

DAGGER

For Kids



A Fast and Fantastic Tool for Old-School Role-Play Gaming with Kids!

Dagger is designed to introduce kids 5 years and over to classic-style fantasy role-playing. It is compatible with most old-school fantasy role-playing games. It is played with one adult acting as the Referee and from 2 to 10 kids playing the parts of adventuring heroes. Dagger uses common, core mechanics, but reduced to only the most basic elements necessary for play. This product includes all of the Standard and some Optional Dagger Rules, a recommended Spell List with simple descriptions, a Classic Monster Reference with vital statistics, a reproducible character sheet and a Referee / Player's Screen.

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DAGGER FOR KIDS!

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Introduction

DAGGER is designed to introduce kids five years and over to classic-style fantasy role-playing. This supplement uses common, core mechanics found in most old-school fantasy role-playing games. However, these core mechanics are reduced to only the most basic elements necessary for play. This effectively simplifies the game so that players as young as five years can easily grasp the basic concepts. The rules presented here are supplementary (i.e. they are not all-encompassing) and it is assumed that the Referee already possesses a general knowledge of some form of classic fantasy role-playing. Any aspect of play not covered in these rules should be handled by the Referee, "filling in the gaps" as necessary with his own rulings, or rules from another classic fantasy system. This is a practice that is expected and encouraged.

Dagger is all about making gaming with young children quick and easy for you and fun and exciting for the kids. Dagger is just a simple tool, but the truth is, you do not really need any rules at all - just make up the armor class, the attack and damage for monsters on the fly. In addition, do not be surprised when some (or all) of the children you game with decide not to play a whole campaign using the same character. Instead, they may want to create a new character every session. You should let them! Kids love to spend time before game sessions designing their own unique characters. I think they get as much fun out of it as they do actually playing their characters! And do not worry about the characters not leveling up enough for your adventures. You can always have the party discover a magical sword, a magical wand, a couple potions of healing, etc. to help them face more powerful encounters and situations. The bottom line is that Dagger is all about everyone having fun gaming together.

Character Creation

There are no ability scores in DAGGER. To create a character, choose one of the four character classes, name the character, and draw a picture of the character (not necessarily in that order). Then, on the character sheet, note the character's level (1), hit points (roll d6), armor class (2, 5, or 9), and saving throw (15). In the appropriate space, note the character's special abilities and equipment, then fill in the "TO HIT" ARMOR CLASS table at the bottom of the record sheet. In most classic fantasy systems, a 1st Level character needs a 10 to hit AC 9, an 11 to hit AC 8, a 12 to hit AC 7, and so on.

In DAGGER, there are four character classes to choose from: knight, wizard, elf, and dwarf. The knight and wizard class titles may be changed to "warrior princess" or "enchantress" respectively if the player so desires.

Knight

Special Ability: In combat a knight gets 2 attacks every round.

Starting Equipment: Plate mail, shield, sword, torch.

Armor Class: 2 [17]

Wizard

Special Ability: Each day, a wizard can use his staff to cast two spells per level of experience. At 1st level a wizard gets two 1st level spells, at 2nd level he gets two 2nd level spells, and so on.

Starting Equipment: Staff, dagger, torch.

Armor Class: 9 [10]

Dwarf

Special Ability: Dwarves can see in the dark up to 60' and, when searching, a dwarf will automatically find any secret door in the area (i.e. less than 40' away).

Starting Equipment: Plate mail, shield, axe.

Armor Class: 2 [17]

Elf

Special Ability: Each day, an elf can use his wand to cast one spell per level of experience. At 1st level an elf gets one 1st level spell, at 2nd level he gets one 2nd level spell, and so on.

Starting Equipment: Chain mail, bow, wand, and arrows, torch.

Armor Class: 5 [14]

Halfling (Optional)

Special Ability: Halflings are half the size of humans and even smaller than dwarves! Their small size helps make them hard to hit in combat and nearly invisible and silent when sneaking around.

Starting Equipment: Short sword, sling and small shield.

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Character Level	Experience Points Needed	# of d6 for Hit Dice	Saving Throw
1	0	1	15
2	1,000	2	13
3	3,000	3	11
4	6,000	4	9
5	10,000	5	7

Hit Points and Saving Throw

At 1st level all characters roll 1d6 for hit points, with an additional d6 each time a character gains an experience level. All characters begin with a saving throw of 15, which improves by two each time the character gains an experience level.

Searching, Listening, & Opening Doors

A roll of a 1 or 2 on 1d6 will indicate success when a character attempts any of the following actions: listening at a door, opening a stuck door, searching for hidden items or secret doors. (NOTE: If the searching character is a dwarf he will automatically find any secret doors in the immediate area. For every failed attempt to open a stuck door, the Referee should make a secret check for wandering monsters.)

Movement

When miniatures are used (and children really enjoy it when they are), the movement rate for all characters is 3 squares (i.e. 15') per round on a 1" grid or other playing surface where 1" = 5 feet. The movement rate in squares per round for monsters is equal to their base move rate divided by 3. For example, a goblin with a base move rate of 6" would move 2 squares, or 10' per round; a giant ant with a move rate of 18" would move 6 squares, or 30' per round.

Experience Points and Level Advancement

Experience points (x.p.) are gained at a rate of 100 x.p. per HD of monster defeated and 1 x.p. per g.p. value of treasure found. After each adventure, earned experience should be divided evenly among the surviving characters. An experience level is gained when a character accrues experience points equal to his current level x 1000. Thus, a 1st level character would need to earn 1000 experience points to achieve 2nd level. A 2nd level character would need an additional 2000 experience points (for a total of 3000) to reach 3rd level, and so on.

