

Breaking the Loneliness: Reinventing the Reading Experience

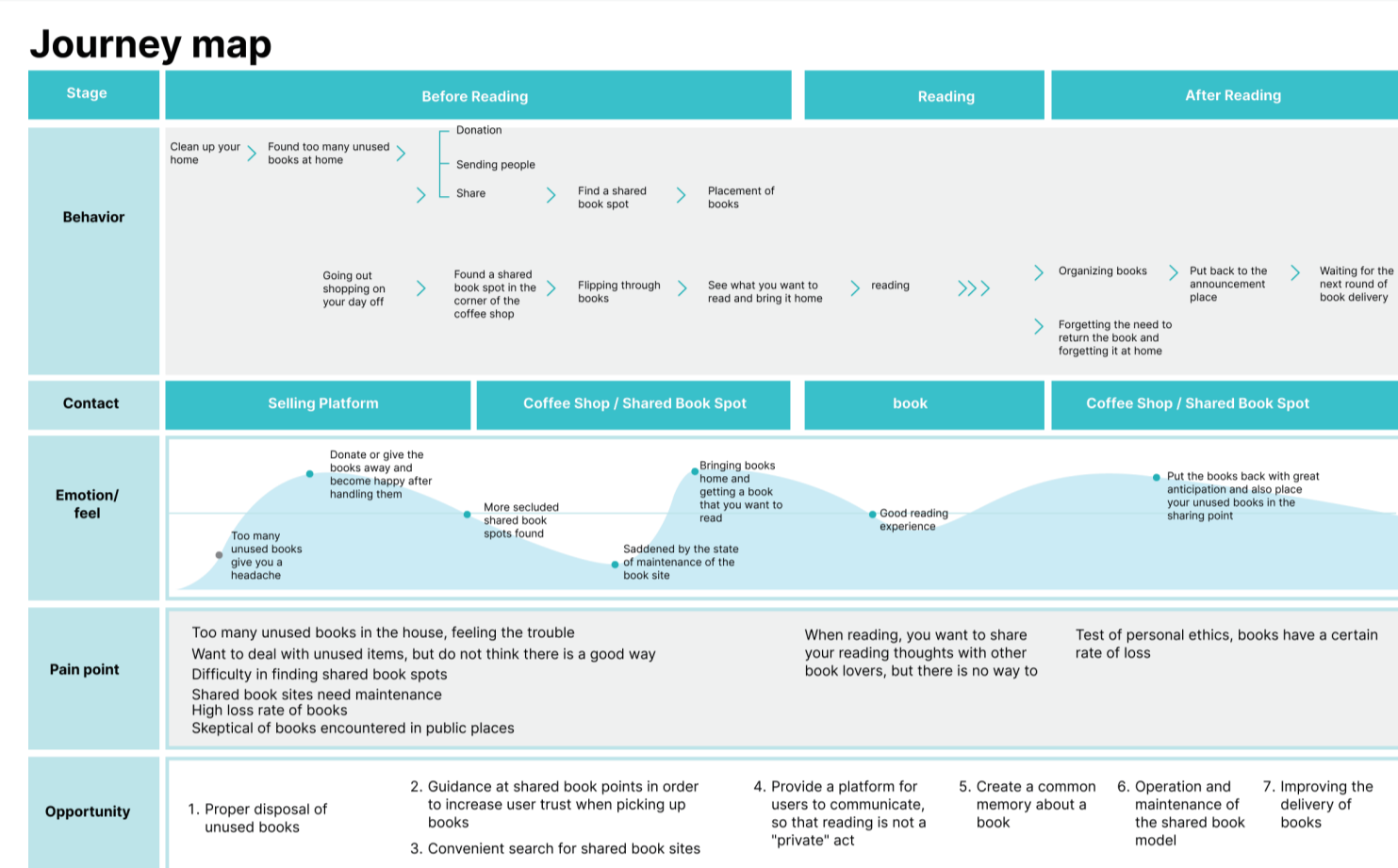
Design of a shared book app dedicated to allowing users to shape collective emotional memories



