HOPSCOTCH HAMLET

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Part I:
Problem Statement & Brainstorming

Problem Statement

Things that are good about Hopscotch:

1. **The game is easy to learn**. The game is traditionally played in schoolyards so is designed to be easy for children to pick up. The "shooter"-throwing + hopping rules are introduced in the first turn, and do not change.
2. **There is a feeling of progress**. Players have to hop over the square they threw their "shooter" onto, which must go in order from 1 to 9.
3. **The game can be "drawn" anywhere.** Outside using chalk or inside using tape, Hopscotch is portable and can be played anywhere.
4. **Customizable "house" rules**. There is variation to some of the board design - some examples of the traditional game use nine spaces (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZzswQaICfM) and others use eight (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ikg9qnWrDU). Also depending on who is playing, some versions allow players to land on the drawn lines, whereas other versions have these lines as out of bounds.
5. **Turn-taking is good to avoid chaos**. Partly because the game is meant to be played with children, but especially because it involves a lot of jumping around, it is a good thing that players take turns, because this avoids the possibility of chaos and injury.

Problems:

1. **The game gets "slow" after a while**. Though there is a benefit to the simplicity of the rules, the game indeed gets "slow" overtime, as players are simply going through the same process eight or nine times without any new rules or interesting complexities added to the game.
2. **What about some players that have better balance than others?** The game is meant to be about hopping, but since it is meant for anyone to play, I worry about some players that have more trouble standing on one leg than others.
3. **There should be more strategy to the throwing mechanism**. The "shooter" part of Hopscotch is extremely basic. You throw a small object into the square you're aiming for and that's it. I wish there were more strategic elements to this mechanism or more interesting penalties or rewards for successful throws.
4. **Should the game be faster?** If there are a lot of players, then there is a lot of waiting around

Brainstorming:

1. Adding different kind of "shooters" with different abilities. Maybe a hackysack does one thing while a bottle cap does another (*Game Mechanics*)
2. Different types of "courses." Maybe it is like golf – you get points by how many turns it takes you to get to a specific square and then you play multiple rounds of this (*Game Mechanics*)
3. Could there be an "Easy" and "Hard" mode based on these different "courses"? (*Game Mechanics*)
4. Using symbols (i.e. the sun, the moon, skulls, etc.) instead of numbers and some help you and some hurt you (*Aesthetics*)
5. Hopscotch racing (two players on two courses side-by-side) (*Game Mechanics*)
   a. Could be done in teams (2 vs. 2 or 3 vs. 3)
   b. Each team takes turns hopping internally while racing the other team
6. Maybe make a long, sweeping board where you hop along on a loooooooonnnnng course. (*Game Mechanics*)
   a. Throw your shooter far AND THEN you must hop across that point
   b. BUT if you don't make it, you have to go back to the start
   c. Strategy of selecting how far to throw shooter
7. Hopscotch on like a DDR-electric board? (*Technology*)
8. Hopscotch that plays music (or SFX) somehow. Maybe a rhythm game? Maybe you have an electric board and you have to jump on specific squares in time with a song (*Technology, Aesthetics*)
9. Hopscotch w/ lights on tiles (*Aesthetics*)
10. Water Hopscotch – also helps those without the best balance. How would you do Hopscotch in the water? (*Aesthetics*)
11. Space-themed Hopscotch – maybe you add a story to it by needing to save/stomp out the "bad" ships by hopping on it. This could incorporate the electric board (*Technology, Story, Aesthetics*)
12. SURVIVAL Hopscotch (*Story, Game Mechanics*)
    a. One player is the ghost/demon/chasing thing
    b. Other players take turns hopping and MUST stay in front of the Demon Player
    c. If the Demon Player gets a player, the player is added to the Demon Team and contributes to the Demon Team's shooters? Maybe the Demon Team now gets to throw shooters multiple times.
13. Hopscotch where you can collect items and different small objects can be those items? (*Game Mechanics*)
14. Hopscotch where some tiles are "bad" that affect you – maybe this would be better as a video game? (*Technology, Game Mechanics*)
    a. Maybe there are "dark" areas right next to the game squares and if your shooter lands on these squares, you lose a turn or have to *repeat* a number that you already did
15. Maybe you have multiple shooters for different levels of difficulty? (*Game Mechanics*)