Using the Modern Ascending Armor Class

When using this alternate method of combat, the player rolls a d20 and adds any bonuses to the result. These bonuses may include the character's Base-to-Hit bonus for their current level and any for bonuses from magic weapons. If the result is equal to or greater than the opponent's ascending Armor Class (listed second in brackets), the attack hits. Ascending Armor Class is most often used combined with the "Improvement of 'TO HIT' Rolls" rule below.

Improvement of "To Hit" Rolls

"TO HIT" roll numbers for characters improve as they gain experience levels. For knights, these numbers improve by 1 with every new level. Elves and dwarves improve by 1 for every 2 levels, and wizards' (and halflings) numbers improve by 1 for every 3 levels.

Optional Rules:

Creating Additional Character Classes - Today's kids are not natural, old-school gamers. The cartoons they watch, the games they play and the action figures they make believe with are all about the "powers" that the characters possess. Do not be surprised or offended when they ask you if they can play a "tiefling sorcerer that uses a blow gun" or a "half-dragon that flies and breathes fire" (actual examples). LET THEM! Just keep the following two suggestions in mind:

First, base each requested character off of one of the four regular character classes. For example, the tiefling sorcerer could be based upon the Elf character class, giving the new character the ability to fight and cast spells just like an elf and his armor class could also be the same because of his natural tough hide. In the same way, the half-dragon character could be based upon the Dwarf character class, giving him the ability to see in the dark and find hidden things.

Second, make sure each special or unique ability for these new characters is no more powerful than the abilities each regular character class already possesses. For example, let the half-dragon fly, but only let him fly as fast and as far as regular characters can normally walk. In the same way, the tiefling can use a blow gun (or a freezing ray or a blast of fire), but it attacks and does damage just like a bow and arrow.

These simple guidelines will enable kids to take ownership of the game and help keep things "fair" in the eyes of the players, which is very important to them!

Invisible Opponents - An invisible monster may be attacked if its general location is known. The attacker suffers a -4 penalty "TO HIT." Likewise, powerful monsters (those with sensitive smell, hearing, or those with more than 6 HD) will frequently be able to detect invisible characters.

Damage and Death - When a character or monster is hit, damage taken is deducted from its Hit Points. A monster that is reduced to 0 Hit Points is dead, but a player character reduced to 0 Hit Points is only unconscious. For every level of experience the player possesses, his Hit Points may cross one point into the negatives before he lapses into death.

Healing - A character will naturally recover 1 Hit Point per day if he has had 8 hours rest. In a safe environment (like a castle or a friendly village) 1-3 Hit Points will be restored for every full day of complete bed rest.

Spells - Spell casting is accomplished by means of a wizard's staff or an elf's wand, the number of spells per day being limited by the class and level of the caster. However, the specific selection of spells to be used need not be determined in advance. The wizard or elf player may use any listed spell of appropriate level at any time, so long as he is in possession of his staff or wand, and does not exceed his daily limit.

Action Checks - When a character attempts a difficult, tricky, or risk-fraught action, such as jumping a wide pit or sneaking past a monster, the Referee may assign a difficulty level of 6 through 1 to the attempted action, with 6 being the easiest and 1 the most difficult. The player will then roll a d6. If the roll is equal to or lower than the assigned number, the attempt succeeds.

Spells

Spells for wizards and elves are drawn from the traditional spell lists of both clerics and magic-users. The Referee may limit available spells to a few per spell level, based upon their understandability and ease of use by new or young players.

Here is a simple list of sample spells. It is intended for quick reference and therefore does not necessarily include every specific detail. Consult your favorite rpg rule book for further details. Please remember that these are only suggestions. The Referee is free to make any changes they desire for the spells in their game.

Spell Stat Block

Spell Name: R (Range of Spell); D (Duration of Spell); Effect of Spell.

First Level Spells

Cure Light Wounds: R Touch; D Instantaneous; The caster heals 1d6+1 Hit Points on themselves or someone else. At the Referee's discretion, it may also restore paralyzed characters.

Light: R 120 ft (40); D 2 hours; Causes an object to shine as brightly as a torch, illuminating a 15ft radius.

Sleep: R 240 ft (80); D Referee's Discretion; This spell puts enemies into an enchanted slumber (no saving throw is permitted). It can affect a number of creatures based on their Hit Dice: Less than 1 to +1 HD affects 2d6+3; 1+ to 2 HD affects 2d6; And 3+ to 4+1 affects 1d6. Creatures with over 5 HD are not affected by a Sleep spell.

Magic Missile: R 150 ft (50); D Instantaneous; An enchanted arrow flies from the caster's pointed finger and unerringly strikes the target for 1d6+1 points of damage.

Second Level Spells

Find Traps: R 30 ft (10); D 20 minutes; Allows the caster to perceive both magical and non-magical traps at a distance of 30 ft (10).

Invisibility: R 240 ft (80); D Until dispelled or an attack is made; A creature or object becomes totally invisible. The spell can be lifted by a remove curse or is ended immediately if the subject takes overtly hostile action. Otherwise, it will last indefinitely.

Speak with Animals: R 30 ft (10); D 1 hour; The caster can speak with animals within range. There is a chance that the animals will assist him, and they will not attack him or his party (unless they are mistreated or provoked).

Web: R 30 ft (10); D 8 hours; Fibrous, sticky webs fill an area up to 10 x 10 x 20 ft. It is extremely difficult to get through the mass of strands—it takes 10 minutes if a torch and sword (or a flaming sword) are used, and creatures larger than a horse can break through in 20 minutes. Humans take longer to break through— perhaps 30 to 40 minutes or longer at the Referee's discretion.

Third Level Spells

Fire Ball: R 240 ft (80); D Instantaneous; Hurls an explosive burst of flame, which detonates with a radius of 18 ft (6) and causes 1d6 damage per caster level, with a saving throw halving damage.

Fly: R Touch; D (Caster's level +1d6) x 10 minutes. Allows the target to fly at 120 ft (40) per turn.

