

Compass

A GAME OF EXPLORATION AND ADVENTURE

Travelers cross lands and oceans, encountering neighboring communities, lost secrets and natural wonders as they go. Set in a pre-industrial world not-our-own, Travelers may seek audience in an Obsidian Palace or lose themselves in the Twisting Mountains of Forever, on a Shifting Plateau. A world from your imagination—full of verdant fields, quiet villages, raging seas, magical courts and perilous passages—awaits your exploration.

SUMMARY:

Players take turns creating Locations and Events, and moving Travelers to interact with these Components. Components are written on note cards and placed in a grid. They form a growing and developing world.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY:

Index Cards Two to Five Players
Pens/pencils One to Three Hours

OVERVIEW OF PLAY:

Create Travelers.

For 2 to 3 players, create two.

For 4 to 5 players, create three.

Players take turns.

On each turn take a Character Action and a World Action

- Character Action: Have a Traveler interact with the World.
- World Action: Create or change something about the world.

CHARACTER ACTIONS:

Pick a Character and use them to....

- Play a Vignette
- Play an Event
- Escalate an Event
- Resolve an Event
- Resolve an Escalated Event
- Resolve a Ripple

May move the Traveler at start or end of Action.

The player's goals are to create a wondrous world to explore, to witness and build off of what others have created, and to portray characters experiencing that world.

ENDING THE GAME

When Travelers have all reached their Destination, Abandoned the Road or Died, the game ends.

WELCOME PLAYTESTERS

to a draft of *Compass*, a game in progress
by Emily Care Boss. This is an alternate version of the
game, with a short-form play style.

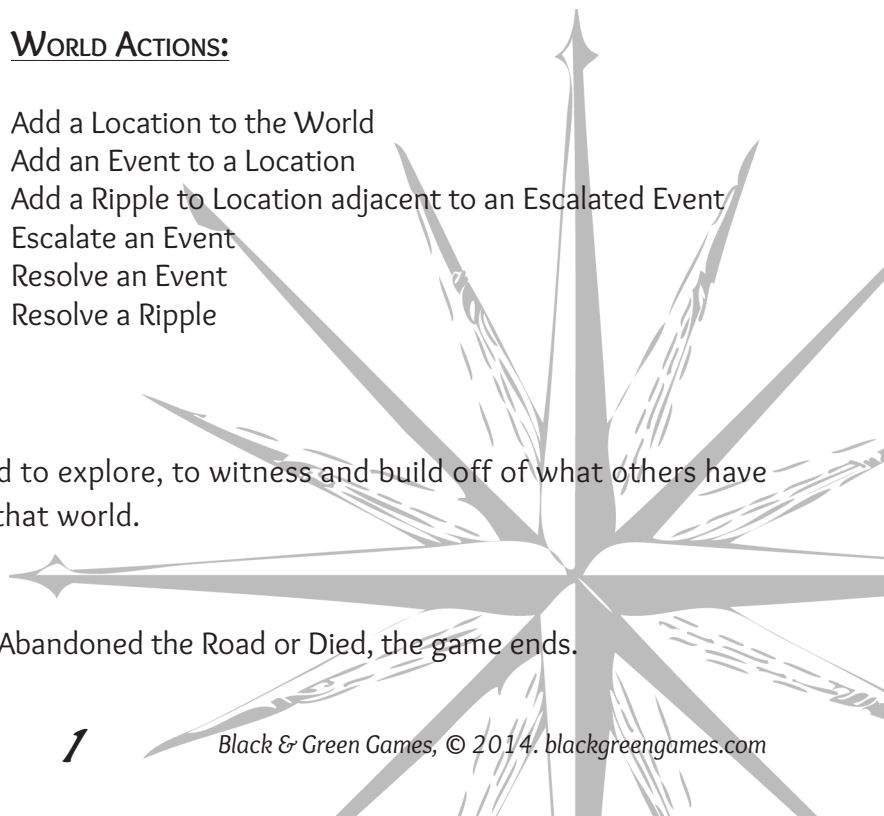
If you have an hour or two to play a game with a friend
or three, I hope you'll try this out and let me know how
it went for you. I've played with these rules and enjoyed
the game. You can contact me at:

blackgreengames@yahoo.com
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This version of *Compass* owes a great debt of inspiration for its
structure to the game *Microscope*, by Ben Robbins of Lame
Mage Productions at lamemage.com. Other influences are *The
Quiet Year* by Avery Mcdaldno and *The Companions' Tale* by Laura
Simpson. Thanks to Ben Arens and Epidiah Ravachol for play-
storming help, and to the Baker family and JiffyCon players for
early playtests and suggestions.