16. OPPONENTS throw shooters on squares. If they land on them, you must hop over these additional tiles (so now there are more squares you can't land on). But *on the way back*, you can collect these shooters and then they become yours. (*Game Mechanics*)
    a. If you make it through, you then get more ammo.
    b. Players must choose whether or not to throw their shooters and mess up the player hopping
    c. Players each start with more than one shooter
    d. Now there is something to do for the players who are not hopping
    e. This could get very physically challenging though
17. Double-hopscotch where you work in teams. You cross arms with a partner and *literally* hop together simultaneously? (*Game Mechanics*)
18. Time trial – hop as long as you can (*Game Mechanics*)
19. Use of colors which mean different things (*Aesthetics*)
    a. Maybe one color is evil?
    b. Color-scotch
    c. Throwing colored markers to match colored squares?
    d. Maybe you progress across the colors of the rainbow
20. Hopscotch while juggling (*Game Mechanics*)
21. Different ways to throw the "shooter" for different numbers – over the head / under-arm / through a leg? (*Game Mechanics*)
22. You each have one turn and try to get through as many numbers as possible. Instead of repeating this, the person who got the farthest gets a point. (*Game Mechanics*)
    a. Now repeat
    b. It can be a best-out-? game
23. Hopscotch video game w/ different characters w/ different types of markers/shooters that have different abilities
24. Hopscotch w/ Movies – Maybe the squares are actually scenes of a movie and each number triggers a scene. So you have to progress to literally play through a sequence of scenes. This could get high-tech (*Technology, Aesthetics*)
25. Hopscotch w/ Trivia – Each tile has a trivia question that you have to answer (*Aesthetics*)
26. Instead of linear, make Hopscotch a big board. You need to hop around and around collecting stuff/symbols/treasure and then putting pieces together in the center of the board. (*Game Mechanics*)
27. Hopscotch w/ dice – one marker/shooter and one dice (*Game Mechanics*)
28. Hopscotch w/ cards – each square is a card and you have to hop to it to eliminate cards from your deck (*Aesthetics*)
29. Players have to hop in one place for part of the game (*Game Mechanics*)
30. Is there a way to make Hopscotch take place in a different time period like the 1800s or the future? Could be done with a video game (*Technology, Aesthetics*)
31. Hopscotch where you start off on two feet + then progress to one (*Game Mechanics*)
32. Hopscotch on a bungee jumper
33. Hopscotch where the board lights up, you have to hop to it, and turn off lights (*Technology, Game Mechanics*)

     a. Maybe you can have a Red Team and a Blue Team and each team has to hop to the colored squares representing their team to get points

     b. Uses electric board

34. "Catch" Hopscotch – one teammate throws the marker, and the other teammate hops to it (*Game Mechanics*)

35. Free-for-all – 4+ players on a big board; hop around and each square you land on becomes *yours*. When the board is filled up, the game is over. Person w/ most squares wins (*Game Mechanics*)

36. Hopscotch where you have to "save a character" by going through the course (*Story*)

37. Hopping on trees – probably needs to be simulated; maybe in VR (*Technology, Aesthetics*)

38. Maybe each numbered square rises in height (or some of the later ones do) to add to difficulty towards the end (*Game Mechanics*)

39. Hopscotch while singing – you *must* sing while hopping. Each square is a song (*Game Mechanics*)

40. Different shapes instead of squares? (*Aesthetics*)

41. Going back to different shooters, maybe one is the traditional shooter and the other you have to balance on your head? (*Game Mechanics*)

42. Treasure on squares – you must hop around the board. If 2 people land on the same space, they're out (*Game Mechanics*)

43. Battle – almost like Chinese checkers or Parcheesi – you must get all your shooters into the center before your opponent does

     a. Multiple shooters in this example – maybe 6 per player?

44. Story – you're all animals in the forest needing to collect food by hopping. You can work together or not. There's also a carnivore that wants to eat you (*Story, Game Mechanics*)

     a. All throw shooters first to make board / where the food is

45. Something to do w/ height on a bungee jumper ~ could be a video game, must be simulated (*Technology*)

     a. More treasure you collect the higher you bounce

     b. Land on empty space and you lose ~ collect all treasure to win

     c. At some point, you bounce so high you don't see the board

46. Video game – Hopscotch but you can do tricks while you're hopping (*Technology*)

47. Video game – you can play as different hopping/bouncing things + even customize w/ different object parts (*Technology*)

     a. Play as a ball, bungee jumper, spring

     b. Game uses actual physics

48. Video game with levels – each "level" has Hopscotch-like treasure you have to bounce around until you get objects to fill it (*Technology, Game Mechanics*)

     a. Like a lit candle but you have to collect water to melt it & inside there is a coin or something

49. In real life, hop to grab coins/tokens to put into labeled jars → once a jar gets a specific # of tokens, it becomes yours. (*Game Mechanics*)

     a. BUT be careful. You could hop + get 4 tokens + then mess up, and then opponent, on his/her turn, can easily grab one token to fill it

      b. Cards that say where "jars" go – AFTER each player has thrown their 3 tokens onto the board
          i. CAN hop on token squares, NOT on jar squares
      c. Incorporate colors that match colored tokens to go into colored jars (might be too complex)

50. Squares are faces of everyone in the group (*Aesthetics*)
      a. If you get landed on by a "shooter" then you have to hop forward and back like the game until you fail. Whoever you land on then has to go.
      b. Could also do trivia about the person who you landed on

51. Death Hopscotch – each square is now a circle. You all have to get out of hell by going from the inner circle to the outer circle (*Game Mechanics*)

52. If you mess up a shoot, you have do something, like hop to a tree, do push-ups, etc. (*Game Mechanics*)

53. (This would have to be in a video game) Hopscotch on different planets where there are different gravities – helps you learn more about gravity and physics (*Technology, Aesthetics, Game Mechanics*)

