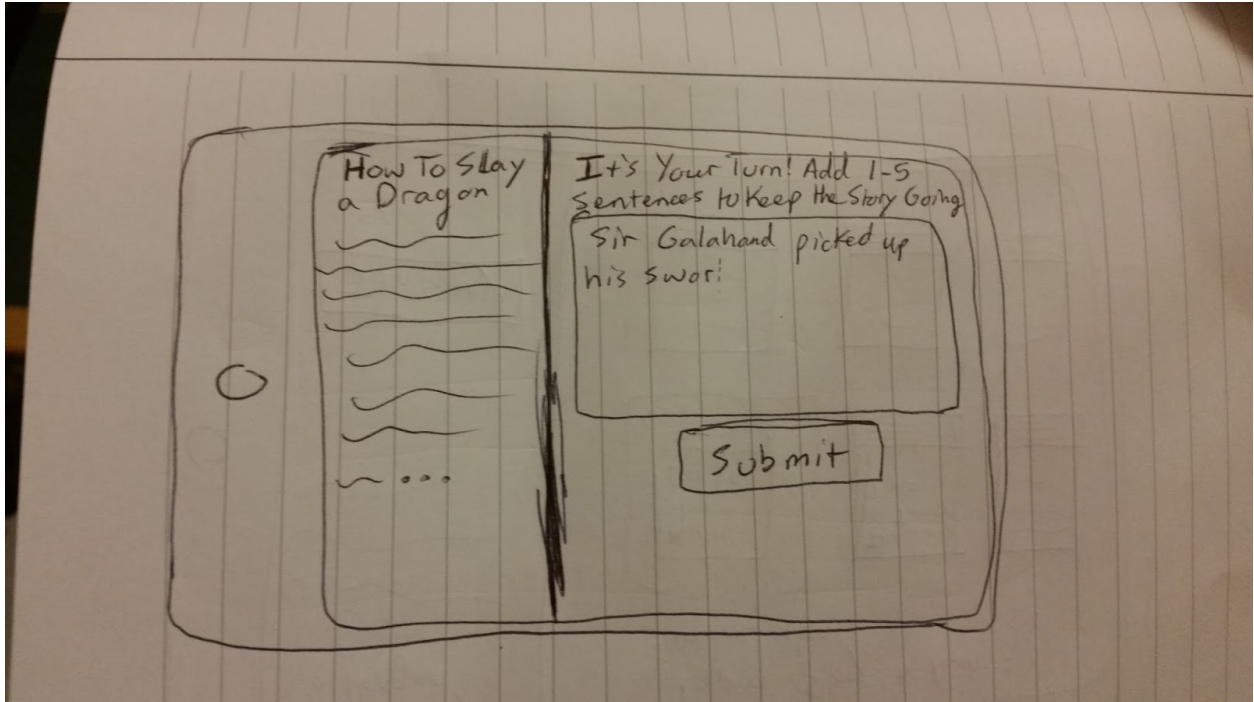
### Screen 1:



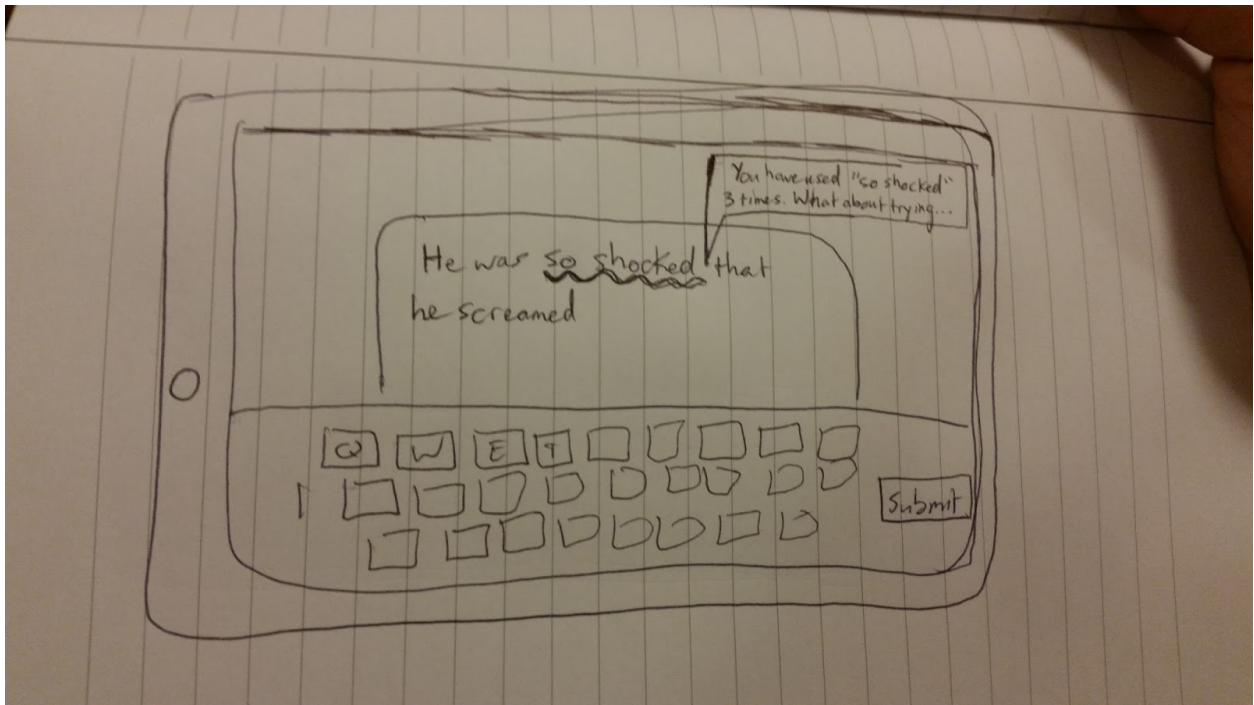
### Screen 2:



