CS 147 Autumn 2025

Interactive Medium-Fi Prototype

Simmr.

Simmr.

VALUE PROPOSITION

"The voice that turns every
recipe into a story."

The Problem

- Cooking feels repetitive and isolating.
- Most recipe apps focus on **efficiency, not enjoyment.**
- Home cooks struggle to stay engaged or make cooking feel social and creative.

Our Solution

- **Simmr** turns cooking into a story.
- Voice-guided, story-driven recipes blend narration, music, and mini lessons.
- Transforms routine cooking into an **interactive, social,** and **fun experience.**

Simmr.

Values in Design

Values in Design

Joyful Connection

Joyful connection means transforming cooking from an isolated, repetitive chore into an emotionally enriching experience. It embodies connection (with oneself, others, and with the act of cooking) by fostering fun, curiosity, and social engagement.

Inclusivity and Personalization

Inclusivity in simmr means ensuring that all users, regardless of dietary needs, skill levels, or family structures, can find recipes and experiences tailored to them.

Discovery and Creativity

Discovery in simmr refers to sparking curiosity and creativity in everyday cooking, turning meal prep into a playful opportunity to learn, experiment, and grow.

Features

Joyful Connection

Features:

- **Group Cooking Sessions:** Enables users to create and join group cooking events, promoting social interaction and shared experiences through food.
- **Voice AI Storytelling:** Makes solo cooking feel conversational and engaging, mimicking the warmth of having a companion in the kitchen.

Inclusivity and Personalization

Features:

- **Dietary Restriction Input:** Allows users to personalize recipes based on allergies, preferences, or cultural needs.
- **Kid-Friendly Recipes with Visuals:** Empowers parents to cook with children by making instructions accessible and entertaining for all ages.

Discovery and Creativity

Features:

- **Chatting with AI to Find Recipes:** Allows users to explore new meals through conversational prompts, encouraging playful discovery.
- **Storytelling with Voice AI:** Turns recipes into evolving narratives, inspiring creativity and imagination in the kitchen.

Value Tensions

Joyful Connection

Tension: Relying on Voice AI for companionship might unintentionally replace real human interaction.

Resolution: Design the AI's tone and responses to *encourage real-world connection* (e.g. prompt users to share dishes or invite friends)

Inclusivity and Personalization

Tension: Personalization features require user data, raising privacy and data-collection concerns.

Resolution: Clearly communicate how data is used and stored; implement transparent consent and local data processing to protect user trust.

Discovery and Creativity

Tension: Relying on AI storytelling might limit user creativity if narratives become prescriptive.

Resolution: Introduce "custom story modes" where users can co-create or influence the story's direction, balancing guidance with creative freedom.

Tasks

SIMPLE

Listening to a story while completing a recipe.

Justification: This is an introductory task that represents the core and most common use of the app. Many users, especially those cooking alone, will use Simmr to make everyday cooking more enjoyable with immersive storytelling. This task shows the main value of the app: turning routine cooking into an entertaining experience. It applies to nearly all users and happens often.

MODERATE

Create a dinner party with your friends

Justification: This task is moderate because it builds on the core use case but involves multiple people and a social setting. It requires more coordination and interaction than cooking alone. Users may complete this task occasionally when hosting friends and want a fun, story-driven cooking experience. It shows how Simmr supports shared, experiential cooking and not just solo use.

COMPLEX

Entertaining kids while cooking

Justification: This is a less frequent task and intended for “power customers”: users who use Simmr for family bonding and child involvement. Kids have varying attention spans and energy levels, making it more advanced than typical sessions. Therefore, cooking with kids introduces more unpredictability, multitasking, and the need for adaptable storytelling. It highlights how Simmr can scale from personal enjoyment to interactive, family-centered experiences.

Usability goals & key measurements

Goal 1: Enhance Learnability and Ease of Navigation

- **Revamped Onboarding:** Introduced new onboarding screens to **import contacts** and communicate the **purpose of cooking with friends**, fostering early social engagement.
- **Simplified Entry Point:** Consolidated the main interface into a **central Explore page**, allowing users to seamlessly discover recipes instead of navigating three separate task buttons.
- **Enhanced Group Cooking Flow:** Made **creating group cooking sessions** intuitive with contact integration, RSVP visibility, and clear event scheduling.
- **Repositioned Kids Mode:** Highlighted **Cooking with Kids** directly on the Explore page, making family-oriented content more discoverable and approachable.
- **Refined Social Interactions:** Replaced the “Would You Rather” game with a **direct AI chat** that assists users in **finding recipes and stories**, improving conversational engagement and task completion efficiency.

Goal 2: Increase Engagement and Emotional Enjoyment During Cooking

- **Expanded AI Cooking Experience:** Designed detailed **AI-guided cooking flows** to help users visualize how voice and story interactions create a dynamic, supportive kitchen companion.
- **Improved Visuals for Kids:** Enhanced visual feedback and **kid-friendly visuals**, creating a joyful and educational shared cooking experience.
- **Personalized Story Log:** Introduced a **cleaner story log interface** where users can revisit past cooking sessions, with options to **"Cook Again"** or **"Try a New Story"**, promoting nostalgia and repeat engagement.
- **Reduced Decision Fatigue:** The **AI chat assistant** provides meal suggestions aligned with user preferences and dietary needs, minimizing cognitive load during meal planning.
- **Improved Usability & Flow:** A **persistent navigation bar** and refined flow architecture make it easier to explore, complete, and revisit features without friction.

Next Steps: Strengthening Our Design Goals

Goal 1: Streamline the Cooking Experience & Social Interaction

- **Deepen Social Dynamics:** Enable richer **real-time collaboration** (e.g., shared cooking timers, live reactions, or ingredient sync) to make group sessions feel more connected and interactive.
- **Smooth Onboarding Transitions:** Continue refining the **import contacts flow** to reduce friction and clarify the benefits of cooking together.

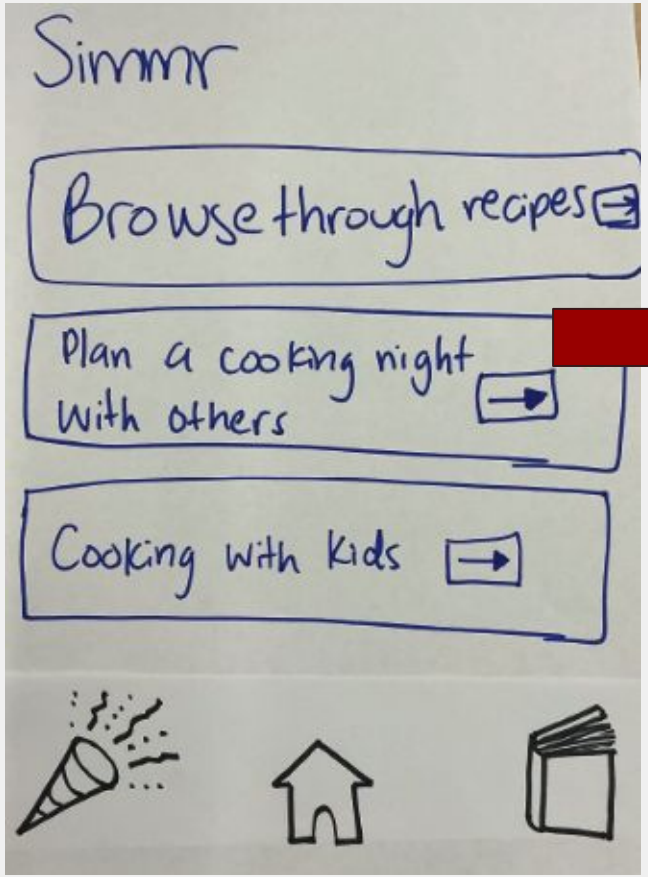
Goal 2: Deepen Engagement & Emotional Resonance

