

Hints

Flash-card vocabulary learning
IOS mobile app



Skills

Research / Personas / User flow & IA / Wireframing / Prototyping / Usability testing

Tools used

Adobe XD / Marvel

00. KICK-OFF

Project overview

«Hints» is a concept of the app that empowers people to learn a new vocabulary. This application is meant to be used on the go for quick 5 to 10-minute study sessions.

01. UNDERSTAND

Problem Statement

Our students need a way to have a diversity of means to review and memorize vocabulary to remember words better and stay motivated to learn every day.

We will know this to be true when we see how many people use our app to learn daily.

Product goals

Students need a way to methodically categorize, reference, and study new vocabulary and concepts so they can move forward confidently in their field.

Basic App Feature Requirements

- A splash screen
- An onboarding page
- A way to sign up and login
- A profile area
- A navigation menu
- A way to upload new vocabulary words and definitions
- A means of reviewing vocabulary

Competitive Analysis

There are plenty of vocabulary apps on the market already. I have chosen for analysis three apps:



TinyCards is a friendly app with gamification features, entirely free for everyone to play.



Teachers and students can use it to verify familiarity as well as a self-learning tool.



The app looks like a learning network, and users can use it for exam or test preparation.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free, simple in use, with large Bibliotheque available with different subjects. Learning is not just by words but also by pictures or audio. It can be used by everyone (from children to senior people). Gamification makes the user very involved in the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Icons' meaning is not very clear (compass icon as an example). No cards verification process. Gamification is nice to have, but it can look too much to take it seriously as a learning tool for some users.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible to customize card movement or orientation. Can challenge your friends. Rating overview after cards set is finished. Possible to create a folder for different subjects to be organized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to be very specific during the search to find correct content. To create your set, class, or folder, you must choose a payment option (only 7days for free). Some icons repeat for the same action.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the impression that it can be used seriously for exam or test preparation by the students. Precise information of class expectations - product content. Can create your network with friends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the first use, nothing is available; you need to download to start (it takes time). UI of the apps looks old and confusing sometimes. Invitation to visit the Brainscape website and button to learn more on the home screen is very annoying.

02. OBSERVE

Interviews

As the second step, I created an interview scrip and conducted three interviews by Skype with potential users: currents students and young professionals. I used eight main questions to have a proper discussion:

1. What is your main occupation: study, job, both? What are your daily routines?
2. When was the last time you learned new vocabulary (or subject)?
3. What are your preferred source of learning, and what do you like/dislike about them?
4. How do you feel about learning through mobile apps?
5. What is your best experience in learning new vocabulary? Can you describe what usually helps you to remember information?
6. What is the hardest thing in learning new words for you? Do you think there is something that can make it easier for you?
7. Do you like to learn subject/vocabulary with a friend or someone, or do you prefer to keep it alone? Why?
8. When and where do you prefer to learn?

After the interview, I analyzed the discussions and turn answers into affinity maps with defined groups: Doing, Feeling, Thinking. Insights I get from the affinity map I described in photo-persona on the next phase of a design process.



03. POV

Proto-persona

Based on three interviews and insights of affinity map, I created a proto-persona Marie.



Marie

Function: Student of the last year (Aeronautic Engineering and Artificial Intelligence)

Location: Edinburg, UK

Nationality: French

«I like to use mobile apps because you can do it whenever and where ever you go. You can be flexible and learn on the go»

Learning sources :

- 80%

Online MOOCs
- 60%

YouTube
- 45%

Mobile apps
- 33%

Books

Behavior/Characteristics

- Learns a lot of stuff and likes to manage time properly.
- Targets to have two diplomas in parallel in two countries.
- Uses different sources for learning.
- Uses all free time (when she is on the bus, underground, waiting somewhere) to learn.
- Loves 3D printing and space.

Needs/Goals

- Having a clear target and deadline to stay consistent and motivated.
- Learning words by different means.
- Interacting and exchanging with people to remember the information.
- Having easy and quick access to the learning information.

