A Roleplaying Game of Students
in a School of Monsters and Mad Scientists

HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT PREPARATORY ACADEMY ROLEPLAYING GAME

A Cheerfully Macabre Game of Schoolyard Horror

by Jeff Zitomer

Part 1: Student Handbook

Chapter 1: Introduction 5
Chapter 2: Your Student 17
Chapter 3: Skills and Tasks 43
Chapter 4: Fighting and Damage 59
Chapter 5: Magic and Science 97
Chapter 6: Marks, Mates, and Mentors 205

Part 2: Campus Life

Chapter 7: A Tour of the Campus 221
Chapter 8: Leaving Campus 239
Chapter 9: Campus Life 245

Part 3: Administration

Chapter 10: For the Gamemaster 265
Chapter 11: Sample Gamemaster Characters 297
Appendix A: Who's Who in the Cthulhu Mythos 327
Appendix B: Lexicon and Suggested Reading 331

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The PDQ System has been designed for evocative simplicity, speed, and flexibility in play.

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Jeffrey A. Zitomer

OBLIGATORY DISCLAIMER

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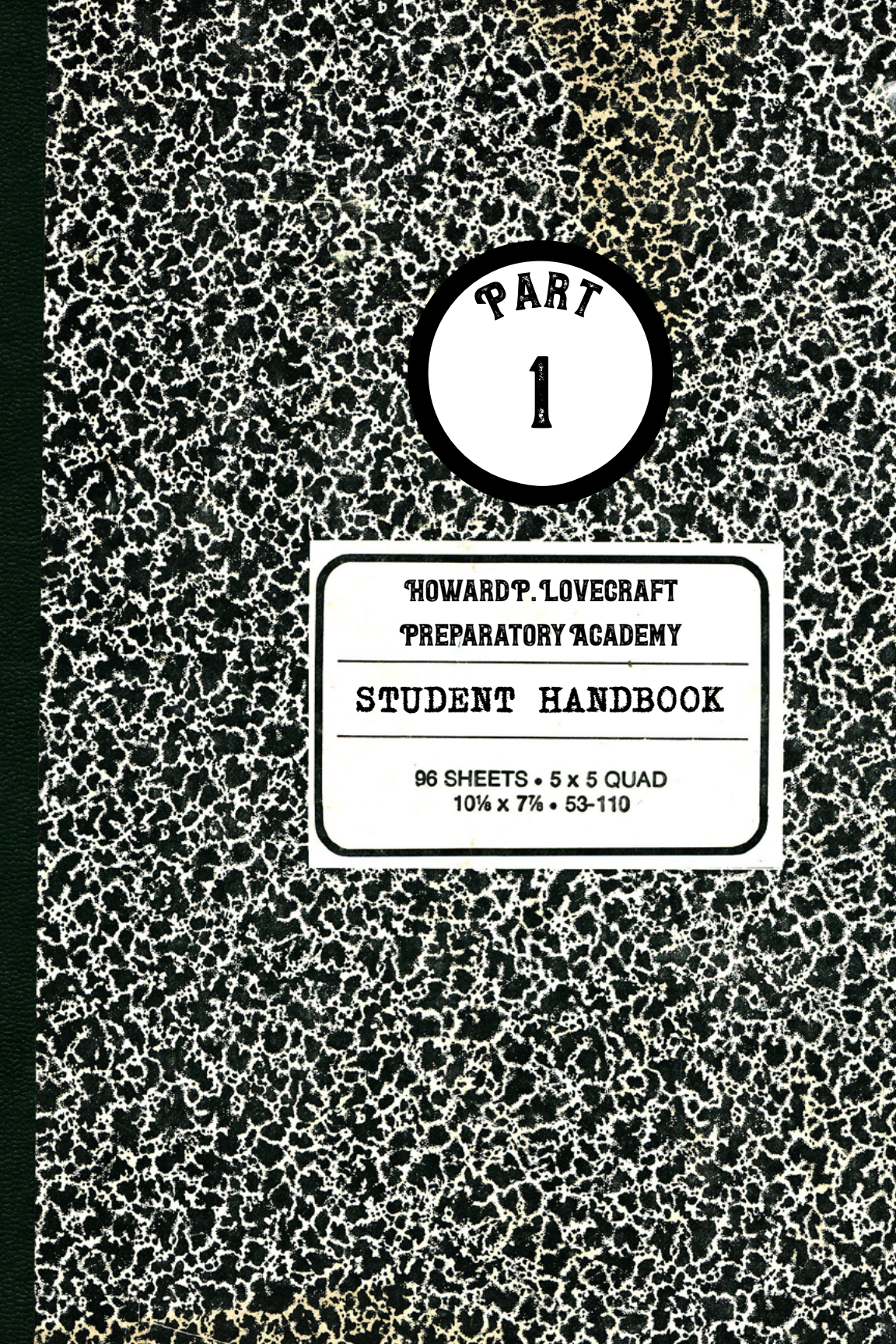
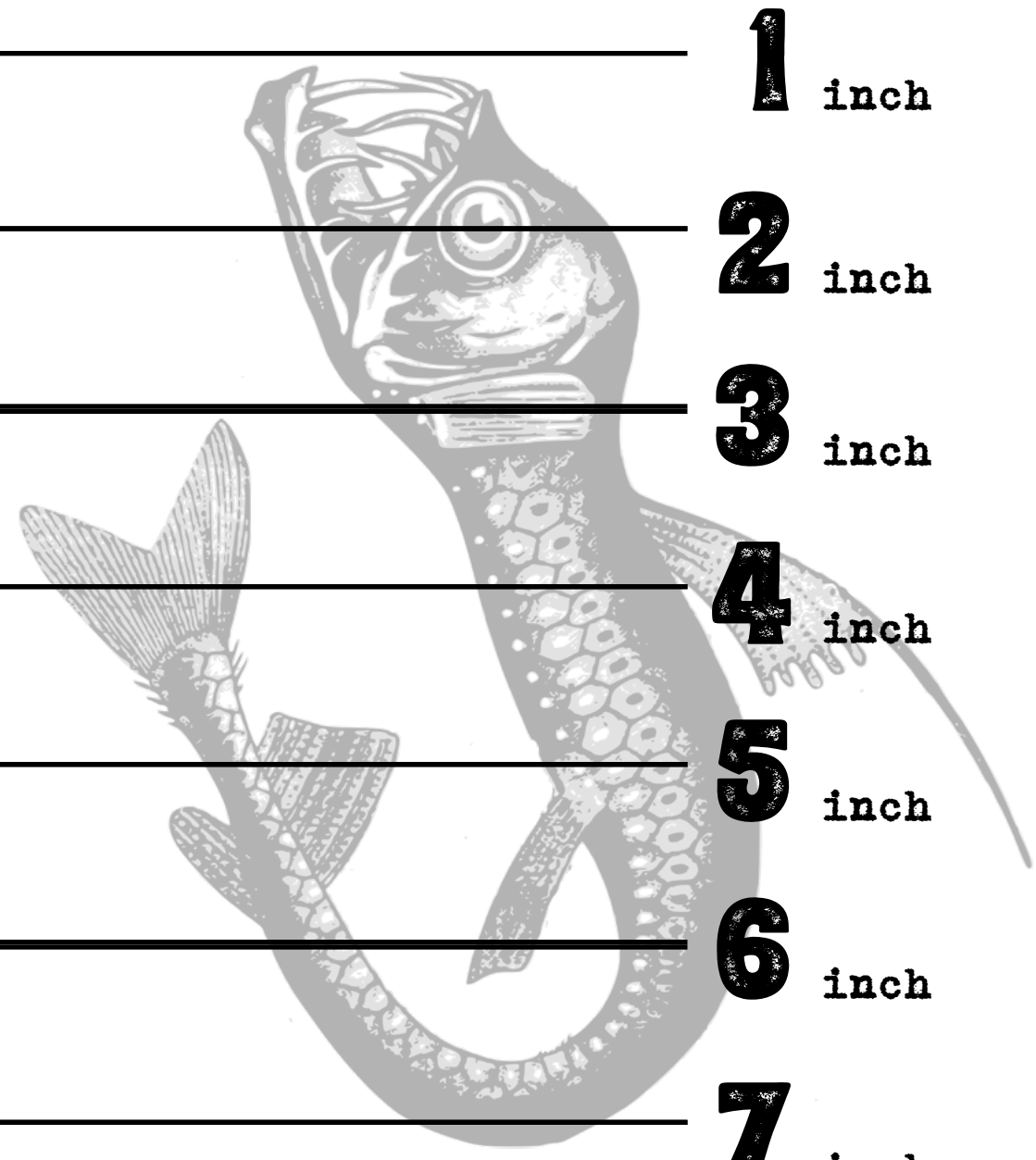

PART
1
HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT
PREPARATORY ACADEMY
STUDENT HANDBOOK
96 SHEETS • 5 x 5 QUAD
10⅛ x 7⅞ • 53-110

Measure Your Unnatural Creation!



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INTRODUCTION

What is a Roleplaying Game?

OK, this is the section where I'm supposed to tell you that roleplaying games (RPGs) are like "make-believe" but with rules. While I guess that's true, it's something of an oversimplification. A roleplaying game is a group activity in creating a shared story. Everyone has a part to play – a role – and they contribute to the story, adding suspense, action, drama, and sometimes humor. These games can be played (or "run" in gamer vernacular) with as few as two players and as many players as you can fit around a table. I find that groups of 4-5 players allow everyone a chance in the spotlight, while providing an interesting mix of personalities and abilities.

Much like RPG videogames or MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games), most of the players take the role of a single character who will adventure in the world. Unlike these games, however, you are not limited to the programmers' imaginations or the limitations of the game engine. You're also not limited to a few conversation options or pre-scripted cut scenes. You can do whatever you think your character would say and do.

Sidebars

Throughout this game, you'll find sidebars like this one. These have expanded information, game advice and optional rules. Feel free to completely ignore them.

There's some common etiquette that I'd recommend for new gamers. First, within the context of the game rules, you can create any character you like, but its good form to make a character who is compatible with the rest of the group. Turncoats and spies secretly allied with the enemy who sabotage the other characters' goals are not appreciated. Loner characters are also a bad idea; why would they want to hang around with the other characters? Characters who steal from other PCs are also unpopular choices. This is not to say that all the PCs must be best buds, but they should be able to work together and rely on one another.

Second, respect your fellow players. Don't try to hog the GM's attention or talk over the other players. Also, some players can be very picky about people touching their dice. Ask before you borrow!

Finally, try to separate your knowledge from your character's in-game knowledge. As a player, you will know a lot of things that your character won't. For example, as a player, you might know that another player's character is under attack across campus. You might be tempted to rush to their aid, but unless your character is psychic – which is a possibility – how would your character know they needed help? On the other hand, if your character were in the next room and overheard the scuffle, there's no reason why they couldn't investigate.

One player will assume the role of the Gamemaster (GM). Being the GM can take a lot of preparation, and a good GM will possess strong storytelling skills, the ability to improvise, a lot of creativity and a thorough understanding of the rules in this book—or the ability to fake it well. The Gamemaster is going to create the framework of the scenarios the players will explore, design and control all the characters and monsters the other players will encounter (Gamemaster Characters, or GMCs), and interpret any rules questions (we're not perfect, we can't create rules for every possible contingency).

If this is the first time you're GMing a game, don't worry. We have a lot of advice in the GM section of this book to help you design adventures and make sure that everyone has fun.

What You Need To Play

To play the *Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* Role-Playing Game, you'll need a few things:

1. A copy of the rules. Check.
2. Two six-sided dice (also called 2d6). These are the most common style of dice, and in a pinch you can borrow a couple from a board game. Having a pair of dice for each player is even better.
3. A character sheet. You'll need a place to record all your character's information: their skills, the things they've invented, the number of Merit Points they've

earned, etc. This information will change during play, so you might want to write it in pencil. You'll find copies of the sheet in the back of this book.

4. Paper and pencils. You never know when you'll want to take notes, draw a map, or send a secret message to another player.

5. A passing familiarity with the writings of H.P. Lovecraft would be useful. Lovecraft wrote many short horror stories about some poor, unfortunate soul who discovers some cosmic truth that humanity was never meant to know. They are rarely the better for having found it. *Be aware that these stories may be too shocking for younger readers. It should also be noted that, even for a writer in the 1920s, some of Lovecraft's writings were particularly racist. Racism, of course, has absolutely no place in this game or in civilized company.*

6. Most importantly, you'll need a couple of friends. One player will be the Gamemaster and everyone else will assume the role of students attending the Academy. The Gamemaster (GM) is like a combination of writer and referee. She'll come up with the story and play the roles of everyone and everything the players will encounter. These characters are the Gamemaster Characters (GMC). The GM also interprets the rules and keeps the game moving along.

Unlike the GM, each player controls only one character: a gifted, young student attending the *Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*. These characters are the Player Characters (PCs). Just like in a book or video game, these characters are the protagonists of the adventure.

> "We shall see that at which dogs howl in the dark, and that at which cats prick up their ears after midnight."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "From Beyond"*

Story Name Here

Young William Chaloux stood alone on the train platform, waiting for the train to take him to his new school in Arkham. A sudden and strangely cool breeze rustled the trees and caused him to shiver, despite the warmth of the late August morning. He looked down at his bags: a small knapsack with a few books and his admission papers, and a plastic pet carrier draped with a dark blanket. His trunk had been sent ahead a few weeks ago and should – he hoped – be waiting for him in his dorm room.

Glancing down the platform, William watched some other kids talk and laugh, trying to bounce rocks off the train tracks. It looked like fun. Some of the kids were about the same age he was, twelve or thirteen, although most looked a little older. All wore the same jet-black and pale-green uniforms that marked them as fellow students of the Academy.

He idly wondered if any of the children on the platform would be in his classes, when a small chipmunk darted out of the

Using Dice

Dice are used, modified by your character's abilities, to provide an element of chance when undertaking tasks. An athletic character will probably be better at football than a stereotypical bookish character, but that doesn't mean that the athletic character won't fumble the ball occasionally. It's just less likely to happen. Some games use a variety of polyhedral dice, but we'll stick with the 6-sided ones you are already familiar with. You'll roll dice when the chance of failure carries some kind of penalty, or when you are competing against another character. You won't need to roll for mundane tasks, like walking across campus, but if you're chasing someone across campus, you're going to need to roll. The rules will go into detail on what to roll and when.

In the text, when you see the notation "2d6" it means that you (or the Gamemaster) should roll two six-sided dice and add the results. Similarly, a notation of "1d6" means that you should only roll one die. To complicate things a little bit, you'll often have modifiers to your roll. Simply add or subtract the modifier from your total. For example, a notation of "2d6-2" means that you should roll two dice, add them together, and subtract two from the total, giving you a range of 0-10.

nearby bushes and scampered across the platform. From inside the covered carrier, a fibrous feeler - like a hairy centipede - darted out, constricting around the poor animal and yanking it into the concealed depths of the carrier.

Anxiously, William looked down the platform again, but none of the other children had seen the disturbing sight. Looking back at the carrier, he shuddered. *Nyhorr'urah must've gotten hungry again.* He'd seen the creature consume food many times – he couldn't really call what it did eating – and the sight never failed to turn his stomach.

He remembered the day when he found the small horror.

Awakened by the neighbors' stupid dog, William watched from his bedroom window as a falling star crashed in the woods behind his home. He woke early that morning, so he could investigate the crash before the school bus arrived. He wasn't sure if anyone else saw the falling star, but he didn't want to risk someone else getting there first. Skipping breakfast, he raced into the woods to see if he could find the remains of the meteorite.

He had only made it a short way into the woods when he heard the bark of his neighbors' dog. His neighbors were high school kids, and they were jerks. They thought it was funny to let their dog, a big German Shepherd, chase and scare the neighborhood kids. Everyone hated that stupid dog. William began running as fast as he could. If he could make it to the creek, he would probably lose the dog, or its owners might call it back, having gotten their laugh.

He made it to the old log that he and his friends used to cross the creek. Slowly, carefully, He crossed the slippery span, one foot in front of the other. Then, from behind him, William heard a low growl. He glanced over his shoulder and found the dog, three feet behind him, snarling

menacingly. William lost his balance and fell into the chilling waters of the creek.

In the distance, he heard the kids laughing as they called their dog home. *Great. Now he'd have to go to school muddy and wet.*

Drying himself as best he could with his coat, William resumed his search for the impact site and his prize: a real meteorite. Something that didn't come from Earth. What he found, instead, was a small crater with a basketball-sized, pulsating mass at the very center. As he approached, the mass untangled itself into a dripping mass of tendrils and translucent membranes.

William ran. He had no idea what that thing was, but it looked like a pile of guts. Maybe the crash had injured an animal?

The entire day at school, he had a bad feeling about the crash site and what he saw there. Still, he wasn't sure anyone would believe him, so he kept the information to himself and resolved to visit the crater again after school.

The meteor had not gone unnoticed. When William returned to the impact site that evening, the area was crawling with men in plastic hazard suits. It looked like they were testing the ground and plants with a Geiger counter and some other scientific instruments.

William ran home. He'd seen a lot of monster movies, and he knew that if the scientists or army or whatever found him, they'd take him back to their base and make him answer questions – probably while the monster was running amok and sucking out their brains.

Just before he made it to the back door of his house, something dropped from the sky right in front of his face. Startled, William fell on his backside for the second time that day.

What hovered in front of him was a dripping, worm-like horror, covered with writhing feelers and held aloft by a pair of membranous wings. It didn't seem to have any eyes, but he had the distinct feeling that it was looking very closely at him. *Examining him.*

William slowly scooted backwards, away from the thing, never taking his eyes off it. It never moved. It hung motionless in the air, its wings never beating, like a string suspended it. A strange, eerie fluting sound came from the vicinity of the creature. It may have come from the creature, itself, but it did not appear to have a mouth.

He bumped into something, and thought he was going to have a heart attack. He quickly shot a glance behind him to discover that he'd backed into his parents' old lawn furniture.

When he turned back, *the horror had vanished.*

That night, vivid nightmares of weird religious ceremonies, distant worlds, strange obelisks, and falling stars haunted William. He heard strange words, like "Cthulhu" and "Shub-Niggurath." One word stood out among the others: "*Nyhorr'urah*."

The next morning, still bleary-eyed from lack of rest, William cut through the woods to get to the bus stop. Brooding over his strange dream, he never heard the approaching dog. The large Shepherd knocked him down, snarling viciously in his face as William vainly tried to push the animal off him.

Suddenly, something smacked into the side of the dog, knocking it off him.

William got up to run but looked back to see the tentacular horror wrapped around the dog, constricting it. In a few moments, the dog was motionless and the creature, no... Nyhorr'urah, for William instinctively knew the horror's name, hung motionless in the air as it had the night before.

As William moved, Nyhorr'urah followed, hovering a few feet above the ground, neither approaching nor waiting. Finally, he turned to face the creature. Putting his hand up, he said in the firmest and most confident voice he could conjure, "Stay." To his surprise, as William backed away, Nyhorr'urah remained where it was. He backed away, then turned and broke into a sprint for the approaching bus.

William felt distracted the rest of the day and a teacher sent him to the principal's office for not paying attention in class. Still, he could not stop thinking about the creature: Nyhorr'urah. Did it understand him? Was it . . . friendly? Clearly, it was not anyone's pet and it was certainly not tame.

When William returned home from school that afternoon, he worked up his courage and decided to see if Nyhorr'urah still lurked within the woods. He found the creature exactly where he had left it, although the dog was nowhere to be seen. At William's approach, the creature emitted the same fluting noise he had heard the previous day. Had it . . . listened to him? He decided to experiment with another command. "Come," William said, and he began walking backwards, never losing eye contact with the floating monstrosity. Nyhorr'urah kept pace, hovering a dozen steps away from him.

It understood! And obeyed!

When William returned home, he ordered the little monster to hide in the tool shed before heading inside to hang up his jacket and wash his hands for supper. When he sat at the table, his parents looked at him with proud smiles and said, "Honey, there are some things we need to tell you about the family. Things you weren't ready to know until now."

That night, William learned about the strange rituals that had been part of the Chaloux family's traditions for generations, about his odd uncle and the names of the Outer Gods that were largely unknown to human beings.

A few weeks later, his parents informed him that he would be enrolling as a First Year student in the prestigious *Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* in Massachusetts this coming fall. He would even be able to bring Nyhorr'urah, for such things were not unusual on the grounds of the Academy.

Nyhorr'urah had been growing steadily stronger and more protective. The creature rarely left his side, at least when he was home. William had to order the creature to stay inside when he went to school or went out to play in the woods, for fear that the little horror would mistakenly attack a friend. He'd already noticed a drop in the local squirrel population around their home.

"What is that?"

The query shook William from his memory, and he looked up to see a girl, about his age, wearing the required ankle-length black skirt and light green blouse of the Academy. Gripped tightly in her arms, she held something that looked like the inside of an old television, with wires and tubes – and a couple of prisms – all running at odd angles.

"Oh that?" He stammered. "A pet. It's a pet. My pet." The carrier rocked violently in protest.

The girl was a little taller than he and had long black hair braided into a pony tail. She narrowed her eyes at him and crooked a small grin. "A pet, huh? *Yeah, right*. Can I see it?"

William wasn't sure what to do. He'd spent the past several months keeping Nyhorr'urah hidden, but his parents had assured him that the creature would be allowed, and even welcomed at his new school.

He shrugged. "Okay, but you might not like what you see." He lifted a corner of the blanket so the girl could peer within. To his surprise, she responded with neither fear nor disgust, and William relaxed a bit.

"Wow, I've never seen a species like this!" She studied the little abomination for several minutes. She was intensely curious about its sex, diet, lifespan, and asked a myriad of questions – most of which William had no idea how to answer. In an awkward attempt to stem the barrage of questions, he pointed to the strange device in her arms and asked about the bizarre machine.

An obvious source of pride, the girl at once launched into a fast-paced and technical explanation of energy waves and vibrational frequencies. William's face went blank. Seeing that she'd lost him, she simply explained "It's a continuum-nexus stability-scope. It allows me to see dimensional rifts, you know, gates to other universes that are normally invisible. I'm still working on it, though. When it's done, I hope to be able to use it to close rifts, too. Dr. Tillinghast is very interested in my work. He sent my acceptance letter *personally*."

"Cool." William's first instinct had been to ask "Who?", but he caught himself. He had absolutely no idea who this Dr. Tillinghast guy was, but it sounded impressive and he didn't want to hurt her feelings. Still, he thought his response, while brief, should mask his cluelessness. He didn't want to let on that he didn't know all that much about the school, even though he really didn't.

She shifted the bulky device in her grasp and thrust out her hand, straight and sharp, as another wind swept across the platform, this one much more seasonal than the last. "I'm Kelly. Kelly Harper."

William took her hand and smiled. *It was going to be a very weird school year.*

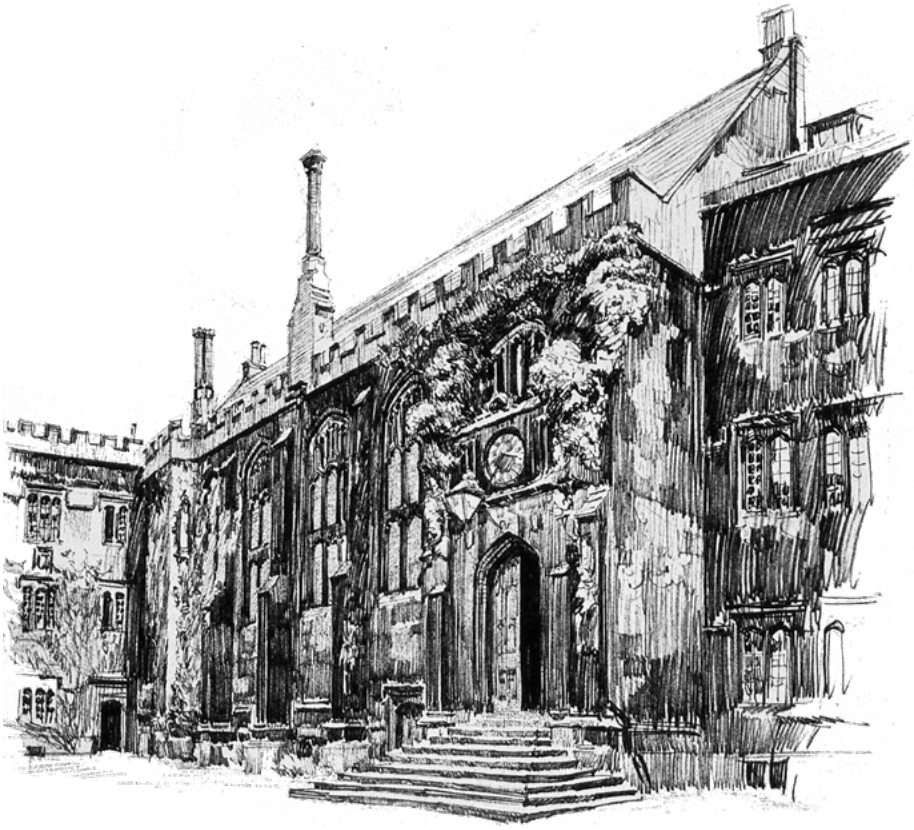
HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT PREPARATORY ACADEMY

FROM THE DESK OF THE HEADMASTER

Nestled in the scenic Miskatonic Valley in northern Massachusetts, The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy is dedicated to warping molding the minds of eager young students. We offer a robust, progressive education with a strong focus on the many permutations of science. Our expert faculty represents the best in their fields and our facilities include state-of-the-art labs and a top-notch medical team.

Rest assured that your child's education and development are of paramount concern to everyone at The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy. Perhaps your child will graduate to join our notable list of alumni, many of whom you may have seen on television!

Sincerely,
Randolph Carter
Headmaster



Founded
1916

School Colors
Abyss Black and Pond-Scum Green

School Mascot
A Five-Headed Hydra

Weekly Student Newspaper
The Illuminator

Annual Tuition, Room, and Board:
$37,000

The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy is in the rustic, small town of Arkham, Massachusetts, only an hour's drive from the coastal fishing town of Innsmouth and the sleepy town of Dunwich.

The town of Arkham has a somewhat dubious history. In the late 1600s, Arkham was the site of the infamous Arkham Witch Trials, which, according to official records, lasted for more than two years and took the lives of more than two dozen suspected witches. Unofficially, there were reports of Witch hangings as recently as 1781. In the late 1800s, the town was at the epicenter of a massive Typhoid epidemic that swept through the northern New England region. The region was not spared from the ravages of the Great Depression, either. The economic

collapse hit the myriad of small farming and mining communities surrounding Arkham particularly hard, and many disappeared altogether. Rumors say some families turned to "alternate food supplies" to feed their families.

Today, the town is known as the home of Arkham Sanitarium, the largest mental health facility for the criminally insane in the region, and the world-famous Miskatonic University. Many Academy Seniors apply to Miskatonic each year, which is hardly surprising since Miskatonic's Occult Sciences and Metaphysics departments are world-recognized authorities in paranormal and extra-planar sciences.

Behind a tall, stone wall with wrought-iron tips lurks *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy.* The main school building is a crumbing brick and gray stone structure covered with ivy and worn, faceless gargoyles. Completed in 1878 as a hospital for typhoid patients, it was repurposed as an asylum for the incurably insane (prior to the opening of nearby Arkham Sanitarium in 1905). In 1910, the building was bought by a private concern, and the doors to *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* opened in 1916 (although renovation and new construction were ongoing for another five years). *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* now serves as school and home to 800 students in years One through Six (grades 7-12) from across the United States and nine countries.

Inside the Academy, the main building is a horribly confusing maze of corridors with obtuse and acute angles. From a bird's eye perspective, the building resembles a hand-drawn, five-pointed star inside of a pentagon. There is a hedge maze in the very center of the star – forming a perfect Elder Sign. The administration offices are in the exterior pentagon, and classes are held in the interior star.

The school's rolling, New England campus also includes a biology building, dorms for the students (in various states of disrepair), an antediluvian stone colosseum, a gym building and sports fields, a stable, a seemingly bottomless lake, and Billington's Wood – a deep, dark forest that hides ancient and unidentifiable ruins. A ten-minute bus ride from the campus is the Miskatonic River, a wide, fast-flowing river where the Academy and university crew teams often practice.

Most of the sports teams aren't very good. The exceptions are the swim team (most of whom seem to have big, dark eyes and a fondness for chum) and the track and field team (because running very fast is a survival trait at this school).

The headmaster of the Academy, Randolph Carter, is an absentee administrator. He is rarely seen around campus and one usually finds him sleeping in his

> "What he did do was to become an almost fanatical devotee of subterranean magical lore, for which Miskatonic's library was and is famous."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep"*

"…witch-cursed, legend-haunted Arkham, whose huddled, sagging gambrel roofs and crumbling Georgian balustrades brood out the centuries beside the darkly muttering Miskatonic."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep"

office. On the few occasions that he has been seen outside of his office, he usually has bloodshot eyes and rumpled clothes.

Head of the Occult Studies Department is Asenath Waite. Professor Waite is a graduate of the Medieval Metaphysics program at Miskatonic University and the daughter of Ephraim Waite, a Witch of some renown (although some might say "infamy"). She is small, dark, and rather attractive with unusually large eyes, a common trait of people hailing from Innsmouth.

The Chairman of the Science Department, Dr. Crawford Tillinghast, would probably be happier at a research institution. A brilliant scientist, Dr. Tillinghast has very little interest in students and only deigns to instruct the most advanced science and engineering courses. It's no secret that he would like to abolish the Occult Studies Program from the student curriculum in favor of expanding the Science Department. Dr. Tillinghast spends most of his time in his lab, securely located under the West Wing of the Main Building.

The Head Librarian, Professor Abdul Alhazred, is a rather scary man with dark eyes. Most students tend to avoid him, as he's full of arcane warnings and dire mumblings, unless they need access to the restricted section of the library. He moves very quietly, and often surprises students when he appears behind them.

The Registrar is Georgina Clarendon. She's been with the Academy for as long as anyone can remember, but she's just as sharp as ever, of both mind and tongue. She is very set in her ways and has little patience for anything or anyone disrupting her routine. Mrs. Clarendon brooks absolutely no backtalk, arguments, or complaints from students. Considering that she sets the students' schedules and can place them in the worst classes, most students go out of their way to be polite to her.

The director of the campus infirmary is Dr. Herbert West. Although he has an aloof, almost uncaring bedside manner, he's an amazing doctor and has never lost a patient – no matter how badly injured.

While the teaching staff is exceptional, they're generally more interested in conducting their own research than teaching a bunch of snot-nosed, intellectually-inferior students. Finding a professor who actually cares about the students is a rare find and a potentially valuable ally.

Campus security is better armed than most SWAT teams. They are usually ex-military and armed with tasers, batons, semi-automatic pistols, and Kevlar vests. They also have access to riot armor and heavy assault weapons if they need them.

2

YOUR STUDENT

In this game, you will play the role of a First Year student (age 12-13) at *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy.* You'll be dealing with all the problems kids face in school: studying, making friends, mean teachers, trying to be cool, and dealing with bullies. As if that wasn't enough, there are a lot of dark, supernatural forces at work at this school. *Weird, extra-dimensional, mind-shattering kinds of stuff.* But your character may have been touched by the supernatural . . . tainted by otherworldly powers. Perhaps you've learned how to harness the powers of black magic, or learned to design weird devices that bend the laws of nature. Or maybe you've mastered a horrible creature from beyond the walls of time and space, tapped the hidden secrets of the human subconscious, or developed strange mutant powers. Unfortunately, a bunch of other kids have these powers, too.

When you create your character, you'll select one of six character classes to play. Your character's class has nothing to do with their academic subjects. Instead, "class" refers to the category of supernatural powers and knowledge they bring to the gaming table. Once you select your character's class, it will never change – so choose wisely!

Witches

Disturbing Ability: Witchcraft

Witches – *both boys and girls* – have learned the dark arts of Witchcraft. Black magic is very flexible and powerful, but the price can be very steep. Magical energies are unpredictable, and a novice Witch can easily lose control, unleashing these energies upon themselves or others with painful and sometimes horrifying results.

Mad Scientists

Disturbing Ability: Science!

Mad Scientists have discovered the boundaries of conventional science and have learned how to circumvent them. Weird science devices, called "gizmos," are far more reliable than black magic, but lack the flexibility. Once a device has been built, its function cannot be changed without going through the design process all over again. Furthermore, these devices must be maintained, limiting the number of devices a Mad Scientist can have operational at one time.

Summoners

Disturbing Ability: Summoning

For some reason, Summoners are bonded to horrible little monsters, called *Servitors*. While Servitors can't speak – at least not any human language – Servitors are intelligent, although their intelligence is completely alien to anything we could possibly understand. As a result, Servitors are somewhat unpredictable, and have been known to run amok.

Hybrids

Disturbing Ability: Mutation

Somewhere down a Hybrid's family tree, somebody did something they really should not have done with something gross. Hybrids are born a little . . . different. *Bestial features. Tentacles. Deep One ancestry. Ghoul blood.* While a Hybrid's birthright grants special powers, it also leaves its mark. Many Hybrids could not pass for human without heavy, concealing clothes.

A Note for Novice Players

The Witch and the Mad Scientist were designed to allow players to customize their spells and gizmos. Players must choose the type of gizmo or spell that best fits their needs and then customize it with modifiers. Mad Scientists have an additional step: They also need to assemble and test their creations.

If you're new to roleplaying games and you want to play a Witch or a Mad Scientist, it is suggested that you work with your GM to design your spells and gizmos in-between sessions. This will help keep the story moving forward. Once you get the hang of it, designing spells and gizmos is a quick process.

Dreamers

Disturbing Ability: Oneiromancy

Dreamers are the least common of the character classes at the school, and the most difficult to identify. During the day, most Dreamers are just like everyone else. But at night, they can invade and manipulate dreams, where they can spy on secrets or inflict horrible nightmares. However, this can be risky for the Dreamer; the human psyche is *not* without its defenses!

> "There is no field other than the weird in which I have any aptitude or inclination for fictional composition."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, Letter to J. Vernon Shea*

"Monday"

Disturbing Ability: *None*

School slang for "mundane," these are the most common type of student at the Academy and don't have any supernatural abilities at all. They make up for it with superior skills and abilities that may give them an edge over the other character classes when coping with daily life at the Academy. The bonus your character receives depends on the type of Monday you choose to play. Trusties (Rich Kids), for example, get a bonus to the Family skill, which reflects their greater wealth and family's influence at the Academy.

Skills

The skills you select help define your character. Just like in real life, your character is going to be better at some things than others. Your *Skill Grade* measures your ability in a skill; it runs from "D" to "A." A Grade of "D" is bad, a "C" is average for a student, and an "A" is exceptional. There's also a Grade Level of FACULTY, but for now, that's reserved for the teaching faculty and the administrative staff.

There are two types of skills: *Mundane* and *Disturbing*.

Mundane Skills

Mundane Skills are normal, everyday skills that everyone has: other students, the faculty, normal people, *everyone*. Mundane Skills will determine how strong your character is, how good they are at math, how cool they are, how good they are at field hockey, etc.

Some skills fall under Specialization skills. For these skills, you'll have to choose your areas of expertise. Just as in real life, your character can't be great at everything. We'll discuss Specialization skills below.

For your convenience, the list of Mundane Skills has three categories: Physical, Mental, and Social. This can be important later; sometimes you'll suffer a penalty to physical or mental rolls due to injury, and you'll need to know which skill falls under which category!

Physical Skills

Brawn: A favorite of thugs everywhere, this is a measure of your character's muscle and health. If you need to intimidate a smaller kid, kick down a door, or stay awake after pulling an all-nighter, this skill will come in handy.

This skill covers: height, strength, arm wrestling, weightlifting, physical intimidation, stamina, resistance to disease and poison.

Delinquent: Whether you're an aspiring cat burglar or just a run-of-the-mill sneaky kid, you'll be using this skill whenever you try something furtive or potentially illegal. As you might imagine, the administration doesn't look favorably upon students who have a demonstrated prowess in this skill.

This skill covers: sleight of hand, stealth, hiding, picking pockets, forgery, shadowing people, lockpicking.

Medieval: This skill governs hand-to-hand armed combat. If you're going to beat up someone at close range and you don't plan on bruising your knuckles, you'll need a good *Medieval* skill. Unarmed combat is under the *Smackdown* skill.

This skill covers: swords, clubs, axes, chainsaws, a sock full of quarters, wet towel-whips, improvised handheld weapons, parrying close combat attacks (armed or unarmed).

Phys. Ed.: If your character is going to be a jock, you'll want to have a good score in this skill. *Phys. Ed.* encompasses all the abilities you'd need in gym class, as well as your natural dexterity. This skill also figures into your character's running speed.

This skill covers: running, climbing, jumping, swimming, throwing, thrown weapons, agility, balance, gymnastics, team sports, riding a bicycle, dodging attacks.

Smackdown: Even at a prestigious Academy, eventually there's going to be a fistfight. When that time comes, nothing's more embarrassing than throwing a punch and missing. With a good score in the *Smackdown* skill, your character will be ready to defend themselves when the fists start flying.

This skill covers: punching, kicking, biting, headbutts, wedgies, grappling, boxing, martial arts, wrestling, dirty street fighting, blocking unarmed attacks.

Shoot: This combat skill includes all ranged weapons, from slings to machine guns. Granted, firearms are forbidden on school grounds, but if the only thing between your character and a rampaging monster is an old revolver, you'll want to make certain you don't miss. Note that thrown weapons fall under the *Phys. Ed.* skill and weird science blasters under the *Science!* skill.

This skill covers: slings, slingshots, bows, crossbows, paintball guns, pistols, rifles, automatic rifles, flamethrowers, grenade launchers, artillery.

> "The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits."
>
> *Albert Einstein*

Mental Skills

Boffin: "Boffin" is a British slang term for someone who's excellent with technology. This skill will allow you to use, build, and repair mundane technological items. Unfortunately, this skill does not work with weird science devices. They're just too . . . *weird*.

This skill covers: using, building, modifying, and repairing computers, alarm

Optional Skill: Driver's Ed.(Specialization)

By default, your character starts off at age 12 or 13 – a tad young to be getting behind the wheel (you must be 16 to get your learner's permit in Massachusetts). That might not stop them, however. Sometimes, you just need to steal a car. This skill covers your character's ability (or inability) to operate a motorized vehicle. Specializations include cars, tanks, motorcycles, boats, helicopters, planes, etc. Consider yourself warned: You should expect some serious penalties if you plan to land a 747 without any training.

If your Gamemaster decides to include this skill in the game, your character will begin the game with a Skill Grade of "D" (because of not having any training and/or not being able to reach the pedals). You may, however, increase this skill normally with Experience Points.

systems, drones, and other electrical and mechanical devices. It also covers hacking computers, creating or disarming mechanical traps, hotwiring cars.

Brainiac: I'm sure you're not surprised to learn that this skill covers your character's intelligence, memory, and problem-solving abilities. It also covers your knowledge of where to look to find tidbits of lost lore. Other skills cover facts and knowledge, like *Hobby* and *Education*. There are a lot of clever people who never had the benefit of a good education. *Brainiac* is one of two skills used to calculate how quickly your character can react in combat.