54. The board moves while you're throwing the marker/shooter (use of electric board again). When a marker is on the board, the board stops moving for the hopping part. (*Game Mechanics*)

55. Hopscotching towards each other (*Game Mechanics*)

56. Hopscotch "Murder" where you have to hop around a large board collecting clues? (*Game Mechanics*)

57. Hopscotch on your hands – maybe this is how you do Hopscotch in the water? You have to jump on your hands while submerged underwater and the "course" is carved into the pool (this would be very expensive Hopscotch though) (*Aesthetics, Game Mechanics*)

58. Make the shooting part more like *Angry Birds* where you have to shoot up into the air (maybe using like a rubber band gun or something) for it to come down onto the board? (*Game Mechanics*)

Part II:
Four Ideas

In cutting down from the 58 ideas to four, I focused on four ideas that could be done (thereby eliminating some of the high-tech ideas and expensive ones like carving numbers into a pool). I also chose to focus on ideas that could be done inside due to the weather at the time:

Idea #1 – Hopscotch Racing

Two teams (of 2, 3, or 4) each have drawn Hopscotch boards next to each other. When the game starts, the first players must throw the shooter and go across the Hopscotch board like traditional Hopscotch. If successful, the next player can throw to the subsequent number. If unsuccessful, the next player must repeat the number that the initial player attempted. The first team to make it across the 9 numbers wins.

This addresses the problem of there not being enough to do for players not hopping (these players would be cheering their teammates on now) and also the game not being fast enough or with a long-lasting interest curve (racing has an inherent interest curve built into it).

Idea #2 – Long-Course Shooting

There will be a long, sweeping board where you hop along on a looooooonnnnng course. You must:
1. Throw your shooter far AND THEN you must hop across that point
2. BUT if you don't make it, you have to go back to the start
3. There is now strategy of selecting how far to throw the shooter

This idea provides a physical element to how far opponents are progresses, which adds to more desperation throws as the game goes on. This will hopefully add to an interest curve that is more long-lasting.

I initially shyed away from this idea because I wasn't sure it would work inside. Credit to Tara Molesworth for convincing me that I could make creative use of indoor space using furniture and other elements to make this idea work.

Idea #3 – Opponents with Shooters

You go through the Hopscotch board like traditional Hopscotch, but with a new element – OPPONENTS can throw shooters onto the squares. If these shooters land on course, you must hop over these additional tiles (so now there are more squares you can't land on). But *on the way back*, you can collect these shooters and then they become yours.
1. Players must choose whether or not to throw their shooters and mess up the player hopping
2. Players each start with three shooters
3. Now there is something to do for the players who are not hopping

This version adds a new element to traditional Hopscotch to allow for more strategy in the shooter aspect of the game while also gives non-hopping players something to do. I'm a little worried about the physical demands of this idea however, if the board becomes cluttered. We will have to see in playtesting.

Idea #4 – Shooters and Jars

There will be a larger Hopscotch board (maybe a giant square with spaces filled in). Players, taking turns, must hop around this board to grab shooters and put into labeled jars scattered around the board. Each jar has a number on it. Once a jar gets a specific # of shooters, it becomes yours.

1. Be careful. You could hop + get 4 tokens + and try to fill out a Number 5 Jar and then mess up. Then opponent, on his/her turn, can easily grab one token to fill it and get the jar for his/herself.
2. Gameplay starts with players throwing coins/tokens/shooters all onto the board. The jars are set in place, but each round of gameplay is different depending on where the tokens land.

This is the most complex of the ideas, very much turning Hopscotch into a strategy game with a very different board set. I'm lightly worried about the complexity of this idea, but it combines two elements I like – strategic shooter placement, and a better interest curve as players are "fighting" for the jars.

Part III:
Playtesting (*Opponents with Shooters*)

Rules

The game is played like traditional Hopscotch, using nine squares. There is one "board" that can be drawn anywhere, and players take turns hopping across the course and back until one players successfully completes a hop on number 9. Each player has three shooters. The catch is that:

If you're not hopping, you can throw shooters onto the squares. If these shooters land on course, the hopping player must hop over these additional tiles (so now there are more squares he/she can't land on). But *on the way back*, this player can collect these shooters and then they become the player's. A round follows like so:

1. The hopping player throws his/her shooter. If it makes it into the appropriately numbered box, play continues.
2. Players must choose whether or not to throw their shooters and mess up the player hopping.
3. Non-hopping players must throw their blocking shooters simultaneously. *Credit to Bobbie Soques and Adela Kapuscinska for helping come up with this rule directly before playtesting.*
    a. If there are players throwing more than one shooter, this step repeats.
    b. Players must have at least one shooter at hand for their own turn
4. If there is an *even* number of shooters on a square, they cancel out and are removed from the board. Shooters that land off-board are also removed. *This rule was created in collaboration with Bobbie Soques, Adela Kapuscinska, Dan Saad, and Kai Kuehner directly before playtesting*
5. The hopping player hops

Playtesting & Analysis

The experience was tested with Bobbie Soques, Adela Kapuscinska, Dan Saad, Kai Kuehner, and myself. **What worked was that:**

1. My fear that the course would become impossible for the hopping player to traverse did not come to pass
2. Having squares with even numbers of shooters cancel made the throwing part more strategic, which people liked.