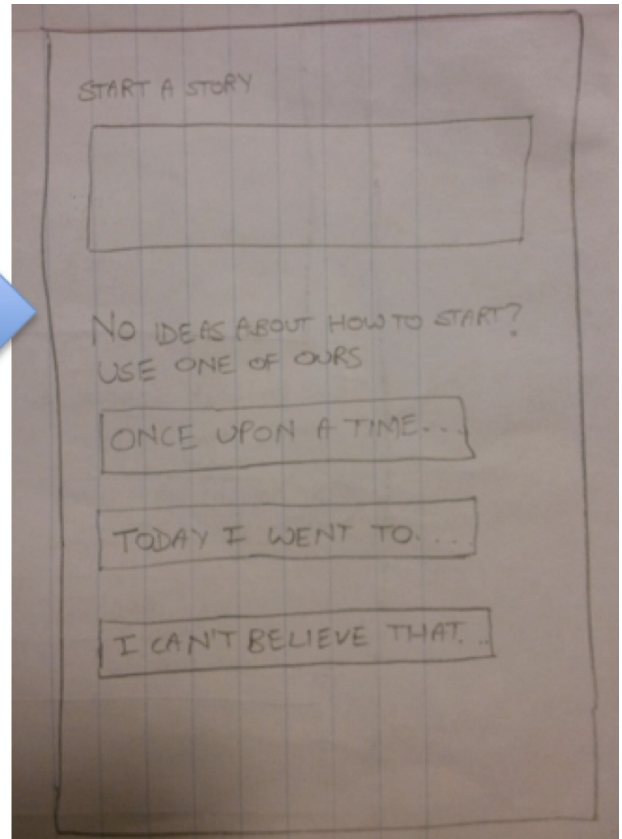
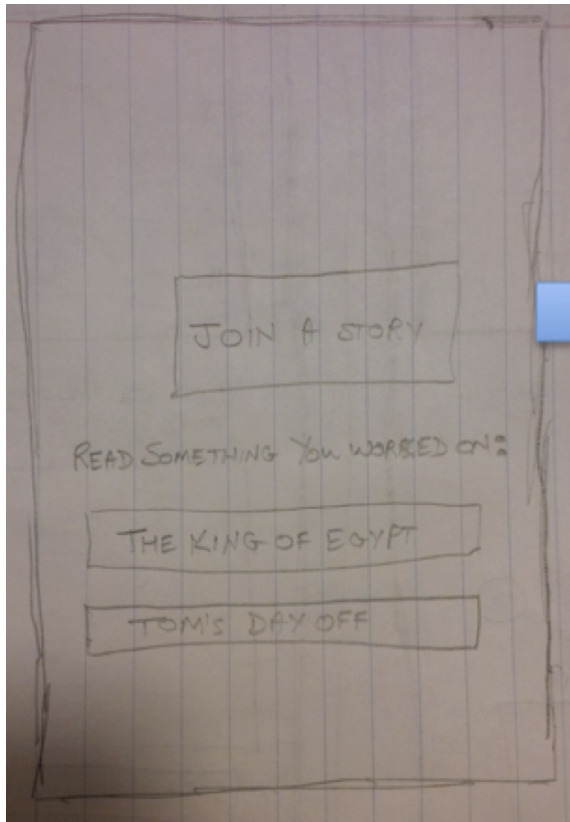
Screen 3:



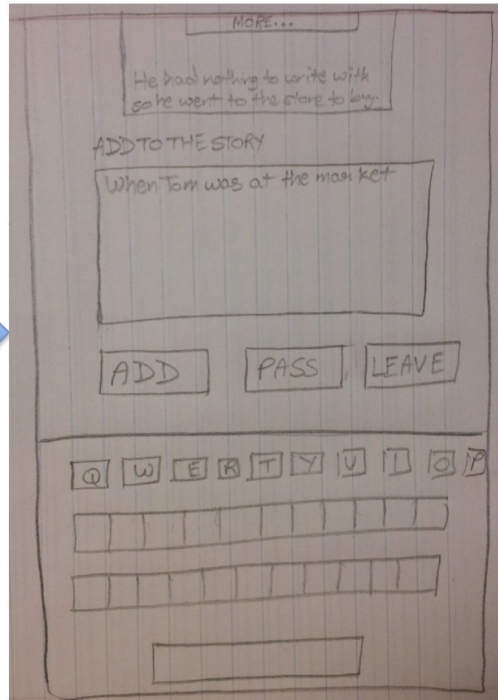
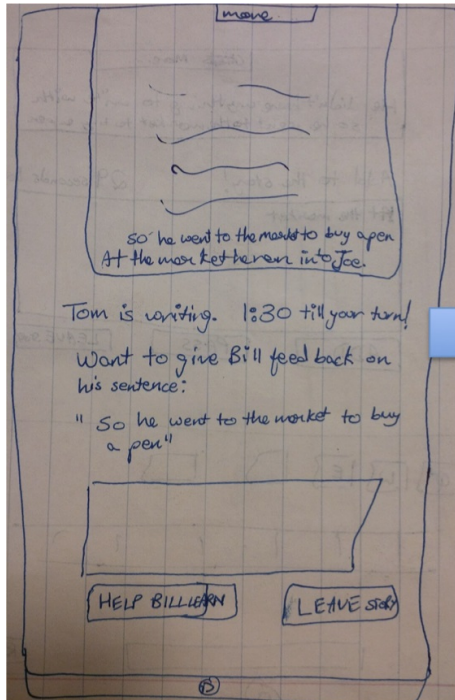
Screen 4:



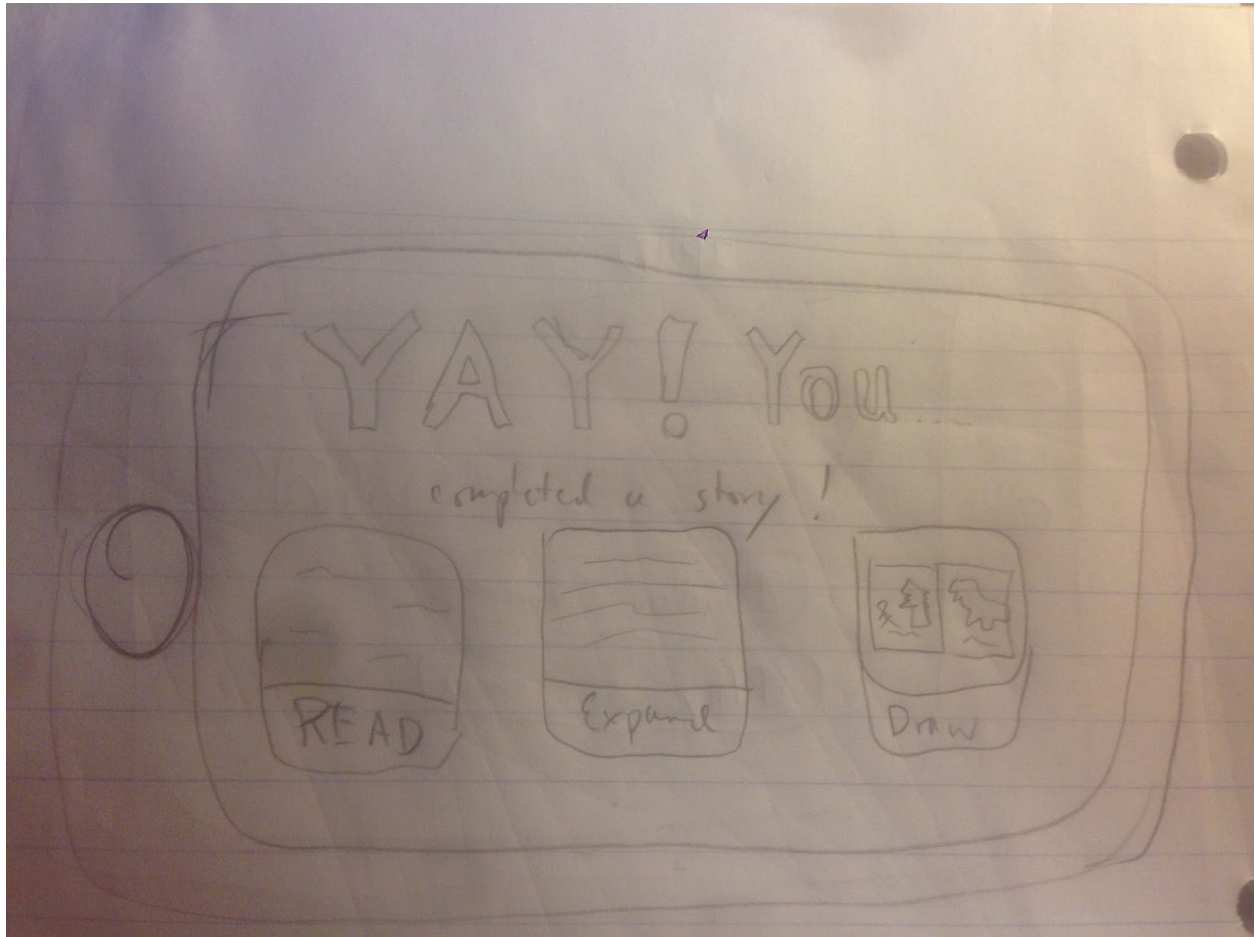
**Design #2:**  
**Screen 1&2 :**



**Screen 3&4 :**



## Screen 5:



## Design Analysis:

We preferred our second design primarily due the simplicity of it, as we thought that we didn't want the user (especially kids) to have to spend 5 minutes trying to set up their story (which would go against our whole notion of making starting a story easier), but rather make that process more automatic as just typing a simple sentence. The main problem we faced was that we were still very much in the early brainstorming phase where our primary aim was to understand how exactly our product would end up accomplishing the bigger goals/tasks for the user, and as such we didn't really sketch out the details of the our design. It is notable though that we are more than likely to use our simplified design rather than more complicated versions, as we really believe that the app should make writing itself fun, but have very little else attached to it, lest the other things distract them.

This is one of the primary reasons we don't really have much of an "user" overview or panel page as we think log/log off should be extremely easy and almost non-existent, and hide most of the menu items such as past activities/history/old stories hidden as our primary goal is to get the kids to write.

## Functionality:

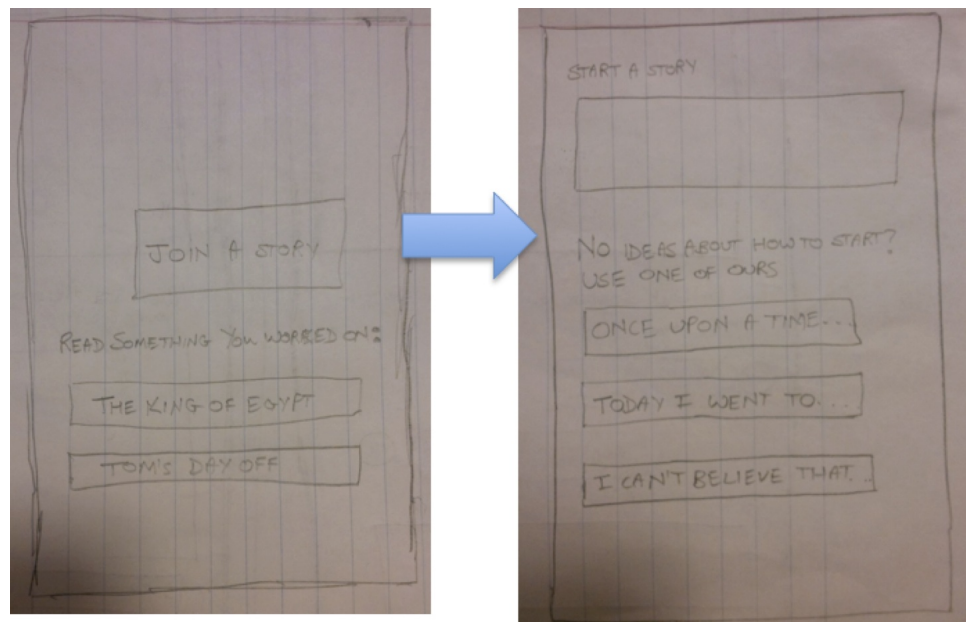
- Able to start your own story
- Have options that you can choose to help you get started
- Able to read and then join someone else's story
- Able to invite people to your story
- Take turns writing (instead of ambiguous collaboration), with time limits
  - Pass, if no idea is there
  - consequently, write for a short amount of time, but produce something quickly, and increase the amount of practice
- While waiting, give feedback
- While waiting, illustrate the story with art
- Able to finish the story.
- After finished, able to expand the story on your own time
- After finished, able to illustrate the story (collaboratively as well).
- Potentially be able to use voice-over for stories, or even avoid typing in the game-stage altogether.

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## UI Storyboard

### Make Writing Easier, Get Stuck Less

To make writing easier to get into, our application offers a simple interface that allows children to start or jump in on a collaborative story-writing process. The application allows children to write 1-4 sentences and then pass on the story for someone else to append to it. The story then circles back to the initial contributor, and they keep writing until a story has been completed.