This skill covers: deductive reasoning, quickness of thought, intuition, memory, logic, puzzles, online or old-fashioned library research.

Education (*Specialization*): This skill covers all the topics, information, and foreign languages you'd learn in school. Specializations include biology, computers, Latin, math, history, English, Sanskrit, etc.

First aid: You'll use this skill to heal yourself or other characters. As a kid, you won't be able to prescribe medicine, but you'll be able to set broken limbs and staunch bleeding.

This skill covers: treating physical wounds, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, treating poison and disease.

Hobby (*Specialization*): Unlike *Education*, *Hobby* covers factoids and abilities not taught in school or covered by other skills. *Hobby* is a flexible skill; it can be mental or physical. By default, it's a mental skill, reflecting your general knowledge of different hobbies and trivia, but your Specializations may be mental or physical. If you suffer a penalty that only affects mental skills, your physical Specializations won't be affected, and vice versa! Specializations include: cooking, punk rock bands, skateboarding, roleplaying games, horseback riding, rare coins, gambling, collecting spores/mold/fungus, fishing, football statistics, playing video games, etc.

Paranoia: This is your character's perception, their ability to notice clues and details around them. Why is it called *Paranoia*? *Because sometimes, they*

"Perfect paranoia is perfect awareness."

Stephen King, "Danse Macabre"

really are out to get you, and you need to pay attention for the slightest sign . . . Paranoia is the second skill used to calculate how quickly your character reacts in combat.

This skill covers: hearing, sight, smell, touch, taste, searching, noticing details, that feeling that someone *or something* is watching you.

Scouts: If you think you might be spending some time in the woods or spelunking in a cave, your character's young life may depend upon this skill.

This skill covers: building or finding shelter, hunting, animal training, tying knots, identifying plants and animal tracks, finding non-poisonous food and water.

Social Skills

Appeal: This is a measure of your looks, your personal charm, and your ability to use them to your advantage. If you believe in making a stunning first impression, talking your way out of (or into) trouble, or you're just shallow, you're going to want a good Appeal skill.

This skill covers: physical beauty, charm, fashion sense, ability to make friends.

Art (*Specialization*): You'll use this skill when you want to channel your inner muse. This skill covers the visual and performing arts, literature, and handicrafts. Specializations include poetry, dance, photography, basket weaving, singing, costuming, creative writing, woodworking, music, disguise, drama, painting etc. With this skill, you'll also be able to estimate how much a piece of art might be worth.

Cool: Cool is your ability to control your emotions and appear awesome when you'd rather curl up into a ball and cry.

Optional Use of the Hobby Skill

Normally, the Hobby skill only covers abilities and trivia that don't fall under another skill. However, your GM may decide to scrap this rule. If so, Hobby Specializations can complement another skill, providing an Upshift to that skill when the Specialization applies.

For example, if your character takes a Specialization in "wrestling," they could earn an Upshift to their Smackdown skill when grappling an opponent, but not when punching. Likewise, a Specialization in "football" would earn an Upshift to the Phys. Ed. skill when the character was playing football, but not basketball or any other sport. A Specialization in "fishing," however, would still be tested using the Hobby skill since the Specialization doesn't fall under another skill.

This optional rule is not recommended when using the optional Advantage/Disadvantage rules to customize characters.

"... only a real artist knows the actual anatomy of the terrible or the physiology of fear—the exact sort of lines and proportions that connect with latent instincts or hereditary memories of fright, and the proper color contrasts and lighting effects to stir the dormant sense of strangeness."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Pickman's Model"

Cool also allows you to resist psychic attacks and the effects of insanity.

This skill covers: self-confidence, willpower, hiding your emotions, controlling your temper, avoiding distractions, resisting fear, intimidation, confusion, insults, embarrassment, insanity, and many mental powers.

Empathy: This is your ability to understand someone's emotional state and detect when they are being less than truthful. Psychopaths often have a low *Empathy* score. *Empathy* can also soothe the pain of mental and emotional damage.

This skill covers: psychology, figuring out when someone is lying to you, figuring out someone's motivation or emotional state, determining whether someone is suffering from a mental disorder, healing mental damage.

Family: This is less of a skill, and more a measure of your family and their connections. Specifically, this skill covers your family's fortune (or lack thereof) and their reputation. Having the right connections will go far at the Academy . . .

This skill covers: family reputation and influence, social status, proper etiquette, bribery, your family's net worth.

Fixer: Sometimes you need something you just can't find in the student bookstore, like a rare tome, a black-market spell component, a popular video game, or someone with a specific set of skills. For these . . . sensitive purchases, you'll need to know a guy. With this skill, you'll have a promising idea where to go, with whom you need to speak, and what kind of payment the seller likely wants.

Family Skill Grade	Allowance Per Week
FACULTY	$1,000
A	$500
B	$100
C	$20
D	$0

This skill covers: streetwise, bargaining, contacts, street slang, rumors, knowing a good place to hide things.

Trash Talk: This skill covers your ability to verbally manipulate others using fast talk or flat-out lies. This skill can also inflict emotional damage by insulting and belittling others. Members of the Student Council usually have a good score in *Trash Talk*.

This skill covers: fast talk, debate, persuade, leadership, lying, insults and cutting remarks.

Specialization Skills

If you have a Grade of "B" or higher in a Specialization skill, you will be able to specify your areas of expertise. You gain a number of Specializations equal to your skill modifier (i.e., 2 at "B", 4 at "A", and 6 at FACULTY). When rolling against any of your Specializations, you use your current Skill Grade. If you're testing your skill against a Specialization you don't have, your Skill Grade defaults to "C." (See *Specialized Skills* under *Task Resolution*, pg. XX).

Disturbing Skills

Not everyone has Disturbing Skills, and those who do are not quite right. These skills tend to leave their mark on the people who possess them. While these abilities may be rare and hidden from most in the outside world, they're not uncommon on the campus of *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy.* In fact, they're nurtured.

Disturbing Skills include *Eldritch Lore* and the five *Character Class Skills*. The Character Class Skills are split into *ability* and *lore*. While any student at the Academy can learn the Character Class lore skills listed below, only characters of the proper class gain both the knowledge and the associated powers. Otherwise, it's just book learning and observation.

Once you've chosen your Character Class, the remaining Character Class Skills become lore skills, as noted under their descriptions. If you're playing a "Monday," all the Character Class Skills are lore skills!

Example: Anyone with the Witchcraft Lore skill can use the ability to identify the purpose of certain spell components, but only Witches gain magical knowledge and the ability to cast spells. Likewise, a Witch can cast spells, but cannot command a Servitor, no matter how much the Witch has studied and observed them.

Eldritch Lore: This is your character's knowledge of the occult, including voodoo, parapsychology, demonology, and ancient astronauts. This is also your character's understanding of the truth behind the Cthulhu Mythos – the gods, their agents, and the many non-human entities that exist on Earth and in the depths of space. This is mind-bending stuff – the true nature of the universe and your tiny, insignificant role in it. The more Eldritch Lore you know, however, the greater the power at your command, and the further you'll be able to progress in the five Character Class Skills (up to the limit of your current Eldritch Lore skill). None of your other Disturbing Skills (ability or lore) can exceed your ability in Eldritch Lore.

There is a drawback, however. Knowledge such as this was never meant for humanity. The higher your character's Eldritch Lore skill, the lower your sanity score will become. Power really does corrupt!

Character Class Skills

Summoning (pg. XX)

Disturbing Ability: you have earned the trust . . . *errr* . . . respect . . . *umm* . . . there's a horrible little monster called a Servitor that follows you around and *sometimes* listens to you. As you progress in the *Summoning* skill, your Servitor will evolve (or devolve, as the case may be) and your control over your Servitor will grow. Servitors can be very dangerous, however. The more cunning your Servitor becomes, the more likely it is to try to break free of your control.

Summoning Lore Skill: You can use the *Summoning* skill to surmise the relative strength of a Servitor and identify the Servitor's abilities.

Witchcraft (pg. XX)

Disturbing Ability: You understand the cosmic rules governing black magic. Witches may use this skill to research and cast spells. *Witchcraft* is very powerful but messing with the fundamental laws of the universe is dangerous stuff, and a careless Witch could easily draw the attention of something nasty.

Witchcraft Lore Skill: You understand the theory behind black magic and can identify the tools and material components used in spells.

"I feel that we've lost so much… but we've got the X-Files, and I believe what we're looking for is in them. I'm more certain than ever the truth is out there, Scully."

The X-Files, "Paper Clip"

Science! (pg. XX)

Disturbing Ability: Your understanding of science transcends conventional thinking. Fifth-dimensional geometry and temporal energies are yours to command. You may use this skill to build and use weird science devices, called "gizmos." *Science!* is not as flexible as *Witchcraft*, but it's typically safer. Plus, you can make ray guns!

Science! Lore Skill: You can identify and use weird science devices (with proper instruction).

Mutation (pg. XX)

Disturbing Ability: You carry the genetic history of some non-human species, like ghouls, serpent people, Deep Ones, or shuggoths. We're not going to get into how this happened, but you were born with a mutation, and it's likely revolting. People tend to react negatively to Hybrids, and some mutations can be difficult to hide. On the bright side, your mutation also grants you super powers (gross and disturbing powers, but super nonetheless). Hybrids use the *Mutation* skill to control their powers and perform power stunts.

Mutation Lore Skill: You have a basic grasp of extra-terrestrial and extra-planar biology and understand the theories of evolution and de-evolution. You can use this skill to spot Hybrids and deduce the nature and strength of their mutation(s).

Oneiromancy (pg. XX)

Disturbing Ability: Dreamers can use this skill to invade and manipulate the dreams and sleeping minds of other people, known as "sleepers."

Oneiromancy Lore Skill: People who have mastered this skill have a grasp of dream symbolism. They have studied the basics of lucid dreaming (not to be confused with the power of the same name) and can exert some minor control over their own dreams.

Skill Levels For Adults And Faculty

Although the kids at the Academy are no joke, underneath it all, they're still just kids and lack the experience and training of most adults (*just look at campus security, how many 12-year-olds do you know who can stand up to a team of ex-special forces?*).

"Non-Euclidean calculus and quantum physics are enough to stretch any brain; and when one mixes them with folklore and tries to trace a strange background of multi-dimensional reality behind the ghoulish hints of Gothic tales and the wild whispers of the chimney-corner, one can hardly expect to be wholly free from mental tension."

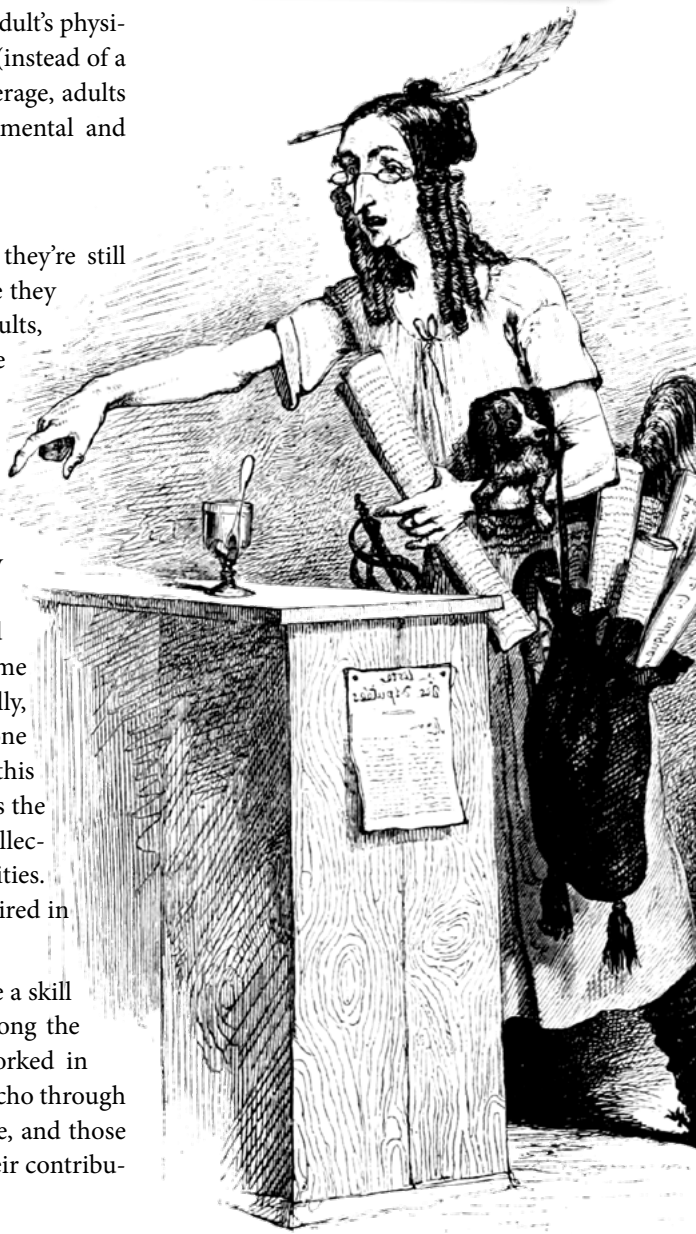
H.P. Lovecraft, "Dreams in the Witch-House"

> Wise men have
> interpreted dreams, and the gods have laughed.
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "Hypnos"*

The average Grade for an adult's physical and mental skills is a "B" (instead of a "C"). This means that, on average, adults will be better than kids at mental and physical tasks.

But what about social skills?

Most adults like to think they're still cool, and many try to act like they are, but they're not. For adults, just like kids, the average Grade for social skills is a "C."



Faculty Skill Grade

Of course, some adults are going to have Skill Grades of FACULTY (particularly members of the faculty, but you've likely already figured that part out). Although some gifted students will, eventually, rise to become the peer of one or two of their professors, this exalted Skill Grade represents the crème de la crème of the intellectual and athletic communities. That is why the faculty was hired in the first place, right?

A few, rare adults *may* have a skill of MASTER, but they're among the very best who have ever worked in their field. Their names will echo through the halls long after they retire, and those at the Academy will study their contributions for generations.

Optional: Customizing Characters

Some players may want a bit more customization for their characters. If your Gamemaster permits, players may apply *Advantages* and *Disadvantages* to their characters' skills. While the skills available to players are broad in scope, Advantages and Disadvantages only affect specific aspects of a skill, either improving or hindering the skill under narrowly-defined circumstances. For example, a player may decide to enhance their Paranoia skill by selecting the Advantage "keen eyesight." This player would receive a bonus on eyesight-related Paranoia rolls, but not on rolls for hearing or smell. The Gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether an Advantage or Disadvantage is too broad and when it may apply to a skill roll.

Rules for Advantages and Disadvantages

- Players may select Advantages and Disadvantages for Mundane and Disturbing Skills;
- If an Advantage or Disadvantage can apply to multiple situations, it is too broad. Work with your Gamemaster to define the scope;
- Advantages add +1 (*not an Upshift!*) to the player's Skill Total (pg. XX) when the condition applies;
- Disadvantages penalize the character with a -1 (*not a Downshift!*) to the Skill Total (pg. XX) when the condition applies;
- Players may choose a maximum of three Advantages, but must select a corresponding number of Disadvantages to balance out the Advantages;
- Disadvantages do not have to apply to the same skill as an Advantage, but may, if the player wishes;
- Players may not add Advantages to their starred Grade "D" skill (see *Making Your Very Own Student*);
- In the case of Specialization skills, Advantages and Disadvantages must apply to specific Specializations. For example, a player with the Art skill and the Music Specialization might select an Advantage in a particular style of music, such as classical or rock, or they might select a specific instrument, such as a flute or electric bass guitar. Players may opt to add Disadvantages to Specializations they do not have but can only add an Advantage to a Specialization they currently possess;
- Advantages and Disadvantages cannot contradict one another. For example, a player cannot select "keen eyesight" and "needs glasses." That would be contradictory;
- No skill may have more than one Advantage and one Disadvantage;
- The Gamemaster must approve all Advantages and Disadvantages.

Advantages and Disadvantages should be noted on the character sheet as:

- Paranoia "C", +Keen Eyesight
- Phys. Ed. "D", -Soccer
- Art "B" (Music, Acting), +Singing, -Ballet

Adding Advantages and Disadvantages to Skill Tests

As mentioned above, an Advantage adds a +1 and Disadvantages subtract 1 from the Skill Total (pg. XX). If a player with a Shoot Grade of "B" and an Advantage with crossbows decides to play William Tell (do NOT try this at home), they would roll 2d6 (standard) +2 (for the Grade of "B") +1 (for the Advantage). If they had been armed with a paintball rifle, they would not receive the +1 modifier.

Suggested Advantages and Disadvantages

Below is a list of possible Advantages and Disadvantages for each of the Mundane and Disturbing Skills in the game. If you have an idea for a new Advantage or Disadvantage, just run it past your Gamemaster.

Physical Skills

Brawn: Brute Strength, Bullying, Big Fella', Arm Wrestling, Weight Lifting, Resist Pain, Resist Poison, Short, Sickly, Overweight

Delinquent: Stealth, Palming, Card Tricks, Shadowing Suspects, Pickpocketing, Lockpicking, Noisy, Obvious

Medieval: Swords, Improvised Weapons, Parrying

Phys. Ed.: Running, Football, Jumping, Gymnastics, Ice Skating, Cheerleading, Juggling, Climbing, Swimming, Throwing, Slow, Bad Sense of Balance, Dislikes Heights

Smackdown: Boxing, Martial Arts, Wrestling, Fighting Dirty

Shoot: Bows, Crossbows, Slingshots, Firearms, Heavy Weapons, Paintball Rifles

Mental Skills

Boffin: Electrical, Computer Repair, Programming, Automotive, Designing Traps.

Brainiac: Memorization, Online Research, Puzzles, Cyphers, Not-Too-Bright, Absentminded

Education: Marine Biology, History of the Miskatonic Region, Making Explosives, Dialects of a Language

First aid: Diagnosis, Treating Wounds, Treating Poison, Treating Disease

Hobby: Coins of Ancient Rome, Horror Roleplaying Games, Poker, Canadian Hockey Players, specific Skateboard Tricks, French Cuisine

Paranoia: Sight, Hearing, Noticing Ambushes, Needs Glasses

Scouts: Finding Shelter, Navigating in the Wilderness, Poisonous Plants, Finding Food and Water, Identifying Animal Tracks, Tying Knots

Social Skills

Appeal: Stylish Clothes, Appearance, Flirting, Making a Good First Impression, Unattractive, Poor Hygiene

Art: Drawing Manga, Black and White Photography, Abstract Painting, Ballet, Saxophone, Cosplay

Cool: Shrugging-off Embarrassment, Resisting Fear, Ignoring Insults, Standing-up to Bullies, Sucker for a Pretty Face, Thin-Skinned, Weak Stomach

Empathy: Detecting Lies, Reassuring Voice, Doesn't Care About Anyone but Herself

Family: Bribery, Calling Home for a Favor, Notorious Family

Fixer: Contacts, Getting Ahold of Video Games, Cutting a Deal

Trash Talk: Lying with Aplomb, Inspiring Speeches, Debate, Painful Insults, Poor Liar

Disturbing Skills

Eldritch Lore: Prehistory of Earth, Identifying Mythos Creatures, Gods of the Mythos, Cults

Summoning: Identifying Servitor Abilities, Specific Servitor Command

Witchcraft: Identifying Tools and Components, Magical Research, Casting Specific Spells

Science!: Identifying Gizmos, Scientific Research, Specific Designs

Mutation: Identifying Hybrids, Inhuman Biology, Concealing Mutations

Oneiromancy: Interpreting Dreams, Slumberland Lore, Specific Dreamer Powers, Dream Combat

Customization Packages

For players who want to play a certain type of character, we've included a few stereotypical background packages. Feel free to change the Advantages and Disadvantages to reflect your vision of your character.

Athlete

- Appeal + Party Animal
- Brawn + Strong
- Phys. Ed. + (specific sport)

- Brainiac - Not Too Bright
- Cool - Doesn't React Well to Insults
- Empathy - Can't Relate to Anyone but Teammates

Cheerleader

- Appeal + Attractive
- Phys. Ed. + Cheering
- Trash Talk + Insults *OR* Medieval +Chainsaws (*unless videogames have been lying to me*)
- Brawn - Petite
- Cool - Faints when Scared
- Phys. Ed. - Falls a Lot When Running from Stuff

Cultist (Witch)

- Eldritch Lore + Cults
- Trash Talk + Brainwashing
- Witchcraft + Curses
- Appeal - Religious Rants Turn People Off
- Cool - Lashes Out at Anyone Insulting their Deity
- Family - Known Cultists

Evil Mastermind (Mad Scientist)

- Boffin + Designing Deathtraps
- Education + Area of Research (Particle Physics, Lasers, Mass-to-Energy Conversion, Etc.)
- Science! +Blast
- Appeal - Rants about Their "Superior Intellect"
- Cool - Sucker for a Pretty Face
- Empathy - No Patience for Lesser Intellects

Geeky Kid

- Boffin + Computers
- Hobby + Font of Knowledge About (Sci-Fi Authors, Specific Anime Series, Etc.)

- Medieval + Swords (*looks like all those medieval reenactments finally paid off*)
- Cool - Awkward Around Your Preferred Gender(s)
- Paranoia - Needs Glasses
- Phys. Ed. - Not Good at Competitive Sports

Goth Kid

- Art + Writes Dark Poetry *OR* Hobby +Vampire Lore
- Cool + Resisting Fear
- Empathy + Sensing Despair
- Appeal - Wears a Lot of Black
- Brawn - Sickly
- Empathy -Acts Aloof

Reporter

- Paranoia + Noticing Details
- Trash Talk + Interviewing
- Art - Photos of Monsters are Always Blurry
- Cool - Resisting Threats

Survivalist

- Scouts + Find Food and Water
- Shoot + Archery
- Appeal - Crazy Eyes
- Phys. Ed. - Limp from a Hunting Accident

Motivations

You need to choose one motivation for your character, a goal. It needs to be attainable, but not too easy (i.e., eat breakfast, study for class, breathe, etc.) or too hard (rule the world, kill Cthulhu, etc.). Your motivation will need some adventuring and investigation to resolve. If your motivation can be resolved in a single game session, it's probably too easy.

Samples:

- Gain access to the Necronomicon.
- Make the varsity track team – by whatever means are necessary.
- Earn a good grade in History.
- Discover whether there really are steam tunnels under the school.
- Uncover what kind of meat the Dining Hall has been serving the students.
- Find my missing sister.
- Raise the money I need to buy a rare component.
- Go on a date with that cute Second Year boy/girl.

Acting on your character's motivation may earn you Merit Points (pg. XX), which can temporarily boost skill rolls or quickly recover from wounds. Once you resolve your motivation, you'll also earn Experience Points, which allow you to improve your character (pg. XX) and pick a new motivation. It could be related to your old motivation, (*now that I discovered that Evan banished my sister to another dimension, I'm going to get revenge*) or something completely new.

Other students and faculty have their own motivations, and their motivations may run counter to your student's interests!

Making Your Very Own Student

It's easy to make a character. Just follow these steps:

Step 1: Come up with your character concept. What kind of character would you like to play? A jock that bullies smaller kids, but is really a coward at heart? A science geek? A shy bookworm who worships something that shouldn't be named? Try to boil your idea down to a simple adjective/noun combination, such as "scrawny geek" or "beautiful heiress." Then add one or two personality traits, like "shy" or "class clown" or "teacher's pet." You can always build on your description as you play!

Step 2: Choose a character class: Witch, Mad Scientist, Dreamer, Hybrid, Summoner, or Monday. Note the appropriate Disturbing Skill, if any, for your class. If you are creating a Monday character, follow the instructions under "Mundane Characters" (pg. XX).

Step 3: Choose your skills from the list of Mundane Skills.

- *Appeal*
- *Art*
- *Boffin*
- *Brainiac*
- *Brawn*
- *Cool*
- *Delinquent*
- *Education*
- *Empathy*
- *Family*
- *First aid*
- *Fixer*
- *Hobby*
- *Medieval*
- *Paranoia*
- *Phys. Ed.*
- *Scouts*
- *Shoot*
- *Smackdown*
- *Trash Talk*

From this list, you can select:

- One Grade "A" skill (+4 Modifier).
- Four Grade "B" skills (+2 Modifier).
- Two Grade "D" skills (-2 Modifier). Put a star next to one of these skills. You really suck at this skill and aren't likely to get any better. We'll go into this in more detail in the *Getting Better at Stuff* section (pg. XX).
- All other skills have an average rating of "C" (0 Modifier).

You can place these grades on whichever Mundane Skills fit your character concept. Note that you cannot put these levels on Disturbing Skills! Don't worry if you don't have enough skills to fit your image exactly. You'll be able to improve your character's skills as you earn Experience Points during play.

Note that the Academy embraces a progressive curriculum, and gifted students (those who have an "A" in an academic skill, like Education or Art) will find themselves placed in advanced classes that cater to one or more of their skill Specializations.

Grade "D" skills can also help define your character's appearance or personality. For example, a character with a "D" in Paranoia might need glasses or a hearing aid, while a character with a "D*" in Phys. Ed. might need to wear an orthotic brace.

Step 4: You automatically start with a Grade of "B" in Hobby. You may spend one of your four "B" skills from Step #3 to boost this to an "A."

Step 5: Pick your Specializations (pg. XX). For each Specialized skill with a Grade of "B" or better – including Hobby – pick your Specializations. You get 2 Specializations for a "B" and 4 for an "A."

Step 6: *Disturbing Skills.* Your Eldritch Lore and Character Class Skills begin at Grade "C."

- If you chose to be a Hybrid, you get the Mutation skill. Modify your skills and choose your Trait and your Tell.
- If you chose to be a Summoner, you get the Summoning skill. Design your Servitor and assign its skills.
- If you chose to be a Dreamer, you have the Oneiromancy skill. Note down that you have the Lucid Dreaming and Dreamrider powers.
- If you chose to be a Witch, you have the Witchcraft skill. You can cast spells and begin with your full complement of common components (7).
- If you chose to be a Mad Scientist, you get the Science! skill. You may

"Children are remarkable for their intelligence and ardor, for their curiosity, their intolerance of shams, the clarity and ruthlessness of their vision."

Aldous Huxley

begin the game with one gizmo and its schematic (maximum Innovation Target Number of 7, not including Design Modifiers) but no components. Alternatively, you may choose to begin play without a gizmo and one common component.

- The other four Character Class Skills become lore skills (i.e., you can't use the supernatural aspects of these skills). These skills are Grade "D."

Step 7: *Motivation* (pg. XX). Pick a motivation for your character. If should be achievable during play, but not too easy. As you work towards your motivation, you'll earn Merit Points and Experience Points.

Step 8: *Sanity*. Your starting Sanity score is a 9. Inevitably, this will drop during play, plummeting your character into an abyss of madness. When your Sanity Score runs out, your character is out of the game. So, have fun until then.

Step 9: *Movement rate* (pg. XX). Your base movement rate is equal to 5+ your Phys. Ed. modifier, in yards, per turn.

Step 10: *Initiative*. This is a measure of your reaction speed and determines how quickly you get to act. Your Initiative Modifier (MOD) is equal to the sum of your Paranoia MOD and your Brainiac MOD. The result can be zero or negative.

Step 11: *Starting Merit Points* (pg. XX). Your character begins the game with 3 Merit Points. These can be used for all kinds of nifty things, like getting bonuses on rolls, healing damage, or buying-off Demerits for bad behavior.

Step 12: *Starting Allowance.* Refer to the chart below to determine how much money your parents sent you off to school with. During play, you'll probably need to tap into this to pay for things like spell and gizmo requirements, bribes and black-market purchases.

Step 13: *Starting Year.* Unless the GM says otherwise, your character will begin play at the start of 7th grade as a First Year Student. This would make your character 12 or 13 years old.

Step 14: *Housing* (pg. XX). For the sake of simplicity, it's recommended that players start together in the same dorm, with characters of the same sex assigned as bunkies (roommates). This will give starting characters a reason to hang out together. Player characters with a starting Family Grade of "A" can opt to have a single room. Roll 1d6 to determine the dorm for everyone's character: On a 1-2: Barker Hall, 3-4: -Gust hall, 5-6: Stoker Hall.

Step 15: *Optional*. Create your Bunkie(s) (pg. XX): If your Gamemaster decides to have the players housed in different rooms or dorms, you will need to create your roommates. Your bunkie (or bunkies) are Gamemaster Characters (GMC), controlled by the Gamemaster.

Family Skill Grade	Starting Allowance
A	$1,500
B	$300
C	$100
D	$50

Step 16: *Optional*. Create your Student Mentor (pg. XX). Your mentor is a GMC.

Step 17: *Name*. Choose a name for your student.

Step 18: Pick your character's height and weight. The average height and weight for a twelve or thirteen-year-old is 4'10"-5'1" and 90-100 pounds (boys and girls are roughly the same height and weight in this age range).

Step 19: What did you pack? Decide what kinds of stuff you packed in your trunk when you left home. *Really into sports?* You probably packed your football and favorite jersey. *Don't like to sleep with the lights off?* You're probably not the only kid to bring a favorite stuffed animal. *Practicing Witch?* You might have stashed some occult books in the bottom of your trunk. Let your skills or character concept suggest items you'd pack. If you have a Specialization in music, it would make sense to bring a musical instrument. If you envision your character as a journalist-in-training, you might want to pack a camera and a recording device.

If you forget to pack something, you're going to have to find it, buy it, or steal it during play. And just be aware: The staff checks all the students' belongings when they're delivered. *You're not going to be able to smuggle weapons or illegal goods onto the campus this way, so don't even try it.*

Other Questions

To round-out your character's background and personality, try to answer the following questions. Your skills may provide some guidance.

- Where does your character's family live? What is their home like?
- What do your character's parents do for a living?
- Does your character have any brothers or sisters? Did they attend the Academy?
- What would your character receive for their birthday?
- Is your character messy or neat?
- Is your character loud and outgoing, or shy and reserved?
- What kinds of music does your character like?
- What are your character's favorite subjects in school?
- What does your character think about the supernatural?

Stuck on a Name for Your Character?

Here's a list of common first names from the period when Lovecraft was writing:

Male: Alexander, Chester, Elmer, Floyd, George, Henry, Lawrence, Nathaniel, Oscar, Theodore, Victor, Vincent.

Female: Carrie, Clara, Cora, Doris, Eva, Faye, Josephine, Margaret, Maxine, Rosemary, Velma, Winifred

"C is for CLARA who wasted away

D is for DESMOND thrown out of a sleigh"

Edward Gorey, "The Gashlycrumb Tinies"

"The Friday before winter break, my mom packed me an overnight bag and a few deadly weapons and took me to a new boarding school."

Rick Riordan, "The Titan's Curse"

"Monday" Students

But What If I Just Want to Play a Normal Kid?

As we mentioned before, the students who have supernatural abilities often refer to the normal kids as "Mondays," a corruption of the word "mundane." Supernatural abilities can be very powerful, but they have some significant drawbacks, as well. Mondays make up for their lack of supernatural abilities with superior skills and abilities that can make a substantial difference in their day-to-day lives at the school.

For players who would rather play a relatively normal kid, we present to you . . .

The Child Prodigy

You have a remarkable skill and could emerge as a world-renowned expert in the field. You could be a music maestro, a math genius, be an exceptional beauty or a future all-star athlete. And the Academy could help you become great.

To create your Child Prodigy, follow the character creation steps with the following adjustments:

Step 3: Select an additional Grade "A" skill (for a total of two) to be your area of mastery. Choose your prodigy skill from the following list:

- Appeal
- Art
- Education
- Hobby
- Phys. Ed.

Circle the selected skill on your character sheet so you'll remember which one is your prodigy skill!

Step 6: Your Eldritch Lore skill begins at Grade "C." You don't get a Character Class Skill – but that's what you wanted, right? All the Character Class Skills become lore skills (i.e., you can't use the supernatural aspects of these skills). All 5 Character Class Skills are Grade "D."

Step 8: Your Sanity begins at 10 instead of 9 because you haven't been exposed to as much weird stuff.

Additional Rules:

- Due to your character's prodigious skill, you may enter the Academy at a younger age. Your character may begin the game at age 10 or 11, instead or 12 or 13.
- You may improve your prodigy skill to the level of MASTER! It costs 25XP (see *Getting Better at Stuff on pg. XX*) to improve the skill from FACULTY to MASTER. You're almost certainly going to

be getting private instruction and a lot of students will be clamoring for you to be their tutor!

- When applicable, you may use your prodigy skill to give you an Upshift with a *related* skill roll. You'll need to justify the use of your prodigy skill to your GM, and they will have the final say as to whether the prodigy skill applies. For example, if you're trying to win the affections of another student, and you're an Art (Music) prodigy, you could gain an Upshift to your Appeal roll if you compose and play a musical piece for the object of your affections! Likewise, if you're an Education (Biology) prodigy, and your class has been given an assignment to debate the merits of evolution, you could rely on your skill in the subject matter to gain an Upshift on your Trash Talk roll, and utterly destroy your opponent with your complete knowledge of the facts. However, an Art (Music) prodigy would have a very hard time justifying the use of their prodigy skill in a debate on the merits of evolution!
- The school may require your participation at events to display your talent, such as an exclusive concert for wealthy alumni or mandatory participation on one of the sports teams.

The Trustie (Rich Kid)

Some kids are born with a silver spoon in their mouth. Yours was 24 karat gold. Your family is old money, and you learned a long time ago that old money commands respect. You've vacationed in exotic locales, hobnobbed with the rich and famous, dined on gourmet meals, and you've never done a day of manual labor in your life. Over the years, you've learned to avoid sycophants and opportunists who would try to gain your confidence, but you must be ever-vigilant of the consequences of your actions and their impact on your family's reputation.

Why aren't you living in King Hall? Maybe your parents' personal assistant misplaced the form or Daddy decided that you needed to "rough it." Regardless, you may elect to live in one of the highly-coveted single rooms and your furnishings are newer and of a better quality that most of your dorm mates'.

To create a Trustie character, follow the character creation steps with the following adjustments:

Step 3: You automatically begin the game with a Family Grade of "A." This is in addition to the one Grade "A" skill you select during character creation, for a total of two.

Step 6: Your Eldritch Lore skill begins at Grade "C." All five of the Character Class Skills become lore skills with a starting Grade of "D." You do not gain any Disturbing Abilities.

Step 8: While you might live in a big, creepy mansion, you haven't seen a lot of weirdness. Even if you did, you would've let the security guards deal with it. Your Sanity begins at 10 instead of 9.

Additional Rules:

- You may improve your Family skill to MASTER! At MASTER level, you receive $2,500 a week in allowance. It costs 25XP (see *Getting Better at Stuff on pg. XX*) to improve the skill from FACULTY to MASTER.

- When applicable, you may use your Family skill to give you an Upshift on a *related* Skill Test. This only works with Social skills (like Appeal and Fixer), and you'll need to justify the use of the skill to your GM. For example, if you're insulting a *rider* (a kid who's receiving financial aid to attend the Academy), you could gain a bonus to your Trash Talk skill by flaunting your social status. If you were trying to ask someone out on a date, you could try to impress them with your designer clothes, possibly gaining an Upshift on the test.
- At the GM's discretion, your wealth may grant some minor perks, such as having a horse stabled at the school, an offer to dine with the Headmaster, etc.
- Because of your family's reputation and their possible connections to the school, you are expected to be on your best behavior at all times. Once your character has a Demerit score of one (1) or more, you automatically suffer a Downshift on all social interactions with the administration and faculty. Once your Demerit score is 7 or more, you suffer two (2) Downshifts!

Optional: Luck Points

Let's face it, the odds are stacked against your character. Students are weaker than adults, have limited access to weapons, and are considered a delicacy by monsters. To even the score a bit, your GM may introduce Luck Points. Luck Points are only available to player characters, and they can be a powerful tool when used effectively.

- After the dice have been rolled, you may burn one Luck Point to do one of the following:
- Pick up and turn one of your dice to any other value.
- Pick up and turn one of your enemy's dice to any other value.
- Erase all damage taken from one attack, either mental or physical, before it applies to your character (i.e., before you start checking-off damage boxes).

You can't lend a Luck Point to a friend – it only applies to Skill Tests made by your character, actions or attacks made against your character, or damage your character has suffered.

Example: If you rolled a 1 and a 6, you could burn one of your Luck Points to turn the 1 into a 6 – giving you a total of 12! Likewise, if an enemy was targeting you with a spell, and they rolled a 2 and a 5, you could turn the 5 into another 2 – forcing them to fail the spell and suffer magical backlash! (It sucks for them, trust me.)

Your character only has a limited number of Luck Points, and once you've used them, they're gone forever. At the completion of a major story arc, your GM *may* reward you with 1 Luck Point, up to your maximum, if you ask nicely.

Disturbing character types (Witches, Dreamers, Hybrids, etc.) begin with 2 Luck Points and can have a maximum of 3.

"Monday" characters begin with 3 Luck Points and can have a maximum of 4.

Let's Design a Character!

Megan wants to create a character for the game.

Step 1: Megan wants to play a smart, gutsy, techno-geek. This will provide a good guideline when selecting her character class and skills.

Step 2: Now, Megan must choose a character class. She decides that a Mad Scientist is a no-brainer for a techno-geek. As a Mad Scientist, her character's Disturbing Skill will be Science!.

Step 3: Now, we must assign Mundane Skills. This is probably the trickiest part, mostly because there are so many options. She will need to assign 1 "A," 4 "B," and 2 "D" skills to her character. She narrows the list of skills she'd like to start with to Boffin (a natural skill for a techie), Brainiac, Cool (the character she's envisioning wouldn't scare easily), Education (for the science skills), and Paranoia (Megan thinks she'd have a good eye for detail).

She'd love to put the "A" on Science!, but that's a Disturbing Skill and she can only assign these Skill Grades to Mundane Skills. She decides to put the "A" on Education (giving her a bunch of Specializations). She'd like to have an "A" in Brainiac, too, but she only gets one to start. She figures she can assign a "B" to Brainiac now and improve it during the game. She also assigns a "B" to Boffin, Cool, and Paranoia.

Megan also must assign a "D" to two skills. She assigns one to Art, reasoning that her character would be more interested in a motor than a painting. She thinks about assigning the other "D" to Medieval but likes the idea of seeing this character smack someone upside the head with a wrench. She settles on Scouts, figuring that this character hates the idea of camping or "roughing it," and is much more comfortable in a lab.

Now she must decide which of these two skills her character is really awful at. She doesn't think her character actively hates the arts; they just don't interest her. On the other hand, she figures that her character's interest in nature is purely academic; she doesn't want to experience it in person. And the idea of having to pee in the woods grosses her out. She puts a star next to Scouts, indicating that she's terrible at this skill.

All the other Mundane Skills are Grade "C."

Step 4: Megan gets the Hobby skill for free at Grade "B."

Step 5: Megan has 2 Specialization skills with a Grade of "B" or better: Education and Hobby, so she needs to pick her Specializations.

She gets to choose 4 Specializations for Education, because she has an "A" in the skill. This is easy – Megan wants science skills and lots of them. She chooses Biology, Chemistry, Calculus, and Physics.

