

Session 1: Before Playing | 15-30 minutes

1. What will I like / dislike about it?

As a person who enjoys avatar-based, role playing games, I will like taking the perspective of a mortician, an occupation I'm unfamiliar with. I live close to Toronto's largest cemetery and walk through its public grounds on many occasions; I have always been curious about what goes on behind its closed doors.

Knowing that the game takes place in a funeral home, following a mortician's day-to-day routine, I may dislike the graphic nature (i.e., depicting corpses – even illustrated ones) and the sombre tone. In real life, I have been fortunate not to have experienced a death in the immediate family. As a result, I haven't fully reconciled with my own desire to play and possibly enjoy a game with death as its central theme.

2. What will I find interesting about it/boring or tedious about it?

The [game developers](#) describe *A Mortician's Tale* as a "death positivity" game; I've never heard this term or death described this way before and was intrigued. To help me get into the right mindset, I listened to a [sample soundtrack song](#) and was drawn to its haunting melody.

If the game is strictly limited to its storyline, I won't be able to explore the space freely. If that happens and the story isn't engaging enough, I may lose interest.

3. What will I need to do in it?

While immersing myself in the role of a mortician, I will need to follow instructions, specifically in medical procedures such as preparing a body for burial or cremation (yikes!). I'll also be interacting with coworkers, clients and management to get further insight in running a funeral home.

4. What will I need to learn within it?

I will need to learn to keep an open mind and be more comfortable with the topic of death, which typically represents the end or losing state in games.

5. What will it be like / similar to (other games I have played)?

I think the game challenges will be like the puzzle games I have played before. The game appears to have similar meditative qualities to [Myst](#) and [The Witness](#) while the story-driven, point-and-click mechanics will be akin to [Professor Layton and The Curious Village](#). I'm not sure if there will be a sense of urgency with the client interactions. In this case, the game could be similar to simulation games like [Diner Dash](#) which deal with meeting time-management objectives.

Fieldnote Summary Session 1

Based on reviews and testimonials, I think the game will satisfy my curiosity about the role of a mortician and our relationship with death in a respectful way.

CBC.ca

A Mortician's Tale explores the poignant — and mundane — realities of death

A Mortician's Tale, by Toronto-based indie team Laundry Bear, **deals with death in ways decidedly unlike most action-packed video games** that ...

Oct. 22, 2017



WIRED

'A Mortician's Tale' Review: This Might Be the First Game to Really Understand Death

A Mortician's Tale, a game created and published by Canada's Laundry Bear Games for PC, is a breath of formaldehyde-tinted air. It takes ...

Oct. 20, 2017



The Verge

A Mortician's Tale: a game that will make you look at death differently

A Mortician's Tale is one of those video games where the term "game" doesn't always feel like an appropriate descriptor. It's more of an ...

Jan. 7, 2018



Polygon

In A Mortician's Tale, death doesn't have to be a downer

It's an inevitability that deserves as much care as life does. A Mortician's Tale - embalming A typical workday for Charlie. Laundry Bear Games.

Oct. 18, 2017



Gamasutra

The developer of A Mortician's Tale talks death-positive game ...

Today on the Gamasutra Twitch channel, we were lucky enough to play A Mortician's Tale with lead developer Gabby DaRienzo. Joined by her ...

Oct. 20, 2017

[Image caption: Screenshot of media coverage, highlighting the death positive theme in *A Mortician's Tale*]