Lightning Bolt: R 240 ft (80); D Instantaneous; This 60 ft long bolt of lightning causes 1d6 damage per caster level to everyone within its area of effect, with a saving throw halving damage.

Remove Curse: R Touch; D Instantaneous; Removes all curses from target.

Fourth Level Spells

Charm Monster: R 60 ft (20); D Until Dispelled; If the spell succeeds (saving throw allowed), the unfortunate creature falls under the caster's influence. Up to 3d6 monsters of fewer than 3 HD are affected.

Neutralize Poison: R Touch; D Instantaneous; Instantly removes the effects of any poisons from the target.

Polymorph: R 60 ft (20); Duration: 1 Hour + 10 minutes / caster level; Allows caster to take or grant the shape of anything he desires, but won't acquire any special combat abilities.

Wizard Eye: R 240 ft (80); D 1 hour; Allows caster to send a mobile invisible "eye" to scout for him. The eye moves at 120 ft (40) every ten minutes.

Fifth Level Spells

Hold Monster: R 120 ft (40); D 1 hour + 10 additional minutes for each of the caster's levels; This spell completely paralyzes a target or targets, stopping them from moving. The caster can target either 1d4 creatures (saving throw applies) or may instead target a single creature who must make their save at a -2 penalty.

Telekinesis: R 120 ft (40); Duration: 1 hour; The caster can move objects using mental power alone. The amount of weight he can lift and move is 20 pounds per level.

Teleport: R Referee's Discretion; D Instantaneous; Transports the target from place to place, regardless of the distance, provided that the caster knows the location.

Wall of Iron: R 60 ft (20); Duration 2 hours; Creates a 2.5 ft thick stone wall up to 75 ft (25) in length and 30 ft (10) in height.

MONSTERS

Here is a simple list of sample monster stats. It is intended for quick reference and therefore does not necessarily include details on a monster's special abilities and attacks. Consult your favorite monster book for further details. Please remember that these are only suggestions. The Referee is free to make any changes they desire for the monsters they use.

Dagger Monster Stat Block

Name: HD = Hit Dice; AC = Armor Class [Ascending Armor Class]; Atk = attack; Move (and in gaming squares); Save = Saving Throw; Special = any special attacks.

Basilisk: HD 6; AC 4 [15]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 6 (2) Save 10; Special: Petrifying gaze

Beetle, Giant Fire: HD 1+3; AC 4 [15]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 15

Black Pudding: HD 10; AC 6 [13]; Atk Strike (1d6); Move 6 (2); Save 6; Special: Acidic

Blink Dog: HD 6; AC 5 [14]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move: 12 (4); Save 10; Special: Blink ability

Bugbear: HD 3+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Weapon (1d6) or bite (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 13; Special: Surprise opponents

Centaur: HD 4; AC 5 [14]; Atk: Weapon (1d6) or kick (1d6); Move 18 (6); Save 12;

Centipede, Giant (small): HD 1d2 hp; AC 9 [10]; Atk Bite (1 hp); Move 12 (4); Save 16; Special: Poison (+4 modifier to opponent's saving throw)

Centipede, Giant (medium): HD 2; AC 5 [14]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 15 (5); Save 14; Special: Poison (+6 modifier to opponent's saving throw)

Centipede, Giant (large): HD 4; AC 0 [19]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 18 (6); Save 12; Special: Poison (+6 modifier to opponent's saving throw)

Cockatrice: HD 5; AC 6 [13]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 6 (2) / flying 18 (6); Save 11; Special: Bite turns bitten into stone

Djinni: HD 7+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Fist (2d6) or weapon (2d6); Move 9 (3) / flying 24 (8); Save 7; Special: Creation and illusion powers

Dragon, Fire-Breathing: HD 10; AC 2 [17]; Atk *Bite, *Breathe Fire; Move 12 (4) / flying 24 (8); Save 6; Special: They breathe fire in a cone-shape 90 feet long and roughly 30 feet wide at the base. *Hit points and damage are based upon the dragon's age according to the following:

Dragon's Age	Hit Points and Fire-Breathing Damage per Hit Dice
Hatchling	1 HP per HD
Young	2 HP per HD
Adult	2 HP per HD

Old	3 HP per HD
Very Old	4 HP per HD
Ancient	6 HP per HD

Dryad: HD 2; AC 5 [14]; Atk Dagger (1d6) or Charm; Move 12 (4); Save 14; Special: Cast Charm Person spell as a natural magical power with a -2 saving throw

Dwarf: HD 1+1; AC 4 [15]; Atk War Hammer (1d6); Move 6 (2); Save 15; Special: Spot hidden doors

Efreeti: HD 10; AC 3 [16]; Atk Fist or sword (2d6); Move 9 (3) / flying 24 (8); Save 6; Special: Wall of Fire

Elemental, Air: HD 10; AC 2 [17]; Atk: Strike (2d6); Move 36 (12); Save 6; Special: Whirlwind (30 feet wide, hurling any creature of 1 HD or less for great distances (almost certainly killing them). Elemental whirlwinds are approximately 100 feet tall.