Now, she can select 2 Specializations for Hobby, because she has a "B" in the skill. She'd like to choose "hacking," but that's covered by the Boffin skill. She thinks that rare and exotic animals might intrigue her character, particularly animals with interesting or unique defensive mechanisms (*did you know that platypuses are venomous?*). She writes "Exotic Animals" on her character sheet. However, the GM warns her that this skill won't cover monsters – they're not normal animals.

For her second Hobby skill, Megan thinks her character would be good at playing pool. After all, it's all physics and angles! She writes "Pool" on her character sheet.

Step 6: Megan's character starts the game with a "C" in Eldritch Lore. Since her character is a Mad Scientist, Megan notes that she also has a "C" in Science!. All the other Disturbing Skills (Summoning, Witchcraft, Mutation, and Oneiromancy) become Lore Skills with a Grade of "D."

Now, she can pick a gizmo from the list starting on page XX, design her own gizmo, or start the game without a gizmo. If she chooses the third option, she'll have a common component, so she can create a gizmo during the game. Megan looks through the list and chooses to start the game with a Continuum Nexus Stability Scope. She notes the gizmo's effects on her character sheet.

Megan rolls 1d6 for the number of charges. She gets a 4, noting that her Continuum Nexus Stability Scope starts with 4 charges.

Step 7: Megan needs to pick a Motivation for her character. She decides that her character is in awe of Dr. Tillinghast's genius and would like to work alongside him and assist with his research. The GM thinks about this. The character's skill levels are high enough, and Dr. Tillinghast is very hard to impress. Megan's character is going to have to work hard to impress him if she hopes to become a lab assistant.

Step 8: The character's starting Sanity Score is 9.

Step 9: The character's movement rate is 5+ their Phys. Ed. modifier, in yards, per turn. Since this character has a "C" in Phys. Ed., there is no modifier. Her movement rate is 5 yards per turn.

Step 10: The character's Initiative MOD is equal to the sum of the modifiers of her Paranoia skill and Brainiac skill. She has a "B" in both, which means her modifier is +2 for each. The character's Initiative MOD is +4. She may not run very fast, but she's got fast reflexes!

Step 11: Megan writes on her character sheet that she begins with 3 Merit Points.

Step 12: The character has a "C" in the Family skill, so her starting allowance is $100.

Step 13: This is a new character, so she is a First Year student. Megan decides that she would like her to be 12 years old.

Step 14: The GM hasn't assigned a dorm to the players, so Megan rolls and gets a 2: Her character will be assigned to creepy Barker Hall. Since she doesn't have an "A" in Family, she knows she's going to have a roommate.

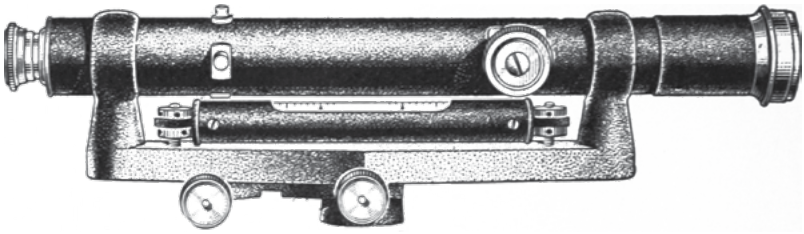
Steps 15 and 16 are optional. With an evil grin, the GM informs Megan that she's going to design a roommate for her, and she'll introduce the GMC when the game begins. Megan is a little worried about that grin. Something tells her that the GM has something "special" in mind.

Step 17: Megan already has a name picked out: Kelly Harper. She writes it at the top of her character sheet.

Step 18: Megan must decide on her character's height and weight. Kelly isn't particularly athletic ("C" in Phys. Ed.) or muscular ("C" in Brawn). However, Megan sees her as a bit taller than average for her age – maybe 5' 3" – and a bit on the thin side – about 90 pounds.

Step 19: What would Kelly Harper bring to school? Megan is amused by the idea that Kelly would sleep with a stuffed doll of Albert Einstein and writes that down. She would also bring her personal microscope from home (since she might need it for experiments in her room). Looking at her hobbies, Megan doesn't think that Kelly would own her own pool cue, but she might bring a couple of reference books on rare animals. She writes "Venomous Animals of Australia, Volumes 1 and 2," "Predators of the South American Rainforest," and "Endangered and Extinct Species" on her character sheet.

Now, Megan must give some details about her character's background and Kelly Harper will be ready to play!



Megan's Scan-Continuum Nexus Stability Scope (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 7

Disabled Damage ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

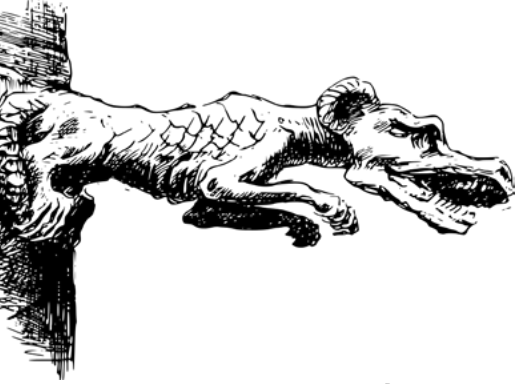
Destroyed Damage ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Bonus MOD: 1 Upshift to Paranoia (to spot dimensional rifts)

Range: Up to 500 feet

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: None



3

SKILLS AND TASKS

Skill Grades

Every skill has a Grade, which indicates increasing proficiency. From highest to lowest, the Skill Grades available to characters are:

FACULTY (+6) **A** (+4) **B** (+2) **C** (+0) **D** (-2)

It's just like being back in school – an "A" is better than a "B," and so on. Any skill in which your character doesn't have any training is considered Average, or "C." Although your character may not have any background as a medic, there's always a chance you can successfully administer first aid. The FACULTY Grade is, not surprisingly, reserved for your professors and the Academy staff . . . at least initially. If you survive long enough and study hard, you'll also be able to achieve the coveted Grade of FACULTY! Very few humans will have a skill of Master, and nothing remotely human will have a skill higher than that.

The number to the right of each Skill Grade indicates the Modifier (MOD) for that Skill Grade. When your character tries to do something, the modifier for your skill is added to or subtracted from a roll of two six-sided dice (2d6 in Gamer Speak).

Master Skill Chart

Grade	MOD	Description	Difficulty Level	Target #
ELDER	6 + 3d6	Cosmic	When Hell Freezes Over	31
INHUMAN	6 + 2d6	Legendary	Superhuman	25
MASTER	6 + 1d6	One of the Best in the World	Heroic	19
FACULTY	+6	Expert/Substantial Skill/Powerful	Next to Impossible/ Up the Creek	13
A	+4	Exceptional/Skilled/ Talented	Difficult	11
B	+2	Good/Proficient/ Initiated	Tricky	9
C	+0	Average	Typical	7
D	-2	Sub-Par/Novice	Easy	5
F	-4	Incompetent/Sucky	Could do it Blindfolded	3
WASHOUT	N/A	Completely Incapable	Automatic	0

Sometimes Average = +1

Most of the time, the modifier for Grade "C" will be +0, but when using certain Disturbing Abilities (such as the *Afflict* spell or the *Natural Weapons* Trait), or light armor or weapons, the modifier is treated as +1, instead. These tools and abilities grant a marginal advantage to the user. Sure, a wooden dowel isn't as useful as a baseball bat in a fight, but if that's all you've got, it's better than nothing. The appropriate modifiers are listed in each section, but for now, just remember that *unless we're dealing with weaponry, armor, or Disturbing Skills, Average = +0.*

Target Numbers and Rolling Dice

When your character tries to accomplish an action that has a chance of failure, you will roll two six-sided dice (2d6) against a Target Number. This is referred to as a Skill Test. The Target Number will either be determined by the difficulty of the attempted action (a Pass/Fail Test) or the results of an opponent's skill roll (a Contested Skill Test). On the Master Skill Chart, sample Difficulty levels and their Target Numbers are listed. An easy task for an average student at the Academy has a Target Number of 5 while a virtually impossible task for an average student has a Target Number of 13. A task that would be inconceivable for anything other than an alien entity from beyond time and space would have a Target Number of 31.

Once the Target Number has been determined, you roll 2d6, add the results together, add or subtract your character's Skill Grade MOD and any other applicable modifiers. If the result – referred to as the *Skill Total* – is equal to or higher than the Target Number, you succeed.

Task Resolution is covered in detail beginning on page XX.

Modifiers: Upshifts and Downshifts

What about the Grades above FACULTY and Below "D?"

Although your character cannot have a Skill Grade as low as "F" or as high as MASTER, other factors can modify your character's performance, temporarily increasing or decreasing your ability to succeed. These modifiers are categorized as either Upshifts or Downshifts.

Upshifts

Upshifts reflect beneficial circumstances that can aid you in succeeding at your task. Whether this is due to luck, favorable environmental conditions, superior planning, or good equipment, one Upshift means that for a particular action, you roll as if your Skill Grade were one level higher (moving up one row on the Master Skill Chart).

1 Upshift = Temporarily Increase Your Skill by 1 Grade

Example: Let's say you are trying to sneak by a campus security guard in the fog. The guard is pretty good, so the Gamemaster decides that this will be a Difficult Delinquent Skill Test. The Target Number for a Difficult task is 11. With a Skill Grade of "B" in Delinquent, you'd roll 2d6 and add your modifier of +2, meaning you'd need to roll a 9 or better to succeed. Because it's foggy, the Gamemaster grants you an Upshift, increasing your skill from "B" to "A" for this action. Now, you're rolling 2d6 with a modifier of +4 against the same target number, so you'd only need a 7 or better to succeed. (In this case, the guard wasn't actively looking for sneaky students, so the GM opted to use a Pass/Fail test instead of a Contested Skill Test. We'll go into the differences beginning on pg. XX)

Although students cannot attain the Grade of MASTER or INHUMAN they may receive temporary, situational Upshifts to their skills that allow them to roll as though they possessed one of these Grades . . . if only for a moment. At Grades of MASTER or above, you add a modifier of +6 and add a number of *bonus dice* to your roll. At a Grade of INHUMAN, for example, you would roll 2d6 (standard) +6 plus another 2d6 for a total of 4d6+6!

Example: If you had a Skill Grade of "A" and earned two Upshifts to your roll, you'd be rolling as though you had a skill of MASTER. You'd roll your normal 2d6 and add another six-sided die +6. The result: you roll three six-sided dice (3d6) and add 6 to the total, giving you a range of results from 9 to 24.

Upshift Limits

A couple of modifiers aren't going to give you godlike abilities. You're still (mostly) human, after all. When dealing with non-Mythos creatures (and that includes students) the maximum Upshift for Mundane Skills is MASTER. Any additional Upshifts that would take you above MASTER are ignored. If you're performing in a concert, you might give the performance of your lifetime, but it won't be supernaturally good.

If you're using Disturbing Skills, the maximum becomes INHUMAN. If you use a Disturbing Skill to boost your strength, for example, it can't go any higher than INHUMAN.

Upshift Limit for Mundane Skills = MASTER

Upshift Limit for Disturbing Skills = INHUMAN

Don't worry about the "extra" Upshifts, though. They're still useful in offsetting Downshifts!

Downshifts

Distractions, faulty or missing equipment, injury, and other adverse circumstances can all contribute to making a task much harder – if not impossible. One Downshift means that for the action in question, you roll as if your skill were one Grade lower (moving down one row on the Master Skill Chart).

1 Downshift = Temporarily Decrease Your Skill by 1 Grade

Shift Accumulation

Note that Upshifts and Downshifts are cumulative. If you have a Grade "B" in a skill, earn 2 Upshifts and a Downshift, your net total is one Upshift (the second Upshift and the Downshift cancel each other out), and your skill is temporarily treated as though it were Grade "A." In this way, you could temporarily have a Skill Grade of MASTER or higher.

Example: Let's say that you have a Grade of "B" in Shoot and you're trying to plug a ghoul at extreme range with your weapon. To complicate matters, the ghoul is crouching behind a hedge. That's 2 Downshifts: One for the range and one for cover. That would drop your effective skill from a "B" to a "D." If you have time to aim, you could gain an Upshift and raise your skill to a "C." Still not great, but it's better than a "D."

Automatic Failure

Downshifting to WASHOUT is an automatic failure. You simply don't have the ability to complete the task at hand given the circumstances. Either outside factors have made the task far too difficult, or you are simply too injured or incapable of performing the action. As a result, you don't even get to roll a stinking 2d6 – your Skill Total is effectively ZERO. Barring the use of Merit Points (pg. XX) to boost your ability, you can either try again when you are better prepared or let someone else take a crack at it.

Sample Upshifts/Downshifts

Your Gamemaster will assign situational modifiers, but players are free to make suggestions. Some common modifiers are in the chart below.

Situation	Modifier
Injury/Disease	1-2 Downshifts (depending upon severity)
Insanity/Personality Quirk	1 Downshift (as appropriate)
Distracted or Tired	1 Downshift
Surprised	1 Downshift (to Defend or Resist) for 1 Turn
Target Prone (Ranged Attack)	1 Downshift to Attack
Target Prone (Hand-to-Hand Attack)	1 Downshift to Defend
Large Target	1 Upshift
Tiny Target	1 Downshift
Poor Visibility	1 Downshift
Extremely Bad Visibility/Darkness	2 Downshifts
Bad Terrain	1 Downshift
Near Range	1 Upshift
Extreme Range or Maximum Range	1 Downshift
Aiming	1 Upshift
Trying to Disarm Target	1 Downshift
Target is Partially Under Cover	1 Downshift
Target is Taking a Full-Move Action	1 Downshift
Wearing Heavy/Superheavy Armor	1 Downshift
Wearing Junked Armor	1 Downshift
Lacking Necessary Tools/Equipment	1-2 Downshifts (if it can be attempted at all)
Possess Useful (but not required) Tools/Equipment	1 Upshift
Target Has an Advantage/Leverage Over You	1 Downshift
You Have an Advantage/Leverage Over Your Target	1 Upshift
Expenditure of Merit Points	1 or More Upshifts
Player has Come Up with a Very Clever/Amusing Plan	1 Upshift

Use your best judgment when assigning modifiers. "Cover" probably isn't relevant if you're talking to someone. And "Bad Terrain" is more of a detriment if you're trying to run away from a monster than if you're trying to shoot an airborne creature. On the other hand, if the monster you were trying to shoot was running across bad terrain, that would be totally different.

Optional: Ballparking Modifiers

Assigning modifiers shouldn't turn into an exercise in accounting. If the list of modifiers begins adding up, you're probably getting too detailed. Remember, Upshifts and Downshifts just cancel each other out anyway. If you want to play fast and loose with the rules, just use these guidelines:

- Player has an overall advantage: 1 Upshift
- Odds are stacked heavily in the player's favor: 2 Upshifts
- Player is at an overall disadvantage: 1 Downshift
- Player is royally screwed: 2 Downshifts

Task Resolution

There are two methods for determining whether your character succeeds at a task: Pass/Fail and Contested Skill Tests. You'll make a Pass/Fail test when your character is trying to complete a task against a set Difficulty; either you pass, or you fail. You'll make a Contested Skill Test when you are competing against someone or something. Contested Skill Tests also apply to resolving combat. When your character tries to perform an action, the GM will determine the best resolution method for the situation.

Pass/Fail Tests

Usually, you only need to know whether your character succeeds at whatever they're trying. It's just your character against the universe; no one is acting against them or trying to stop them.

Rules for Pass/Fail Tests

- You are not competing against an opponent.
- The Target Number is determined by the Difficulty of the task (the rightmost columns of the Master Skill Chart).
- There is a chance of failure.
- To succeed, you must tie or beat the Target Number.

Examples include:

- Taking a test.
- Noticing a clue.
- Hacking a computer network.
- Picking a lock.

When your GM calls for a Pass/Fail Skill Test, she will let you know the Target Number (based on the Difficulty of the task) and the skill that will resolve the test. You'll roll 2d6, add or subtract the Modifier for the relevant Skill Grade, and apply any Upshifts or Downshifts due to situational conditions. If your Skill Total

This Doesn't Look Like the PDQ System!

During the development of the game, we took some liberties with the core PDQ system and the resulting system diverged a bit. The new subsystems and options added another layer of complexity, but the original system is still here. Here are some of the changes:

Qualities: This is the biggest change from the core PDQ rules. Instead of allowing players to design their talents and skills, we opted for a pre-determined skill list that reflected the "sandbox" setting of the game. This leveled the playing field a bit and hindered players from making functionally impractical or hyper-specialized characters with overlapping qualities. If you prefer to use PDQ Qualities, you can use the skill list as a guide to practical physical, mental, and social qualities.

Damage: This is the second-biggest change. In the PDQ system, as you take damage, your Qualities downshift on a point-for-Rank/Grade basis until one of them zeroes-out (the equivalent of WASHOUT). Given that this is a Mythos-inspired game, we felt that it was important to track mental trauma separately from physical damage, so we instituted wound tracks, instead. The tracks also help players to visualize their health levels and apply penalties accordingly. If you prefer to use the PDQ system, simply note whether the final source of damage was physical or mental and send the incapacitated character to either the infirmary or Arkham for a bit of quiet time. Super-scale damage (from *Truth and Justice*) isn't used, although you could add it in for very powerful non-human entities.

Hero Points: Hero points became Merit Points, which are reduced by Demerits on a one-to-one basis.

Skill Levels: We added a Grade of "F" (-4), but otherwise this didn't really change. In PDQ, Qualities range from Poor (-2) to Master (+6). Instead of the descriptive terms, we assigned a grade value. Just assume that a grade of "C" is equal to "Average" in PDQ.

PDQ Master Chart: The chart has been expanded to encompass the effects of Disturbing Skills and extended to handle the vast abilities of non-human entities. Since Downshifts and Upshifts play such a critical role in this iteration of the rules, a Grade of "F" was added to provide an additional buffer when Downshifting and limits were placed on Upshifts.

Weapons and Armor: These were considered to be Qualities unto themselves in PDQ. You can either convert them back to Qualities (using the Grade as a guide) or use the rules as written and bolt them onto the PDQ system.

Disturbing Skills: These are treated like "Magic-Star" Qualities in *Zorcerer of Zo*. The GM and the player work together to determine the effect of the spell, the limits of the spell, and the price it exacts. Failing a Magic-Star roll usually results in something unexpected.

Insanity: There isn't a system for this in the base PDQ rules, although insanities may be taken as Qualities or they may be treated as Vulnerabilities (from *Truth and Justice*). Optionally, you can use the rules as-is and add them to the PDQ system.

equals or exceeds the Difficulty, you pass. If your Skill Total is lower, you fail. If this sounds like a bit of a review, it's because most of the examples we've included thus far have used Pass/Fail resolution!

Example: You've decided that you'd like to climb a stone wall. Since no one's trying to stop you, the GM decides that this requires a Pass/Fail test. The wall is moderately high, but not sheer, so your GM sets the Target Number at Typical (7). However, it's been raining, so the GM gives you a Downshift because the wall is slick. Since climbing is covered under Phys. Ed., the GM asks for a Phys. Ed. test (in which you have a Skill Grade of "B"). Normally, you roll 2d6 and add your +2 modifier for having a "B." Since you have a Downshift, however, your effective skill is now a "C" with a modifier of 0. You roll a 4 and a 4, giving you a Skill Total of 8, which is enough to beat the Target Number of 7 and you scamper over the wall.

Example 2: Having mastered a stone wall, you get the bright idea that you'd like to climb a 200-foot cliff (Difficult) in icy, blustery conditions with improvised climbing equipment, so your GM assigns a Target Number of 11 with 3 Downshifts (equipment, ice, wind). Again, your GM asks for a Phys. Ed. test. Three Downshifts put your effective Phys. Ed. skill at "F," however. With a modifier of -4, the best Skill Total you could achieve is an 8. You might want to come back when the conditions are less hazardous. If only there was some method of improving your chances, like some kind of pool of bonus points that you could dip into . . .

As you can see, sometimes you simply cannot succeed at certain tasks without a good deal of skill, help from others (see below), advanced planning and prepping, or the expenditure of Merit Points (pg. XX). Merit Points are earned for being a good student, an exemplary citizen of the Academy, and for roleplaying your character's Motivation. Merit Points have many uses and can be spent to gain one or more Upshifts on your roll.

When NOT to Roll

Obviously, you won't need to roll for *everything* your character attempts. We're going to assume that they can perform common, everyday actions, such as eating lunch, opening an unlocked door, dressing themselves, or chewing gum and walking at the same time. If your character trips while running to class and they're unlikely to hurt themselves and no one is around to tease them about it, what does it matter? If there's no chance of failure or failing just doesn't matter, you can skip the roll. Save it for important stuff.

Pass/Fail Resolution without Rolling

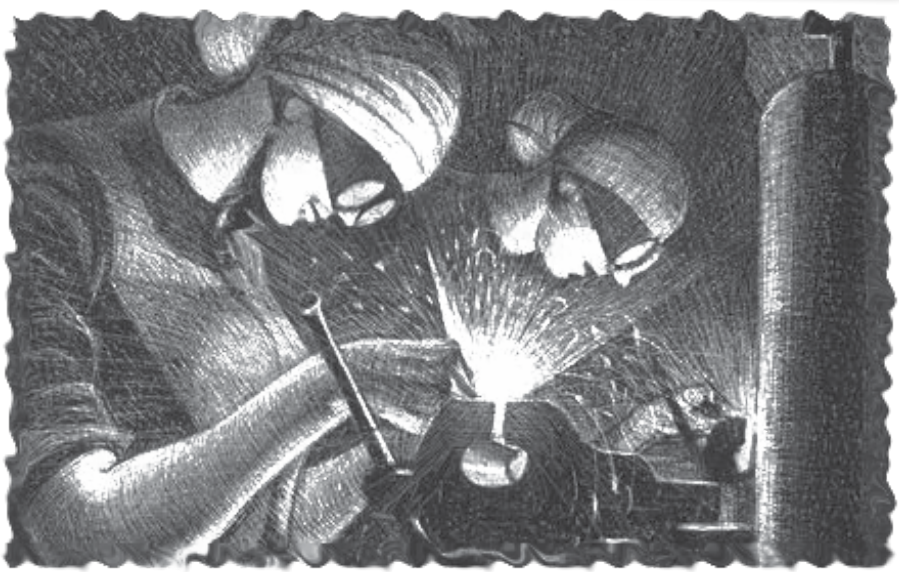
Sometimes, dice rolling can really bog down the game, especially when the results are blatantly obvious. If a player wants to do something that is clearly impossible, say building a jet engine out of the twigs, rocks, and dead leaves they found in the forest, then don't bother setting a Difficulty or asking them to roll. *It ain't gonna happen (and "they did it on Gilligan's Island" is not a valid argument).*

More reasonable Pass/Fail tests can be resolved without needing to roll, as

Fixing Stuff

If you've got the Boffin skill, rest assured that you're going to get a panicky call when someone's computer goes on the fritz. Make a Pass/Fail Boffin Skill Test against the complexity of the device. Simple repairs or adjustments, like updating software, merit an Upshift on your test. Major repairs and rebuilds will get you a Downshift on the Skill Test, if the device can be repaired at all. If you fail the Skill Test, but the Margin of Failure (pg. XX) was low, your GM might decide that you partially fixed the problem. Further repairs will be needed in the future, but the device is somewhat functional for the time being.

Grade	Target #	Complexity
FACULTY	13	Cutting Edge and Beyond (Hadron Collider, artificial intelligence)
A	11	High Tech (Electron Microscope, MRI, Aircraft)
B	9	Technical/
Complicated (car, computer)		
C	7	Common (household appliances)
D	5	Simple



well. If the task is clear-cut, there are no outstanding issues interfering with the attempted action, and your character's Skill Grade is equal to or higher than the Difficulty set by the GM, the GM can simply declare that you pass the check. If your Skill Grade is lower, you'll need to roll as usual.

Example: A teacher assigns a tough math problem, which the GM decides is a Tricky task (the equivalent of a "B"). The GM calls for an Education Skill Test. Conveniently, your character has an "A" in Education with a Specialization in Math. Since your grade is higher, you can solve this problem, easy-peasy.

Example 2: If another character with an Education skill of "C" tried to solve the same problem, it would require a Pass/Fail test because Grade "C" is lower than Tricky (the equivalent of a "B").

You will always need to roll when resolving the use of Disturbing Skills, such as Science! and Mutation. Supernatural abilities are anything but predictable and failures can result in unpleasant side-effects.

Contested Skill Tests

Contested actions arise when someone (or something) is actively working against you, whether they're trying to prevent you from accomplishing your goals, or vice versa. The most obvious example of a Contested situation is combat, but there are also mental and social contests (like the Science Olympiad or flirting).

Rules for Contested Skill Tests

- You are pitted against an opponent or an opponent is attempting to interfere with your action.
- The Target Number is randomly determined by your opponent's skill.
- There is a chance of failure.
- To succeed, you must *beat* your opponent's Skill Total. If your Skill Totals are equal, you tie.

Examples include:

- Negotiating a better grade with a professor who doesn't like you
- Asking someone to attend the formal dance
- Trying to out-run a rampaging horror from beyond time and space

Asking someone on a date is a good example of a Contested Skill Test. Your success will depend upon when you ask, how they feel at the time, and whether they like you or not (see the section on Social Interaction). The difficulty of getting a "yes" will vary from person-to-person. Assuming they're on the fence about going with you (or don't particularly like you, which would merit a Downshift or two), you'll need to convince your potential date that you'd be a good choice and they would have fun. Of course, if the other person likes you and is waiting for you to ask, you wouldn't need to roll at all.

What Skill Should I Use?

When you declare your action, the GM will request a Skill Test using the most appropriate skill. If it's a game of dodgeball, it's Phys. Ed. If it's a spelling bee, it's Education. Some other examples are below.

The skills are broad in scope and, sometimes, you might want to use a different skill than the one your GM requests. In an arm-wrestling competition, for example,

Situation	Action	Response
Arm Wrestling	Brawn	Brawn
Palming an Item	Delinquent	Paranoia
Hiding	Delinquent	Paranoia
Playing Poker	Paranoia, Brainiac (to count cards), or Hobby (Gambling)	Paranoia, Cool (to bluff), or Hobby (Gambling)
Cheating at Poker	Delinquent, or Hobby (Gambling)	Paranoia or Hobby (Gambling)
Tying Someone Up	Scouts	Delinquent
Dance-Off	Art	Art
Trying to Tell if Someone is Lying	Empathy	Trash Talk
Asking Someone on a Date	Appeal	Cool
Negotiating a Deal	Fixer or Trash Talk	Fixer or Trash Talk

you might want to use Phys. Ed. instead of Brawn, even though Brawn is the most appropriate skill. If you can make a good case for using a different skill, your GM might let you get away with it, but at a Downshift or two. As always, the GM has the final say.

Determining Success or Failure in a Contested Action

Contests are like Pass/Fail tests, except that the Target Number is a variable number, based on your opponent's ability. A highly-skilled opponent is going to pose a greater challenge than an unskilled one.

Each character makes a Contested Skill Test using the most applicable skill as determined by the GM. The characters roll 2d6 and add the appropriate Modifier for the skill they're using, plus any modifiers assigned by the GM. If one of the characters is a Gamemaster Character (GMC), the GM rolls for them. The character with the highest Skill Total wins. The same rules apply whether the nature of the Contest is physical, mental, social, or combat (pg. XX).

CONTESTED SKILL TEST

(Character's 2d6 + Modifiers) vs. (Opponent's 2d6 + Modifiers)

Example: Your character is competing in a track meet against a Gamemaster Character. The GM decides that the relevant skill is Phys. Ed. You have a Phys. Ed. Grade of "B" and the GMC has a "C." If your Skill Total was 10 and theirs was 7, you'd beat them to the finish line. Of course, we could have asked you to roll for each hurdle and lap of the race, but that seems like of lot of unnecessary rolling.

Don't forget, if a character's Skill Grade has been Downshifted to WASHOUT for any reason, they are no longer capable of making a Skill Test using that skill. They can still take actions that don't require

them to roll, but their Skill Total is effectively ZERO – no rolling and no adding. Barring the use of a different skill, they automatically fail unless they are willing to spend Merit Points to gain an Upshift or two.

Washout = Automatic Failure

Example: Let's say a third charac*ter was competing in the meet – but they fell and hurt themselves badly. As a result, they've been Downshifted to WASHOUT. Assuming they don't have any Merit Points to spend, their Phys. Ed. Skill Total is ZERO. They can hobble slowly to the finish line (since that doesn't require a Skill Test), but they finish a distant third place.*

Social Interaction

Eventually, your character is going to need the help of a fellow student, professor, or a member of the administration. If your character doesn't have the power to bend lesser minds to their will, they're going to have to rely on their social skills.

While Appeal, Trash Talk, and Fixer are important social skills, having a good Skill Grade isn't a guarantee that a GMC will jump to attention whenever you need something – particularly if they don't like you – or you're asking for something that could put them in danger. Very few individuals will rush to certain doom for people they hate. At least, not without getting something seriously big in exchange.

When interacting with GMCs, you need to keep two things in mind: Whether they like you and whether they trust you. The two aren't mutually exclusive: a bad guy may have a reputation for keeping their word, and you might have a friend to whom you'd never lend money in a million years.

These modifiers are cumulative. If you're desperate (or stupid) enough to ask an enemy to do something dangerous, you're staring down the barrel of 2 Downshifts. Three, if you're known for backing out of deals.

If your Skill Test is successful, the GMC will agree to your request, but there may be a price, especially if the GMCs need to put themselves at risk to help you. This could be a favor, an object, or money (also known as a bribe). The bigger and riskier the request, the more it's going to cost you. A friendly GMC may not ask for anything when doing you a favor, but they might expect a favor in the future. An enemy, if they agree to help you, will almost certainly request something in exchange. Instead of taking the high road, you could try to extort the GMC's aid if you have some dirt on them, but they're not going to appreciate it and you'll probably make an enemy.

GMC Disposition	Modifier
Likes you	1 Upshift
Hates you	1 Downshift
What you're asking is risky or dangerous	1 Downshift (or more)
What you're asking will benefit the GMC	1Upshift
You have a reputation for being trustworthy	1 Upshift
You have a reputation for being dishonest	1 Downshift

"Success is a relative thing - and the victory of a boy at marbles is equal to the victory of an Octavius at Actium when measured by the scale of cosmic infinity."

H.P. Lovecraft

If you fail the Skill Test, the GMC will refuse your request. A friendly GMC might want to help but may not have the time or ability to do so. An enemy, however, might decide to take advantage of the opportunity to sabotage your plans.

Social skills are no replacement for roleplaying. A single, successful Appeal roll won't turn a rival into an ally, but it's a good starting point. Use your social skills to create roleplaying opportunities. Your rival might not be willing to give you the time of day, but a successful Skill Test might convince them to listen to you.

On the other hand, it's easier to create a bad impression than it is to shake one. A series of disastrous Skill Tests could turn your character into a social pariah under the right circumstances. In a case like this, your character's going to have to work extra-hard to repair their reputation, if they can.

Margin of Success

Determining the degree to which you succeed or fail can be important. In our track meet example, you'll want to know whether the race was close or if you left the other runner in the dust. To calculate the Margin of Success, simply subtract the loser's Skill Total from the winner's. There is no Margin of Success in a tie! Although we're getting ahead of ourselves, this is also how you'll determine how much damage you do in combat (pg. XX).

Since you won the race in the earlier example by a margin of 3 (Skill Total of 10 minus a Skill Total of 7), you were the undisputed winner. If you'd won by 6 points, you would have been waiting for them at the finish line.

Example: Evan, Andrew, and Bill are competing in the semi-finals of the Science Olympiad. The GM has asked for an Education Skill Test. Andrew, who is a Mad Scientist, has unsuccessfully lobbied the GM to let him use the Science! skill, instead. Evan, Andrew, and Bill roll Education tests and get the following Skill Totals:

- *Evan: 11*
- *Andrew: 10*
- *Bill: 13*

Difference	Modifier
Tied	No Clear Winner
1-2	Slight Advantage
3-5	Clear Win
6+	Significant Victory

Bill wins the Olympiad, edging out Evan (2-point difference), but getting a clear win over Andrew (3-point difference). While Bill is lovingly cradling his trophy, Andrew leaves the event muttering about "narrow-minded fools" and vows to get revenge on the judges.

If your opponent's skill was reduced to WASHOUT, your Skill Total equals the Margin of Success.

Ties

In the case of a tie, there is no clear winner. Characters may either try again, circumstances permitting, or accept the stalemate. In a combat scenario, the attacker makes contact, but it would only be a glancing blow and does no damage.

Combining Pass/Fail and Contested Resolution

What if a group of characters are competing against a set goal?

You can combine Pass/Fail and Contested resolution. The GM sets the Difficulty, and the highest roll that equals or exceeds the difficulty wins. So, to win a combined test, you not only have to tie or beat the difficulty, you also must beat your opponents. If no one beats the difficulty, then no one succeeds.

Example: Evan, Andrew, and Bill are running late for class, and this professor has a rule to discourage tardiness: The last student to take their seat after the bell rings gets extra homework. As you might imagine, they're all hauling butt to make sure they're not stuck with additional work. The GM decides that to make it to class before the bell rings, they'll need to make a Phys. Ed. test against a Difficulty of 11. Let's assume they all have a "B" in Phys. Ed. If Evan's Skill Total is 11, Andrew's is 10, and Bill's is a 4, they arrive in this order:

1st: Evan

2nd: Andrew

3rd: Bill

With an 11, Evan makes it to his seat a split-second before the bell rings. He's safe (ties win in Pass/Fail tests). Andrew and Bill failed to tie or beat an 11, so they're both late. Lagging 6 points behind Andrew, Bill is so late that he interrupts the class when he arrives and is assigned extra homework.

This will come up again with certain Disturbing Skills, like *Witchcraft* and *Science!*.

"In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call Cthulhu"

Specialized Skills

As we discussed in the Skills section, certain skills require you to select Specializations, like Education or Art. The governing skill will determine how your Specializations function. If you have the Hobby skill with a Specialization in Baseball, you know a lot about the history of the sport, the rules, and the players, but you don't have any particular skill in playing the game. In this case, Hobby is a mental skill; playing a sport is covered by Phys. Ed.

Your Skill Grade determines the maximum number of Specializations you can have in that skill:

Skill Grade	# of Specializations
FACULTY	6
A	4
B	2
C	None

When making a test against one of these skills, you use your current Skill Grade if any of your Specializations apply. On the other hand, if a task requires a Specialization you don't have, your skill defaults to a Grade of "C."

Example: You have a Grade of "B" in Education, which entitles you to 2 Specializations. You choose "Biology" and "Computers." When trying to recall some obscure fact about the reproductive rates of mollusks – which is covered by your Specialization in Biology – you'll make your Skill Test with a Grade of "B." If you were trying to recall a historical fact, your Education skill defaults to a "C" because you don't have a Specialization in History. When you advance your skill to "A," you'll be able to select two more Specializations.

Character Class Lore Skills

You cannot use the Disturbing Abilities of a Character Class skill that does not apply to your character. If your character isn't a Witch, then, as we discussed before, your Witchcraft skill only conveys knowledge – no special abilities. You'll know about magic and the tools used in spells, but you won't be able to cast any spells yourself.

The difficulty to use these lore skills is determined by the particular power or skill you are trying to discern. If you want to know how long a magic spell is going to last, the Difficulty is equal to the Casting Target Number of the spell. If you want to know what powers a Hybrid has, the Difficulty is equal to their Mutation skill. If you want to figure out how smart a Servitor might be, your Difficulty is equal to the Summoning skill that controls it.

Working Together

If multiple characters team up to perform a task, they increase the chances of success. One character, the leader (decided by the group), makes the Skill Test (usually the one with the highest Skill Grade). Each helper with a Grade of "C" or better adds 1 Upshift, up to a maximum number of helpers determined by the GM (too many cooks, and all that).

Example: A group of 6 player characters have encountered an ancient bronze door in an underground cavern and they've decided they'd like to see what's on the other side. The GM has decided that this requires a Brawn test against a difficulty of 13 (Up the Creek). With a Target Number of 13, there's no way an average character could succeed on their own. The GM has decreed

that up to 4 characters can work together to pry open the door. Assuming they're all average ("C"), the leader will make the Skill Test with 3 Upshifts, bringing them up to FACULTY. If the leader rolls a 7, they add +6 for the skill MOD for a total of 13. They pass the test – swinging the door wide to discover the ancient horror lurking within. Some things are better left alone.

Obviously, there are limits to the number of people who can work on a single task and not step on each other's toes. Your GM will decide how many is too many.

Working Together cannot be used in combat. All Skill Tests in combat must be made individually.

Optional: Acing and Blowing the Roll

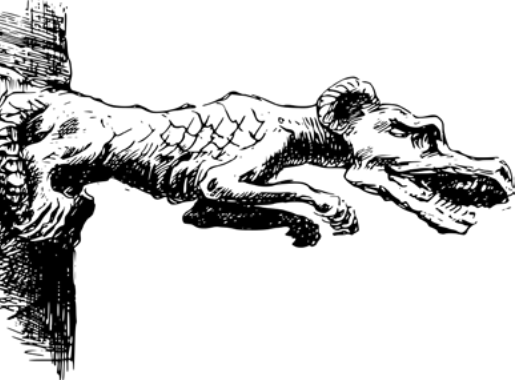
Sometimes, fortune smiles on you. Sometimes, she drives a bus over you. If you would like to add the effects of a major success or devastating failure to your game, follow these simple rules:

Acing the Roll: If you roll double 6's (i.e., a 6 on each die) and you succeed at your Skill Test, you've aced the roll. Assuming you didn't need to roll double 6's just to succeed, you get some kind of bonus on top of the success you were trying to achieve! The effect could be completely narrative in the context of the game, like scoring 100 on a test and impressing your teacher by getting the hard extra credit question, as well. Alternatively, a mechanical (rules-based) effect might be more appropriate, such as the ones listed below:

- Upshift on your next roll
- Opponent gets a Downshift on their next roll
- Deal extra damage (+2 boxes)
- Earn 2 Merit Points
- You don't use up your components or a gizmo charge

Blowing the Roll: This is the exact opposite of Acing the Roll. If you roll double 1s (i.e., a 1 on each die) *and* you fail your Skill Test, you're in real trouble. Not only have you failed, but something else has gone wrong, as well. As with Acing the Roll, the effect could be narrative or mechanical. Maybe you swing your weapon, fail to connect, and lose your grip on it, accidentally tossing it away! Maybe your attempts to charm someone fail miserably and now they hate you! When casting a spell (pg. XX) or activating a gizmo (pg. XX), double 1s usually means that you've been hit with Backlash. If a mechanical effect would work better, pick from the following list:

- Opponent gets an Upshift on their next roll against you
- Downshift on your next roll
- Opponent deals extra damage (+2 boxes)



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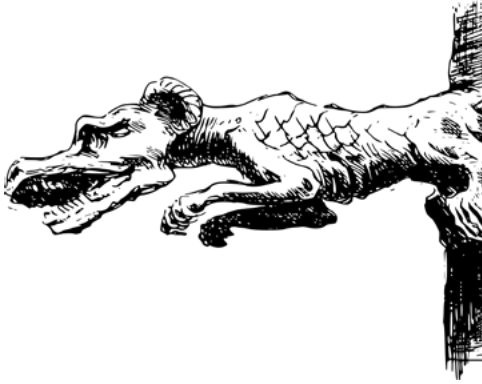
FIGHTING AND DAMAGE



William was cornered, and he was about to get pounded. He looked up at Steven Frost, the captain of the football team, who cracked his knuckles with gleeful anticipation. Frost never liked him, and often picked on him in front of his teammates, but Frost had been gunning for him ever since last week when Nyhorr'urah broke loose and flew into Frost's dorm room through an open window. The resulting shriek was surprisingly high-pitched. Unfortunately, Frost was so freaked-out, that he ran out of the dorm . . . in his underwear.

