

Heuristic Evaluation of Kin

1. Problem/Prototype Description

Kin is a mobile storytelling app that seeks to connect family members, across generations, by providing families with small daily custom prompts that encourage reminiscing and reflection on family stories and memories.

2. Violations Found

Task 1: Responding to a prompt

1. H2 Match between system and world / Severity: 3 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface uses the Spotify logo as the button to upload a song in response to a prompt
- c. Rationale: While the majority of potential users may be familiar with Spotify, others may not recognize this logo, or want to upload songs from other platforms onto the app
- d. Fix: Use a more generic music note or alternative symbol

2. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface orders the potential media responses from left to right as a file upload, then a song, then an image upload, then a voice memo
- c. Rationale: Users may be more likely to upload a photo or voice memo compared with a file or song upload, especially older users.
- d. Fix: Consider reordering the placement of the icons to make the uploading process more intuitive, as the human visual system naturally scans from left to right.

3. H5 Error prevention / Severity: 4 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Every upload format besides a text response (file, song, image/video, voice memo) is displayed inside a box that reads “type your answer here.”
- c. Rationale: This visual placement is likely to confuse users, who may want to type an answer on top of/behind the voice memo recording.
- d. Fix: Consider replacing the text box with only the voice memo screen to ensure that users understand the scope of their upload. Or also allow for users to be able to add a caption to their attachments.

4. H3 User control and freedom / Severity: 3 / Found by: A, B, C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Users are unable to undo their text responses, or switch to a different response format once their text is typed.
- c. Rationale: Users may want to change their response format from a text response to an image/video upload, audio response, song, or file upload. They are currently unable to

do so as the other buttons do not function and cannot override a text response. The only way for a user to switch their response out of a text response is to start over by pressing the “x” button on their entire response.

- d. Fix: Consider enabling the other upload functionalities to override the text prompt after a user enters a text response.

5. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface allows the user to upload media from their library, but doesn’t clarify whether the user can upload an image, video, or both.
- c. Rationale: Users may experience confusion if certain media types are unsupported by the platform.
- d. Fix: Consider displaying a pop-up bar above the image/video upload bar that invites users to select photos, videos, or both from their library.

6. H10 Help and documentation / Severity: 3 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface doesn’t support multiple uploads from the same media type.
- c. Rationale: Users may be confused about how many uploads they can do, and whether or not they can upload multiple media types.
- d. Fix: Display an instructions button the user can click on, or instruction text under the prompt question text.

7. H2 Match between system and real world / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface doesn’t currently support mixed response upload types to a prompt (for example, text and video, or song and text), as other platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Reddit, etc) do.
- c. Rationale: Users may be used to uploading multiple media types and experience confusion while interacting with this app’s constraints.
- d. Fix: Enable users to upload multiple media types in conjunction (for example, adding a caption to an image).

8. H5 Error prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface doesn’t currently display a word count limit for text prompt responses.
- c. Rationale: Users may want to write more words than the platform currently supports.
- d. Fix: Adding a clarification (number of words / supported words) could allow users to better refine their responses and prevent overflow errors.

9. H9 Help users with errors / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The interface doesn’t allow users to submit blank responses (with no text, file, audio, song, image/video), but does not display an error message detailing why.
- c. Rationale: Users may not immediately understand that they cannot submit empty responses.

- d. Fix: Adding an error message or pop-up button that instructs users to respond with text, file, song, image/video, or audio

10. H11 Accessible design / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Each alternative response type (file, song, image/video, audio) is displayed in a very small box.
- c. Rationale: The small size of the message type may be difficult to see for users with impaired vision, or older users.
- d. Fix: Increase the size of the message display before the user submits their response. Maybe make it a rectangle instead of a square.

11. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: The display for a song upload and photo/video audio looks the same in the response preview before a user submits (square photo in a white frame)
- c. Rationale: Because the two upload formats look the same, unfamiliar users may wonder whether or not they have truly uploaded the correct message format.
- d. Fix: Distinguish the preview options between a song and an image/video upload. Consider adding a title or music artist to the song upload, or change the shape of the frame.

12. H1 Visibility of system status / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B, C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Once a user has responded to the prompt, the only indication a response has been submitted is a home screen display button that changes from “add” to “view.”
- c. Rationale: It is still unclear to the beginner user whether this “view” signifies that their response has been uploaded.
- d. Fix: Display a message or status icon that indicates to the user that their response has been submitted, for example, “view your response.” Could also consider having the top card change to what the user said once they answer. The big top card could include things that are in the card once you click “view.”