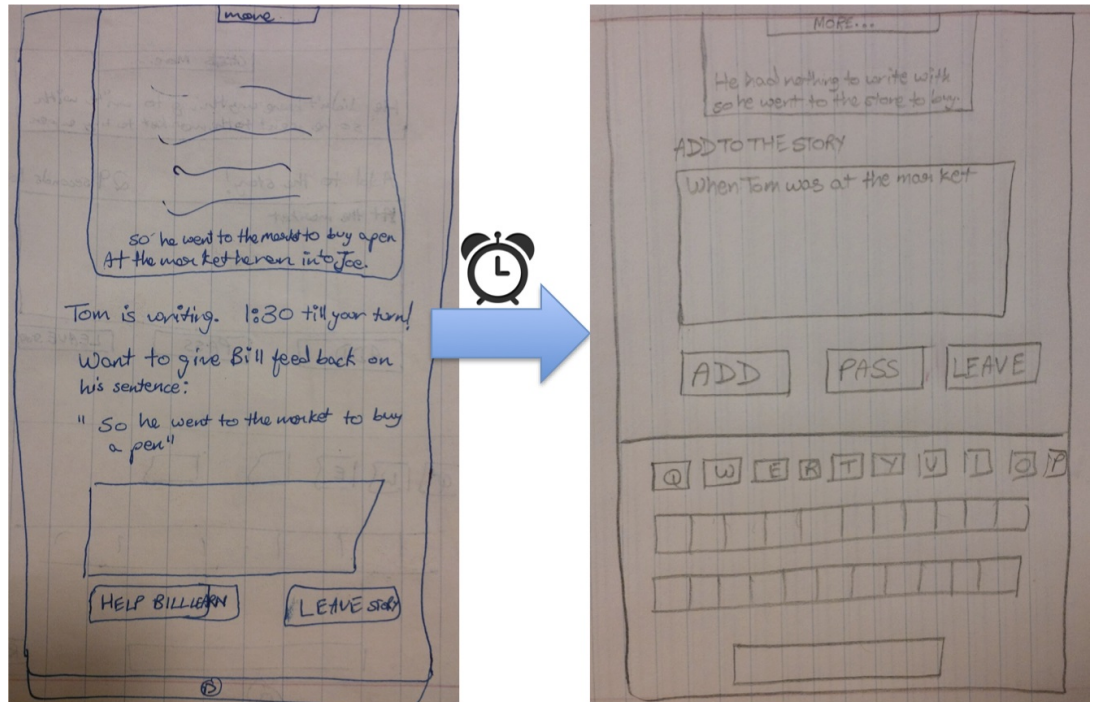


To help children get stuck less frequently when writing, we offer suggestions about how to proceed as seen in the picture on the right. This removes one of the barriers from writing, and one of the features of the writing process that frustrates children the most.

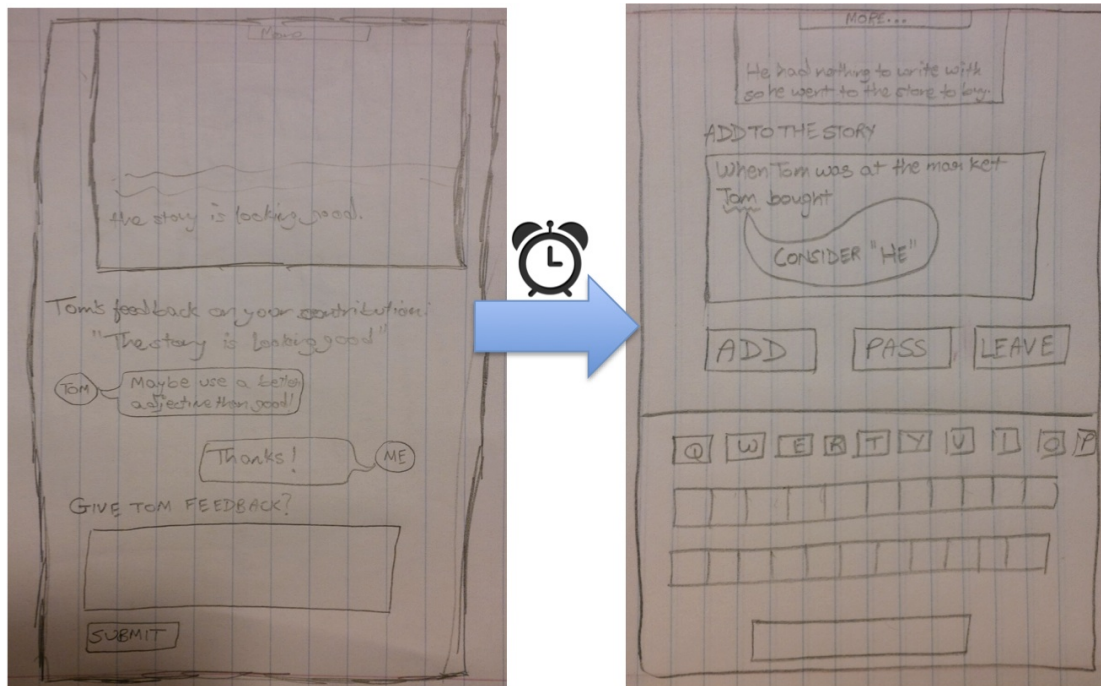
## Collaborate With Other Writers

When waiting for the story to circle back to them, users can read the story to that point to enjoy the product as well as try to formulate thoughts for where they want the story to go. Further, if they want to give any of their co-authors feedback they have the option to do that to

