

Meddling Kids™



An Introductory Role-Playing Experience

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An Introductory Role-Playing Experience
Stage One of The Starter System™

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Mom, Dad, Beth, Schroeder, Therrel, Treva, JR, & Jean (my family!);

Every animal that has ever accepted food from me;

but most of all, my best friend ever and the coolest guy

I've ever known—Brett. I love you very much.

PLEASE, do not go outside and solve mysteries on your own! This is a game, and if you play it as a game, then you will have fun. Real mysteries are solved by the police. If you want to be a police officer when you're older, that's great! But until then, just practice safe at home, okay?

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Table of Contents

Where
are things?



Introduction:

Let's Pretend! - page 5

Chapter One:

Character Creation - page 10

Chapter Two:

The GM's Guide - page 18

Chapter Three:

The Rules - page 32

Chapter Four:

The Dragon's Eye! - page 50

Epilogue:

Does it End? - page 64

Appendices:

Extra Stuff! - page 66





Introduction

Let's Pretend

A Quick 'Toon History

Once upon a time, on Friday, October 28, 1892, Emile Reynaud showed an audience at the Musée Grévin in Paris, France a new invention. He took a series of hand-drawn characters on a strip of film and ran it through a machine he called the Praxinoscope. Emile's drawings came to life on a big screen, and the audience laughed and clapped. The three films, "A Good Beer," "Poor Pierrot," and "Clowns and Dogs" were the talk of Paris, and they showed at the Musée for the next eight years to over 500,000 people. Everyone loved the new moving "cartoons." However, Emile grew tired of his films, and went on to do more important, more serious and more "grown-up things" with his Praxinoscope.

But, thank goodness, not everyone at that time made the decision to "grow up," like Mr. Reynaud.

Jump forward to 1962, a time when our parents (and maybe our grandparents) were watching cartoons on television. They only had three channels to choose from: ABC, NBC and CBS. That year, the big three decided to give the kids of America a cool gift—Saturday morning cartoons! Many of those shows featured talking animals and superheroes—pretty fantastic, really imaginative, but not too easy to relate to the average kid's life. About seven years later, a big (but not too grown-up) executive at CBS, Fred Silverman, had a new idea: why not show the kids themselves doing fun things in cartoons, like going on adventures and solving mysteries with a crazy, cartoon companion? A new kind of cartoon was born, and soon afterward, a lot of animation studios were making cartoons about kids like us having wild adventures, but still showing the adults that we're just as smart as they are. Maybe even smarter.

What's an RPG?

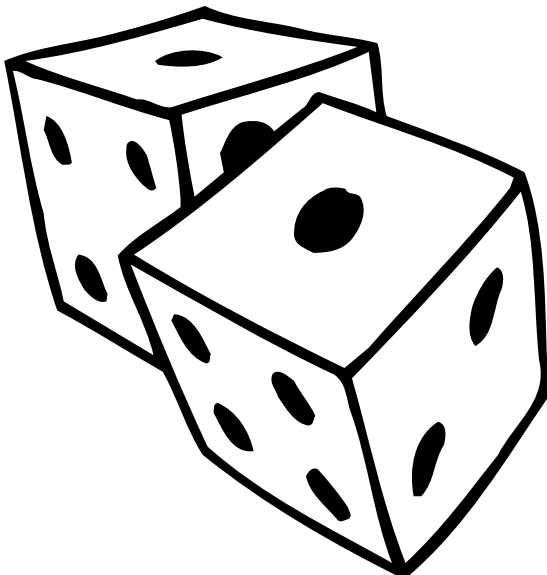
Ever play Let's Pretend? You know the game: you say to your friends, "Hey, let's pretend we're a bunch of super-ninjas who can



summon a dragon to fight off the evil forces of the universe so we can save the world.” You may have even played Let’s Pretend at school—the teacher may say, “Okay, let’s pretend we lived back in ancient times.” Actors do it on stage, in movies, and on television. It’s the world’s easiest game to play: you decide who’s going to be which character, what you’re going to do, how you’ll do it, and then just act it out. Simply put: you tell a story.

Now, let’s take it a step up. A Role-Playing Game (or RPG, for short) is just a slightly more advanced version of Let’s Pretend. It has guidelines, it has a setting, it has statistics, and it even has its own vocabulary. At first, all these things may seem real restrictive—why so many rules just to tell a story? Actually, the guidelines take care of a lot of little details and allow you more freedom to develop the character you play. Rules are a part of any game, even Let’s Pretend!

You may already be familiar with one type of RPG: computer. They differ greatly from the type in this book, which is called a pen-and-paper RPG. Both allow you to pretend to be a character in a story, but, that’s where the similarity ends. Computer RPG’s, while



action-filled and cool-looking, are totally restrictive. You can only go as far as the game’s software will allow. Although pen-and-paper RPGs move a little slower and get a little more involved, you can make your character do much more, like learn to play the tuba, or suddenly develop a fear of green olives. Pen-and-paper RPGs also



allow for a really cool excuse to hang out with your friends (or your family, if they want to play, too) without waiting for a turn to use the controls.

There is one more kind of RPG—it's called Live Action Role Playing, or LARP (funny word, ain't it?).LARPs allow the players to physically act out the story.

People who LARP

dress up in costumes as their character, often using fake items, or "props," to make the acting seem more realistic. Sometimes they may go to a park or some other location (with permission, of course) to give the feeling of really "being there."LARPs also have their own set of rules and guidelines, such as no real hitting or hurting anyone. LARPing isn't too different from being in the school play; the difference is that, in a LARP, there's no script or audience. They just make it up as they go along, and have a lot of fun doing it!



How Does Meddling Kids Fit In?

Meddling Kids is a pen-and-paper RPG. You won't need a computer or a lot of collectable cards or a fancy costume to play. As a matter of fact, the things you need to play this game may already be in your own home—a pencil or pen, paper, some six-sided dice, an imagination, and some friends or family. And this book. That's it.



Like all RPGs, Meddling Kids has its own world, its own story setting. Some RPGs are set in a fantasy world full of dragons and wizards; some are dark and scary, full of vampires and werewolves. Your brother, sister, friends, or even your parents may have played some of those RPGs. The world of Meddling Kids isn't as scary or weird as other RPGs—it's just the world outside your door. The way things are today are the way things are in "Meddling Kids." In case you haven't already guessed, the world of Meddling Kids is about a group of teenagers and their special friend who get together to solve mysteries and check out weird happenings that are going on around them—just like some of your favorite Saturday morning cartoons!

Just like any game, an RPG has rules, and Meddling Kids is no exception. Don't freak out; the rules in this book are very helpful and not very difficult to figure out. They also keep the game from getting boring. Really. Without the rules, everyone would be a super-strong super-brain. *Boring!!* Just like in real life, our limitations along with our strengths make us cool and unique people. Getting the characters to work together, using their strengths to solve the mystery, is what makes the game fun to play. Besides, the rules aren't very strict at all. It's okay to bend a rule or two, as long as everybody playing is okay with bending the rule. You'll see as you start playing yourself!

Another thing that Meddling Kids has (just like all other RPGs) is a Game Master, or GM for short. This is the person who runs the game, kind of like a referee in football or the umpire in baseball. Often, the GM has played other RPGs, or has already played "Meddling Kids." If you've never played an RPG yourself, you may want to let a more experienced person (like your parents or an older brother or sister) take this job. The GM is responsible for knowing the rules of the game and making sure that everyone follows them. A GM is never bossy or too strict about the rules, either; he or she must use good and fair judgment at all times. But, the GM's job isn't always so serious. The GM also creates the framework of the story—this includes the setting, the people that



the player's characters will encounter (also called Non-Player Characters, or NPCs), and a loose, unfinished storyline called the plot. To add to the fun, the GM has a special job in "Meddling Kids;" he or she will play a special character called a Wild Card. But, we'll talk about that later on in the GM's section of this book. And, as soon as you understand playing the game, you'll get the chance to be a GM, too!

So, what do you think? Are you ready to play? Then, let's get started!





Chapter One

Character Creation

Who Do You Want To Be?

Welcome to the first step in playing Meddling Kids—Character Creation. For many people who have played RPGs for a long time, making up a new character to play is half the fun. To make things easier to understand, we'll build a sample character alongside each instruction.

Creating the Background

The biggest (and most fun) part of any RPG is deciding who you will be. You have many things to think about when making up your character. What does your character look like? What does he or she wear? Is your character from the town where the story takes place, or is your character from another town (or maybe another country)? How does your character act most of the time: smart, serious, funny, cool, crazy, absent-minded? What does he or she do best? What does he or she not do so well? Any hobbies or interests? Does he or she have any secrets? What's their family like? What does he or she want to be when they grow up? All these things (and more!) make up your character's history, or background, to use the RPG word.

Some people will play a character that is similar to themselves; this can be the easiest character to play, especially if you've never played an RPG before. But, a truly creative player will stretch their imagination and think of a character that is quite different from who they (the player) actually are. For instance, are you the person at school who is smart, always the first to raise your hand to answer a question, or maybe the person who helps everybody with homework? Then, perhaps you could try to be someone who is strong and athletic, like the guy who always saves the weaker kids from the bully, or the girl on the soccer team who's fast enough to always make the winning goal. Maybe you're the person at school



whom everyone else tends to overlook, who's shy and kind of hard to notice. You could try playing a popular person, like the class president, or the gal who knows everything about fashion and boys. Playing your opposite can be really interesting; sometimes you find out that the people who seem the least like you can actually have a whole lot in common with you.

A Very Special Note About Playing Your Opposite: It is totally cool to play a character that is not the same gender as you. In other words, if you're a girl, it is okay to play a guy, and if you're a guy, it's okay to play a girl. No big deal; this is just a game. It takes a really clever and imaginative player to give this a try. And, it can be really cool to see what the other gender goes through in everyday life; you gain a real appreciation for what's different and what's the same. Okay, we all know that some kids (and some grown-ups, too) might give you a hard time about this. Whatever! This is your character, not theirs. These kinds of people really aren't the people you'd want to play with anyway—they obviously can't hack role-playing games and maybe should go play another kind of game. Be true to yourself, and to your character, too. That's the real idea behind RPGs!

And, if you just want to play someone that's your same gender, that's cool, too. No big deal; it's just a game.

Once you figure out your character's background, write it down in a paragraph or two. It doesn't have to be a big story; just some notes for you and the GM. Here's the background for a sample character, a guy named Weldon "Clutch" Sellers:

Weldon Sellers, known to everyone as "Clutch," is a big, burly guy with blond hair and blue eyes. When he was a baby, he'd "clutch" his teddy bear real tight and not let go of it. He is from Port Juliet and is a sophomore at Patrick Henry High School. He plays nose tackle for the football team. His mom is a stay-at-home mom, and his dad owns and operates a used car lot (his dad used to play football in college, too). Clutch isn't always too book-smart, but he has a big heart and very good instincts about people. He is a loyal friend; his best friend is Andrea, who helps him out with his homework. He has a secret crush on Andrea, but has never told



anyone. Clutch also likes to go camping, and is a member of the Nature Scouts. He hopes one day to play pro football.

You don't have to go into a lot of detail about your character; after all, your character is supposed to grow as you play. Your character will experience new things in each game and, as a result, these things will reflect in his or her personality over time. Just like real life.

Archetype

Ever notice that some people seem to share the same traits? Almost everyone who does sports seems physically fit. Almost everyone who reads a lot seems smart. Almost everyone who is outgoing has a lot of friends. And so on. In this game, these traits are gathered up in one character and called an archetype (say "ar-ka-type").

Here are the archetypes used in Meddling Kids:

The Jock—the strong adventurer who's got the muscle and the courage

The Fluff—the attractive character that becomes the focus of all love interests

The Brain—the smart one in the group

The Goof—the wacky character who always sees the humor in any situation

The Temper—the emotionally driven character that can motivate others into action; sometimes a trickster or a rebel





The Sidekick—the dependable one who’s always there in a jam

The Innocent—the optimist who always sees the best in everyone and everything

Take a good look at your character, and figure out which archetype he or she is most like. For instance, our character, Clutch, is a very athletic football player. He fits best as a Jock.

You may find that your character will fit in two or more archetypes. Sorry; you can only pick one archetype for your character. That’s the rules, and later on, you’ll see why it’s important to pick only one archetype. If you need help, ask the GM or maybe the other players for their opinion. The group may find it easiest if there is only one of each archetype in the Clique. The Clique is the name of the group of kids that are running around solving mysteries. You can call them a group, a team, or whatever you want in your game, but in this book, every time we talk about the group of characters, we call them a Clique. If you want more than one person playing the same archetype, ask the GM if it’s okay—it may work out. After all, even though two characters may be Jocks, they can still be different individuals.

Stats

So, how is it that two characters of the same archetype can still be two different individuals? Easy! That’s where stats come into play. Stats represent and measure certain aspects of each character: how smart you are, how strong you are, how fast you are and how tough you are. The four stats used in this game are:



Strength—the physical strength of the character when lifting, carrying, throwing, or hitting things



Moves—how quickly the character can run and dodge, and how coordinated he or she is



Smarts—not just how much your character knows, but how well he or she can use it



Health—the measure of how much of a beating your character can take, as well as their immunity to disease and their level of energy

You get to determine how much of each stat your character has, but there's a catch: the numbers of creation points spent on all four stats cannot add up to more than 24, and each stat can be no higher than ten. In RPG terms, you have 24 creation points to spend, with a limit of ten per stat. A plain ordinary, everyday character would have six in each stat ($6 + 6 + 6 + 6 = 24$), but playing that kind of character would get very boring, very quickly. Mix your numbers to fit your character's background and archetype. To see how this works, let's do Clutch's stats.