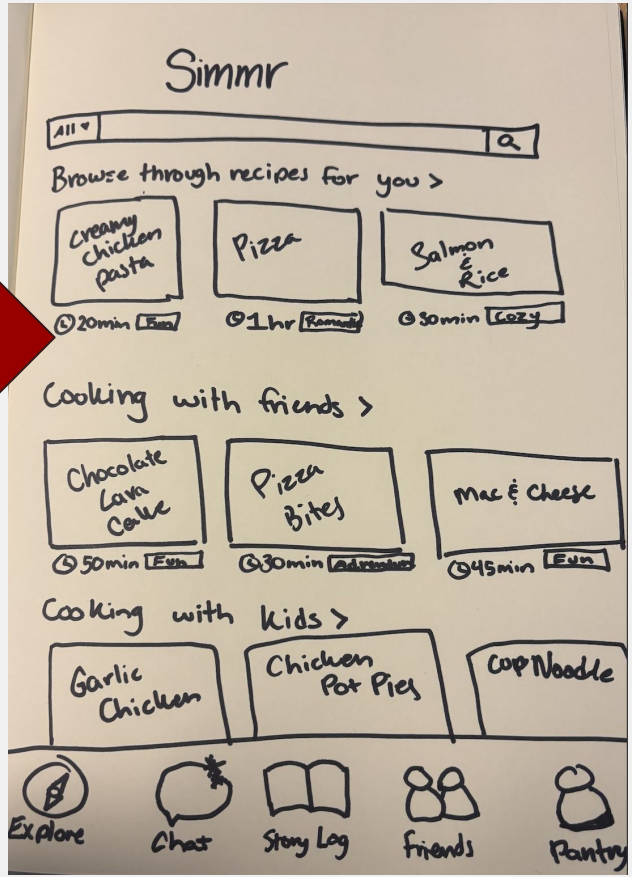
- **Evolve AI Personality:** Further personalize the **AI voice and storytelling tone** to reflect user preferences, cooking style, and emotional cues.
- **Broaden Family Accessibility:** Test and iterate on **animations and visuals for kids** to ensure age-appropriate design and accessibility across devices.
- **Measure Delight:** Gather qualitative and quantitative feedback to understand **how users emotionally connect** with the AI and story-driven cooking experience.
- **Retention Metrics:** Introduce mechanisms to **track repeat cooking sessions** and “Cook Again” interactions to measure long-term engagement impact.

Revised interface sketches

Revised Sketch: Landing Page

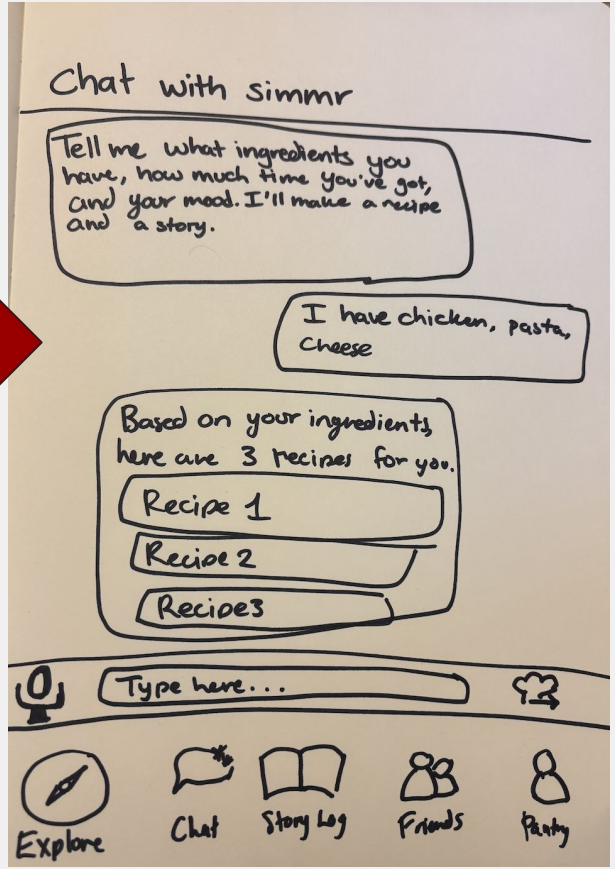
- Replaced the three separate entry buttons with **a single Explore page**
- Instead of tapping through different menu options, users now **see recipe images right away**
- **Gives content preview,** makes the **app feel more welcoming**, and **reduces the number of steps** needed to start cooking
- Removed confusion between navigation buttons and previous landing page





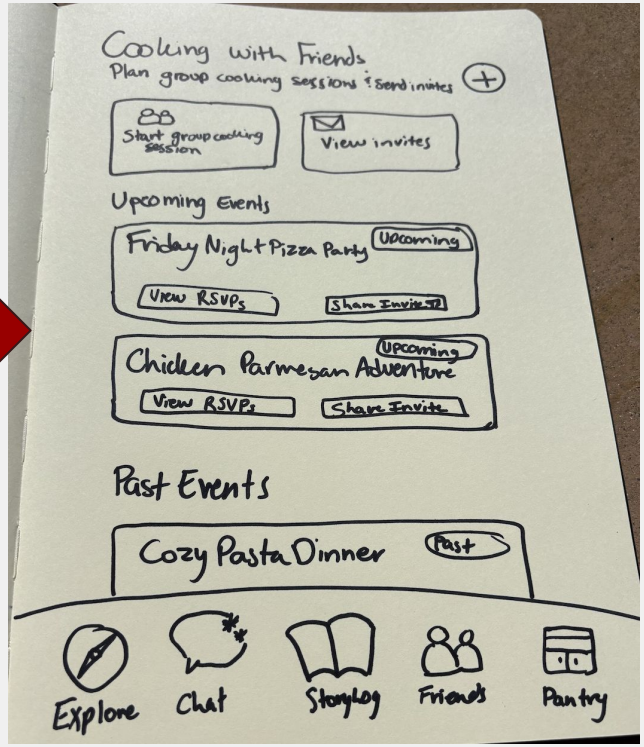
Revised Sketch: AI Chat for Receipe Generation

- Replaced the “Would You Rather” feature with an **AI chat assistant that gives users direct, accurate guidance**
- Users receive recipe **suggestions** based on **ingredients, cravings, and dietary needs**
- The change reflects Week 1 findings, where users said meal decisions felt overwhelming and they wanted clearer direction
- Reduces confusion with how a game leads to recipe matching



Revised Sketch: Setting Up a Dinner Party

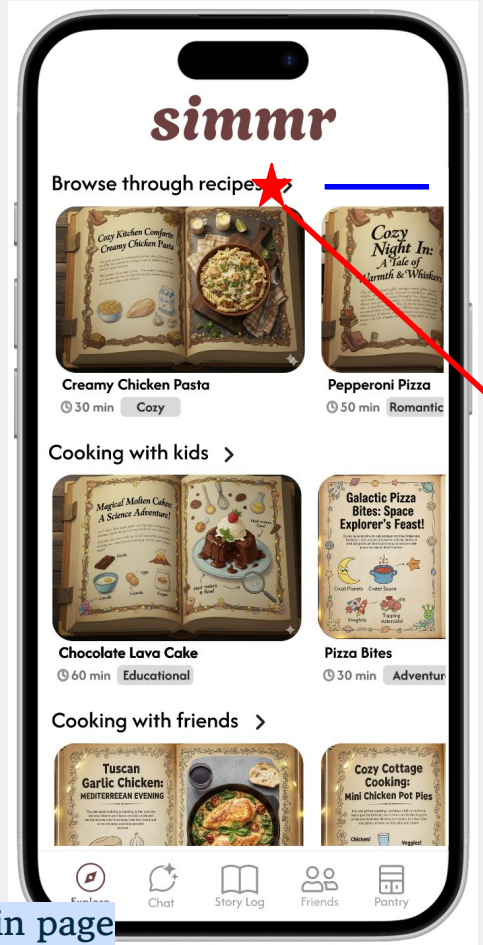
- Simplified the dinner party flow by **showing upcoming and past events in one place**
- Users can **start a new event, view invites, or check previous parties** from a **single page**
- Reduces friction and **makes the experience feel more familiar**
- Based on studio feedback, we also added a **start group coking button** to remove scheduling for users who already have friends over.



Medium-fi task flows

SIMPLE Task

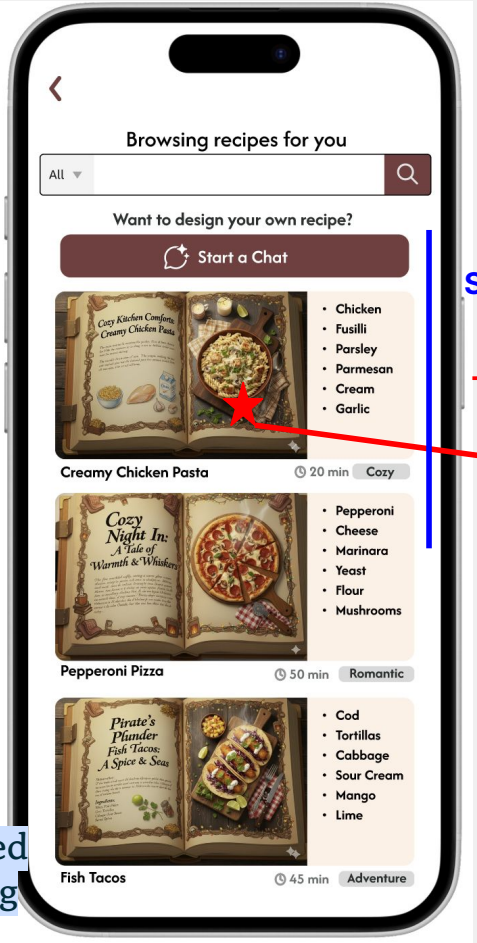
Listening to a story while completing a recipe.



