



# GLYPH QUEST

[deadgremlin.neocities.org](http://deadgremlin.neocities.org)

--

character creation.

## 1. create class.

your class is a two word description of your character's abilities.

draw five letters-- you may redraw once. pick two of these letters to represent your class.

decide what the two letters stand for, and record it on your character sheet. it's beneficial to use words with lots of letters to help you with drawing chance and casting magic.

for example, if you chose a S and a V, you could be:

- sneaky videographer
- superpowered vegan
- shellshocked veteran

get creative with it-- this is who you are!

## 2. collect your skill letters.

your skill letters are letters that represent the things that you can do at the current moment. whenever you want to do anything other than moving or talking, you have to describe it with an action, and that main verb of your action must begin with one of your skill letters.

draw three letters— you may redraw if you wish. one of these will be your permanent letter, which you keep after using, and the others are temporary letters, which you replace after using with a new letter from the draw bag.

keep these skill letters face up in front of you to keep track of them. they not only represent your available actions, but your health at well— you lose skill letters when you take damage, and you can't take action without your letters...

### 3. pick up an item.

you have an inventory that can hold five items. whenever you find an item, the gm will often ask you to draw an item letter.

at any point, you may define an item letter in your inventory as a specific noun that begins with that letter. once defined, an item letter cannot be redefined.

draw five letters. you can redraw once. then, pick one of these letters and define it. this is your starting item.

when defining a letter, it should fit in only one of these categories:

- weapons or tools - items that will allow you to pull off more specialized actions. (you can't "cut" without a "blade", for instance.)
- pieces of armor - can be sundered (discarded) to negate harm from an attack.
- magic artifacts - if in your possession, allows you to cast magic. if you choose to start with one, you may imbue it with an intention for free. (see magic rules)
- healing items - can be discarded to heal somebody, no skill roll required.
- trinkets or treasures - an item that isn't really for anything, but could be used in trading.

### 4. you're done!

--

how to play.

- when the session begins, the gm deploys the draw bag and the house letters.
- the draw bag is the bag in which letters not in play are kept. this is the bag players will draw from when replacing your temporary letters, finding items, or whatever else the gm needs.
- the house letters are a group of letters face up on the table within all the players reach. when performing an action, you may choose to use a house letter instead of one of your skill letters. there are 5 to start, and they are finite-- if used, they are sent to the draw bag and not replenished.
- a challenge is when your character is trying to overcome an obstacle, such as leaping a gap, seeking a hidden target, or any other feat in which success isn't assured.
- typically, if your character's class and skill action narratively fit to overcome the challenge, then you don't have to do anything-- you succeed automatically. but what if your character is doing something that isn't their class's specialty? or what if your character is doing something that requires an item they don't have? or maybe your character is performing something that's just a little beyond their limit? you're drawing chance.

to draw chance, draw a letter from the draw bag.

- if you draw a consonant that is in your class name - success! despite the odds, you pulled it off flawlessly.
- if you draw a vowel that is in your class name - you succeed... sort of. you pull off your action, but it caused another problem.
- if you draw a letter that isn't in your class name - you failed. sorry!

--

magic.

- when defining an item, you can create a magic artifact. possession of such an item allows you to apply effects to targets, stunting their ability to attack and/or defend.
- the magic artifact may be defined, but it won't be imbued with power until you cast for the first time. when ready to cast, you announce your intention, which is the general effect you're trying to produce. then, you draw as many letters as you have in your class name. you must then spell a word that fits your intention.
- if you're successful in spelling such a word, then the intention is realized, and the effect is applied on the target. this intention is now imbued onto the artifact, and the artifact will only cast this effect. whenever you want to achieve the magical effect again, you can use it by drawing your class letter value, and attempt to spell a word that fits it's imbued intention.
- if you cannot spell such a word, then the magic fails, and the artifact is disabled for a turn. if you fail with an artifact not yet imbued with an intention, you don't have to use the same intention the next time you wish to try cast with it-- feel free to change your magical strategy!

--

questing

- a quest can be many things. it's when a hostile enemy is battling you and your team. it's a measure of a journey through an unexplored land. it could be a representation of a relationship with an npc. if whatever needs to be accomplished more than one action, the gm can begin a quest.
- when a quest begins, the gm will draw the progress bars where players can see them. these progress bars are a series of blank spaces that make up the quest's true name. revealing the quest's true name is your goal if you wish to overcome it.
- if you're battling enemies, for instance, you could see the progress bars as enemy health bars. progress bars can track the amount of a long journey

you've completed. or perhaps each progress bar is a single step in a list of errands you must complete.