Stats for Clutch

Strength—9

Moves—4

Smarts—3

Health—8

$9 + 4 + 3 + 8 = 24$

You can also tell a great deal about a character just by looking at the numbers on the stats. For instance, with Clutch, you can tell he's practically built like a big, steadfast brick wall—his strength and his health are very high and his moves are low. If you need a character who can stop a charging bad guy and keep him from going anywhere, Clutch is your man. However, if you need a character to figure out where the bad guy's hideout is, or to solve the Ancient Maze of the Egyptian Pharaoh, you may not want Clutch to help; his smarts stat is very low. Stats are a great tool to help with the strategy of your team; by working together and using everyone's strengths, you can solve the mystery and save the day!



Abilities

We all have something we do well. Some of us can juggle, ride a horse, draw pictures, cook a fancy meal, or eat a lot of ice cream without getting sick. Some of us may have a special area of knowledge, like American history, modern poetry, gardening, or the origin of every comic book superhero. Abilities are the special things that your character knows or can do.

Just as you do with the stats, you get to pick which abilities you'd like your character to have. On page 68 of this book is a complete list of all the abilities used in this game. Take time to look through them all, then decide which ones best suit your character based on his or her archetype and stats.

Be sensible about this; for instance, our strong guy Clutch would definitely have the ability Immovable (once again, take a look at his high Strength and Health and his low Moves), but it would be unlikely that he'd have Bookworm, since his Smarts stat is very low.

Again, there's a catch—you can only spend 26 creation points on your abilities. You'll find a complete list of all the abilities on page 68. The cost of each ability is located next to its name. The costs vary according to how common or how powerful the ability is. Here's the good news: remember your archetype? Each archetype gets one free ability! You don't have to spend any of your points to get your archetype ability.



Here is a list of the one special free ability each archetype gets:

Jock—Sporty

Brain—Bookworm

Goof—Clown

Fluff—Flirt

Sidekick—Best Friend

Temper—Stir The Pot

Innocent—Strong Willed

This is how the 26 points were spent on Clutch's abilities:

Sporty—0 (*his free ability for being the Jock*)

Immovable—5

Nosey—2

Fearless—6

Outdoorsman—4

Intuition—8

Bottomless Stomach—1

Total Cost of abilities—26 ($5+2+6+4+8+1=26$)

It's okay for the characters in the Clique to have some of the same abilities. Each character will have the ability to a different degree because the ability is used in conjunction with a stat. But, there will be more on this later about using your stats and abilities in the "How To Play" section of this book.

You may find that, after picking out your character's abilities, you may have a point or two left over. Unfortunately, you cannot save leftover creation points for a later time. Creation points can only be used during the creation of the character. You need to use all of your points when building your character on abilities, or you lose those points.

You've done it! You now have a completed Meddling Kids character! You can keep all of your character's information on a plain sheet of paper, or you can download a special Character Sheet from the Meddling Kids website (www.meddlinggames.com). Remember to make sure it's okay with your parents to go online.





Chapter Two

The Game Master's Guide

Building A Story

Are you a leader? Are you the president of a club or the captain of the kickball team? Are you the one that everyone asks to read the rules of a new board game or video game? Are you the one everybody asks *Where should we eat?* or *What movie should we go see?* Or, maybe you're just the one in the group who has a lot of cool ideas, says them out loud, and everybody seems to think that your ideas are pretty good.

Then, maybe, you'd like to be a Game Master!

The Game Master (or GM, for short) is the person who runs the game. He or she pulls from his imagination the world that all the Meddling Kids live in—the city or town, the people who live there, the things that happen—everything. The Game Master creates a living story, and weaves that tale around the players' characters. The Game Master holds the power to make decisions about the fate of the characters, almost making him or her the King Of The Universe!

Yeah, right. Let's get back down to earth, okay?

In other words, since the Game Master is in charge, the Game Master is responsible for the game itself. You need to know the rules, your players, and their characters. You need to prepare your story, but you need to be flexible with the story, too. And you must always be true, fair, and balanced in all that you do as a GM.

Sound tough? Maybe. But, you're up for the challenge. And this section is here to help you. After all, this is just a game. What makes this game special is that you get to play as well—the GM plays the important role of the Wild Card. But, more on that later.



First, there are a number of things as leader that you must keep in mind.

Rules

Of course, as a GM, it helps to know the rules. As a matter of fact, take a moment, right now, and go to Chapter 3, page 32, and read the rules. Don't try to memorize them, just become familiar. Go ahead, read it now, and then come back to this spot. We'll wait.

Finished? Good. Now, here's your Number One Rule for Being GM: Don't stress over the rules. Many times, you won't be able to remember a rule right off the top of your head; that's okay, just look it up in your book. It's a good idea to bookmark the rules section so that you don't spend a lot of time searching. That can mess up the dynamic of the game and cause your players to get distracted while waiting for you to find out what to do. Remember: *Meddling Kids* is a cartoon game, and most cartoons only last 30 minutes to an hour. Time is limited, so keep things going!

Also, there is one unwritten rule for all GMs of all RPGs (this one's a secret, so don't tell!): Sometimes, there are no rules! Seriously! Sometimes, during play, you'll find that the players will do something you don't expect them to do, and the situation that arises doesn't have any special rule written up to deal with it. As Game Master, you must use your best judgment. Take a guess. Think it out. The rules are not always hard and fast—on special occasions, you can bend them a little to meet a special need.

For instance, let's say that your Jock character needs to jump a big ditch to rescue the Fluff from Bigfoot, but he doesn't have an ability to help him jump. If he doesn't make enough on his *strait Moves* roll to rescue the Fluff, then either character could get hurt by Bigfoot, and the game could end, not only too quickly, but on a real bummer as well. One way to take care of this is to make the difficulty for jumping the ditch much lower than you'd normally make it—that would make it very easy for the Jock to rescue the



Fluff, and the game can continue. This is a very special occasional rule-breaker method that has to be used sparingly, or else the rules themselves become useless. Again, use your best judgment. And, as an old GM saying goes, “Don’t let the rules get in the way of a good story.”

Players and Characters

As GM, you are King of Your Domain. But, as King, if you mistreat your subjects, no one will want to play in your domain, and you’ll be King of the Big, Fat Nothing. As leader, a GM is expected to be patient, responsive, flexible, and respectful towards the players and their respective characters. After all, games are supposed to be fun! No power trips allowed!

A GM is a guider, not a pusher. You may have a wonderful story to tell, but remember that the players are telling some of the story, too. Guide them toward the haunted mansion you’ve made, but if they want to look for clues at the amusement park, let them do so for a little bit. Once they find that there’s no clues for them there, they’ll go to your mansion willingly without you having to force them.

Even though the GM runs the game, that doesn’t mean she is the center of attention. If your players are trying to role-play a situation, let them. Don’t interrupt. This will allow the characters to grow and develop—you can even award an extra point of experience at the end of the game if they play out the situation really well. You can even make reference to parts of the interaction in future games. The only exception to this might be if the monster or other bad guy overhears the characters and attacks. Let the players have fun, but keep the story true, too.

Good GMs treat players fairly. In your group, you may have your best friend playing. You must resist the temptation to give special treatment to your best friend. For instance, don’t let your best friend’s character always be the one to solve the mystery. This is a team effort, and everyone is involved in solving the mystery. Also,



don't feel that you have to always have to bend the rules just to be popular with your players. Treating everyone equally by sticking to the rules will earn you respect.

Part of being fair is also not letting players take advantage of you. For instance, if a player is going to role-play his or her character to be foolish enough to arm-wrestle the giant gorilla in the zoo cage, he should get bonked on the head. It's okay to warn the player that teasing the giant gorilla is dangerous, but if the player persists, then let him get bonked.

Most of all, remember that the goal of a GM is to make sure the players have fun. Set realistic goals that the players (and characters) can achieve. Give them challenges to meet so that they feel a sense of accomplishment. If the players have goals they want their characters to achieve, then set aside a special game every so often to help them do exactly that. Remember that as a GM, you are a host, and any good host wants their guests to have so much fun that they'll want to come back and play again!

Story Preparation

Now that you're familiar with the rules, your players, and the characters they'll play, you'll need to compose a story to tell. This is the area where your creativity can really shine!

Just like any story you'd write, there are many things to consider. One great way to start is to ask the Big Six Questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Where shall the story take place—a city, a town, on the road? Where shall the action occur—a house, a hotel, a concert hall, an amusement park, a seaside dock, a museum, a shopping mall? Who (beside the player's characters) will be involved—family, friends, well-known local citizens, celebrities, innocent bystanders? When is this story happening—on an average school day, the weekend, summertime, a holiday? What's happening in the story—is the place rumored to be haunted, is a monster scaring people away, was something of value stolen? Why are these things really happening—are greedy developers trying to scare people away so they can buy the land, is



the monster really a guy in a bad gorilla suit, is the item stolen really of great value, or is it the key to unlocking a greater mystery? And, the biggest question of all: How do I get the characters involved in the story?



GMs use many different sources to help compose their stories. Many

will take an old book, TV show, movie, or whatever, use parts of it, and create a new, yet somewhat similar, story. For instance, perhaps you've read *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien. You know that in one part of the book, Bilbo finds in the treasure horde of Smaug the dragon a magical ring that has special powers, and that another character, the greedy Gollum, wants the ring for himself. You can take this little snippet from this wonderful book, and make a story of your own. Perhaps one of the characters has an old family member that has passed away and left him or her an ordinary-looking trinket—say, an old silver ring. Perhaps another family member (say, someone who never was really close, or someone the character never really liked that much) approaches the character, trying to convince them that they want the ring, it really was meant for the relative anyway, or perhaps the relative tries to get the ring from the character by bullying or bribing. If the character looks carefully at the ring, they see a cryptic



inscription on the inside of the ring. The inscription leads to more clues, perhaps to some other more valuable items (land, money, etc.) that eventually the dead relative wanted the character to have, but the other greedy relative felt they deserved more. This is only one idea; there are many great books out there to pull ideas from. If you need help, ask your mom or dad, or your favorite teacher at school. They can always suggest cool books or movies to inspire you.

Often, GMs will use real-life experiences to use as story ideas. Many famous story writers will tell you, “write what you know.” That means write stories about the things you have experienced in your own day-to-day life. The setting of the story could be a place you went to on vacation. The street your characters are walking down could be a street in your own hometown. The people they meet could be friends, family, or celebrities that you and your players know. This can be a great way to personalize an adventure, and really draw in your players.

When you finally have your basic storyline put together, it’s time to spice it up with a few details. The big thing to do is carefully compose the non-player characters (or NPC, in game terms) that the player characters will meet. Normal, everyday people that the PCs encounter and human villains can be built just like other PCs. Just refer to the Character Creation section in Chapter 2. To build a monster, use the same rules for creation that you use for creating a Wild Card (page 26). In the Appendix, we’ll give you a few examples of some villains and monsters that you can use, either as-is, or you can build your own based on those guys.

If your story occurs in a real city, read up on the local history and its sites and events—you might even be able to use those tidbits to make your story better. Taking the time to learn a few real-world facts about some of your story elements can add a lot to the atmosphere. Is the story taking place at an Egyptian exhibit at the city’s museum? Reading about things like mummies, King Tutankhamen, the pyramids at Giza, or Egyptian mythology can give you great ideas that will add an awesome flavor to your game.



Keep in mind that you are not the only one writing your story. The players and their characters are helping to form it, too. Your story doesn't need to be too detailed. It really should be more like an outline—just a loose plot and some key characters. A GM has to be flexible with the story. The players, just by playing the game, will add their own ideas and flavors to your story line. Don't be upset if your players aren't following your exact story; again, as the GM/host, it's also your duty to make sure the players are having fun, too. When your players throw your story a curve, roll with it, and add it in. You'll find it might make the story (and the game) even better!

One last very important note about preparation: a Meddling Kids GM's most important tool (besides the Meddling Kids book itself) is... a notebook. Seriously. You'll have a story, great ideas, notes, information, and all kinds of other stuff for your game, so you're going to need a place to keep it. It doesn't need to be fancy or expensive. Just a regular, spiral-bound composition book will do fine. If it has a couple of pockets for loose papers (like computer printouts and character sheets), that would be cool, too. You might even use it to take notes during the game—the players will do a lot of crazy stuff, and you'll want to jot down these things to remember for future games. You may also have some secret stuff written down in your book that you'll use to surprise your players with, so be careful that they don't read it—after all, not knowing how a story ends will make you want to read it that much more!

The Wild Card

With most RPGs, the GM is pretty much a host and a referee. The GM will have a place for everyone to play, prep the game, and make sure that everyone follows the rules during the game. Many older, more seasoned GMs will tell you how boring that can be after doing just that for a long time. With Meddling Kids, that old-school tradition is thrown out the window—the GM not only gets to play, but she gets to play the coolest character of all: The Wild Card!



You may have noticed in some of your favorite cartoons, there's always a weird character that hangs around with the gang; a talking dune buggy, an electric mouse, an unfrozen, flying caveman, a talking shark, a genie, whatever. That character may act completely goofy, but he always seems to lead the gang to the right clues and keeps them on track. This is the Wild Card of Meddling Kids.