However:

1. It didn't help that we playtested with rolled-up pieces of tape and paper as shooters. These objects rolled a lot, which made people unable to truly hit targets/squares that they were aiming for.

2. It was a problem that people didn't know whose shooters were whose. If the hopping player was unsuccessful and shooters returned to their original players, there was a lot of confusion as to whose was whose

It was suggested that, **in addition to using better shooters like beanbags**, **the shooters be color-coded** so it is easier to remember whom they initially belonged to (even if they change hands over the course of the game).

Problems

The part that works so far is getting the non-hopping players involved and the even-number rule keeps this element strategic. However, **the issue of traditional Hopscotch having a waning interest curve was present**. We only made it through one round for each player before we learned everything we needed to know and then stopped.

This was as far as this idea progressed. I tested this idea first due to it being easier to set up, but soon after I tested Idea #2 (see next section), which immediately showed more promise. I included this small part of playtesting for this idea to show the elements that work with it, but also its limitations

Part III: Playtesting (*Long-Course Shooting*)

Rules

The game is designed to be played indoors, making creative use of the space you have. The only requirement you need to have is tape to make the game board, small objects to act as shooters, and a flight of stairs (more on that later). The game board (or "course") is composed of a long path of squares found on a traditional Hopscotch board – single squares that you have to land on with one foot, and double squares that you can put two feet down on. Some squares have an adjacent square next to them – these are "checkpoints." Furniture (i.e. boxes, lamps) has been placed in locations to block certain angles. The game can be played with 2+ people, with players taking turns throwing their shooters and progressing across the board. A round follows like so:

1. The first player throws their shooter far AND THEN must hop to that point (if the shooter lands off-course, the player loses their turn).
2. If the player successfully hops to where their shooter is, the player may place their shooter next to this square – this now the square that this player is marking.
3. The next player repeats this motion. If this next player *passes* the first player's square, the first player is bumped back to the nearest "checkpoint." On the first player's next turn, they "shoot" from the checkpoint square. *Credit to Tara Molesworth and Erik Shepherd for helping me come up with this rule directly before playtesting.*
4. Play continues with players taking turns. The board, in this case, snakes around the corner and leads into the stairway.

Once a player reaches the stairway, they must throw their shooter to the top of the landing. This is allowed to be done in multiple steps, but of course this runs the risk of another player passing them. The first player to reach the top of the stairs wins.
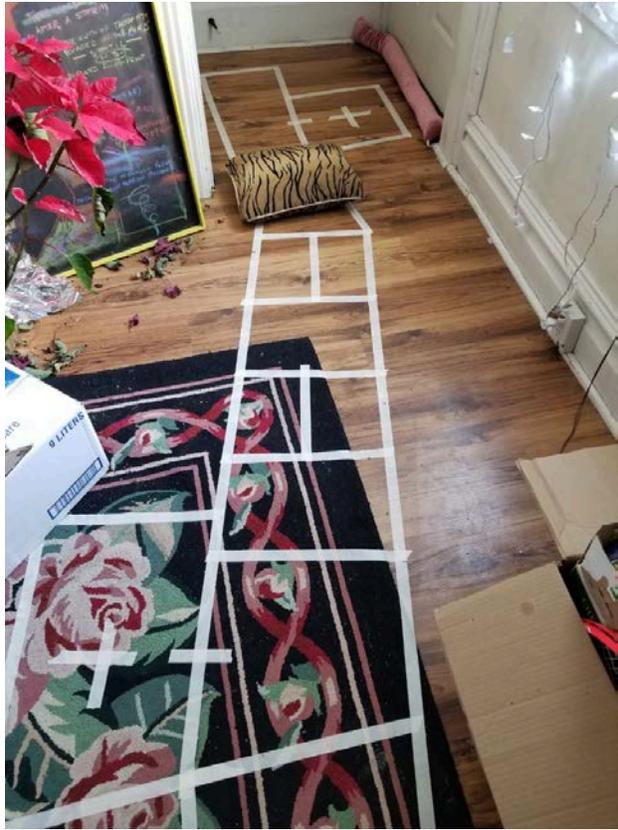
These pictures, of the first and third sections of the course, were taken between Playtest #1 and Playtest #2, at which point the checkpoints were marked with "+" symbols.

Playtesting & Analysis #1

The game was played by Tara Molesworth, Erik Shepherd and myself. Even on first playthrough, the skeleton of the game was solid. Playtesters mentioned that it still needed some tweaks, but the premise worked.