- weak names are usually 3 to 5 letters long. strong names are typically 6 to 12 letters long. boss enemies or formidable journeys are often phrases of multiple words. a good gm tries to make the true name relate to the quest somehow.

--

## combat

- here's an example on how to use quests for combat. first, the gm set the true names for each enemy in battle, and marks that number of spaces as progress bars for the players.
- determine initiative by drawing a letter. on a consonant, players go first, if a vowel, enemies go first. the gm will also draw 3 letters and add them to the house.
- when it's your side's turn, you can perform your actions in any order you all choose. these are resolved like challenges. you can also decide to forego your turn for one of two actions:
  - you can swap any number of temporary skill letters with an equal amount of house letters. you cannot swap out your permanent letters.
  - you can draw 3 letters and add them to the house. the house cannot exceed 10 letters.
- when you target an enemy with an action, you are submitting the letter you took action with as a guess toward their true name. the gm reveals if the letter is in the enemy's true name, the amount of letters revealed representing to the amount of damage the enemy takes. a fully revealed name means the enemy is defeated and no longer in battle.
- on the enemy's turn, they will attack. each player has the opportunity to take a defensive action or sunder one of their pieces of armor to avoid damage. failure to do any of these will leave you open to attack, and undefended players that are targeted take damage by losing access to one of their temporary skill letters. if they have no temporary skill letters left, they begin to lose access to their permanent skill letters. a player with no skill letters left to take action is downed, and cannot take turns unless healed.

- if, during the course of battle, a player thinks they know what the enemy's true name is, they may forego their turn in order to attempt a critical action. this involves stating your guess out loud— if you're right, the enemy is instantly vanquished! but if you fail, you are instantly downed.
- the gm can roll 2d6 for each defeated enemy to determine it's dropped loot.
  - 2 - you've picked up a curse! one of your item slots becomes unusable. if your inventory is full, you'll have to drop something, or pass it to a player with an available slot. you can remove the curse with a healing item.
  - 3-5 - nothing. sorry!
  - 6-8 - common item letter. whatever item this letter produces is something the defeated enemy is expected to be carrying, or perhaps something that wouldn't be out of place narratively. you can take a pelt from a dire wolf, or take a dagger from a thief, but you can't take a rifle from a dragon, or magical artifact from a wild possum.
  - 9-11 - valuable item letter. whatever item this letter produces is also not too out of place, but has value, either in a monetary or practical sense. you could pull a pendant from a burglar, or perhaps a password to a private lounge from a bouncer.
  - 12 - strange item letter. whatever item this letter produces is something that is strange considering the circumstances. why did this lowly goblin have a vorpal sword? why did this robot have... meat? who knows. but it does!

---

#### non-combat quests

- now that you're aware of how questing works for combat, you'll be able to see the pattern you'll take to quest for other things.
- for instance, perhaps the players are taking a journey through unexplored lands to a destination. the gm sets the true names of landmarks on that journey, or just sets a singular name, and writes out the progress bars for the players.

- we draw for initiative as normal. on the player's turn, the gm portrays a opportunity for a challenge during their journey. perhaps they come upon a good place to hunt, or they spot a treasure in a hard to reach spot. the players make actions to overcome the challenge, and these action letters are submitted as a guess to the quest's true name.
- on the quest's turn, the players come upon a mishap. perhaps a storm begins, or a bridge collapses as they cross it. same as defending, the players take action to avoid damage. and, same as in combat, the player can take critical action and end the journey if they can determine the true name.
- you can use this in multiple ways. you could make a quest about clearing out a cave of glowing fungus, in which the true name represents the amount of mushrooms left needing harvesting. you could make a quest about gaining favor with a noble, the true name representing the level of trust you need to achieve. you could even make a quest about delving into a dungeon, with the true name showing how many rooms are left to explore.
- multiple quests can be going on at the same time. perhaps you run into combat with kobolds when exploring their underground dungeon. or you could explore a castle you come across while journeying across the land.

--

## level up

this game was designed for quick and probably silly one-shots, and not so much for long-form campaign play. however, you if you do wanna do something like that, here's something you can try:

- whenever you complete a quest, draw a letter and record it in your EXP bank. you can spend these letters in a number of ways
  - extra permanent letter - if you collect five EXP letters of a kind, you may spend them to add it as a new permanent letter. this not only increases your options, but your health as well.
  - traits - if you collect the letters to spell a specific trait, you may spend those letters to give yourself that trait. traits act as class names for the purpose of determining whether your action requires drawing chance or not. a player with the class "rowdy brute" would definitely need to draw

chance to move across a room stealthily, but having the “sneaky” trait would allow the action as is.

- inventory space - if you collect the letters to spell a storage unit, such as a “backpack” or a “utility belt”, you can spend those letters to increase your inventory space by 1.