

Short Summary:

The player wakes up in a lavish study they've never seen before with no memory of how they arrived there. Upon checking the door they find a combination lock with 3 numbers holding them inside. A timer counts down beneath 3 lights mounted just above the mantle of the unlit fireplace and the sound of gas can be heard hissing slightly from within. This is the beginning of a virtual reality escape room inspired by horror films like *Saw* and the gameplay of *I Expect You to Die* that serves as the basis for my paper prototype. Within, the player will have to solve puzzles by searching through the room and following clues to avoid meeting their end when the timer reaches 0.

Rules:

1. The timer will be set at 30 minutes (shortened for playtesting) and the player will lose when the timer hits 0
2. The 3 lights above the fireplace correspond to 3 chances to guess the passcode to the lock before the player loses. This prevents brute-forcing any number of the code.
3. As a paper prototype, the game will function with one player acting as the game master (GM) who will describe the locations in a roleplaying game fashion to retain some of the sense of freedom and creativity that a virtual reality game presents.
4. The GM will hold on to the folder and present the items within to the player when they've inspected the corresponding locations (for the demo I will play this role)
5. The player will be presented with the floorplan of the room and the key to the corresponding locations
6. The player can choose which location they investigate by picking a number and the GM will give a short explanation of the location and the objects within, allowing the players to choose aspects of the location to further investigate.
7. In the VR game, the bookshelf will allow you to inspect the books one at a time but never move to keep them in the correct order thus in the prototype the same logic must be followed

(Reading Ahead Contains Spoilers):

Object Index:

Below is a list of each location and their corresponding objects to be found by the player
(Bolded are objects that the player is given from the folder)

1. Desk
 - a. Unlocked drawer
 - i. **Jigsaw piece**
 - b. Locked drawer (Needs Key)
 - i. **Chess Riddle**
 - c. **Paper** and Pencil (Blank paper given to player)
2. Chess table
 - a. Chessboard no pieces moved
 - b. Drawer
 - i. Chess US rulebook
 1. **14th-page corner folded**
3. Bookshelf
 - a. Vase
 - i. **Jigsaw piece**
 - b. Books
 - i. **Book Title List**
 - ii. House of Leaves
 1. **Pigpen Cipher Key**
4. Table by the Window
 - a. Bonsai tree
 - i. Plant tag
 1. **Jigsaw piece**
 - ii. **Pigpen cipher** sticking out of pot base
5. Globe in the corner (A globe bar cart with a modified interior to fit the puzzle)
 - a. Hiding a **jigsaw piece**
 - b. Has a circular shape to fit the puzzle
6. Fireplace
 - a. Timer
 - b. Attempt lights
7. Lock on the door
 - a. 3 number combination
8. Painting
 - a. Picturing a king and queen
 - i. On the back is the desk **key**
9. Couch and side table
 - a. Lamp on the side table
 - i. **Jigsaw** under the lampshade

Puzzle Solutions:

Number 1 (The Bookshelf)

1. The player will inspect the bookshelf and be given a list of the book's names in order
 - a. Beowulf
 - b. The little book of bonsai - Jonas Dupuich
 - c. Julius Caesar - Shakespeare
 - d. Lord of the Flies - William Golding
 - e. The Hobbit - J. R. R. Tolkein
 - f. Frankenstein - Mary Shelly
 - g. The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou
 - h. A Midsummer Night's Dream - Shakespeare
 - i. Charlottes Web - E. B. White
 - j. Dune - Frank Herbert
 - k. Wonder - R. J. Palacio
 - l. The Life and Afterlife of Harry Houdini - Joe Posnanski
 - m. House of Leaves - Mark Z. Danielewski
 - n. Fahrenheit 451 - Ray Bradbury
2. By looking at the bonsai tree (the little book about bonsai is the clue) the player can find a pigpen cipher with a symbol of a book with a leaf on the cover
3. Upon inspecting the book *House of Leaves* the player will find the key to the pigpen cipher
4. Using the paper and pencil on the desk the player can note down the solution to the cipher which is "Last letter of the titles"
5. Using the same paper pencil if the player notes down the last letter in each book title they will find it spells out "First Number is 1" giving the player the first number of the combination

Number 2 (The Chessboard)

1. The player will first need to inspect the painting of the **King** and **Queen** (hints at the chess connection) where they will find a key taped to the back
2. Using this key the player can get into the locked drawer at the desk which will give the player the riddle: "Only if the ranks of pawns come together can they reach the second number you desire"
3. At this point, the riddle directs the player to the chessboard which can be used to solve the riddle. But in case the solution is not apparent further hints can be found.
4. Inside the drawer of the table, the chessboard is atop, the player can find the US official chess rulebook with the corner of page 14 folded down (for the purposes of the prototype the player will be given a printout of the page)
5. With this, the player can realize that the keyword **ranks** refers to the numbers of the staring horizontal rows of the pawns which when they **come together** through addition

give the player the number **9** the second number of the combination. A further hint can be ascertained through the riddle's wording as a chessboard does not have a 9th rank meaning the **only** way to find that number on the chessboard is through the addition.

Number 3 (The Globe)

1. Upon inspecting the globe the player will open it up to find it hides a space for the assembly of a circular puzzle. One piece of the puzzle will be in the globe though not yet set in place.
2. The next piece of the puzzle can be found in the unlocked desk drawer
3. Another can be found within a small vase placed on the bookshelf
4. A fourth can be found within the solid of the bonsai tree showing its white backside as if it were an empty plant tag
5. The final piece can be found casting a shadow from within the lampshade of the lamp on the side table at location number 9
6. Altogether the puzzle will showcase the **4** seasons and have " _ _ _ " printed on the back (the prototype reads "3rd instead of showing slots")

The Lock

1. The locks combination is once deduced to be **194**