13. H6 Recognition rather than recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: There is no instruction/description besides “answer” for the prompt.
- c. Rationale: Users might forget the purpose of the app, which is to connect with their family. Other questions they might wonder: am I late to answering the question? How often is a question generated?
- d. Fix: Add a title above the large question box

14. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: When typing the response “Submit” is used vs. “Answer” (used earlier on the home screen)
- c. Rationale: Seems out of the ordinary that a user might Submit their response. Answer was used earlier.

- d. Fix: Switch both to “answer”

15. H2 Match between system and the real world / Severity: 2 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: File upload button seems like a general upload symbol
- c. Rationale: Users could misunderstand what the button means which would cause errors.
- d. Fix: Pick a more intuitive symbol

16. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 2 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Cannot see your response and your family’s responses all in one place – requires multiple clicks in and out.
- c. Rationale: Users might get tired of clicking in and out to see every person’s response, especially in a big group.
- d. Fix: Add a feed versus different buttons for different people.

17. H12 Value alignment and inclusion / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: No view of family name or group you’re in
- c. Rationale: Users might not receive the value of feeling connected because they are welcomed individually by their name.
- d. Fix: Add a word count or word maximum/minimum

18. H2 Match b/w System & World / Severity: 2 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: “view” (seen after you submit your answer) is a little unclear what it would lead to
- c. Rationale: Since “view” is very broad, users may not be sure what they are viewing. I could see a user clicking “view” to see what others have said as well.
- d. Fix: Be clearer with what users are viewing by writing “view your answer” or simply “your answer.” Confusion could also be minimized by applying the fix from #2 on the list.

19. H2 Match b/w System & World / Severity: 2 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Blurred out background feels like if I click it, it should also take me back but currently does not
- c. Rationale: To me the blurred out background when you click into “view” feels like it should be clickable in order to return to that screen.
- d. Fix: If the blurred background is clicked, it can also take you to that previous screen.

20. H4 Consistency & Standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Capitalization is not consistent
- c. Rationale: Mentioned some cases of this in #1, but also in the “view” page the prompt at the top has all caps which is different from that same prompt on the screen prior and in the “answer” page.
- d. Fix: Stick to all caps or all lowercase for the start of each phrase across all pages.

21. H8 Aesthetic & Minimalist Design / Severity: 1 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Responding to a prompt
- b. Description: Grid misalignments
- c. Rationale: On the first/home page the top card asking what your go to recipe is, is slightly to the left. The two cards about what others said are then slightly to the right. Once you click into the “view” screen, comments from other people seem to be left leaning too as the profile picture of the commenters is closer to the edge than the right side of the comment bubble.
- d. Fix: Center all the content, or make it more obvious that it is leaning one way.

Task 2: Responding to family member’s responses

22. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to family members’ responses
- b. Description: The profile picture of the user whose response you’re viewing is displayed above the box with their response in it.
- c. Rationale: It is usually standard across other social media apps to display the user’s name and profile icon below or in the same box as the uploaded media.
- d. Fix: Place the user’s profile icon in the same box or below the user’s uploaded media.

23. H6 Recognition not recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B

- a. Task: Responding to family members’ responses
- b. Description: The name or relationship of the person whose response you’re viewing is not displayed.
- c. Rationale: Users, especially those with large extended families, may want a reminder beyond a profile picture of whose response they are reading.
- d. Fix: Display the responding family member’s name and relationship alongside their profile picture.

24. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 3 / Found by: A, C

- a. Task: Responding to family members’ responses
- b. Description: Users cannot provide multiple comment responses, or “like” and comment at the same time
- c. Rationale: Users may want to leave multiple comments or display their interest in the post through a “like” response in addition to a comment consistent with interaction/comment behavior on other platforms (Instagram, Facebook, etc).
- d. Fix: Enable users to leave multiple comments and like the post concurrently.

25. H5 Error prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to family members’ responses
- b. Description: The “reply” text field is formatted in the same color and bar as the “like” and voice memo response.
- c. Rationale: The “reply” text field may be confused as a button due to its coloring and placement, confusing users.
- d. Fix: Consider changing the color of the “reply” text field to better distinguish its function.

