My IRIS system contains a set of formulas that consist of actions that the Drama Manager can perform in certain sequences to create suspense.

I plan on evaluating these formulas experimentally. I hope to show that these formulas are sufficient to create suspense, in that they are comparable to a human author’s mental formula for creating suspense and better than a logically consistent baseline. The experiment will be designed as follows:

Participants will be given some background initial info about the world, such as "This takes place in a medieval fantasy world. There is a maiden, a knight, a friendly wizard, and an evil dragon. The knight is trying to kill the dragon."

There is a bank of sentences that I will create that can combine to form fragments of a story in this fantasy world. These sentences are divided into three different phases. The phases are created so that as long as you follow the pattern

(Phase 1 sentence)* (Phase 2 sentence)* (Phase 3 sentence)*

then the story will be logically consistent.

An example of the bank might be:

**Phase 1**

The wizard tells the knight where the dragon is hiding.
The knight searches for a sword to kill the dragon

Phase 2

The knight finds where the dragon is hiding.

Phase 3

The dragon attacked the knight.

The knight attacks the dragon but fails to kill it.

There are 17 different formulae variations in the IRIS system. We need to make sure every story fragment creates suspense around the same goal, which will be having the knight kill the dragon. I then use the sentence bank to create all of the different ways to author each formula variation. At experiment runtime I randomly choose one of these story fragments that satisfies the given formula variation.

Then, I give a few human authors the sentence bank and story fragment creation formula of (Phase 1 sentence)* (Phase 2 sentence)* (Phase 3 sentence)* and tell them to create some story fragments that create suspense around the goal of the knight killing the dragon.

Finally, I randomly generate some more story fragments using only my creation formula but with no notion of suspense for the baseline.

The participants are given the background story info and a 34 pairings of story fragments. They are asked to compare the two fragments as to which is more suspenseful. The choices are neither, both, or one or the other is more suspenseful. They will have 35 comparisons to make.
Experimental Evaluation of Suspense Formulas

Written by Matthew Fendt
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(17 of the IRIS suspense formula variations compared to the two other options, baseline and human author, 17x2 = 34 + baseline vs author). I expect these results:

my formulas = human author

human author > baseline

my formulas > baseline

The 17 IRIS suspense formula were generated from all possible suspenseful combination of Drama Manager actions. This experiment will allow me to eliminate those that were not experimentally validated as suspenseful and also to give credence to those suspense formula that were shown to be suspenseful.