WORLD ACTIONS:

- Add a Location to the World
- Add an Event to a Location
- Add a Ripple to Location adjacent to an Escalated Event
- Escalate an Event
- Resolve an Event
- Resolve a Ripple



SETUP:

1) Create Travelers (See page 2 below)
Two to Three players—Create 2 Travelers
Four to Five players—Create 3 Travelers

2) Create Starting Locations and Events(See pages 3 and 4)
Locations: A central Location and an additional Location per player
Events: One per Traveler in play

Place each Traveler in the central Location and person who came from farthest away begins play.

HOW TO MAKE TRAVELERS:

TRAVELERS –

These are characters who will move through the world, meeting people and having adventures. The players will collaborate on making their story happen.

Name. On both sides of a note card folded in half, write a name this Traveler answers to. The Note card will sit on the Locations making a small tent or triangle. (see diagram on page 9)

Examples:

- Athene
- Cordel
- Pria
- Ramiro

Description. Write a short phrase that tells something about the Traveler's occupation, demeanor or habits.

Examples:

- A road hardened traveler, sings hymns for food and coin.
- Deposed priestess.
- Inquisitive tinker, with rattling pots and wares.
- Sword for hire.
- Courtier clothed in forbidden colors.

Home. The name of their home location. May be a known Location, or one not written down yet. Create the name as you would for a Location.

Examples:

- Cloud Pass
- The Oasis of Homecoming
- Green River
- The Fortress of Light

Destination. Write down a place to which they travel. Should not be a known Location. May be their Home. Create the name as you would for a Location Name (say what it is and provide an evocative detail).

Examples:

- Holy Shrine
- Temple at Delphi
- The Court of Regents
- The Shadow God's Abode

Why: Explain why the Traveler journeys, involving their Description or Destination. Need not be written down.

HOW TO MAKE A LOCATION:

On a horizontal note card, write: NAME, DESCRIPTION, GROUP (see diagram on p. 9) Later, Locations will have more Groups, Characters and Landmarks added to them.

NAME. Write a Location name at the top of the note card

In the name include

- 1) What kind of location it is. (e.g. a Village, Fortress, River)
- 2) A detail about the location. (e.g. The Dyer's Village, The Silent Fortress, The Red River)

Examples:

- The Cliffside Monastery
- Sea of Bounty
- City of Illusion
- Black Rock Pass
- The Monuments of Forgotten Hope
- Stilt Village of Vurst
- Blood River Falls
- The Painted Desert
- The Eternal Port

Scope: The location should large enough to encompass some days travel, or be a settlement or building that can accomodate a large number of people.

DESCRIPTION. Explain in a short phrase or sentence give a brief description of the atmosphere of the place, what might be seen there, or the place it holds in the world. This need not be written down.

Examples:

- A haunted land full of dunes and overlooks with sands of many colors.
- For as long as people have plied the seas, this place has harbored their ships.
- Jagged stony hills with giantic ruins.

GROUP. Write down the name of People present at or who live in this place.

In the name include

- 1) Their nature or occupation
- 2) An evocative descriptor

Examples:

- Brotherhood of the Sacred Hunters
- The Astral Lamplighters
- The Hapless Pilgrims
- Foxes who Speak as Humans Do

Group's name should not include the name of any existing Location. Although, locations may be made later that refer to a Group's Name.

The following may be added to a location after a Vignette, Event or Ripple.

Characters - A person or being in this location. (See page 4)

Landmark - An object, building or point of note. (See page 4)

Site - a place of interest within the Location. (See page 4)

Players may create a Location during another players's Turn or a break, and add it to s acentral Location Deck. Place these Locations face down in a pile. Players may draw one for World Action instead of making a new one to Add. Place as usual. May add Group if there is none.

HOW TO MAKE AN EVENT:

These are occurrences of moment, offering danger, unrest or change to the place in which they occur. Choose a Location to add an event to. On a note card folded in half across the longer edge (see diagram on page 9), write the Event TITLE. Describe the Event and place it on the Location.

TITLE. Write down a few words that summarize the event.

Include in the Title

- 1) A group from the Location, a Traveler or another character
- 2) The activity happening

Examples:

- The Fox Council calls a meeting on the Solstice
- Athene is seized by the Sacred Hunter Demetrios.
- Pilgrims schism over collecting chips of the Monuments.