Scroll

Tap

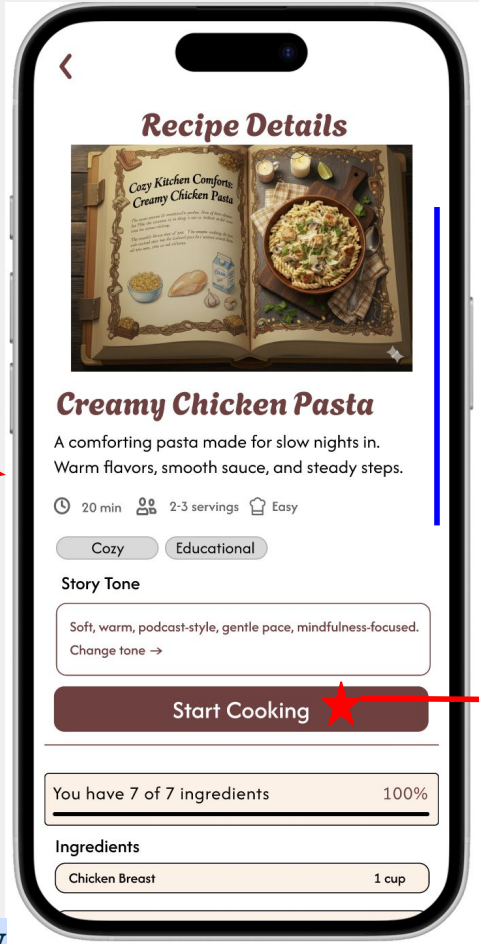
Main page



Scroll

Tap

Expanded browsing screen

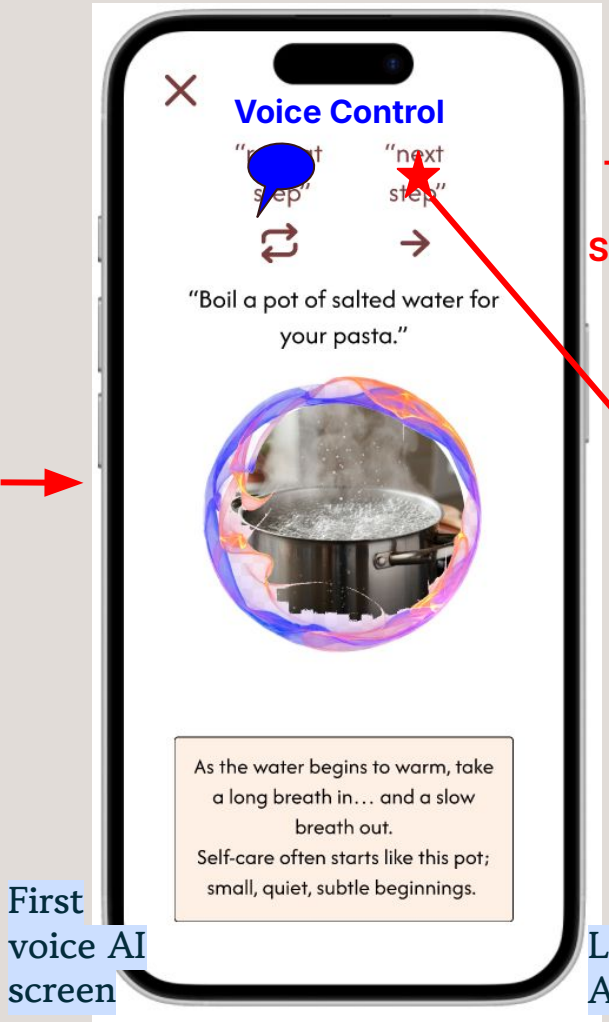


Scroll

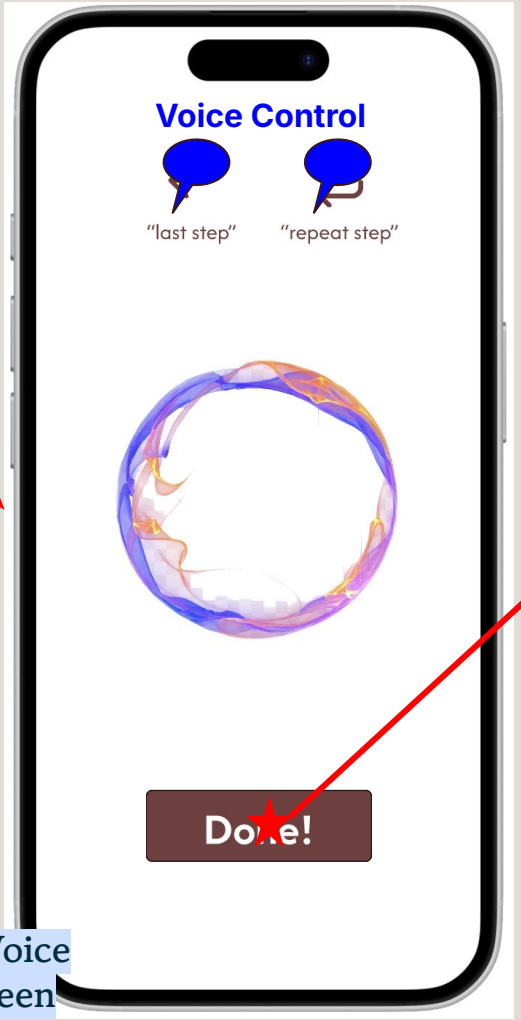
Tap

See next slide

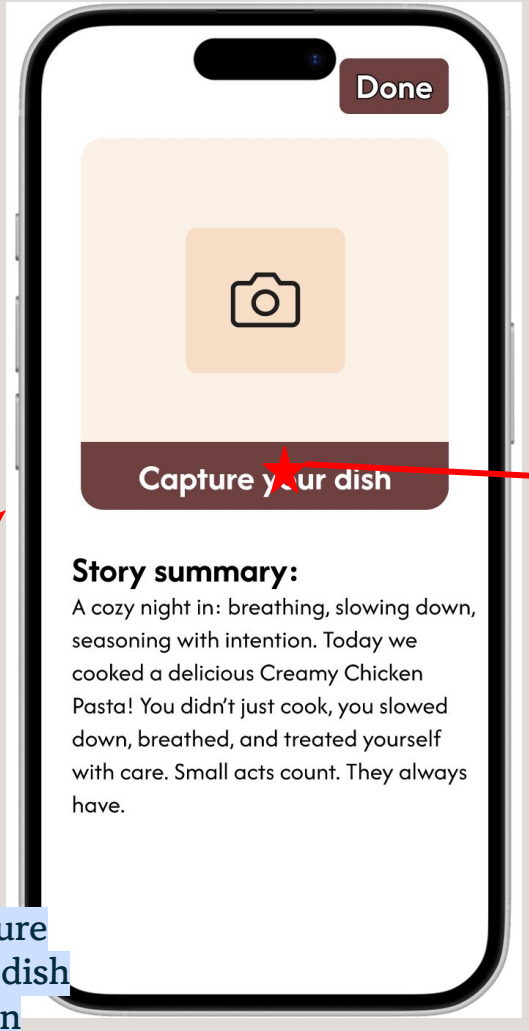
Recipe Preview



Tap or Speak



Tap

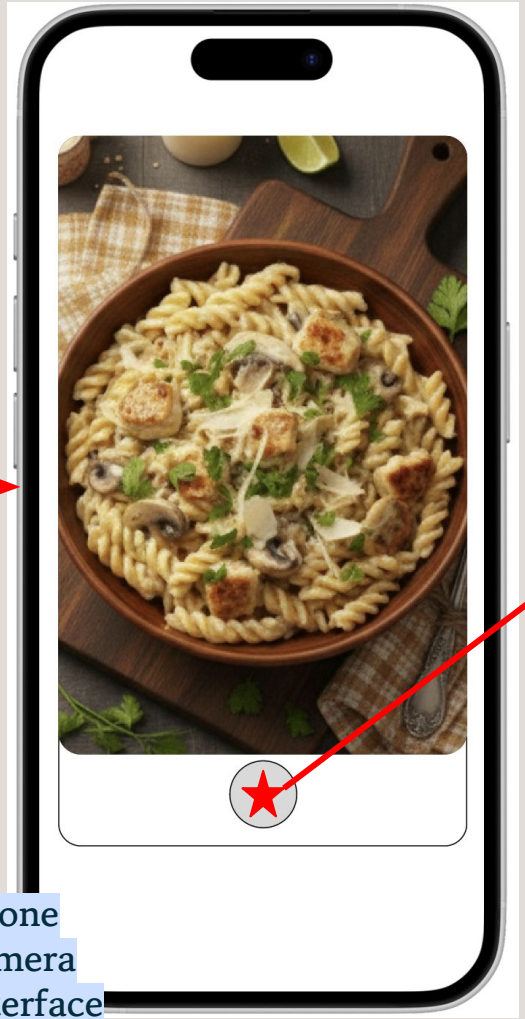


Tap