Elemental, Earth: HD 10; AC 2 [17]; Atk Fist (2d6); Move 6 (2); Save 6; Special: Stone destruction

Elemental, Fire: HD 10; AC 2 [17]; Strike (2d6); Move 12 (4); Save 6; Special: Ignite materials

Elemental, Water: HD 10; AC 2 [17]; Atk Strike (2d6); Move 6 (2) / swimming 18 (6); Save 6; Special: Can overturn ships

Elf: HD 1+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Longbow (1d6) or sword (1d6); Move 12 (3); Save 15; Special: Cast spells with wand

Gargoyle: HD 4; AC 5 [14]; Atk Claw (1d6); Move 9 (3) / flying (5); Save 12

Gelatinous Cube: HD 4; AC 8 [11]; Atk Acidic Strike (1d6); Move 6 (2); Save 12; Special: Acidic Strike, Immune to lightning and cold

Ghoul: HD 2; AC 6 [13]; Atk Claw (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 14; Special: Paralyzing Touch

Giant, Hill: HD 8; AC 4 [15]; Atk Giant Club (2d6) or Hurl Boulder (2d8); Move 12 (4); Save 8

Gnoll: HD 2; AC 5 [14]; Atk Bite (1d6) or weapon (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 14

Goblin: HD 1-1; AC 6 [13]; Atk weapon (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 16; Special: -1 "to-hit" in sunlight

Gorgon: HD 8; AC 2 [17]; Atk Gore (1d6) or Stone Breath; Move 12 (4); Save 8; Special: Stone breath turns people to stone (60 foot range, saving throw applies)

Griffon: HD 7; AC 3 [16]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 12 (4) / flying 27 (9); Save 9

Harpy: HD 3; AC 7 [12]; Atk Talons (1d6); Move 6 (2) / flying 18 (6); Save 13; Special: Siren Song

Hell Hound: HD 4-7; AC 4 [15]; Atk Bite (1d6) or *Breathe Fire; Move 12 (4); Special: *Breathes fire in 10 ft area and inflicts 2hp damage per hit dice

Monster Table

Target's Armor Class [Ascending Armor Class]

Monster's Hit Dice	9[10]	8[11]	7[12]	6[13]	5[14]	4[15]	3[16]	2[17]	1[18]	0[19]	Monster's Saving Throw	Experience Points for the Monster
	Monster's Attack Roll (1d20) Needed to Hit											
< 1	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	16	50
1	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	15	100
2	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	14	200
3	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	13	300
4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	12	400
5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	11	500
6	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	10	600
7	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	9	700
8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	8	800
9	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7	900
10	2	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	6	1000

Hippogriff: HD 3+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Claws (1d6); Move 12 (4) / flying 27 (9); Save 13

Hobgoblin: HD 1+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 15

Human, Bandit: HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 15

Human, Berserker: HD 1+2; AC 7 [12]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 15; Special: Berserking

Human, Sergeant-at-Arms: HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 13

Human, Soldier: HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 15

Hydra: HD 5-12 (equals # of heads); AC 5 [14]; Attacks: 5-12 bites (one for each head and 1d6 damage from each bite attack); Move 9 (3); Save varies

Invisible Stalker: HD 8; AC 3 [16]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 8; Special: Flight, invisibility

Kobold: HD 1/2; AC 6 [13]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 6 (2); Save 16

Lizardman: HD 2+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Claws (1d6) or Sword (1d6); Move 6 (2) / swimming 12 (4); Save 14

Lycanthrope, Werewolf: HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk Bite (1d6) or Claw (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 13; Special: Only affected by silver or magical weapons, and are often humanoid—except for during a full moon, and so on

Minotaur: HD 6+4; AC 6 [13]; Atk Weapon (1d6) ; Move 12 (4); Save 10

Ogre: HD 4+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk Weapon (1d6+2); Move 9 (3); Save 12

Orc: HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 15

Purple Worm: HD 15; AC 6 [13]; Atk Bite (2d6) or Sting; Move 9 (3); Save 6; Special: Poison sting

Rat, Giant: HD 1-1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 16; Special: 5% are diseased

Roc: HD 12; AC 4 [15]; Atk Claw (2d6); Move 3 (1) / flying 30 (10); Save 6

Skeleton: HD 1/2; AC 8 [11]; Atk Strike (1d6) or Weapon (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 15

Slug, Giant: HD 12; AC 8 [11]; Atk Bite (2d6) or Spits Acid (2d6); Move 6 (2); Save 6

Spider, Giant: HD 2+2; AC 6 [13]; Atk Bite (Poisonous); Move 18 (6); Save 14; Special: Poisonous Bite

Troll: HD 6+3; AC 4 [15]; Atk Claw (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 10; Special: Regenerate 3 hp each attack round/turn.

Worg: HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 18 (6); Save 18

Wyvern HD 7; AC 3 [16]; Atk Bite (2d6) or Sting (2d6); Move 6 (2) / flying 24 (8); Save 9; Special: Sting is poisonous

Zombie: HD 1; AC 8 [11]; Strike (1d6) or weapon (1d6); Move 6 (2); Save 15; Special: Immune to sleep, charm.

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Combat Tables

Character Combat Table

Knight Level	Elf & Dwarf Level	Wizard Level	Target's Armor Class [Ascending Armor Class]							
			9 [10]	8 [11]	7 [12]	6 [13]	5 [14]	4 [15]	3 [16]	2 [17]
			Attack Roll (1d20) Needed to Hit							
1	1-2	1-3	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
2	3-4	4-5	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
3	5		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
4	300		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5	400		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Monster Combat Table

Monster's Hit Dice	Target's Armor Class [Ascending Armor Class]										Monster's Saving Throw	Experience Points for the Monster
	9[10]	8[11]	7[12]	6[13]	5[14]	4[15]	3[16]	2[17]	1[18]	0[19]		
Monster's Attack Roll (1d20) Needed to Hit												
< 1	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	16	50
1	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	15	100
2	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	14	200
3	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	13	300
4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	12	400
5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	11	500
6	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	10	600
7	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	9	700
8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	8	800
9	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7	900
10	2	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	6	1000

THE VILE WORM

An Adventure for 4 - 8 1st Level Characters

By Jimm Johnson with Jeff Lynk and John Adams •
Proofing: Leif Hamman, Mitch Williams, Colin Chapman •
Art by: Andy Taylor

Adventure Background

Deep within the forest, an ancient oak tree has grown huge, twisted, and evil. Long ago, an evil group haunted these woods and this tree became the place where they held their evil rites. Below it, they carved out a room where victims were chained up and given to the giant worm they worshipped like a god. After a long time, the cult ceased and left the old tree, but it was discovered again hundreds of years later by a crazy old warrior. He thinks the tree whispers secrets to him, and believes the tree has asked him to make his home here and to find people to feed to the worm in the caves below. Now, living as an old hermit within the tree, he goes out every night looking for people to kidnap and take back with him.