26. H3 User control and freedom / Severity: 3 / Found by: A, B, C

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: Users cannot delete comments to family members' responses.
- c. Rationale: Users may want to delete, edit, or change their comments.
- d. Fix: Add a "delete" or "edit" button to the right of each comment or voice memo reaction.

27. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, C

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: The spacing between comments seems inconsistent.
- c. Rationale: Consistent spacing helps in grouping related elements and separating distinct pieces of information. Inconsistent spacing can make the interface look unorganized and can be visually taxing, leading to a poor user experience.
- d. Fix: Implement uniform spacing between individual comments and consistent margins around comment blocks to create a cleaner, more organized layout.

28. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: The profile pictures are disproportionately large compared to the text they accompany, which may detract from the textual content and lead to a less efficient use of screen space.
- c. Rationale: Oversized elements can dominate a design unnecessarily and make the interface appear cluttered. They can also reduce the amount of content visible at once, requiring more scrolling and making it harder to get an overview of the conversation.
- d. Fix: Reduce the size of the profile avatars to ensure a more balanced proportion with the accompanying text and to declutter the interface, allowing for more content to be visible at once.

29. H5 Error Prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: The presence of a microphone icon suggests voice input is available, but there is no indication of how to use it or what happens if it is pressed accidentally.
- c. Rationale: An interface should prevent errors by making it clear what actions will result from user input, especially for actions that are not easily reversible.
- d. Fix: Provide a visible tool or instruction indicating the function of the microphone icon and confirm the action if it is selected to prevent accidental voice posts.

30. H12 Value alignment and inclusion / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: The emoji reactions displayed (just a heart for now) might not adequately represent the diversity of responses that users may wish to express. If the set of emojis is limited or not customizable, it could fail to resonate with the broad spectrum of cultural expressions or emotional responses users might have.
- c. Rationale: A diverse user base requires a flexible system of expression that can be personalized to represent a wide array of cultural and emotional reactions. A limited set of reaction options might not encompass the full range of user sentiments and could make some users feel their perspectives are not valued or represented.

- d. Fix: Expand the emoji reaction set to include a more diverse and inclusive range of expressions. Provide users with the ability to customize their reaction sets to better align with their cultural contexts and personal preferences.

31. H1 Visibility of system status / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: Users cannot see when another user commented on a post
- c. Rationale: Users are commonly used to seeing time stamps next to comments as a sign of social signaling
- d. Fix: Add time stamps to comment

32. H2 Match between system and the real world / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: Light gray "reply text"
- c. Rationale: Users might not be used to the "reply" wording, and think that the app is encouraging them to carry out a different action
- d. Fix: Inspired by Instagram, maybe replace with "Add a comment"

33. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: My personal answer to a question looks visually exactly like everyone else's
- c. Rationale: Users might not be able to differentiate between their responses and the responses of their family members – a case where consistency could lead to error
- d. Fix: Change color of one of the responses to indicate the difference, or create a feed.

34. H12 Value alignment and inclusion / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: Users cannot respond to comments on their own posts
- c. Rationale: This could run contrary to Kin's value of fostering conversation within the app
- d. Fix: Add a way to respond to comments on your own post

35. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: How come I can only comment via Voice Memo and Likes but I can post via file, photo, music, etc.?
- c. Rationale: Users might want to engage in the same way they do when answering questions and feel frustrated that they cannot
- d. Fix: Add different ways to comment

36. H11 Accessible design / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: Can't see a like count, or tap in and see more details on who has liked a certain post
- c. Rationale: Users with visual impairments might not be able to clearly see everyone who has liked a certain post with the current visualization
- d. Fix: Add a like count

37. H6 Recognition not Recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: Unsure if you have already seen/liked another person's response from home page
- c. Rationale: Users can see that they have liked/commented on another person's post only when they click into the cards of what "others said" but cannot see this feedback from the home page. This may cause users to click into the same card multiple times even if they have already seen/liked/commented on it.
- d. Fix: Add an icon that shows that you have liked/commented/seen what others have said on the tiles on the home page.

38. H2 Match b/w System & World / Severity: 2 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Responding to family members' responses
- b. Description: "view" button leads to more than just viewing
- c. Rationale: When the user clicks "view" in a tile under the "others said" section it leads them to not only be able to view, but also to like and comment. Thus, having just the word "view" to do all these actions seems confusing. Additionally, users who want to like/comment may not click "view" because they only think it is for viewing.
- d. Fix: Consider changing the word from "view" to "more" or something else more broad and indicative of covering different actions.

