Adventure
A WEEK.COM

Adventure Composition Tutorial

(ACT001-12)
COMPOSED BY JONATHAN NELSON

Adventure Composition Tutorial

by Jonathan G. Nelson

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This product makes use of the 3.5 OGL, Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook, Pathfinder Role-playing Game, and Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary. These rules can be found online as part of the 3.5 SRD and Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at www.d20srd.org & paizo.com /pathfinderRPG/prd/ respectively. This adventure is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game or the 3.5 edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game. The OGL can be found on page 30 of this product.

Product Identity: The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, deities, etc.), dialogue, plots, storylines, locations, characters, artwork, and trade dress. (Elements that have previously been designated as Open Game Content or are in the public domain are not included in this declaration.)

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in publishing an adventure with Adventureaweek.com! Adventureaweek.com was conceived in December of 2010 and constructed throughout 2011. Ten adventures were written and formatted in advance so we would not get behind after opening our doors. We launched our site on March 1st 2012. After the launch we found that the backlog of adventures bought us the time needed to deal with unforeseen issues. Luckily, our members did not notice a thing. Of course, things were not quite so calm behind the scenes, but being prepared in advance really was the key to our site's survival and success.

The launch seems like ancient history now. We certainly have learned a lot since opening our doors to the world. AaW team member Joshua Gullion likes to refer to Adventureaweek as **RPG boot camp**, and I concur!

Over the past six months, we have released over 25 adventures in both our PDF and patented web formats. We have received a great deal of praise and rave reviews on sites such as DriveThruRPG and Paizo.com, as well as numerous independent blogs. Although far from easy, we have established ourselves faster than most RPG companies. This is due in large part to the dedication of our hard-working team and the amazing authors and artists which contribute on a weekly basis to make this business model a success.

Never before has anyone attempted what we tackle each week, which can only be described as taking on a massive red dragon with little more than a quill and stack of papers. Trust me, I've learned to make the dragon ramble on long enough so that I may record his memoirs, keeping him from devouring me whole!

So, let's cut to the chase, shall we? You're reading this today because you would like to try your hand at writing an adventure. Easy right? Well, yes... er... kind of. To really make an adventure successful you need more than just a great idea and a bunch of cool monsters, although that's an excellent start! You need proper spelling, grammar, and formatting. You need a solid layout with jaw-dropping artwork and top-notch cartography. You also require a delivery method and a publisher. That's where we come in. We're here with you every step of the way. We will help you hone your ideas, develop artwork and cartography, create both web and PDF formats, and even promote and sell the finished product! On top of all that you still receive a very reasonable commission and get to see your adventure published alongside other famous award winning authors!

To make all of the above happen is a complex process behind the scenes, something we have turned into a real science through trial and error. After many mistakes (who doesn't make 'em?), we came up with a structure which works for us, the developers, the authors, artists, play-testers, and finally the Gamemasters and Players who run our products. The following is a big part of that process, revealed for you to see all the moving parts and wrap your head around. This is the ACT, the Adventure Composition Tutorial. So, what are you waiting for? It's time to ACT!

Happy Writing! (and formatting)
Jonathan Nelson
Adventureaweek.com Founder, Web/Game Developer

The Basics

Format

We require the final format of your adventure to be emailed in Microsoft Word format (either .doc or .docx). We do not accept fax, snail mail, or other forms of submissions. If you do not have Word, you may make do with Open Office (a free program available for download online). Please be sure you convert your final file format to .doc or .docx before sending it in if you take this route.

Proper Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation

It is very important that you spell check your adventure prior to sending it in. It is equally important to have a friend well-versed in the English language read through your adventure looking for grammar or punctuation mistakes, continuity errors, and other issues.

Developer's Tip: I use a text to speech program to read my entire adventure aloud. This allows me to find any hard to pronounce names or strange sounding sentences. I listen all the way through with my eyes closed, noting the errors and where they occurred.

Plagiarism

Blatantly stealing materials from other authors & submitting this material to Adventureaweek.com, LLP will quite simply get you banned from ever working with us again. If your material somehow makes it into a published product and we are sued you may be held personally responsible for your actions in a court of law. In other words, don't be a jerk. Write your own stuff!

Copyrighted names

Using the names of your favorite Star Wars characters or the voice actors names from Fraggle Rock may seem like a cool idea and way to sneak something fun into your adventure, but trust me, it's not. Using names of places, people, or things which are already copyrighted is prohibited by Adventureaweek.com, LLP. If you attempt to sneak these type of materials into your adventure submission you will be banned. If they are caught post-publish you will be banned and held responsible should any legal action be taken against our company. So, just don't do it. If you need ideas for names there's lots of great resources out there and even random name generators to help you.

3.5 OGL

The Open Gaming License is a licence produced by Wizards of the Coast in the year 2000. It is the license which allowed Paizo to produce Pathfinder using a new variation of the 3.5 rule set for Dungeons & Dragons.

The Open Game License (or OGL) may be used by game developers to grant permission to modify, copy, and redistribute some of the content designed for their games, notably game mechanics. However, they must share alike copies and derivative works.

Pathfinder Compatibility License

It is recommended that before you produce any adventures for us, you become familiar with the Pathfinder Compatibility Agreement. Adventure aweek.com, LLP is legally required to abide by these terms. Thus, by producing material being published by our company, you too are required to comply to the terms set forth within this agreement.

We must work together to uphold the high standards set by Paizo Publishing for the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

The entire agreement is available for you to read at the following hyperlink:

http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility

One of the most important items to note on the agreement is to which books reference is allowed. I am reproducing this information here so should you need it you may quickly find it in the future. I have many times caught myself wondering if I could reference a particular section or feat listed within one of many Pathfinder tomes.