A few nights ago the hermit found the family of Bior the shepherd in their house at the edge of the forest. He knocked Bior out and made Bior's wife, Mira, and their son, Cullen, drag Bior's unconscious body through the forest to the huge, ancient oak. The mad hermit then trapped Mira and Cullen in a cage in a room below the tree, and gave Bior to the "almighty worm."

Starting the Adventure

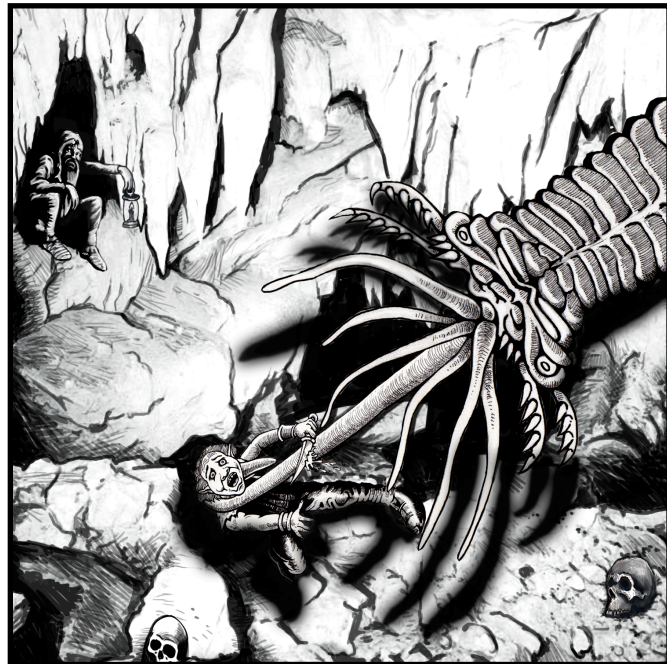
You and your friends are together eating a noon meal when an older man enters the inn and comes right to your table as soon as he sees you.

"Heroes," he says, "something terrible has happened! My neighbors, Bior the Shepherd, his wife Mira and their son, Cullen have all disappeared! I went over to their house this morning when I noticed that I had not seen them in two days. When I got their house, I saw that their front door was open and all of the furniture inside was knocked over. It looks like someone came into their house and took them! There were even marks on the ground where it looks like someone dragged them into the forest! I can show you the way to their house. My friends, please help us!"

Once at the house, the players will see that the older man told them the truth. The drag marks on the ground will be very easy for the heroes to follow and they will lead them right to the old, oak tree.

Area 1: The Hollow of the Oak:

It is up to the Referee, but if the characters are trying to be very quiet as they near the tree, they will only be attacked by the lynx up in the tree during the first round of combat. The hermit and his wolf will leave the tree and attack the party on the next round.



But if the characters are not very quiet as they approach the tree, the hermit will hear them and be ready to attack. The hermit will come running out of the tree with his sword in hand, yelling a war cry, to attack the heroes. His "dog" (wolf) will be with him and will also attack the heroes. The lynx will jump down out of the tree to attack the party too.

Lynx: HD 1; HP 3 AC 6 [11]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move: 12 (4); Save 15

Mad Hermit: HD 2+2; HP 8; AC 7 [12]; Atk Weapon (1d6); Move 12 (4); Save 14; Special: When attacking with his war cry, the Mad Hermit gets a +2 bonus to hit

Wolf: HD 2+2; HP 6; AC 7 [12]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move: 18 (6); Save 14

The opening in the tree is hidden behind two large bushes. The trunk of this huge oak has rotted and become hollow and created a small room within. This is where the hermit lives and sleeps when he is not out hunting. The room holds a cask of wine, a wooden table and chair, a rough wooden cup and plate, and a bed of loose dirt and leaves.

Beneath this pile of leaves, the hermit has buried a small chest near the wall of the oak (marked as 'x' on the map). It contains 23 gold pieces, 33 silver pieces and an old iron ring with 3 large keys on it. NOTE: These keys are for the cages, shackles, and table irons in Area 2., below.

There is a hidden trap door beneath the dirt in the center of the room. It is easily found because it makes a distinct hollow sound when any character steps on it. It opens onto a rough spiral staircase carved out of the dirt and rock. At the bottom of the stairs, a passage leads to a barred iron door.

Area 2 - Chamber of Feeding:

The iron door opens onto a 90' x 90' chamber with a 30' high ceiling. The walls are reinforced with stone brick, but in many places the bricks have crumbled and fallen away, revealing loose dirt. The room contains the following:

Area 2A: There are two 10' x 20' cages, one along the north wall and one to the south. The cages contain scraps of clothing. In the cage to the north are Mira and her young son, Cullen. They are hiding among the debris, but can be easily found by anyone checking the cages. Mira is in a state of shock and will not speak. Cullen keeps repeating, "A monster got Papa! A monster got Papa!"

A very long pile of knotted rope lies between Area 2A and Area 2B on the south wall of the room. This old rope is bound to an iron ring that is securely attached to the wall. The character can use this rope to lower themselves down into Area 3.

Area 2B: Three pairs of iron leg-shackles are bolted to the floor.

Area 2C: Two large stone tables are in the east part of the room. They are equipped with hand- and foot-irons for holding a person.

Area 2D: Wall racks containing whips, prods, and other tools of torture can be found here.