make collaboration a more enjoyable experience for everyone. We also intend to let them draw/illustrate the story they are working on bring in other creative channels. When the story comes back to them, users can engage in the collaborative writing experience by adding their ideas to the story within the pre-specified time limit.



## Improve Writing Ability



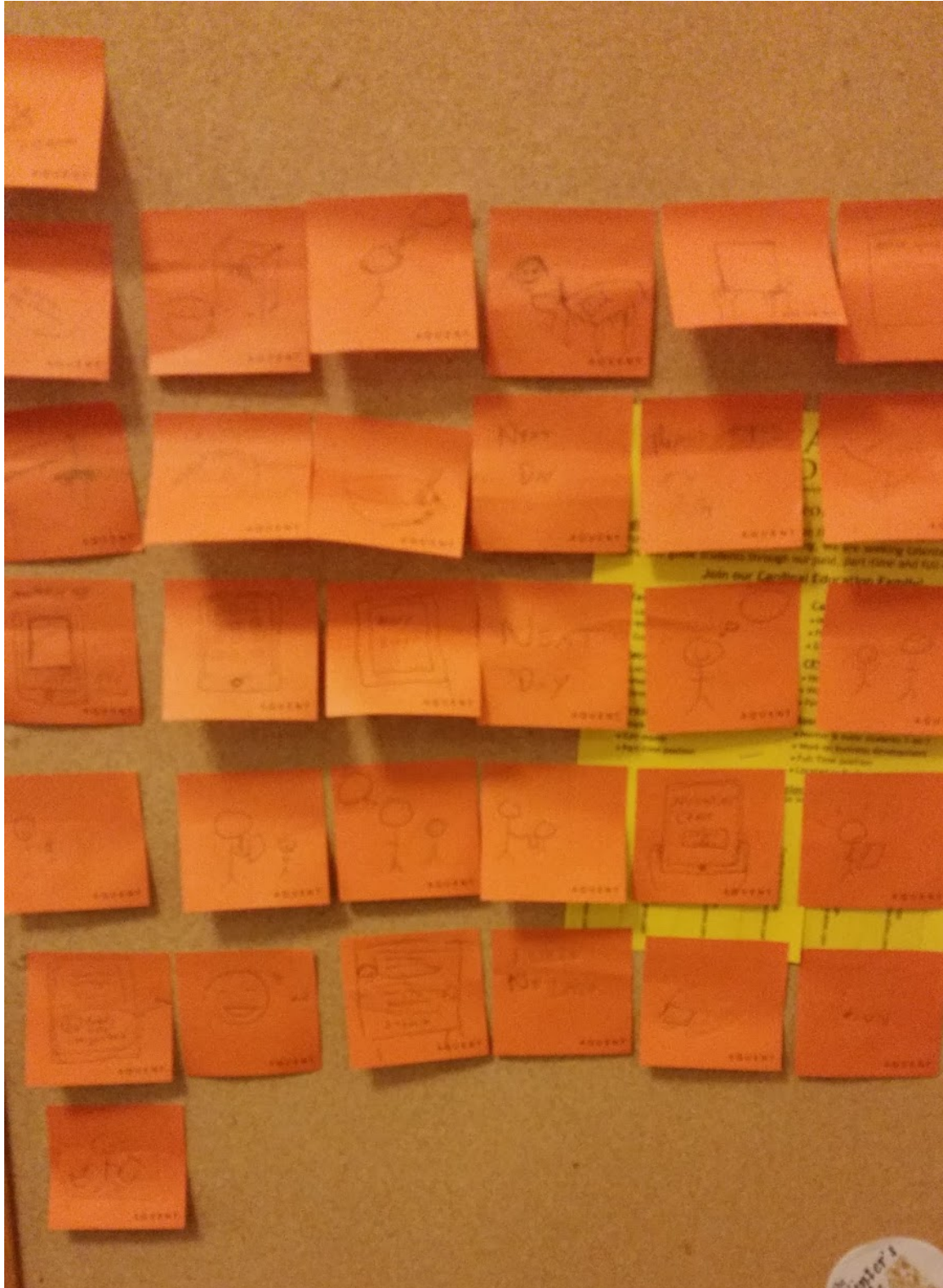
The most complex of our tasks is to help users improve their writing ability. This can be accomplished through the application in a number of ways. The first of which is illustrated in the sketch on the left. When the user is waiting for his turn to write again, feedback that other users give will be displayed on his screen. This helps users gain insights into their writing, and helps them see what can be improved about their writing. When his turn to write comes again (and we move to the second figure) and the user is writing, the application parses the text that is being input and offers suggestions (in the figure, the user says “Tom” twice in one sentence so the app suggests that a pronoun such as “he” should be used instead). Inputs such as these will give children real-time feedback on their writing, which will help them improve their writing ability as they move forward.