William had gotten lucky and had managed to avoid Frost for a whole week. But Frost wasn't an idiot; he'd waited until William had brought Nyhorr'urah for its weekly examination before ambushing him behind Peterson Hall, where he'd be completely defenseless.

William glanced behind him at the two teammates Frost had brought along to ensure that William wouldn't get away.

"By the time I'm done with you, even West won't be able to fix you up," Frost snarled.

Mentally prepping for the worst beating of his life, William played his trump card. "Steven, how's that problem going?"

Frost looked annoyed at the interruption. "What are you talking about?"

If this didn't work, William was going to be an unidentifiable red smear on the back of the building. So, he screwed-up his courage and added, "You know, the *nighttime* problem?"

Frost froze, his face paling. After a quick glance at his teammates, who were visibly confused, Frost tried to regain his normally cool and confident composure. "Let's go, this kid isn't worth getting a Demerit over."

Frost gave William a shove that sent him to the ground and walked away. His teammates followed, kicking dirt on William as they passed.

William sighed with relief. He was going to have to thank Kelly. He was pretty good with a computer, but she was scary good. She'd snuck into one of the administration offices and hacked her way into the school's medical and disciplinary records. There, she'd discovered that, after getting a few too many Demerits, Frost had "volunteered" for one of Tillinghast's experiments. Because of the experiment, big, bad Steven Frost was left with a persistent case of enuresis; a fancy term for bedwetting.

Summary: Order of Operations

When resolving combat, a turn will run as follows:

1. Determine surprise (if any).
2. Determine initiative.
3. Characters may attempt to flee.
4. Revolve the first action.
5. Resolve the response (if any).
6. Compare results and apply the effects of the action (if any).
7. Resolve subsequent actions.
8. End of turn.
9. If necessary, begin a new turn.

Conflict is like an extended Contested Skill Test. Nobody wants to get slugged, right? You try to avoid taking damage while dishing out some of your own. Characters in a conflict progress through a series of exchanges in which opponents compare the results of Contested Skill Tests; the higher result wins, possibly inflicting damage on the loser based on the Margin of Success. The conflict goes back and forth, with attackers and defenders trading blows (physical or verbal) until one of them is out of the fight. The same rules apply whether the conflict is physical, mental, or social.

Time in a Fight

When a fight begins, time sort of slows down. Not in the game, of course, but we need to impose a little more structure to keep track of what each character is doing, when they resolve their actions, and the results of those actions. To keep everything straight, we track time in increments of *Actions*, *Turns,* and *Scenes*.

An **Action** is like a single panel in a comic book. During their action, a character may do one of the following:

- Do one thing that requires a Skill Test (like casting a spell, throwing something, kicking someone in the jimmies, hurling an insult with the intent to emotionally cripple, etc.).
- Take a Full Move Action (pg. XX) if they need to get somewhere else in a hurry. Usually, this entails running away or chasing someone who's trying to flee (see below). A full-move action cannot be combined with a minor move action (see below).
- Begin a Long Action. Some actions might take a long time to complete, such as defusing a bomb in the middle of combat, running a long distance, or picking a lock. Long actions like these will span several Turns before completion, at which time the character will make a roll to resolve their action, if necessary.
- Hold or forfeit their action for the turn.

Minor Actions. During your character's turn, you can also take one or two minor actions that do not require a Skill Test, like saying a few words, opening a door, standing up (or dropping prone), readying a weapon, or moving a distance up to your base movement rate (pg. XX). Minor actions may be taken before or after their primary action. Note that a character may only take one movement action, whether it's a full move action or a minor action, when it's their turn to act.

A **Turn** is the time it takes for all characters in a scene to take their action. If necessary, a new turn begins once everyone has had a chance to act. It sounds like a lot when you break it down that way, but it's not any different than taking turns while playing a board game.

Scenes are just like the scenes in a movie. A scene can be described as however long it takes for a distinct action or set of related actions (combat, library research, Occult Studies class, The Spring Equinox Dance, etc.) to happen. Scenes can be long or short and can collapse or extend time as necessary. Some scenes can be skipped entirely. In movies, we don't always see how a character gets from one place to another because it isn't relevant to the story. Similarly, there's no reason to play-out the ten-minute bus drive to the Miskatonic River if nothing happens during the ride.

When does a character get to act in a turn?

Characters act in an order determined by their initiative (see below), a combination of perception, quickness of thought, and dumb luck. Once one character has finished taking their actions, the next character will go, and so on.

How long is an action?

It depends; Some actions take longer than others. Pressing the activation

button on your Chrono-Variable Orgone Projector takes a lot less time than reciting the Preamble to the Constitution. A good rule of thumb is that an action usually takes just a couple of seconds. If everyone else is taking quick actions and you're taking a longer action, then your action may stretch across a couple of turns.

How many actions are in a turn?

If there are two characters who are acting, then there are only two. If there is a mob of fifty people all scrambling to do something, then it's fifty. That said, the GM is encouraged to streamline combat by consolidating enemies into smaller, easier to manage groups.

How long is a turn?

If there are only two characters taking actions, it could be only a few seconds. If you have a mob of fifty, it's going to take a while.

What about powers and effects that are measured in turns?

Some effects last "until the end of the turn" or "for the rest of the turn." When the turn ends, so does the effect. Other effects last "for 1 turn" or "for 2 turns." In this case, the effect begins on one action and ends just prior to that action on the next turn. If you cast a spell with a duration of 1 turn, the spell would begin on your action and end just before your action on the *next* turn.

Initiative

As we mentioned above, each character who is present in the scene takes their action during the same turn. Now we decide the order in which they'll take those actions.

At the beginning of each turn, each character rolls one six-sided die (1d6) and adds their Initiative MOD. The Initiative MOD is the sum of the character's permanent Paranoia and Brainiac MODs. The highest result goes first, the second highest goes second, etc. A character gets a +2 to their Initiative total for the first turn if they surprised their opponent (see below).

INITIATIVE: 1d6 + Initiative MOD (permanent Paranoia MOD + permanent Brainiac MOD)

Ties

If two characters tie for initiative, resolve the deadlock in the following order:

- Highest Brainiac Grade goes first. If they are still tied . . .
- Highest Paranoia Grade goes first. If they are still tied . . .
- Roll 1d6 for each tied participant. Highest roll goes first.

Example: Four characters are taking part in a tag-team wrestling match: Josh, Pierre, Andrew, and Haydn.

- *Josh has an Initiative MOD of +2 (Paranoia "B" and Brainiac "C")*
- *Pierre has an Initiative MOD of +6 (Paranoia "B" and Brainiac "A")*
- *Haydn has an Initiative MOD of +2 (Paranoia "C" and Brainiac "B")*
- *Andrew has an Initiative MOD of +4 (Paranoia "C" and Brainiac "A")*

Each participant rolls 1d6 and adds their Initiative MOD.

- *Josh rolls a 3 for a total of 5*
- *Pierre rolls a 2 for a total of 8*
- *Haydn rolls a 4 for a total of 6*
- *Andrew rolls a 4 for a total of 8*

Andrew and Pierre tie with an 8. They both have the same Brainiac Skill Grade ("A"), but Pierre has a "B" in Paranoia and Andrew only has a "C." If their Paranoia Skill Grades had been the same, they'd each need to roll one die – the higher result going first.

The characters will act in the following order this turn:

- *1st: Pierre*
- *2nd: Andrew*
- *3rd: Haydn*
- *4th: Josh*

Obviously, a character must be present in a scene to take part in a conflict. If there's a fight in gym class and you're across campus in math class, there's not a whole lot you can do about it. Your character probably wouldn't even know about it. Similarly, not everyone who is present will want to get involved in the conflict. When the fight in the gym breaks out, some students may jump into the fray while others will stand on the sidelines and watch.

Holding Actions

In addition, characters may wait and take their actions later in the turn. They can't cut-off another character mid-action, but they can choose to act before or after someone who was initially lower in the initiative order.

Example: Pierre doesn't trust Andrew and wants to wait and see what he's going to do. Andrew has decided that he wants to act after Josh, and Haydn has decided to sit this mess out and forego his action.

The revised initiative order now looks like this:

- *1st: Haydn (skipping his action)*
- *2nd: Josh*
- *3rd: Andrew*
- *4th: Pierre*

After everyone involved has had an opportunity to act, the characters can start a new turn. This cycle continues until the conflict is resolved.

Run Away!!!!

If your character is hopelessly outmatched, they can always choose to run away. Running away is a full-move action (see below), which bars your character from taking any other actions during the turn. However, any character who makes a break for it automatically goes first in the turn. Any ranged attacks against a fleeing character incur a Downshift on the Skill Test.

This strategy isn't foolproof. Your opponent may give chase and might even catch you.

Surprise

You never know when your enemies might try to ambush you, physically or verbally. To determine whether your character is surprised by an opponent, the GM will require a Pass/Fail Paranoia test against a Target Number equal to your opponent's Delinquent Skill Grade (for ambushes and other physical situations) or Cool Skill Grade (for mental or social situations). If you fail this roll, your character is surprised and suffers a Downshift to their response or defense rolls for the rest of this turn. In addition, your opponent gets the jump on you with a +2 to their initiative roll!

SURPRISE: +2 to Initiative and Defender Downshifts Response/ Defense Rolls for the Turn

Example: Abby is minding her own business when Angela and her cronies pass her in the hallway. Out of nowhere, Angela makes a crack about Abby's hair, catching her off-guard. Angela has an "A" in Cool and Abby has a "B" in Paranoia. Abby needs to roll her Paranoia skill against a Target Number of 11 – the equivalent of Angela's Cool Skill Grade. The GM could assess a Downshift to Abby because she's outnumbered by Angela and her sycophants but decides against it since they're just spectators. If Abby passes the test, she sees the smirk on Angela's face as she approaches and is ready for her to do something unpleasant. If she fails the test, she'll suffer a Downshift on her defense this turn, and Angela will get a +2 to her initiative roll this turn. If someone had tipped her off that Angela was gunning for her, Abby would've been expecting something and would not have had to roll for surprise.

What Skill Should I Use in a Fight?

The combat skill you'll be using will depend upon the nature of the conflict, the available weapons, and your preferred fighting style.

But what if you're exceptionally good at martial arts and someone's attacking you with a knife? You might want to use your Smackdown skill instead of Medieval, arguing that you'd probably learned how to defend yourself against an armed attacker. Likewise, substituting Brawn for Smackdown may reflect your reliance on brute strength as opposed to training and finesse. What if you're armed with a bat and you're pretty good at baseball? You might prefer to use your Phys. Ed. skill instead of Medieval when taking a swing at some unspeakable horror's head.

As we mentioned before, if you can make a good case for using a different skill, your GM *might* let you use the substitute skill at a Downshift or two. When swinging the aforementioned baseball bat, your GM might allow you to use Phys. Ed. instead of Medieval, at a penalty. If you were armed with a length of chain, instead, the answer would probably be "no." If you're substituting Brawn for Smackdown, the GM may decide your relative lack of training grants a bonus to your opponent's defense, because you're telegraphing your blows and swinging wildly.

Situation	Attacking	Defending
Wrestling or Punching	Smackdown	Smackdown (block) or Phys. Ed. (dodge) or Brawn ("taking it like a man")
Swordplay	Medieval	Medieval (parry) or
Phys. Ed. (dodge)		
Shooting an Arrow	Shoot	Phys. Ed.
Throwing a Rock	Phys. Ed.	Phys. Ed.
Intimidating Someone	Brawn (physical) or Family (social status)	Cool
Making Fun of Someone	Trash Talk	Cool

What if I Can't Defend Myself in a Fight?

If you (or your opponent) are completely incapable of launching a defense, either because your skill has been Downshifted to WASHOUT, unconsciousness, total paralysis, etc., your Skill Total is ZERO. That means your opponent's Skill Total is also the Margin of Success.

Determining the Winner and Loser of a Fight

On their action, the attacker explains what they plan to do and then the defender explains how they'd like to defend themselves or react to the attacker's action. After declaring actions, the attacker and the defender make Contested Skill Tests. The character with the highest Skill Total wins.

CONTESTED SKILL TEST: (Attacker's 2d6 + Modifiers) vs. (Defender's 2d6 + Modifiers)

One of three results follows:

- The attacker wins. The attack is successful, and damage may apply to the defender. Determine the Margin of Success.
- The defender wins. The defender avoids the blow, disregards the comment, stays cool, etc. No damage is done.
- A tie. Both sides are a little tired or messed-up, but no damage is done. There is no Margin of Success (Margin of Success = 0).

Example: Your character is trading insults with another character, so the GM requests a Trash Talk Contested Skill Test. If your Skill Total was 9 and theirs was an 8, you'd win with a Margin of Success of 1 – dishing-out some sweet Mental Anguish damage (pg. XX) and making them look like the punk they are. If your Skill Total had been a 6, you'd lose, and they'd take no damage, shrugging-off your lame attempt.

Don't forget, if a character's Skill Grade has been Downshifted to WASHOUT for any reason, their Skill Total is effectively ZERO. Barring the use of a different skill or the expenditure of Merit Points, they automatically fail.

Example: Your character is trading insults with a different character. You still have a "B" in Trash Talk and they have been Downshifted to WASHOUT in Cool. If they can't spend any Merit Points, all they can do is suck it up and take whatever you can dish out. If your Skill Total was 9, theirs is a big, fat ZERO. Your Margin of Success is 9.

Some participants in a turn may be acting unopposed, meaning that they're not competing against or doing anything to anyone else. In this case, resolve the unopposed actions as usual with Pass/Fail tests against Difficulties set by the GM (pg. XX).

> "Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster."
>
> *Friedrich Nietzsche*

Pick Your Battles

Question: What happened to the 98-pound weakling who got into a fight with the captain of the football team?

Answer: He got his butt kicked.

If you know you're fighting out of your class, change your tactics. Throw a spell. Get some backup. Fight dirty. Run away. Destroy their sanity while they sleep. Fight on your own terms and play to your character's strengths.

Multiple Targets

Sometimes you'll be facing multiple targets in a single action. Of course, splitting your attention means that you'll be less effective, overall. For each additional target, apply a Downshift to your Skill Grade, down to a minimum of "C."

The GM is the final arbiter as to whether an attack can be split.

Example: You're fighting two opponents and decide to do this wicked spin-kick that you saw in a movie. Your Smackdown Grade is a "B," so one additional target would shift you from a "B" to a "C" against each of them. Had your Grade been a "C," you wouldn't have been good enough to try hitting both. You roll a Skill Test at Grade "C" against each target, and they each get to roll a Skill Test to defend themselves.

What if I'm Using a Weapon?

As you'll see on pg. XX, weapons have a damage modifier based on their potential for injury and destruction. The nastier the weapon, the higher the MOD. When you split your attack, the weapon's damage modifier does not Downshift. If you got ahold of a gun and decided to wildly spray an area with bullets, you may not hit anything, but it's still going to hurt if you do.

How Far Away Is It?

In general, GMs can be flexible with range. Disturbing Abilities will have varying effective ranges, as noted in their descriptions, but as a guideline:

So, if you're using a cheapo slingshot with an effective range of 200 feet, you'd get an Upshift when shooting at

Skill Grade	# of Targets
FACULTY	1 target at +6, or 2 targets at +4 ("A"), or 3 targets at +2 ("B", or 4 targets at +0 ("C")
A	1 target at +4, or 2 targets at +2 ("B"), or 3 targets at +0 ("C")
B	1 target at +2, or 2 targets at +0 ("C")
C	1 target at +0
D	1 target at -2
F	1 target at -4

Range	Description	Modifier
Close	Within a few feet/punching range	None
Near	10-20 feet away	Upshift 1 for ranged attacks
Short	Across a room/20-100 feet	Downshift 1 for ranged attacks*
Long	Across the street/100-500 feet	Downshift 1 for ranged attacks*
Far	Down the street/500-1,000 feet	Downshift 1 for ranged attacks*
Extreme	1,000 feet – whatever seems reasonable	Downshift 1 for ranged attacks*

*If the range listed is the maximum effective range for the weapon or attack.

targets 10-20 feet away and a Downshift when shooting at targets around 200 feet away. The slingshot simply isn't powerful enough to hit anything beyond that with any degree of accuracy.

As you can see, range is only an issue when something is close (but not too close) or so far away that it's pushing the effective limit. Your GM is going to have to use her judgment when it comes to deciding range. The world record for a javelin throw is only a little more than 340 feet, while expert snipers with high-powered rifles have hit their targets from more than a mile away! However, unless something is either nearby or far away, don't worry too much about range.

Ranges don't usually apply to non-physical contests, like insults. Yelling across a field takes some of the sting out of a good put-down. Unless you have a megaphone. I'd totally give you an Upshift for a put-down delivered by megaphone.

Aiming

If you've got a target in your sights and you can maintain your aim for one turn or more (i.e., you've chosen to aim instead of making a Skill Test), you can apply an Upshift to your next ranged attack.

Prone Targets

After a serious blow, a target may be knocked down (pg. XX). Optionally, on their action, a target may drop to the ground to avoid a ranged attack. Prone targets receive a Downshift to defend against hand-to-hand attacks (Smackdown, Medieval, Rend, and related attacks), but ranged attacks (Shoot, Spew, etc.) suffer a Downshift to hit them.

It takes a minor action to drop to the ground or to stand up again.

Running like Your Life Depended Upon It: Full-Move Actions

Running

If you need to see whether your character can run a certain distance in a given amount of time, you'll make a Pass/Fail Phys. Ed. test against a Target Number set by your GM. If you need to outrun or catch someone, you'll instead make a Contested Phys. Ed. Test against your opponent's Phys. Ed. skill (or Scuttle, if you're trying to catch a berserk Servitor).

Much like range, movement rates are

flexible and are up to your GM's discretion. If you need something a little more concrete, assume your character can move 5 yards plus their Phys. Ed. Grade modifier as a minor move action. If you're making a Full Move Action, make a Pass/Fail Phys. Ed. test and add 5 to the total. This is the distance in yards you can run in one turn. A character may only make one move action – minor or full-move – per turn.

Full-Move Actions

Sometimes, it's better to run away and live to fight another day. In combat, you may choose to run flat-out in lieu of taking any other action, called a Full Move Action. To determine how far you can run, make a Pass/Fail Phys. Ed. test and add 5 to the total. When you take a full-move action, you can still take one or two minor actions (except minor move actions) but you can't take any other action. There are certain advantages to taking a full-move action:

- If you're running away from a fight, you get to jump ahead of the initiative order and go first (anything chasing you acts in the normal initiative order);
- Ranged attackers suffer a Downshift to hit you.

Grappling

Grappling does no damage to your opponent, but it's useful if you need to restrain an opponent. If you succeed with a contested Smackdown Skill Test, you have grappled your opponent. Your opponent can take no physical actions until they beat you in a contested Brawn or Smackdown test against your Smackdown skill (or you opt to release them).

Optional: Combat Strategies

There are three optional strategies that you can use in combat:

Losin' It: The attacker flips out all over the target, making strong attacks without worrying about defense. Losin' It grants an Upshift for your next attack and a Downshift on all defensive reactions and other non-conflict-related tests until your next turn. If you want to use this tactic, you must announce it at the beginning of the turn. You cannot use Losin' It on the same turn as Holding Back.

Holding Back: The defender plays it cool, not taking any chances and holding back in the conflict. Holding Back grants you an Upshift for all defensive tests and a Downshift on your next attack (even if that attack is during the following turn). You also receive a Downshift on all other non-conflict-related tests until your next turn. If you want to use this tactic, you must announce it at the beginning of the turn. You cannot use Holding Back on the same turn as Losin' It.

Headshot!: For the small price of Downshift on your attack test, you can convert your Physical Damage to Mental Anguish, instead.

"Now and then he would fumblingly make an entry in his diary, so that detached phrases such as – "The lights must not go"; – "It knows where I am"; – "I must destroy it"; and – "It is calling to me, but perhaps it means no injury this time"; are found scattered down two of the pages."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Haunter of the Dark"

Damage

As your character takes damage, either mental or physical, their skills and abilities deteriorate. I mean, it's hard to do calculus when you've got a concussion.

After a successful attack, the difference between the attacking and defending rolls — the Margin of Success — determines how many points of damage are done to the defender. The use of weapons and armor (pg. XX) can increase or decrease the damage inflicted.

Attack Skill Total/Target Number – Defending/Response Skill Total = Points of Damage Inflicted

Example: Your character is punching someone. Let's assume that you have a Smackdown Grade of "A" (+4) and you've rolled a 9 on 2d6. Your Skill Total is 9+4= 13. If your opponent's Skill Total is only 10, your Margin of Success is 3. You've done 3 points of damage to them.

Damage Tracks

Damage points are recorded by marking damage boxes on the corresponding Damage Track: Physical Damage or Mental Anguish. Each damage point fills one damage box, starting from the top of the track. The source of the damage determines which track you use. Anything that causes cuts, bruises, burns, or barfing is recorded on the Physical Damage Track. Emotional and mental trauma is recorded on the Mental Anguish Track.

1 point of damage = 1 box on the corresponding Damage Track

PHYSICAL DAMAGE SOURCES	MENTAL ANGUISH SOURCES
• Blunt Trauma/Punching • Sharp Objects • Energy Blasts • Falling • Burning • Poison/Disease • Non-Lethal Weapons (Temporary)	• Bullying (Temporary) • Embarassment/Humiliation (Temporary) • Taunts (Temporary) • Fear • Psychic Attacks • Backing Down on a "Double-Dog Dare" (Temporary)

Example: Your punch did 3 points of damage to your opponent. They cross-off 3 Physical Damage boxes. If an insult, shame, or mental attack had caused the damage, they would cross-off Mental Anguish boxes, instead.

When you take your first point of damage, mark the first damage box on the track ("Bruised" on the Physical Damage track or "Stunned" on the Mental Anguish track). The more damage you take, the more boxes you fill. When you've filled all the damage boxes in a single row, or Damage Level, any leftover damage will trickle down the damage track to the next damage level.

Example: You have 2 boxes marked in the "Bruised" damage level. If you take 2 more points of Physical Damage, you'd fill the remaining "Bruised" box and 1 box in the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level. If you take 5 points of Physical Damage on top of that (what are you doing??) you'd fill the last 2 boxes in the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level and the whole "Pretty Messed-Up" level, as well.

If you fill enough damage boxes on either track, you'll begin to suffer penalties to your character's actions. Penalties reflect your character's physical and mental impairments due to debilitating pain, dizziness, confusion, nausea, etc., and become progressively worse as you take damage. Beginning with the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" and "In Denial" levels, your character will suffer their first penalty. Penalties on the same damage track (that's important) aren't cumulative, so when you mark the first damage box in a new level, replace your former penalty with the new one.

Each penalty is only applied once, and it stays in play until it is replaced with a new penalty.

If you were to mark two boxes in the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level, you'd note that your penalty is "1 Downshift to physical tests for the rest of the turn." You wouldn't suffer a Downshift each time you marked a box of damage nor would the penalty last for more than a single turn because penalties in the same track aren't added together. Likewise, when you mark a box in the "World of Pain" level, you wouldn't add the penalties from the previous damage levels. The penalty for the current damage level replaces the previous one.

We hate to kick you when you're down, but do you remember that part about "penalties on the same damage track aren't cumulative?" Well, penalties on different tracks are cumulative! If you've incurred penalties on the Physical Damage Track and the Mental Anguish Track, your current penalty for Physical Damage is added to your current penalty for mental damage. A severely wounded character could find themselves Downshifted to WASHOUT.

Physical Damage Track

Damage Level	Boxes	Penalty
OK!		None. You're fine.
Bruised	☐☐☐	Hurts, but no penalty.
It's Just a Flesh Wound!	☐☐☐	Dazed. 1 Downshift to physical Skill tests for the rest of this turn.
Pretty Messed Up	☐☐☐	1Downshift to physical Skill tests until healed.
World of Pain	☐☐☐	1 Downshift to all Skill tests until healed.
Disemboweled	☐☐	Knocked unconscious for the rest of the scene. When conscious again take 2 Downshifts on all Skill tests. On the plus side, its easy to get a blood sample from you.
School Infirmary	☐	*Special:* Out of the game for the rest of the scene and the next 2 scenes. When you return, not quite feeling like yourself. Your Physical Damage Track is set to 0 (all boxes erased) but you subtract 1 point from your Sanity Score.

Mental Anguish Track

Damage Level	Boxes	Penalty
OK!		None. You're fine.
Stunned	☐☐☐	Rattled a bit, but no penalty.
In Denial	☐☐☐	Dazed. 1 Downshift to mental and social Skill tests for the rest of this turn.
Picked Up a Tic	☐☐☐	1 Downshift to mental and social Skill tests until treated.
Really Freaked Out	☐☐☐	1 Downshift to all Skill tests until treated.
Gibbering Incoherently	☐☐	Knocked unconscious or standing around, catatonic, for the rest of the scene. When you can act again take 2 Downshifts on all Skill tests. Also, there might be some pee.
Visiting Arkham Sanitarium	☐	*Special:* Out of the game for the rest of the scene and the next 2 scenes. When you return, feeling happy and a little drugged, your track is set to 0 (all boxes erased) but you subtract 1 point from your Sanity Score.

"That is not dead which can eternal lie, and with strange aeons even death may die."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

Example: You've taken a pounding and you've suffered 5 points of damage. Assuming you were "OK" before, you check the first 5 boxes in the Physical Damage Track, filling all three boxes under "Bruised" and the first two boxes under "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" You now suffer one Downshift on all your physical Skill Tests (but not mental or social tests) for the rest of the turn. After that, there is no further penalty until you check the first box in "Pretty Messed-Up." You also must make a Skill Test to avoid being knocked down (see below), and since this is a physical skill, you'll have to apply the penalty to the test.

If you take three more points of damage, you'd be "Pretty Messed Up," and you would swap your penalty for one Downshift to all physical Skill Tests until you are healed up to another level.

Example 2: You've taken Physical Damage and Mental Anguish. You're at "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" and "Really Freaked-Out." The physical penalty is a Downshift to all physical Skill Tests for the rest of this turn, and the mental penalty is a Downshift to <u>all</u> Skill Tests (which includes physical tests). For the rest of this turn, you'll suffer 2 Downshifts on physical Skill Tests and one Downshift on mental and social tests. Next turn, you'll only have to deal with the remaining Downshift to all Skill Tests, but that's going to stick around until you've healed the Mental Anguish.

Example 3: Andrew is having a very bad day. He and his friends are fighting some horrible monstrosity that appeared in one of the mausoleums. He's suffered a lot of mental and physical injuries in addition to a bunch of other penalties. Right now, he's facing a whopping 4 Downshifts! That means that any skill at Grade "B" or below is now at WASHOUT, and any Grade of "A" is now at "F." When the initiative order gets to him, he hasn't got a lot of choices left. He's too wounded to throw a punch or shoot a weapon, as his combat skills have been Downshifted to WASHOUT. He's also not in any condition to run anywhere, as his Phys. Ed. skill has also been Downshifted to WASHOUT. He's not entirely hosed, though. Andrew can still use any skill that hasn't been Downshifted to WASHOUT (any skill that was formerly an "A" or better), but his current MOD will be low. Andrew can also take any action that doesn't require a Skill Test. He could slowly stumble out of the mausoleum and save his own skin, heroically radio Campus Security on a stolen walkie-talkie, or give one of his weapons to an ally.

Special Status

Once you've reached this level, you're in deep, serious trouble. First Aid, Disturbing Skills, and Merit Points aren't effective anymore. Your wounds are just too severe. The bucket is within kicking distance. The invisible choir is warming up. Fortunately, someone will come along (eventually) to cart-off whatever's left to the Infirmary or to Arkham for a recovery that's nothing short of miraculous (pg. XX). How does the school

know you're hurt and where to find you? Who knows? Maybe there's a microchip in your head. Or hidden cameras. Or an Ouija board.

What if you zero-out both tracks at the same time? Depending upon the situation, your GM should decide whether the infirmary or the mental hospital is the most appropriate destination. Reset the appropriate damage track and heal three boxes in the second track (restoring the character to consciousness). The character loses one Sanity Point, as usual.

Damage Tracks and Non-Human Creatures

Animals and monsters may have more or fewer damage boxes than human beings. It takes a lot more to injure a bear than your typical 12 or 13-year-old. Some creatures, like shuggoths and star spawn, with their apparent lack of vital internal organs, won't have the same damage levels as a person, either. This means that some creatures can keep fighting at full or near-full strength until they collapse.

Suffering Mental Anguish

This is school — a cruel word can cut as deeply as a homemade shiv, and the scars can last a lot longer. Attempts to exclude, embarrass, or humiliate another student are resolved in the same manner as combat. The attacker selects an appropriate skill (usually Trash Talk) and rolls against the defender's skill (usually Cool). If the attacker's Skill Total is greater, they do damage equal to the Margin of Success as Mental Anguish to the defender. If the defender's Skill Total is greater, they suffer no damage. The GM may assign an Upshift to the attacker's Skill Test if the victim is humiliated in front of a group of people, and a Downshift if no one else is around to hear it (and spread the story). If the attacker rolls exceptionally poorly, the GM may have the crowd laugh at the attacker, instead!

Damage from insults and humiliation is Temporary and heals at the rate of one box per scene plus one box per night. All

"It seemed to be a sort of monster, or symbol representing a monster, of a form which only a diseased fancy could conceive. If I say that my somewhat extravagant imagination yielded simultaneous pictures of an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature, I shall not be unfaithful to the spirit of the thing. A pulpy, tentacled head surmounted a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings; but it was the general outline of the whole which made it most shockingly frightful."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

Immunity

Some particularly nasty monsters are completely impervious to certain attacks. Shuggoths, for example, are immune to normal hand-to-hand and ranged combat attacks. This means that they completely ignore any damage from knives, bullets, and funky kung-fu moves. Other attacks, such as fire, acid, freezing, gamma radiation, explosive decompression, electrocution, dynamite, and mental attacks, will inflict damage as usual.

Some monsters are immune to social attacks. This means they can't be insulted, humiliated, embarrassed, or taunted to any appreciable effect. Either they're too alien or they just don't care. Must be nice.

Just because a monster is immune to certain damage types doesn't mean that non-damaging effects will be ineffective, too. A monster that's immune to mental attacks might respond to telepathy. And you could probably still trick a monster that's immune to social attacks. While it might be difficult to attack a shuggoth physically, you could use a Containment gizmo to trap it for a little while.

other forms of Mental Anguish heal at the normal rate (pg. XX). Since humiliation damage heals quicker than other forms of Mental Anguish, players should keep track of how much damage they've taken from insults and embarrassment. Other forms of Mental Anguish, like psychic attacks and fear, heal at the normal rate.

Only intelligent, social beings can suffer Mental Anguish from embarrassment or bullying. Animals and most supernatural creatures only suffer Mental Anguish from fear or psychic attacks. Their minds are either too simple, too alien, or our social mores hold no meaning for them. Simply put: Making fun of a shuggoth's mother isn't going to get you very far.

Temporary Damage

You may have noticed that some mental and Physical Damage sources are listed as "Temporary." These sources of damage, like stun weapons or embarrassment, don't have lingering effects. You fill-in the appropriate number of damage boxes as usual, but the boxes will heal at an accelerated rate (pg. XX). This doesn't mean that Temporary damage doesn't matter. On the contrary, it can still impose penalties, knock you down, or send you to the infirmary! Temporary damage heals before regular damage, so keep track of how much you've taken. Damage from insults and humiliation is Temporary and heals at the rate of one box per scene plus one box per night while other types of Temporary damage, such as non-lethal weapons (like tasers, see below), disappear at the end of the scene.

Getting Knocked on your Butt

If you take enough damage in a single attack to completely fill one or more rows, or Damage Levels, of the Physical Damage Track, you'll need to make a Phys. Ed. test against the attacker's Skill Total or you'll be knocked down. The test is made after damage is applied, so you could have a penalty to this roll. While you're knocked down, you suffer an additional Downshift to all physical actions, including defense. You can get up on your

Due to the risk of earning Demerits, fighting is generally uncommon, but not unheard of. It's hard to justify a black eye. Bullying, unfortunately, is more common. Even so, students are careful not to inflict enough damage to send their opponent to the infirmary (or the Sanitarium), and risk the administration launching an investigation and assigning a whole mess of Demerits.

turn as a minor action.

Example: Evan has had just about enough of Bill and slugs him in the gut. Evan wallops him with a Skill Total of 14. Bill rolls a Skill Total of 10 to block the attack and takes 4 points of damage. Bill was previously uninjured, so 4 boxes are enough to completely fill his "Bruised" level and one box of "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" To remain standing, Bill will have to beat a 14 (Evan's attack total) using his Phys. Ed. skill. If Bill were to take 2 more points of damage, his "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level would be filled, but he wouldn't have to worry about being knocked down since the level was partially filled already.

Environmental Damage

Eventually, your character is going to try something reckless and/or stupid. And when they fail, it's going to hurt.

Let's say you engage in a potentially dangerous activity that carries the possibility of bodily harm, like trying to walk across a narrow beam suspended over a pit full of sharp spikes. Your GM will ask for a Pass/Fail Skill Test against the Difficulty of the action and determine a Severity for the hazard in case you fail. The Difficulty and the Severity don't have to be the same Grade. Walking a tightrope is hard, but there's not much danger if there's a net below you.

The skill you'll need to test will depend upon the situation. If you're shimmying down the drainpipe outside your dorm room, you'd roll Phys. Ed. If you're in the middle of a forest fire, you could try a Scouts test to see if you can navigate to safety.

If you pass the Skill Test, great. No problem. If you fail the roll, add the associated Damage MOD for the Severity to the amount by which you failed the Skill Test (the Margin of Failure). This is the amount of damage you'll suffer.

ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE: Margin of Failure + Severity Damage MOD

Example: You're walking along a ledge about 50 feet above the ground. The ledge isn't particularly narrow, so the Gamemaster decides this is a Typical action, and assigns a Target Number of 7. You've got a Phys. Ed. Skill Grade of "B," so you roll 2d6 and add +2 for your skill MOD. Assuming you get a Skill Total of 6, you fail the Skill Test and prepare to plummet 50 feet to the ground. The height is less than 60 feet but greater than 40, so the Severity is SEVERE. A SEVERE hazard adds +4 to the damage. The Margin of Failure is 1, plus the Damage Modifier of 4 means that you're gonna land on your butt and take 5 boxes of Physical Damage.

Characters simply aren't going to get up and walk away from Severities greater than DEVASTATING without special protection, like a fireproof suit or a parachute. Without special protection, characters will be critically injured. Fill all their remaining Physical Damage boxes, scrape up whatever's left, and send it to the Infirmary.

Severity	Hazard Grade	Damage Mod	Falling Height	Enviro. Hazards
DEVASTATING	FACULTY	+6	100 Feet	Raging Inferno, Heavy Flamethrower, Butane Tank Explosion, Lightning
SEVERE	A	+4	60 Feet	Electric Fence, Concentrated Acid, Bonfire, Industrial-Grade Fireworks, Blowtorch, Getting Splashed with Boiling Oil
MODERATE	B	+2	40 Feet	Moderate Electric Shock, Torch, Stovetop Burner, Campfire, Large Fireworks
MILD	C	+1	20 Feet	Acid, Small Fireworks, Smoldering Campfire
LOW	D	-2 (minimum 0)	10 Feet	Lighter, Candle, Hot Coffee, Diluted Acid

We are all drowning on the face of time and all else has drowned, is drowning, or will drown.

Henry Miller

Suffocation and Drowning

This probably won't come up too often, but your character might get stuck in an airtight vault, suffocate from smoke inhalation in a burning room, or risk drowning in a dark pool (assuming your character doesn't have gills). On second thought, this probably will come up a lot.

Everyone can hold their breath for one turn. After that, it gets tougher and tougher. On the second turn, you need to make a Brawn Pass/Fail test against a Target Number of 5. Each turn, the Difficulty Upshifts by one to a maximum of 13. If you fail a test, you'll take Physical Damage equal to the Margin of Failure between your Skill Total and Target Number.

Here's the bad news: you have to keep rolling (and taking damage) until you get yourself clear of the danger or someone comes to rescue you.

Poison and Disease

Some games get into a lot of semi-realistic detail about the types and effects of poison and disease. This isn't one of them.

Every poison and disease are rated by their Severity. Cross-reference the Severity with the Target Number. This is the number that you need to beat on a Brawn roll to avoid being poisoned or contracting the disease.

Poison

Fortunately, in this game at least, poison either works or it doesn't. If you succeed on your Brawn roll, you're fine. If you fail, you take the Margin of Failure in damage points, plus the damage modifier listed in the Penalty column. You also apply the listed penalty to all skill rolls for as long as the poison is in your system (usually a couple of scenes). Please note that the penalty is applied after the roll is failed and is not applied to the initial Brawn roll! Also, the penalty is cumulative with any other penalties from mental and physical injuries!

Example: Some rat poison "accidentally" got into the food in the dining hall. You need to make a Brawn roll against a Target Number of 11. Your Skill Total is an 8. You take the margin in damage, 3 points, plus the damage modifier, +4. That's a total of 7 points worth of poisoning damage. On top of everything else, you've got 2 Downshifts on all rolls until the poison is out of your system. Since rat poison is a Grade "A" poison, it's going to be with you for 4 scenes or 4-6 hours. It's going to be a long night of puking.

Disease

Disease is almost as much fun as poison. If you succeed on your Brawn roll, you're fine. You didn't catch it. If you fail, you automatically take the Damage Modifier listed in the Penalty column in damage points per day (i.e., a moderate disease will cause 2 damage points per day). You do not add the margin between the roll and the target number to the damage. You need to roll again each day; taking damage and applying the penalty to your rolls (including subsequent Brawn resistance rolls!) until you finally beat the Target Number and recover.