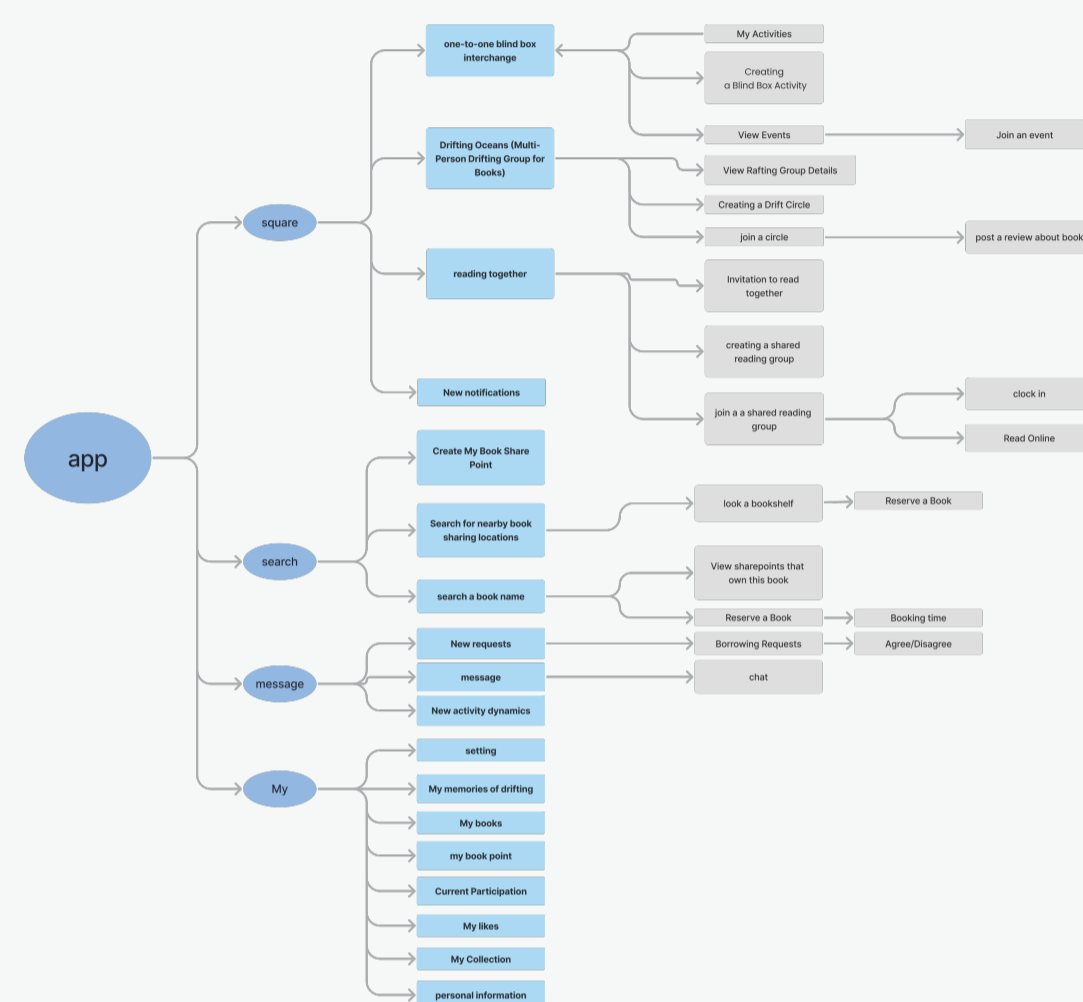
Abstract

Unlike the closed and solitary reading of individuals, reading groups and book clubs are widely popular, and shared reading sublimates the solitary act of reading into a social and shared experience, which not only makes reading more emotionally deep and participatory, but also generates positive social orientation. This project takes book sharing activities online, integrates multiple forms of shared reading, one-to-many and one-to-one, and explores how to create a more belonging emotional link between people and books, and between people, so that by sharing emotions, ideas and experiences, users can have a richer and more meaningful reading experience. In addition, the sharing of books also allows the flow of unused books in the user's personal home, which greatly improves the sustainable development of book resource.