Area 2E: A large iron bell stands here, mounted between two upright stone slabs. A rope attached to the rim of the bell rises up to the ceiling. If any character is able to check this (by climbing or other means), they will find that the rope disappears into the ceiling through a small hole.

Area 2F: This room is hidden behind a secret door that is opened by pressing a stone brick to the right side of the door. It is in this 10' square room that the cavern worm can be summoned by pulling the rope, which rings the "dinner bell." There is a peephole that lets a person watch.

If the bell is rung, a deep, barely audible tone will sound. The air will begin to rumble with a low, almost painful throbbing and the floor and ceilings in the room will begin to vibrate. Within 1d4 rounds, the tentacled cavern worm will emerge from the central hole in the floor. The monster expects to feed, and will attack any living thing it sees. (See Area 3). If the worm suffers 8 HP of damage or more, it will try to retreat down the hole and back to its lair in Area 3.

Area 3 - Caverns of the Worm:

For hundreds of years, a tentacled cavern worm has lived here. When the mad hermit discovered the purpose of the bell in the feeding chamber (Area 2), he believed it was his calling to feed the monster.

The upper area of the cavern is about 40' across. A steep slope on the south side descends about 40' to a ledge just above the shaft that leads to the worm's lair (Area 3B). The opening to another cavern (Area 3A) can be seen from the ledge. To get to this area, a character must somehow cross the mouth of the shaft that leads to Area 3B.

It is up to the Referee, but a character might be able to climb the sidewalls. Other characters may attempt to leap across, but the shaft opening is quite wide (12-15 feet). However, any character that fails would certainly die from the fall. For the sake of fun, the Referee might want to remind the heroes about the long rope in Area 2.

Area 3A: The cavern worm's treasure is found here in great piles of mixed coin and other precious objects. It includes 2,450 copper pieces, 1,120 silver pieces, 598 gold pieces, a gold torc engraved with twining dragons worth 75 gold pieces and 2 large green agates worth 30 gold pieces each.



NOTE: If the worm has not already been slain, it will be lurking in the lower cavern (Area 3B) unless some noise in Area 3A gets its attention. Characters throwing coins into a sack, arguing, or shouting up the shaft to Area 2, are all examples of what will alert the worm. If this happens, it will quietly climb into this area in 1d4 rounds, staying in the shadows on the ceiling above the characters that are in the treasure cave. Unless a character tells the Referee that they he is watching the shadows or the ceiling, the worm has a very good chance of not being detected.

Once positioned above the characters, it will cling to the ceiling with its back legs, while its head and tentacles lunge down upon its target. If all of the characters in this area have been paralyzed, the cave worm will quickly drag them down into Area 3B, where they will be impregnated with worm eggs if they are not rescued within an hour.

Area 3B: This slime filled cavern is the home of the tentacled cavern worm.

Tentacled Cavern Worm: HD 3; HP 16; AC 5 [14]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 9 (3); Save 13; Special: paralyzing slime

This creature is a giant, bloated worm with large black eyes and tentacles surrounding its mouth. These tentacles secrete sticky ooze that may instantly paralyze any creature it touches for 24 hours (if they fail a saving throw). However, any sort of magical healing will restore full movement to a character.

The worm lives in this underground cavern and often scavenges for food. It is hostile and will attack anything it can eat - or use as a host for its eggs! A character attacked in this manner can only be saved by applying magical healing within 3 days. The worm is a very good climber and has no penalty to its movement rate when walking on ceilings or walls.

The worm's translucent slime also coats the floor and walls here. A smart character will see that a large number of small flying bugs have died in the slime. Anyone falling into it or touching it with bare skin risks becoming completely paralyzed.

If the cave worm has not already been killed, it will be lurking in the shadows at the back of this cave. It will try to remain hidden, and try to position itself and attack using the same tactics as described above for Area 3A. There are four bodies in this cavern. The first three are small, green man-creatures with sharp fangs (goblins) and the fourth is a human male (Bior, the shepherd).

Worm eggs have been laid in all of them. The young worms growing inside the goblin bodies have used them to feed on and the goblins are now quite dead. The worms gestating within do pose a threat. The shepherd, however, is still alive—though just barely. If magical healing is not applied to him within 6 hours, he will die because of the worm larva within him.

Every round, there is a chance (1-2 on 1d6) that 1d4 hatchlings will emerge from a dead goblin. The hatchlings are 3' long, and have five 1' tentacles (but only one attack per round). The paralyzing slime of the hatchlings is not as strong as that of the ancient cavern worm.

Tentacled Cavern Worm (Hatchlings): HD <1; HP 1; AC 8 [11]; Atk Bite (1 HP); Move 6 (2); Save 16; Special: weaker paralyzing slime (+2 bonus to saving throw)

Revenge of the Eldritch Oak

If the heroes rescue the shepherd and his family and kill the giant cavern worm, the Oak itself will become angry and awaken. As the heroes emerge from the hollow tree, its limbs will come to life and attack those responsible for the destruction of its servants and the plundering of its treasures. In addition, the oak will also try to charm a member of the party and turn them against their friends.

This ancient tree may have been a very evil treant that lost its ability to move around and or speak. It will brood for hundreds of years without revealing its magical nature. It can detect living creatures within 120' of its gigantic, gnarled trunk, and will try to charm them to act as its servants and as guardians of its secrets. Its charm ability (similar to a simple Charm Person spell) may be used once per day. The oak communicates with its charmed servants by telepathy, which takes the form of whispers within the mind of the victims.

Eldritch Oak: HD 4; HP 21; AC 3 [16]; ATK Strike (1d6); MOVE None; SAVE 15; SPECIAL: Charm.

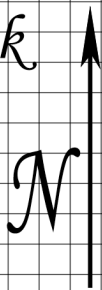
After defeating the eldritch oak, the grateful shepherd and family will tearfully thank the party for saving them and promise to provide food and a safe place to stay whenever the characters travel through this area in the future. In addition, the local village may hold a celebration in honor of the heroes.