Task 3: Submitting your own prompt

39. H5 Error Prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: The "Propose a prompt" button is placed at the bottom of the screen in a manner that could be prone to accidental taps, especially if users are attempting to scroll through the content.
- c. Rationale: Actionable items should be placed in areas where they are less likely to be activated unintentionally. Placing a button in a 'high traffic' area where users are likely to touch while performing other tasks can lead to accidental activation.
- d. Fix: Move the "Propose a prompt" button to a less prominent position, or implement a confirmation step that verifies the user's intention to propose a prompt before taking them to the next step of the action.

40. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, B, C

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: The "Propose a prompt" button is stylistically different from other interactive elements on the page (outlined in white, thin border, not filled), which may lead to an inconsistent user interface.
- c. Rationale: The design should have a uniform look and feel to prevent cognitive overload and maintain the user's focus on the task at hand. The current button format looks like the "submit" button on other pages.
- d. Fix: Standardize the appearance of interactive elements like buttons to match the overall design language of the application (by making the button filled, for example, and changing the color of the button), ensuring consistency across the user interface.

41. H2 Match between System and the Real World / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: The dice symbol and the text explaining the process of submitting prompts may not be immediately clear or intuitive to all users. Users may not associate dice with the random selection of prompts or understand the process described.
- c. Rationale: Symbols, language, and concepts used should be familiar to the user and based on real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.
- d. Fix: Consider removing the symbol or choosing more familiar icons, perhaps a question mark instead, or adding clearer language to explain how submitted prompts are used.

42. H10 Help and Documentation / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: There is no immediate help or documentation to assist users in understanding the purpose of the screen or the process of submitting prompts. Users may be uncertain about what kind of prompts are suitable or the benefits of submitting one.
- c. Rationale: Sometimes documentation is necessary to prevent confusion.
- d. Fix: Include a help icon or link to a FAQ section where users can get more information about the purpose of submitting prompts.

43. H5 Error prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: The interface doesn't currently display a word count limit for custom user prompts.
- c. Rationale: Users may want to write more words than the platform currently supports, or write prompts that are too long to elicit good responses.
- d. Fix: Adding a clarification (number of words / supported words) could allow users to better refine their responses and prevent overflow errors.

44. H11 Accessible design / Severity: 3 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Once a user has submitted a prompt, the system displays a success message that flashes on the screen and then disappears after a fixed number of seconds.
- c. Rationale: Having text that disappears may create issues for visually-impaired readers, or elderly readers who need additional time to read and understand text prompts.
- d. Fix: Replace the auto disappearance with an "x" box in the corner of the screen.

45. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B, C

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Once a user has submitted a prompt, the system displays a success message that flashes on the screen and then disappears after a fixed number of seconds.
- c. Rationale: Other similar pop up fields are marked with an "x" option on the corner of the screen, which indicates to users to manually close the pop-up box. Maintaining consistent design improves usability and intuitive user experience.

- d. Fix: Replace the auto disappearance with an “x” box in the corner of the screen.

46. H6 Recognition not recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Once a user has submitted a prompt, the system displays a success message that omits the prompt that the user has submitted.
- c. Rationale: Not displaying the submitted question may cause confusion for the user. Ensuring that the submitted prompt is displayed again reduces cognitive load for the user and allows the user to double-check their response.
- d. Fix: Display the question in the confirmation screen.

47. H5 Error Prevention / Severity: 3 / Found by: A, C

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Once a user has submitted a prompt, the app automatically loads it into the system without asking the user to confirm their question.
- c. Rationale: Without confirmation, users may accidentally write typos or want to go back and change their response. This increases susceptibility to errors and makes it difficult for users to edit or delete their question.
- d. Fix: Add a confirmation button after the user clicks the “submit” button that enables the user to edit or delete their response.

48. H1 Visibility of system status / Severity: 3 / Found by: A

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Users are unable to view previously submitted responses or see the status of their submitted responses. The screen indicates that a user should “check back tomorrow” to see if their response has been randomly selected.
- c. Rationale: The lack of feedback on the status of a submitted response creates uncertainty and potentially frustration for users. The current design fails to provide immediate and clear feedback about the submission status, leading to confusion and a lack of control for the user.
- d. Fix: Introduce a feature that allows users to view a list of their previously submitted responses, along with the current status of each.

49. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 2 / Found by: B, C

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Propose a prompt button is a different color (white) than other buttons (green)
- c. Rationale: Users might miss the button entirely or get confused as to why this button is white and not green
- d. Fix: Make all buttons the same color, or at least more aesthetically similar

50. H10 Help and documentation / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Do users need to know upfront that the prompts are randomly generated?
- c. Rationale: Users might appreciate this insight into how questions are generated, but might also want additional information on the random selection process
- d. Fix: Add this information as a separate screen that can be accessed using a help button, not on the main screen.

51. H2 Match between system and the real world / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Is “propose a prompt” the most common wording of suggesting this action?
- c. Rationale: Users might not understand the task that is required of them, as they aren’t used to this wording, especially since “prompt” is not seen in the rest of the app
- d. Fix: Change “Propose a prompt” to “Write your own...question/prompt”

52. H5 Error prevention / Severity: 3 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: There is no way for the system to check whether or not a prompt is worded correctly.
- c. Rationale: Users could submit prompts that do not meet Kin’s standards, and those could still be randomly selected
- d. Fix: Have stronger error messaging or criteria checks for adequate questions. Or, have some kind of screening process once questions are submitted.

53. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: The top bar of the question box is formatted differently and shares information about how the app works, which is not the same as other prompts
- c. Rationale: Users might want information about how their other submissions are processed, or be confused if the different formatting elicits a different action
- d. Fix: Format all submission boxes similarly. Or, if they are different, change colors to indicate different actions

54. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: Spacing on success message is not centered.
- c. Rationale: Users might not find this aesthetically pleasing
- d. Fix: Space the message out more

55. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: B

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: There is no success message when you carry out any other action
- c. Rationale: Users might want to see a success message when they submit other content
- d. Fix: Add a success message or banner for completion of other tasks

56. H2 Match b/w System & World / Severity: 3 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt
- b. Description: “Type your answer here.” does not indicate what you should put there
- c. Rationale: While “Type your answer here...” matches other text fields to fill that look the same, here it is confusing what to type. Users may be unsure to put questions in here and may just opt to not do it instead.
- d. Fix: Prompt users differently, maybe “type a new prompt here” or “type your own prompt here.”

57. H9 Help Users with Errors / Severity: 2 / Found by: C

- a. Task: Submitting your own prompt

- b. Description: No error help if users try to “Submit” with no content
- c. Rationale: If you have no answer and you click “Submit” there is no help to tell you why it won’t submit. This could be confusing for a first time user or someone going through the app really fast.
- d. Fix: Add an error message / popup that tells the user they need to put something into the submission box in order to submit.

3. Summary of Violations

A Google Sheet Template is provided [here](#) to help you calculate numbers.

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)
H1: Visibility of Status	0	1	1	1	0	3
H2: Match Sys & World	0	3	5	2	0	10
H3: User Control	0	0	0	2	0	2
H4: Consistency & Standards	0	8	3	1	0	12
H5: Error Prevention	0	0	5	2	1	8
H6: Recognition not Recall	0	0	4	0	0	4
H7: Efficiency of Use	0	2	1	0	0	3
H8: Minimalist Design	0	4	0	0	0	4
H9: Help Users with Errors	0	0	2	0	0	2
H10: Help & Documentation	0	1	1	1	0	3
H11: Accessible	0	1	1	1	0	3
H12: Value Alignment & Inclusion	0	2	1	0	0	3
Total Violations by Severity	0	22	24	10	1	57

Note: check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)

4. Evaluation Statistics (in %)

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C
Sev. 0 Ex: Eval A count / total sevs 0 in table #3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sev. 1 Ex: Eval A count / total sevs 1 in table #3	31.8%	63.6%	18.2%
Sev. 2 Ex: Eval A count / total sevs 2 in table #3	62.5%	41.7%	37.5%
Sev. 3 Ex: Eval A count / total sevs 3 in table #3	60%	30%	50%
Sev. 4	100%	0%	0%

Ex: Eval A count / total sevs 4 in table #3			
Total (sevs. 3 & 4) Ex: Eval A = sum(sev 3: sev 4 counts) / sum(sev 3: sev 4 in table #3)	63.6%	27.3%	45.5%
Total (all severity levels) Ex: Eval A total sev count / total sevs (green cell) in table #3	50.9%	47.4%	31.6%

***Note that the bottom rows are *not* calculated by adding the numbers above it.**

5. Summary Recommendations

Overall, Kin's app was designed with simplicity in mind, which made the app and the three tasks easy to understand and execute. When we were maneuvering through the different task flows, we felt that we did not make many errors. We thought the app was very well designed – we really liked the monochromatic color palette and the use of green for a calm feel. We think that the size of the text and icons is also very thoughtfully designed to appeal to an older audience. We also loved that the design was super streamlined with a low number of button clicks, and did not have any “excess” text to read through.