Optionally: After placing the Event

Add a Character, a Landmark or Site to the Location

NAMING CHARACTERS, LANDMARKS AND SITES

Character. Write the name of a new character present at or involved in this Event. The character's name should include

- 1) A title or what they are called
- 2) A detail that shows their occupation, place in the world or some other distinguishing characteristic

Examples:

- Arleni the Unhooded Executioner
- Captain Alexandry
- Ridolfi, father of the lost child

Each character should only be written down on one Location.

Landmark. Write down the name of an object or building which can be seen from far away.

Include

- 1) What it is
- 2) A detail that makes it stand out from others of its type

Example Landmarks:

- The Whispering Pines
- The Mirror Falls
- The Golden Tower

Site. Write down the name of a shelter, building, grove or other smaller area of note within a larger Location.

Include

- 1) What it is
- 2) A concrete detail that show who owns it, or what you can see, smell or hear there

Examples:

- The Poisonberry Grove
- The Potter's Shed
- The Weathered Sampan

HOW TO PLAY:

The game takes place in turns. In their turn each player two things:

- 1) Take a Character Action
- 2) Take a World Action

CHARACTER ACTIONS

Play...

- a Vignette
- an Event

Escalate...

- an Event

Resolve...

- an Event
- an Escalated Event
- a Ripple

End a Traveler's Tale

WORLD ACTIONS

Add...

- a Location to the World
- an Event to a Location
- a Ripple to Location adjacent to an Escalated Event

Escalate...

- an Event

Resolve...

- an Event
- an Escalated Event
- a Ripple

May move Traveler before or after the Character Action. But not during World Action.

MOVING A CHARACTER: Travelers may move from one Location to another Location that is above, below or on either side of the Location they were in at the start of the turn. May not move diagonally.

CHARACTER ACTIONS:

Play a Vignette. Move the Traveler to a Location without an Event (or keep them on one with no Event where they start the Turn). Role play a brief scene, showing a moment or two of the Traveler's journey.

Need. The player whose turn it is chooses a need that the Traveler is addressing at this Location. Choose from this list:

- Food
- Shelter
- Romance
- Friendship
- Employment
- Transportation
- Enjoying the Sights

Cast. The person whose turn it is plays the Traveler. They Cast one other person to be an already named Character or a new member of a Group from that Location. Characters may also be from other Locations.

Set the Scene.

- The Cast player describes surroundings in the Location—a place where the Need could be met
- The Cast player describes their character doing a daily task

Play. Play the scene, either narrate or speak in character as the Traveler and the other character interacting. The Traveler asks for their Need to be met. End the Vignette when the Traveler's Need has been met, or the offer is rebuffed.

NO QUESTS. In Vignettes, a price may be asked, or a bargain struck, but only so far as could be easily paid or settled off screen. No condition can be made for a task requiring a long trip or travail. Save that kind of thing for Events.

ALTERNATE RULE: Narration. The player whose turn it is simply narrates a scene of the Traveler meeting a Need.

CHARACTER ACTIONS CONTINUED:

Play an Event. Move the Traveler to a Location with an Event (or keep them on one with Event where they start the Turn). Role play a brief scene, showing a moment or two of the Traveler's journey.

Cast. The person whose turn it is plays the Traveler. Choose a character from that Location or another that will interact with the Traveler about the Event. They Cast one other player as that character.

Additional Cast. The other players may add themselves to the Event if they so choose, picking another character to play.

Set the Scene.

- The Cast player describes surroundings in the Location—a place where the Event is taking place


Play. Play the scene, either narrate or speak in character as the Traveler and the other character interacting.

- The Cast player describes how the Event is going on, or upsetting their character's daily routine.
- The Traveler enters the scene and interacts with the first character
- Additional Cast enters the scene, or if they were already present, now may interact with the Traveler, too.

End the Scene after all characters have interacted with the Traveler. The player of the Traveler then says whether the Event is **Escalated** or **Resolved**. They choose another player to summarize the outcome and write the Escalation or Resolution out.

Events may be Escalated or Resolved as an independent Traveler Action, or after Playing an Event

Escalating an Event.

To Escalate an Event, turn the folded card over to the other blank, folded side. Mark it with a delta character, or triangle.  (see diagram on page 9) Traveler may be moved before or after Escalating.

On the card, write the following:

TITLE. Just as with the initial Event, write down a few words that summarize the event.