Suggested Experience Point Table

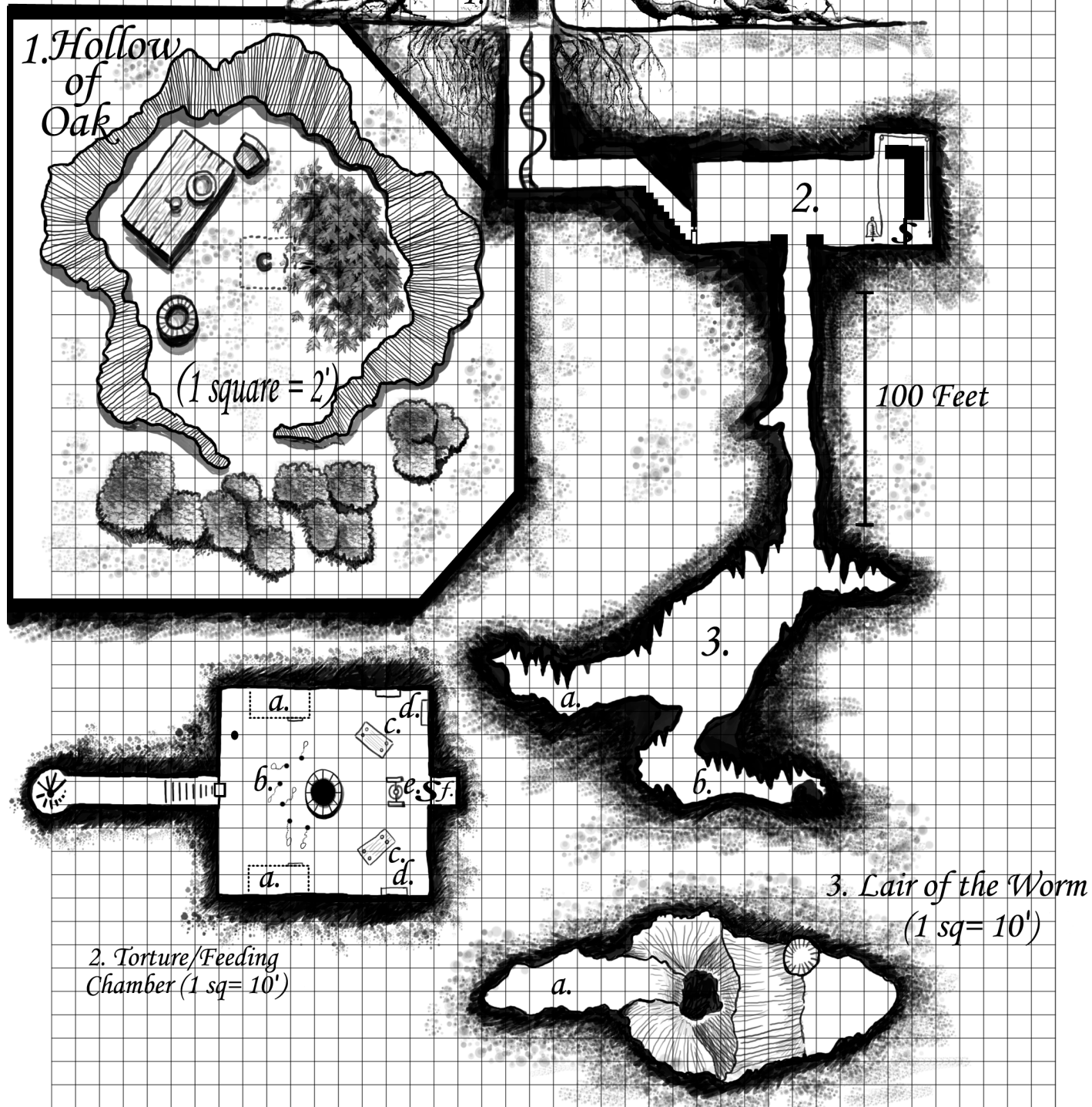
Lynx	100 XP
Mad Hermit	250 XP
Wolf	100 XP
Tentacled Worm	400 XP
Worm Hatchlings	50 XP for each
Defeating Eldritch Oak	500 XP
Rescuing Bior, Mira and Cullen	100 XP for each

Total:

Mad
Hermit's
Oak



1 Square = 10 Foot



1. Hollow
of
Oak

(1 square = 2')

2.

100 Feet

3.

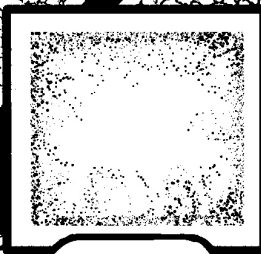
3. Lair of the Worm
(1 sq = 10')

2. Torture/Feeding
Chamber (1 sq = 10')

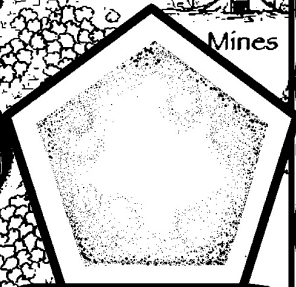
DAGGER



CHARACTER PORTRAIT



LEVEL



HIT POINTS



ARMOR CLASS



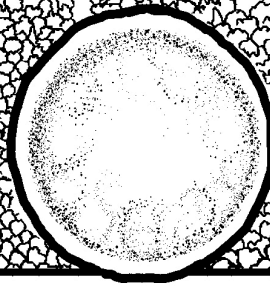
CHARACTER'S NAME



CHARACTER'S CLASS

Special Ability:

Equipment:



SAVING THROWS

"TO HIT" ARMOR CLASS:

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

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Allen 2013

Optional Dagger Tables

These charts are just tools for the Referee to use in helping kids have a great time gaming. As always, it is up to the Referee to interpret, tweak or change the results. Not every result will fit each gaming session. Rather than just providing results that run the gamut, most of these entries have been designed to help make memorable moments in gaming with children - so have fun!