What worked:

1. The pacing (especially with three people), with the game taking about 12 minutes to complete.
2. **The passing/bumping mechanic works.** The checkpoints are spaced out enough so that the bumping isn't egregiously annoying, but far enough so that successful shooter throws lead to more bumping.
3. **As players fell behind, it led to more risky shooter throws**, and the successful ones led to more bumping.
4. You also are in constant view of seeing your opponents/friends moving farther away from you / getting closer to you. **This physical manifestation of progression led to more tension and a better interest curve.**

5. The obstacles worked. At several instances, the stack of boxes blocked players' lines of sight in trying to throw across the room as a shortcut.
6. **We used balled-up socks as shooters for this playtest and they work**. They don't roll, they land where you aim, and they're durable.

What needs improvement:

1. **There is more that can be done with difficulty**, especially towards the end. Erik suggested to put more tape down in the last section before the stairs to force players to make more difficult hops.
2. We need to mark off the checkpoints, because there were moments where it was unclear if a shooter landed in-course. The checkpoint squares don't count as a square to land a shooter on, but this needs to be more apparent.
3. This happened once which led to confusion: **what happens if you tie** (a player finishes on the same square another player occupies)? In this playtest, we just add players share the square, but maybe there is a "War"-type mini-game that players can have to break the tie and see who gets sent back to the checkpoint.
   a. Idea: Two players stand on one leg and the person to lose their balance first has to go back.
4. Only once during this playtest did a player fail to make it to their shooter. We brainstormed **additional types of squares** to incorporate into the board to make the actual *hopping* part more difficult:
   a. A **Side-Square** where you have to hop a land with both feet *off-center* before hopping back.
   b. **Left and Right Squares** that designate you having to land on either your *left foot* or *right foot*, respectively.
   c. **Criss-cross Squares** you have to land on both feet, but in criss-cross form.
   d. Putting actual physical **obstacles on certain squares** that you have to jump over.
5. **Changing the endgame**. It was very easy to throw the shooter over the top of the stairway (even though the hopping part was trickier). **We are going to change this rule so that the stair that is the "finish" is the *second-to-last* stair, right below the landing.** So you have to throw and *actually aim* for this stair in order to hop to victory. If you throw the shooter and it goes beyond the landing, it doesn't count and you lose your turn.
6. Also with regards to the endgame, we want to give players who are behind a chance to catch up. So, we're going to incorporate **the concept of "rebuttals"**. Here, if Player 1 reaches the Finish Stair, both Players 2 and 3 get a chance to try to tie Player 1. If both Player 2 and 3 are unsuccessful, Player 1 wins. But if, for instance, Player 2 is successful in doing so, both Player 1 and 2 must return to the bottom of the stairs and play continues from there. Turns repeat until the "Rebuttals" fail and one player wins.

Playtesting & Analysis #2

The game was tested again by the same group. In this new version, the board was restructured to slowly sift in new types of squares as the game progresses:

1. The first few squares of the board are identical to a traditional Hopscotch board, and then Side-Squares are introduced
2. Towards the end of the first section (before the first checkpoint), Left and Right Squares are introduced
3. Soon after the first checkpoint is an Obstacle Square (in the form of a pillow) that needs to be jumped over
4. Towards the end of the second section, the Criss-Cross Square is introduced.
5. The third section (before the stairs) doesn't introduce new elements but contains smaller squares, Criss-Cross Squares, and an Obstacle Square (another pillow) that needs to be jumped over to reach the last checkpoint.

Erik hopping across the first section of updated board

The main positive reactions from this second round of playtesting were that:

1. The difficulty worked. Playtesters talked about how the additions make the hopping harder, and it amps up in the second section, which is good.
2. The changes to the stair rule makes the finale more engaging as well, as it led to a lot of back-and-forths of players thinking they're about to win only to be rebuffed or missing

the final stair by one hop. There were also a lot of laughs when the "shooters" would miss the target stair by a little bit and end up rolling all the way down to the bottom.

A few drawbacks from this round were:

1. **The stand-on-one-leg tiebreak mechanism didn't really work**. In one instance, two players tied for the lead ended up each standing on one leg, waiting for the player behind them to pass. When this didn't occur, the two players in the lead didn't know what to do.
   a. Also, Tara pointed out that if two players in the back were forced into this tiebreak, it would be very annoying to do while waiting for players in the lead to take their turns.
   b. It was decided that going forward, **the attacking player gets priority**, bypassing this tiebreak system. So, if Player 1 is occupying a square and Player 2 successfully reaches and hops to that square, Player 1 is sent back to the checkpoint.
2. There was some confusion over what happens if a shooter lands in one side of a Double Square, with another player's shooter occupying the other side. Are the players allowed to share the square now? What happens?
   a. **It was decided to make these Double Squares holistic**. So, the new tiebreak rule mentioned above applies to them as well, regardless of whether or not players are on two separate sides.

We also decided to add in two more elements:

- One more type of square to the board: an **X Square** with two squares adjacent to it, where you have land with your two feet out on the adjacent squares (this square is also treated holistically so the new above rule applies)
- Having players *leave their shooters* **on the board while the next player goes**. The shooters act as obstacles that the next player has to jump over, adding to the difficulty of passing an opponent (basically, **if a shooter is on a square, treat it as an Obstacle Square**). If the next player's shooters lands on a square occupied by another player's shooter, however, they can still land on that square to end their turn and bump the other player back.