Diagram / Design



information architecture

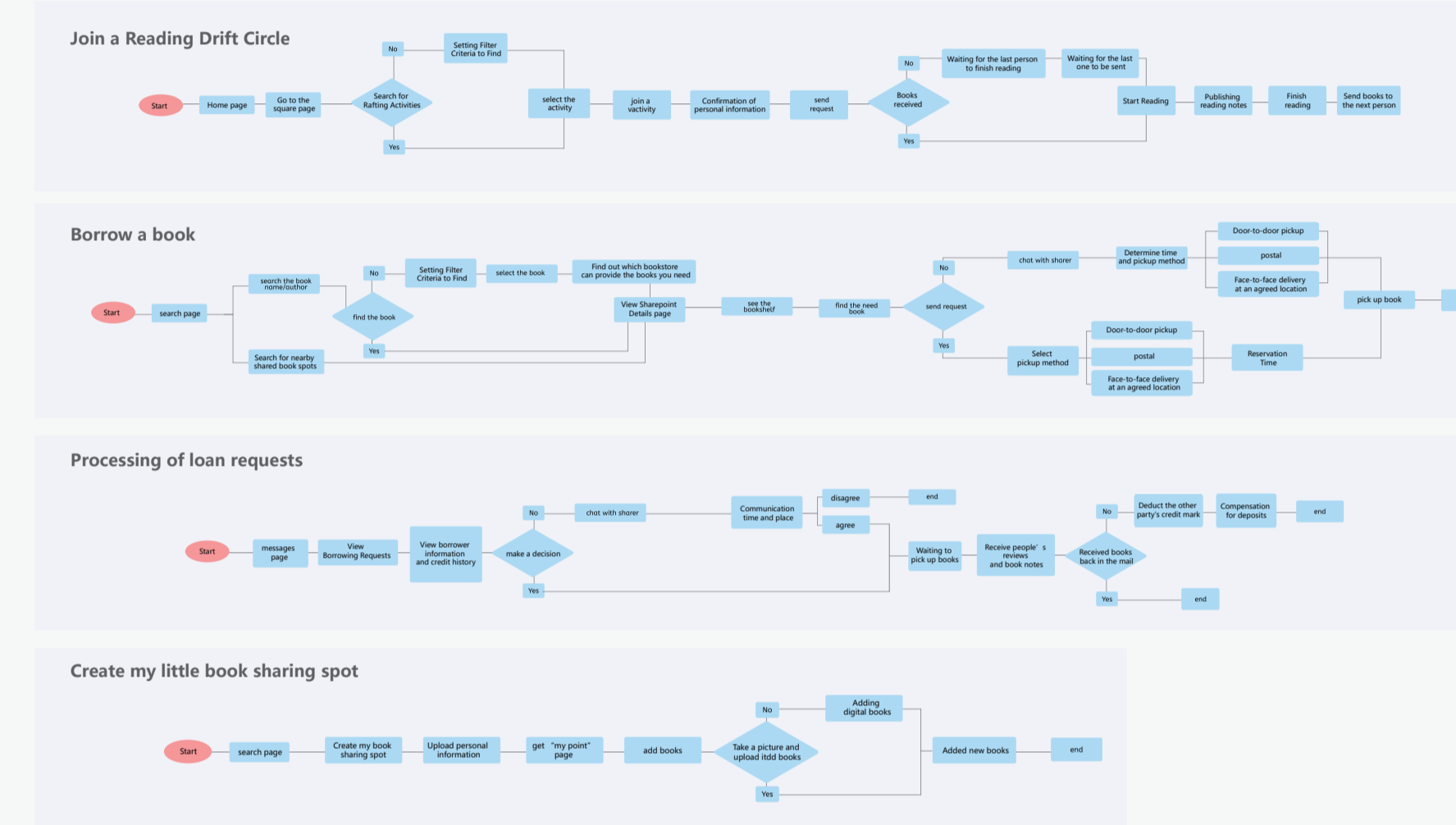


Introduction

Research question: How do we shape collective shared emotional memories? How does the exchange of books between users affect their reading behaviour?

