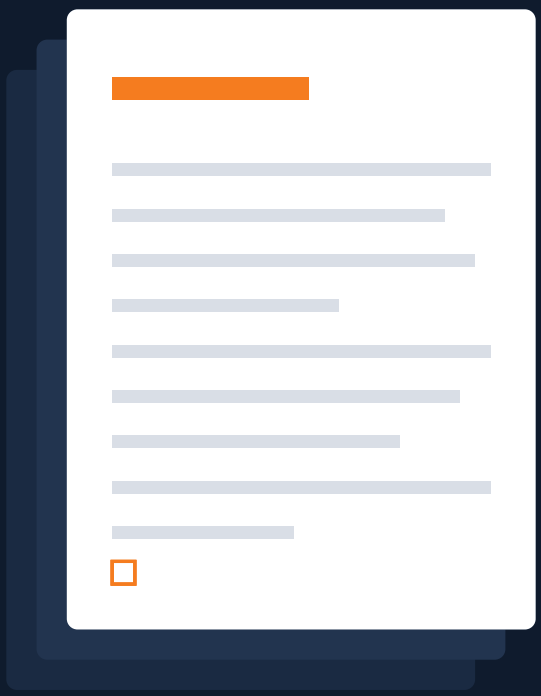
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COMPLETED SAMPLE GAME DESIGN

General Game Design Document (Completed Sample)

The General GDD template filled in for a fictional game, showing how each section is completed.

WHAT IT SHOWS

Every section of the General GDD, filled in

EXAMPLE GAME

Lantern Tide - a cozy island fishing adventure

About this template

This is the General Game Design Document template completed for a fictional game, Lantern Tide. The structure is identical to the blank template, so you can compare them side by side. The orange guidance boxes are kept so you can see how each answer responds to them.

Detail	
What it shows	Every section of the General GDD, filled in
Example game	Lantern Tide - a cozy island fishing adventure

How to use it

- Use this sample alongside the blank General GDD template; the section numbers match exactly.
- Replace every *[grey bracketed placeholder]* with your own details.
- Delete the orange **Guidance** boxes and green **Example** boxes before you publish or circulate it.
- Add or remove table rows as needed; keep the section order so readers can find things quickly.

Document Control

Game title	Lantern Tide	**Studio / team**	*[Studio name]*
Document version	0.3 (pre-production)	**Lead designer**	*[Name]*
Status	Draft for review	**Last updated**	*[Date]*

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
0.1	*[Date]*	*[Lead designer]*	Concept, pillars, high concept
0.2	*[Date]*	*[Lead designer]*	Core loop, mechanics, controls
0.3	*[Date]*	*[Design team]*	Economy, progression, production plan

01 Game Overview

GUIDANCE One page anyone can read in two minutes. If a stakeholder reads nothing else, this should sell the game.

Working title	Lantern Tide
Genre	Cozy exploration, fishing, light life-sim
Platforms	PC (Steam), Nintendo Switch
Engine	Unity 6 (URP)
Target audience	Ages 12-40; fans of Stardew Valley and A Short Hike
Session length	20-45 minutes, playable in 10-minute bursts
Business model	Premium, USD 19.99
Target release	Q4 2027

02 Concept

GUIDANCE Capture the idea in one sentence (high concept), then a short pitch and the hooks that make it different.

High concept	Rebuild a forgotten lighthouse town by fishing glowing night creatures - every catch lights up the map.
Elevator pitch	Explore and befriend islanders by day; sail out at night to catch luminous fish whose light restores the islands and reveals secrets in the fog.

Unique selling points
Light is both currency and map: catches visibly illuminate the world.
Day/night dual loop: calm social sim by day, gentle tension at night.
No fail states: missed catches cost time, never progress.

03 Design Pillars

GUIDANCE 3-5 principles every feature is judged against. If a feature doesn't serve a pillar, cut it.