Your Wild Card can be just about any creature you could imagine: a talkative boxing kangaroo, a flying toaster, a hip-hop space alien, a nervous but friendly ghost. Anything! It really depends on what would work best with the group of characters you have.

Just like your players, though, you have to build your Wild Card the same way they build their characters. The Wild Card has the same four stats that you can only spend 24 points on. Also, you only have 26 points to spend on the Wild Card's abilities. But, because the Wild Card is not an average, ordinary teenager, a special list of Wild Card abilities are put together on pages 78 to



81 to choose from. You can give the Wild Card any of the abilities from the Player Character list, but there is a catch: you have to pay one point more above the listed cost for the ability. However, the Wild Card will get one extra point to add to the Stat roll. For instance, if you choose to buy the Character Ability Clown, you'll have to pay six points instead of five for it. But, when you use this ability for the Wild Card, you get to add three (instead of two) to the roll. If the modifier adds an extra die (as in Actor), then you still add one extra point after you've rolled all the dice. As you can see, Wild Cards are a little different from regular characters, and this is reflected in the Abilities.

The Wild Card does get one special trait that regular characters do not get: a Quirk. The Quirk is free, but the Wild Card is required to have one. A Quirk is any odd mannerism that the Wild Card has that can affect play. Some examples are always wanting to eat, only being able to speak its name, disappearing when frightened, or having a fear of green olives.

Here is an example of our Wild Card, Cap'n Bingo:

Character's Name—Cap'n Bingo
Archetype—Wild Card

Stats—

Strength-9
Moves-5
Smarts-5
Health-5

Quirk—

He cannot resist bananas in any form (banana bread, banana splits, banana taffy, music by Bananarama, etc.)





Abilities—

Ken

Wild Whiz-(The Sea)

Melee-(Sword fighting)

Strong

Hard-Headed

Background Concept—

Former lab chimp named Bingo who is now imbued with the spirit of a dead pirate captain (more specifically, a privateer for the budding US Navy of the mid-1700's). Can't remember his name as a pirate, so the kids gave him his new name. Often seems cranky towards the kids, but likes them very much—especially Andrea, who rescued him from the lab, and Clutch, who tries to protect her. Loves bananas, hates stuffy British seamen, and wants to own a parrot one day.

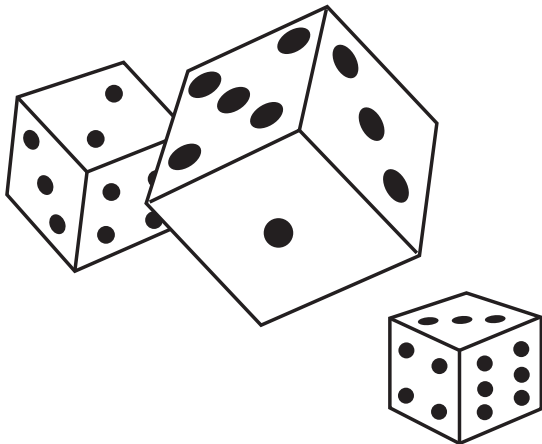
You can write up your Wild Card in your GM's notebook, or use the special Wild Card Character Sheet that can be downloaded from www.meddlinggames.com. Again, ask you parents for permission to go online first.

The Wild Card also can be very useful for the GM. If you feel that the group (of players) is having a hard time trying to solve the mystery story you've set up, you can always have the Wild Card find a clue itself and show it to the Clique. Sometimes you may find that the group is getting off track (know in the RPG world as "going off on a tangent"); you can then have the Wild Card remind the Clique of what their original goal is, and have it make suggestions as to what they could do next. Don't ever use your Wild Card to trick the players by finding false clues or making bad suggestions. That is truly bad sportsmanship, and you'll quickly lose respect as a GM from your players. Again, this is a game meant to be fun for everyone.



Running The Game

You've done your research, you've developed a flexible storyline, you've got people interested in playing, and you've even got an idea for a Wild Card. Now what do you do?



Simple! Get everyone together and play!

It really is that simple.

Meddling Kids (and any RPG, for that fact) can be played just about anywhere at just about anytime. At home during bad weather, in the car on a trip, camping, during a slumber party or sleepover—there's really not any bad time or place to play. Some hardcore RPGers will even play using their email! (Special Pandahead Note to All: don't play at school during class time—give your teachers some respect, and don't get you and your friends in trouble!)

If you want, you can take some time to get together with your players and have them build their own characters, making sure that all the characters can work together, and that your Wild Card will work with the characters. Or, if you like, you can have your players use the pre-made characters in the back of the book, and you can use Cap'n Bingo as your Wild Card. We also have for you a pre-made story (called an Adventure Module) in Chapter 4, page 50, that use those characters. Many people will do this when trying out an RPG for the first time; it's a great way to get the feel of the game, and can give players an idea of what kind of character they might create for themselves, as well as give you, the GM, an idea of what kind of story you could come up with for the next game.



A great way to learn how to run Meddling Kids (or any RPG) is to ask for help from the folks who run your local gaming store. These people are likely to be very seasoned players; they can give you great tips, and may even be happy to run a demonstration of Meddling Kids for you and your players.

As far as games go, an RPG can be both very easy and very difficult. There are no hard and fast rules (as we've explained), and the play can be free-form and improvisational. For some players, this can be difficult if they are used to games where the play is structured. Encourage these people to stretch their imagination, and remind them of how they used to play "Let's Pretend" when they were much younger. Other players will take to the way of playing an RPG very easily—these are the guys who are natural actors that love to ham it up and like to grab the attention. These players can be a challenge to keep them from overshadowing the more shy players. Instead of stifling their energy, encourage them to gently bring the more quiet players out of their shells. Players don't necessarily get up in front of everyone and completely act out every word of dialog—most of the time, players just sit, relaxed, and speak out their dialog. Some simply give instructions to the GM as to what their character is doing. Here's a "for instance" of some usual RPG play:

GM: *Okay, Todd, since you're playing Clutch, what does Clutch do when he sees Andrea leave Danni's Ice Cream Shop?"*

Todd: *I ask Andrea if she saw the ad for the new exhibit at the museum for the Dragon's Eye Diamond, and whether or not she's going to go.*

GM: *Lisa, since you're playing Andrea, what does Andrea do when she see Clutch?*

Lisa: *(acts like she eating ice cream) < sigh > Of course I'm going to the exhibit, Clutch, and you're going, too! You know you have a report due in history class about it, and we need to do research. Besides, it might be fun! (hands Todd an invisible ice cream cone) Here's your triple-scoop Fudge Licorice Supreme with gummy worms in a chocolate chip waffle cone. Blech! (Lisa sticks out her tongue)*



As you can see, each player will develop a style. Some will give instructions, some will actually speak out the dialog. Each way is okay, but encourage others to mix up their styles, just to keep play from getting too routine.

Being a GM takes a bit of effort, but once you get the hang of it, your game play and story will flow easily. Just be flexible and have fun. And, after a while, don't be afraid to let others take a stab at being a GM—they may even come to you for advice!





**WE ALL CAN'T
PLAY
CAPTAIN ZOOM!**





Chapter Three

The Rules

Let's Play!

Rules are a very important part of any game. They set guides to make things fair for all players, and also challenge your creativity to make you work within those guides. What makes the rules in an RPG cool is that they take care of a lot of little details so that you can spend time role-playing in a free-form fashion. Also, the rules help determine the outcome of any actions. If you're playing Thrasher, the Goof, for example, then you can let him do a frontside mctwist on his snowboard, and the rules will determine whether he does it well, does it spectacularly, or flubs it so bad that he falls headfirst into the snow.

The rules used for Meddling Kids are a special system called TSS© (short for The Starter System©). These rules are very easy compared to other games, since most people playing Meddling Kids may have never played an RPG before.

Your equipment for the game should be easy to obtain: you'll need your new character, written up (or use one of our pre-generated characters, which you can download from www.meddlinggames.com), a pencil with an eraser, and four six-sided dice. Oh, and your own Meddling Kids book. That's it. Well, and maybe something to drink. And a snack. It's up to you.

Okay, here's how it goes:

Remember the numbers you put next to your stats when you built your character? Here's how you actually use them. When you decide that your character will do something that the result or outcome isn't obvious (unlike, say, blinking or breathing), you will use these numbers to determine that outcome. For instance, let's say that Andrea the Brain is searching the kitchen of the haunted mansion to find a key to unlock the secret pantry. The GM will ask



the player playing Andrea to “make your Smarts roll.” The player will then take the three six-sided dice (called d6’s, in RPG terms), roll them, and add up the numbers showing. Then, the player adds the number next to the Smarts stat on Andrea’s character sheet. The number the player gets must meet or exceed a pre-determined number (called the Target Number) set by the GM.

Sound complicated? Don’t worry; here’s a typical scene of how the above rule might be worked out between the GM and the Player:

GM: *Okay, all of you are in the haunted mansion. Andrea, what will you do first?*

Player: *Andrea decides to look for clues by finding the key to the locked pantry in the kitchen.*

GM: *Very good. Make your Smarts roll, and try to beat a Target Number of 20.*

Player: *(Rolls dice) Okay, I got 13 on the dice, plus she has a 10 in Smarts, so that gives my character a 23.*

GM: *Wow! Great roll! Andrea not only finds the key, but she also finds the first clue inside the pantry...*

Sometimes, though, just like in real life, your character can also have bad luck, or just have a bad day. Here’s a scenario that could occur when your dice roll doesn’t work out well:

GM: *Okay, Thrasher, what are you going to do in the haunted mansion?*

Player: *Thrasher will sneak around the back of the house to look for signs of the ghost.*

GM: *Alright, for sneaking, make your Moves roll, and try to beat a Target Number of 18.*

Player: *(Rolls dice) Oh, no! I only got three ones, which give me three plus his eight for Moves, so that’s only an 11!*

GM: *Oooh, tough luck, Thrasher! Okay, this is what happens: in the dark of the foggy night, Thrasher carefully tiptoes around to the back of the house, only to slip and fall over a few empty garbage cans, making a terrible racket. Cap’n*



Bingo yells from the porch, "Sorry, matey! Sounds like ye found one o' me loose banana peels that didn't make it to th' garbage! Arrgh!"

Got it? The numbers you roll plus the number of your stat added together determine whether or not you succeed in what you're trying to do. What happens as a result of your roll is determined by the GM and, sometimes, the players. It's how you make the story!

For GMs: Setting a Target Number

This can be the biggest challenge for a GM—your sense of judgment really comes into play when you have to determine how easy or how hard a player's task is. To help you along, we've come up with a chart to help you guess what Target Number to use. And yes, we said guess. You don't have to be perfect in coming up with a Target Number. You just have to give it your best guess.

Target Number Scale Chart

- 4— This is the lowest number anyone could possibly roll. So, if a task is this easy, you may not want to make the player roll for the task. They might as well roll to remember to breathe or blink. Pretty boring way to play, don't you think?
- 5— Still an easy task, like chewing gum.
- 6— Still easy, like pointing at something.
- 7— Still really, really easy.
- 8— A normal type of easy, like walking down the stairs. Sometimes you might fall, but normally easy.
- 9— Again, this one is normal easy, like writing your own name.
- 10— Like swatting a baseball off a stand with your hand.
- 11— At this number, there is about a 75% chance of the normal character succeeding.
- 12— This is a number for a task that would be moderately easy for the character to perform. For instance, this is a good number if the Jock were to do something physical, or the Brain to do something mental. You'd still want the player to roll for the task, though, just in case.
- 13— The only way this Target Number would be unlucky is if the player didn't make the roll.



- 14– We’re getting tougher, but this is not hard yet. Kind of like riding a bike.
- 15– You can make this number most of the time, but not always.
- 16– This number would mean that the standard character has a slightly better than 50-50 chance of succeeding at the task.
- 17– This is the mathematical middle of all the Target Numbers. Many GMs may want to use this as a way to pick a number. Anything below this number is easy; anything above is hard.
- 18– This number would mean that the standard character has a slightly less-than 50-50 chance of succeeding at the task.
- 19– This might take a little bit of thought, like remembering what you had for dinner a week ago last night.
- 20– This is like riding a bike with no hands. You can do it, but it can be tough.
- 21– Now you’re trying rock climbing—for the first time. Small wall, but tough climb.
- 22– This is like trying to catch the monster with nothing but a butterfly net. Not something that you can usually do.
- 23– At this point, your character should be feeling challenged.
- 24– Now you’re teaching someone how to ride a bike. It isn’t easy at all.
- 25– You’re really hoping that luck is on your side at this point.
- 26– At this point, there is only about a 25% chance of succeeding for the normal character.
- 27– This is for a task that would be moderately difficult for a character; for instance, if the Innocent had to pretend to be mean street gangsta, or if the Fluff had to break down a door. If you feel the character is doing something that’s, well, out of character, then use a number close to this one.
- 28– With this number, an above-average character is going to have to really try to succeed, but they can do it—if their luck holds out.
- 29– This is like the Fluff trying to change a flat car tire in the pouring rain, while still keeping an eye out for the monster.
- 30– This is like trying to catch the monster with a piece of string and some chewing gum. Unless you get really lucky, he’s gonna get away.
- 31– Like making a trip to the North Pole. It’s not an easy thing to do, and you’ll probably need help.