First voice AI screen

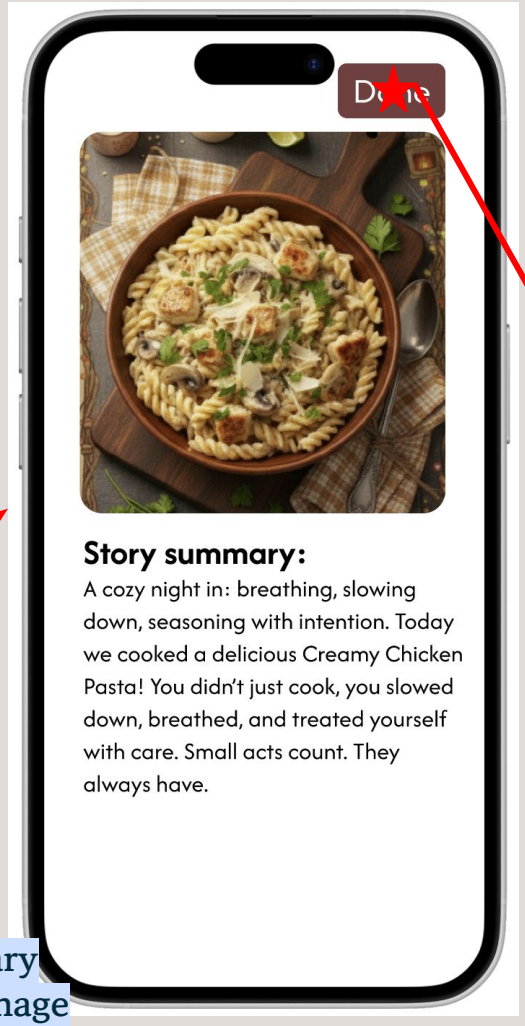
Last Voice AI screen

Capture your dish screen



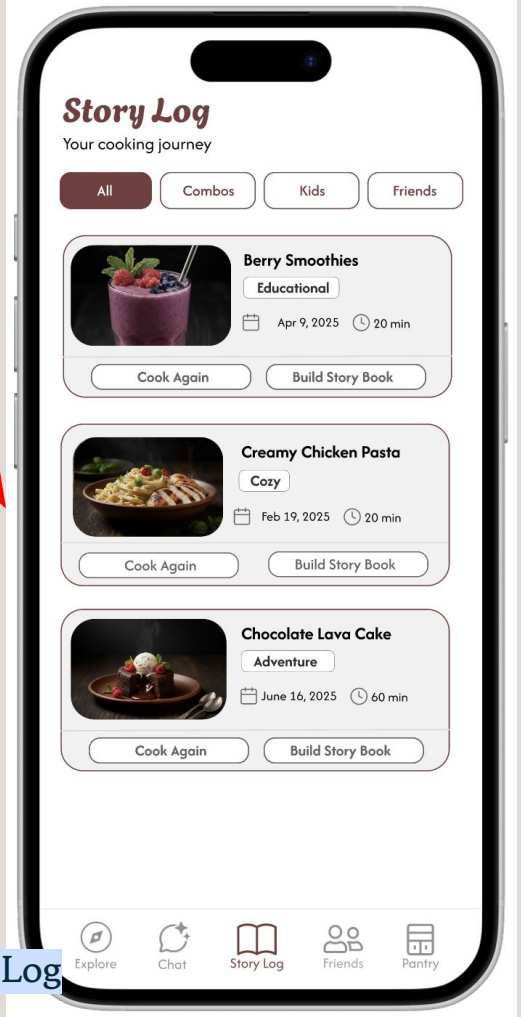
Phone camera interface

Tap



Story summary with image

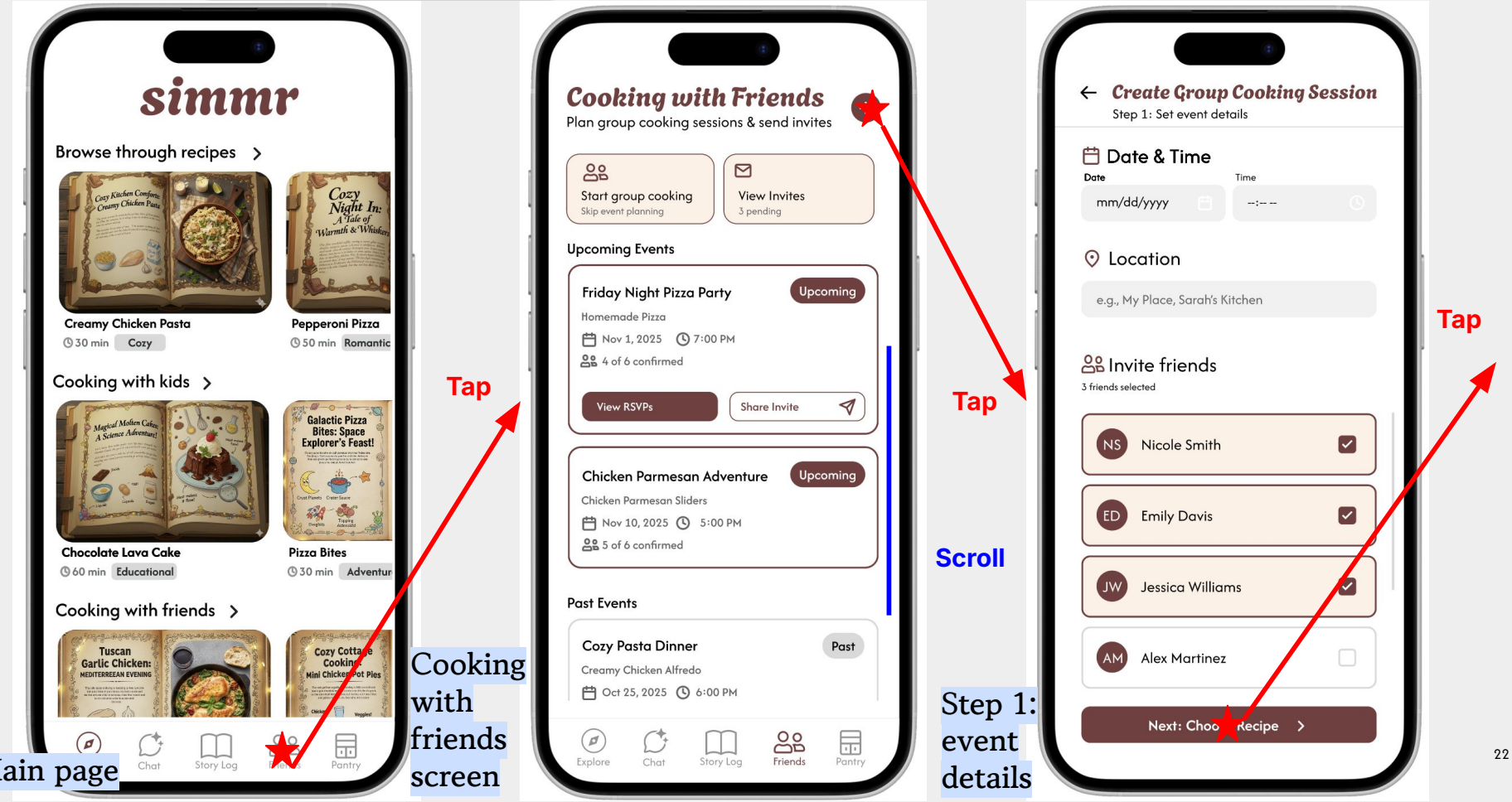
Tap



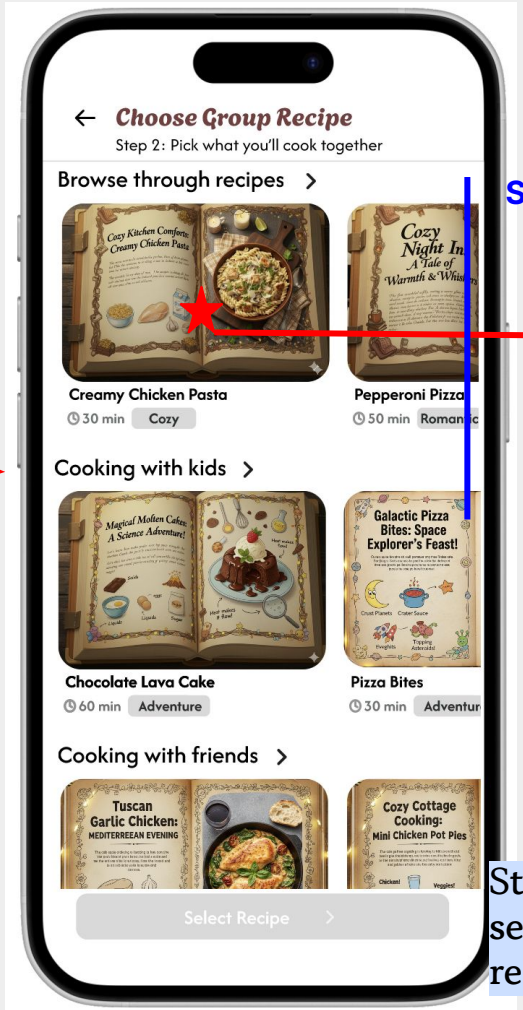
Story Log

MODERATE Task

Create a dinner party with your friends.