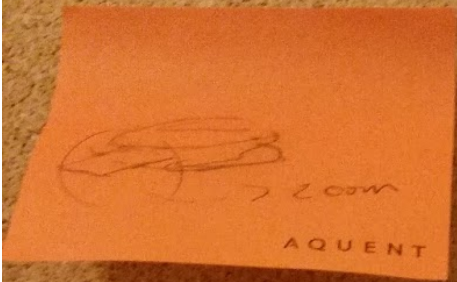
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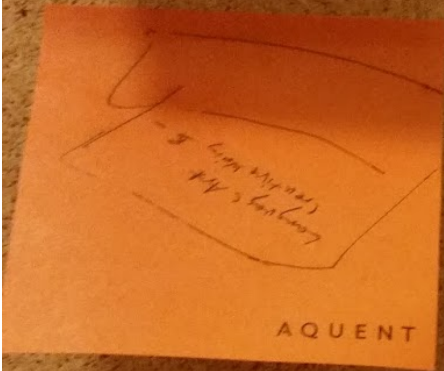
# Video Storyboards

## Storyboard #1

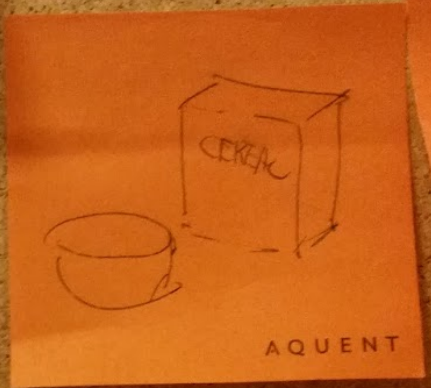




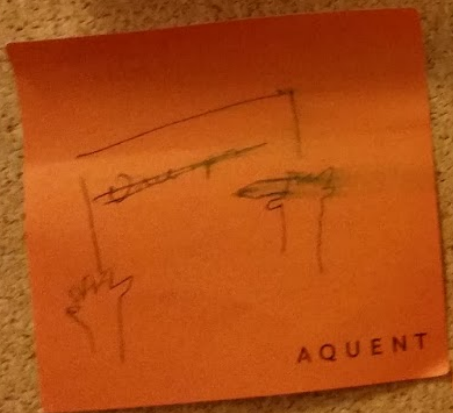
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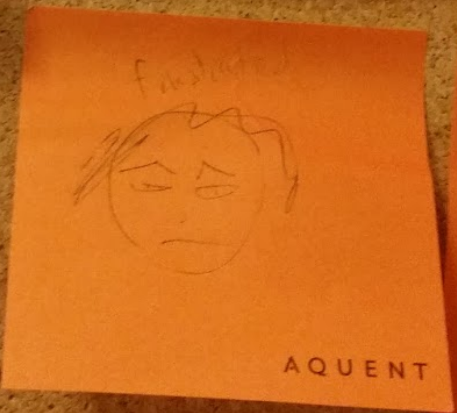
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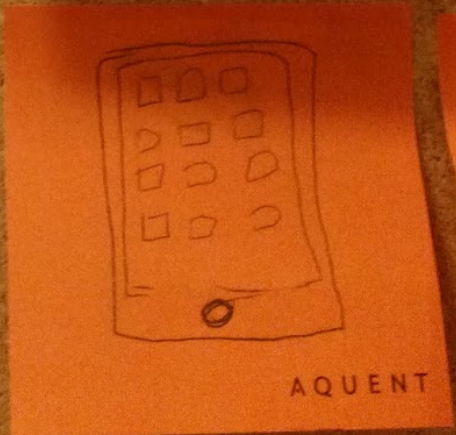
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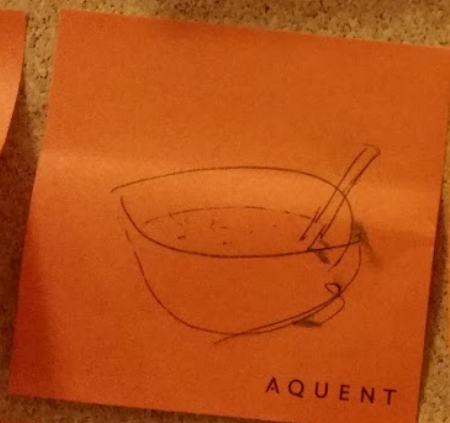
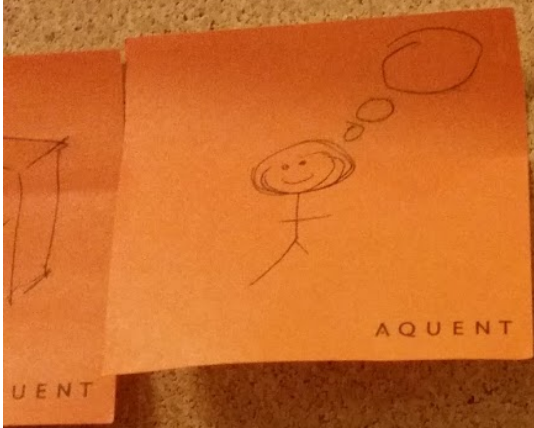
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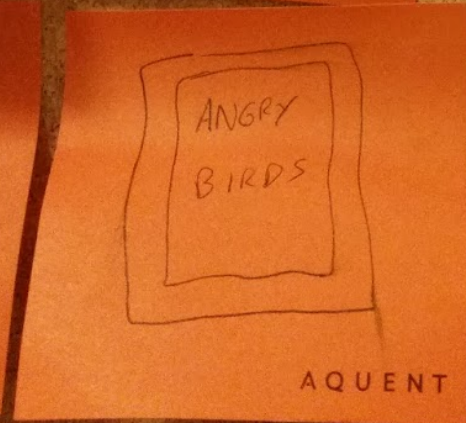
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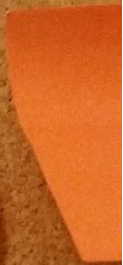
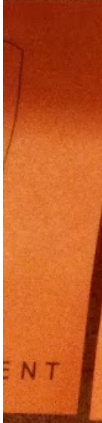
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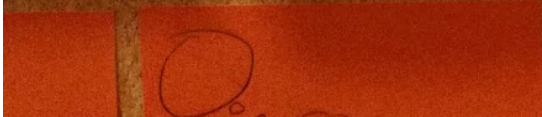