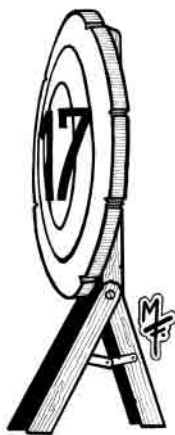


32— No matter what, this is gonna be near impossible task, but it's still worth a try.

33— Even the best character is gonna have trouble here. It's like trying to skateboard across the Grand Canyon.

34— This is the highest possible roll any player could ever get. If you set the Target Number here, you're saying that the task is nearly impossible, even if it is the character's greatest area of expertise. The Brain would have to be a super-genius, The Jock would have to be able to move Mount Everest with one hand, and the Goof would have to be funnier than... than a screen door on a submarine. Well, you get the idea. Some things just can't be done.

Realize that these are just general suggestions; it is very possible for a Brain to know a lot about sports, or for a Jock to be very good at things like needlepoint (Rosy Grier, a famous football player, would



do needlepoint for a hobby!). Know your player's characters and be familiar with their weaknesses and strengths. Make a copy of the character sheets for your records, just to keep yourself familiar with them. The GM must adjust the Target Number to each character in each unique situation.

But, the key here is not to stress—just give it your best guess!

Now, how do the Abilities work? You'll notice that in the description, the first phrase sounds like some weird, secret code. For instance, the ability "Flirt" says, "Hea + 2." That phrase, in RPG terms, is called the Modifier. This means, if you choose to use this ability, you get two extra points added to your Health roll. Example: the player playing Roshandra the Fluff has to distract the



guy who cleans the pool at the haunted mansion so he won't see the rest of the gang sneaking in. Since she is dealing with someone who is not her gender, she can use this Ability. The player rolls the three dice, adds the number from Roshandra's Health stat, plus two extra points for the Flirt Ability.

You may also notice a slight difference in the modifiers of other abilities. The Ability "Fast-Talker" has a modifier that reads, "Hea + 1d6 to confuse any target person by talking fast." This means, instead of just adding extra points to your roll, you get to roll an extra die (d6) to the three you normally roll! So, for this ability, you would roll four six-sided dice, and add the Health (Hea) stat. The extra dice can make a very big difference. You'll also notice that these Abilities cost a little more than the others, too.

Here's your catch for the Abilities: To be fair to the GM (and the other players), you must tell the GM that you are going to use your Ability BEFORE you roll your dice. You can't roll your dice, then decide to use the Ability. Knowing what Ability you plan to use will help the GM determine your Target Number. And, you can only use one ability per task.

Bring It On!

Rules for Conflict Resolution.

Okay, we're not total fools here; we all know that violence never solves anything (duh-huh!). That's not what this game is about.

But, as we all know, conflict happens, and there's a lot of ways of dealing with it. When it happens in your game, there are specific rules that walk you through it.

In RPG-speak, conflict is a situation wherein any two characters have something they want to do at the same time. This could be any two player characters, or a player character and a non-player character.



For example, let's say the Lagoon Monster of Lagoon Bay wants to catch the Goof. The Goof wants to run away. Lots of things can occur in this scene, and making the proper dice rolls will help everyone determine the outcome.

First, the right Stat to use must be determined. Since both of these characters are running, the player and the GM controlling Ol' Fishface will both use their Moves Stat. Each will roll 3d6, add their Stat, and add any Ability modifier they might have that would be appropriate (such as Sprint or Sporty). Whoever has the highest number wins! If the monster got the higher number, the GM might say that he caught the Goof. If the Goof got the higher number, the GM might say that he got away. It's really that simple!

But, what if they both roll the same amount? Then, compare the number of each character's Stat. Whoever has the higher Stat wins that conflict.

But (so many buts!), what if those numbers are the same? Okay, then, just do the roll again! No big deal! Keep rolling until one member of the conflict gets a higher number. Ever watch a chase



scene in a cartoon that seems to go on so long that you notice that the background keeps repeating itself? That's what's happening in the game! Just as it can be funny in a cartoon, you'll find that this kind of situation can be very, very funny in a game.

To review, the rule for conflict is: Roll 3d6, add the appropriate Stat, and add any useful Abilities; whoever gets the highest number wins. In case of a tie, the character with the highest raw Stat wins. In case those numbers are the same, keep rolling until one character finally gets the higher roll.

Getting Bonked!

At some point it's going to happen. You are going to do something that is going to hurt. You might fall down the stairs, or you might get smacked on the head with a smelly fish. It doesn't matter how it happens, you just know that it's going to happen. So, what do you do about it in the game?

You get Bonked, that's what!

In the game, there are going to be times when things happen that might hurt you. You represent getting hurt by taking points of damage. In the game we call these Health Points, because it tells us how healthy you are. You determine your Health Points by looking at your Health Stat; whatever your Health Stat is, that is the same number of Health Points that the character has! Let's look at our sample character, Clutch, as an example: Clutch has a Health Stat of 8, which makes him have 8 Health Points.

Damage can happen because of almost anything, like our example of falling down the stairs. And we'll even tell you a simple rule for falling: for every ten feet that you fall, you will take 1d6 worth of damage. So, if Clutch were to fall down a ten foot staircase, the Gamemaster will roll a d6 to get the number of the damage. If it was a really big house, and Clutch fell down a twenty foot staircase, the Gamemaster would take 2d6 to get the worth of damage. With 8 Health Points, a 10-foot staircase might be



annoying, but it won't Bonk Clutch. Now, a 20-foot staircase and 2d6 damage, that could hurt!

But what about the smelly fish? Okay, let's see what happens if Clutch gets hit with a smelly fish. Let's say that Clutch has made Cap'n Bingo really mad, and the Cap'n smacks him on the head with a fish that he found. It's just like resolving any conflict. You take Clutch's Moves plus 3d6 and compare it to Cap'n Bingo's Moves plus 3d6, and if the Cap'n has a higher total, he hits! Now, to determine how many Health Points Clutch takes, take his Strength and add 1d6, and add them together. Since Cap'n Bingo has a Strength of 9, even with a roll of 1, he is going to beat Clutch's Health Points, so Clutch gets Bonked!

So what does that mean? It means that the character can't take any action for a number of minutes equal to the points above his Health Points that Bonked him. Let's look at an example. Clutch got smacked on the head with a smelly fish by Cap'n Bingo. The Cap'n did a total of 10 points of damage, and Clutch has 8 Health Points, so he's out of action for two minutes ($10-8=2$). The GM can decide whether those minutes are real time or game time.

Traps!

While playing *Meddling Kids*, you are going to find yourself dealing with a lot of monsters! They are the things that keep popping up and making the game an adventure. But monsters have a unique quality in the game: they can only get Bonked by traps! It won't do you any good to run around trying to hit the monster—hitting people doesn't solve anything. You have to use your brains and trap the monster so that the police can come and take them away.

To build a trap, first you need an idea! It can be as complex or as simple as you want, but the whole idea has to be to catch the monster. And the tougher the monster, the tougher the trap! It's not too hard to catch a regular puppy, but catching the Werewolf of McCulley Manor is another matter. For the puppy, you could



just say that you are going to put a hot dog on the ground and put a leash on him while he's eating. For the Werewolf, you might need more than a leash. Maybe you would try to lure him into the big ballroom of McCulley Manor and drop the fancy chandelier on him, trapping him completely. Of course, you would need to get him there, and get him into position, and drop the chandelier, and... well, you can see that it's more complicated.

And we handle that in game with the Trap Rules. The Trap Rules are put together to help you design and execute a trap for a monster. Like everything else, trapping a monster has a Target Number. The Target Number for trapping a monster is equal to the monster's Health stat AND his Strength stat. So, for our Werewolf (Strength 8, Health 8) that makes the Target Number 16 ($8+8=16$). Now it's time to get the trap that can reach that target.

First you have your idea. Remember, the bigger the monster, the bigger the trap. When you come up with your idea, each step in the trap adds one to your base number for your roll. But, you can't have more steps in your trap than you have points in your Smarts stat. So, if Clutch is going to try to catch the Werewolf of McCulley Manor, he can only add three steps to the Trap, since his Smarts is only 3. He might want to call in some of his friends to help. If all of the Clique is building the trap, you get to use the highest Smarts plus one. So, Clutch brings in his pal Andrea, who has a Smarts of 10, which will let them have up to eleven steps to their trap—if they can think of that many! Remember, your trap has to make sense. You can't just say that you are taking eleven steps to the trap, you have to describe the steps. For our example, Clutch and Andrea have come up with a trap that has Clutch finding the Werewolf and getting him to chase him (step one), leading to a skateboard that he borrowed from Thrasher that the Werewolf will step on (step two), that will run him into a rope that the kids have pulled across the room (step three), making him fall forward into a pile of pillows that they put in the middle of the room (step four), that has a big horn in it making a loud noise (step five), that tells Andrea to untie the rope holding the chandelier (step six), that



then falls on the Werewolf, trapping him (step seven). See, even though Andrea and Clutch could have had up to eleven steps, they couldn't come up with more than seven, giving them a Trap with a Rating of 7. So, now that you've planned your trap, it's time to see if it works!

To check and see if your trap does what you want it to, take your Trap Rating and roll 2d6, add the total together, and try to beat the monster's Target Number. With our example, that means that Clutch gets to roll 2d6 and add 7 to the total, and if it is more than 16 he traps the Werewolf of McCulley Manor. If you catch the monster, then it's time to call the police. If not, they you are going to have one really mad monster, and you'll have to try to catch it all over again, using a totally different trap; once you use a trap, you can't use it again—the monsters never fall for the same trick twice.

Cool Optional Rule: Kid Points!

One of the biggest parts of playing Meddling Kids is working together as a team. Kid Points are a great thing to add to really keep the team together!



What are they? Kid Points are special points that a player can use to improve his or her roll, especially in a crunch situation. Before the start of a game, the team of players will pick someone to be their Points Keeper. The GM will then roll two d6's, and that will be the number of Kid Points

assigned to the team's Kid Point Pool. The Point Keeper will write down the number, and keep track of how many points the team uses, and let the team know how many they do have when they decide to use them. Of course, when you start each game session the Kid Point Pool will be no smaller than two, but no larger than twelve.



How do they help? Let's say that a player has to get her character to jump a fence in order to capture The Bigfoot of Clement's Canyon that's running away with the clue the team needs to solve the mystery. The roll that the player makes could really make a big difference in the game: if she makes the roll, her character will get the monster and solve the mystery for the team. If she misses the roll, the team may never solve the mystery. As we've seen in the rules already, she'll have to roll her Moves, plus the character's Jump ability, if she has it. If the player has an extra point or two from the Kid Points pool to add to her roll, it could help her succeed and win the game for everybody! So, one player might say to the player whose character is trying to jump the fence, "take two Kid Points!" This means, that in addition to the regular roll and Stat, the player also gets an additional +2 to that number. Of course, it doesn't have to be two, it can be any number you want to give out, as long as there are enough points in the Kid Pool to cover it.

The biggest rule for using is Kid Points is this: You can NEVER ask for Kid Points for yourself. Kid Points are only given out to the player by the teammates. No hinting is allowed, either! Your teammates must think to do this on their own, with no signals or suggestions from you. Kid Points are all about working and thinking together as a team.

As for the team, sensibility must be used when giving Kid Points. You can give your teammate all the points in the Kid Point Pool (seriously!), but that won't leave any points for you or your other teammates for later. If you want to give points, ask your Point Keeper what you have, think about how difficult the roll is, and make a decision. You can even discuss this with the other players (as a matter of fact, that would be the best idea!). This game is a team effort, and everyone should be involved.



Here's how using the Kid Point Pool might go in actual play:

Player 1: *My character, Thrasher, wants to find out about the Dragon's Eye gemstone on view at the museum. He's going to do research online.*

GM: *Good idea! You'll need to roll your Smarts, plus any computer-related ability you have. This is important information that may be hard to find, so try to beat a Target Number of 30.*

Player 1: *Wow! Okay, my Smarts is a 7, plus I'm going to use my ability Webworm, which gives me an extra die to roll.*

Player 2: *Hey, take three extra Kid Points from the pool!*

Player 1: *Thanks! (rolls dice) Whoa! I got 22 on my four dice, plus my Smarts give me 29, and my three Kid Points makes it 32!*

GM: *Excellent! You made it! Now, here's what you find out about the Dragon's Eye...*

Just as you see here, using Kid Points also means that you need to keep up with what your teammates are doing as well as with what you want to do. You are multi-tasking—doing more than one thing at a time—but once you get the hang of it, you'll find this way of gaming very easy!

And, again, to be fair to the GM and to the other players, you need to announce to the GM and everybody else that you're awarding Kid Points BEFORE the player makes his or her roll. And, as far as the GM is concerned, the Target Number cannot change if a player declares Kid Points.

This is really a fun option to add to your game that can make the play totally awesome! Before you try it out, though, make sure you're very comfortable with all the rest of the rules. Doing too much at once when you're not ready to move forward will only make your game frustrating.



Cool Optional Rule: Chase Scenes!

It just wouldn't be a cartoon-like story if there wasn't at least one chase scene. Have the monster chase the kids around. After all, these are monsters! When the characters see a monster, have them make a Smarts roll (make the Target Number high the first time, but have it get smaller each time they see the monster), and if they don't make the roll, they get scared and run away! Naturally, the monster chases them.