Exhibit B: List of Products which May Be Referenced

Last updated April 12, 2012

Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook™ (PZO1110)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game Bestiary™ (PZO1112)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Bonus Bestiary™ (PZO9500-3)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide™ (PZO1114)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide™ (PZO1115)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 2™ (PZO1116)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Magic™ (PZO1117)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Combat™ (PZO1118)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 3™ (PZO1119)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Advanced Race Guide™ (PZO1121)
Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Equipment™ (PZO1123)

Please note that this agreement is updated a couple times a year by Paizo, with new titles being added during each update. Please visit http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility for the most recent version of this list.

Copyrighted 3rd Party Publisher Materials

Third party publishers many times produce their content as OGC, which means,you can use it!

Unless you can provide us with evidence that proves beyond reasonable doubt that the content is 100% OGC, than you must email the company. Usually you can locate their contact information on their website. You will be asking the company or author for a simple letter stating that you are allowed to use this specific material within your adventure.

You must also use "Section 15" at the bottom of the OGC material each time it is referenced.

Here is an example of a "Section 15" for a Pathfinder compatible Owlbear:

Section 15: Copyright Notice - Pathfinder Chronicles: Dungeon Denizens Revisited

Pathfinder Chronicles: Dungeon Denizens Revisited.
Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors:
Clinton Boomer, Jason Bulmahn, Joshua J.
Frost, Nicolas Logue, Robert McCreary, Jason
Nelson, Richard Pett, Sean K Reynolds, James L.
Sutter, and Greg A. Vaughan.

Remember, if the work is not OGC and you do not obtain a letter or email specifically stating that you are allowed to use this material within your adventure which is to be published by Adventure aweek.com, LLP, you may not use the material. Those who disregard this policy risk being banned from publishing in the future with Adventureaweek.com, LLP.

When you are ready to submit an adventure proposal or completed adventure you may visit this link: http://adventureaweek.com/submit

Step One: Setting the Stage

After your initial adventure proposal has been accepted, you can begin work on "setting the stage" for your adventure. This includes the name of your adventure, the difficulty level, the adventure background, adventure synopsis, and adventure hooks. We also require that you send in a complete description of your adventure, and a Cover Art and Map Request.

Adventure Name

This should be easy, but some developers struggle to find the perfect name. A few times I've seen names grace my inbox that are so long they trail off the screen. The name "Legend of the Were-Phoenix Grendalwat, The Phewiolionian Sage Part 2, Largoth's Return" is just too darn long, you wouldn't even be able to see the cover art through the text! Also, don't get too clever and lose your potential audience with something which just doesn't make sense at first glance. Take the time to find something which really conveys what your adventure is about using as few words as possible. If you need ideas search through the products available for sale on Paizo.com to see what other publishers are putting out.

We've all heard the phrase "dont' judge a book by its cover", the reality is, people do just that. The cover art and the name of your adventure really sell the product, and if no one buys it, than no one is going to play it!

Adventure Difficulty

Determine the required number of players and PC level before beginning construction of your new adventure. This will help you choose appropriate challenges for the party.

Example: 4-6 PCs of Levels 2-3 -or- 4 PCs of Level 10

Adventure Background

This section describes "what happened before" and describes the different locations, characters, and monsters involved. You are setting the groundwork and painting a picture in which to place your entire adventure. Limiting this section to a few sentences limits the breadth and scope of your adventure, whereas writing a twenty page novella may simply bore and/or confuse the GM.

As a general rule writing 3-5 paragraphs of material for your adventure background is acceptable.

Adventure Synopsis

The synopsis should contain everything that could, would, or should happen during the course of the adventure. Whilst some players may find a different and stranger path (whose players don't?) you should at least point out the general expected direction of the adventure from start to finish. Sometimes this can be very straightforward and explained in a couple sentences (such as in a simple dungeon crawl) or could be as lengthy as 6-8 paragraphs; it all depends on the length and style of your adventure.

Developer's Tip: Sometimes you may need extra pages attached to the end of the adventure just to show all of the potential paths that the PCs could take and what happens should they take them. However, this begins to turn into more of a "path tree" and not a true synopsis of the adventure. Just look at RISE OF THE DROW part 3 to see where I got carried away with potential paths!

A long synopsis with multiple paths can be good, but make sure and detach the "path tree" from your synopsis and simply reference it, letting it appear at the end.

Adventure Hooks

How are you going to get the PCs involved? Try and avoid the typical "you're in a tavern" line and go for something fresh and new. Provide more than just one hook, a list of 3-5 hooks is best. Make sure your hooks are varied to cover all types of players. Some groups live for story, others for combat, some run good campaigns and others evil. Plan accordingly and throw out a few hooks to snag them and get those PCs involved in your adventure. It makes it a lot easier on the GM.

Adventure Description

This is what you see on Paizo.com when reading about a new RPG product. This is the only chance you have to get the reader **REALLY** excited to buy your PDF!

Here is an example of a proper Adventure Description:

A Pathfinder/3.5 Compatible Adventure for 4-6 level 10 PCs

The portside city of Tawwa is under attack from within! The PCs find themselves waylaid in the harbor of the busy port city as the government has begun to fall into chaos – a dozen city officials have been murdered over the last month, and the attacks show no sign of stopping. The mayor is panicking, and the harbor has all but stopped. The party has to unravel the mystery, searching the city above and below to find this killer before they strike again!

Also included in "To Catch A Serpent":

- Razorpoint Claws, an exciting new weapon for unarmed fighters and monstrous adventurers
- The Power of an Oath – a new set of rules for securing the services of an outsider
- A new monster, the rock-devouring Aurspeily
- A new city on the river, Tawwa, a perfect place to stop and refuel before setting sail for adventure
- Maps by three time ENnie Award winning cartographer Todd Gamble

Map Request

For information on how to compose your Map Request Form, you may reference the Map Request Tutorial designed by Todd Gamble and available on Adventureaweek.com.

Cover Art Request

Think about what you envision for the cover of your adventure. Come up with some different ideas on what you would like to see. Keep in mind that since we crank out a new adventure every week, our artists will be quite swamped at times, especially if we are also releasing material online for the campaign setting. Because of these occasional time constraints we ask that you provide three different cover art requests: basic, intermediate, and advanced.

