Silent Testimony

Genre	Production	Role	Year
Narrative, Mystery, Puzzle, Investigation	Collaborative Project (3 Members)	Lead Designer and Developer	2026

Introduction

The Silent Testimony is a first-person, text-based mystery game about three murders disguised as suicides. Playing as detective Lu Chen, haunted by his sister's death, players investigate crime scenes, collect and compare evidence, and uncover the hidden connections between the cases. By revealing the truth behind the victims' deaths, Lu Chen seeks justice and redemption.

Demo Video: https://youtu.be/apgr4XUFOtc?si=cST7V9IfgRY37KHu

Inspiration

INSPIRED BY RUSTY LAKE

Rusty Lake's unique atmosphere, symbolic storytelling and puzzle design strongly inspired my game. It shows how a simple scene, ordinary objects and a mysterious narrative can create a deep and unsettling experience.

Distinctive Atmosphere

Observe — Pay attention to unusual details in the scene.

Atmosphere — A persistent sense of unease and mystery.

Surreal Setting — Ordinary spaces with strange, dreamlike elements.

Object-based Puzzles

Interact — Examine and collect strange objects.

Solve — Use inventory items, combine and experiment.

Uncover — Objects often hide clues to a larger story.

Case Study

1 Scene Exploration

OBSERVE / EXPLORE / DISCOVER

Click to navigate

Rusty Lake uses fixed camera angles with edge arrows to pan between rooms. Clicking objects triggers zoom-ins, creating a claustrophobic "box view".

2 Item—based Puzzles

COLLECT / USE / SOLVE

Use collected items

Collected items are used to solve puzzles, unlock mechanisms, and reveal new information.

3 Chained Puzzles

CONNECT / DECODE / ADVANCE

Follow the clues

Puzzle results reveal information needed for later steps, gradually advancing the investigation.

Conception

Based on the design features of Rusty Lake, I developed my own game, Silent Testimony. I kept the strengths of atmospheric exploration, object interaction and hidden connections, and transformed them into a first-person investigation game with three interrelated cases.

First—person Investigation

Explore crime scenes

Players explore crime scenes in first person, inspect objects, and collect evidence.

ENTER → INSPECT → COLLECT

Evidence Comparison

Connect the evidence

Players compare two clues to expose contradictions and generate new leads.

CLUE 01 + CLUE 02 → COMPARE → NEW CLUE CARD

Cross—case Deduction

Uncover the culprit

Players connect evidence across three cases to reveal their hidden connections and expose Shen Mo.

CASE01 CASE02 CASE03 → ACCUSE → MURDERER

Gameplay

01 EXPLORE

Players begin by reviewing case files and entering the crime scene. Through observation, interaction, and environmental details, hidden clues gradually emerge.

Explore the Scene

Players switch views with the arrows and click or open objects to discover clues. The hearts show remaining mistakes, while the inventory stores collected evidence. Once the case is solved, players move on to the next investigation.

Case 01 | The Sealed Window

In Lin Jingwan's bedroom, the curtains cover a window that has been sealed with tape. Players must open the curtains, remove the tape, and open the window, then click the moon outside to obtain the clue.

Case 02 | Finding the Second Phone

Two phones can be found in Zhou Nian'an's scene. The first contains no key evidence, so players must search further and find the second phone in the drawer to uncover the crucial abuse recording.

Case 03 | The Lamp, Door & Clock

A note in Shen Xiwei's office gives instructions involving the lamp, door, and clock. Following the sequence reveals a key, allowing players to unlock the drawer and obtain hidden evidence.

02 COMPARE

Collected clues can be compared to reveal contradictions. Meaningful connections generate new deductions and push the investigation forward.

Select Clues — Choose two related pieces of evidence.

Find Contradictions — Compare details to uncover inconsistencies.

New Deductions — Generate new leads and unlock the next step.

03 ACCUSE

After gathering enough evidence, players organize the key clues and make a final accusation. The ending depends on the truth they uncover.

Organize Evidence — Select the most crucial clues.

Make an Accusation — Point out the truth based on your findings.

Reach the Ending — The story concludes based on what you uncover.

UI Design

01 Main Interface

Core actions stay at the screen edges, leaving the center clear for the scene. Clues and notes remain easy to reach.

02 Comparison Interface

Place two clues side by side. A correct match reveals a connection; a mismatch warns the player.

03 Deduction Interface

Link evidence across all three cases to reveal suspect Shen Mo and unlock the final accusation.

04 Main Menu

Lu Chen's office is the gateway to the story. Interactive objects guide players into the investigation.

Game Flow

01 Enter & Explore

Explore the scene, interact with objects, and collect clues.

Start → Prologue → View Dossier → Explore Scene → Collect Clues

02 Compare & Deduce

Compare two clues. A match reveals a connection; a mismatch can cost one heart.

Select Two Clues → Match or conflict → New clue or lose one heart

03 Final Accusation

Combine evidence from all three cases to identify the suspect and reach an ending.

Build the Evidence Chain → Build the Evidence Chain → Reveal the Truth

Narrative Design

01 Character Map

CASE CONNECTIONS / SUBJECT RELATIONSHIPS

02 Main Plots

FROM STORYBOARD SKETCH TO FINAL CINEMATIC

The prologue is generated with AI, transforming storyboard sketches into cinematic scenes. It establishes the game's atmosphere, characters, and initial emotional tone.

01 Accident — A sudden accident changes everything.

02 A Letter — A mysterious letter arrives, leading to a new investigation.

03 Searching — He dives into the past, searching for clues.

04 Deliver — The clues lead to new people and answers.

Three Cases, Three Spaces

CASE 01 LIN JINGWAN

Scene Views

The Sealed Room

A small, isolated room, cut off from the outside world. Ordinary furnishings hide an extraordinary story. In the silence, every object becomes a witness.