People need to communicate emotionally, it's a way for them to channel and feel their emotions, and communication through books avoids the awkwardness that often comes with face-to-face contact, it's "safer". Even though people love to read, they rarely have the opportunity to share their emotions about a book with like-minded people, and it is often the case that when you are excited to talk about books with your close friends, they are always perfunctory and uninterested. This project provides users with an opportunity to match with like-minded book lovers, allowing them to make friends while reading and to shape collective emotional memories about a book.

Task flow



Finding

Through the user study, we found that the users' attitude towards such a sharing platform is very welcome and willing to participate in it. After summarising the users' needs, the following design concepts are listed:

- The platform needs to have the ability to communicate and interact emotionally with other book lovers and have strong links.
- This platform should be safe and secure for users of books
- Help users quickly and efficiently find places close to their homes that offer book sharing services.
- Provide good and convenient opportunities to dispose of unused books.
- The process of creating shared memories should be emotional and warm.

Study Methodology

Questionnaire: (30+people)

- 50% people many unused books at home
- 77% want their unused books to add value to themselves and others
- More than 30% are strongly willing to share their unused books at home with others
- 56% said they look forward to receiving comments on their books when they share them, and when asked if they are willing to share their books on a charity platform, they all said yes
- Most people are willing to share their reading experience with strangers by writing short book reviews
- 55.6% prefer private, one-on-one book sharing mode

User Interviews: (6 people)

- Most of the respondents were supportive of the prospect of book sharing and thought it would be a fun thing to do, as well as a way to get unused books in circulation at home.
- There were concerns about books receiving damage, or being maliciously damaged by the other party during the exchange process.
- People believe that book sharing requires a high level of trust in each other, which tests the moral fibre of both parties.
- Fear of disappointment if books of unequal value and subject matter are exchanged with the other party in the book exchange process.
- Worry about personal privacy and security.

Card sorting: (6people)

Based on the results of the user research, 14 feature cards were created and six users were invited to conduct an open-ended card sorting test to group the 14 parallel features. A similarity analysis matrix between the cards was analysed to examine the connections between the features, and four cluster categories were developed: **Square, Search, Messages, and My**.

Square Page 01

homepage, which provides search and creation of three forms of reading events (Read a Book Together, Blind Boxes for Books, and Multi-Person Shared Reading Events).

Search Page 02

Search for nearby book sharing points to borrow books. You can also create your own book spot.