COVER ART REQUEST (EXAMPLE):

A beautiful blonde haired/blue eyed maiden age 18-24 wearing a white dress showing some skin and quite muddy and dirty.

A Bog Troll carrying this woman through the swamp - similar to the AaW Bog Troll monster, but with a slightly different color and appearance to differentiate him from his brothers (standard Bog Trolls)

Environment: New Orleans, Louisiana style swamp – warm and humid. In the distance fire burns in the swamp where oil leaks to the surface (this area is very rich in oil).

FINAL COVER ART (EXAMPLE)
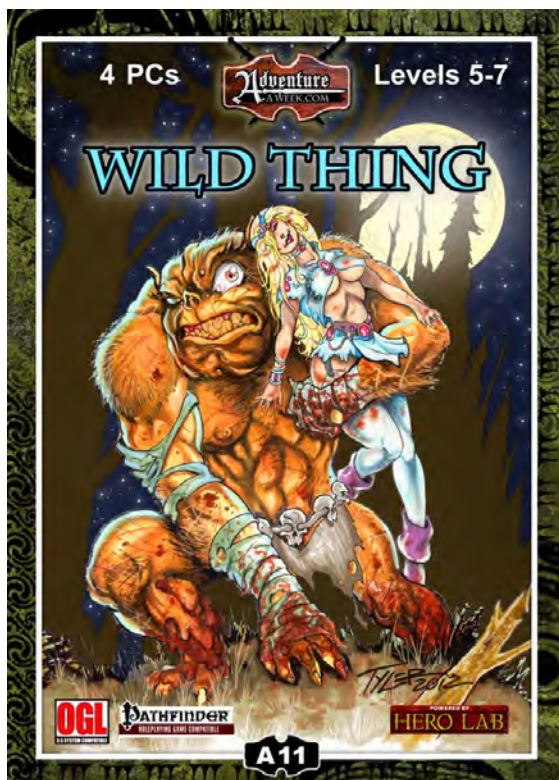
Developer's Tip: The artist who drew this cover (Tim Tyler) chose to focus on the two main characters of the adventure rather than get too involved in the background environment. Due to time constraints we went with this cover. A perfect example of why you should have three different descriptions of your ideal cover art. That way if the artist is too pressed for time we are still able to get something prepared for your adventure launch!

Step Two: Communication

Once you have completed your final draft of the Adventure Background, Synopsis, and Hooks send it to... (WAIT!) nope, don't get ahead of yourself now. Did you spell check your document? Have you had your wife, your friend, and your gaming group look it over for errors, mistakes, and plot holes? It's very easy to miss a jarring error or hole in your story since you're the one writing it. Make sure you have a couple very sharp minds read it through for you.

Developer's Tip: If you don't have many friends that are able to help you out, feel free to post your idea on our forum and ask other GMs for help. While it's probably not the best idea to give away your entire adventure, you reveal just enough to get the feedback you require.

There's a protected area of the forum which you may request access to. This area is frequented by the core AaW team, the founders, authors, and artists which do work for Adventureaweek.com. This area is the best place to post your stuff if you're wary of others snagging your idea and running off with it.

Once everything looks perfect and beautiful, go ahead and send it along.

CONTACT: Email your Adventure Background, Synopsis, Hook, and Description to the Editor at Adventureaweek.

If you don't have the editor's email please contact us and we will provide it so long as you have received a positive approval rating on your initial adventure proposal submitted at

http://adventureaweek.com/submit

CONTACT: Email your Map Request Form and Cover Art Request Form to the Art Department and CC the Editor

For more information on how to compose your Map Request Form you may reference the Map Request Tutorial designed by Todd Gamble and available on Adventureaweek.com.

Step Three: Layout & Formatting

Please be sure to use proper formatting and headings in your adventures. While this sounds easy there are different heading sizes and bold type depending upon your style of adventure. Heading must be formatted in a logical manner so they can easily be arranged by our Table of Contents program. This places H1 (Heading 1) at the top, followed by H2, H3, and stops there with H4 and H5 being treated the same as standard text. Certain areas must be bolded for formatting whilst others are simply to notify the editor of an event which requires a special text box (which we will get to in Step Four).

Here is an example of proper adventure formatting:

Adventure Background

Text goes here.

Adventure Synopsis

Text goes here.

Adventure Hooks

Text goes here.

Morningstar Castle

Information on castle here.

1. Castle Gardens

Information on castle gardens here.

1a. Strawberry Patch

Information on strawberry patch here.

An **Adventure Location** has a specific format and information to assist GMs in conveying the feeling of a location along with any other important information.

Here is an example of proper formatting for an **Adventure Location**:

Adventure Location: Tawwa Sewers

Location: Just beneath the surface of Tawwa is a palatial network of 'sewers', more akin to a kingly catacomb than a waste management system.

History When Tassi arrived in Tawwa nine years before, the sewers beneath Tawwa were nothing more than a system to keep flood waters out of the streets of the city. Once she took control, however, the sewers were one of the first things to expand, far outstripping the needs of the city above for both sanitation and flood control. Now, they are kept maintained by a dedicated group of Tassi's followers, selected from the ranks of those within the city.

Dangers: Magical beasts, outsiders

Lighting: Dim, through sewer entrances

Walls: Smooth stone

Doors: none

Mood/Theme: The sewers should be played as an utterly abandoned, expansive complex. However, background noise of the city occasionally slips through, giving the place almost a haunted feel.

Step Four: Special Text Boxes

Events such as combat encounters or skill checks do NOT use a header tag but must be coded appropriately to designate their usage in our program.

How to Code Text Boxes

All text boxes are programmed to utilize this simple code:

[stextbox id="XXX"]

Information to appear in box goes here.

[/stextbox]

Let's take another quick look at that:

[stextbox id="XXX"] <-This is what tells the Adventureaweek program that we need to display a text box. The "XXX" is where your type of text box appears. The code for each will appear below in the description along with a cheat sheet at the end of this section.