It's at this point that the chase is on! Now, the characters have to get out of the chase. They can use Abilities like Fast Talk, or Magician, or even Cross Out or Singer if they want to distract the monster. In fact, anything they can think of might be what they need to distract the monster. Have the player make a roll, and if he beats a Target Number equal to the monster's Smarts +10, the monster is distracted. If they are able to distract the monster, the characters get to run away without the monster following, and the chase is over!

Hints & Tips—Not Necessarily The Rules

There are other things that you may want to keep in mind while playing Meddling Kids (or any other RPG). These aren't necessarily rules; they're just good things to do that will make for great play.

Politeness Works! It may sound real old-school, but it is for real in RPG-playing. Don't talk over other players, no matter how exciting your idea may be. Take turns, and realize your place in line. Don't waste time arguing over rules, and be respectful of the GM's rulings.

Ask Questions! You and the other players are trying to solve a mystery, so be a detective! Ask the GM questions about what's going on in the game. What does my character see/hear/feel/smell/taste? What does my character know about that? Has my character met this person in the game before? These are some common things to ask the GM as a player. Don't be afraid to ask questions—it will keep the game moving. And, you can always tell if you getting close to solving your mystery—the



GM may make you roll some dice before answering your question!

Seeing Is Believing! If you're having a hard time understanding what something looks like, ask (nicely!) your GM to sketch out what he or she is describing. Maps are also very useful, and many RPGers consider them a tradition in gaming. Also, to help other players visualize your character, bring a sketch of your character, or use a picture of a celebrity who looks closest to what your character looks like.

Multiple Personalities! Game play can get real confusing when you and your character start melting into one person. If you are talking, make sure you let the other players and the GM understand whether it's you or your character. You may want to give your character a special voice—maybe a higher pitch, a small speech impediment, a slight accent, or maybe some funny hand gestures. Be an actor! Live in the moment! Another thing: remember that there may be some things that you know that your character may not know. For instance, you may know a lot about chemistry, but your character may not even know how to dissolve sugar into water! Like a good actor, remember to stay in character, and realize your character's weaknesses and strengths.

Take Notes! As play progresses, you'll find out some interesting things will happen. These things could be clues to help you solve your mystery! Write down quick notes as you go along, and share them with your teammates. You may have caught something that they may have missed!

Experience—The Big Reward

As we grow, we learn. The more things we do, the more things we know. We gain experience. You and your character will do the same thing in *Meddling Kids!*

At the end of each game, the GM will award to all players experience points. The players then get to spend those points on new Abilities or to bump up their Stats. You can spend your points right away on small things, or save them up for something big and



expensive. It's up to you!

The GM awards one to four experience points based on how efficiently the mystery was solved, how well the players role-played the characters, and how well everyone worked together as a team. The awarding goes in this manner:

- **1 point**—Despite some stumbles, the players did what was needed to solve the mystery.
- **2 points**—The players were quite creative in solving the mystery.
- **3 points**—The players were very enthusiastic, quick to think, and role-played the characters well.
- **4 points**—The players put on an extraordinary show, often surprising the GM.

Most of the time, players will receive two to three points. The GM should only give four points if the players really, truly showed their very, very best. But, awarding experience points is totally up to the GM, and players should always be respectful toward the GM's decision.

If you ask any old-school gamer, most will tell you that their favorite part of playing an RPG is getting to spend the experience points! It's just like taking your hard-earned allowance and going to buy something cool at your favorite store. But, just as it is in real life with real money, there are limits and rules to spending experience points.

If you want to buy a new Ability, that's no problem. Abilities still cost the same amount of points as they did when you first made your



character. Just look in the Character's List of Abilities (page 68), and the price listed is still the price you pay. Of course, if you already have an Ability, you don't buy it again. Buying more of the same Ability doesn't make it stronger—you only need to buy an Ability once. So, don't be silly and waste points!

Now, buying up a Stat is a different matter. In real life, an Ability would be easy to learn. A Stat would be harder to learn, so it costs more experience to do. The price of moving up one number in a Stat is five times the current amount of that Stat. For example, if your character has a two in Health, and you wanted to move up to a three, it would cost you ten experience points:

2 (Health) x 5 (cost) = 10 (*how many experience points you'll need to get to a three in Health*)

Or, if you wanted to go from a three to a four in Strength:

3 (Strength) x 5 (cost) = 15 (*how many experience points you'll need to get to four*)

Got it? It's only a matter of knowing your multiplication tables (just the fives, really). If you understand, but notice that others are having trouble with the math, give them some help. After all, that's what friends are for!

And, don't forget the Wild Card! It gets experience, too! The GM may award experience points to the Wild Card, but it gets only half the points (if the experience points awarded to the players is an odd number, round up). Buying up Stats and buying new Abilities work the same way as they do for Player Characters.

That's it for the rules! If you think you have it down, then you're ready to play. But, if you can't remember a rule off the top of your head, don't stress! That's why you always have your Meddling Kids book handy for reference. Even the best and smartest GMs and players will still reach for their rulebook during a game.

Now, let's play!





Chapter Four

Sample Adventure - "The Dragon's Eye"

This is a sample adventure (often called an Adventure Module, in RPG speak) for you and your team to try out. This one uses the sample characters we've made up—you can find their character sheets on pages 82-89 or download them from www.meddlinggames.com (ask if it's okay with your folks, first!).

You'll notice that most of the story seems to be missing. That's how an Adventure Module works—it just provides you with the beginning of a story, plus a few notes to help you along. You and your friends make up the rest!

A Big Note About Adventure Modules

Most seasoned RPG players will not read Adventure Modules. Reading the Adventure Module will ruin the surprise of a story. If you know what's going to happen next, the game won't be any challenge. It's really best to leave it up to the GM to read the Adventure Module. You'll find out what's going on when you play!

However, if you plan to make up your own characters, your own Clique, and your own world, then your GM will write up his or her own Adventure to match. In that case, feel free to keep reading so you can get a feel for what an Adventure is like.

Either way, give it a try, and have fun!

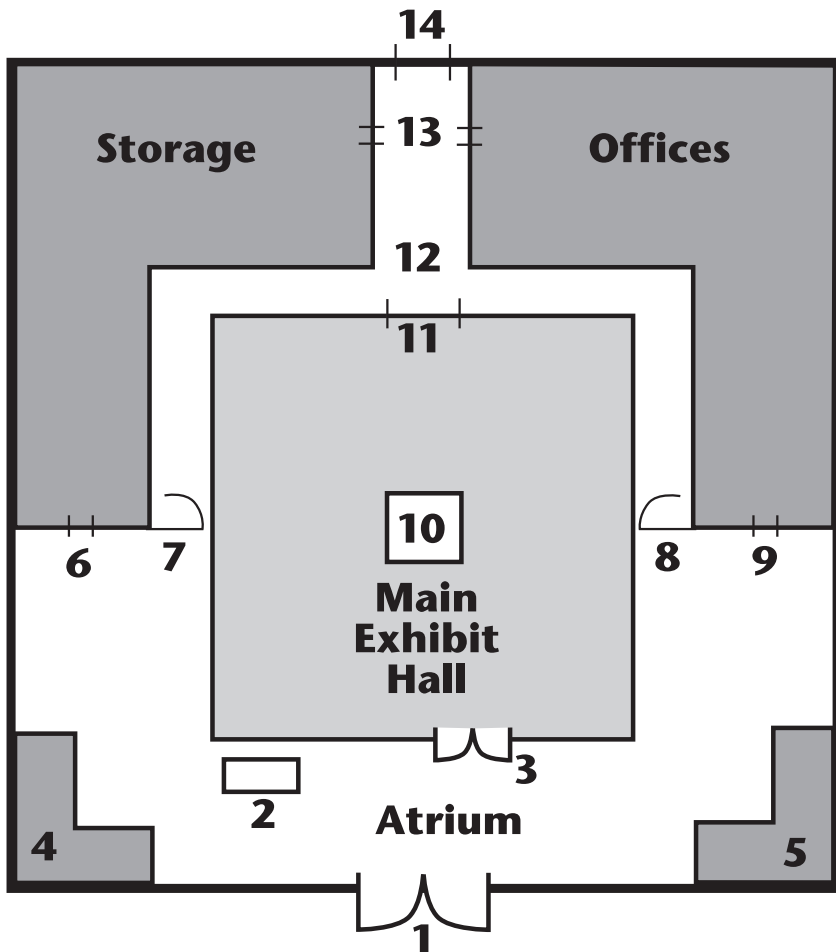
The Dragon's Eye, or The Origin of Cap'n Bingo

Items the GM Will Need:

- Meddling Kids Book, four dice, paper, pencils, pens
- Your own special GM's Notebook
- The Character Sheets for the NPCs (either printed out, or just bookmark them on page 82-88)
- Map of Museum
- A Secret Note



Map of The Port Juliet Museum



Key

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Main entrance to museum | 9. Door to offices |
| 2. Ticket booth | 10. Dragon's Eye exhibit |
| 3. Entrance to Main Exhibit Hall | 11. Back entrance to Main Exhibit Hall |
| 4. Ancient History of Rhode Island exhibit | 12. Back hallway |
| 5. Port Juliet local history exhibit | 13. Back doors to storage & offices |
| 6. Door to storage area | 14. Back entrance to Museum |
| 7&8. Swinging doors into back hallway | |

**To Prepare:**

- Using the basic map of the museum on page 52, trace or draw a copy of that map to use as a guide for your players.
- Make a secret note to use as a visual for your players. On a small piece of paper (about 8 1/2 inches by 5 1/2 inches), write the word “HOPE” in all capital letters and write the number “10:00.” Fold in half two times.

The Background: All the kids in this Clique live in Port Juliet, Rhode Island. It’s a great little tourist town in Rhode Island sound, surrounded by a number of small islands and salt-water inlets that have some great fishing. The big attraction is the old lighthouse on the edge of town closest to the ocean, and a statue of Juliet, the woman who, according to local legend, founded the town. All the kids are sophomores at Patrick Henry High School. Because Port Juliet is a small town, the kids will know just about all the citizens of the town.

At the beginning of this story, Cap’n Bingo is merely Bingo, an aging chimpanzee that Andrea the Brain rescued from the laboratory where her parents work as animal behaviorists. He’s very gentle, surprisingly strong, quite smart, and can even do a few signs in American Sign Language. He spends his time either with Andrea or at a special facility at the lab with her parents.

The Setting: Most all of the action will take place at the Port Juliet Museum. It is a small, one-story building, built in the late 1700’s, and decorated outside with tall columns and a huge iron anchor mounted on a sturdy pedestal in front of the building. A great bronze seal of Rhode Island—an anchor with the word “Hope” floating above it on a banner—is above the grand entrance. The atrium is small, but well lit from the skylights above. Permanent displays of the history and pre-history of Port Juliet are always on exhibit. The main exhibit area is in the center of the building, and the offices and storage areas are in the back, and there is one back door for deliveries. See the main map of the museum, page 52, for a complete layout.



Cast Of Characters:

Holly Bennett

Professor Dorchester

Nora Cochran/
Georgianna Fortuna

Crazy Walt/Walter Bennett

Mysterious Visitor/
Detective Joseph Vendredi



*Professor Dorchester • Nora Cochran
Mysterious Visitor*

During play, if any of the players ask for a description of the NPCs that they meet, simply refer to the descriptions written up on the characters on pages 89-90. Be careful not to give away any important information; just stick to descriptions of their appearance.

The Event: The museum is having a special exhibit—*Gems Of The World*. This is a very special exhibit of precious gems that are on loan from the MegaCity Museum of Art and History. In the collection is a number of famous diamonds and information about the history of diamonds, but the star of the exhibit is The Dragon’s Eye, a rare red diamond from Korea.

The Story: The kids find out that someone is going to steal The Dragon’s Eye, and they have to stop them!

How To Start The Story: It’s Friday morning, at 11:00am. Mr. Kepner, the kid’s history teacher at Henry High, arranges to take everyone on a field trip to the exhibit. All the kids have to go, since Mr. Kepner has also assigned a report on diamonds for everyone to write. They’ll all take the bus to the museum.



Scene I—At The Museum

As the bus drives up to the museum, read the following to the players:

“The Port Juliet museum is a small, one-story building, built with a red brick exterior and tall columns. A real iron anchor is mounted in the middle of the walkway on a sturdy pedestal in front of the building. A great bronze seal of Rhode Island, which is an anchor with the word “Hope” floating above it on a banner, is above the grand entrance.”

When the kids get inside the building into the atrium, read the players this description:

“The museum’s atrium is well-lit from the three skylights above. To your left is a permanent display of the pre-history of Port Juliet, with a closed cabinet filled with ancient Indian artifacts. To your right is a display of the history of Port Juliet, with a painting of Juliet and a closed-cabinet display of some of her personal items (diary, lace handkerchief, flintlock pistol), plus some old photos and other historical items. In front of you is the entrance to the main exhibit hall. On either side are the ticket booths, and on the outside of the ticket booths are two doors with signs that read ‘Employees Only.’ ”

As you read the passage regarding the interior of the atrium, draw on your basic Museum map the location of the things you’re describing. This will help your players visualize their surroundings.

Let the players know that the teacher, Mr. Kepner has given them all tickets for the main exhibit. Mr. Kepner is a very cool, relaxed teacher that will allow the students to take the exhibit at their own pace, but they must meet back at the entrance in an hour. The students can look at the permanent exhibits in the atrium, but most of them may already be familiar with (and probably bored of) the stuff in those cabinets. They’ll want to move on to the Diamond Exhibit.



