

Ideation & Needfinding

We brainstormed possibilities for a lifelogging application as a group before settling on the problem, “how might we help people recall their childhood?”

Our first idea was to design a Mad Libs style video where kids would be prompted to take pictures of their surroundings, which would then be inserted into a story.

After paper prototyping, we decided to give the kids more creative control in realizing their own stories.

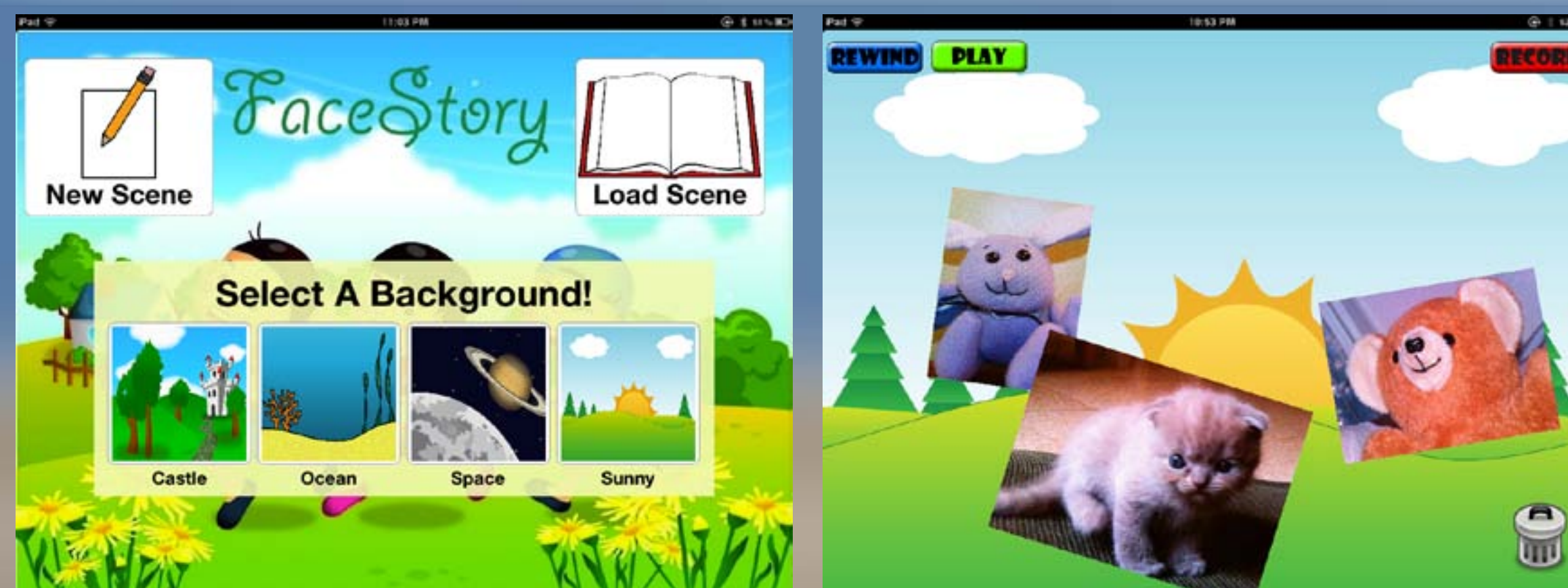
We observed kids during their regular play time activities with physical toys and noted the types of stories they told.

FACE STORY

Creating a Story

Kids take pictures on the iPhone which transmits the image to the iPad canvas via Bluetooth.

They can move and scale objects and characters in the story using direct manipulation while giving narration. The application records the narration and movements as continuous animation.



Saving and Revisiting Old Stories

When kids close the app, their stories are automatically saved to the device. Parents can look back on their kids' creations, and kids have a record of their creativity in their childhood.

When kids grow up, they can reflect on their stories and revisit the worlds created in their imagination.

Future Work

For a long term project, we plan to incorporate a social aspect to the app to collaboration and sharing ideas from a distance.

Iterative Design & User Testing

In the alpha testing phase, one or two kids would test the current version of FaceStory at a time. After discovering usability issues or technical bugs, we revised our application and tested it on a new set of users.

Our user testing culminated in a visit to an elementary school class as a “stress test” for our beta prototype.



Prototyping

We decided to focus on the small interactions first and built up the list of features from there. The first functional prototype had little flexibility since we were concerned with testing the interaction techniques first.

In later iterations, we practiced some low-fidelity prototyping techniques such as reading from a script to test out how voiceover directions would work. We added new features as requested or necessary.



Evaluation & Insights Gained

Through user testing, we found many usability issues stemming from how children's mental models did not match our own.

Children are also adept at finding edge cases we hadn't considered, as they are less careful about pressing random buttons or accidentally closing the app.

We also uncovered some surprising results that informed the direction of our design. For example, we designed the app so that one child would be capable of independently creating a story but found that it was also suited for group collaborative creations.