Information to appear in box goes here. <-Here's where you type whatever you would like displayed. It could be a Skill Check, a Magic Item, or even an Information box for the GM!

[/stextbox]<-Finally we need to tell the Adventureaweek program to end the text box (otherwise it would drag on throughout the entire adventure making things look very strange indeed!)

The "XXX" must have the "quotes" on either side for the program to determine which special text box you would like to add here.

Read-aloud

Code: No code for Read-alouds
Usage example:

READALOUD

Information to read here

END

If you would like GMs to read text aloud to players you must use the following format to indicate this accordingly. Our editor will put your text into nice, attractive read aloud boxes similar to those which appear in most published products on the market.

Before Example:

READALOUD

You hear screams coming from the front of the monastery and monks rush into this room. "The orcs are back! They have killed Brother Mealle! Please help us!" As you head towards the entrance with a tide of monks behind you, you wonder what these peaceful, unarmed men and women are actually going to do against a band of orc warriors.

END

After Example:

> You hear screams coming from the front of the monastery and monks rush into this room. "The orcs are back! They have killed Brother Mealle! Please help us!" As you head towards the entrance with a tide of monks behind you, you wonder what these peaceful, unarmed men and women are actually going to do against a band of orc warriors.

Information

Code: [stextbox id="info-aaw"]

End Code: [/stextbox]

Think of the information box as a multi-purpose delivery tool. It can be used to list details or information on a specific location, deal out snazzy tips for GMs, or provide links to additional reference materials which may improve your adventure.

The most common use of the information box is to alert the GM that something important to the adventure is contained within, and not to gloss over it whilst scanning through and running the adventure.

Before Example:

[stextbox id="info-aaw"]

Alchemist's Fire

You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet.

A direct hit deals 1d6 points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 1 point of fire damage from the splash.

On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d6 points of damage. If desired, the target can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. Extinguishing the flames requires a DC 15 reflex save. Rolling on the ground provides the target a +2 bonus on the save. Leaping into a lake or magically extinguishing the flames automatically smothers the fire.

[/stextbox]

After Example:

Alchemist's Fire

You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet.

A direct hit deals 1d6 points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 1 point of fire damage from the splash. On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d6 points of damage. If desired, the target can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. Extinguishing the flames requires a DC 15 reflex save. Rolling on the ground provides the target a +2 bonus on the save. Leaping into a lake or magically extinguishing the flames automatically smothers the fire.

Skill Check Special Text Boxes can be tricky. Sometimes you don't want to break the flow of your GM description just to denote a Skill Check in bold with a colorful purple box around it. In these cases simply bold the skill check within the text so it can be easily spotted. No further editing is necessary. If you do, on the other hand have a very specific Skill Check, one that falls outside the everyday challenge, please be sure you use the following format so that your Skill Check is obvious to the GM as he runs the adventure.

Before Example:

[stextbox id="skill-check"]

<u>**Skill Check**</u>

Search/Perception DC 30

Success: *"A flat stone on the floor slides away revealing a deep hole with a large sack. The sack is jammed full of gold and silver coins, gems, and jewelry. You've found Doonswallow's treasure hoard!"*

[/stextbox]

After Example:

<u>**Skill Check**</u>

Search/Perception DC 30

Success: *"A flat stone on the floor slides away revealing a deep hole with a large sack. The sack is jammed full of gold and silver coins, gems, and jewelry. You've found Doonswallow's treasure hoard!"*

Trap

Code: [stextbox id="trap"]

End Code: [/stextbox]

Ah, traps. Who doesn't love em? Your players, that's who. It's important that every single trap be properly formatted using the standard shown below, and also coded correctly so the trap icon and box show up throughout your adventure.

Before Example:

[stextbox id="trap"]

Spring-Loaded Panel

CR 2

XP 600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 22

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Effect panel flips up and knocks one victim off the platform into the pit of acid (Reflex DC 15 avoids; 50 foot fall, 2d6 fall damage, acid causes 8d6, 10d6, 12d6 and continues to increase by 2d6 every round.)

[/stextbox]

After Example:

Spring-Loaded Panel

CR 2
XP 600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 22

EFFECTS
Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Effect panel flips up and knocks one victim off the platform into the pit of acid (Reflex DC 15 avoids; 50 foot fall, 2d6 fall damage, acid causes 8d6, 10d6, 12d6 and continues to increase by 2d6 every round.)

Magic

Code: [stextbox id="magic"]

End Code: [/stextbox]

The Magic Special Text Box may be used for either Magic Items, Spells, or Spell-like effects. Please be sure you utilize the proper formatting.

Before Example:

[stextbox id="magic"]
Ring of Chameleon Power
Aura faint illusion; **CL** 3rd
Slot ring; **Price** 12,700 gp; **Weight** —

Description
As a free action, the wearer of this ring can gain the ability to magically blend in with the surroundings. This provides a +10 competence bonus on her Stealth checks. As a standard action, she can also use the spell *disguise self* as often as she wants.

Construction Requirements
Forge Ring, *disguise self, invisibility*; **Cost** 6,350 gp
[/stextbox]

After Example:

Ring of Chameleon Power

Aura faint illusion; **CL** 3rd

Slot ring; **Price** 12,700 gp; **Weight** —

Description

As a free action, the wearer of this ring can gain the ability to magically blend in with the surroundings. This provides a +10 competence bonus on her Stealth checks. As a standard action, she can also use the spell *disguise self* as often as she wants.

Construction Requirements

Forge Ring, *disguise self, invisibility*; **Cost** 6,350 gp

ItemName

Aura ZZstrength ZZschool; **CL** ZZth

Slot ZZslot; **Price** ZZ gp; **Weight** ZZ lbs.