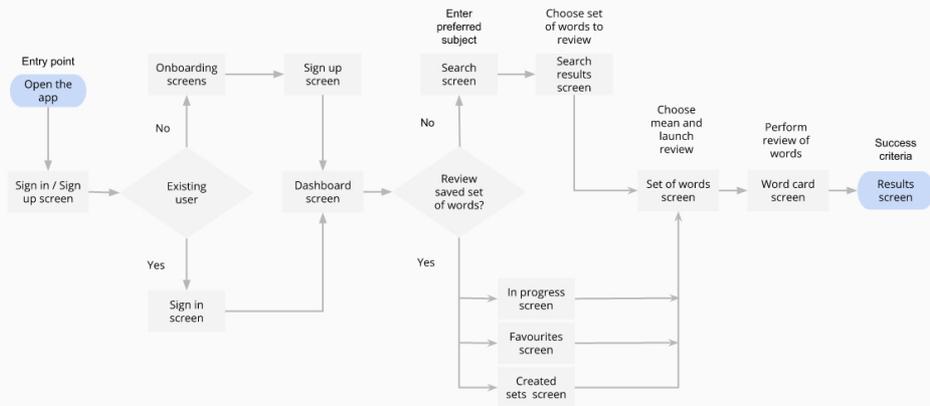
Challenges/Frustrations

- Paid application or recourses to study.
- Complicated administrative part.
- Consistency in learning and motivation.

04. IDEATE & PROTOTYPE

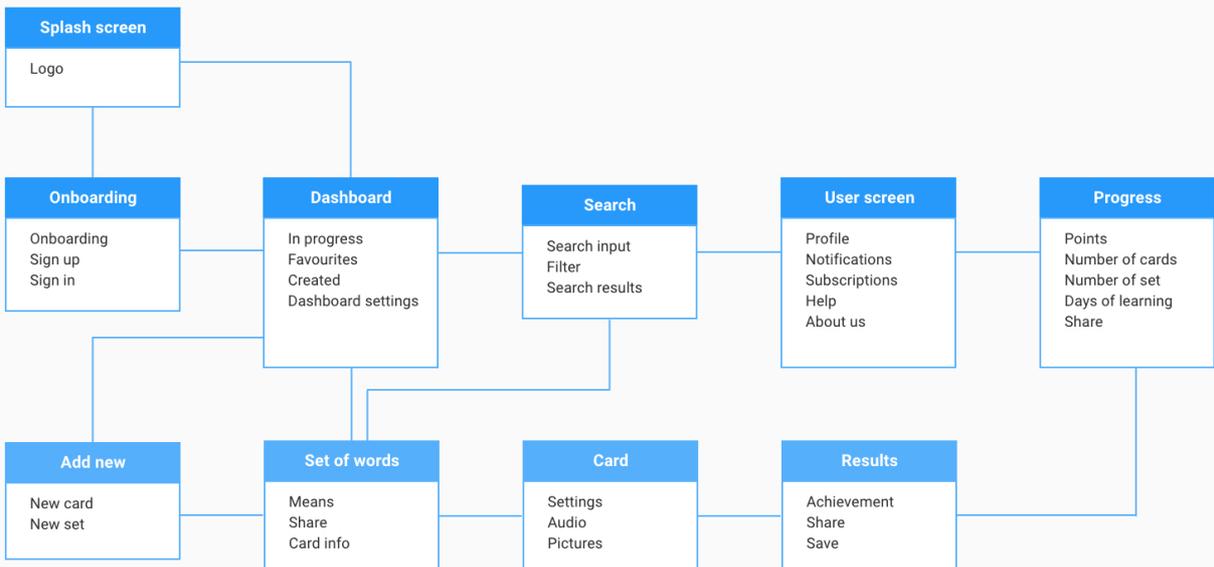
User flow

I start my Ideate phase from task analysis, and then I create user flow per each task.