We thought there could be more visual differentiation between the user's responses and those of family members. We thought the “Propose a Prompt” task had a lot of visual differences that indicated the unique qualities of the task, but could also leave users confused on how exactly to proceed and could discourage them from executing the task in the first place. We believe that the Kin team should be a little more thoughtful when they create visual differences or similarities so as not to confuse their users.

We also thought that your app could greatly benefit from more intuitive and clear instructions for each task. For instance, adding visible word count limits for text responses, clearer indications for the functionality of icons like the microphone, and more explicit error messages when users attempt to submit blank responses would significantly enhance the user experience. By focusing on these aspects of error prevention, you can ensure that users of all ages and technological proficiencies can engage with your app effortlessly, making the storytelling experience more seamless and enjoyable for everyone involved. Ensuring that visual elements, such as icons and response format options, are consistently designed and function uniformly across different sections of the app will create a more intuitive user experience. This consistency aids in building user confidence and familiarity, making the app more accessible and easier to navigate. Finally, prioritizing flexibility in user interactions, such as allowing mixed media responses and providing easier ways to edit or change response formats, would make the app more user-friendly. We would also encourage you to add a way to edit/delete/redo your answers to prompts and responses to other people's posts to ensure users are able to have more choice and recover from mistakes.

One problem that we found that did not fit into any of the heuristics was the fact that the app's mission and value proposition did not necessarily come across strongly. The only way we could tell that Kin's goal was to connect family members was by the nature of the questions. We have a few suggestions on how to mitigate this. Kin could create an intro page that details their value proposition, add more guidance when users submit their own prompts, or add a small banner at the top of the Home Screen to reiterate their values of connecting across generations. We also think your app could benefit from incorporating more interactive elements, such as user-customizable settings and personalization options. Allowing users to tailor their experience, from the layout of the interface to the types of prompts they receive, would add a level of engagement and ownership that can significantly enhance user satisfaction. Additionally, integrating a feature for community building, like forums or shared family spaces where messages are saved beyond the day-of prompts, could foster a sense of connection and collaboration among users, enriching the overall storytelling experience. Lastly, we think you should flesh out the History Timeline you mentioned was incomplete in the ReadMe. We think this added feature would really help to push your value proposition of "chronicle[ing] our familial connections."

Excited to keep seeing your hard work!

Severity Ratings

- 0 - not a usability problem
- 1 - cosmetic problem
- 2 - minor usability problem
- 3 - major usability problem; important to fix
- 4 - usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

Heuristics

H1: Visibility of System Status

- Keep users informed about what is going on

H2: Match Between System & Real World

- Speak the users' language
- Follow real world conventions

H3: User Control & Freedom

- "Exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- Don't force down fixed paths

H4: Consistency & Standards

- Words, actions, and UI elements should be consistent across the entire platform
- Follow platform and industry conventions

H5: Error Prevention

- Minimize error-prone conditions
- Remove memory burdens, support undoing, and warn your users when necessary

H6: Recognition Rather Than Recall

- Make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

H7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use

- Accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, keyboard shortcuts)
- Allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design

- No irrelevant information. Focus on the essentials.

H9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors

- Error messages in plain language
- Precisely indicate the problem
- Constructively suggest a solution

H10: Help & Documentation

- Easy to search
- Focused on the user's task
- List concrete steps to carry out
- Not too large

H11: Accessible

- Users can interact with the system using alternative input methods.
- Content is legible with distinguishable contrast and text size.
- Key information is upfront and not nested for screen readers.

- Purely visual or auditory content has text-based alternatives for users with low vision and low hearing.

H12: Value Alignment and Inclusion

- The design should encode values that users can understand and relate to.
- It should make a diverse group of users feel included and respected.
- The design should prevent the reproduction of pre-existing inequities and not create additional burdens for members of disadvantaged populations.