Description

ZZItemDescriptionParagraph

Construction Requirements

ZZfeats, ZZspells, ZZotherrequirements; **Cost** ZZ gp

Puzzle

Code: [stextbox id="puzzle"]

End Code: [/stextbox]

Puzzles are great fun in games. This code allows you to summon up the yellow puzzle icon which looks like a tiny maze. You may use this Special Text Box for displaying riddles, describing complex puzzles, or providing simple challenges which must be solved using player intellect as opposed to Skill Checks or Combat.

Before Example:

[stextbox id="puzzle"]

Dwarven Puzzle

At the end of the small box canyon is a large stone puzzle which functions as the door to enter the Dwarf Realm.

The Puzzle is made up of large stone blocks inlaid in grooves in the wall. These grooves allow one to freely slide the pieces up and down, left and right. A symbol is carved into the face of each stone block, if aligned properly the symbols combine to translate into words.

The correct word combinations must be displayed and a stone button pushed in order for the door to open. Incorrect answers will result in a burning hands spell targeted on the PC which pressed the button.

Once the following words are displayed (in any order) the door will open and the trap will be disarmed.

HONOR
EARTH
HEART
FORGE
STONE

Note: For British English feel free to replace "HONOR" with "DWARF", "STEEL", "BEARD" or any other 5 letter word which Dwarves may hold dear to them.

[/stextbox]

After Example:

◎ Dwarven Puzzle

At the end of the small box canyon is a large stone puzzle which functions as the door to enter the Dwarf Realm.

The Puzzle is made up of large stone blocks inlaid in grooves in the wall. These grooves allow one to freely slide the pieces up and down, left and right. A symbol is carved into the face of each stone block, if aligned properly the symbols combine to translate into words.

The correct word combinations must be displayed and a stone button pushed in order for the door to open. Incorrect answers will result in a burning hands spell targeted on the PC which pressed the button.

Once the following words are displayed (in any order) the door will open and the trap will be disarmed.

**HONOR
EARTH
HEART
FORGE
STONE**

Note: For British English feel free to replace "HONOR" with "DWARF", "STEEL", "BEARD" or any other 5 letter word which Dwarves may hold dear to them.

R	N	E	N	R		H	O	N	O	R
A	H	O	H	E		E	A	R	T	H
R	T	A	G	E		H	E	A	R	T
O	O	E	F	T		F	O	R	G	E
O	T	S	R	H		S	T	O	N	E

UNSOLVED PUZZLE   SOLVED PUZZLE

🗡Adventure🗡 Door to the Dwarf Realm

Treasure

Code: [stextbox id="treasure-icon"]

End Code: [/stextbox]

Where's the loot? How could you miss it? That gleaming diamond symbol is pretty hard to miss! Don't forget to add it anytime you have any kind of treasure. Treasure could be as enticing as a pile of precious gems, or as simple as a handful of copper pieces and a jade necklace. You may list Magic Items among treasure, but be sure to display the full properties of the item within a Magic Item listing as described above under "Magic".

Before Example:

[stextbox id="treasure-icon"]

<u>Treasure</u>

1422 gold, 1902 silver, 2455 copper

14 Rose Quartz Gems valued at 50gp/each

5 Tourmaline Gems valued at 100gp/each

1 Alexandrite Gem valued at 500gp

1 gold necklace valued at 20gp

1 silver necklace with diamond valued at 50gp

1 Ring of Protection +1

Jaamuuri's Amulet of Icy Defense*

*detailed below.

[/stextbox]

After Example:

Combat

Code: [stextbox id="combat" caption="(#) Monster Name here (Game System here)" collapsing="true" collapsed="true"]

End Code: [/stextbox]

Each time a combat encounter occurs you must provide a stat block for each 3.5 creature/NPC and one for each Pathfinder creature/NPC. In the case that you have multiple of the same creature you may denote that as follows:

(3) Skeletons (3.5)
Stats here
(3) Skeletons (Pathfinder)
Stats here
If you have multiple enemies of varying types, group them by system as shown below:
(6) Skeletons (3.5)
Stats here
(4) Zombies (3.5)
Stats here
(6) Skeletons (Pathfinder)
Stats here
(4) Zombies (Pathfinder)
Stats here

Please be sure that you repeat the statistics each and every time in which this encounter occurs. The reason for this is simple: the web version of your adventure will have "click to open/close" javascript boxes. Repeating the stats will save a GM time and eliminate scrolling or opening additional pages in their browser.