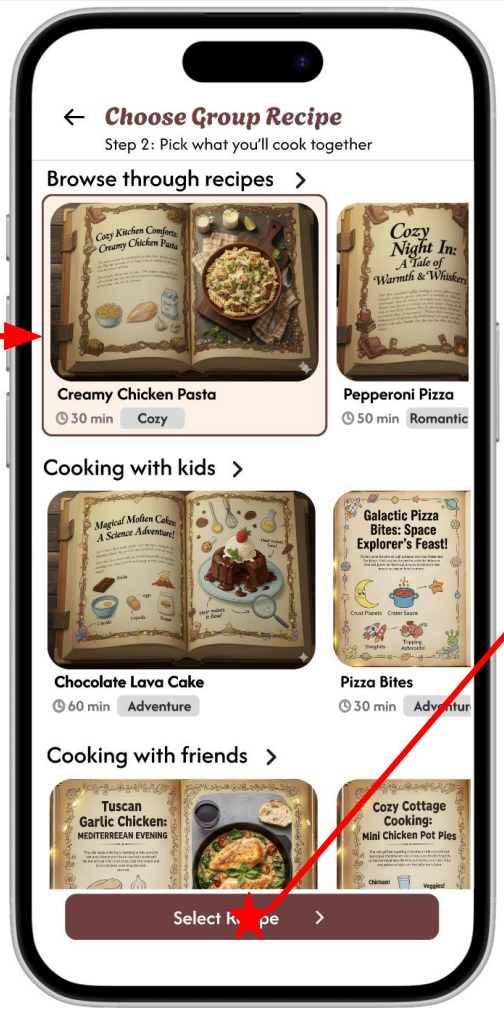


Main page



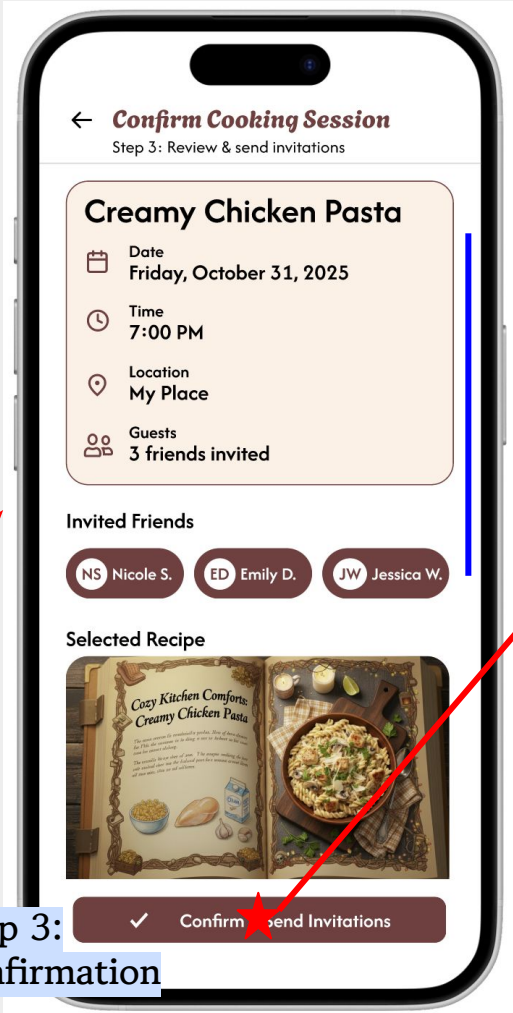
Scroll

Tap



Step 2: select recipe

Tap



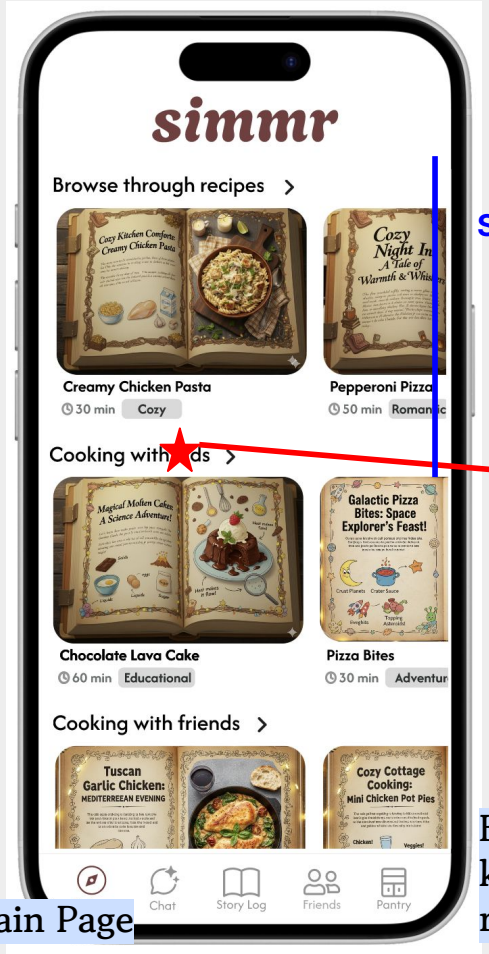
Scroll

Tap

Step 3: confirmation

COMPLEX Task

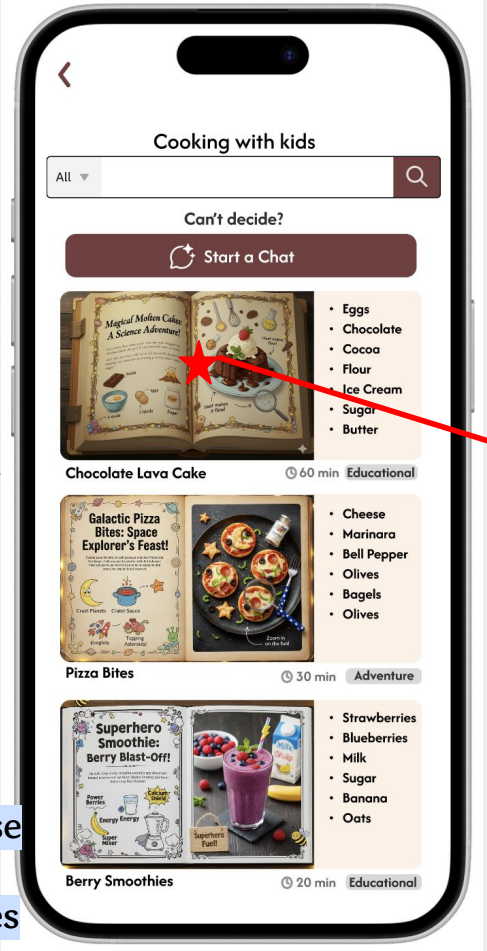
Entertaining kids while cooking



Main Page

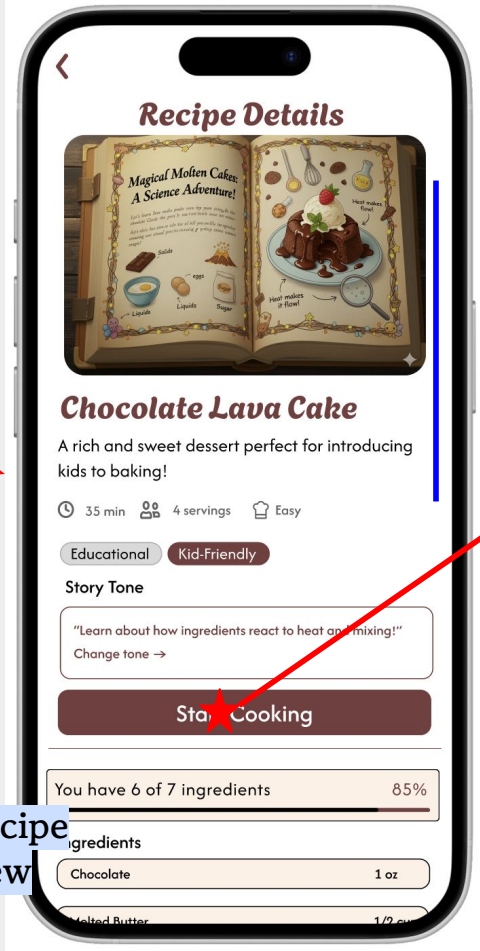
Scroll

Tap



Browse kid recipes

Tap



Kid recipe preview

Scroll

Tap

Tap or Voice Control

Hey Family! Time to start cooking a yummy Chocolate Lava Cake!