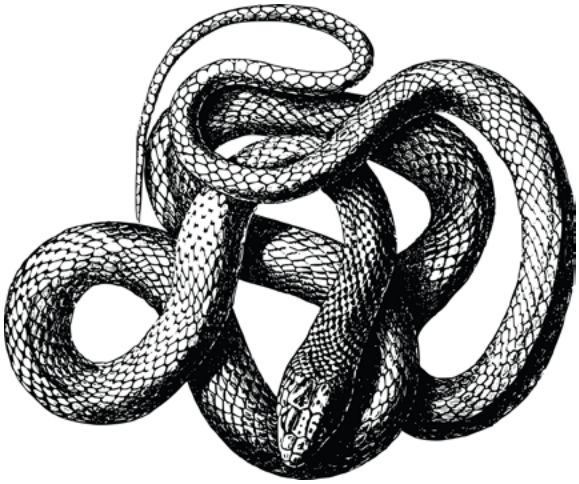
Example: After trudging through a swamp, you caught Malaria, a Severe disease. You need to roll an 11 or better on your Brawn Roll or you're coming down with a full-blown case. Assuming your Skill Total was a 9, you've got the disease, and you suffer 4 points of damage (note that this is not modified by the Margin of Failure). You also take 2 Downshifts on all your skill rolls, including your Brawn roll, until you kick this disease. If you beat an 11 tomorrow, you'll be fine. If not, you'll take another 4 points of damage and hope for a better roll the day after.

Characters suffering the effects of disease do not recover damage normally.

Poison Grade	Poison Duration
FACULTY	6 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	4 Scenes/4-6 hours
B	2 Scenes/2-3 hours
C	1 Scene/1 hour

Severity	Target #	Penalty	Poison/ Disease Grade	Examples
Devastating	13	2 Down-shifts to All Rolls/+6 Damage	FACULTY	(Hospitalization required, but cure is not guaranteed – if it exists at all) Bubonic Plague, Smallpox, Ebola, Blowfish Toxin, Cyanide, Polonium
Severe	11	2 Down-shifts to All Rolls/+4 Damage	A	(Hospitalization required, but cure is available) Malaria, Dysentery, Cobra Venom, Rat Poison
Moderate	9	Downshift to All Rolls/ +2 Damage	B	(Incapacitating, but hospitalization is not required) Flu, Measles, Rabies
Mild	7	Downshift to All Rolls/ +0 Damage	C	Common Cold, Mild Fever, Chickenpox, Scorpion Sting

While under the wracking throes of whatever disease you've managed to contract, your body is too busy fighting the infection for natural healing to occur (pg. XX). Medical treatment, Disturbing Abilities, and Merit Points still work normally.



Terror

Fear is a type of Mental Anguish and is resisted with a Pass/Fail Cool test. If you fail the test, you suffer a number of Mental Anguish points equal to the Margin of Failure between your Cool Skill Total and the Target Number. Fortunately, out of necessity, most everyone at the Academy has built-up a strong resistance to fear. What would send a normal person shrieking generally won't bother a student too much.

The alien creatures in this game have a Terror Grade. This is a measure of their mind-warping, drool-inducing scariness. When a normal human first lays eyes on a creature with a Terror Grade, they must make a Pass/Fail Cool test against the Target Number associated with the monster's Terror Grade (i.e., a creature with a Terror Grade of "B" will trigger a Cool Skill Test against a Target Number of 9). After the character has passed a couple of Terror rolls and become inured to seeing the monster, the GM may opt to Downshift the difficulty by a rank or two.

Terror Grade	Severity	Target #	Examples
FACULTY	Devastating	13	Seeing an elder entity
A	Severe	11	Seeing a mythos creature or another plane of existence, extreme torture
B	Moderate	9	Seeing a friend get mauled, seeing a decayed body
C	Mild	7	Seeing a lot of blood
D	Low	5	Hearing a scream, being trapped in the dark

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear. And the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Supernatural Horror in Literature"

Weapons And Armor

While they aren't common, weapons add their modifier to the damage done in combat. If you successfully hit your opponent with a Margin of Success of at least 1, you add the Damage MOD for the weapon to the Margin of Success. Weapons won't help you succeed; they only add to the damage if you hit! Use the charts below as a guide:

Hand-to-Hand Weapons

Grade	Damage Mod	Severity	Hand-To-Hand Weapons
FACULTY	+6	Devastating	High-Voltage Power Lines, Construction Equipment, Getting Hit by a Car
A	+4	Severe/Heavy	Chainsaw, Maul, Machete, Fire Axe, Bonfire
B	+2	Moderate	Kitchen Knife, Bat, Hand Axe, Large Improvised Weapon, Torch
C	+1	Mild	Pocket Knife, Shiv, Small Improvised Weapon
D	0	Low	Punching, Kicking

Ranged Weapons

Grade	Damage Mod	Severity	Ranged Weapons
FACULTY	+6	Devastating	Bomb, Flamethrower, Mounted Machinegun, Bazooka
A	+4	Severe/Heavy	Big Gun, Rifle, Grenade
B	+2	Moderate	Pistol, Nail Gun, Thrown Hatchet, Arrow, Razor-Edged Boomerang
C	+1	Mild	Slingshot, Throwing Stars
D	0	Low	Small Rock, Baseball

Anything beyond FACULTY should be out of the scope for the game. Most of the immensely powerful entities, like Cthulhu, are immune to nuclear weapons anyway.

Example: You hit your opponent with a length of chain with a Skill Total of 13. Your opponent tries to block your blow with a Skill Total of 10. Tough break. You inflict 3 points of damage. The GM decides that a chain is probably in the same category as a baseball bat or an improvised weapon – Grade "B" – so you would add 2 to the total damage done, for a total of 5 boxes of damage. If you had rolled a 10 – a tie – you would not have done any considerable damage (Margin of Success = 0) and would not have added the modifier for the chain.

Non-Lethal Weapons

Sometimes you don't want to hurt your opponent, just make them hate their lives for a little while. Subdual weapons do Physical Damage just like regular weapons, but it's all Temporary. All damage inflicted by these weapons disappears at the end of the scene.

Non-Lethal Weapons

Weapon	Range	Grade	Damage Mod	Notes
Taser	Near	A	+4	Only good for 1 shot
Stun Gun	Close (Melee)	B	+2	
Pepper Spray	Close (Melee)	C	+1	Only effective if sprayed in the face

Insults and Humiliation

For mental and social attacks, the weapons are a little different. Sure, there are psychotropic drugs which can really mess you up (treat these as poisons that do Mental Anguish instead of Physical Damage), but juicy family secrets are pure gold: Bad grades, secret adoption certificates, bankruptcy filings, criminal records, etc. The juicier the information you dig-up, the bigger your modifier (use the Severity column of the weapon chart as a guide). As we mentioned before, the number of witnesses can also affect the amount of Mental Anguish inflicted. Humiliating someone in front of a crowd may merit an Upshift to the Severity, while a lack of witnesses might do the opposite.

Like non-lethal weapons, damage from insults and humiliation is *Temporary,* healing at the rate of one box per scene plus one box per night.

"I'll beat thee, but I would infect my hands."

William Shakespeare, "Timon of Athens"

"It is true that I have sent six bullets through the head of my best friend, and yet I hope to shew by this statement that I am not his murderer. At first I shall be called a madman — madder than the man I shot in his cell at the Arkham Sanitarium."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep"

Armor

Outside of the barracks of Campus Security, armor is hard to come by. You'll probably have to improvise or make it yourself, but it's worth it. Just as weapons add to damage inflicted, armor absorbs damage.

Every point of protection will absorb one point of damage. If you are hit for 5 points of damage, and you're wearing football padding (2 points of Protection), you will only take 3 points of damage.

Grade	Type	Protection	Examples	Penalty
FACULTY	Superheavy	6	Futuristic Powered Armor	Downshift on Physical Rolls
A	Heavy	4	Riot Gear/ Primitive Plate Armor	Downshift on Physical Rolls
B	Medium	2	Athletic Protection/Bulletproof Clothes	N/A
C	Light	1	Homemade Armor (duct tape, tin cans)/ Heavy Jacket/ Extra Layers of Clothes	N/A
D	Wrecked	0	None (the armor is in ruins and is getting in your way!)	Downshift on Physical Rolls

Of course, armor is bulky, hot, and uncomfortable. It's also hard to conceal. People are going to notice if you're walking around in riot gear and may not react in a favorable manner (i.e., they're going to stare or ask a lot of questions). If you somehow manage to get a hold of Heavy Armor (Grade "A" and above), just be aware that you're going to take a Downshift on all your physical rolls. You may also have trouble getting up again if you fall over.

Armor doesn't last forever; it can only take so much punishment before it degrades, offering less protection as it begins to fall apart. Against a superior attack (i.e., a weapon or Disturbing Ability of a higher Grade than your armor), your armor will only protect you from a number of attacks equal to the Protection rating before the armor drops a Grade. Armor that has degraded to a "D" is an *impediment*. Pieces are falling off, getting in your way, or obscuring your vision. As a result, it is less than worthless; it's actively giving you a penalty as long as you're still wearing it. After you get a chance to fix the straps or bang-out the plates using the Art skill (or Boffin for high-tech armor), the armor will be as good as new (test against the appropriate skill). The highest Target Number achieved, up to the original Grade of the armor, is the level of repair.

Example: You're wearing football padding, which is Grade "B." The first 2 times you're hit with a chainsaw (Grade "A"), the armor will reduce the damage you receive by 2 points. After that, it drops to Grade "C" and only protects you from 1 point of damage from 1 attack before it becomes junk (downgraded to "D" and you get a Downshift on all physical rolls while you are still wearing it). If you had been attacked with a baseball bat (Grade "B") instead of a chainsaw your armor would not degrade. To repair your armor, you test against your Art skill. If your Skill Total is 9 or higher, the armor is restored to Grade "B." Since the armor is currently Grade "C," anything less than a 9 has no effect.

Combat Example

The Set-Up

Andrew, Bill, and Evan have been affected by a mind-altering gas engineered by the Migo. They designed the gas to increase human aggression responses, and our three ~~idiots~~ heroes have gotten a good whiff of it. They managed to escape the Migos' hidden laboratory before the effects kicked-in. The GM has decided that the effects of the gas will last one scene . . . provided they last that long.

Andrew's Abilities

Initiative MOD: +4 (**Paranoia** "C" and **Brainiac** "A"), **Medieval** "B", **Shoot** "A", **Smackdown** "C", **Phys. Ed.** "C", **Cool** "C", **Trash Talk** "C"

Andrew is armed with a *pistol* ("B")

Bill's Abilities

Initiative MOD: +2 (**Paranoia** "C" and **Brainiac** "B"), **Medieval** "B", **Shoot** "B", **Smackdown** "B", **Phys. Ed.** "C", **Cool** "B", **Trash Talk** "D"

Bill is unarmed but is wearing *scavenged football and hockey padding* ("B")

Evan's Abilities

Initiative MOD: +2 (**Paranoia** "B" and **Brainiac** "C"), **Medieval** "C", **Shoot** "C", **Smackdown** "C", **Phys. Ed.** "B", **Cool** "B", **Trash Talk** "C"

Evan is armed with a *chainsaw* ("A")

The First Turn

As the three characters froth at the mouth in a chemically-induced rage, the GM calls for initiative. They're all aware of one another, so there's no chance for surprise. Each character rolls 1d6 and adds their Initiative MOD. We get the following results:

Andrew: 7	**Bill:** 5	**Evan:** 5

Bill and Evan are tied. Bill has the higher Brainiac skill, so he goes first. The initiative order looks like this:

1st: Andrew	**2nd:** Bill	**3rd:** Evan

For his action, Andrew has decided to split his attack and pop a cap in both Bill and Evan, and with a Shoot of "A," he's good enough to do it. Splitting his attack means that his effective skill is a "B" for both attacks. There's no modifier for range since they're at close range. The GM decides that there aren't any other modifiers and asks Andrew to roll a Contested Shoot Test against Bill and Evan's Phys. Ed. skills. For the first roll, Andrew rolls a 10 and for the second, he rolls a 5. Bill rolls a 7 and Evan rolls a 5.

The results:

- Andrew's attack on Bill: 10 + 2 = 12
- Bill's defense roll: 7 + 0 = 7
- Andrew hits Bill.
- Andrew's attack on Evan: 5 + 2 = 7
- Evan's defense roll: 5 + 2 = 7

Tie! The shot grazes Evan but does no damage.

Since Bill was hit, we need to determine damage. The Margin of Success was 5, +2 for the weapon, for 7 points of Physical Damage! Fortunately, Bill is wearing armor, and reduces the damage done by 2 points. Since the weapon and the armor are the same Grade ("B"), the armor doesn't degrade. Having taken 5 points of damage, Bill marks all three boxes on the "Bruised" level and two boxes in the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level. He now has a penalty of 1 Downshift to physical Skill Tests for the rest of this turn. And since he completely filled one damage level ("Bruised"), he also must roll to remain standing.

The GM asks Bill to roll his Phys. Ed. skill against Andrew's Skill Total – a 12. Bill has a downshift due to his injury and rolls a 10. With a -2, he fails the roll and falls. Since he's now prone, he's got another Downshift until he can regain his feet on his action.

Lucky for Bill, he's the next one up. As one of his minor actions, Bill gets up, eliminating one of his modifiers. Bill takes a swing at Andrew and rolls a 12! Since Bill's been Downshifted to a "C" due to his gunshot wound, there's no modifier, but Andrew doesn't have a modifier either (Phys. Ed. "C"). Getting desperate, Andrew spends some Merit Points to gain an Upshift (Phys. Ed. is now "B"). Unfortunately, he rolls a 6. It was a noble effort, though.

- Bill's attack on Andrew: 12 + 0 = 12
- Andrew's defense roll: 6 + 2 = 8

Bill rings Andrew's bell with a solid hit.

Bill's unarmed and Andrew isn't wearing any armor, so the Margin of Success is the amount of damage done: 4 points. Now it's Andrew's turn to fill-in some Physical Damage boxes. He marks all three boxes on the "Bruised" level and one box in the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level. Just like Bill, he has a penalty of 1 Downshift to physical Skill Tests for the rest of the turn. And since he completely filled one damage level ("Bruised"), he also must roll or be knocked down.

Seeing the bloodlust in Evan's eyes (he's crazy under the best of circumstances), Andrew spends another Merit Point to heal one box of damage. He erases the one "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" box and becomes "Bruised," avoiding the penalty.

Andrew still must roll to remain standing, though. And with a Target Number of 12, his chances are pretty low. He rolls and gets a 9. His Phys. Ed. skill of "C" doesn't

help, so he fails the test and is knocked down by the force of the blow.

Now Evan acts. Screaming like a wild animal, he leaps on Andrew, chainsaw revving. The GM asks Evan to make a Contested Medieval Test against Andrew's ability to dodge (Phys. Ed.). Andrew asks the GM if he can use his pistol to parry the strike, instead. It's not a large object, but he reasons that it's made of metal and only has to stop one hit. The GM is prepared to object, but instead rolls her eyes and decides to allow it, but she assigns a Downshift and notes that the gun will be destroyed by the chainsaw in the process. Both characters roll their Medieval skills. Evan rolls a 10 and Andrew rolls a 10. Andrew has a "B" in Medieval, but he's also prone, so the Upshift and one Downshift cancel each other out, leaving Andrew with a single Downshift for trying something so blatantly stupid.

- Evan's attack on Andrew: 10 + 0 = 10
- Andrew's defense roll: 10 - 2 = 8

Evan turns Andrew into hamburger.

(The moral of the story: don't try to parry a chainsaw with a handgun.)

The Margin of Success is only 2 points, but a chainsaw does horrible things to people (weapon Grade "A"), doing +4 damage on a hit! Andrew is feeling decidedly uncomfortable as he takes 6 points of Physical Damage. His "Bruised" level was completely filled, so 6 points of damage is enough to completely fill his "Pretty Messed-Up" and "World of Pain" damage levels. Andrew has a penalty of 1 Downshift on <u>all</u> Skill Tests until he's healed, and if he takes one more point of damage, he'll be unconscious. On the bright side, he's already prone, so he doesn't have to roll to see if he's knocked down.

The chainsaw made quite a mess and the GM asks Bill to make a Pass/Fail Terror test against a Target Number of 7. If he fails, he'll take the Margin of Failure as Mental Anguish damage. Bill rolls the dice and gets a 4. Adding +2 for his MOD, his Skill Total is 6. He fails the roll and takes one point of Mental Anguish. He's now "Stunned," but there's no penalty for that damage level.

On this gruesome image, everyone has taken their actions and the combat turn is over. Any effect with a duration of "until the end of the turn" ends.

The Second Turn

To recap, Andrew is badly wounded and he's flat on his back. Bill is lightly wounded, but his penalty expired at the end of the first turn. He's taken some Mental Anguish, too, but not enough to have any kind of impact. Evan is unscathed, so far.

The GM asks for new initiative rolls and everyone rolls 1d6 and adds their Initiative MODs. We get the following results:

Andrew: 9	**Bill:** 11	**Evan:** 8

The initiative order looks like this:

1st: Bill	**2nd:** Andrew	**3rd:** Evan

Bill knows that sooner or later, Evan's coming for him, and he's well aware that his armor won't last long against that chainsaw. Also, who thought it was a promising idea to trust Evan with a chainsaw? Bill could change tactics and try humiliating Evan, trying instead to inflict some Mental Anguish, but his low Trash Talk skill makes that an iffy choice. Maybe he can tackle Evan while he's distracted with Andrew? He'd rather not get into hand-to-hand combat without something he can use to parry, so he asks the GM if there's anything around him that could be used as a weapon.

The GM considers this, noting that they're outside the hidden lab, and tells Bill that there are a couple of small branches and rocks lying around. Bill would prefer something heftier but there isn't anything nearby. Bill tells the GM that he's going to grab a sturdy stick and whack Evan in the arm with it. Ideally, he'd like Evan to drop the weapon, but if he can do some damage as well, that's just icing on the cake. The GM assigns a Grade of "C" to the light weapon.

Looking around and picking up the stick were minor actions, so Bill can still attack. A character can take a couple of minor actions (within reason) and still make a Skill Test. If he wanted to search for a better weapon (a Paranoia test) or travel any distance to get it (taking a full move action), Bill wouldn't have been able to attack, as well.

The GM asks Bill to make a Medieval Contested Skill Test against Evan's Medieval skill (if he wants to parry) or his Phys. Ed. (if he want to dodge, instead). Evan decides to dodge. He hasn't taken any damage and his Phys. Ed. skill is higher. Bill's penalty for being at the "It's Just a Flesh Wound!" level ended with the conclusion of the first turn, but the GM assigns a Downshift for the disarm attempt. Bill's effective Medieval skill is now a "C."

Bill rolls a 9 and Evan rolls a 6.

Bill's attack on Evan: 9 + 0 = 9

Evan's defense roll: 6 + 2 = 8

Bill hits Evan with a relatively weak blow – but it connects.

The Margin of Success was 1 (the minimum for a successful hit) and adds 1 for the small branch (weapon Grade "C"). He does two points of damage to Evan, who drops the chainsaw. Evan marks two boxes in the "Bruised" damage level.

It's now Andrew's action. He knows he can't take another hit. Andrew stands up and, as a minor action, grabs the fallen chainsaw for himself. He's no longer prone, but he still has a Downshift for his injuries, dropping his "B" in Medieval to a "C."

Andrew revs the chainsaw and grins. "Come get some." He'd been waiting a long time to say that . . .

On that disturbing note, we'll leave our three heroes to finish off the combat turn and one another.

Healing

Mental and Physical Damage naturally heal at the rate of one box each per night of rest, barring disease or some other factor. In addition, characters recover one box of Physical Damage at the end of any scene in which they suffered a physical injury *and* one box of Mental Anguish at the end of any scene in which they suffered a mental injury.

There are two exceptions to this rule:

1. Mental Anguish suffered through insults or humiliation. This heals at the rate of one box per scene plus one box per night of rest.
2. Non-lethal Physical Damage. This heals completely at the end of the scene in which it was received.

Healing can also be accelerated by using Merit Points or by employing relevant Disturbing Abilities (such as Rejuvenate or Regeneration).

Getting Treatment

Healing may be increased using First Aid, or Empathy in the case of Mental Anguish. To use First Aid or Empathy, you will need to make a Pass/Fail test against the injury's Target Number:

Healing, ironically enough, resolves like damage. The Margin of Success between the healer's Skill Total and the Target Number determines how many damage boxes are erased. The GM may award Upshifts or Downshifts depending upon the availability of medical equipment, medicine, etc. Additionally, several characters can team-up to help a patient. Regardless of whether the test is successful or not, only one First Aid and one Empathy test may be performed on a patient per day.

Example: You've taken some nasty hits, and you're at the "World of Pain" damage level. Fortunately, you have a friend nearby . . . but they don't know anything more about First Aid than what they've seen on TV. Checking the Grade of "C," they've got a +0 modifier, and will need to beat an 11. Amazingly, they roll double sixes, beating the difficulty by one. You heal one damage box. Hopefully, you can find someone a little more competent to heal you tomorrow.

As you heal, you erase the boxes in your track from the bottom up, even if you previously sustained non-lethal or humiliation damage. There should never be empty boxes in the middle of your

Wound	Healing Target
OK	*Go away you hypochondriac*
Bruised/Stunned	5
It's Just a Flesh Wound!/In Denial	7
Pretty Messed-Up/ Picked Up a Tic	9
World of Pain/	
Really Freaked-Out	11
Disemboweled/Gibbering Incoherently	13
School Infirmary/Visiting Arkham	Special

damage track – only at the end. Functionally, it's like getting hurt, only in reverse. Starting with any Temporary damage (non-lethal or humiliation damage), the worst wounds heal first, and they grow less severe as you recover. As you heal, your penalties drop as well. Once you've healed enough wound boxes to empty your current wound level, your wound penalty is replaced with the preceding one, if any.

Example: After a bad scare, Abby has filled-in 2 boxes in the "Picked Up a Tic" level, and currently suffers a Downshift on all mental and social skill rolls. Christina rolls an Empathy test against a Target Number of 9 and gets a Skill Total of 12. That's 3 boxes of healing. Abby erases both boxes in "Picked Up a Tic" – emptying the level – and one box in "In Denial." Abby is now "In Denial" and suffers only a Downshift to mental and social rolls for the remainder of the turn.

If Abby incurred the Mental Anguish during the current scene, she heals an additional box of damage at the end of the scene. It's not enough to get her to "Stunned," but it does clear-out one more "In Denial" box. Even though she's still "In Denial," Abby won't suffer the penalty again. It's only applied once per level. Tomorrow morning, Abby will naturally heal one more box of Mental Anguish, emptying the level and bringing her to "Stunned."

Example 2: Let's say that Abby took 4 boxes of damage from a bad scare (regular damage) and 4 more from being embarrassed by a group of snobby girls (Temporary damage). That means that Abby currently has 2 boxes filled in the "Picked Up a Tic" level. If Christina heals 3 boxes of Mental Anguish, the temporary damage is healed first. That leaves Abby with 1 more point of Temporary Mental Anguish, which will heal at the end of the scene, anyway. The remaining 4 points will either have to be treated or heal naturally at the rate of 1 per night.

Damage is healed from the bottom of the damage track first, starting with Temporary damage.

Merit Points can also heal damage. Each Merit point you spend is worth one box of healing, either Physical Damage or Mental Anguish.

Antidotes and Antibiotics

Poison and disease are horrible. Fortunately, we live in a world of wondrous scientific breakthroughs! You or another character can make a First Aid test to try to cure the disease or poison by rolling against the Severity Target Number. Remember, although several characters can work together to provide treatment (pg. XX), only one First Aid roll can be made each day. You can also try healing yourself, but if you're badly injured, you might want a steadier hand to patch you up. Having access to medical supplies and facilities will grant an Upshift on this roll.

Once a disease has been cured, the character can begin healing naturally.

Example: You've still got Malaria, a Severe disease, and the chances of beating an 11 with two Downshifts aren't good. In fact, you're probably going to die of Malaria. Fortunately, a wandering group of three medics (all Grade "B" in First Aid) discovered you and dragged your disease-ridden body to their mobile hospital unit. Since the medics are working together, the two additional medics add 2

Upshifts ("B" + 2 Upshifts). And since they have a mobile hospital unit, the GM grants them an additional Upshift. Their First Aid Grade is effectively MASTER with a +6 to cure your malaria (3d6+6). Against a Target Number of 11, your chances are looking up! If the medical team achieves a Skill Total of 15, you would not only be cured, but you'd also heal 4 points of damage (the Margin of Success for the treatment Skill Test).

Special

You may have noticed something by now: YOUR CHARACTER CAN'T DIE. You can get pretty messed-up, but you can't buy the farm, meet your maker, croak, drop dead, meet the choir invisible, etc. However, if someone is so badly hurt that they need to visit Dr. West in the school infirmary or they need to take a little break at Arkham, their injuries have reached a critical level and can *only* be treated by trained professionals. Traditional healing skills, Merit Points, and Disturbing Skills simply won't cut it. School officials will arrive on the scene soon to carry the poor, unfortunate soul off to the infirmary or Arkham for a little quiet time. Don't worry, they'll be back soon enough! Dr. West and the good folks at Arkham are the best in their fields and most people come back with no major behavioral issues. Mostly.

Voluntarily Going to the Infirmary

There are a lot of good reasons why you should pay a visit to the good doctors at the infirmary rather than relying on your friends to patch you up. Foremost among them is the fact that the infirmary employs skilled doctors and nurses (Dr. West only handles the most critical cases). Most of them have a Skill Grade of FACULTY in First Aid and a lot of the necessary drugs and equipment to do the job properly. However, the doctors are required to report any injuries to the administration, and that might lead to a lot of questions you probably don't want to answer.

"I can't die. I've experienced death countless times. Sometimes I see a bright light; sometimes I see heaven or hell. But eventually no matter what I wake up in my bed wearing my same old clothes. And the worst part? Nobody even remembers me dying."

South Park, "Mysterion Rises"

"The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of the infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

Sanity

While the Academy may offer the most progressive curriculum available, it's not exactly a nurturing environment, particularly for one's mental health. Students are going to suffer a lot of Mental Anguish and it's going to add up.

Losing Sanity

There are a lot of ways to lose your marbles.

- Whenever you increase your Eldritch Lore skill, you automatically lose 1 point of Sanity. This can *never* be recovered. A Summoner (starting Sanity of 9) with a Grade of "A" in Eldritch Lore, for example, will never have more than a 7 Sanity Score unless they lose a Grade in Eldritch Lore and forget what they've learned.
- Whenever you max-out your Mental Anguish track and take a trip to Arkham, your Mental Anguish track refreshes, but you lose 1 point of Sanity.
- Whenever you max-out your Physical Damage track and visit Dr. West in the Infirmary, your track refreshes, but you lose 1 point of Sanity.

As you lose sanity, consult the Sanity chart for the effects on your personality.

The effects of diminishing Sanity are cumulative! If your character is teetering on the brink of insanity with a paltry Sanity Score of 2, you'll have two disorders and will have to roll for nightmares every night.

Regaining Sanity

After you've lost your marbles, it's not that easy to find them again. If the PCs manage to thwart the plans of the Great Old Ones or their minions, or the PCs destroy a particularly powerful entity, such as a shuggoth or a Star Spawn, they can regain one point of Sanity, up to their maximum (nine – or ten for "Mondays" – minus the number of Eldritch Lore Skill Grades above "C"). Players shouldn't expect to receive these rewards every time they play. These are significant achievements, usually the culmination of several sessions of play and investigation. Disrupting a weekend cult bake sale or

Sanity Chart

Sanity Score	Effect
10	Totally sane. (Monday character starting score)
9	Starting score for Witches, Mad Scientists, Dreamers, Hybrids, and Summoners
8	A little odd, but nothing you wouldn't see at a comic convention or a pro-football game. You suffer a nightmare about strange rites and cyclopean ruins. You don't heal any damage the night your Sanity decreases.
7	You've picked up a personality quirk (see below).
6	Your quirk becomes a full-blown disorder (see below).
5	You're beginning to understand the soothing and protective qualities of tin foil. You don't heal any damage the night your Sanity decreases.
4	You've picked up a brand-new personality quirk!
3	Yay, more nightmares! Each night, roll 2d6. On a roll of 2, you suffer horrible nightmares. You don't heal any damage that night and suffer a Downshift on Mental skill tests until you get some rest.
2	Kinda bonkers. Your quirk becomes a full-blown disorder.
1	Rapidly losing your grip on reality.
0	Permanent vacation in the student wing of Arkham. Maybe your former friends will come to visit you. Visiting hours are Sundays, 2:10pm-6:30pm.

Optional: Other Methods of Regaining Sanity

Here are two additional options for regaining Sanity. Permanent insanity is the closest this game comes to traditional character death, and these options will significantly erode that threat. Your GM will have to consider whether she will allow these options in her game.

- Players who have missed a game session are assumed to be spending time in the infirmary, speaking to a staff psychiatrist. They can regain 1 Sanity point for having missed the fun. Their characters still must keep up with all the schoolwork they missed, however!
- Alternatively, if the Sanity levels of the group are dwindling, the GM can decide that the group needs to visit the infirmary "for observation." They lose a week of game time and need to make-up any work or tests they missed, but they each regain 1 sanity point.

beating-up a run-of-the-mill ghoul won't cut it.

By doing these things, the PCs regain some measure of confidence and importance. They know that humanity isn't insignificant in the universe. We can make a difference – if only a small one.

Quirks and Disorders

At some point, you're probably going to pick one of these up. Simply put, quicks are minor behavioral peccadillos, weird little eccentricities. Disorders are a full-blown symptom of insanity and mental decay.

Quirks

If you pick-up a quirk, choose something interesting: trouble sleeping, hypnotized by squirrels, a dislike of spiders or rats, distrust of kids from a certain dorm, etc. Whenever your quirk comes into play, you may either spend a Merit Point or make a Pass/Fail Cool test against an Average Difficulty (Target Number 7) to suppress it for an entire scene. There are times you might not want to do that, however. Playing your quirk could be amusing and could earn you additional Experience Points (pg. XX) towards improving your character.

Disorders

If your quirk develops into a full-blown disorder, erase the quirk from your sheet and pick a disorder to replace it. You can select a disorder from the list below or you can choose something interesting you found on the internet (with your GM's permission, of course). Whenever your disorder comes into play or you attempt to ignore your disorder, you may spend 2 Merit Points or make a Pass/Fail Cool test against a Target Number of 9 (or 11 for something really hard, like a pyromaniac trying to resist setting off some pretty, pretty fireworks) to suppress your disorder for the rest of the scene. Otherwise, your disorder will kick-in and you will suffer a Downshift to all appropriate rolls. Just like quirks, playing your disorder can earn you valuable Experience Points.

Example: You have a phobia of spiders, and, of course, you wind-up fighting some hairy, giant spider-thing with huge fangs. The GM calls for a Cool roll against a Target Number of 11, because this isn't just any ordinary spider. Swearing at your GM, you roll your Cool and only get a Skill Total of 10. You're going to have a Downshift on any actions against the arachnoid horror. If you give in to your phobia and run like a craven coward, you would not receive a Downshift to your Phys. Ed. skill.

Example 2: Abby has Obsessive-Compulsive disorder, and she must touch all the furniture in her room three times, in order, before she can leave – even though she's going to be late for class. If Abby fails her Cool test, she either must complete her ritual and be late, or she can go to class and suffer a Downshift on all rolls until she can return to her dorm room and touch her furniture.

"We all go a little mad sometimes."

Robert Bloch, "Psycho"

Sample Disorders

Bi-Polar: You suffer from wild mood swings from depression to mania.

Delusions: You have developed an unreasonable and unshakeable belief in something (someone has replaced all your internal organs, actors on television are trying to relay messages to you, you or someone else has been chosen to be the avatar of one of the Great Old Ones, etc.).

Depression: You suffer from feelings of sadness, loneliness or apathy that may sap your concentration and interest in activities.

Dissociative: You develop one or more distinct personalities, which may or may not be aware of, or even respect, your core personality.

Hallucinations: You have begun to see and hear things that no one else can sense.

Kleptomania: You have an urge to steal, without regard to need or object value.

Obsessive-Compulsive: You need to engage in persistent or ritualistic words or behaviors.

Panic: You suffer from frequent feelings of anxiety and/or fear for no clear reason.

Paranoia: You have developed a fear of being watched and observed.

Phobia: You have developed an unreasoning fear of something (spiders, open spaces, heights, etc.).

Pyromania: You have an obsessive need to start and observe fires.

Selective Amnesia: You've blocked out certain, painful memories and the circumstances surrounding them.

> "The spasms that resulted from the first questions were violent and pitiable – and that evening a closed car took his poor struggling body to the Arkham Sanitarium."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep"*

Medicine

Courtesy of Arkham Sanitarium, there are experimental drugs that can control quirks and disorders, but the side-effects of these drugs are often as bad as the disorders themselves. If a character is suspected of having some variety of mental illness, they may be prescribed "something to help them cope."

As long as the character takes their meds (usually one dose per day), they receive 1 Upshift to their Cool test when trying to suppress their quirk or disorder. However, the character will also suffer an unpleasant side-effect from the medication. The GM will secretly decide on the nature of the side effect and whether it will have a mechanical effect (modifiers and rules) or narrative effect (roleplaying) on the game. The character will be in for a surprise unless they can get online and research the potential side-effects ahead of time. Here's hoping it's not some kind of oily discharge!

Some suggested side effects include:

- Internal hemorrhaging (2 points of Physical Damage per dose)

- Sluggishness (Downshift -Phys. Ed.)
- Gas/bloating (Downshift Appeal)
- Confusion (Downshift Brainiac and Education)
- Ringing in the ears or blurry vision (Downshift Paranoia)
- Night terrors (per the effect of a Sanity Score of 3)
- Switch one disorder for another (hallucinations, anxiety)
- Sleepwalking
- Diarrhea
- Excessive sweating or itching
- Violent behavior
- Alopecia (hair loss, Downshift Appeal)
- Interferes with supernatural abilities (Downshift Disturbing Skills)

Characters can go off their meds, losing both the Upshift and the side-effect with their first missed dose. However, the health professionals at the school would certainly disapprove of that and might take steps to ensure that the character gets the help they need . . .

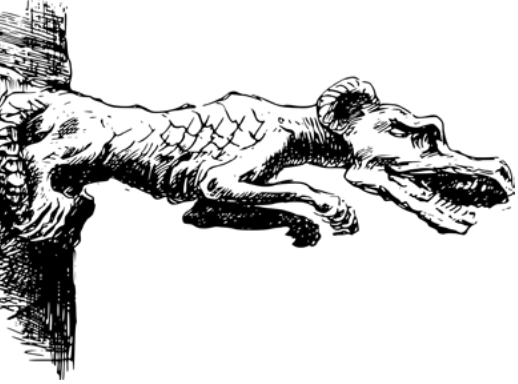
A Quick Note About Mental Illness

Insanity was a common thread in Lovecraft's writing, and many of his protagonists suffered from mental blocks, which protected the remnants of their sanity and prevented them from clearly recalling specific details about their encounters. Since this is a somewhat humorous game, we've taken a less-than-serious approach to pretty much everything, but many of the themes in this game are no joke. The conditions listed above are *real* disorders. In real life, mental illness can be frightening and emotionally painful for the patient as well as their family and friends. Please, don't be a jerk.

NOTE TO SELF:

ADD BIG MAGIC/TECH TABLE

HERE.



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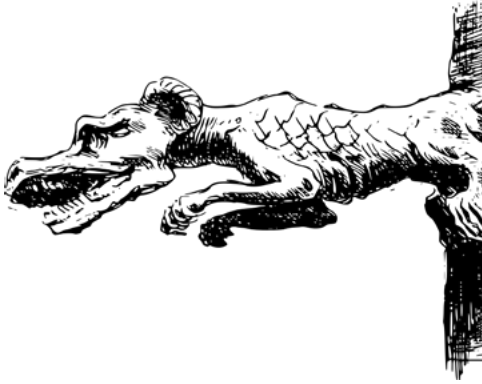
MAGIC AND SCIENCE



The Fine Art Of Witchcraft

Kelly Harper must go.

In her dorm room, Angela Pritchett fumed. Her mother had graduated from *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* as valedictorian. Her *grandmother* had graduated from *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* as valedictorian. *And so would she.*

In the weeks since they had arrived at school, Kelly had proven herself to be an annoyingly competent rival. Angela had always stood above her classmates, effortlessly earning top marks in the most challenging classes. However, Kelly Harper had matched her, quiz-for-quiz, test-for-test.

This simply would not do.

Angela had scoured her great-grandmother's grimoire for the perfect incantation to… sideline her rival. After all, she had mused, didn't an education at *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* include a robust curriculum in the occult? In a way, she was doing the poor girl a favor. The time had come to acquaint Kelly Harper with the power of black magic.

Angela had devised a spell to afflict Kelly with horrible skin lesions, but when she waltzed into class, there wasn't a blemish on her. Not even an extra freckle!

Then, Angela cast a spell to spy on Kelly in her room, hoping to discover some juicy blackmail material or – dare she hope – something expulsion-worthy. But all Kelly ever did was study . . . study and tinker with her ridiculous machines!

When that plan had failed, Angela summoned a minor servant of the Outer Dark to destroy Kelly's class notes. It had been an expensive spell, requiring one of her grandmother's gold earrings. But the next morning, when Kelly fished her voluminous notebook out of her backpack, it was as pristine as always.

Finally, Angela summoned a more powerful minion to attack Kelly directly. Not enough to inflict serious harm – and prompt an investigation by the administration – but enough to undermine her smug attitude and distract Kelly from her studies. This had cost her grandmother's other earring and enough blood to make Angela a bit giddy. Once again, however, Kelly was in class the very next morning, not a scratch or gouge on her. She was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed *and thoroughly maddening as always*.

Angela balled her hands into fists and screamed at the ceiling in frustration. How had Kelly foiled each and every one of her schemes? *What kind of power did this girl possess?*

Angela Pritchett was through playing nice.

"I am a great admirer of mystery and magic. Look at this life - all mystery and magic."

Harry Houdini

Witchcraft is extremely flexible, allowing casters to modify and hurl spells on the fly. Although the arcane energies wielded by a Witch are relatively easy to manipulate (with the proper training, of course), they are also fickle and unpredictable. A Witch can easily lose control of a spell and suffer the effects of *Backlash*, which can be severe.

How To Create And Cast A Spell

1. Pick the spell you want to cast from the list below. Each spell includes a chart of associated effects (range, spell duration, etc.), organized by spell Grade. You may cast any spell equal to or lower than your Witchcraft Skill Grade.

The *Casting Target Number* of your spell is equal to the Grade of your spell.

2. Apply modifiers to your Witchcraft Skill Test. In addition to mundane modifiers (like the penalty for being

injured), you can Upshift or Downshift your Skill Grade by applying Casting Modifiers to the spell. Some of these modifiers will be optional (using blood magic or casting a ritual), and other modifiers are based on circumstance (running out of spell components).

3. Cast the Spell. Test your modified Witchcraft skill against the Casting Target Number.
   - If you succeed, the spell goes off as planned.
   - If the spell requires a Contested Skill Test, as noted in the spell's description, you'll *also* need to beat your target's resistance/defense Skill Total using the *same* Skill Total.
   - If you fail to beat the Casting Target Number, the magic fizzles and you need to check for Backlash.
4. Check off the components you used (if any).
5. Backlash! If you failed to cast the spell in step #3 and you rolled doubles on 2d6, roll 1d6 and compare your total to the Magical Backlash Chart (pg. XX).

Each of these steps will be detailed in the following pages.