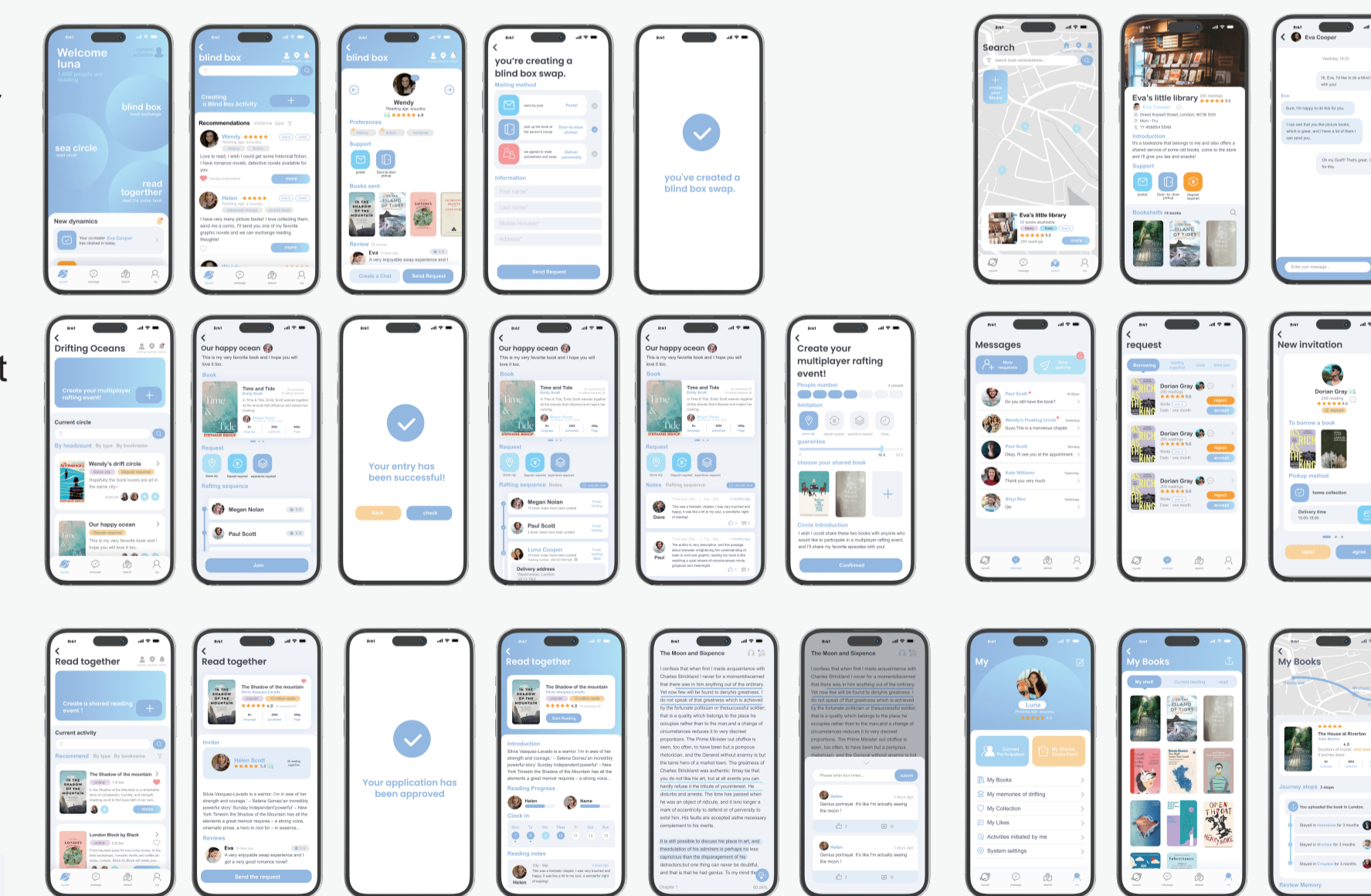
Messages Page 03

Message lists, new requests and new dynamics. Here, users can view the loan requests of book lovers, view the requests of applicants who participate in the reading activities initiated by them, and approve them.

My Page 04

Carries the function of memory, where you can view the history of your participation, the progress of current activities, my bookshelf, and book routes and so on.

Prototype



SUS Scale

Users were invited to fill out a usability test scale to help evaluate the overall usability and user experience of the application. After testing, the average end-user score was **70.41**, which means that users were moderately satisfied with the system, but there are still some areas that could be improved.

Testing & Evaluation

First click test

Six tasks were created and users were invited to test them to review the reasonableness of the page layout, and most of the tasks achieved a success rate of 60 to 100 per cent, except for the task "View your own book track", for which only one person succeeded in finding the entrance. Analysis revealed that this was because the task entrance was too small and not clear enough, making it easy to confuse with other entrances side by side.

Usability testing

After producing a high-fidelity prototype, four functional tasks were created to invite users to experience them, and the experience process was recorded on video screens for subsequent analysis, and some of the users' comments are as follows:

- "Smooth", "Nice interface", "Smooth logic", "Better usability". "Willingness to use."
- "Confusing" "Makes me feel a little confused."

Conclusions and future work

This work has been somewhat fruitful, with several rounds of design iterations and usability testing, but the results of the usability testing have been very mediocre. The designers have overloaded some of the terminology with personalised definitions, which makes it difficult for users to understand and takes them longer to become familiar with some of the functionality. The current usability testing has yielded a number of issues, but it is clear that a larger sample size is needed for design iteration. On the other hand, the focus of this project is to "create collective emotional memories", but under this study, only a few simple forms of emotional interactions were simply explored, and more interesting and unique patterns need to be explored, and whether such patterns of collective memories can help to emphasise cultural values and emotional legacies.