Remember, you are creating an adventure which will undergo extensive editing in two completely different formats. Jonathan Nelson handles all web development and will be creating javascript boxes which are color coded with combat symbols. A GM may click these boxes to open /close them and easily access only the statistics which they need. Joshua Gullion will be developing the PDF version of your adventure which will be sold on Paizo, RPGnow, and many other online stores.
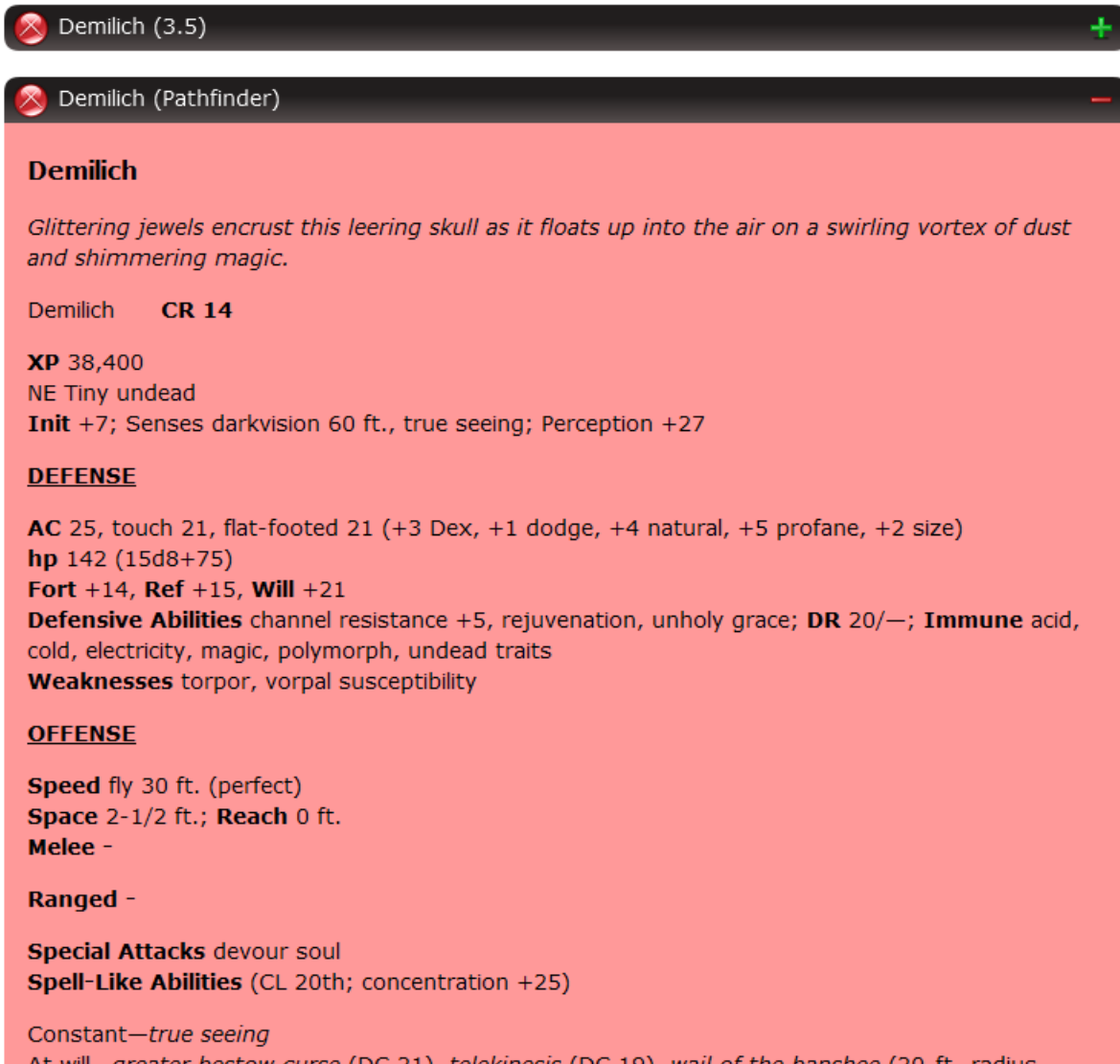
Here's a sample of how the combat text boxes will appear when closed:

Demilich (3.5)

Demilich (Pathfinder)

When a GM clicks the Pathfinder box, it will open and display the combat statistics which you have provided:

⊗ Demilich (3.5)   +

⊗ Demilich (Pathfinder)   −

Demilich

Glittering jewels encrust this leering skull as it floats up into the air on a swirling vortex of dust and shimmering magic.

Demilich   **CR 14**

XP 38,400
NE Tiny undead
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 21 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, +5 profane, +2 size)
hp 142 (15d8+75)
Fort +14, **Ref** +15, **Will** +21
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +5, rejuvenation, unholy grace; **DR** 20/—; **Immune** acid, cold, electricity, magic, polymorph, undead traits
Weaknesses torpor, vorpal susceptibility

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Melee -

Ranged -

Special Attacks devour soul
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +25)

Constant—*true seeing*
At will—*greater bestow curse (DC 21), telekinesis (DC 19), wail of the banshee (20 ft. radius*

*truncated

In order to get the Special Text Boxes to appear you must use the code provided at the start of this sub-chapter as follows:

[stextbox id="combat" caption="(#) Monster Name here (Game System here)" collapsing="true" collapsed="true"]

Name of Monster and Stats go here!

[/stextbox]

That's it! Now you've got the hang of it. At first you may find you spend a lot of time stumbling over proper formatting in your adventures, but after you crank out a couple it will become second nature and you won't even need to reference this manual anymore!

Cheat Sheet: Special Text Boxes

Read-aloud: READALOUD Information to read here **END**

Information: [stextbox id="info-aaw"]

Skill Check: [stextbox id="skill-check"]

Trap: [stextbox id="trap"]

Magic: [stextbox id="magic"]

Puzzle: [stextbox id="puzzle"]

Treasure: [stextbox id="treasure-icon"]

Combat: [stextbox id="combat" caption="(#) Monster Name here (Game System here)" collapsing="true" collapsed="true"]

Final Words on Special Text Boxes

Remember, if you have trouble with any of the above text boxes feel free to post in the developer's section of the forum or email any of the core Adventureaweek team. We're here to help you any time of the day! (Seriously, Stephen's in London and the rest of us are scattered about the US. We're a 24/7 operation! :P)

Step Five: Stat Blocks

All creatures and NPCs submitted within your adventure must match the formatting of the following stat blocks perfectly. Combat statistics are required for both game systems except under very rare circumstances where a product is specifically designed with only one rule set in mind.

If you are unable to locate both a 3.5 and Pathfinder version you have a couple options:

1. Convert the stat blocks from the system you need into another system, sending the final to Will (at) Adventureaweek.com for verification.

2. Find an equal or lesser creature which would be a perfect substitute for this monster. If two different monsters are provided for the same encounter a unique description or notes to guide the GM will be required.

Special Note: Adventureaweek has been building a library of correctly formatted stat blocks in both 3.5 and Pathfinder. Some common creatures are available along with some custom creatures and NPCs. You may view the files on the server here: http://adventureaweek.com/stats/

If you wish to contribute to this database please send your correctly formatted creatures or NPCs in Microsoft Word format to Joshua (at) Adventureaweek.com. *Thanks!*

3.5 Stat Block

The following is the only acceptable format for 3.5 stat blocks. Please use this as a template when building your creatures or NPCs.