Spells

To cast a spell, you first need to decide what you want to achieve. *Are you looking to inflict a disfiguring curse on a classmate? Shroud an area in darkness? Ward yourself against magical influences?*

Below is the list of available spells, whether the Casting Skill Test is Pass/Fail or Contested, and a description of the spell. Underneath the description is a chart that lists the different spell effects (the elements of the spell, like range and any bonuses it may convey) available for each spell Grade and the associated Casting Target Number. Note that the effects for certain spells may vary from the standard effects listed in the Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart. If so, use the values listed beneath the spell, instead. Some complicated spells have a minimum Casting Target Number of 7 – which means that the lowest Grade available for that spell is a "C." Spells with a Casting Target Number of 5 are known as "cantrips."

Most spells have a preset result, as determined by the Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart or the text under the spell. In these cases, you do NOT add the Margin between the Skill Total and the Target Number to the effect. When casting Afflict, for example, you add the damage modifier to the Margin of Success, as normal. It's no different than using a weapon in a Contested Skill Test. Ward, on the other hand, has a specified armor bonus, as determined by the Spell Grade. So, the Margin of Success doesn't matter when casting Ward, only that you pass the Skill Test.

Spell Duration

When a Witch casts a spell, the effects of the spell – range, duration, area, etc. – are locked-in and cannot be changed. If a Witch wishes to end their spell early, they will need to Counterspell their own work. Witches gain 1 Upshift to their casting test to counter a spell of their own crafting.

Afflict

Casting Test: Contested.

Resistance: If the spell does Physical Damage that the target may dodge, like a fireball, the target defends with aPhys. Ed. Skill Test. If the effect cannot be dodged, they resist with Brawn. If the effect does Mental Anguish damage, instead, like a blast of psychic energy, the target resists with Cool.

Optional Casting Modifier: If you want to strike multiple targets, you can split the attack by Downshifting your Witchcraft Skill Grade per the rules on pg. XX.

This is a generic "make them go 'OW!'" spell. Whether you are magically crushing someone's trachea because they dared doubt your powers, bombarding their minds with horrific and alien images, or flinging fireballs, you'll be casting this spell. You choose how the spell manifests when you cast it. If you successfully cast the spell *and* hit your target, add the Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success. A Grade "D" spell may seem worthless, perhaps no more effective than mundane hand-to-hand combat, except that you can specify the type of damage when you cast the spell. That can be handy when facing a monster that can't be hurt by physical attacks!

Grade	Target #	Damage Mod	Range
FACULTY	13	+6	Up to 2,000 feet
A	11	+4	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet
B	9	+2	Across the street/Up to 500 feet
C	7	+1	Across a room/Up to 100 feet
D	5	0	Within a few steps/punching range

Barrier

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

This spell erects a wall of bones, thorn bushes, whatever. Anyone attempting to pass through the barrier must attempt a Pass/Fail Skill Test against the spell Grade. This usually entails the use of directed violence to beat it down, but climbing over it could be an option, depending upon the nature of the barrier. Attacks made with appropriate weapons, such as battering rams, sledgehammers, fire, explosives, and hedge clippers may earn 1-2 Upshifts on the Skill Test, at the GM's discretion. If the Target Number was beaten by destroying the barrier, it collapses. Attempting to attack anything through a barrier suffers a Penalty Modifier to the Skill Test as noted on the chart below (i.e., 1 Downshift to shoot someone on the other side of a "B" Grade barrier).

Grade	Target #	Barrier Strength/ Penalty Modifier	Duration	Area
FACULTY	13	13/3 downshifts	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 500 Square Feet
A	11	11/2 downshifts	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	9	9/1 downshift	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	7	7/0	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet
D	5	5/0	1 Turn	1 Person/5 Square Feet

Binding

Casting Test: Contested. Pass/Fail to escape.

Resistance: If the spell is cast directly on an opponent, they may attempt to evade the trap with a Contested Phys. Ed. test against your Casting Skill Test. Anyone else who encounters the spell has a chance to either spot or avoid the trap with a Contested Paranoia or Phys. Ed. test against your original casting Skill Total.

Bindings trap and hold a target. A binding could be a circle drawn on the floor, skeletal hands that burst from the ground to hold a target down by their nostrils, sticky webs, or anything equally arcane and gross. If you successfully cast the spell and beat

the target's Skill Total, the target is bound. Bound targets may attempt to free themselves by making a Pass/Fail test against the spell Grade. Usually, this is a Brawn test, but other skills might suffice. Appropriate weapons and tools may earn Upshifts on the Skill Test. Once the Target Number has been beaten, the target has broken free of the binding and may move freely through the affected area. The target suffers a Penalty Modifier (as noted below) to any other physical actions while bound.

Grade	Target #	Penalty Modifier	Range	Duration	Area
FACULTY	13	4 Downshifts	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 500 Square Feet
A	11	3 Downshifts	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	9	2 Downshifts	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	7	1 Downshift	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet
D	5	0	Within a few steps/ punching range	1 Turn	1 Person/ 5 Square Feet

Charm

Casting Test: Contested.

Resistance: Cool.

Nothing's better at making someone look like a fool than an old-fashioned love spell. When you cast this spell, you must specify the victim and the object of their attentions. The victim's disposition towards the selected target may grant an Upshift or Downshift to the resistance test, depending upon whether the victim likes the target or not. Animals and species with a Terror Grade cannot be selected as a target (unless the victim is a member of that species). If the victim fails to resist the spell, they will become infatuated with the specified target, whether the target reciprocates those feelings or not. To the victim's altered perceptions, the target will become more attractive, witty, and charming, receiving a bonus to their Appeal skill for the duration

of the spell. Additionally, the victim will need to make an additional Cool test or feel compelled to demonstrate their worthiness to the target, duration permitting, by sending lavish gifts, serenading them under their window in the middle of the night, composing epic poems to express their feelings, etc. A character can only be subjected to one Charm spell at a time.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts to Appeal	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Upshifts to Appeal	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts to Appeal	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to Appeal	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns

What about Grades Greater Than "FACULTY?"

Your character may encounter monsters, alien entities, and some uniquely gifted GMCs with a Witchcraft skill greater than FACULTY. To determine the appropriate effects, use the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart.*

Conjure

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

This spell allows you to summon a monstrous servant. The chart below indicates how many Mundane Skill levels the creature will possess and how much Physical Damage it can sustain before it is sent back from whence it came. If you cast the spell by passing a Witchcraft Skill Test, you may assign your monster a number of Mundane Skills as shown on the chart below. Unlike people, however, any skill the creature does not possess defaults to a grade of "D" (not "C"). The amount of damage the creature can sustain is determined by its Size. Conjured creatures are not as durable as their terrestrial (and extra-terrestrial) counterparts as they are constantly fighting the entropic pull of their native plane of existence. So, if you want the critter to hang around for a little while, you'll want your spell to have a good Duration. Finally, a word of caution when giving orders to your creature: It can only obey one set of commands at a time and conjured creatures like to twist the meaning of words!

Grade	Target #	Size/ Physical Damage Boxes	Skills	Duration
FACULTY	13	Immense (whale or tank)/13 Damage	2 Grade "A" Skills, 2 Grade "B" Skills, and 2 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	Huge (elephant or truck)/11 Damage	1 Grade "A" Skill, 2 Grade "B" Skills, and 2 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	Big (bear)/9 Damage	2 Grade "B" Skills and 2 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	Average (man)/7 Damage	3 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	Small (cat or dog)/ 5 Damage	All Skills at Default of "D"	1 Turn

"As I told you longe ago, do not calle up That which you can not put downe; either from dead Saltes or out of ye Spheres beyond.

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward"

Counterspell

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

This spell allows you to undo a spell, whether it's yours or someone else's. Counterspell has no Grade equivalent; the casting difficulty is equal to the Casting Target Number of the original spell (not the caster's Skill Total). Counterspell does not require material components, although rare components may gain an Upshift, as normal. Witches gain 1 Upshift when countering their own spell.

Curse

Casting Test: Contested.

Resistance: Brawn for physical curses, Cool for mental or social.

This is a classic Witchcraft spell. You may hex your target, causing them to suffer a penalty on the Mundane Skill of your choosing. You must have a personal item (lock of hair, teddy bear, favorite pen, class notes, etc.) of the person you wish to curse. Usually, this means stealing. If you successfully cast the spell and the target fails to resist, apply the Penalty Modifier to the appropriate skill or skills. There are a lot of variations on this spell. To blind someone, apply the penalty to Paranoia. To render your victim Mute, apply the penalty to Trash Talk. To cover them with weeping, disgusting sores, apply the penalty to Appeal. A character can only be subjected to one curse spell at a time.

Grade	Target #	Penalty Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Downshifts to one skill or 2 Downshifts to 2 different skills	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Downshifts to one skill or 1 Downshift to 3 different skills	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Downshifts to one skill or 1 Downshift to 2 different skills	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Downshift to one skill	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns

Darkness

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

Optional Casting Modifier: If the caster would like to operate in the area of effect without a penalty, Downshift their Witchcraft skill by one.

With this spell, you can summon a strange, stygian darkness to fill an area. At higher Grades, the darkness not only obscures vision, but the other senses, as well. When you create the spell, you'll have to figure out how large an area you want to shroud and for how long. Anyone within the field of darkness (or outside the area and attempting to peer through it), including the caster, must make a Pass/Fail Paranoia Test against the spell Grade. If they fail the test, they suffer the listed penalty to their Paranoia skill for as long as they remain within the area of effect.

Grade	Target #	Penalty Modifier	Range	Duration	Area
FACULTY	13	4 Downshifts to all Paranoia Tests	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 500 Square Feet
A	11	3 Downshifts to all Paranoia tests	Down the street/ Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	9	2 Downshifts to Paranoia (vision only)	Across the street/ Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	7	1 Downshift to Paranoia (vision only)	Across a room/ Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet

"Everyone is a moon, and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody."

Mark Twain

Detect (Something)

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

This spell helps you to see if something is nearby. When you cast the spell, you need to specify what you are trying to detect, even if it is something you could not normally see. Examples include: a lost ring, magic, Servitors, gold, blood, invisible beings (you won't be able to tell who or what is invisible, only the location) or illusions. For the duration of the spell, you may add the spell's Bonus Modifier to your Paranoia Pass/Fail tests to detect the specified item (or items) within range. If your quarry is hiding, the Paranoia test becomes Contested, instead. For example, if you cast a Grade "B" *Detect Blood* spell, you'll have 2 Upshifts to your Pass/Fail Paranoia skill to spot all traces of blood up to 1,000 feet away. If you're not specific, you might also detect nearby squirrels, your friends, anything with blood. Remember, when trying to detect things that humans normally cannot see, even a "D" Grade spell is better than nothing.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts to Paranoia	Up to 5,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Upshifts to Paranoia	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts to Paranoia	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to Paranoia	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	0	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	1 Turn

Enchant

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

You may enchant a willing target (or yourself), granting them a bonus to their Mundane Skills. This spell does not work on Education or Disturbing Skills. If you cast the spell successfully, apply the spell's Bonus Modifier to the desired skill. The caster can also choose to split the bonus among multiple skills as noted on the effect chart below. Just like Curse, a character can only be under one enchantment at a time.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts to one skill or 2 Upshifts to 2 different skills	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Upshifts to one skill or 1 Upshift to 3 different skills	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts to one skill or 1 Upshift to 2 different skills	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to one skill	Up to 2 Turns

Evocation

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

A Witch can use this spell to grant themselves or a willing target the powers of an animal. For example, with this spell, you could grow wings and fly, see in the dark, turn your fingers into wicked claws, or breathe underwater. Use the chart below to determine how long the spell lasts, how far you can see, how much damage you do, the distance you can fly/swim/wall-crawl each turn, and so on. Whenever you use this spell, the target always suffers a drawback for the duration of the spell. If you cast this spell to breathe underwater, maybe you can't breathe on land until the spell ends. If you need to assign a penalty, instead assign a Downshift to whatever skill fits the situation. If you grant yourself the ability to see in the dark, perhaps you suffer a Downshift to your Paranoia under bright conditions. Depending upon the ability granted, the modifier may (in the case of talons, for example) add to the Margin of Success, like a weapon. In other cases (like adding fins and gills to a swimmer or giving someone bat-like sonar), the spell adds an Upshift to the most appropriate skill. For abilities that people don't have at all, like flight, the spell Grade acts as the target's Skill Grade for the spell's duration. Like the *Detect* spell, sometimes a Grade of "D" is better than nothing. To operate underwater without a penalty for a turn, a "D" is all you need.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	+6/4 Upshifts	Up 1,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	+4/3 Upshifts	Up to 500 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	+2/2 Upshifts	Up to 250 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	+1/1 Upshift	Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	0	Up to 20 feet	1 Turn

Invisibility

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

This is a fun spell. As the name implies, you can turn someone or something invisible with this spell. To locate an invisible object, make a Pass/Fail Brainiac test against the spell Grade. Invisible characters instead gain an Upshift to their Delinquent skill and physical attacks equal to the Bonus Modifier of the spell – at least until someone spots them in a contested Brainiac versus Delinquent test.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Size	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts	Immense (whale or tank)	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Upshifts	Huge (elephant or truck)	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts	Big (bear)	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift	Average (man)	Up to 2 Turns

Mentalism

Casting Test: Contested.

Resistance: Cool.

This spell compels the victim to take whatever actions you dictate. In olden days, they called it a Geas. To plant a command, you must be able to see your target using your own eyes (binoculars and closed-circuit cameras won't work). If you pass the casting test *and* you beat the victim's Skill Total, the victim is bound to your will and must follow your command for as long as it takes to complete or until the spell ends. The Complexity determines the level of detail that the victim can follow. A spell Grade of "D" allows for simple commands with only a couple of steps requiring no skill or interaction. A Grade "C" spell can handle slightly complex commands that require Typical Skill Tests with limited social interaction. A "B" permits somewhat complex commands with several steps that require a couple of Tricky Skill Tests. An involved command with many, detailed steps that require the victim to pass Difficult Skill Tests is an "A." FACULTY-Grade spells can handle involved commands with many, detailed steps that require the victim to interact normally with friends or colleagues and to pass extremely difficult Skill Tests. Giving commands beyond the complexity allowed by the spell Grade will result in incomplete or failed objectives. Commands that would cause the victim to put themselves in a dangerous situation or are contrary to their nature grant *at least* one Upshift to the Cool test. To determine whether someone has been magically ensorcelled, make a Paranoia Pass/Fail test against the spell Grade.

Grade	Target #	Command Complexity	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	Virtually Impossible/Up the Creek	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	Difficult	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	Tricky	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	Typical	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	Easy	Within a few steps/punching range	1 Turn

You want to do WHAT?!?!?

Players are sneaky creatures, and they'll come up with some strange and unexpected uses for their spells. That's fine. Witchcraft is meant to be flexible. Look at the spell and the listed effects to see if it's possible. The effect chart should help you figure out a good Target Number. If not, check out the sidebar entitled "*New Spells*."

Phantasm

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

This spell allows you to cast illusions. To spot an illusion for what it is, the viewer must make a Pass/Fail Brainiac test against the spell Grade. Although illusions can't harm someone directly, they can create a distraction or disguise something harmful. For example, if you cast a Grade "C" phantasm of solid ground over a deep pit, the next poor slob to come along will have to beat a 7 on a Pass/Fail Brainiac test. If they fail, they'll need to make a Phys. Ed. test or fall into the pit. To cast a free-standing phantasm, like a wall or a monster, use Area to determine the size of the illusion. Free-standing phantasms cannot extend or move beyond this area. When casting a phantasm to disguise a person or object, use Size, instead. "Disguise" phantasms move with their subject and are not limited by the area of effect. Instead of a Target Number, disguised people get an Upshift to their Art skill as noted in the Bonus Modifier column, below. Grade "D" illusions are useful if you want observers to see the illusion, but quality isn't important (like the magical equivalent of a cheapo Halloween mask or a big "kick me" sign over someone's head).

Grade	Target #	Illusion Quality	Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	13	Indistinguishable from the real thing	4 Upshifts
A	11	Realistic	3 Upshifts
B	9	Good likeness	2 Upshifts
C	7	OK, but won't hold up to scrutiny	1 Upshift
D	5	Obviously Fake	0

Grade	Size	Duration	Area
FACULTY	Immense (whale or tank)	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 500 Square Feet
A	Huge (elephant or truck)	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	Big (bear)	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	Average (man)	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet
D	Small (cat or dog)	1 Turn	5 Square Feet

Scry

Casting Test: Pass/Fail or Contested.

Resistance: Paranoia

Optional Casting Modifier: To add audio, Downshift the caster's Witchcraft skill by one.

This spell is sometimes called Clairvoyance, and it allows you to magically see a distant location or person, limited only by the range of the spell. You must either be familiar with the location, or you must have a personal item (lock of hair, teddy bear, favorite pen, etc.) of the person you wish to spy upon. Although the spell may be centered on any point within range, regardless of intervening obstacles, walls and other obstructions limit the viewable area of effect. For example, with a Grade "A" spell, you can view the contents of a 20x20 room from 2,000 feet away, regardless of any buildings or walls between you and the target location. However, you won't be able to see beyond the walls of that room. Also, this spell only conveys visual information. If you are casting this spell on a person, they can resist with a Contested Paranoia test against your Casting Skill Test. If the target resists the spell, the vision will become indistinct and the target will get the feeling that they are being watched.

Grade	Target #	Range	Duration	Area
FACULTY	13	Up to 5,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 200 Square Feet
A	11	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	9	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	7	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet
D	5	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	1 Turn	10 Square Feet

Tempest

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

Sometimes you really want to let people know how angry you are. When that time comes, nothing communicates your displeasure like a storm. Anyone, including the caster, caught in the storm will suffer a penalty to appropriate skills (running on ice, talking in a windstorm, etc.) as shown on the Penalty Modifier column. Storms can

also do a lot of damage – hail, lightning, flying debris, etc. Anyone caught in the area, including the caster, must roll 1d6 each turn; if they roll a 1, they might be pelted by something in the very near future. The victim must make a Pass/Fail Phys. Ed. or Brawn test (depending upon the situation) against the spell Grade. If the victim fails the test, they take Physical Damage equal to the Margin of Failure. Storms are hard to control, even for experienced Witches. Attempts to Counterspell the tempest are Downshifted by 1.

Grade	Target #	Penalty Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Downshifts	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Downshifts	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Downshifts	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Downshift	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	0 (really inconvenient)	Within a few steps/ punching range	1 Turn

Grade	Area
FACULTY	Up to 500 Square Feet
A	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	Up to 20 Square Feet
D	1 Person/5 Square Feet

Ward

Casting Test: Pass/Fail.

Wards are entirely defensive spells, like a magical force shield. They differ from Barriers in that they only affect one target and they move with that target. The spell provides an armor bonus against an attack that deals damage, like gunfire or acidic puke, equal to the Bonus Modifier column on the chart below. Against non-damaging attacks, like curses or mind control, the spell provides an Upshift to resistance rolls, instead. When you cast the spell, you'll need to decide what you are warding against: unarmed attacks, guns, fire, disease, mental blasts, specific magic spells, etc. If you

are specific with your description, your GM may Upshift your protection by 1. While Wards are not as powerful as Barriers, they don't impede your ability to attack through them, either. Note that Wards are invisible (at least until something hits it), so they can't protect you from seeing something scary. You can only receive help from one Ward at a time.

Grade	Target #	Armor/Bonus Modifier	Duration
FACULTY	13	6/4 Upshifts	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	4/3 Upshifts	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2/2 Upshifts	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1/1 Upshift	Up to 2 Turns

New Spells

Feel free to create other spells. Newly discovered arcane knowledge is being dug-up all the time! Use the spells presented here as a guideline and select appropriate effects from the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart*. If you come up with an idea for a new spell, your GM will need to review it to make sure that the new spell isn't too powerful or too weak – or already covered by one of the spells in this section.

Casting Difficulty And Modifying The Spell

To determine the Casting Target Number – the difficulty you'll need to test against using your Witchcraft skill to cast the spell – look at the chart under the spell you want to cast. The chart lists the effects available for the spell, organized by Grade. Effects include the effective range, the duration of the spell, the size of the target, etc. You can cast any spell equal to or lower than your Witchcraft Skill Grade.

The *Casting Target Number* of your spell is equal to the Grade of your spell.

The Grade of the spell cannot exceed your Witchcraft Skill Grade.

Example: Let's say you've got a Skill Grade of "A" in Witchcraft and you're being chased by a nameless shambling horror and you decide to erect a magical barrier to slow it down. The barrier doesn't have to be very big, just large enough the block the corridor. With a Grade of "A," you can cast Grade "D," "C," "B," and "A" spells. A spell Grade of "C" should be big enough (20 square feet), but will 2 turns be enough time? One scene is probably about right (spell Grade "B"). Now for the most important part: How strong should the barrier be? The horror will probably rip through a Target Number of 9 in a couple

of turns. On the other hand, a stronger barrier will make the spell tougher to cast. A barrier with a Target Number of 11 (spell Grade "A") should hold a little longer. A Grade "A" barrier will last for 2 scenes, cover 100 square feet, and requires a Skill Total of 11 or better to bash through. That gives us a Casting Target Number of 11. This spell won't be easy to cast, but with a few Casting Modifiers, like using rare spell components, it should be manageable.

When you are casting a spell, it is assumed that you have:

- Material components;
- Said arcane words (verbal components); and
- Made the appropriate weird gestures* (somatic components)

*We know what you're thinking. Stop that.

While you can perform your invocation without doing these things, it's dangerous and will increase your chance of failure. Likewise, there are ways to Upshift your Witchcraft skill, making your spell a little easier to cast. These are Casting Modifiers. Some of the spells include suggested Casting Modifiers in their descriptions. Other Casting Modifiers are below.

Before you roll to cast your spell, you need to decide if and how you're going to modify your Witchcraft skill. There are a couple of rules, however:

- Casting Modifiers are in addition to mundane modifiers.
- Modifiers do not increase or decrease your spell's Grade or effects.
- You may use different Modifiers each time you cast a spell.
- Some modifiers are optional; the GM assigns the others.

Material Components

With the exception of Counterspell, if you try to cast a spell without using material components (see below), either because you ran out or didn't bring any with you, Downshift your skill by one. On the other hand, if you decide to use one of your rare components (assuming you have some), Upshift your skill by one, instead. Rare components take the place of common components and you can use a maximum of one rare component per spell. Many alien entities don't require components for their spells but will use

Situation	Casting Modifier
No Material Components	1 Downshift
Rare Material Components	1 Upshift
No Verbal Components	1 Downshift
No Somatic Components	1 Downshift
Musical Instrument	1 Upshift (extends casting time by 1 turn)
Triggered Spell	1 Downshift
Blood Magic	1 Upshift
Ritual Magic	1 Upshift
Involved Spell	1 Upshift
Miscellaneous Modifiers	1 Upshift or 1 Downshift
Adding a Damaging Effect	2 Downshifts

them to gain an Upshift.

Verbal Components

If you try to perform the incantation without verbal components (chanting, ancient invocations, etc.), Downshift your skill by one. Your verbal component must be loud enough for the person standing next to you to hear. Whispering won't cut it.

Somatic Components

If you try to cast the spell without using somatic components (hand gestures, drawing symbols in the air, dancing, etc.), Downshift your skill by one. You'll need to have at least one hand free to cast effectively.

Musical Instrument

Music has been a part of magic throughout recorded history. Even Azathoth is a music aficionado. Pipes, drums, theremins, or other musical instruments may be used in lieu of verbal and somatic components to earn 1 Upshift. The caster must play the music continuously for at least two turns (make the Casting Skill Test at the end of the caster's second turn). The music is eerie and discordant, so you're not going to be able to sneak a casting into the middle of band practice. You must have the Art skill and a Specialization in a musical instrument to take advantage of this modifier.

Trigger

If you want to set your spell for a delayed effect (at midnight, on the full moon, etc.), or when a specified event occurs ("the next person to open this book," "if anyone other than me enters this room") Downshift your skill by one. The Witch makes the casting test when the trigger is placed. If the trigger can activate multiple times, additional casting tests are made each time the trigger is activated. If the spell is cast upon an object or location, you'll need to spend a minor action to inscribe a magical symbol or rune.

Blood Magic

You can Upshift your Witchcraft skill by using your character's blood to fuel the magical energies. As you might imagine, this is gonna hurt, and more powerful spells require more fuel. The Casting Target Number of the spell determines the number of Physical Damage boxes the caster will have to inflict on themselves. To fuel higher Grade spells, some evil casters use sacrifices - inflicting wounds on other creatures to offset the injury penalty that would result from using their own blood. Let's repeat: E – V – I – L. The administration and most right-thinking casters take a very dim view of a Witch who uses sacrifices and might step aside if the townsfolk got uppity. Using blood magic is a minor action when casting a spell.

Ritual Magic

You can also cast any spell as a Ritual to gain an Upshift. Ritual magic is an exception to the Working Together rule (pg. XX). The Casting Target Number of the spell determines the minimum number of participants required or the time it will take to cast. If you manage to gather the required number of participants, the spell won't take any longer than usual to cast (usually one action). Although the caster leads the ritual (and makes the casting roll), all the participants must have a working knowledge of Witchcraft (Skill Grade "C" or better), although they do not have to be Witches, themselves. If the caster really messes-up and incurs a Backlash, it affects all the participants!

Blood Magic

Casting Target #	Damage Boxes
7	1
9	3
11	5
13	7

Ritual Magic

Casting Target #	Number of Participants	Time Required To Cast
7	4 + Caster	Or 1 Scene/1 Hour
9	6 + Caster	Or 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
11	8 + Caster	Or 3 Scenes/6-12 Hours
13	12 + Caster	Or 4 Scenes/12-24 Hours

"Suddenly the sunshine seemed to lessen without the intervention of any discernible cloud. It was a very peculiar phenomenon, and was plainly marked by all. A rumbling sound seemed brewing beneath the hills, mixed strangely with a concordant rumbling which clearly came from the sky. Lightning flashed aloft, and the wondering crowd looked in vain for the portents of storm. The chanting of the men from Arkham now became unmistakable, and Wheeler saw through the glass that they were all raising their arms in the rhythmic incantation."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Dunwich Horror"

Involved Spell

Some spells are more complex and require more careful casting than others. By extending the casting time to 3 actions, you can gain an Upshift on your skill. Make your Casting Skill Test at the end of your third action. If you take any other action instead of completing the spell or you suffer mental or Physical Damage before the spell is completed, the spell fails, and your components are wasted.

Miscellaneous Modifiers

Various other tweaks can be made to customize spells for the task at hand. You'll incur 1 Downshift for an adjustment that improves the usefulness of the spell, and 1 Upshift for an adjustment that noticeably limits the scope of the spell. Such changes must be approved by the GM!

Example: You're casting Scry, and you'd like your friends to view the scene as well. As written, only the caster may experience the visions conferred by the spell. You ask the GM if you can take a Downshift to your Witchcraft skill to allow more than one person to view the vision. The GM mulls it over and gives her approval – but notes that you'll need a mirror or other reflective surface in which to view the spell.

To add a damaging effect to a spell that normally doesn't cause injury, take 2 Downshifts to your Witchcraft skill. The target will take damage equal to the Margin between their Skill Total and the Target Number.

Example: You decide to cast a Barrier spell, but you'd like to make a wall of fire that burns anyone who touches it. The spell is Grade "B" (Target Number 9, maximum duration of 1 scene, maximum area of 50 square feet). This means you'll need to tie or beat a 9 with 2 Downshifts on your Witchcraft test. Assuming you pull that off, anyone who unsuccessfully attempts to get through or around your wall (Target Number 9) will take damage equal to their Margin of Failure. If someone decides to pole-vault over the wall with a Skill Total of 8, they fail and take 1 point of Physical Damage.

Example 2: You want to curse someone with painful, disfiguring boils. Since Curse requires a Contested Skill Test, you not only have to tie or exceed the Casting Target Number, but you also must beat your target's resistance roll. If your Casting Target Number is 11 and your Witchcraft Skill Total is 12, you cast the hex successfully. If your target's Brawn resistance Skill Total is 10, they get hit with the curse. They suffer 2 (12 minus 10) points of damage as well as the listed penalty.

Material Components

Witches use a lot of doodads when casting their spells. You know, eye of newt, fingernail of a dead guy, that sort of thing. Casting a spell without components is tricky, but it can be done. When you use a component in a spell, it is used-up – it disintegrates, burns away, turns into a colored mist, whatever. If you're planning on throwing a lot of magic around, you're going to want a lot of components.

Keeping Track of Components

We're not going to worry about keeping track of each and every single newt's eye you've got stashed in your dorm room. We'll just categorize them all under the generic heading of "components."

1 component fuels any 1 spell

Look up the Target Number for your Witchcraft Skill Grade on the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart*. This is the maximum number of common, material components you can have (and safely store) at one time (i.e., someone with a Witchcraft Skill Grade of "C" would have enough materials for a total of 7 spells). As you grow in skill, you'll learn better methods to preserve your components and you'll be able to store more of them.

When you run out of components, you may either buy more in the Bookstore ($20 per component), or try to find them yourself, using the Scouts skill (Target Number 9, or 11 if a lot of students need to replenish their supplies and stocks are getting scarce). The difference between your roll and the Target Number is the number of spells' worth of components you have found (up to your maximum).

Billington's Wood is usually the best place to look for materials components, if not the safest.

Rare Components

Rare components can super-charge your spells and grant you an Upshift on your Casting Skill Test. However, they're uncommon, expensive, and you're not going to find them with the Scouts skill. Rare components must be bought (using the Family or Fixer skills) or stolen. The Target Number for buying or cutting a deal for these components is 11 (13 or more if it's tough to get a hold of, like uranium or moon rocks). If you need the component ASAP, Downshift your skill by one. If you fail the roll, you may have annoyed your family or burned a contact for a little while.

Rare components take the place of common components when casting a spell and they do not count toward the maximum number of components you may possess at one time.

"Yog-Sothoth knows the gate.

Yog-Sothoth is the gate.

Yog-Sothoth is the key and guardian of the gate.

Past, present, future, all are one in Yog-Sothoth.

He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where They shall break through again."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Dunwich Horror"

"Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
wool of bat, and tongue of dog."

William Shakespeare, "Macbeth"

Sample Common Components

Although the exact ingredients don't make any difference in the game (beyond whether they are common or rare), we've included a list, so you can add some flavor during play.

- Antimony
- Aqua fortis (nitric acid)
- Aqua vitae (ethanol)
- Bismuth
- Black candles
- Blood
- Boron
- Chalk
- Coffin nail
- Copper
- Crystals
- Fulminating gold (gold carbonate)
- Grave dirt
- Incense
- Iron
- Kosher salt
- Lead
- Magnesium
- Mercury (quicksilver)
- Offering bowls
- Personal item or lock of hair
- Phosphorus
- Poppet/Voodoo doll
- Potassium
- Ritual knife
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Spanish moss
- Stinging nettles
- Sulfur (brimstone)
- Vinegar

Sample Rare Components

- Ambergris
- Arsenic
- Claw of a Deep One
- Gemstones
- Gold
- Hemlock
- Hair of a murder victim
- Human bones
- Platinum
- Silver
- Uranium

Casting The Spell

Once the relevant modifiers and Casting Modifiers have been applied, make a Pass/Fail Witchcraft test against the Casting Target Number of the spell. As noted in their description, some spells require a Contested Skill Test, so you'll not only have to tie or beat the Casting Target Number, but you'll also have to exceed your opponent's resistance Skill Total on the same test (pg. XX). Simply compare your Witchcraft Skill Total against the Casting Target Number and your opponent's resistance roll. It's possible to cast a spell properly, only to have your opponent avoid the effects.

If you tie or beat the Casting Target Number (Pass/Fail tests): The spell goes off just like you hoped, and the effects are now active for the duration of the spell. Check-off any material components you used.

If you tie or beat the Casting Target Number *and* you beat your opponent's Skill Total (Contested Skill Tests): The spell goes off and your opponent suffers the effects of the spell. Check-off any material components you used.

If you tie or beat the Casting Target Number *but* you fail to beat your opponent's Skill Total (Contested Skill Tests): The spell was cast properly, but your opponent resisted it or dodged out of the way, wasting the components.

If your Skill Total is less than the Casting Target Number: The spell doesn't go off and you wasted the components.

If your Skill Total is less than the Casting Target Number AND you rolled doubles (i.e., two of the same number on each die, such as two 3s): You botch the spell, wasted the components, and you suffer BACKLASH (*see below*). Also, it sucks to be you.

Example: You've got a "C" in Witchcraft and you're casting a lightning bolt (Afflict) with a Casting Target Number of 7. Your opponent is planning to jump out of the way using their Phys. Ed. skill (Grade "A"). If you pass the test with a Skill Total of 7 or better, you successfully cast the spell and the components are used up. Let's say your Skill Total is 10. You beat the Casting Target Number, so the bolt flies from your fingertips. If your opponent's Skill Total is less than 10, they'll be zapped by your spell. If their Skill Total is 10 or higher (remember, this is a Contested Skill Test, so the Margin of Success must be greater than zero), they dodge out of the way and you miss. And with an "A" in Phys. Ed., there's a decent chance they won't get fried.

Target Numbers for Resisting Spells

What if you're on the receiving end of a malicious spell?

The spell's description will note whether it requires Pass/Fail or Contested Skill Tests. Generally, if the spell is targeting you, it's probably a Contested Skill Test, so you'll need to tie or beat the caster's Skill Total. Spells that require Pass/Fail tests don't usually target a specific person or object, although they may target an area of effect. You may need to succeed at a test, however, to avoid the effects of a Pass/Fail spell (like Darkness) or to resist the effects of an ongoing spell (like Binding). If so, test the most applicable skill (usually noted in the spell's description) against the Casting Target Number. If the spell enhances someone's abilities, like Invisibility or Phantasm, then you make a normal Contested Skill Test.

Example: If your path is blocked by a Barrier spell with a Casting Target Number of 9, you only need a 9 (the barrier's strength) or better on a Pass/Fail test to get through or around it. On the other hand, if someone tries to put a Curse on you with a Casting Target Number of 7 and a Skill Total of 10, you'll need to make a Contested Skill Test with a Skill Total of 10 or more (remember, the caster has to beat your Skill Total in a Contested Skill Test).

Naming

Your spell will need a suitably mysterious and arcane name. This isn't an anime game, so there's no advantage to yelling the name of the spell when it goes off (and cluing your opponents in on how to counter it), but it'll be easier to find the spell in your grimoire.

If you get stuck, just consult the handy-dandy chart below:

X the Y (of) Z *or* **The Y+ Z of (the) Z**

Example: Calm the Black Aura, or The Crawling Claw of Darkness.

X		Y		Z	
Abandon	Shackle	Accursed	Loathsome	(Entity Name): Horus, Hecate, Azathoth, Shub Niggu-rath, etc.	Moon
Alter	Shroud	Antediluvian	Lost		Nightmare
Anoint	Shun	Astral	Mindless		Pestilence
Attune	Soothe	Barbed	Mute	(Location): Xoth, Kadath, Yuggoth, R'lyeh, Leng, etc.	Protection
Awaken	Travel	Bellowing	Nameless		Rain
Banish	Turn	Bitter	Obsidian		Ring(s)
Bewitch	Utter	Black	Putrefying		Seal(s)
Blind		Blasphemous	Sacred	Abyss	Serpent
Call		Blinding	Secret	Aura	Shadow(s)
Calm		Bloody	Shrieking	Bell	Skull
Confer		Bringer	Shunned	Blood	Soul
Consume		Clouded	Silent	Cat	Spawn
Deafen		Crawling	Unnamable	Chaos	Sword
Desecrate		Cyclopean	Withered	Claw(s)	Threshold
Empower		Damned		Cup(s)	Toad
Engulf		Deep		Darkness	Twilight
Flay		Devouring		Demon(s)	Worm
Fortify		Doomed		Essence	
Imprison		Dweller		Flesh	
Inflict		Elemental		Fool	
Invite		Foetid		Fungus	
Mark		Forbidden		Gate(s)	
Negate		Forgotten		Goat	
Nullify		Formless		Hound	
Punish		Gibbous		Inferno	
Purge		Hallowed		Key	
Raise		Hanged		Life/Death	
Reveal		Hungry		Madness	
Sanctify		Infernal		Martyr	
Seal/Unseal		Ivory		Mask	
Seek		Leprous		Mirror	
Serve		Lesser/Greater		Misfortune	

Backlash

When you fail to cast a spell (your Witchcraft Skill Total is less than the Casting Target Number) and you roll doubles (two of the same number on each of the dice), something very bad has happened — very, very bad.

To determine what happens, roll 1d6 and compare your result to the Magical Backlash table.

Example: You've got a "C" in Witchcraft and decide to cast a Grade "C" spell with a Casting Target Number of 7. You roll a 3 and a 3 on 2d6. You failed to beat the Target Number and you rolled doubles (two 3s). That means Backlash. You roll 1d6 for Backlash and get a 4. Checking the table, you've suffered a physical effect. The GM grins evilly. Suddenly, three, slimy tentacles erupt from your torso, uncontrollably writhing and grasping at everything in reach. You also suffer 2 points of Mental Anguish from the shock and decide to hide in your room until the Backlash wears off in a few hours.

Backlash always centers on the caster, regardless of range or triggers.

For Grades of MASTER and Above

For Witches and other creatures who possess a Witchcraft skill of Master or greater, Backlash only triggers if they fail the Casting Skill Test and *all* the dice show the same value.

Die Roll	Magical Backlash
1	Fortune frowns. You suffer a Downshift on all rolls for the rest of the scene.
2	Can only speak in gibberish for the rest of the scene. No spellcasting.
3	KO'd for 1d6 rounds.
4	Suffer a physical effect for 2 scenes (extreme hair growth, inhuman skin coloration or texture, grow extra limbs or animal features, etc.). Take 2 points of Mental Anguish damage.
5	Crimes against Nature. The environment in the area goes haywire for 1d6 scenes (sudden lightning storm, softball-sized hail, animals and insects attack, etc.). Everyone in the area takes Physical Damage equal to the Margin of Failure.
6	Plucked away by an alien entity. You caught the attention of . . . something. A vortex opens, and a hideous appendage drags you through. You come back twitchy in 1d6 turns, suffering Mental Anguish damage equal to the Margin of Failure. Everyone in the area takes 2 points of Mental Anguish damage for just seeing this happen. You really don't want to talk about it. Ever.

Witch's Grimoire

A Witch's grimoire, a fancy term for a spellbook, is like a notebook combined with a cookbook. It holds all the Witch's research and spell formulae. If a Witch loses their grimoire, they'll take 1 Downshift on their Witchcraft skill until they can inscribe a new one. Most grimoires are written in notebooks or journals. While they could save most of the formulae and notes in a computer file, grimoires also contain magical diagrams, arcane symbols, and ancient languages, making electronic storage systems a problematic choice.

Creating a new grimoire takes a lot of time. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be done all in one sitting. A Witch can extend the creation time for as long as they need to accommodate other projects.

A grimoire can also be used against a Witch in other ways. First, a grimoire counts as a personal item for spells that require such things. Secondly, any Witch that reads another Witch's grimoire gains 1 Upshift to Counterspell their magic!