Playtest & Analysis #3

We added these minor rules to the game and played one more time. This time, everything seemed to work. The new X Square blended in seamlessly with the current design, and **the new tiebreak rule led to more tension and checkpoint bumps**, which led to more laughter and excitement from the playtesters.
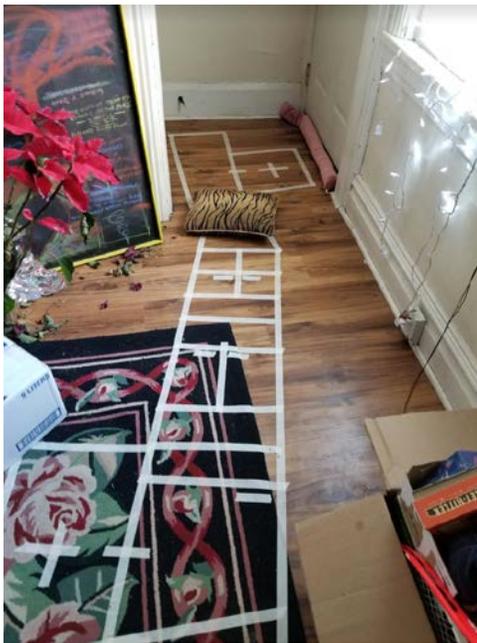
The course after final edits. Check out the "Squares" page of the following "Final Product" section (page 26) for a specific list of all the different types of squares.

The only thing pointed out with this last version is what to do with different test cases with regards to number of players:

We had two players play through the experience once without problem – there is still room for interest curve swings and large comebacks if players are willing to take risks and make longer throws. This last test involved Tara successfully throwing over the furniture obstacles across multiple sections to make a comeback – such a maneuver is possible, just difficult.
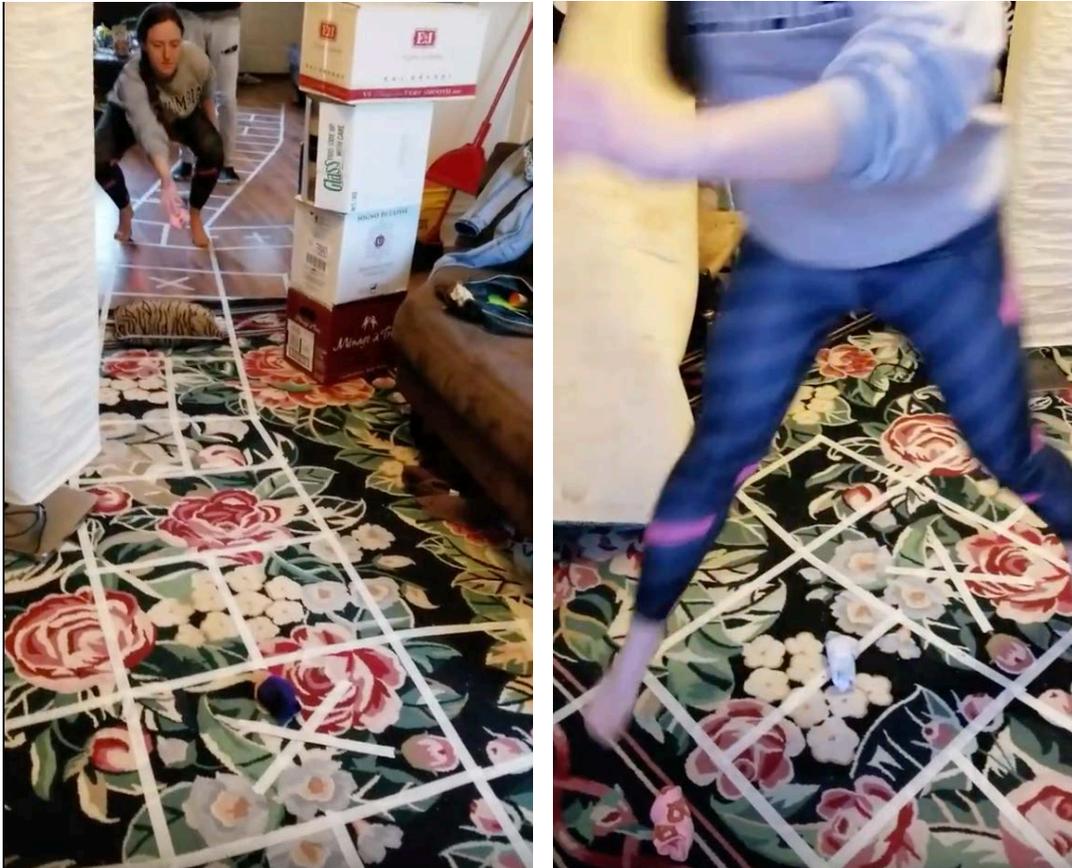
Tara lining up a shot in the completed course (left) and hopping over an opponent's shooter-occupied square (right)

With regards to test cases with lots of players, we were not able to test this, but decided to cap the number of players at six. It feels like there's room for more chaos to be added, and the bumps are actually fun and not that annoying, so we think that it would still work with 4-6 players.