Include in the Title

- 1) A group from the Location, a Traveler or another character
- 2) How things have become worse or more intense

Examples:

- Athene kills Demetrios, earning his brother's ire.
- Pria's song is seen as a portent of doom by the Fox Elders

Replace the Event on the Location which it originated.

Optionally: After replacing the Event

Add a Group, a Character, a Landmark or Site that relates to the Event, to the Location

Examples:

- Hakim, who was Left Behind
- Captain Alexandros

CHARACTER ACTIONS CONTINUED:

Resolving an Event. Choose a Location with an Event and Traveler. To Resolve this event:

Describe how the Event comes to completion and activity in the Location goes back to how it was before the Event, or say how it has changed. Involve one (or more) of the Travelers present on the Location.

Remove the Event from play. Write a sentence on the back that shows how the Event was resolved. Place it in a pile with other Resolved Events.

Examples:

- Athene is taken by the Brotherhood.
- Pria takes Hakim with her on her journey to the Holy Shrine.

Optionally: Add a Group, a Character, a Landmark or Site to the Location that relates to the Event.

Examples:

- The Oracle of the Song
- The Siren's Stones
- Wreckers of the Green Tower
- A Warm Eddy Pool

Resolving an Escalated Event. Choose a Location with an Escalated Event with a Traveler. Resolve as with an Event.

Resolving a Ripple. Choose a Location with a Ripple and at least one Traveler. Resolve as with an Event.

Ending a Traveler's Tale. See ENDING THE STORY (on page 8) to Reach Destination, Abandon Road or Die.

WORLD ACTIONS:

Add a Location. Follow the same process as described for creating Locations during Setup. Place the new Location in an open slot above, below, to either side, or diagonal from an existing Location.

Add an Event. Follow the same process as described for creating Events during Setup. Place the new Event on any Location without an Event or a Ripple. Cannot add more than one Event to a Location.

Add a Ripple. As in Character Actions

Creating a Ripple from an Escalated Event.

Create a new Event in a Location adjacent to a Location with an Escalated Event. Mark the note card with the symbol of a tilde < ~ > (see diagram on page 9)



TITLE. Just as with the Event, write down a few words that summarize the event.

Include in the Title

- 1) A Group, Character, Landmark or Site in this Location
- 2) How the Escalated Event affects or is manifesting in this Location

Examples:

- Disappearance of the Caravan Masters, all but one.
- Ship of Sacred Hunters—The Swift Vengeance—is wrecked.

Place the Ripple on this Location.

WORLD ACTIONS CONTINUED:

Resolving an Event. Choose a Location with an Event (since this is a World Action, it need not have a Traveler on it, but it is fine if it does). Resolve as with an Event in Character Actions. If no Traveler is present, you do not need to mention one in the Resolution.

Resolving a Ripple. Choose a Location with a Ripple (since this is a World Action it need not have a Traveler on it, but it is fine if it does). Resolve as with an Event for a Character Action. If no Traveler is present, you do not need to mention one in the Resolution.

Resolving an Escalated Event. Choose a Location with an Escalated Event (since this is a World Action, it need not have a Traveler on it, but it is fine if it does). Resolve as with an Event in Character Actions. If no Traveler is present, you do not need to mention one in the Resolution.

Resolving a Ripple. Choose a Location with a Ripple (since this is a World Action it need not have a Traveler on it, but it is fine if it does). Resolve as with an Event for a Character Action. If no Traveler is present, you do not need to mention one in the Resolution.

ENDING THE STORY.

The game ends when all of the Travelers' stories are completed. A Traveler's story ends when they:

- Reach their Destination
- Abandon the Road
- They Die

Reaching the Destination.

Once a location card has been created that matches a Traveler's Destination, when the Traveler reaches it, the players may work together to End that Traveler's Tale.

Event. Using a World Action, create an Event about the Traveler reaching their Destination. Resolve (or Escalate) through Character or World Actions. When the Event has been Resolved, write the Traveler down as a Character on that Location. If they have joined a Group there, indicate that. Remove the Traveler from play.

Abandoning the Road.

After the first Escalated Event with Ripples has been Resolved, when a Traveler reaches a Location that is not their Destination and Resolves an Event, they may Abandon the Road and travel no more. Add the Traveler to that Location as a Character. If they have joined a Group there, indicate that. Remove Traveler from play.

The Traveler Dies.