An armed guard stands at the entrance to the exhibit hall, and he won't let the kids in unless they get their ticket stamped by Holly, the girl in the ticket booth.

If they talk to Holly, she's cheerful at first, telling them as she stamps the ticket, "Enjoy the exhibit!" Anything beyond that, she seems a little surly, and tells the kids, "Sorry, can't talk while I'm working. Professor Dorkster is here!" Then, she'll go back to stamping tickets or doing clerical work in the booth and pretty much ignore the kids.

Encourage the group to make their way to the main exhibit hall doors, then read them the following:

"Once you have your ticket stamped, the guard will let you into the main exhibit hall. As you step in, you are momentarily blinded by bright, dazzling light. As your eyes adjust, you notice that around the room are ten big, glittering diamonds that have a spotlight aimed directly on them. Each has a plaque next to it explaining its history. Also, a

few interactive kiosks are interspersed between the diamonds; they show the different uses of diamonds, how diamonds are mined, and other interesting things about gemstones. In the center of the room in a glass case is a huge, pale pink diamond resting





on red velvet. Two armed guards stand on either side of the diamond, and a plaque is attached to the front of the case. This is the Dragon's Eye Diamond."

If any of the kids want to read the plaque about the Dragon's Eye, they learn that divers recently found the diamond in an old ship that was wrecked off the coast of Rhode Island. Diamond experts believe that it may be the very diamond that was owned by the Emperor of Korea; he kept the diamond hidden in the Temple of Yong Wang, the Dragon King of the Seas, until it was stolen by pirates. The divers donated the Dragon's Eye to the MegaCity Museum.

If the players have their characters read the plaques of the other diamonds, you as a GM can either tell them that those plaques have no useful information, or you can make up what they read. There are many famous diamonds you can learn about through research, and you can share that info this way. It's up to you!

The kids will also notice that Mr. Kepner is talking to two very important looking people. One is Professor Dorchester, the curator of the museum; everyone recognizes him. Next to the Professor is a lady. If any of the kids decide to go up to them, Mr. Kepner will introduce them to the lady; she is Nora Cochran, the Touring Exhibits Specialist to the MegaCity Museum. After the introduction, have all the players roll their character's Smarts, with a Target Number of 20 to beat. Any character who beats 14 will notice that Ms. Cochran's badge from the MegaCity Museum does not have the MegaCity Museum official seal. If the characters mention anything to her, Nora acts surprised, and excuses herself to go look for it; she thinks the must have fallen off her badge.

If the kids choose to stay and talk to Mr. Kepner and Professor Dorchester, the PCs will hear Mr. Kepner ask how safe the Dragon's Eye is from being stolen like it was from the ancient Korean Emperor, and the Professor will laugh and tell everyone listening how safe the whole museum is with their new state-of-the-art alarm system. He says it goes on at the same time every night, and



no one but him knows when, nor does anyone but him know how to disable it. He whispers to Mr. Kepner that he carefully keeps the code for the alarm and the time it goes off on himself at all times as he pats his jacket. If the players roll their Smarts and beat a Target Number of 17, they can hear the Professor whispering.

If any of the kids decide to take a close look at the Dragon's Eye, they are immediately startled by Crazy Walt, the custodian. Again, everyone knows Crazy Walt, and is only startled for a moment. He says to the kids, "Y'know, the Dragon's Eye is cursed! When pirates stole it from the temple, a priest yelled a curse at them—'may your life never be the same,' he yelled. Ever since, every pirate that had the Dragon's Eye met a terrible fate! It's true!" If they talk more to him, or tell him that they don't believe him, Walt will say, "Why do ya think the divers who found it didn't keep it for themselves? 'Cause they knew it was cursed, that's why!" If they push him for more information, he just grunts, "Nosy kids," and walks away, scowling at them.

If any of the PCs decide to walk around the rest of the exhibit, have them make a Smarts roll (Target Number 15) to notice a mysterious man near one corner talking into his shoulder. If they want to sneak up to him to hear him talking, they must make a Moves roll (Target Number 22) to sneak up, and then a Smarts roll (Target Number 15) to listen in on his conversation and not get caught eavesdropping. If the player or players make the roll, they hear the man say in a French accent, "Yes, yes, everything is going as planned. Meet me in the back at 10:30 tonight." If they miss the roll, the man will look them in the eye and say very snootily, "Nosey children!" and walk away with his nose in the air. He'll go back to talking into his shoulder very quietly, but he'll keep an eye on the kids, and stay away from them. They won't be able to get close enough to hear him again.

Of course, if the kids try to report what they saw and heard from the mysterious man, no one will believe them; the grown-ups will laugh, shake their heads and tell the kids that they have really overactive imaginations. This would be a good time to introduce the secret note. Have



everyone make a Smarts roll. Do not announce a Target Number; instead, whoever gets the highest number is the one who finds the note. Hand the note to them, and tell them that they found this slip of paper on the ground. Let that player decide whether he or she will show the note to the other kids.

The Secret Meaning of the Note: the letters HOPE are the letters that correspond to the numbers on the keypad of the alarm system that will deactivate the alarm. The numbers “10:00” on the note tell what time the alarm comes on.

After all this has taken place, Mr. Kepner will call out to everyone to get on the bus—the museum trip is over, and they’re all going to Super Clucker’s for lunch!

Scene II— Later That Night

The action in this scene starts at the pizza place, “Gigi’s,” which is just across the street from the museum. The kids meets here every Friday night to eat dinner and just hang out. Tonight, Andrea has





been told by her parents that she must take Bingo with her when she goes out with friends. If none of the players is playing Andrea, pick one other character to take care of Bingo for the night as a favor to Andrea.

Have all the players make a Smarts roll (Target Number 19). Whomever makes the roll sees the mysterious man sneaking around to the back of the museum. Again, if the kids attempt to tell any adults what they've seen (and this includes calling the police), the adults dismiss them, once again good-naturedly making fun of their over-active imaginations. Also, any character with the ability Nosey will naturally want to go to the museum to see what the mysterious man is up to—no roll is necessary.

The kids will notice that at both the front and back doors to the museum (whichever door they go to) will have a keypad next to it. The red LED on the keypad reads, "Auto Activate at 10:00pm Cancelled." A green light on the pad is lit. All doors are open.

Whether they come in the back door or the front door, the kids will notice that the place is dark, and no one seems to be about. If they decide to sneak, have everyone make a Moves roll and beat a Target Number of 21. Museums, even small ones, can echo really loudly, and any little noise (even whispering) can carry. Everyone must beat the Target Number to consider the roll a success.

If everyone succeeds, they can hear slight scratching noises in the main exhibit hall. Because of the good roll, when they open the door to look inside, they see a huge glowing white dragon (about eight feet tall) with an orange crest standing next to the Dragon's Eye diamond. Its back is to them, but upon hearing the door open, the dragon wheels around and says in a booming voice, "Who dares approach Yong Wang, the Dragon King of the Seas?"

If the roll is not a success, the noise in the hall stops suddenly, and the museum becomes spooky and silent. Then, the doors to the main exhibit hall blow open, and the kids are blinded by the sight of a huge (eight foot tall) glowing white dragon with an orange



crest standing next to the Dragon's Eye. It roars, and says to the kids, "Who dares approach Yong Wang, the Dragon King of the Seas?"

At this first look, the dragon appears to be very real. To keep from being really scared and running away, every player must make a Smarts roll and beat a Target Number of 28. If they do not make the roll, they run away, and a Chase Scene begins. To get out of the Chase Scene, the kids have to trick Yong Wang in order to get away (see Chase Scenes, page 46). Whatever the case, the noise and action from the Chase Scene has locked the kids and Yong Wang inside the museum. The doors won't open no matter how hard they try. The kids are now stuck in the museum with the dragon!

The players now must try to capture Yong Wang by setting a Trap (see Traps!, page 41). If the trap is successful, the dragon is captured, but not defeated, and will make the speech listed below. The dragon laughs, and tells them all (and you can read this to the players), "Foolish little humans! I am the Dragon King of the Seas, and if you know what's good for you, you'll leave now, before I have you for dinner! I am here to get what is rightfully mine - The Dragon's Eye Diamond. It was stolen from me, and now I shall take it back!"

Have all the players make a Smarts roll and beat a Target Number of 24. Those who make it notice that, while the dragon is waving its arms and talking, there is a weird little hole in its armpit. It looks like the same kind of hole that happens when you tear your shirt.

At this point—or if the trap didn't work,—Bingo will rush at Yong Wang, trying to tackle him to protect his friends. In the chaos, Bingo and the dragon fall backwards into the museum displays.

Bingo and Yong Wang knock over the case holding the diamond. The diamond dramatically rolls across the floor, making a pretty tinkling sound. This distracts Bingo, and he goes to retrieve it. When he grabs the diamond, it glows red, then gives off a huge flash of light. The light slowly fades, and everyone sees Bingo



dressed like a pirate. He scowls at the kids and the knocked-over dragon. "What ye be starin' at?" he growls. The dragon seems dazed, and it is very apparent now that it is nothing more than a person inside of a dragon suit. The head is still on, so it's hard to tell who's in the suit.

The set of doors going in to the exhibit hall that the kids didn't come through suddenly burst open, and two policemen and the mysterious man charge in, followed by a very confused Professor Dorchester. The mysterious man says to the policemen, "The children are innocent! Do not take them into custody!"

The police handcuff the dragon's arms behind it, and the mysterious man introduces himself to the kids. "Pardon my rudeness earlier today, my friends. I am Detective Joseph Vendredi of Interpol. And this," as he rips the head off the dragon, "is, of course, not Yong Wang, but Georgianna Fortuna, an international jewel thief!" When they see the woman in the dragon costume, they notice that it's the same woman who claimed to be Nora Cochran from the MegaCity Museum. The costume is nothing more than a big puppet made of white silk and orange feathers, backlit inside the costume with glow sticks. Georgianna wears a small microphone that is in sync with the speaker system in the exhibit hall.

The Professor seems very confused, but apologetic. He feels stupid for having been fooled by Georgianna Fortuna, and embarrassed that she picked his jacket pocket and managed to steal the slip of paper he keeps the alarm code and auto-alarm time on. (Special GM note: if any of the characters return the note to the professor, they get one bonus experience point for honesty at the end of the game.)

Bingo, now dressed in pirate finery, lopes over to Georgianna. He pokes her in the nose with a crooked monkey finger, and says to her, "Missy, ye ain't no dragon, an' ye certainly ain't no pirate! Yer a common, thievin' wench, an' iff'n ye were on my ship, I'd make ye walk the plank!" Detective Vendredi sees Bingo poking Georgianna's nose, and laughs. He says to the kids, "It seems your



little chimpanzee friend thinks Ms. Fortuna stole his banana! He is so cute!” If the characters ask the Detective about Bingo’s pirate outfit, or Bingo talking, he laughs even harder, and tells them they have such overactive imaginations. He does not see the pirate clothes, nor does he hear Bingo talk. Professor Dorchester acts the same way. The only adult that sees what the kids see is Georgianna; after all, she was the only other person present when Bingo got his new persona. Georgianna thinks the monkey is the freakiest thing she’s ever seen, and won’t say anything else.

After the grown-ups all leave, the kids can ask Bingo any questions they like. Bingo the chimp is now embodied with the spirit of the last pirate who owned the Dragon’s Eye. They can now call him Captain Bingo, since the pirate cannot remember his name. He was a special pirate; he was a privateer for the American Revolutionary Navy. He was captain of the ship *Juliet the Beautiful*, named for the woman he was in love with (she didn’t even know him). The last thing he remembers was riding the coast of Massachusetts (which later became Rhode Island) during a storm, and the ship started to crash on the rocks. He can’t remember much after that.

Now, after such a harrowing adventure, Cap’n Bingo suggests that they go out to find a tavern where he can get a big banana split!

The End!





Epilogue

Does It Have To End?

But, that's not all, folks!

The game doesn't necessarily end at the end of a story. The characters grow, gain experience, and learn new things. They become closer to their friends. Maybe they even leave their little home town and visit other exciting places.

Just like real life.

We, as gamers, often find a little of ourselves inside of our characters. Sometimes, we find that the adventures they have may mirror some of the things we come across in our day-to-day lives.

Just remember: we live real lives in a real world. Andrea, Clutch, Sid, Jeff, Spike, Thrasher, Roshandra and Cap'n Bingo (and the other characters you make up) live in a make-believe world. It can be a whole lot of fun to play the game that your characters are a part of, but don't forget to make your real world and your real life just as much fun as the game.

Okay, enough of that! Enjoy your game, create new adventures, and always remember to have fun, no matter what you do!





Glossary of Terms

Adventure—A story that is created for other people to participate in as characters.

Adventure Module—An adventure that is conveniently pre-written for the GM to run.

Background—The life story of a character up until the player first plays it.

Bonked!—When a character gets knocked out.

Character—The pretend person that a player plays.

Chase Scene—A point in the adventure where the characters run from the monster and the monster chases them.

Clique—The group of characters that are together because they have something in common.

Conflict—When two characters or a character and a non-player character want to perform tasks at the same time.

D6—A six-sided die.

GM—Game Master; the person who runs an RPG.

Health Points—A number equal to a character's Health Stat that tells how tough he is to Bonk!