Creature/NPC Name

Size/Type: xxType (subtypes)
Hit Dice: xdx (xx hp)
Initiative: xx
Speed: xx ft. (x squares) (1 square=5 ft.)
Armor Class: Armor Class Total (Armor Class modifiers, such as armor, Dex, size, in alphabetical order), touch (Dex, deflection, size modifiers), flat-footed (Armor Class Total minus Dex bonus)
Base Attack/Grapple: xx/xx+Str bonus
Attack: weapon name +xx melee (base weapon damage + extra damage modifiers/critical threat range/critical multiplier) or weapon name +xx ranged (base weapon damage + extra damage modifiers/critical threat range/critical multiplier)
Full Attack: weapon name +xx melee (base weapon damage + extra damage modifiers/critical threat range/critical multiplier) or weapon name +xx ranged (base weapon damage + extra damage modifiers/critical threat range/critical multiplier)
Space/Reach: xx ft./xx ft.
Special Attacks: special attack names, in alphabetical order
Special Qualities: special quality names, in alphabetical order
Saves: Fort +xx, Ref +xx, Will –xx
Abilities: Str xx, Dex xx, Con xx, Int xx, Wis xx, Cha xx
Skills: Skill names in alphabetical order +xx
Feats: Feat names in alphabetical order
Environment: xx
Organization: xx
Challenge Rating: xx
Treasure: xx
Alignment: Law/Chaos axis first, Good/Evil axis second
Advancement: if any
Level Adjustment: if any

COMBAT

Combat tactics

SPECIAL ABILTIES

Special Ability Name (Ex, Sp, or Su)

Special Ability Description

SPELLS

Level Number – (Spells or Spell slots per day; DC) *spell name* (DC if different than general DC)

Pathfinder RPG Stat Block

The following is the only acceptable format for Pathfinder RPG stat blocks. Please use this as a template when building your creatures or NPCs.

zzMonstername CR ##

XP ##
zzAlignment zzSize zzType
Init +##; **Senses** zz, zz,; **Perception** +##
Aura zz (## ft., DC ##)

----- Defense -----
AC ##, touch ##, flat-footed # (+## zzModifier, +##zzModifier)
hp ## (##d##+##); fast healing ##
Fort +##, **Ref** +##, **Will** +##
DR ##/zzMaterial; **Immune** zz; **Resist** zz ##, zz ##; **SR** ##
Weaknesses zz, zz

----- Offense -----
Speed ## ft., fly ## ft. (zzManeuverability)
Melee zzAttacktype +## (zzDamage plus zzOthereffect), zzAttacktype +## (zzDamage)
Ranged zzAttacktype +## (zzDamage)
Space ## ft.; **Reach** ## ft.
Special Attacks zz, zz
Spell-Like Abilities (CL ##zz; concentration +##)
At will—*zz*, *zz*
1/day—*zz*, *zz*

----- Statistics -----
Str ##, **Dex** ##, **Con** ##, **Int** ##, **Wis** ##, **Cha** ##
Base Atk +##; **CMB** +## (+## zzConditionalmaneuverbonus); **CMD** ## (## vs. zzManeuvername)
Feats zzFeatname, zzFeatname

Skills zzSkillname +##, zzSkillname +## (+## zzCondition); **Racial Modifiers** +## zzSkillname, +## zzSkillname in zzCondition
Languages zzLanguage
SQ zz

----- Ecology -----
Environment zzClimate zzTerrain
Organization zz, zz, or zz
Treasure zzCategory

----- Special Abilities -----

zzName (Ex/Sp/Su) zzDescription

Here are some tips for using the above stat block, and building stat blocks in general.

is a placeholder for a number, so an entry like "Init +##" should be something like "Init +2" or "Init -2" in your monster stat block.

zz is a placeholder for anything other than a number (obviously, "zzSize" means you should replace it with a game term for size, such as "Medium," not "zzMedium").

When you are finished, your monster stat block should not have ## or zz in it at all.

If your monster doesn't have an ability mentioned in the sample stat block format (such as DR, SR, Immune, an "plus" effect for a melee or ranged attack, a conditional skill bonuses, or racial skill modifiers), delete that ability and its placeholders. For example, if your monster doesn't have damage reduction, delete the "DR ##/zzMaterial" and the semicolon after it so the line starts with "Immune."

If your monster has an ability that isn't presented in the sample stat block format (such as Spells Known), add it to the stat block, making sure to put it in the correct section of the stat block (for example, Spells Known goes in the Offense section) and match the bold and/or italic format for that ability as shown in a printed stat block.

If the monster doesn't have Feats, Skills, or Languages, delete the entire Feats, Skills, or Languages line.

If your monster has Space 5 ft. and Reach 5 ft., delete that entire line (the default is a monster with that size and reach).

When you are finished, your stat block shouldn't have any "blank" entries like "DR —."

The Defense, Offense, Statistics, and Ecology lines have "-----" at the beginning and end to visually offset those section headers. This is because the messageboard code doesn't allow you to underline text, and this is an easy and clear way to duplicate the printed stat block format for this purpose. Do not tamper with those lines.

In a printed stat block, the individual listings for the spell-like abilities are indented, but it's difficult to make that work in the messageboards, so if your monster has spell-like abilities, just use the non-indented format as presented in the above sample stat block.

If your monster has a new ability (such as "Arcane Vengeance" or "Eyeball Eater"), you must explain it in the Special Abilities part of the stat block.

If your monster has a common ability from the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook (such as sneak attack) or a universal monster rule from the Bestiary or Bestiary 2 (such as grab or stench), you do not need to provide the description of that ability in the Special Abilities part of the stat block (we assume the reader knows how sneak attack, grab, and stench work, or can look them up in the appropriate book).

When in doubt as to how to format part of your stat block, check the monsters in the Bestiary and universal monster rules.