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## Storyboard #2



We chose to use Storyboard #1.

### In words:

#### Problem Statement:

Actor Comes home  
Drops off the backpack  
Report card comes out and says b-  
Start making cereal  
Gets an idea  
Starts to write  
Gets paper and pen  
Writes something, erases it,  
Gets frustrated and goes back to cereal  
Fades to next day  
Get back home  
Gets to couch  
Grabs ipad  
Plays angry bird  
Get idea  
Tries a writing app on ipad  
Gets nowhere  
Goes back angry bird

Next day  
Comes home  
Makes cereal  
Gets idea  
Dad shows up  
Talks to dad excited  
Dad tells kid to write  
Don't want to write  
Dad thinks, gets idea

### **Get kids exciting and writing**

Shows adventure craft  
Kid plays with it, start writing  
Shift screen,  
Focus kid writing excited, then surprised

### **Collaborate on Stories:**

Randy pops in, wants to contribute  
Focus kid, nods head  
Start collaborating

### **Improvement:**

1 week later  
Backpack again  
Report card, A+  
Kid writing excitedly, parents watching from distance....

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## **Concept Video Description**

### **What was the most difficult part?**

The most difficult part was shooting the video, as none of us had any experience in this area. It was also difficult to coordinate schedules on such short notice with a couple of kid actors. In the end, we made it work in between dentist appointments and soccer practice, but we only had 45 minutes to shoot the video, which turned out to be a little rushed.

We also had problems with our camera as it died within 5 minutes of shooting, and from there we had to rely on our phones. We also had a little problem shooting a lot of different angles as we simply didn't have the manpower nor cameras to do it. Another thing we could have done better is to include the lead actress's sister more in the process.

### **What worked well?**

Having a storyline already laid out with the different scenes and camera angles was really helpful. It allowed us to move from shot to shot very quickly. We think the storyline we devised manages to tell our problem and solution quite well, and it does establish a concrete connection with the audience. We used sticky notes for the brainstorming, and it worked wonders as it let us draw and think about the video in a more organized and visual way.

The little girl actresses that helped us out were also awesome to work with. They were very willing to do what we told them and reshoot the same shot several times over (they especially liked reshooting scenes of eating the cereal).

Also, for the little amount of experience we had with iMovie, the editing process wasn't extremely painful (credit goes to Varun!), and we are very pleased with the end result. None of us will be switching to film majors, but we were pleasantly surprised with the final version.

### **How long for each part?**

Concept: 2 hours

Shooting: 2 hours (1 hour prep)

Editing: 4 hours