Pillar	What it means	Example decision
Warm, never punishing	Players feel safe to relax	Storms delay you but never sink the boat
Every action lights the world	Progress is visible on screen	Upgrades change island lighting, not just stats
Small places, deep secrets	Dense islands over empty space	6 islands, 8+ secrets each

04 Core Gameplay Loop

GUIDANCE *Show the loop the player repeats most, then the longer-term loops around it.*



Moment-to-moment	Steering, casting and rhythm-timing catches
Session loop	Complete one day/night cycle and deliver Lumen
Long-term loop	Relight all five towers and restore the town

05 Mechanics & Systems

GUIDANCE *Describe each mechanic: how it works, why it exists, and which pillar it serves.*

Mechanic	How it works	Pillar served
Lantern fishing	Cast at glowing ripples; match the fish's pulse with a timing ring	Every action lights the world
Sailing	Wind-based steering; fog hides rare spawns	Small places, deep secrets
Friendship	Gifts and errands raise 5 heart levels per islander	Warm, never punishing
Day/night cycle	24 real minutes per day; no energy bar	Warm, never punishing

06 Controls

GUIDANCE *List every action for each input method.*

Action	Gamepad	Keyboard / mouse	Touch
Move / steer	Left stick	WASD	-
Cast / reel	A (hold)	Left click (hold)	-
Raise lantern	RT	Right click	-
Journal	Y	J	-

07 Story, World & Characters

GUIDANCE *Keep narrative brief here; link to a separate narrative bible for scripts.*

Premise	The Lumen Tide stopped rising 40 years ago and the lighthouses went dark. You arrive with the last glowing lantern.
Story structure	Act I Embers, Act II Currents, Act III High Tide

Character	Role	Personality / hook
The Keeper	Player	Quiet, curious, customisable
Marisol	Shopkeeper	Practical; secretly writes poetry
Wren	Rival keeper	Wants the Lumen for another town

08 Levels & Progression

GUIDANCE *Show how the player grows and how content unlocks.*

Area / level	Theme	Unlock condition	Est. playtime
Harbor Isle	Hub town	Start	1 hr
Kelpwood	Underwater forest	Tower 1 lit	3 hrs
Mistmoor	Permanent fog	Fog lantern	4 hrs
The Great Light	Finale	All towers lit	2 hrs

09 Economy & Monetisation

GUIDANCE *List every resource, where it comes from and where it goes. State what will never be monetised.*

Resource	Source (faucet)	Use (sink)
Coins	Selling fish, errands	Gear, bait, decorations
Lumen	Night catches	Towers, upgrades

Monetisation	Premium only; no microtransactions or timers
Post-launch	Free festival update; one paid expansion

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10 UI / UX & Accessibility

Screen	Purpose
HUD	Time, Lumen jars, lantern charge
Journal	Fish collection, quests, map
Shop	Buy, sell, upgrade

	Item
☐	Subtitles with size options
☐	Full control remapping
☐	Colour-blind modes
☐	Assist mode for timing ring

11 Art & Audio Direction

GUIDANCE *Describe the look and sound in words and link mood boards.*

Visual style	Hand-painted 2.5D; pastel days, indigo nights lit only by Lumen
References	Ghibli seaside towns, Ori's glow
Music	Acoustic guitar and celesta by day; ambient pads by night
SFX	Tactile, wooden, watery

12 Technical Requirements

Target specs	GTX 1050, 8 GB RAM, 60 fps at 1080p
Save system	Auto-save at dawn and dusk; 3 manual slots
Localisation	EN at launch; FIL, ES, JA later
Tools / middleware	Ink, Tiled, FMOD

13 Production Plan

GUIDANCE *Milestones with clear exit criteria.*

Milestone	Timeline	Exit criteria
Prototype	Months 2-3	Fishing and sailing feel fun in greybox
Vertical slice	Months 4-6	Harbor Isle at final quality
Alpha	Months 7-12	All features in
Launch	Month 18	Certification passed

Risk	Mitigation
Fishing feels repetitive	Species-specific rhythms; monthly playtests
Scope creep	Lock island count at Alpha

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