1 Sealed Window
- Interaction: Tear off the tape and open the window.
- Clue: No moonlight and no wind on an overcast night.
- Revelation: Contradicts the note's claim of "moonlight" and "wind".

2 Bedside Objects
- Interaction: Inspect items on the desk.
- Clue: A suicide note mentioning moonlight, and a counseling center business card.
- Revelation: The handwriting is hers, but the content may be fabricated. She had contact with Shen Mo.

3 Under the Bed
- Interaction: Click the bed and inspect the floor.
- Clue: Unused cat toys and an empty cyanide bottle.
- Revelation: She was lonely after her cat died. The poison was hidden here, not openly held for suicide.

4 Drawer
- Interaction: Open the drawer.
- Clue: A psychological follow-up record dated the day she died.
- Revelation: She visited the Star Counseling Center right before her death.

5 Calendar
- Interaction: Inspect the calendar on the wall.
- Clue: Only one date is circled in red—the day her cat died.
- Revelation: Time stopped for her half a year ago. She lost her only emotional support.

Key Combined Clues
- 1 Suicide Note + Weather Record → Moonlight Contradiction — The note and injuries point to coercion.
- 2 Help Record + Counseling Card → Shen Mo Was Her Counselor — Records reveal a hidden counseling link.

Three Cases, Three Spaces

CASE 02 ZHOU NIANAN

Scene Views

The Oppressive Apartment

A cramped apartment filled with traces of conflict. Every corner reflects the tension between people. Routine life conceals a far more disturbing reality.

1 Front Door
- Interaction: Inspect the front door and wall.
- Clue: "Pay back" paint, broken lock, neighbor's note.
- Revelation: Debt harassment and the neighbor often heard her crying and him yelling.

2 Bedroom Desk
- Interaction: Read the suicide note on the desk.
- Clue: A suicide note with shaky handwriting at the end.
- Revelation: The claim "He never hurt me" is a lie. It was written under coercion.

3 Study Drawer
- Interaction: Open the hidden drawer.
- Clue: A secondary phone and a psychological counseling record.
- Revelation: She secretly recorded his abuse and sought help from Shen Mo.

4 Living Room Floor
- Interaction: Inspect the floor.
- Clue: Wine bottles, a smashed phone, and an empty poison bottle.
- Revelation: Alcohol triggers violence; the phone was smashed to hide evidence.

5 Trash Can
- Interaction: Check the trash can.
- Clue: A crumpled 20,000 yuan gambling IOU.
- Revelation: The financial ruin led to escalating violence, eventually costing her life.

Key Combined Clues
- 1 Suicide Note + Bruise Photos → Forced Confession — The note mentions moonlight on a cloudy night.
- 2 Counseling Card + Follow-up Record → Shen Mo and the Victim — Records reveal she repeatedly visited Shen Mo.

Three Cases, Three Spaces

CASE 03 SHEN XIWEI

Scene Views

The False Office

A tidy, professional space built to hide the truth. Documents and records reveal a carefully constructed facade. The more you investigate, the more contradictions emerge.

1 Left Wall
- Interaction: Inspect the wall.
- Clue: Banners of gratitude and award certificates.
- Revelation: Proves she was a dedicated volunteer, making her death highly suspicious.

2 Wall Clock & Switches
- Interaction: Toggle lights 3x, door 2x, then click the clock.
- Clue: A key drops from the back of the clock.
- Revelation: Matches the code "Clock stops once". The key unlocks the top drawer.

3 Office Desk
- Interaction: Inspect the desk.
- Clue: The code note, PC chat logs, calendar, and her sister's photo.
- Revelation: The note is a cipher. Shen Mo threatened her in the chat.

4 Top Locked Drawer
- Interaction: Get the key and open the top drawer.
- Clue: The victim's investigation notes.
- Revelation: She secretly linked the "suicide" cases together. (

5 Bottom Drawer
- Interaction: Open the bottom drawer.
- Clue: TV station invitation and printed evidence.
- Revelation: She was exposing the truth and planned to go public.

Key Combined Clues
- 1 Suicide Note + Fingerprint Report → Shen Mo's Lie — His fingerprints prove he lied about being there.
- 2 Victim's Notes + Shen Mo's Message → Shen Mo's Warning — She found the truth, he threatened her to stop.

Programming

01 Clue System — EVIDENCE DISCOVERY

Players inspect objects at the crime scene to discover and record clues. The system manages clue IDs, information, and investigation states, keeping track of discovered and examined clues for further deduction.

02 Inventory System — EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT

Collected evidence is added to the inventory, where players can review and inspect it at any time. The system manages acquired evidence and its states, providing a central collection for organizing and combining clues.

03 Case Progress — INVESTIGATION TRACKING

The system tracks investigation progress based on collected evidence and completed steps. After multiple cases are completed, their results are combined to evaluate the player's overall investigation and determine different endings based on evidence completeness and accusation accuracy.

04 Compare System — DEDUCTION & CONTRADICTION

Players combine two pieces of evidence to test whether they are logically related. Successful combinations generate new deductions and contradictions, while unrelated or repeated combinations produce no new clues. This system forms the core gameplay loop of investigation and deduction.

05 Accusation System — FINAL JUDGMENT

After completing the investigation, players select the cause of death and submit the key evidence. The system checks whether the accusation is correct and whether the required evidence is complete, determining whether the case has been successfully solved.

Outcome

FINAL GAME SCREENS

TESTING

2 PLAYERS / 2 COMMENTS

"The cold color palette and minimalist UI are highly immersive, making me feel like a truly dedicated detective."

"The clue comparison mechanic is brilliant, and finding contradictions to piece together the truth is incredibly rewarding"