Witchcraft Skill	Time To Make A New Grimoire
FACULTY	6 Scenes
A	5 Scenes
B	4 Scenes
C	3 Scenes
D	2 Scenes

Sample Spells

Below you will find some sample starting spells. All you need to do is come up with a cool name for the spell and decide how the spell manifests, as this may determine the resistance skill. Casting Modifiers have not been included.

Afflict (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Contested

Resistance Skill: Phys. Ed., Brawn, or Cool

Target Number: 7

Damage MOD: +1

Range: Up to 100 feet

Conjure (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Target Number: 7

Physical Damage Boxes: 7

Duration: 2 turns

- **Sneaky Monster:** Delinquent "C," Paranoia "C," "Phys. Ed. "C"
- **Strong Monster:** Brawn "C," Phys. Ed. "C," Smackdown "C"
- **Shooty Monster:** Paranoia "C," Phys. Ed. "C," Shoot "C"

Curse (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Contested

Resistance Skill: Brawn or Cool

Target Number: 7

Penalty MOD: 1 Downshift to 1 skill

Range: Up to 100 feet

Duration: 2 turns

Invisibility (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Target Number: 7

Bonus MOD: 1 Upshift to Delinquent & physical attacks

Duration: 2 turns

Ward (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Target Number: 7

Bonus MOD: +1 armor or 1 Upshift against specific attacks

Duration: 2 turns

The Science Of Mad Science

Kelly Harper found, to her surprise, that she was enjoying her classes. While she wasn't too sure about all this supernatural nonsense, she'd found most of her classes intriguing and a few of them were quite challenging. While Kelly had always enjoyed learning and picked-up new concepts quickly, she hadn't always been a fan of the classroom experience.

In the public and private schools she'd attended, Kelly found the classes too elementary for her needs. Even the so-called "advanced" classes offered little challenge, and on the rare occasions they did require a bit of cerebral exercise, her classmates had trouble keeping up.

Kelly's parents were sympathetic to her frustration and enrolled her in college math and science courses. While the material was interesting and demanding, Kelly often found herself isolated from her classmates. At first, she was the "cute prodigy" but the sentiment quickly turned to resentment as she dominated the grading curve. College students didn't want to associate with a girl who was ten years their junior, particularly if the nerdy little freak was ruining their GPAs.

But here, at *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*, Kelly was in her element. And best of all, she was no longer alone. There were so many brilliant students, she squealed into her pillow with excitement after her first day of classes.

But strange things started to happen.

Early one morning, before the sun had risen, Kelly awoke with a strange itching sensation. She found that her whole body was covered with itchy, red welts. While she was certainly uncomfortable, she looked worse than she felt. Still, she couldn't go to class looking like this. After coating herself thoroughly with calamine lotion, she began disassembling her prized continuum-nexus stability-scope. She could rebuild it, of course, but she needed several core components.

Kelly worked quietly through the pre-dawn hours, so she wouldn't wake her roommate, Christina. By the time her alarm clock rang, Kelly had perfected a miniature hologram projector that could hide the lesions, along with a pimple that had been threatening to appear. By the time the battery in her projector had depleted, the marks had faded to near-invisibility.

Several nights later, Kelly returned to her dorm room to find that her roommate had captured a small, rat-like creature with a disturbingly human face. Christina had heard the creature rustling about on Kelly's desk, and had trapped it under a milk crate. Curious as to whether the creature was a mutation or of a species unique to the Arkham region, Kelly had tried to dissect it. Upon her first incision, however, it dissolved into a featureless, gray sludge. She took a small sample for future study and dumped the rest of the disgusting mess out the window and into the bushes below.

Finally, one evening Kelly was walking home from the dining hall after dinner when she encountered William Chaloux with his Servitor, Nyhorr'urah, in tow. William was going on and on about a bully who had been tormenting him. "At least," she thought,

"Nyhorr'urah doesn't complain."

Suddenly, a leather-winged nightmare dove out of the sky, talons bared to slash her face. She'd barely had time to raise her hands in defense when Nyhorr'urah swiftly intercepted the . . . thing and coiled itself around her attacker, crushing and absorbing it.

Kelly tried to extricate the remains of the creature from the Servitor's coils, but Nyhorr'urah floated out of reach and vibrated like a hive of angry hornets. William suggested that it might be safer to let Nyhorr'urah keep its prize. "You'd probably have better luck getting a steak away from a junkyard dog," he mused.

When Kelly returned to her dorm room that evening, she was too distracted to study. Too many odd things had happened to her in the past few weeks and she didn't believe in coincidence. She didn't know how, but these were not accidents.

Fortunately, Kelly thrived on a challenge.

> "Back off, man. I'm a scientist."
>
> *Ghostbusters*

None of that magical mumbo-jumbo for you . . . you're a Mad Scientist! You work with innovative, ground-breaking theories and principles – the very building blocks of the universe – even if those principles haven't yet been discovered or safely tested by the scientific community at large. Oh well, there's no progress without risk!

Mad Scientists don't cast spells; they build amazing devices called "gizmos." Science! is not as flexible as Witchcraft, but gizmos blow up a lot less often than you might expect, and other people can borrow them (with a bit of training). Of course, small-minded fools who are jealous of your genius might also try to steal or destroy your inventions!

Overview: How To Build A Gizmo

If you're familiar with the Witchcraft spell creation system, you'll find a lot of similarities here. While the underlying principles behind Witchcraft and Mad Science are completely different, the in-game systems mirror one another, aside from a couple of tweaks.

1. **The Design Phase.** Select the type of gizmo you want to create from the list below. Underneath the gizmo's description, you'll find a chart that lists the different effects, organized by Grade. Some effects measure the gizmo's run-time or area of effect, while others may provide a damage or bonus modifier. You may build any gizmo with a Grade equal to or less than your Science! Grade.

The *Innovation Target Number* (or IT#) of your gizmo is equal to the Grade of your gizmo.

The Innovation Target Number reflects the sophistication of the technology, the difficulty of putting it together, and the challenge of using it.

Example: Let's say you've got a "C" in Science! and you want to create a device that will make you invisible. A Grade "C" Cloak will only last for a couple of turns. If you need to remain invisible for a longer period, you'll need to increase your understanding of the underlying principles by improving your Science! skill.

2. **Apply modifiers and Design Modifiers.** In addition to mundane modifiers (like range or penalties due to injury), there are a couple of additional modifiers, called (appropriately enough) Design Modifiers, just for the construction and operation of gizmos. Both types of modifiers can increase or decrease your chance of success, but Design Modifiers have two significant differences:

   - Design Modifiers increase or decrease the Target Number, not your skill. An Upshift to the IT# makes it harder to build and use a gizmo, while a Downshift to the IT# has the opposite effect
   - Once you've added a Design Modifier, you're stuck with it. Design Modifiers are a permanent part of the gizmo.

Example: You decide that you need protection to keep those pesky Dreamers out of your head while you're trying to sleep. That sounds like a Shield gizmo. If you have a Grade of "B" in Science!, you can make a Grade "B" or "C" gizmo, but not an "A" or better. The IT# *for a Grade "B" personal REM-wave distortion field is 9, but you've got some rare isotopes handy that you could use to Downshift the Target Number. You can also make the gizmo bulky, earning another Downshift, since the device is just going to rest on the floor, beside your bed. The two Design Modifiers have reduced the Target Number from a 9 to a 5.*

3. **Check off the components used to build your gizmo.** You can't build a gizmo without components.

4. **The Assembly Phase.** You'll need to spend one scene (about an hour) building and experimenting with the gizmo. When you're done, make a Pass/Fail Science! Skill Test against the modified IT# (from step #2). If you tie or beat the Target Number, you have a working gizmo. Congratulations on another brilliant break-

through! Note the schematic on your character sheet. If you fail to beat the Target Number, the gizmo doesn't work, the components were ruined, and you need to check for Backlash. You're going to have to go back to the drawing board (also known as step #1). That means more components, more time putting it together, and another opportunity to be at ground zero when the prototype explodes.

5. **The Clean-Up the Mess After the Explosion Phase.** If your gizmo didn't work and you rolled doubles (two 1s, two 2s, two 3s, etc.) on the Skill Test, roll 1d6 and compare your total to the Gizmo Backlash table (pg. XX).
6. **Roll for charges.** If you successfully built the gizmo, roll 1d6 to determine the initial number of charges. Your gizmo consumes one charge on each activation.

Overview: Using Gizmos

1. **To use a gizmo, make an Activation Skill Test.** This is a Science! Skill Test against the gizmo's modified Innovation Target Number (Target Number + Design Modifiers). The gizmo's description will note whether the Activation Test is Pass/Fail or Contested.
   - If you succeed, the gizmo does what it was intended to do.
   - If the gizmo requires a Contested Skill Test (as noted in its description), you'll also need to beat your target's resistance/defense Skill Total using the same Skill Total.
   - If you fail, something went wrong, and you need to check for Backlash.
2. **Mark-off a charge.** When you're out of charges, the gizmo can't be used again until it has been recharged.
3. **Backlash.** If you failed the Activation Skill Test and you rolled double 1s (a 1 on each die) on the Skill Test, roll 1d6 and compare your total to the Gizmo Backlash table (pg. XX).

We'll detail each of these steps in the following pages.

List Of Gizmos

To build your gizmo, you need to decide on the effect you want to achieve. *Are you trying to create a death-ray to inspire fear in your enemies? A jet-pack to ensure that you're never late for class again? A personal cloaking device that will allow you to sneak around invisibly?*

Below is the list of gizmo types and whether the Activation Test requires a Pass/Fail or Contested Skill Test. An Activation Test is a Science! test required to operate a gizmo. This is followed by an explanation of the gizmo's function and a chart which lists the Innovation Target Number (IT#) and available effects for each gizmo Grade. Some gizmos have a minimum IT# of 7, meaning that the lowest Grade available is a "C" instead of a "D."

A gizmo's effects are its operating parameters, such as range, duration, skill bonuses, etc. More powerful gizmos have stronger effects. The effects for some gizmos may vary from the standard effects listed in the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart*. If so, the values listed beneath the gizmo supersede the values listed in the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart*.

Many gizmos have a preset result, based upon the purpose of the device. In these cases, you do NOT add the Margin of Success to the gizmo's effect. When using a Blast gizmo, like a ray gun, you add the damage modifier to the Margin, just as you would for any mundane weapon. However, the Shield gizmo has a preset armor bonus that determines the gizmo's IT#. Rolling well when activating a Shield gizmo won't improve the function – you only need to pass the Skill Test to gain the specified armor bonus.

Augment

Activation Test: Pass/Fail or Contested (see below).

You may improve some aspect of the user (or yourself), granting them a bonus to their Mundane Skills. *Want to increase your Brawn? Build a suit of powered armor. Want to boost your Paranoia? How about a pair of multi-spectrum goggles? Need more Brainiac? A neuro-stimulation helmet will turn you into a veritable genius!* If the user passes the Activation Skill Test, apply the bonus modifier to the proper skill. Optionally, the designer can split the bonus among one or more skills, as noted on the chart below. The decision on which skill or skills will be augmented must be made at the design stage and cannot be changed once the gizmo has been built. If the recipient of the bonus chooses to resist for some reason, you'll also need to beat them in a Contested Skill Test (Brawn to resist physical augmentations, Cool for mental and social). A character can only benefit from one such augmentation at a time.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts to one skill or 2 Upshifts to 2 different skills	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Upshifts to one skill or 1 Upshift to 3 different skills	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts to one skill or 1 Upshift to 2 different skills	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to one skill	Up to 2 Turns

Automaton

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

This gizmo is a robotic servant, homunculus, or Frankenstein-like golem. The chart below indicates how many Mundane Skill levels your creation will have and the amount of damage it can sustain before being made inoperable. Any skill the automaton does not possess defaults to a grade of "D" (not "C"). Automatons may possess the Science! lore skill for the use of carried gizmos. Once you have created your automaton, the

skills are locked, so you'd better write them down! Duration measures the automaton's operational time before it runs out of juice and will need to be reactivated. So, if you have a lot of tasks for your creation, you'll want to choose a Grade with a good duration. Automatons are human-sized unless you apply Design Modifiers. Be careful when giving your creation orders – automatons can only process one command at a time and they tend to take things literally.

Grade	Target #	Physical Damage Boxes	Skills	Duration
FACULTY	13	13 Damage	2 Grade "A" Skills, 2 Grade "B" Skills, and 2 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	11 Damage	1 Grade "A" Skill, 2 Grade "B" Skills, and 2 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	9 Damage	2 Grade "B" Skills and 2 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	7 Damage	3 Grade "C" Skills	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	5 Damage	All Skills at Default of "D"	1 Turn

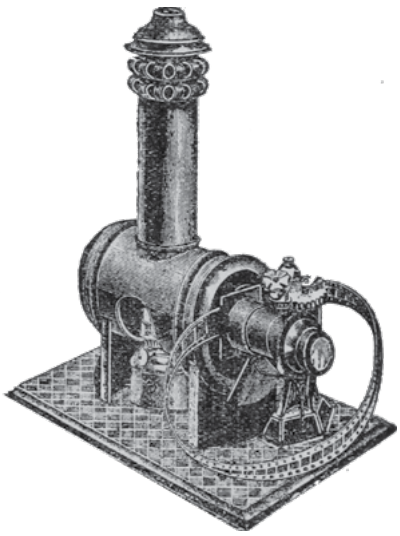
Blast

Activation Test: Contested.

Resistance: If the gizmo has a physical effect that the target can dodge, they resist with Phys. Ed. Otherwise, they resist with Brawn. If the effect is mental, like a brain-wave-scrambling ray, the target resists with Cool.

This is a weapon gizmo, regardless of whether you're shooting bolts of pure force, a modification of the Martian heat-ray, or wielding electrified gauntlets. When you assemble the gizmo, you must decide on the type of damage inflicted, whether the gizmo does mental or Physical Damage, and whether the effect can be dodged, like an energy beam. If you successfully activate the gizmo and hit your target, add the Bonus Modifier to the Margin of Success as you would for any weapon. If you want to attack multiple targets, you can split the attack by Downshifting your Science! Skill Grade per the rules on pg. XX. If you find yourself up against a monster that can only be harmed by certain attacks (electricity, microwave radiation, etc.), don't discount the value of a Grade "D" gizmo!

Grade	Target #	Damage Mod	Range
FACULTY	13	+6	Up to 2,000 feet
A	11	+4	Down the street/ Up to 1,000 feet
B	9	+2	Across the street/ Up to 500 feet
C	7	+1	Across a room/Up to 100 feet
D	5	0	Within a few steps/ punching range



Cloak

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

This gizmo can make someone or something invisible. To find a cloaked object, make a Pass/Fail Paranoia test against the gizmo's Grade. Invisible characters, on the other hand, gain an Upshift equal to the gizmo's Bonus Modifier to their Delinquent skill and physical attacks, as noted in the chart, below. This bonus lasts for the duration of the gizmo or until someone beats the invisible character in a contested Paranoia versus Delinquent Skill Test. The gizmo must remain near the person or object to maintain the cloak.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Size	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts	Immense (whale or tank)	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Upshifts	Huge (elephant or truck)	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts	Big (bear)	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift	Average (man)	Up to 2 Turns

Communicate

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

Optional Design Modifier: If you limit the translation ability to a single language, apply a Downshift to the Innovation Target Number. To enable the gizmo to translate written text, add an Upshift to the Innovation Target Number.

Ever wanted to speak telepathically to your friends? Have a burning desire to hold a philosophical discourse with the Yith on the benefits of Nth-dimensional travel? (I really don't recommend trying this without booking a reservation at Arkham Sanitarium in advance.) This gizmo will allow you to communicate remotely in any spoken language, provided you know the target and their location. To translate a foreign or alien language, compare the gizmo's translation ability with the obscurity of the language and the complexity of the message. A Grade "D" gizmo can translate modern dialects or related languages. Communication between two, unrelated modern languages (English and Chinese) requires a Grade of "C." A Grade "B" gizmo is required to translate an ancient, terrestrial language or a language used by an alien, but humanoid species. You'll need a Grade "A" gizmo for a non-humanoid alien language. An ancient alien language is a task for a FACULTY-Grade gizmo. A highly technical conversation adds a Downshift to the Activation Test, while very simple ideas might merit an Upshift.

Grade	Target #	Translation Ability	Duration	Range
FACULTY	13	Expert/Substantial Skill	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 5,000 feet
A	11	Exceptional/Skilled	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 2,000 feet
B	9	Good/Proficient	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet
C	7	Average	Up to 2 Turns	Across the street/Up to 500 feet
D	5	Sub-Par/Novice	1 Turn	Across a room/Up to 100 feet

Containment

Activation Test: Contested. Pass/Fail to escape or penetrate.

Resistance: Anyone within the area of containment when the gizmo is activated can make a contested Phys. Ed. test against the user's activation Skill Test to avoid being trapped (if the area is large, the target may suffer one or more Downshifts to their Skill Test, at the GM's discretion).

This gizmo can erect a translucent force field of walls to create barriers, platforms, or cages. To trap a target within a cage, you must successfully activate the gizmo and beat the target's Skill Total. Anyone trying to escape (or enter) an active containment field must first destroy the field walls. Make a Pass/Fail Skill Test using the most appropriate skill against the gizmo's Grade. Once the Target Number has been beaten, the field deactivates. Heavy tools and weapons, particularly explosives, add 1-2 Upshifts to the Skill Test. Containment field cages are not airtight, although they do muffle light and sound. If the gizmo creates a single wall, such as a barrier, ramp, or a bridge, double the listed duration. Use the Size column to determine how much mass a platform can support before buckling. Fields created by this gizmo are immobile; once they've been activated, they stay in place until the duration expires, the gizmo is deactivated, or the field is destroyed.

Grade	Target #	Range	Duration	Area	Size
FACULTY	13	Up to 2,000 feet	4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 500 Square Feet	Immense (whale or tank, large group of people)
A	11	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 100 Square Feet	Huge (elephant or truck, group of people)
B	9	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet	Big (bear, 2-3 people)
C	7	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet	Average (man)
D	5	Within a few steps/ punching range	1 Turn	1 Person/5 Square Feet	Small (cat or dog)

What about Grades Greater Than "FACULTY?"

Your character may encounter monsters, alien entities, and the rare GMC with a Science! skill greater than FACULTY. To determine the appropriate effects, use the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart.*

Evolver

Activation Test: Contested.

Resistance: Cool. Hybrids gain an Upshift on the resistance test.

This gizmo can evolve a living, humanoid subject in a matter of moments, or send them racing back along evolutionary lines to a bestial state. The user may choose to either evolve or devolve the target when they make the Activation Test. If the target fails their resistance Skill Test, apply the skill modifiers listed in the chart below. Highly evolved subjects may lose interest in mundane affairs and eschew contact with others, who may appear to them as little more than hairless apes. Highly devolved subjects will have trouble remembering basic facts, civilized customs, and school rules, succumbing to their baser instincts. Therefore, using this gizmo to improve the performance of an athlete is not likely to yield positive results. Unlike most gizmos, the duration cannot be shortened by deactivating the gizmo. Only exposure to the opposite setting can end the effect prematurely. At higher Grades, the effects are obvious.

Grade	Target #	Evolution Modifier	Duration
FACULTY	13	As per "A," but the character gains the Hybrid Telepathy Trait (pg. XX) at "C" +1 Downshift to Appeal	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	2 Upshifts to Brainiac & Education 1 Upshift to Boffin & Cool 2 Downshifts to Brawn & Phys. Ed. 1 Downshift to Smackdown, Medieval, & Appeal 2	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 hours
B	9	1 Upshift to Brainiac & Education 1 Downshift to Brawn & Phys. Ed.	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to Brainiac 1 Downshift to Brawn	Up to 2 Turns

Grade	Target #	Devolution Modifier	Duration
FACULTY	13	As per "A," but the character gains the Unnatural Strength Trait (pg. XX) at "C" +1 Downshift to Appeal	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	2 Upshifts to Brawn & Phys. Ed. 1 Upshift to Smackdown & Medieval 2 Downshifts to Brainiac & Education 1 Downshift to Boffin, Cool, & Appeal	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 hours
B	9	1 Upshift to Brawn & Phys. Ed. 1 Downshift to Brainiac & Education	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to Brawn 1 Downshift to Brainiac	Up to 2 Turns

"Life is a hideous thing, and from the background behind what we know of it peer daemoniacal hints of truth which make it sometimes a thousandfold more hideous. Science, already oppressive with its shocking revelations, will perhaps be the ultimate exterminator of our human species—if separate species we be—for its reserve of unguessed horrors could never be borne by mortal brains if loosed upon the world."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family."

Hologram

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

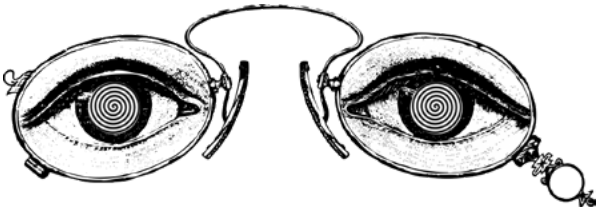
Optional Design Modifier: To add audio to a hologram, add an Upshift to the Innovation Target Number.

This gizmo can project realistic holograms, but you probably figured that out from the name. The difficulty of seeing through a hologram or realizing that a hologram is fake is equal to the gizmo's Grade. And although holograms can't harm someone directly, they can disguise something dangerous! For example, if you project a Grade "B" hologram of a comfy chair on top of a bear trap, the next exhausted person to come along will have to beat a 9 on a Pass/Fail Paranoia skill roll. If they fail, they'll have to make a Phys. Ed. skill to avoid getting the worst pinch they've ever had. To create a free-standing hologram, use the Area effect to determine the hologram's size. Free-standing holograms cannot extend or move beyond this area unless the gizmo is physically moved. If you're using your hologram to disguise someone or something, use Size, instead. Instead of a Target Number, hologrammatic disguises provide an Upshift to the wearer's Art skill, as noted in the table, below. The gizmo must remain near the person or object to maintain the disguise. Grade "D" holograms are useful tools when realism isn't a factor (such as a hologrammatic signal flare).

Grade	Target #	Hologram Quality	Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	13	Indistinguishable from the real thing	4 Upshifts
A	11	Realistic	3 Upshifts
B	9	Good likeness	2 Upshifts
C	7	OK, but won't hold up to scrutiny	1 Upshift
D	5	Obviously Fake	0

Grade	Size	Duration	Area
FACULTY	Immense (whale or tank)	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 500 Square Feet
A	Huge (elephant or truck)	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 hours	Up to 100 Square Feet
B	Big (bear)	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 50 Square Feet
C	Average (man)	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 20 Square Feet
D	Small (cat or dog)	1 Turn	5 Square Feet

Hypnosis



Activation Test: Contested.

Resistance: Cool.

This mind-control gizmo compels your victim to take whatever actions you dictate. If the target fails their resistance Skill Test, they obey the gizmo's user for as long as their command takes to complete, or until the hypnotic effect wears off. The Complexity determines the level of detail that the victim can follow. A simple command with only one or two steps that requires no skill or interaction with others is a Grade of "D". A Grade "C" gizmo is capable of more complicated commands that require Typical Skill Tests and limited social interaction. A command with several steps that require a couple of Tricky Skill Tests requires a gizmo Grade of "B." An involved command with many, detailed steps that require the victim to pass Difficult Skill Tests is an "A." If the victim must interact normally with close friends and family and perform very difficult tasks, the Grade jumps to FACULTY. Commands beyond the maximum complexity allowed will result in incomplete or failed objectives. Orders that would cause the victim to put themselves in a dangerous situation or are contrary to their nature grant at least one Upshift to the Cool test. Thanks to the multi-band broadcast emitters perfected in orbital mind-control satellites, you don't need direct line-of-sight to your target, although you do need to have a very good idea where they are.

Grade	Target #	Command Complexity	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	Virtually Impossible/Up the Creek	Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	Difficult	Down the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	Tricky	Across the street/Up to 100 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	Typical	Across a room/Up to 20 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	Easy	Within a few steps/punching range	1 Turn

Immobilize

Activation Test: Contested. Pass/Fail to escape.

Resistance: Targets may try to evade the attack with a Contested Phys. Ed. test.

This gizmo is used to hold a target in place. It could be a paralysis beam, quick-hardening resin, or a temporal distortion field. The appearance is up to you but must be decided at the design stage. If you successfully activate the gizmo and beat the target's resistance test, the target is immobilized. An immobilized target may take an action to break free by succeeding in a Pass/Fail Brawn or Phys. Ed. test against the gizmo's Grade. Unaffected allies may try to free the target, as well. Any other physical action while immobilized will suffer a Penalty Modifier. Once the Target Number has been beaten, the target is freed from the effect.

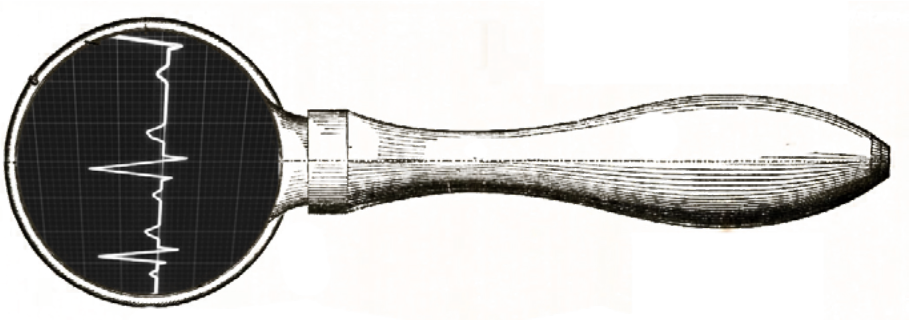
Grade	Target #	Penalty Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Downshifts	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Downshifts	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Downshifts	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Downshift	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	0	Within a few steps/punching range	1 Turn

Rejuvenate

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

This gizmo can heal someone's physical injuries, even neutralizing the effects of disease and poison! *Pretty cool, huh?* Make a Pass/Fail Science! test against the Target Number of the injury (pg. XX), disease, or poison (i.e., a Grade "A" poison has a Target # of 11). Any Design Modifiers are applied to the injury Target Number, instead. If you succeed, the target heals a number of damage boxes equal to the Margin of Success + the gizmo's Bonus Modifier. If you're bad at First Aid, then even a "D" may be a step up, especially since the gizmo can be used without having to touch the patient. This gizmo may only be used once per day on a patient.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Range
FACULTY	13	+6	Up to 2,000 feet
A	11	+4	Down the street/ Up to 1,000 feet
B	9	+2	Across the street/ Up to 500 feet
C	7	+1	Across a room/Up to 100 feet
D	5	0	Within a few steps/ punching range



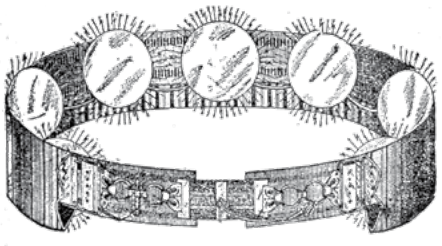
Scan

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

This gizmo will help you find certain, specified objects, even if you normally couldn't see them with the naked eye. When you build a scanner, you need to specify what you are trying to detect. Examples include: life signs, rare minerals, Zeta energy, dimensional rifts, or invisible beings (you won't be able to tell who or what is invisible, only the location). For the duration of the gizmo's effect, you may add the Bonus Modifier to your Paranoia Pass/Fail tests to detect the item (or items) within range. If your target is hiding, make a Contested Skill Test. For example, if you build a "B" Grade life-form scanner, you'll have 2 Upshifts to your Paranoia skill to spot all traces of living creatures up to 1,000 feet away. If you're not more specific, however, your life-detector will also detect nearby trees, the rats in the walls, your friends . . . anything that is alive. However, it might miss anything that doesn't fit our modern definition of "living" – like some monsters. Your life-form scanner would also reveal if something is not alive, like a frighteningly realistic automaton. Remember, when trying to detect things that humans normally cannot see, like deadly radiation or invisible entities, even a "D" Grade is better than nothing.

Grade	Target #	Bonus Modifier	Range	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts to Paranoia	Up to 5,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 Hours
A	11	3 Upshifts to Paranoia	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Upshifts to Paranoia	Down the street/ Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Upshift to Paranoia	Across the street/ Up to 500 feet	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	0	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	1 Turn

Shield



Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

This is a defensive gizmo, like armor or a personal force field. Against an attack that deals damage, like guns, claws, and stuff like that, the gizmo provides an armor bonus equal to the Bonus Modifier. Against non-damaging attacks, like hypnosis, the gizmo provides one or more Upshifts to resistance rolls. When you build this gizmo, you'll need to decide what you are protecting against: unarmed attacks, immobilization, guns, disease, fear, psychic attacks, etc. If you are specific with your description, your GM may Upshift your protection by 1. A Shield isn't as powerful as a Containment field, but you can attack through it and it moves with you. You can only benefit from one Shield at a time.

GRADE	TARGET #	ARMOR/BONUS MODIFIER	DURATION
FACULTY	13	6/4 Upshifts	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	4/3 Upshifts	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2/2 Upshifts	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1/1 Upshift	Up to 2 Turns

Transport

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

This gizmo allows you to move yourself or something else from place to place. This gizmo can take the form of a jet pack, matter-transmat device, spatial distortion field, or a hover-board. It's up to you, but you must decide on the gizmo's form and the means of transportation at the design stage. Use Range to determine how far you can move in a single turn and Size to account for the mass you'll be moving (teleporting only half of your companions – the upper half – could be problematic). If you blow the Activation Test, you might teleport into a solid object or go rocketing into a brick wall. If this happens, you and everyone travelling with you takes the Margin of Failure as Physical Damage. This is why your mother always told you to wear a helmet. If you plan to use this device to move someone against their will, say with a teleportation projector, the target may resist with a Contested Phys. Ed. test versus your Science! skill. (*P.S. – don't try teleporting off the Academy grounds. Rumor has it some kid tried that a couple of years ago, and the explosion could be seen across campus. Or maybe the kid just wasn't very good at Science!.)*

Grade	Target #	Range	Duration	Size
FACULTY	13	Up 1,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Immense (whale or tank, large group of people)
A	11	Up to 500 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Huge (elephant or truck, group of people)
B	9	Up to 250 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Big (bear, 2-3 people)
C	7	Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns	Average (man)
D	5	Up to 20 feet	1 Turn	Small (cat or dog)

Upgrade Armor

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

To improve mundane armor, you'll first need to determine the "base Grade" of the armor on the chart below. Football padding, for example, provides Grade "B" protection. Obviously, the improved protection value must be a higher Grade than the original protection value. So, Grade "B" armor (+2) could be upgraded to either an "A" (+4) or FACULTY-level protection (+6). The upgraded protection value determines the Grade of the gizmo. Armor improved to Grade "A" or FACULTY protection does not impart a penalty on physical tests like mundane armor. The gizmo's Activation Test is made when the armor is put on. The user may opt to spend a charge whenever they are physically attacked (before making the defense test). If a charge is used, use the armor's

upgraded protection value. Also, the protection value does not degrade when a charge is used. If the gizmo runs out of charges or the user decides not to spend a charge to deflect an attack, use the original protection value and the armor degrades as normal. Wrecked armor (Grade "D") must be repaired before the gizmo may be used again.

Grade	Target #	Protection	Armor
FACULTY	13	+6	Futuristic Powered Armor/Alien Tech
A	11	+4	Riot Gear/Primitive Plate Armor
B	9	+2	Athletic Protection/Bullet-proof Clothes
C	7	+1	Homemade Armor (duct tape, tin cans)/Heavy Jacket/Extra Layers of Clothes

Upgrade Item

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

You can improve the existing function of mundane items, making them gizmos. You can make a car more fuel-efficient, faster, or improve the protective qualities, for example, but you couldn't make it fly. To upgrade an item, you need to determine the item's "Base Grade" on the chart below. This is a measure of the number of parts, the skill needed to create and repair such a device, and the need for specialized tools. Next, you'll need to determine the effect you'd like to improve. We've included a couple of commonly-used effects in the chart below, but depending upon the nature of the device, just about any effect on the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart* is fair game. If no other effect fits your concept, use the column entitled "Degree of Change." The Degree of Change is a catch-all category to measure the intended upgrade. Any upgrade you apply must be an equal or higher Grade than the item's starting Base Grade (pre-gizmofication). This is a change from Upgrade Armor and Upgrade Weapon. A typical laptop computer has a Base Grade of "B." A computer that can run all day (4 scenes) on a single charge without using a single drop of power is a FACULTY-Grade gizmo. A laptop that provides a +4 bonus when attempting to hack the school's intranet is an "A." On the other hand, doubling the processing speed or memory isn't an earth-shattering improvement. Next year's model might be just as fast. That's a pretty minor change, but any upgrade to the computer must be equal to or higher than "B," so this is probably a "B" gizmo. One charge is consumed per use of the upgrade (the item may be used independently of the upgrade). The GM must approve all upgraded items. An item may only have one upgrade.

Grade	Target	Base Grade	Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	13	Cutting Edge and Beyond (Hadron Collider, artificial intelligence)	+6
A	11	High Tech (MRI, jet fighter)	+4
B	9	Technical/Complicated (car, computer)	+2
C	7	Common (household appliances)	+1
D	5	Simple	0

Grade	Range	Duration	Degree of Change
FACULTY	Up to 2,000 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Devastating
A	Down the street/ Up to 1,000 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Severe
B	Across the street/ Up to 500 feet	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Moderate
C	Across a room/ Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Turns	Mild
D	Within a few steps/punching range	1 Turn	Low

Upgrade Weapon

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

Now you can improve an existing aspect of a mundane weapon, turning it into a gizmo! For example, you could add a magnetic field to increase the range of an ordinary handgun or an ultra-sonic edge to a sword to increase the damage. To upgrade a mundane weapon, you'll need to determine the "Base Grade" of the item on the chart below. A dagger, for example, is a Grade "B" weapon. Then determine the aspect you'd like to improve: range or damage. The improved aspect must be a higher Grade than the existing one. So, a Grade "B" weapon could be upgraded to either an "A" or FACULTY-level range or damage. The upgraded aspect determines the gizmo's Grade. A dagger with a damage bonus of +6 (instead of +2) is a FACULTY-Grade gizmo. A

dagger with jet-assist and an effective throwing range of 1,000 feet is a Grade "A" gizmo. One charge is consumed per use of the upgrade, although the weapon may be used independently of the upgrade. When using the weapon without the upgrade, no Activation Test is necessary; treat the item as an ordinary weapon. Upgraded weapons are subject to approval by the GM. You may only add one upgrade to a weapon.

Grade	Target #	Damage	Range	Hand-To-Hand Weapons	Ranged Weapons
FACULTY	13	+6	Up to 2,000 feet	High-Voltage Power Lines, Construction Equipment, Getting Hit by a Car	Bomb, Flamethrower, Mounted Machinegun, Bazooka
A	11	+4	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet	Chainsaw, Maul, Machete, Fire Axe	Big Gun, Rifle, Grenade
B	9	+2	Across the street/Up to 500 feet	Kitchen Knife, Bat, Hand Axe, Large Improvised Weapon	Pistol, Nail Gun, Thrown Hatchet, Arrow, Razor-Edged Boomerang
C	7	+1	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Pocket Knife, Shiv, Small Improvised Weapon	Slingshot, Throwing Stars

Wormhole

Activation Test: Pass/Fail.

With this gizmo you can create a portal to pass through (or reach through) solid objects. This can be useful when someone's stuffed you into a locker or you need to swipe the answers to Friday's test from a locked file cabinet. The gizmo's Grade will determine the density of the object you want to move through, and the duration of the portal. Your GM may adjust the Target Number if the material is particularly thick. A metal door is 11, but ten feet of reinforced concrete might be 13. Range is limited to only a few feet. To create a teleportation device, use Transport, instead.

Grade	Target #	Material Strength	Duration
FACULTY	13	Super-Dense (supra-taniuim alloy, alien tech, diamond, armor plating)	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	Very Dense (metal, reinforced concrete, solid stone)	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	Strong (Thick wood, brick, concrete)	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	Average (wood)	Up to 2 Turns
D	5	Weak (flimsy wood, drywall)	1 Turn

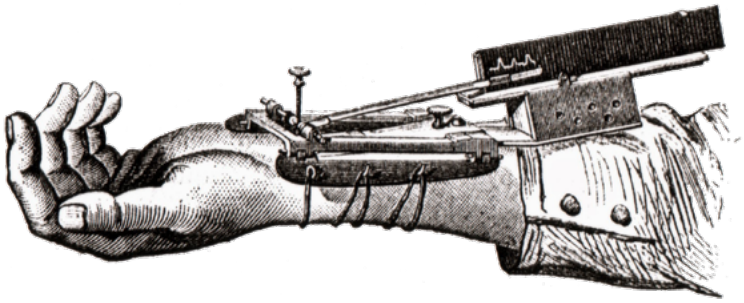
New Gizmos

Unleash your inner inventor and feel free to create new gizmos. The frontiers of science are expanding every day. Use the gizmos presented above as a starting point and then select appropriate effects from the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart*. Your GM will need to review your idea and your chosen effects to make certain that your proposed gizmo isn't overly powerful, pitifully weak, or covered by one of the existing gizmos.

"It had long been my belief that human thought consists basically of atomic or molecular motion, convertible into ether waves of radiant energy like heat, light, and electricity. This belief had early led me to contemplate the possibility of telepathy or mental communication by means of suitable apparatus, and I had in my college days prepared a set of transmitting and receiving instruments somewhat similar to the cumbrous devices employed in wireless telegraphy at that crude, pre-radio period."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Beyond the Wall of Sleep"

The Design Phase: Determining The Target Number And Design Modifiers



After you've chosen the gizmo you're going to build and decided upon the effect parameters, you'll need to determine the base Innovation Target Number. To build and activate your gizmo, you'll be testing your Science! skill against the Innovation Target Number (IT#). This number reflects the sophistication of your device, how difficult it is to build, and the difficulty in using it.

To determine the base IT#, look at the chart underneath the gizmo description. Each column lists the available effects for the gizmo: Range, duration, damage bonus, etc. The rows indicate the potency of these effects by gizmo Grade. You may build any gizmo equal to or lower than your Science! Skill Grade. The lower the IT#, the easier it is to build and use your gizmo.

The base *Innovation Target Number* (IT#) of your gizmo is equal to the Grade of your gizmo.

The Grade of your gizmo cannot exceed your Science! Skill Grade.

Example: With a Science! Skill Grade of "C," you can build any gizmo with a Grade of "C" or "D." If you decide to create a Grade "C" Containment gizmo, it will have a maximum range of 100 feet, cover a maximum area of 20 square feet, with an operating time of 2 turns.