LARP—Live Action Role Playing; the players act out their characters in a live setting, similar to theater.

Modifier—The extra numbers added to a die roll.

Monster—A generic term for the strange thing that is the center of an adventure; it can be real, or just somebody pretending in a costume.

NPC—Non-Player Character; characters that the GM creates that may or may not interact with the PCs.

PC—Player Character; another name for Character

Player—The real person that creates and plays a character.

Plot—The plan of action or series of events in a story.

Prerequisite—In an RPG, an ability you must have before getting the next higher or stronger ability.

RPG—Role-Playing Game.

Setting—The place where the story happens.



Target Number—The pre-set number given by the GM that a player must roll in order to successfully have the character complete a task.

Trap—A device that is used to capture a monster.

Trap Rating—The base number that you use before you roll dice to see if you catch the monster.

Wild Card—The weird, somewhat human, somewhat supernatural animal or object that hangs out with the Clique.

List of Player Character Abilities

Abbreviations:

Sma = Smarts

Hea = Health

Mov = Moves

Str = Strength

Actor—cost - 8; *Prerequisite: Disguise*

Hea+1d6

This Ability helps a character look, sound, and act like someone else.

Animal Friend—cost - 3

Sma+2

This is used to befriend any animal, including angry ones and wild ones.

Best Friend—cost - 6

Hea+1d6

The character can make friends with anyone if the roll succeeds.

Bookworm—cost - 7

Sma+1d6

For any roll when researching a subject that's in a library, or to remember something you've previously read in a book. This does not apply to online research.



Bottomless Stomach—cost - 1

Hea+1

The character can eat a lot of food, and not get sick.

Bug-Free—cost - 2

Hea+4

This can prevent a character from catching any colds, flu, or other “bugs” that are going around

Clown—cost - 5

Hea+2

The character can make anyone laugh, including villains and monsters.

Computer Guru—cost - 8

Sma+4

The character can fix, build, or program a computer.

Connected—cost 1

Sma+2

You know a lot of gossip, and the best way you find out the scoop on anyone is through all your connections. Roll to see if and what you find out. *Note:* gossip isn’t always reliable information.

Diplomat—cost - 3

Sma+3

You have a wonderful ability to make people stop arguing and help patch things up.

Disguise—cost - 4

Hea+4

This helps a character to just look and dress like someone else.

Dodge—cost - 5

Mov+1d6

The character can dodge any object flying at him or her.



Double-Jointed—cost - 5

Mov+3

This can be used anytime a character needs super dexterity, as with yoga, or squeezing into a small space.

Drive—cost - 6

Mov+4

This allows a character to drive any motorized vehicle, from a forklift to a semi-truck

Famous—cost - 13; *Prerequisite: Popular*

Hea+5

Just like Popular, but more people know who the character is because he or she may be a pop star, a notable athlete, or someone else that is easily recognizable in public.

Fast Talk — cost - 8

Hea+Id6

The character can confuse a specific person by talking very fast.

Fearless—cost - 6

Sma+Id6

This helps a character to muster up any extra courage to get him or her through a situation.

Flirt — cost - 2

Hea+ 1

The character uses this when trying to get the attention of someone of the opposite gender.

Geek—cost - 4

Sma+2

This helps a character to remember any knowledge about TV shows, movies, comic books, and other pop-culture trivia.



Good Eats—cost - 2

Sma+3

This works whenever a character cooks a meal or a snack for someone else.

Gross-Out—cost - 1

Hea+ 1

Yick! This allows a character to have anyone get disgusted just because he or she did something really gross (show chewed food, burp, have gas, pick his or her nose, make nasty noises, whatever seems right at the time).

Hard Headed—cost - 5

No Roll Needed

This is a special Ability that helps when a character gets Bonked! A character with this Ability is only Bonked for half the normal time. So, if a character with Hard Headed would normally be Bonked! for two minutes, he's only Bonked! for one minute instead.

Hip—cost - 3

Sma+2

The character knows what is currently in vogue.

Immovable—cost - 5

Hea+3

This helps a character to stand his or her ground when someone is charging at the character.

Intimidate—cost - 7

Str+3

The character can cause anyone, even monsters, to sometimes freeze in their tracks by trying to stare them down.

Intuition—cost - 8

Sma+Id6

This can help a character to see if he or she has any bad feeling about a situation or a person (sometimes called "foreboding").



Jury-Rig—cost - 8; *Prerequisite: Mechanic*

Trap Roll+1d6

The character can build a complex device out of common items that could be used for trapping a monster or villain (sometimes called a Rube Goldberg Device). This Ability adds directly to any roll on a Trap.

Leadership—cost - 5

Hea+3

This can be used whenever a character needs to inspire others to follow or do as he or she says.

Level-Headed—cost - 3 (*The Temper cannot have this Ability!*)

Hea+3

The character rarely loses his or her cool, no matter how stressed or angry the others may be.

Lucky—cost - 15

Proper Stat+1d6

This is a very special ability that you, as a player, can only use once per game (so use it wisely!). If you make a bad roll, this ability allows you a do-over. Story-wise, it means that your character often has great luck, especially during the crunch. Make the same roll you just made, but add one more die, even if you rolled four dice before due to an Ability. If it's better than your previous roll, it counts! However, if this roll is worse than the one before, too bad; you still have to count this roll. It's okay to take Kid Points with this Ability, too, if one of your teammates offers them.

Magician—cost - 2

Mov+2

This Ability helps the character to do any cool slight-of-hand tricks.

Mechanic—cost - 6

Sma+6

The character can build or repair any device.



Mega Whiz—cost - 9; *Prerequisite: one Whiz Ability*
Sma+1d6

This is an extension of an existing Whiz. The character, through a lot of study, knows even more about this particular school subject; he or she is, more than likely, in an honors program.

Monster Mind—cost - 6
Sma+3

The character knows so much about supernatural monsters (Bigfoot, Loch Ness Monster, aliens, etc.) that he or she can almost think just like them. Roll to see if your character knows what the monster will do next.

Musician—cost - 4
Sma+1d6

The character can play instruments from one of the following groups (pick one): woodwind, brass, string, percussion, or electronic.

Nature Buff—cost - 3
Sma+3

This is used whenever a character needs to remember anything he or she knows about any plant or animal.

Nimble—cost - 3
Mov+2

This helps the character to deftly and quickly move out of the way of anyone charging at him or her.

Nosey—cost - 2
Sma+2

This helps a character determine whether or not to give in to the urge to investigate any situation. If you don't make the Target Number, the character will investigate, no matter how dangerous it may seem.



Outdoorsman—cost - 4

Sma+3

This works when a character is doing any camping activities or anytime he or she is “roughing it” out in the wild.

Pack Rat—cost - 5

Sma+1

The character has a habit of keeping the weirdest stuff in his or her pockets or handbag. If that character or a member of the Clique needs an odd item, roll to see if you have it. *The Catch*: it must be an item that will fit in a pocket or a purse.

Perfect—cost - 1

Hea+2

It seems that, no matter how much filth there is in the world, it always manages to stay far away from you. Roll to see if you stay clean when you fall into a dumpster, a sewer, a mud puddle, or anything that could get you dirty.

Popular—cost - 8

Hea+2

Everybody at school and in town knows and likes the character. Roll to see if he or she can convince anyone to do something or tell valuable information just because they know the character.

Really Rich—cost - 10; *Prerequisite: Rich*

Hea+6

The character has an incredible inheritance, but there are some things he or she still can't afford to buy. Roll to see if the character can buy what is needed or wanted.

Rich—cost - 7

Hea+3

The character has a really good job, or a really good allowance, but some things may be out of the question. Roll to see if the character can afford what he or she is after.



Rich Beyond Belief—cost - 14; *Prerequisite: Rich and Really Rich*
No Roll Needed

The character always has money-no roll needed.

Singer—cost - 4

Hea+1d6

This helps a character to sing really well.

Slam—cost - 3

Sma+1

This helps a character to have a quick come-back to any insult or obvious statement.

Sleuth—cost - 4

Sma+3

This helps a character to look for clues.

Sneak—cost - 4

Mov+3

This determines how well a character can move without making any noise.

Sprint—cost - 4

Mov+4

This helps a character to run quickly a short distance (about 100 yards).

Sporty—cost - 4

Str+3

This gives a character a bonus to all sport-related activities, like running, throwing, hitting, or catching.

Stir The Pot—cost - 6

Sma+3

This can be used to convince someone that someone else is saying or doing things against the first one (often called “manipulation”).



Steel Memory—cost 3

Sma+3

The character has the amazing ability to remember anything, even the most trivial stuff.

Strong-Willed—cost - 7

Hea+5

Rarely will the character be bullied or even give up during a stare-down; the character might even giggle or just be confused by the bully. Roll to see if the character's will breaks.

Super-Slam—cost - 7; *Prerequisite - Slam*

Sma+3

This gives a character a quick come-back to any insult or obvious statement and to keep the target from saying anything else because they're just too embarrassed.

Super-Sporty—cost - 1; *Prerequisite - Sporty*

Str+6

This gives the character a bonus to more skillful sport-related activities, like riding a horse, swimming in rough water, or balancing on a beam that's a few stories above ground.

Suspicion—cost - 6

Sma+4

This helps a character to detect whether or not someone is lying.

The Whiz—cost - 4

Sma+3

The character has a good grasp of any one subject in school. The character can have more than one Whiz specialty, but each one must be purchased separately. Some examples of a Whiz Ability:

Math Whiz

Geography Whiz

Science Whiz



Total Hottie—cost - 11; *Prerequisites - Flirt and Ultra Cute*
Hea+Id6

The character uses this when trying to make someone of the opposite gender completely stop their action, or make them forget whatever they were doing.

Ultra Cute—cost - 6; *Prerequisite - Flirt*
Hea+4

The character uses this when trying to persuade someone of the opposite gender.

Wallflower—cost - 2
Hea+2

This helps the character to go unnoticed, especially in a crowd.

Webworm—cost - 7
Sma+Id6

The character uses this when researching anything online.

Weirdness Magnet—cost - 3
No Roll Needed by Character

Another very special ability. Your character seems to naturally attract strange things and people. You, the player, do not roll this ability; the monster or whatever nearby weirdo makes a Smarts roll to see if it notices you. Great to have if the Clique needs someone as bait for a trap!

Winning Smile—cost - 1
Hea+1

The character uses this to have anyone feel at ease just because he or she smiles.

Xtreme Sporty—cost - 5
Mov+3

The character uses this when doing anything relating to skateboards, surfing, snowboarding, or bmxing.



List of Wild Card Abilities

NOTE: The Wild Card can also have any of the PC abilities, but must pay one extra point above the listed cost.

Bag O'Tricks—cost - 4

Mov+3

The Wild Card has a device (not necessarily a bag; can be a back pocket, under floppy ears, etc.) that will produce anything it needs, such as food, clothes, an anvil—whatever is needed or wanted at the time. If the player doesn't meet the Target Number, a useless or weird object (of the GM's choice) comes out.

Brawler—cost - 7

Str+6

The Wild Card is able to fight with any natural part of its body, such as teeth, claws, fists, etc.

Call To All—cost - 2

Hea+2

The Clique will instantly find the Wild Card if it calls to them.

Exit Stage Left—cost - 9; *Prerequisite: Super Fast*

Mov+ 10

The Wild Card can grab one other character and quickly exit the scene before the monster or villain has any idea where they've gone.

Fade—cost - 5

Hea+3

The Wild Card can fade from everyone's view.

Fish Out Of Water—cost - 5

Hea+Id6

The Wild Card can adapt to any environment, regardless of its species.



Fly—cost - 4

Mov+3

The Wild Card can fly, but it needs a special object to do it (such as a flying carpet, an umbrella, etc.)

Ken—cost - 2

No Roll Needed.

The Wild Card can understand the Clique, and they understand it. Everyone else is clueless.

Martial Arts—cost - 9; *Prerequisite: Brawler*

Str or Mov (whichever is higher)+8

The Wild Card is familiar with one school of Martial Arts.

Mechanized—cost - 16

Special Roll

Automatically add 1d6 to any Str, Sma, or Hea roll. The Wild Card can be either a partial cyborg or a full robot.

Melee—cost - 7

Str+6

The Wild Card is able to fight with a weapon, such as a sword or a club. Only one weapon per Melee Ability.

Perfect Direction—cost - 3

Sma+3

The Wild Card never gets lost because it always knows where it is.

Skit—cost - 6

Sma+5

The Wild Card has the talent to turn the situation into a funny skit in order to confuse the monster or villain. The skit must be described to all players.

Speak—cost - 2

No Roll Needed.

The Wild Card can talk and everyone (not just the Clique) understands.



Specter—cost - 16

No Roll Needed.

No roll needed to act like a ghost. However, the Wild Card will automatically get Fade, Super Fly, and Transform. The Wild Card is, quite literally, a ghost, able to fly and disappear, and detect and talk to other ghosts.

Strong—cost - 5

Str+4

The Wild Card is strong enough to lift something or someone that weighs as much as it does.

Super Fast—cost - 8

Mov+7

The Wild Card can move faster than the eyes of anyone watching it.

Super Fly—cost - 8

Mov+5

The Wild Card can fly all by itself.

Super Strong—cost - 9; *Prerequisite: Strong*

Str+8

The Wild Card is strong enough to lift something or someone that weighs two or more times its weight.