Combat:

Any time that a natural "1" is rolled on a to-hit d20 roll, consult the **Fumble Table** for the results.

Any time that a natural "20" is rolled on a to-hit d20 roll, consult the **Critical Hit Table** for the results.

Spell Casting:

Please note that the **Spell Charts** listed here assume that the normal rules for casting spells (1 or 2 spells per level per day) have been replaced with this rule: Spell casters may attempt to cast one spell from the list of spells they know each turn by rolling a d20 and consulting the **Simple Spell Table** for the results.

Critical Hit Table

Roll 1d6 + your level and any magical bonuses

3 - 5 *Disarm - Your attack knocks your opponent's weapon out of his hands / or +2d4 to your damage roll.

6 - 7 **You Got Lucky** - Add +1 to your damage roll.

8 - 9 **Not Bad** - Add +2 to your damage roll.

10 *Knocked Down - Your attack knocks your opponent off of his feet. If he fails a saving throw, he is knocked out for 1d4 turns / or +2d4 to your damage roll.

11 **Fighting Machine** - Your attack is so successful against your opponent that you do + 2d6 damage and gain an extra attack for the same round.

12+ **Monster Slayer** - Your attack is so vicious it causes an extra +3d6 damage and stuns your opponent so that he cannot attack for one round.

*If fighting a non-humanoid monster that cannot be knocked down, disarmed, blinded or knocked out, just add +2d4 to your damage roll.

Not Paying Attention Table

Roll 1d4

1 **Jabbering** - You spend so much time talking about what you are going to do that you end up losing all actions for the round.

2 **Fusing** - You start an argument with a ally and spend your entire round trying to convince him he is wrong and you are right.

3 **Tantrum** - You get so upset yelling about how the party is not following your plan that you end up losing all actions for the round.

4 **Day Dreaming** Lost in your own thoughts, you forget to attack / cast a spell and end up losing all actions for the round.

Fumble Table

Roll 1d6

1 **Weapon Breaks** - Poor use of your weapon causes it to break. Magic weapons get a saving throw.

2 **Drop Weapon** - Your attack is so poor that you drop your weapon. You will spend your next round picking it back up.

3 **Ally Drops Weapon** - Your attack is so poor that your nearest ally drops his weapon. They will spend their next round picking it back up.

4 **Not Helpful** - Your attack is so poor that you end up causing 1 HP of damage to a nearby ally.

5 **Roll on Gross Table**

6 **Roll on Not Paying Attention Table**

Gross Table

Roll 1d4

1 **Poop or Slime** - You step (or fall) into a pile of some kind of animal or monster poop / slime and spend your next round trying to clean it off.

2 **Snot** - You sneeze during you attack / spell casting and get green snot all over yourself. You spend the round cleaning yourself off.

3 **Fart** - You pass gas during your attack / spell casting. You spend the next round telling everyone that it was not you.

4 **Ripped Pants** - You rip your pants trying to attack / cast a spell on your opponent. You spend the next round trying to cover your back side.

Simple Spell Table

Roll 1d20 + your spell caster's level

1	*Roll on Spell Misfire Table
2 - 10	Spell Fails
11 - 18	Spell Works as Usual
19 - 22	Spell has Maximum Effectiveness
23+	Spell has x2 the Maximum Effectiveness

Summoning Table

Roll 1d4

1	Minor Demon - The misfired spell energy opens a portal that a small demon comes through. You must fight the demon until it is destroyed before you can do anything else. Minor Demon: HD 1; AC 6 [13]; ATK claws (1d6); Move 9 (3) / flying 9 (3).
2	Hobo - The misfired spell energy opens a portal that a hobo (a refugee from the trans-dimensional Hobo-Ninja War) comes through. He will ask for food and will not stop bothering you about it until you feed him something. As soon as he eats, the hobo will disappear.
3	Little Girl - The misfired spell energy opens a portal that a little girl comes through. She will talk your leg off until you spend two rounds paying attention to her. As soon as you do, she will disappear.
4	Himalayan Fighting Chicken - The misfired spell energy opens a portal that a Himalayan Fighting Chicken comes through. You must fight the creature until it is destroyed before you can do anything else. Himalayan Fighting Chicken: 3 HP; AC 8 [11]; ATK beak (1d6); Move 6 (2).

Spell Misfire Table

Roll 2d6 + the level of the spell

3	Lose Spell - You cast the spell so poorly that you lose the ability to cast that particular spell for the rest of the day.
4	Roll on the Not Paying Attention Table
5 - 6	Smoke - You cast the spell so poorly that the only result is that the spell energy released forms a dark cloud of smoke which envelopes the party and cause them to lose their next round.
7 - 8	Blinding Flash - You cast the spell so poorly that the only result is that the spell energy explodes in a blinding flash that stuns everyone within 24 ft (8) for the remainder of the round.
9	Burnt - You cast the spell so poorly that the only result is that the spell energy singes everyone within 24 ft (8) for 1 HP of damage per level of the spell.
10	Roll on Gross Table
11	Roll on Change Table
12+	Roll on Summon Table

Change Table

Roll 1d4

1	Sleep - The misfired spell causes the caster or a member of the party to fall asleep (random roll) for the rest of the day.
2	Shrink - The misfired spell cause the caster or a member of the party (random roll) to shrink to 1 ft tall for the rest of the day.
3	Grow Feathers - The misfired spell cause the caster or a member of the party (random roll) to grow feathers all over their body for the rest of the day, after which they fall out.
4	Frog - The misfired spell cause the caster or a member of the party (random roll) to shrink to 1 ft tall for the rest of the day.