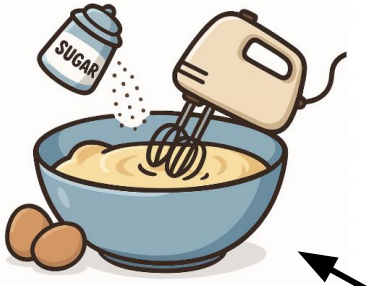
First voice AI screen

Tap or Voice Control

Preheating...

First, we need an adult to preheat the oven to 400 degrees F!

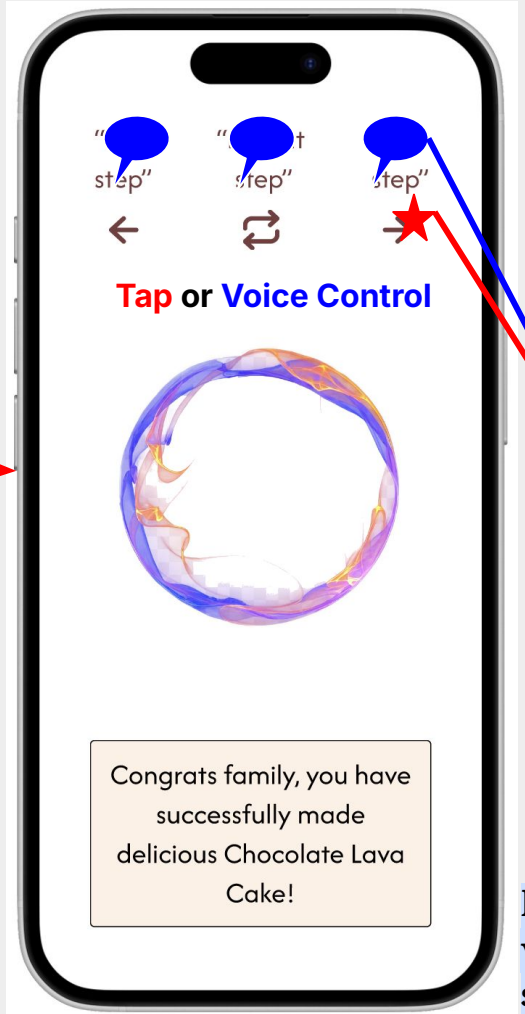
Tap or Voice Control

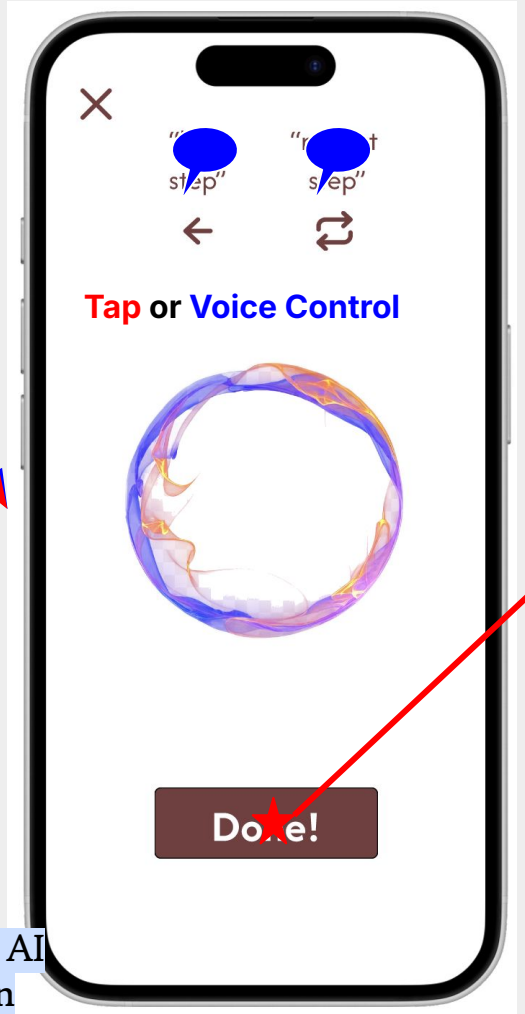


Next, combine the eggs and sugar in a large bowl and use electric mixer until pale and thick.

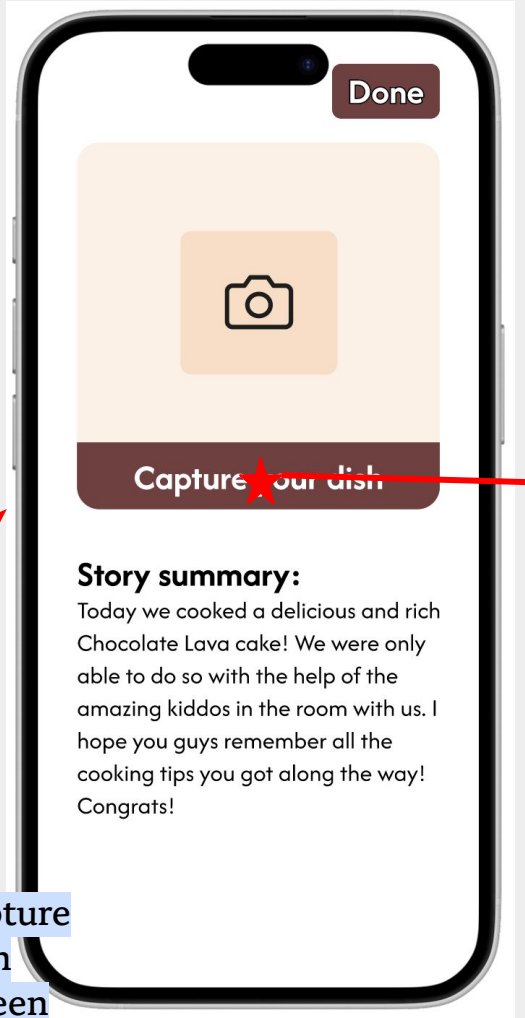
Kid mode Voice AI screens

Kid mode uses more in depth and engaging images to help entertain kids while education them about cooking