Erik hopping across the section (on a Criss-Cross Square (left); over an Obstacle Square (right))
before the last checkpoint

A last rule we decided to add was to max out the number of "Rebuttals" in a game. They led to a lot of laughter early on, but we're aware that if these were to go on indefinitely, it would get annoying and extremely tiring. So, the new rule is that: **the number of rebuttals that can occur in a game is equal to the number of players playing it.** So, if there are three players playing, there can be three ties (and subsequent pushbacks) on top of the stairs. Afterward, the first player to the top wins out.

The final stair challenge

Final Analysis

I believe that the game solved the two problems the original idea was always trying to tackle: providing more strategic throwing and sustaining a longer interest curve. There is indeed strategy to the throwing, with room to make crazy comebacks if you're willing to take risky throws.

The difficulty ramps up well, with new types of squares being introduced. And then the stair finale provides a lot of possibility for back-and-forths and reversals (as long as this finale isn't dragged on for too long). And having physical views of players' progression through the course provides a tension that regular Hopscotch really doesn't.

However, the game doesn't really address the issue of traditional Hopscotch not being fast enough, and this game is arguably more physically taxing than regular Hopscotch.

I like to think of this game as having enough going on with the shooting mechanisms and different spaces that speed is less of an issue. And I feel like it's meant for more advanced hoppers who find traditional Hopscotch to be too basic; therefore, these advanced hoppers would be more inclined to test their balance. Erik pointed out that, in playing this game, he found himself to have better balance than he expected. And it's always nice to hear your playtesters say "I love this game." Such is the final product, titled *HopShooter*.

Final Product: HopShooter

HopShooter: A HopScotch-Inspired Physical Board Game

Traditional HopScotch works in its simplicity, but there isn't much strategy to the "shooting" mechanic, and, after a while, the game begins to gets stale, with the same beats getting repeated again and again. Where's the progression?

HopShooter, like traditional HopScotch, is a variation meant to employ more strategy and physical progression. It can still be played with kids, but is meant for more advanced hoppers and older kids who like more strategy to their hopping.

Gameplay: 10-15 minutes

You will need:
- 2-6 players
- Indoor Space (can be played anywhere *but* you need to have stairs nearby)
- Tape (to make the board)
- A "shooter" (Balled-up socks work well, or beanbags – things that don't roll)
- 2-3 larger, physical obstacles (Lamps, Large boxes, Furniture, etc.)
- Two medium-sized objects (Pillows, Cushions, etc.)

Basic Rules:

The goal of the game is to make it across the "course" first. To do so, you throw your "shooter" through the air towards the course. You then must hop across the course across different types of Spaces (see below) to get to your "shooter." If you make it to your "shooter", then this becomes your space to end your turn. Leave your "shooter" on this space. If you *don't* make it to your shooter, it doesn't count and you must return from where you started your turn. If you threw the "shooter" and it lands off the course, it doesn't count and you don't move.

On the following player's turn, they repeat the same motion. If the Player 2 *passes* the space where Player 1's "shooter" is and successfully completes their turn, the first player is bumped back to the closest checkpoint on the course (see below). Turn continues until a player reaches the end of the course.

The taped-down part of the course is meant to end at the bottom of a flight of stairs. The "final challenge" for each player is to throw their "shooter" up the stairs to the stair directly below the landing (you can't just throw it over the stairwell). As with the taped-down part of the course, you must hop up the stairs to where your shooter. You can take as many turns as you'd like to reach the top, but keep in mind that this gifts other players a chance to pass you and push you back to the last checkpoint. The player to reach the top of the stairs wins.

However, each following player is allowed a rebuttal, and if, for instance, Player 2 ties Player 1, who reached the top of the stairs, both Player 1 and Player 2 then return to the bottom of the

stairwell. Play continues (the number of these rebuttals/returns allowed is equal to the number of players playing) until there is only one player on the top of the stairs.

It is possible to come from behind in this game if you take more challenging shooter throws. Good luck!

Squares:

Regular Squares	Like traditional Hopscotch, hop across this square on one leg of your choice (*if two Regular Squares are in a row, you cannot switch legs*)	
Double Squares	Like traditional Hopscotch, hop across this square on two legs, with your left leg on the left side and your right leg on the right side	
Side Squares	Hop across these squares like you would a Double Square. They are simply off-center to make your hopping more challenging	
Left Squares	Hop across this square on your left leg (required)	
Right Squares	Hop across this square on your right leg (required)	
Criss-Cross Squares	Like Double Squares, but switched. You must land criss-crossed with your left leg touching the right side	

	and your right leg touching the left side.	
X Squares	You cannot land in the center of these triples. You must extend your legs out to land on the adjacent squares, left on left and right on right.	
Obstacle Squares	These squares have medium-sized objects (i.e. pillows) deliberately placed on them. You must hop over them.	
Checkpoints	These squares are not technically *part* of the course (i.e. if your shooter lands on them, it counts as out). However, they are connected to course squares. You return to these squares and shoot from them if another player passes you and you are bumped back to the last checkpoint you passed.	