Special thanks to Paizo Publishing and Sean K Reynolds for compiling this handy reference tool
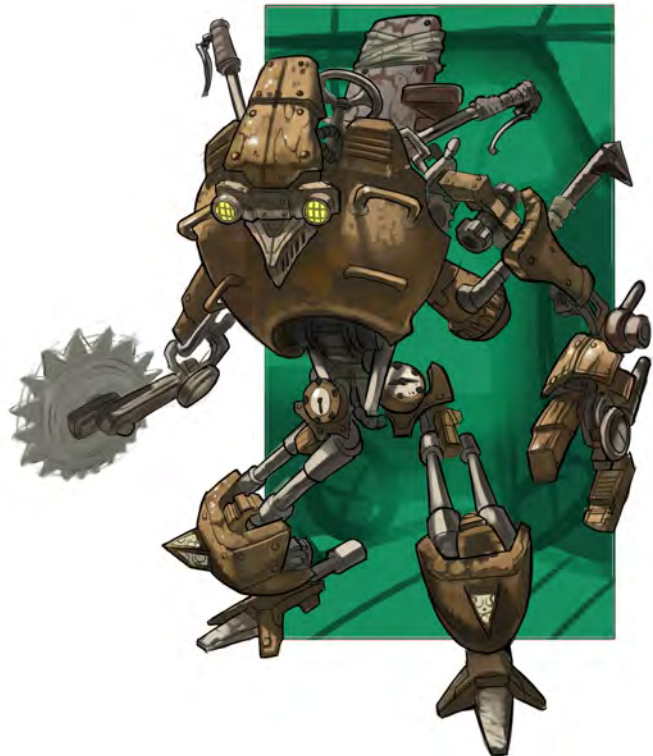
Final Words

Thank you for reading the Adventure Composition Tutorial. My goal in writing this tutorial is to empower you to construct your adventures in a format which complies with all existing game content and plugs in perfectly to both of Adventureaweek.com's two delivery formats. I understand that at times some of the information contained within the ACT can seem daunting, but I assure you, after knocking out a few adventures this stuff will be like second nature. You'll no longer need to remember what the code for a skill check is, or the correct formatting for a new monster, you'll have it all stored in that wonderfully creative brain of yours!

One thing we didn't touch on within this tutorial is actually my favorite part of adventure writing: the creative part! Since others have already compiled a wealth of information in a very consumable volume I will simply refer you to the Complete Kobold Guide to Game Design **by Wolfgang Baur** and others. This volume assisted me when I first started writing adventures and continues to be a quality reference book whenever I need to get out of a rut and on to a new style of adventure entirely. Here's a little blurb on this invaluable volume:

Got Questions About RPG Design?

Wolfgang Baur, Monte Cook, Ed Greenwood, Mike Stackpole, and other industry veterans have the answers you asked for...and the advice you need!

You'll learn how to create great new adventures, monsters and magic for your RPG campaign, and maybe even design your own game!

The Complete Kobold Guide to Game Design offers 240 pages of in-depth essays on what makes RPGs tick. Get time-tested advice from the top designers in the industry. This compilation includes all three volumes of our Kobold Guide to Game Design series—now with all-new material by Wolfgang Baur, Mike Stackpole, and others!

From core rules and magic systems to fantasy adventures, monster design, playtesting, and much more, these 40 essays cover every aspect of RPG design in clear, accessible language, to show you what it takes.

How to contact the Adventureaweek.com Staff

Should you ever need special guidance feel free to contact one of the staff members below. Please be certain that you have exhausted all other avenues prior to contacting us as we are all quite busy cranking out a new adventure every week (among other things!)

Also, be sure you direct your question toward the correct member of our staff. Duties of each staff along with a name and email are listed below. Obviously the @ is left out to discourage those nasty spam-bots from sending us unwanted junk mail.

Editor-in-Chief/Game & Web Development - Jonathan (at) Adventureaweek.com

Art Department/Cartography - Todd (at) Adventureaweek.com

PDF Development - Joshua (at) Adventureaweek.com

Editor/Statistical Conversions - Will (at) Adventureaweek.com

Editor/Game Developer - Stephen (at) Adventureaweek.com

Hero Lab/Roll20 - Nathan (at) Adventureaweek.com

Adventure Composition Cheat Sheet

Not everything is included here, but if you need something to quickly reference when putting together the basics for an adventure this should help you in a crunch.

1. Choose a name for your adventure.
Is this part of a series? Include that information as well.

2. Decide the difficulty of your adventure.
Example: 4-6 PCs of Levels 5-7 OR 4 PCs - Level 6

3. Adventure Background
What happened before the PCs got involved? Establish history and breathe life into the story.

4. Adventure Synopsis
A brief synopsis of each stage of the adventure. No need for details here, save that for later!

5. Hook(s) and Introduction
Who or what gets the PCs involved? Are there multiple hooks? Set the stage for the PCs.

6. Adventure Location(s)
Describe the area(s) that the PCs are going to be adventuring in. Every adventure needs at least one location, but how many beyond that depends on the adventure itself. See the example below for how to format your location write-up.

7. Chapters
The adventure should be broken down into one or more chapters, each with its own title. They

can be event, time or location based, depending on the adventure itself.

8. Encounters
Chapters are broken down into one or more encounters, usually by location. An encounter can

be combat, skill checks, traps, NPCs, or anything that engages the party.

9. Conclusion
Finish telling your story with the option of leaving some loose ends if this is part of a series.

10. Adventure Rewards

11. Experience Awards

12. New Classes, Magical Items, Monsters, Spells, etc.
These are not a requirement, but it is a bonus and an added incentive to prospective buyers.

13. Table of Contents
A table of contents will be built based on your headings. This will create a hierarchy in the TOC so be mindful of what size and where you placing headings. Each Chapter should receive a H1.

Special Text Boxes

Read-aloud: READALOUD Information to read here **END**

Information: [stextbox id="info-aaw"]

Skill Check: [stextbox id="skill-check"]

Trap: [stextbox id="trap"]

Magic: [stextbox id="magic"]

Puzzle: [stextbox id="puzzle"]

Treasure: [stextbox id="treasure-icon"]

Combat: [stextbox id="combat" caption="(#) Monster Name here (Game System here)" collapsing="true" collapsed="true"]

To show the selection has ended, end all of these with [/stextbox]