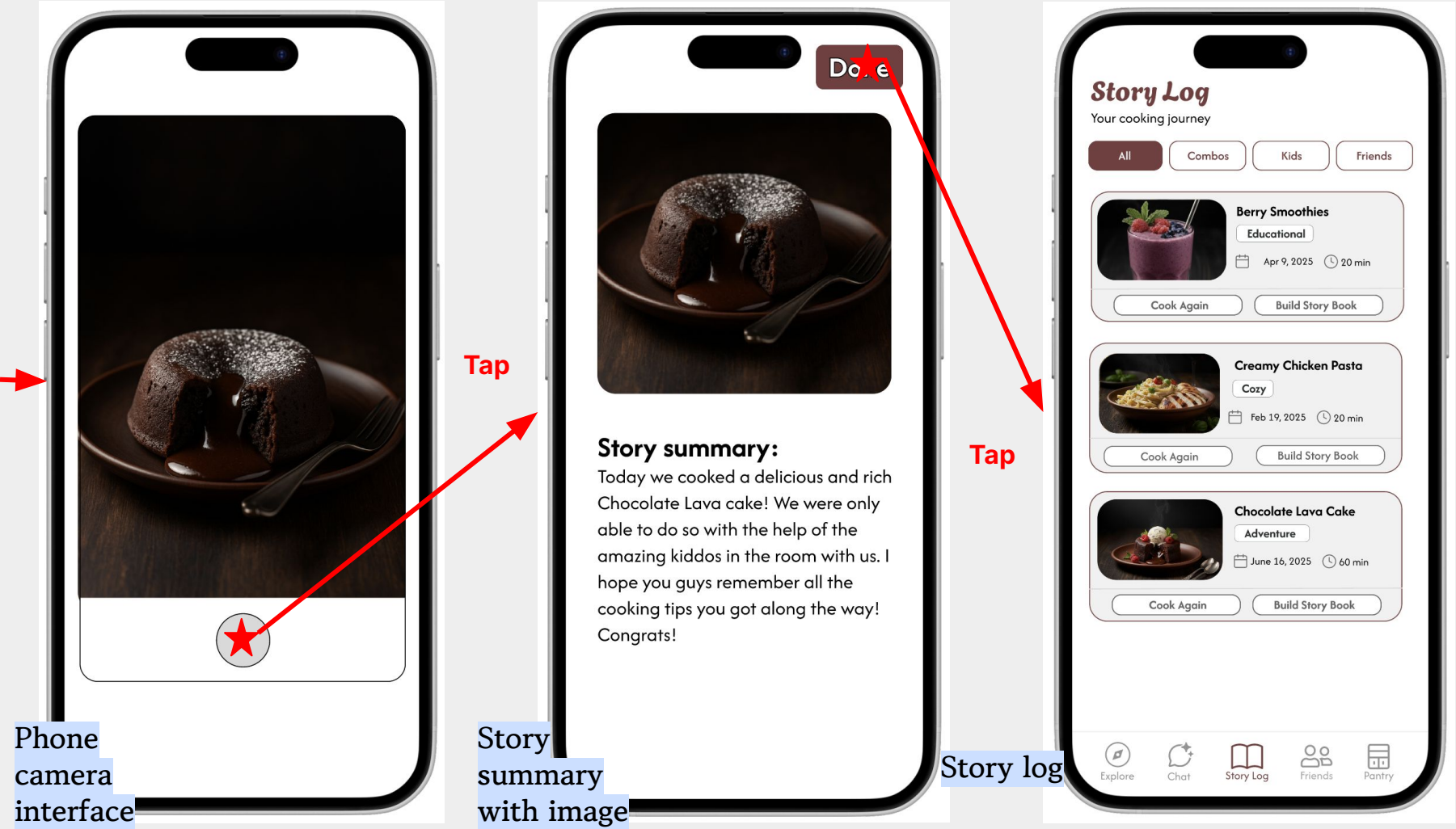


Last voice AI screen



Capture Dish Screen

Tap



Phone camera interface

Story summary with image

Story log

Prototype implementation

Tools and Approach

- **Figma** – built all screens, flows, and interactions in one environment.
- **Gemini** – generated cooking visuals and story images

Pros:

- Figma offered fast iteration, clear user flow testing, and realistic transitions.
- Gemini enhanced storytelling with consistent, high-quality imagery.

Cons:

- No real-time logic or voice interaction possible.
- Visuals and text could not adapt dynamically to user choices.

Why Tradeoff Was Acceptable:

- The prototype focused on *experience*, not engineering.
- Using Figma let us quickly test how users felt using Simmr before investing in real AI or backend systems.

Prototype Limitations

- No real backend or AI model — all “voice” and recommendation responses were scripted.
- Only one user profile available, no saved preferences or personalization.
- Voice narration, timers, and reminders were static placeholders.
- Contacts, invitations, and event creation are simulated — no real syncing or messaging.
- These limits helped focus testing on engagement, flow, and clarity, rather than on technical performance.

Wizard of Oz Features

1. **Voice AI guidance:** appeared interactive but followed pre-scripted paths.
2. **Recipe recommendations:** automatically loaded based on mock “profiles.”
3. **Kid Mode:** appeared adaptive but used preset dialogue and visuals.
4. **Friend invites and reminders:** triggered preset confirmation screens instead of real interactions. These simulated features helped test emotional tone and flow before implementing real AI or database logic.
5. These illusions made testing feel authentic while controlling for complexity and user confusion.

Hard-Coded Components

- Recipes, instructions, and storylines are fixed and manually entered.
- User details (photo, name, restrictions) are preloaded and non editable.
- Buttons like **“Start Cooking”**, **“Capture Story”**, and **“Chat with Simmr”** only trigger visual transitions.
- Visual assets from Gemini are static images, not generated dynamically.
- Contacts, invites, and events were fake, showing mock data for consistency in testing.

Impact of Limitations

- Users clearly understood the concept and felt engaged despite limited functionality.
- The scripted nature made the experience feel polished but slightly predictable.
- The simplified flow improved navigation feedback and kept sessions focused on storytelling.
- These constraints helped us identify design priorities—**clearer icons, stronger onboarding, and better timing for AI cues**—before building a high-fidelity version.

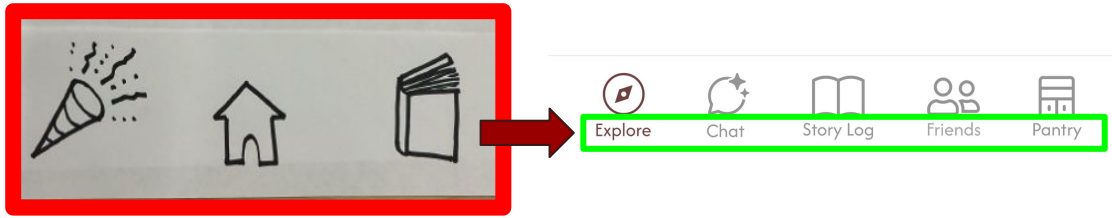
Appendix

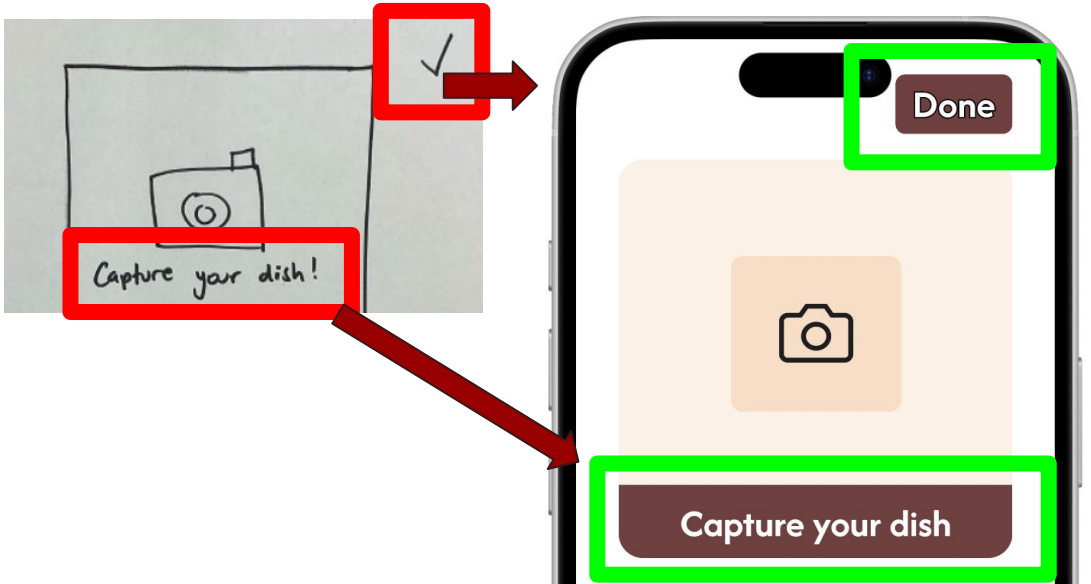
Prototype Link:

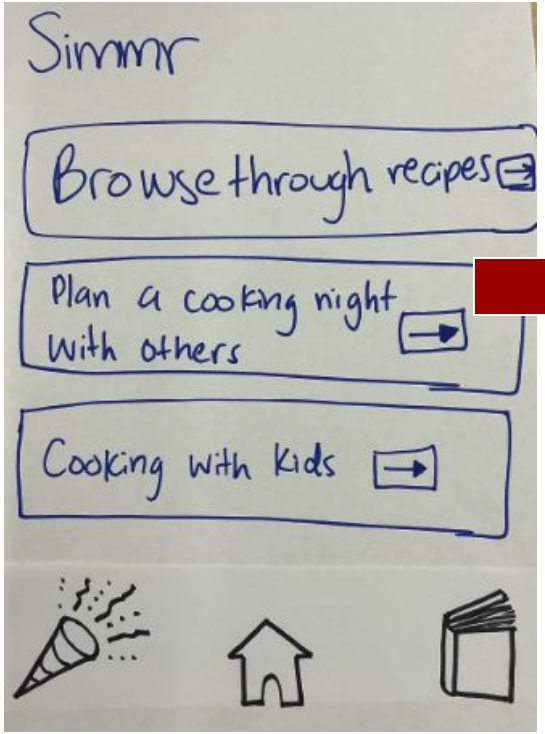
https://www.figma.com/proto/KvIEFtHzKd9xQEkPe0P6wf/A6-Med-fi-Prototype?node-id=201-5290&t=hTzUeTnxQUi8XWRB-1

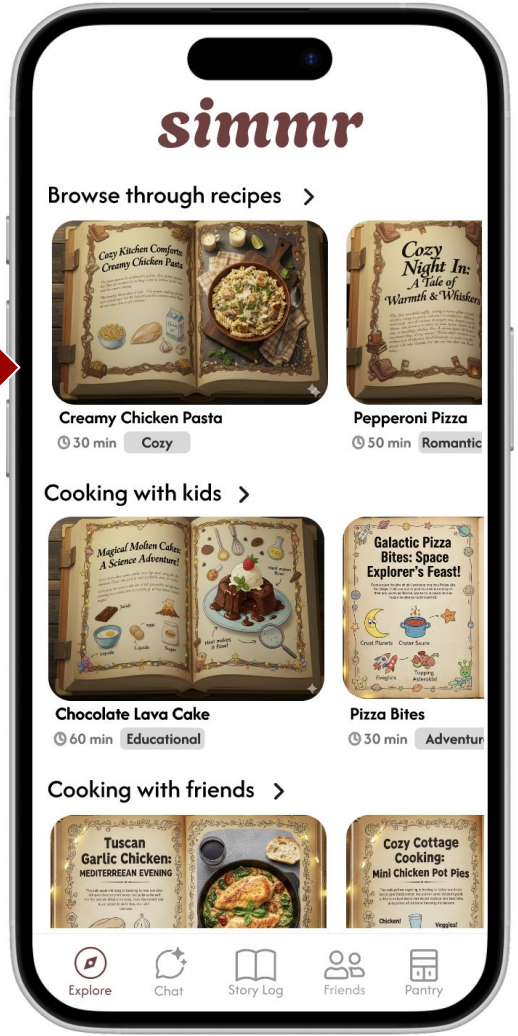
Change: Improved Labeling

Icons and buttons alone were not intuitive for users, so **we added text labels and clearer visual indicators** throughout the app to **improve usability and reduced moments of confusion.** The **persistent navigation bar** also supports a smoother flow, making it **easier to explore, complete tasks, and return to key features.**

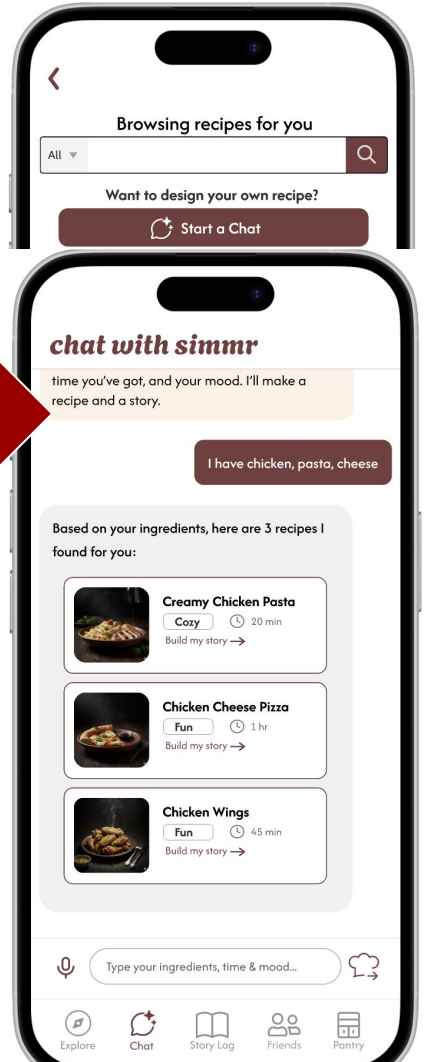




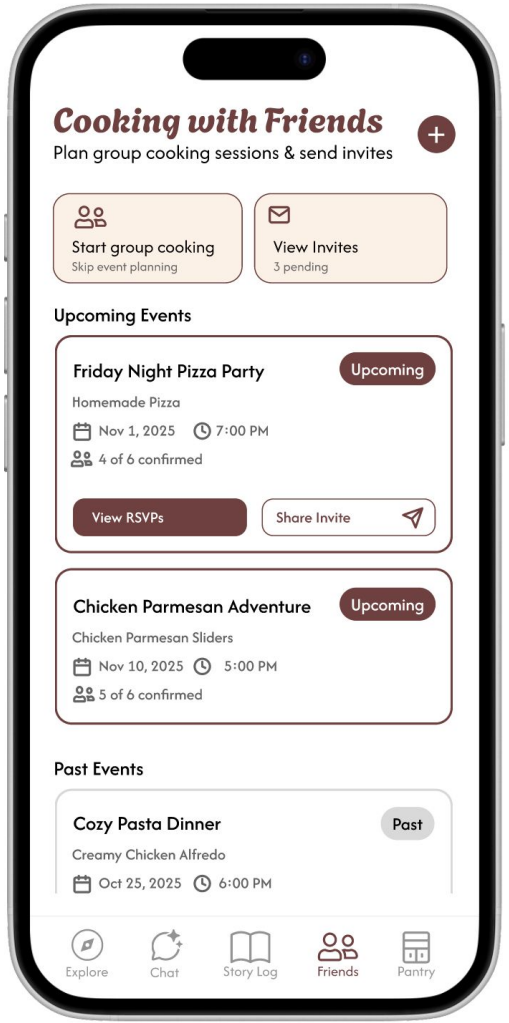

Simmr
Browse through recipes
Plan a cooking night with others
Cooking with kids


simmr
Browse through recipes
Creamy Chicken Pasta
30 min
Cozy
Pepperoni Pizza
50 min
Romantic
Cooking with kids
Chocolate Lava Cake
60 min
Educational
Pizza Bites
30 min
Cooking with friends
Explore
Chat
Story Log
Friends
Pantry


Would you rather be on a TROPICAL BEACH?
or
Spend a night in ITALY?


Browsing recipes for you
All
Want to design your own recipe?
Start a Chat
chat with simmr
time you've got, and your mood. I'll make a recipe and a story.
I have chicken, pasta, cheese
Based on your ingredients, here are 3 recipes I found for you:
Creamy Chicken Pasta
Cozy
20 min
Build my story
Chicken Cheese Pizza
Fun
1 hr
Build my story
Chicken Wings
Fun
45 min
Build my story
Type your ingredients, time & mood...
Explore
Chat
Story Log
Friends
Pantry


Let's Dinner Party
Upcoming parties...
Oct 28,2025
Dinner for 5.
Plan a new event


Cooking with Friends
Plan group cooking sessions & send invites
Start group cooking
Skip event planning
View Invites
3 pending
Upcoming Events
Friday Night Pizza Party
Upcoming
Homemade Pizza
Nov 1, 2025
7:00 PM
4 of 6 confirmed
View RSVPs
Share Invite
Chicken Parmesan Adventure
Upcoming
Chicken Parmesan Sliders
Nov 10, 2025
5:00 PM
5 of 6 confirmed
Past Events
Cozy Pasta Dinner
Past
Creamy Chicken Alfredo
Oct 25, 2025
6:00 PM
Explore
Chat
Story Log
Friends
Pantry