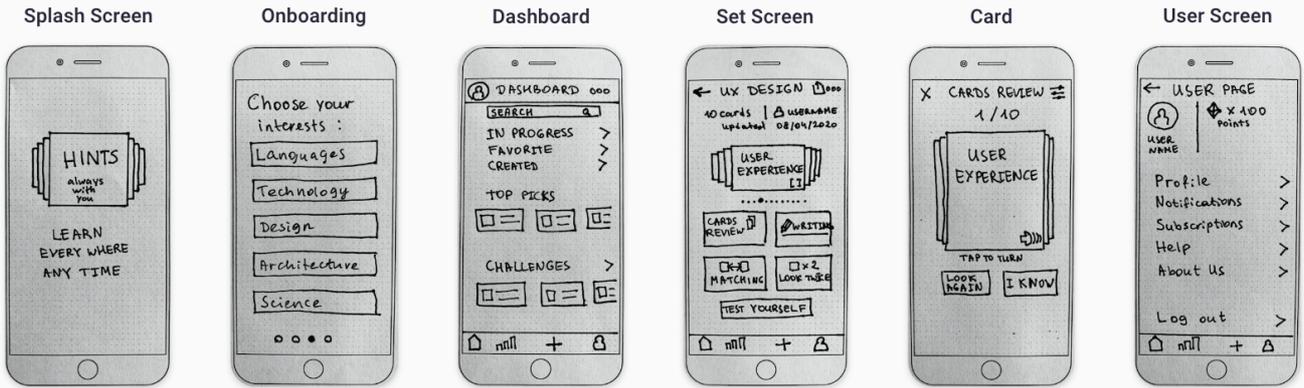
Sitemap

I follow User flow to create a basic Site map and listed elements on each screen.



Wireframes and Prototype

I have created wireframes for each task flow and then turn them into a clickable prototype (I used Marvel). And then, I launched usability testing.



05. TEST

Usability Test

I performed 3 moderated remote tests with a clickable prototype. My participants were students and young professionals. The testing allowed me to find issues and errors in the significantly earlier stage of the project. I used direct tasks and also scenario tasks to have discussions with interviewees.

Interview records I transcripts to a rainbow spreadsheet. I evaluated each user point (I measured errors using Jakob Nielsen's scale), set priorities, and defined an action plan.

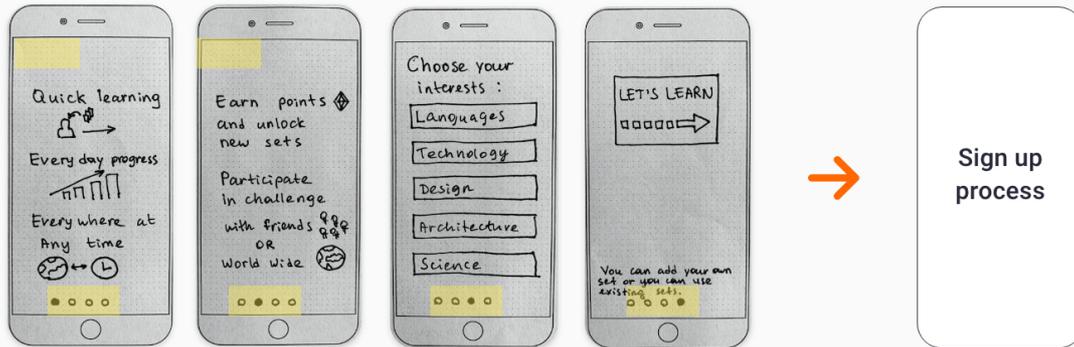
TOP3 issues

01 Issue: Users were not happy with the onboarding process due to the long way. And when you log in the second time - you don't need to see that again.

Actions:

- Add a link «skip.»
- If the user didn't log out - he doesn't see onboarding screens at all.
- Divide onboarding into two steps.

Before



After



02

Issue: The search area was not visible and apparent, so users spent time starting the process.

Actions:

- Add an icon on the navigation panel.
- Increase space on the dashboard.
- Instead of «search,» write «tape the word or subject.»

Before



After



Before



After



03

Issue: Not clear what to do on the screen with the card. Which button to use to go to the next card.

Action:

Add «next» for the button with «I know».

07. LESSONS LEARNED

1. User is not me - people think differently than me.
2. You are more fast and efficient when you think persona and project brief.
3. Be clear and straightforward at every step of the process.
4. The more you test - the more you learn.