Telekinetic—cost - 8

Sma or Str (whichever is higher)+7

The Wild Card can move objects with its mind.

Telepathy—cost - 6

Sma+5

The Wild Card can read the mind and speak to the mind of only one member of the Clique. Pick one and stick with him or her!

Transform Object—cost - 8

Sma+4

The Wild Card can change any non-living object into another non-living object of the same size.



Transform Self—cost - 8

Mov+6

The Wild Card can change into anything as long as what it's changing into is the same size as the Wild Card.

Wild Whiz—cost - 6

Sma+6

This knowledge can be of any subject matter (not just school subjects), but only one subject per Whiz ability. *Examples: Wild Whiz - Comic Books, Wild Whiz - Pop Songs, Wild Whiz - Italian cuisine, etc.*





Sample Player Characters

The complete character sheets of these characters can be downloaded from www.meddlinggames.com. The following are just simple character Stats, Abilities, and Background.

Weldon “Clutch” Sellers Archetype- Jock

Stats—

Strength-9
Moves-4
Smarts-3
Health-8

Abilities—

Sporty
Immovable
Nosy
Fearless
Outdoorsman
Intuition
Bottomless Stomach

Background Concept—

Basic football jock (plays nose tackle); tall, blond, bo-hunk with silly, puppy-dog smile on his face most of the time. Also member of Nature Scouts (uniform rarely fits him). Stable, traditional family life—Mom is a stay-at-home mom, Dad is former college football star who owns & operates used car dealership. Has secret crush on Andrea, whom he rescued from bullies in 6th grade. Will protect anyone whom Andrea feels is her friend (“Her friends are my friends, too!”). Gets along with just about anyone. Very, very slow to anger, but when he gets to his saturation point, becomes almost hulkish and is prone to rampaging.





Andrea Davis

Archetype- Brain

Stats—

Strength-2
Moves-7
Smarts-10
Health-5

Abilities—

Bookworm
Dodge
Leadership
Steel Memory
Wallflower
Whiz - Math
Whiz -Science
Level-Headed

Background Concept—

Basic brainiac girl; small, skinny red-haired girl with glasses, normally hiding behind a book.

Really comes out of her shell when in her element, i.e.,

library or science lab. Can be a know-it-all sometimes. President of Science and Math clubs. Loves chess. Family life is relatively stable- Dad and Mom both work for AmeriGen Research Laboratories, and they love their daughter, but often get wrapped up in their work. She has problems with the lab's use of experimental animals, and rescued a lab chimp, Bingo, who later became Cap'n Bingo (the Cap'n chooses to live with her, keeping her company when Mom and Dad aren't around). Has been the victim of bullies (read: learned to run fast and dodge dodge-balls) until Clutch chased them away from her. Does her best to help out Clutch (or anyone else she likes) with homework. Secretly thinks Thrasher is dreamy.





Brian “Thrasher” Carson

Archetype- Goof

Stats—

Strength-5

Moves-8

Smarts-6

Health-5

Abilities—

Clown

Bottomless Stomach

Computer Guru

Gross Out

Mechanic

Weirdness Magnet

Xtreme Sporty

Background Concept—

Basic skate punk, but a lot more laid back. Lanky, slouchy, disheveled, and never seen without a skateboard. Never. Very concerned about environmental

issues-will go out of his way to recycle. Plays a lot of computer games, and will also spend a good deal of time online. Member of Science Club, but thinks that most members (except for Andrea) are waaaaay too uptight. Has more fun in Drama Club, but keeps forgetting to attend. Loves to find out how things work—habitually aggravates his Mom by taking apart her kitchen appliances. Parents divorced; Dad unknown, Mom works at Super Clucker’s fast food during the day and goes to night school to get her hair stylist’s license. Is currently trying to teach Cap’n Bingo how to be a pirate rapper. The Cap’n is amused.

And, yes, Thrasher is always hungry.





Roshandra Ngyen

Archetype- Fluff

Stats—

Strength-4
Moves-7
Smarts-5
Health-8

Abilities—

Flirt
Fast-Talker
Hip
Singer
Rich
Perfect
Nimble

Background Concept—

Basic African-Asian-American girl. Well, maybe not. Very cute, far from subtle, and is often followed by at least three fawning boys. Member of Drama Club and is Fashion Editor for the school newspaper.

Loves karaoke, shopping for the latest fashions, and being seen. Is convinced she could be the next pop star if she could just get the right connections. Empty family life—Dad is investment broker for a Korean bank and is often out of town. Mom is a civil rights activist who is thinking about running for office and, subsequently, is not around too often, either. To make up for it, parents shower her with a lot of money and gifts. Wants to give everyone in the gang a makeover, and really likes Cap'n Bingo's sense of pirate style ("...my boy, CB is too fly!"). Secretly wants everyone's approval, but will pretend it's not important to her. Slightly envious of Clutch's family life.





Siddhartha "Sid" Johnson

Archetype- Innocent

Stats—

Strength- 5

Moves- 6

Smarts- 6

Health- 7

Abilities—

Strong-Willed

Best Friend

Bug-Free

Double-Jointed

Good Eats

Nature Buff

Musician - Strings

Weirdness Magnet



Background Concept—

Moved to Rhode Island from San Francisco, CA. Lives with Dad and Grandma, who run a New Age health food store called It's All Good. Always sees the good in every situation and in every person.

Total vegan (the kind of vegetarian that doesn't even eat milk or eggs), but is okay if other people eat meat—he thinks it's more wrong to be judgmental. Always concerned about taking care of the Earth, and has started a recycling program at school. Great musician, can play any stringed instrument, and is trying to start a band with Thrasher and Roshandra. Because of his good nature, many grown-ups think he's not real smart; however, his real friends know better, and often ask him for advice.



Daniel "Spike" Spikelson

Archetype- Temper

Stats—

Strength- 6

Moves- 6

Smarts- 5

Health- 7

Abilities—

Stir The Pot

Slam

Drive

Geek

Intimidate

Monster Mind

Background Concept—

Spike is the quintessential smart-aleck punk, at least at first glance. He actually has a great love of humanity, but gets easily ticked off at people who he thinks are acting stupidly. Oftentimes, he likes to play tricks on these kinds of people, hoping they will learn from their mistakes. He knows the whole gang thanks to Thrasher, who loves to tinker with Spike's old car. He likes everyone in the Clique, and will staunchly defend all of them, even if his loud, in-your-face, don't-mess-with-my-friends style sometimes annoys them (except for Cap'n Bingo, who likes the fact that Spike wears a Jolly Roger t-shirt). He has a job at the local punk rock boutique, Slasher's Den, and often will update Roshandra on the latest club fashions; after all, he does have a secret crush on her.





Jeff Younger

Archetype- Sidekick

Stats—

Strength- 6

Moves- 6

Smarts- 6

Health- 6

Abilities—

Best Friend

Animal Friend

Level-Headed

Lucky

Wallflower

Winning Smile

Magician

Background Concept—

Jeff is totally the “Joe Average” kind of guy; he rarely disturbs the status quo. He gets along fine with everyone he meets, and tries to keep the peace with all the people that he knows (he hates conflict!). His Dad is an accountant and his Mom is the receptionist at Clutch’s Dad’s auto dealership (he and Clutch are second cousins). Even his hobbies are a little ordinary; he hikes, collects coins, watches David Blaine on TV, and reads mystery novels. The only unusual thing about Jeff is his amazing ability to save the Clique when they think all is lost.





Other “Dragon’s Eye” Characters

These are short write-ups on the villain and the NPCs of the Adventure in Chapter 4. Feel free to make up any other information that we may have left out!

Georgianna Fortuna

Type: Jewel Thief

Stats—

Strength- 4

Moves- 7

Smarts- 6

Health- 7

Abilities—

Disguise

Actor

Sneak

Whiz – Gemology

Steel Memory

Perfect

Background—

Not only is Fortuna an international jewel thief, she’s a master of disguise. She’s been on Interpol’s most wanted list for many years because the police never get the same description of her twice! She was once the director of the Association of Gemologists, but they let her go because of her arrogance and greed. She has vowed revenge against the Association, and, unfortunately, anyone else who gets in her way.





Professor Clive Dorchester

Type: NPC

No stats needed.

Background—

The good-natured, yet absent-minded director of the Port Juliet Museum for the past three years. Originally from England, the Professor moved to Rhode Island to work at the museum. Has wanted the museum to be nationally recognized, and hopes that the “Gems of the World” exhibit will put Port Juliet on the map. Although very, very intelligent, the Professor will get so wrapped up in things, he’ll forget minor details (like checking out the credetials of the MegaCity Museum’s “Touring Exhibit Director”).



Detective Joseph Vendredi

Type: NPC

No stats needed.

Background—

Detective Vendredi is the suave, sophisticated, and sometimes snooty French officer for Interpol. His main goal: Get Georgianna Fortuna! He has chased her for nearly a year, and has always been just one step behind her. This time, he’ll be in disguise, too—as a French visitor to Port Juliet to see the Dragon’s Eye.





Holly Bennett

Type: NPC

No stats needed.

Background—

Cute, smart, and normally cheerful, Holly is the intern at the museum, learning all she can so that she can be a museum director one day. She just recently graduated from Warwick College, and started working at the museum a few months ago. She's a little upset that Professor Dorchester is the director, and not her uncle Walter, who's worked at the museum for over twenty years.



Walter Bennett

Type: NPC

No stats needed.

Background—

Crazy Walter, as everyone in Port Juliet knows him, is a fixture at the museum. He's tall and skinny, with wild, unkempt red hair, and always has a crazy look in his eyes. He knows everything about every exhibit, and loves to tell anyone who'll listen all about what they're looking at, whether they want to know or not. The Museum Board offered him the job of Museum Director, but he turned it down; he enjoys just being the janitor and maintenance man. He has fewer responsibilities, and he can still be near the visitors, "informing" them. More like scaring, them, actually.



Sample Villains & Monsters

It's just as easy to build your own villain or monster as it is to build a character or a Wild Card. Since villains are basically normal human beings, build them the same way an ordinary character is built. Because monsters can be a little different, build them the same way you'd build a Wild Card, but leave out the Quirk. You can make up a background for either, but it's not always necessary.

Here's a few examples of some villains and monsters.

Dick "The Worm" Kirkland

Type: Street Thug

Stats—

Strength- 6
Moves- 8
Smarts- 2
Health- 8

Abilities—

Connected
Sneak
Nimble
Dodge
Sprint
Intimidation

Rupert Malachite

Type: Greedy Corporate CEO

Stats—

Strength- 4
Moves- 4
Smarts- 9
Health- 7

Abilities—

Rich
Really Rich
Leadership
Whiz-Business



Ziagnork

Type: Alien

Stats—

Strength- 3

Moves- 5

Smarts- 11

Health- 5

Abilities—

Fly (uses a hover disc)

Telekinetic

Telepathy

Wild Whiz- Outer Space

GreenGills

Type: Sea Monster

Stats—

Strength- 8

Moves- 7

Smarts- 4

Health- 5

Abilities—

Speak

Strong

Super Strong

Super Fast

The Undead Dude of Dugout Creek

Type: Zombie

Stats—

Strength- 10

Moves- 3

Smarts- 2

Health- 9

Abilities—

Brawler

Strong

Super Strong

Bottomless Stomach

Gross Out

Mr. Chitters

Type: Giant Squirrel

Stats—

Strength- 10

Moves- 11

Smarts- 1

Health- 2

Abilities—

Brawler

Martial Arts (Karate)

Super Fast

Winning Smile



Index

Abilities

Creation Points Allowed	16
How to Use in Play	37
Player Character List	68-77
Wild Card List	78-81

Adventure Module

Definition	51, 67
“The Dragon’s Eye”	51-63

Adventures

Adventure Modules.....	51, 67
“ <i>The Dragon’s Eye</i> ”	51-63
Construction.....	22-25

Archetype

Examples of	13-14
Free Ability.....	16-17
List of	13-14

Character Creation

Choosing Abilities	16-17
Choosing Archetype	13-14
Determining Stats	14-15
Writing Background.....	11-12

Chase Scene.....46

Conflict Resolution38-40



Experience Points

Buying New Abilities	47-48
Buying up Stats.....	49
For Wild Cards	49
How to Award.....	48
How to Spend	47-48

Game Master

Awarding Experience	48
Building NPCs.....	24
Building a Wild Card	26-28
Constructing an Adventure	22-25
Dealing With Players & Characters.....	21-22
Dealing With Rules	20
Definition	67
Guide	19-31
Running an Adventure.....	29-31

Getting Bonked!40-41

Kid Points43-45

LARP7

Non-Player Characters

Definition	67
How to Build.....	24
List of Villains & Monsters	91-93

Player Characters

Definition	67
How to Create	11-17

RPG (Role-Playing Game)67



Rules

Conflict Resolution.....	38-40
Kid Points	43-45
Hints & Tips for Play	46-47
How to Use Abilities.....	37-38
How to Use Stats	33-35
Target Numbers.....	35-37
The Starter System®	33

Stats

Creation Points Allowed	15
Description of	14-15
How to Use in Play	33-34

Target Number

Definition	35, 67
How to Set	35
List of	35-37

Traps!

Designing	42-43
Trap Rating	42

Wild Card

Definition	26, 67
Example of.....	27-28
Experience Points for	49
How to Build	26-27
List of Abilities	78-81
Quirks.....	27



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