Travelers and other characters may die as part of an Escalated Event or Ripple, either during their creation or resolution. If a Traveler dies, when the Event is resolved, write "The Grave of [Traveler's Name]" on the Location where the event occurred, and take the Traveler out of play.

End and Epilogue

Once all Travelers are removed from play, end the game. To see the Tales of their adventures, look at the Resolved Events. As an Epilogue, each player may choose one Event or Ripple to Resolve.

Location Name

Description of the Location in a short phrase or sentence.

Groups:
 Start with one at Setup
 May add other Groups, Characters, Landmarks or Sites after
 Events and Ripples are Resolved or Escalated

} Horizontal
 Note Card

Traveler Name

Description of the Traveler in two words
 or a phrase.

Home: Name of a Location

Destination: Name of a Location

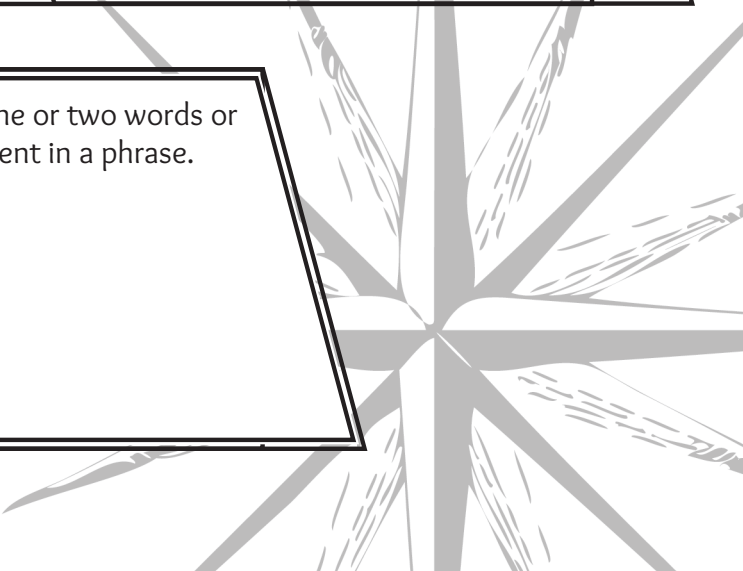
} Note Card
 Folded in Half
 Stand Up
 -- write their name in
 large letters on the other
 side

Folded Note Cards, Lay Flat on Location
 Flip over to Escalate



<p>Event Title: one or two words, or description of the Event in a phrase.</p>	<p>Escalated Event Title: one or two words or description of the Event in a phrase.</p>
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Ripple Event Title: one or two words or
 description of the Event in a phrase.



Playing Compass

ON YOUR TURN.....

- TAKE A CHARACTER ACTION
- TAKE A WORLD ACTION

CHARACTER ACTIONS: MAY MOVE A TRAVELER AND...

- PLAY A VIGNETTE (p. 5) OR PLAY AN EVENT (p.6)
- ESCALATE AN EVENT (p. 6)
- RESOLVE AN EVENT, ESCALATED EVENT OR RIPPLE (p. 7)
- END A TRAVELER'S TALE (p. 8)

WORLD ACTIONS:

- ADD LOCATION TO WORLD (MAY DRAW FROM LOCATION DECK) (p. 3)
- ADD AN EVENT TO A LOCATION (p. 4)
- ADD A RIPPLE ADJACENT TO AN ESCALATED EVENT (p. 7)
- ESCALATE AN EVENT (p. 6)
- RESOLVE AN EVENT, ESCALATED EVENT OR RIPPLE (p. 7)
-

TRAVELERS MOVE ORTHOGONALLY: UP, DOWN OR SIDE TO SIDE. NOT DIAGONALLY.

PLACE LOCATIONS ADJACENT TO EACH OTHER (ABOVE, BELOW, LEFT, RIGHT OR DIAGONAL).

PLACE RIPPLES ADJACENT TO THE ESCALATED EVENT THEY SPIN OFF FROM.

PLAYERS MAY MAKE LOCATIONS DURING OTHER PLAYERS TURNS. ADD TO LOCATION DECK.

IN A VIGNETTE A TRAVELER SEEKS... (CHOOSE ONE)

- FOOD
- SHELTER
- ROMANCE
- FRIENDSHIP
- EMPLOYMENT
- TRANSPORTATION
- TO ENJOY THE SIGHTS

A TRAVELER'S STORY ENDS WHEN THEY...

- REACH THEIR DESTINATION (p. 8)
- ABANDON THE ROAD (p. 8)
- DIE (p. 8)