If another player's shooter is occupying a square, you must hop over it, treating said square as an Obstacle Square. In this sense, Double Squares, Criss-Cross Squares, Side Squares, and X Squares are treated holistically – if another player's shooter is occupying one side of these squares, the entire square must be jumped over.

Setting Up the Board:

The non-stair part of the board is set up using masking tape or other colored tape to act as borders for the squares. You are free to make these squares as large or small as you'd like. It is

suggested that squares closest to the stair portion of the game be made smaller for increased difficulty, but it is up to you.

With regards to squares, it is suggested to ramp up difficulty as the game progresses. The first six squares are meant to mirror traditional Hopscotch. Then it is advised to introduce Side Squares and Left/Right Squares before the first checkpoint. Between the first and second checkpoint, you should then introduce Obstacle Squares, Criss-Cross Squares, and X Squares. The last section between the second and third checkpoint (before the stairs) is open-ended, but should be as difficult as possible, within reason. The specific board set used for the testing for this game is as follows:

Section 1:
1. *Regular*
2. *Regular*
3. *Double*
4. *Regular*
5. *Double*
6. *Regular*
7. *Side*
8. *Regular*
9. *Double*
10. *Left*
11. *Double*
12. *Right*
13. *Side*
14. *Double (connected to Checkpoint)*

Section 2:
15. *Regular*
16. *X*
17. *Left*
18. *Obstacle*
19. *Double*
20. *Criss-Cross*
21. *Regular*
22. *Double*
23. *X*
24. *Double*
25. *Regular*
26. *Right (connected to Checkpoint)*

Section 3:
27. *Regular*
28. *Regular*

29. Criss-Cross
30. Regular
31. Regular
32. Criss-Cross
33. Double
34. Obstacle
35. Regular (connected to Checkpoint)

Section 4: Stairs
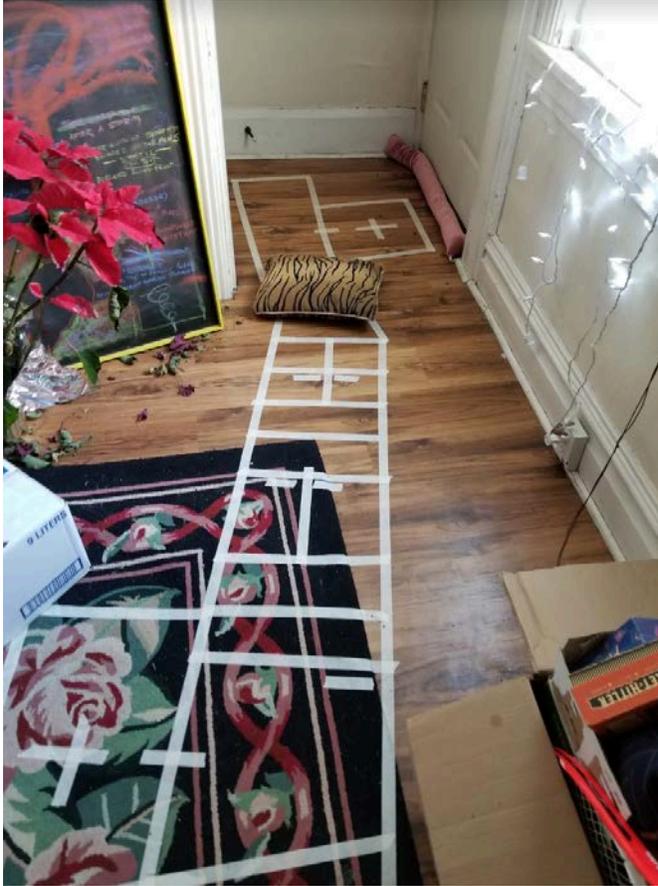
You are also encouraged to use the play space you have to your advantage. Move furniture into the way to block certain lines of sight. Have the course snake around certain areas and make sharp turns towards the end of the course. The board set used for testing utilized furniture obstacles near the course within Section 2 and had the last square before Section 3 make a sharp turn. But again – you do not have to conform to this board set. Be creative!

If you want to add more sections before the stairs, you are welcome to do so. Think about difficulty as you to. Maybe add more sharp turns and corners to these sections, or make the squares even smaller.

House Rules:

It is typically left up to house rules whether not lines on the course count as in or out. If a person's shooter (or foot) is threading this line, this can be a judgment call for players to decide – it is helpful to come to a majority on these matters; just remember to be cordial.

This also applies to the stairs, when players more frequently need to stabilize themselves. In testing, players were allowed to bump against the walls enclosing the stairs for stabilization, but were not allowed to put their hands on the ground or grab onto the railing. The amount of leniency here is up to the players playing.

Credits:

Research Videos – YouTube
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZzswQaICfM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ikg9qnWrDU

"Opponents with Shooters" Playtest
- Bobbie Soques
- Adela Kapuscinska
- Dan Saad
- Kai Kuehner

"Long-Course Shooting" / "HopShooter" Playtest & Final Collaboration
- Tara Molesworth
- Erik Shepherd