When you are building your gizmo, it's assumed that you have:

- Material components
- Set-aside time to assemble the gizmo
- A first aid kit*

**Optional but recommended.*

There are also a couple of ways to cut corners to make your gizmo a little easier to build (which grants a Downshift on the IT#) or enhancements to improve functionality (at the cost of an Upshift to the IT#). These are Design Modifiers. Some are included in the gizmo descriptions, others are below. Before you begin, there are several rules about adding Design Modifiers to your gizmo:

- Unlike most modifiers, Design Modifiers apply to the Innovation Target Number, not your Science! skill.
- Design Modifiers cannot reduce the Innovation Target Number below 5.
- Design Modifiers do not replace mundane modifiers.
- Design Modifiers are optional.
- Design Modifiers do not increase or decrease your gizmo's Grade or effects. A Grade "B" gizmo with 2 Upshifts is still a Grade "B" gizmo, although it will have a modified Innovation Target Number of 13.
- Design Modifiers are permanent features of a gizmo and must be added at the design stage. You can't go back and add a modifier to a completed gizmo, nor can you remove one from a completed gizmo.
- Design Modifiers only apply when building a gizmo or making an Activation Skill Test. Any other Skill Tests use the gizmo's Grade (i.e., the base Innovation Target Number).
- Pass/Fail resistance rolls (i.e., punching through a Containment field or seeing through a free-standing Hologram) are made against the base Innovation Target Number associated with the Grade of the gizmo.

Miniaturizing the Gizmo

Sometimes it's worth the extra aggravation to create a smaller, lightweight gizmo. To make your gizmo compact and easily hidden, Upshift the IT# by one. This modification is not available for Upgraded Armor, Upgraded Weapons or Upgraded Items.

Function over Form

If subtlety isn't an issue, you can save yourself some effort. If you don't mind

Situation	Design Modifier
Rare Material Components	1 Downshift
Bulky Gizmo	1 Downshift
Portable Gizmo	1 Upshift
Redundant Systems	1 Upshift
Fragile	1 Downshift
One-Shot Gizmo	1 Downshift
Personalized	None
Long Warm-Up Time	1 Downshift
Triggered Gizmo	1 Upshift
Miscellaneous Modifiers	1 Upshift or 1 Downshift
Adding a Damaging Effect	2 Upshifts

a gizmo that's bulky, obvious and barely portable, you can Downshift the IT# by one. Be warned - these gizmos are easier to target in combat!

Redundant Systems

Your gizmo is harder to destroy. It gains +1 Disabled Damage Box and +1 Destroyed Damage Box. Upshift the IT# by one.

Fragile

It's easy to damage this gizmo. Reduce the number of Disabled Damage Boxes and Destroyed Damage Boxes by one each. Downshift the IT# by one.

Rare Components

All gizmos require components. There's no getting around that requirement. However, you can substitute a rare component (assuming you have some) for a common component and gain a Downshift on the IT#. You may use a maximum of one rare component per gizmo.

One-Shot Gizmos

To create a one-shot gizmo, follow the creation process as usual, but don't roll for charges (see below). Downshift the IT# by one. Once your gizmo has been activated, even if it wasn't used successfully, the device burns-out and self-destructs.

Personalized Gizmo

The gizmo is created with custom grips, coded controls, and biometric scanners. Only the Mad Scientist who built the gizmo can use it. This design modifier does not change the IT#.

Slow to Warm Up

Activating the gizmo is a long action (pg. XX). The user must fiddle with the gizmo's controls for 3 consecutive turns before it can be activated. Only minor actions are allowed. If the user is interrupted, they will need to start again. Make the Activation Skill Test at the end of the character's third action. Take a Downshift on the IT# for your trouble.

Trigger

If you want to set your gizmo to activate at a specific time (4:00 pm, at the end of a five-minute countdown, etc.) or when a specified event occurs ("if someone opens this door without inserting the key," "when I say the code phrase," etc.), Upshift the IT# by one. The trigger must be determined when the gizmo is designed. The Activation Test is made when the gizmo is triggered. If the creator is not present when the gizmo is triggered, the GM makes the Activation Test on their behalf. Depending upon the nature of the gizmo and the trigger, the GM may allow a Paranoia Skill Test to spot the gizmo before it activates.

Miscellaneous Modifiers

You'll probably come up with a million other improvements and alterations you'd like to apply to your gizmo. Apply 1 Upshift to the IT# for an adjustment that improves or expands the usefulness of the gizmo, and 1 Downshift for an adjustment that significantly limits the usefulness of the gizmo. The GM must approve all Miscellaneous modifiers!

Example: You're building a containment gizmo, but you're mostly going to use it

indoors, so you don't need a roof or floor, just walls. You confer with the GM and she decides that this is a worthwhile limitation, granting you a Downshift on the Innovation Target Number. When creating a cage, this gizmo will never be able to generate a floor or top, but it will be easier to build and use. If you later find yourself going up against Nightgaunts on the campus Yard, you'll need to build another gizmo if you want to keep them from just flying away.

To weaponize a gizmo that normally doesn't cause damage, add 2 Upshifts to the IT#. You can toggle the damage "on" or "off" when you activate the gizmo but turning off the damage won't change the modified IT#. The target takes damage equal to the Margin between their Skill Total and the unmodified Innovation Target Number.

Example: You've been experimenting with solid-light, and you'd like to see if you can apply this technology to your hologram gizmo. This will make your gizmo more difficult to build and use (2 Upshifts to the IT#), but the holograms will do real, Physical Damage. Anyone who encounters your hologram, regardless of whether they believe it is real or not, will have to make a Skill Test against the gizmo's Grade (this is not an assembly or Activation Skill Test, so we use the base IT#). If they fail, they take damage equal to the Margin of Failure.

Components

Mad Scientists require specialized components and raw materials to build their wonderful toys. There's no getting around it. Without components, a gizmo is nothing more than a bunch of equations and some drawings on a napkin. Unlike magic, though, you don't use up your components every time you use your gizmo; you only consume a component when you first build it.

Keeping Track of Components

Don't worry about keeping track of every nut, bolt, and brain in a jar you've got in your dorm room. We'll just throw them under the generic heading of "standard components."

1 component is required to build 1 gizmo

Look up the MOD for your Science! Skill Grade on the Master Skill Chart. This is how many standard components you can safely store (treat a Grade of "C" as having 1). You can make and store as many gizmos as you want, but you are limited to the number of unused components you can have at any time. As you grow in skill, you'll learn how to put your components to better use and you'll be able to store more of them.

Example: You've got a Grade of "B" in Science!. That means you can have 2 gizmos worth of standard components. If you have 2 components stored and you build a gizmo, you would have one component remaining. You could then buy or forage for another, bringing your total back up to 2.

When you run out of standard components, you may either buy more in the Bookstore ($40 per gizmo) or try to scavenge them from some other electrical or mechanical device using your Boffin skill (Target Number 9, or 11 if a lot of students have needed to replenish their supplies and stocks are getting scarce). The difference between your roll and the Target Number is the number of gizmos worth of components you have found (up to your maximum). Whether you're able to successfully scavenge usable compo-

nents or not, the device is destroyed in the process.

The dumpsters behind West Wing and Peterson are a reliable source for cast-off equipment.

Rare Components

Rare components are just what they sound like. They're uncommon, expensive and you're not going to find them lying around. However, rare components grant a Downshift on the IT# when building and using a gizmo. Rare components do not count towards the maximum number of components your character can have.

Rare components must be bought (using the Family or Fixer skills) or stolen. The Target Number for buying or cutting a deal for these components is 9 (11 if it's really tough to get ahold of, like weapons-grade plutonium). If you need the component ASAP, Downshift your skill by one. If you fail the roll, you may have annoyed your family or burned a contact for a little while.

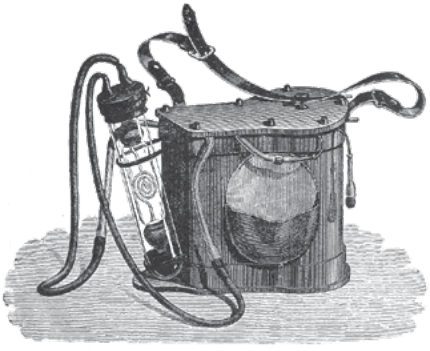
Sample Standard Components

Although the exact components used in a gizmo don't really matter in the game (beyond whether they are standard or rare), we've included a list in case you wanted to add some flavor during play.

- Antennae
- Big red buttons
- Car battery
- Chronometer
- Circuit boards
- Electric motors
- Hydrogen gas
- Infrared sensor
- Lenses and prisms
- Pressure & heat gauges
- Radio transmitter
- semiconductors
- Soldering iron
- Solenoid valves
- Titanium
- Tubing
- Vacuum tubes
- Wiring (and lots of it)

Sample Rare Components

- Rare components include:
- Alien technology (Migo, Yith, etc.)
- Depleted uranium
- Diamond
- Gold
- Human brain
- Mono-molecular fibers
- Moon or Mars rocks
- Nanotechnology
- Platinum
- Rare isotopes
- Synthetic neurons



The Assembly Phase

Now, you're finally ready to see if your masterpiece is a breakthrough or an utter failure. You need to spend one uninterrupted scene putting your gizmo together. At the end of the scene, make a Pass/Fail Science! test against the modified Innovation Target Number (IT# + Design Modifiers), considering any other modifiers that may apply.

- If you tie or beat the modified IT#: IT WORKS! IT WORKS! Roll for the number of charges and note the schematic on your character sheet, in case you ever need to rebuild the gizmo.
- If your Skill Total is lower than the modified IT#: The device is a failure and you wasted the components. If you still want to build this gizmo, you're going to have to start all over again.
- If your Skill Total is lower than the modified IT# AND you rolled doubles (i.e., two 1s, two 3s, etc. on the 2d6 roll): Something has gone very wrong. You wasted the components, and you suffer Backlash (*see below*). If you survive the lab accident, you can try all over again.

Unlike Design Modifiers, effects (damage, duration, etc.) are not "locked" when you build a gizmo. You may dial-down the effects when you make your Activation Test. Once your gizmo is operational, however, the only way to alter the effects is to deactivate the gizmo and make another Activation Test.

Rebuilding a Gizmo You've Already Created

If you need to build a replacement gizmo, a schematic will allow you to assemble an exact duplicate (including all Design Modifiers) without having to make a Skill Test. You'll have to use the same components and you still must spend a scene putting it together, but there's no chance of failure.

Batteries Not Included

Now that your masterpiece is up and running, you can use it whenever you want – provided it's got power.

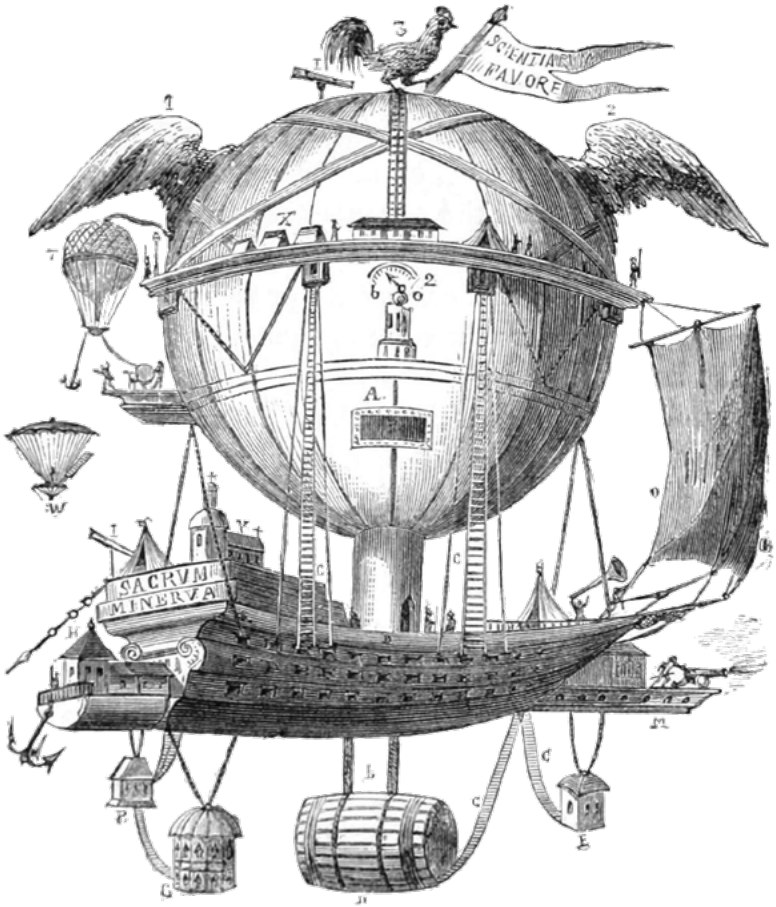
When you build or recharge a gizmo, roll 1d6 for the number of charges.

"Magic--that's just a label, you know. Completely meaningless. It wasn't so very long ago that people were saying that electricity was magic."

Robert Bloch, "Psycho"

Gizmos run on charges. A single, 12-hour charge is enough to provide 1d6 charges for your device (rolled at the end of the 12-hour charging period), and each charge is good for one activation of the gizmo, up to its maximum duration, if any. If a gizmo has a duration of 6 hours, you can run it continuously for up to 6 hours on a single charge. At the end of 6 hours, you'll either need to reactivate the gizmo or let it run out. If you only turn the gizmo on for 10 minutes before deactivating it, you still consume one charge. When you're out of charges, your gizmo ceases to function until it has been recharged. Charging is relatively easy, you can plug it into a wall socket, let the solar panels absorb energy, whatever. You do not need to be present while the gizmo is charging.

You can also Overcharge a gizmo – using two charges per use instead of one – to gain an Upshift on your Science! skill when making an Activation Test. Overcharging makes it a little easier to use your gizmo at the risk of running out of charges. One-shot gizmos cannot be overcharged.



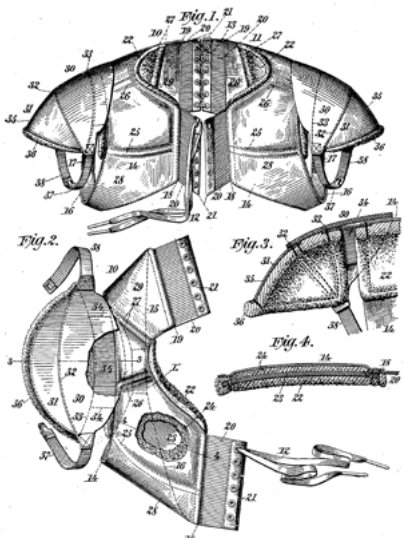
Naming

When you finish putting your gizmo together, you need to come up with a suitable, pseudo-scientific name for it. If you get stuck, here's another handy-dandy chart:

V (+ W) + X + Y (+ Z)

Example: Giga-Positronic Aether Lens.

V	W	X	Y	Z
Anti-	Aerial	Accumulator	Analyzer	-graph
Auto-	Alpha	Aether	Belt	-izer
Cephalo-	Artificial	Antimatter	Charger	Mark II – V
Chrono-	Atomic	Capacitor	Coil	-ometer
Compu-	Cellular	Chaos	Collector	-Scope
Cryo-	Conducive/ conducting	Circuit	Detector	-tron
Detecto-	Cyber	Dark matter	Drone	
Electro-	Dimensional	Deflector	Engine	
Exo-	Evolution	Fiber	Field	
Giga-	Fractal	Flux	Generator	
Holo-	Gravitic	Halpon	Glove(s)	
Hypno-	Inversion	Inducer	Helmet	
Menta-	Neutronic	Integrator	Lens	
Multi-	Omega	Memory	Machine	
Nano-	Parallel	Modulator	Portal	
Neuro-	Positronic	Neutrino	Probe	
Over-	Power	N-Ray	Projector	
Proto-	Projection	Orgone	Ray	
Pyro-	Quantum	Particle	Shield	
Sub-	Spatial	Polarity	Sphere	
Tele-	Spectral	Pyramid	Suit	
Thermic-	Synthesizing	Radio	Transmitter	
Thermo-	Telurgic	Radium	Unit	
Trans-	Variable	Relay		
	Zero-point	Singularity		
		Warp		



Example: They laughed when you said you wanted to join the football team! You'll show them! A genius can do anything they put their mind to! You'll create a device that will make you the equal of any of those Neanderthals on the team! *This is clearly an Augment gizmo, and the skill that governs football is Phys. Ed. However, you'd also like to get a boost to your Smackdown, in case you need to tackle someone... hard. You've got a Science! Skill Grade of "B" so you can make any gizmo with a Grade of "B" or lower. A Grade "B" Augment gizmo allows you to apply 1 Upshift to 2 different skills – in this case, Phys. Ed. and Smackdown. Yeah, that'll work. A gizmo with a Grade of "B" has a base IT# of 9. You want something small and easily concealed to fool the dim-witted jocks, so that Upshifts the IT# to 11. However, you managed to get your hands on some rare components – synthetic neurons. That'll cancel-out the Upshift, bringing the modified IT# back down to 9. You scratch the rare components off your list. Now, you've got to put it together and hope your calculations were correct. After you spend a scene putting the gizmo together, you need to make a Pass/Fail Science! Skill Test against a modified IT# of 9. Assuming your Skill Total is equal to or higher than 9, you successfully build the gizmo. All you have to do is name your creation and roll 1d6 for the number of charges. This sounds like a "Sub-evolution modulator suit" to me. Your new gizmo will provide one Upshift to your Smackdown and Phys. Ed. skills for one scene or one hour per charge.*

Activating Your Gizmo

Once you have a functioning gizmo, you're ready to unleash your masterpiece on the world! Obviously, the gizmo must be fully-functional and have at least one charge before you can activate it.

To activate a gizmo, your Science! Skill Total must be equal to or higher than the modified Innovation Target Number.

To activate a gizmo, make a Pass/Fail or Contested Science! Skill Test, as noted in the gizmo's description, against the modified Innovation Target Number (the IT# associated with the Grade of your gizmo + the Design Modifiers added to the gizmo). For Contested Skill Tests, you'll not only have to tie or beat the modified Innovation Target Number, but you'll also have to beat your opponent's resistance Skill Total on the same test (pg. XX). Compare your Science! Skill Total against the modified IT# and your opponent's resistance Skill Total. It's possible to successfully employ your weapon of ultimate destruction, only to have your target step out of the way. People are inconsiderate like that.

- If you tie or beat the modified IT# (Pass/Fail tests): The gizmo works properly. Mark off a charge.
- If you tie or beat the modified IT# *and* you exceed your opponent's Skill Total (Contested Skill Tests): The gizmo works, and your opponent suffers whatever fate you have planned for them. Mark off a charge.
- If you tie or beat the modified IT# *but* your Skill Total is equal to or less than your opponent's Skill Total (Contested Skill Tests): The gizmo worked properly, but your opponent resisted or evaded it. The inconsiderate jerk made you waste a charge.
- If your Skill Total is less than the IT#: The stupid gizmo doesn't work right, and you waste a charge. *Was it warmed-up? Maybe you just turned the wrong dial? Try turning it off and on again.*
- If your Skill Total is less than the IT# *and* you rolled double 1s (i.e., a 1 on both dice): It doesn't work, and you waste a charge. On top of your utter failure, you also suffer Backlash.

Example: You've got an "A" in Science! and you have a Grade "B" paralysis ray-projector (Immobilize). Your opponent has no intention of standing around like a statue for the next hour, so they're going to jump out of the way using their Phys. Ed. skill (Grade "C"). If your Science! Skill Total is 9 or better, your ray-projector emits a whine as an aesthetically-pleasing blue beam of paralyzing energy streaks toward your opponent. If your opponent's Phys. Ed. Skill Total is less than 9, they'll be frozen. If their total is 9 or more, they safely evade the effects of your gizmo. (Remember, you need to exceed your opponent's total in a Contested Skill Test!)

When you make your Activation Test, you may also adjust your gizmo's

How Not to Get Zapped

What if someone's pointing a gizmo at you?

The gizmo's description will note whether it requires Pass/Fail or Contested Skill Tests. Usually, the test is Contested if the gizmo will be targeting and affecting you, specifically. You'll need to tie or beat the wielder's Science! Skill Total – the same one they used to activate the gizmo. Gizmos that require a Pass/Fail test don't usually target a specific person or object, although they may blanket an entire area. You may be asked to make a Skill Test to resist the effects of a Pass/Fail gizmo (like Hologram) or to break free of an ongoing effect (like Immobilize). If so, test the most applicable skill (usually noted in the gizmo's description) against the base Innovation Target Number. If the gizmo improves someone's skills, like Augment, then it's a normal skill vs. skill Contested Skill Test.

Example: If someone's blasting away at you with a Blast gizmo, you need to tie or beat their Activation Skill Test. If you're trying to determine whether a Hologram is real or not, you only need to tie or beat the gizmo's IT#.

operating parameters – reducing the effects to fit your needs. A Containment gizmo capable of enclosing an area up to 100 square feet might not be useful indoors, but you can reduce the area of effect when making the Activation Test. Likewise, a Blast gizmo with a +6-damage modifier might be overkill when faced with an angry squirrel (unless you're having a contest to see how far you can scatter the pieces). Once you've successfully made your Activation Test, however, the effects are locked for the duration. The only way to alter them would be to deactivate the gizmo and make a new Activation Test, which would consume another charge and, potentially, give your opponent another chance to get away.

A character is not limited by their Science! skill when Activating a gizmo – only when building one.

A character who has the Science! skill may try to use any gizmo they encounter. Once they have figured out how it works (see below), they may attempt an Activation Test, regardless of the gizmo's Grade.

Lending Gizmos to Dear Friends

One of the cool things about gizmos is that other people can use them. As long as the gizmo isn't personalized (see above), anyone who has the Science! skill can use it, even if they aren't a Mad Scientist. The gizmo's creator (or another Mad Scientist who's figured out how it works) can spend 2 turns to teach anyone with the Science! lore skill how to operate the gizmo.

When encountering a non-personalized gizmo created by someone (or something) else, a Mad Scientist can attempt to figure out how the gizmo works by making a Pass/Fail Science! Skill Test against the gizmo's Grade. If they succeed, they can activate the gizmo normally. Anyone making an Activation Test uses their own Science! skill (regardless of whether they are Mad Scientists, themselves, or simply possess the Lore skill). As noted above, characters are not limited to using gizmos equal to or lower than their Science! Skill Grade. This limitation only applies when building a gizmo. However, only the creator can maintain a gizmo and keep it in working order.

Maintaining Gizmos And Gizmo Limits

Gizmos are finicky and need daily maintenance. A Mad Scientist must spend a couple of turns each day tinkering with their gizmos or the gizmos will cease functioning and their internal power supplies will go dead. Only the creator of the gizmo can properly maintain it. Once a gizmo goes dead, it'll stay that way until its creator has time to maintain and recharge it, which takes 12 hours. A Mad Scientist can intentionally let a gizmo go dead to build a new one or reactivate an old gizmo.

Mad Scientists can make as many gizmos as their dark little hearts desire, but they can only maintain a few, active gizmos at one time, as determined by their Science! skill. Look up the Modifier for your Science! skill on the Master Skill Chart. This is how many gizmos you can have operational and charged at one time (treat a "C" as 1). If you want to build something new and you're already

"Science, already oppressive with its shocking revelations, will perhaps be the ultimate exterminator of our human species..."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family"

at your limit, you're going to have to retire another gizmo first – allowing that gizmo to go dead.

Your Science! MOD is the number of operational gizmos you can have at one time.

If you have to pull a gizmo out of retirement, you'll need to make sure that you're not over your limit and allow 12 hours to recharge the gizmo's battery.

Example: You have a Skill Grade of "B" in Science!. That means you can maintain two gizmos at the same time. If you already have two and you want to build another gizmo, you're first going to have to shelve one of the other two. The shelved gizmo will stop working and lose all remaining charges. If you need that gizmo again, you'll need to shelve something else and allow 12 hours for the gizmo to recharge.

Alien devices don't need to be maintained; the science behind them far outpaces our own. These devices will remain functional as long as they have charges. Once the item is out of juice, the device is useless.

Schematics

Gizmos can be stolen, broken, confiscated by teachers, sucked into an interdimensional vortex, explode, etc. Rather than let all their hard work go to waste, Mad Scientists create schematics of the gizmos they build. Schematics don't have to be fancy blueprints - many are nothing more than some notes, diagrams, and equations on a dirty napkin. However, if a Mad Scientist needs to rebuild a gizmo, a schematic is invaluable. Each schematic corresponds to one gizmo the Mad Scientist has created, and allows a Mad Scientist to make an exact copy of a previously built gizmo – same Grade, same Design Modifiers, same paint job – without having to make another Science! Skill Test. The Mad Scientist still needs components, they still must put in the time to rebuild the gizmo, and they're still limited by the number of active gizmos they can have at one time, but there's no chance of failure.

If a Mad Scientist wants to update their gizmo's abilities or they've lost the corresponding schematic, they'll need to make a Science! Skill Test at the end of the design phase, as usual. If they pass the Skill Test, they can save a new set of schematics. There is no limit to the number of schematics they can possess.

Example: A Mad Scientist's anti-polaron energy projector blew up in a bad Backlash incident. The gizmo was Grade "B" and utilized rare components. The modified IT# *was 7. Since the Mad Scientist had a schematic, they can build another one just like it. Since they used rare components the first time, however, they'll need rare components to rebuild it. Assuming they have some lying around, the Mad Scientist only has to spend an hour putting it together. Since they're working from a sche-*

matic, they don't need to make a Skill Test to build it. If the Mad Scientist wants to tinker with their gizmo, like adding another design modifier or increasing the gizmo's grade, the schematic would not provide any benefit.

Reading Another Mad Scientist's Schematics (Stealing Their Ideas)

The creation process becomes a whole lot easier if you can gain access to the schematics of another Mad Scientist. First, you need to decipher their notes. For each gizmo schematic you find, roll your Science! skill against the Target Number associated with the other Mad Scientist's Science! skill (i.e., a Science skill of "B" has an associated Target Number of 9). If you fail, you can't make heads or tails of their scribblings, and the schematic isn't useful. If you succeed, you can automatically build the exact gizmo described in the schematics (*provided the gizmo Grade is equal to or lower than your Science! skill*) without having to make a Science! Skill Test.

Despicable Acts Of Roguery, Sabotage, And The Destruction Of Personal Property

As we mentioned before, a Mad Scientist's schematics and inventions are subject to theft or destruction.

Another character may attempt to disarm you, forcing you to drop a held gizmo. Forcing an opponent to drop a held object incurs a Downshift on the combat Skill Test. Obviously, this won't work if you're wearing the gizmo, so your GM will have to adjudicate. If the character succeeds, however, you'll be forced to drop the gizmo. If the other character is in close range, they may spend a minor action to grab the gizmo for themselves (although the character will need to learn how to operate it before they can make an Activation Test).

Optionally, a character may specifically target a gizmo in combat, with the intention of disabling or destroying it. Targeting a gizmo also incurs a Downshift on the combat Skill Test, unless the gizmo has the "Function over Form" design modifier. More sophisticated gizmos (i.e., higher Grade gizmos) are easier to damage, as shown on the chart below:

Gizmo Grade	Disabled Damage Boxes	Destroyed Damage Boxes
FACULTY	4	4
A	4	4
B	5	5
C	5	5
D	6	6

The number of damage boxes a gizmo has may be increased or decreased with the "Redundant Systems" and "Fragile" Design Modifiers. As the gizmo takes damage, the Disabled Damage Boxes are filled first, with overflow damage filling the Destroyed Damage Boxes.

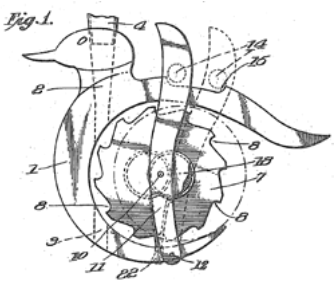
When a gizmo's Disabled Damage Boxes are filled, it no longer operates. The Mad Scientist who created it may spend one scene repairing it. At the end of the scene, the Mad Scientist must make a Pass/Fail Science! Skill Test against the modified IT#. If they succeed, the device is restored to full functionality. If they fail the test, the Mad Scientist may repeat the process until the device is repaired.

Once all the Destroyed Damage Boxes are filled, the gizmo is a smoldering wreck and cannot be salvaged.

Example: A bully has been attempting to pound you, but your personal shield generator has been frustrating their attempts. Changing tactics, they've decided to destroy your gizmo, leaving you vulnerable. Let's assume your gizmo is Grade "A," which grants you a lot of protection, but it's relatively delicate. If you have a Phys. Ed. Grade of "C" and the Bully has a Smackdown skill of "A," the bully would normally make a contested Smackdown Skill Test against your Phys. Ed. skill. Since they're targeting your gizmo, they get a Downshift, evening the odds a little. If the bully's Skill Total is 10 and your Skill Total is 4, the bully has done 6 points of Physical Damage. Since they're targeting the gizmo, you don't take any damage, but all 4 Disabled Damage Boxes and 2 Destroyed Damage Boxes are filled. Since all the Disabled Damage Boxes are filled, your gizmo sparks and shuts off. If your gizmo takes 2 more points of damage, it's headed for the scrap heap.

As we mentioned above, if another Mad Scientist steals one of your schematics, they can use your plans to create a duplicate of that gizmo. Before they can rip-off your work, the Mad Scientist must first make a Pass/Fail Science! Skill Test against the Target Number associated with your Science! Skill Grade to comprehend your designs. If they fail the test, they can't make heads or tails of your notes and the schematics are worthless to them. Of course, if someone steals one of your schematics, you'll also lose the associated benefit if you need to rebuild that particular gizmo.

If you thought that the theft of intellectual property was bad, a rival Mad Scientist can attempt to sabotage your schematics, too! Once a rival Mad Scientist has gotten ahold of one of your schematics and deciphered it, instead of stealing it, they may spend one uninterrupted scene to "alter" your schematic. (Of course, if they do this, keeping the schematic won't do them much good.) The next time you pull out the booby-trapped schematic to rebuild your gizmo, the GM will ask you to make a Pass/Fail Brainiac Skill Test against the gizmo's modified IT#. If you pass, you discover the discrepancies and correct them. If you fail the Brainiac Skill Test, you automatically roll on the backlash table when you've finished assembling your gizmo. This is why so many Mad Scientists don't have eyebrows.



Backlash

Backlash is the result of an epic lab accident or gizmo overload. It can happen in one of two ways:

1. You're building a gizmo, and you not only fail the Science! Skill Test, but you roll doubles (the same number on each die) on your 2d6 roll;
2. You're using a gizmo, and you not only fail the Activation Test, but you roll double 1s on your 2d6 roll.

You'll note that using a gizmo is significantly less hazardous than building one for the first time.

To determine what happens, roll 1d6 and compare your result to the Gizmo Backlash table.

Die Roll	Gizmo Backlash
1	Overheated. Take 2 boxes of Physical Damage.
2	Small boom. Knocked-out for 1d6 rounds.
3	Circuits are fried. You need to spend one scene repairing the gizmo (make a Pass/Fail Science! test against the modified Innovation Target Number) before you can use it again.
4	Radiation leak. Anyone within two feet of the gizmo suffers a minor physical mutation for 2 scenes (extreme hair growth, inhuman skin coloration or texture, grow extra limbs or animal features, etc.). These mutations convey no advantages to the characters. They also take 2 points of Mental Anguish damage.
5	Broke the Laws of Physics. Physical laws in the area go haywire for 1d6 scenes (gravity becomes erratic, probability goes out the window as impossible things begin to happen, characters skip forward/backward in time, warped to another dimension, characters change shape and/or gender without regard to conservation of mass, etc.). Also, everyone in the area takes 2 points of Mental Anguish damage.
6	Destroyed in an explosion. The gizmo must be rebuilt completely. Everyone in short range (about 20-foot radius) takes Physical Damage equal to the Margin of Failure +2. Alternatively, it rips open a temporary rift in time/space and everyone in the area views something they were never meant to see. Everyone in short range takes Mental Anguish damage equal to the Margin of Failure +1

Backlash is always centered on the gizmo.

For Grades of MASTER and Above

Mad Scientists and alien entities who possess a Science! skill of MASTER or greater have a reduced chance of triggering Backlash. When building a gizmo, Backlash triggers if they fail the Skill Test and all the dice show the same value (remember, you roll extra dice at MASTER and above). When using a gizmo, Backlash triggers if they fail the Activation Tes and all the dice come up 1s.

Sample Gizmos

Below you will find some sample gizmos. All you need to do is come up with a cool name for the gizmo and its effects. Design Modifiers have been included as noted.

Augment: Strength-Enhancing Exoskeleton (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 7

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Bonus MOD: 1 Upshift to Brawn

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: None

Blast: Ray Gun (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Contested

Resistance Skill: Phys. Ed.

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 7

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Damage MOD: +1

Range: Up to 100 feet

Design Modifiers: Personalized

Blast: Proton Accelerator (Grade "B")

Skill Test: Contested

Resistance Skill: Phys. Ed.

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 7

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Damage MOD: +2

Range: Up to 500 feet

Design Modifiers: Bulky (1 Downshift)

Containment: Force Field Trap (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Contested

Resistance Skill: Phys. Ed.

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 7

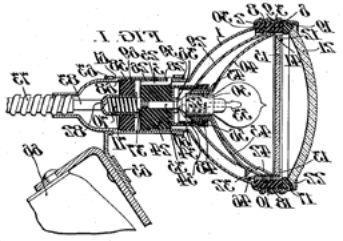
Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Range: Up to 100 feet

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Area: 20 square feet

Design Modifiers: Triggered (1 Upshift), Bulky (1 Downshift)



Hologram: Portable Projector (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 11

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Bonus MOD: 1 Upshift to Art (for disguises only)

Size or Area: Average/20 square feet

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: Audio (1 Upshift), Portable (1 Upshift)

Rejuvenate: Single-Use Medpac (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: Varies by injury (Downshift Target Number by one)

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Bonus MOD: +1 Damage healed Range: Up to 100 feet

Design Modifiers: One Shot (1 Downshift)

Rejuvenate: Electro-Lazarus Chamber (Grade "A")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: Varies by injury (Downshift Target Number by one)

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 4/4

Bonus MOD: +4 Damage healed Range: Up to 1,000 feet

Design Modifiers: Bulky (1 Downshift)

Scan: Continuum Nexus Stability Scope (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

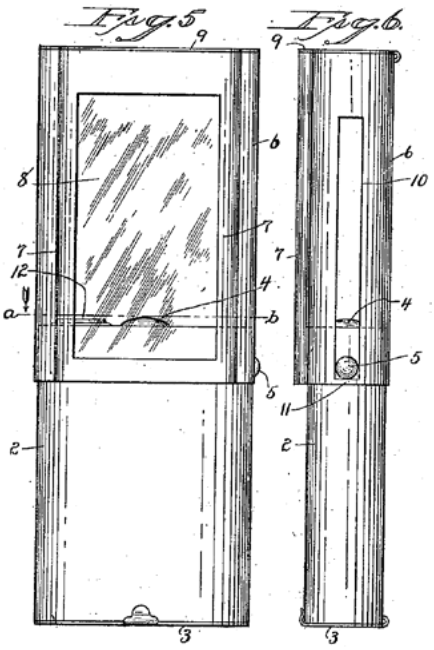
Mod. Innovation Target Number: 7

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Bonus MOD: 1 Upshift to Paranoia (to spot dimensional rifts) Range: Up to 500 feet

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: None



Shield: Anti-Bully Punching Deflector (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 9

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 6/6

Armor: +1 (unarmed attacks)

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: Redundant Systems (1 Upshift)

Shield: Anti-Bully Punching Deflector, Mark II: The Revenginator (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 11

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Damage MOD: Margin of Failure

Armor: +1 (unarmed attacks)

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: Damaging Effect (2 Upshifts)

Transport: Rocket Roller Skates (Grade "B")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 11

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Range: Up to 250 feet/turn

Duration: 1 scene or 1 hour/charge

Design Modifiers: Portable (1 Upshift)

Upgrade Armor: Reinforced School Uniform (Grade "B")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

Mod. Innovation Target Number: 9

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Armor: +2 (normally +1)

Duration: 1 charge/use

Design Modifiers: None

Upgrade Item: Laptop Computer with Virtual Intelligence (Grade "C")

Skill Test: Pass/Fail

Resistance Skill: Not applicable

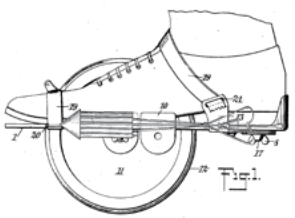
Mod. Innovation Target Number: 9

Disabled Damage Boxes/ Destroyed Damage Boxes: 5/5

Bonus MOD: +1 to Boffin

Duration: 2 turns/charge

Design Modifiers: none



The Uncanny World Of Mutations

As her alarm clock beeped again for the third time, Kelly's hand tentatively reached out of her blanket cocoon. She was tempted to hit the snooze button again, but she'd rigged it to give her a shock if she hit it three times.

The room was cold. It was always cold. And drafty. She loathed getting out of bed in the morning, but attendance at breakfast was mandatory – even if you weren't a breakfast person.

She blew her long, tangled hair from her eyes and peeked out of her cozy nest to see if her roommate, Christina, was up yet. As usual, the bed was empty, and Christina's huge, poufy bathrobe lay across her bed.

Kelly rarely saw Christina and spoke with her even less. They didn't dislike each other – at least Kelly didn't hate Christina – they just had different schedules and moved in different circles.

In her head, Kelly amused herself by thinking of Christina as her "room*mouse*" because she came and went without ever waking her. Christina was an early riser and was usually up and out of the room before Kelly woke up. Likewise, she usually went to bed long after Kelly had fallen asleep. "Sleep Ninja" might be a better term, she mused, as she gingerly poked a toe out from under the protective warmth of her blankets. A drafty breeze instantly made her regret it.

The longest conversation they'd ever had was after Kelly had thought a bat had flown into their room. She was awakened late one night by what she was certain was the sound of flapping bat wings in their room. Straining her eyes in the dim light, she saw Christina moving around in her giant bathrobe, probably on her way back from the bathroom. Christina swore she didn't hear anything, but Kelly was certain she'd heard it. The entire dorm was incredibly drafty, so there were plenty of opportunities for a bat to find its way into the building.

The next day, Kelly rigged a sonic emitter for their room. It should've repelled bats as well as mice, rats, and several varieties of insects, but Christina said that the amber light it emitted gave her a headache. To be fair, it also gave off a noxious odor, so Kelly scrapped it.

And that was their longest conversation.

Looking at her still-blaring alarm clock, Kelly decided to face the situation and braced herself against the cold morning that awaited her. She truly hoped the showers would have warm water this morning.

There are a lot of non-human and alien entities in the universe with physiologies that defy our understanding of biology and evolution. Without getting into the mechanics, you were born a mutant, a hybrid of two different species. As a Hybrid, you possess inhuman traits as the result of some questionable decisions on the part of your ancestors. These traits mark you as something not 100% human, but also grant you amazing powers.

Mutation: It is the key to our evolution.

Charles Xavier

Most people are not particularly fond of Hybrids. Whether this is because Hybrids are gross (and to be fair, they usually are gross), because of their alien nature, or because Hybrids offend their delicate sensibilities, Hybrids are universally shunned. Their inhuman biology has some distinct advantages, however. Each Hybrid possesses a supernatural ability, called a Trait, which grows stronger as they grow and develop their power. Unlike black magic or gizmos, there is no limit to how often a Trait may be used, and Traits do not have backlash - other than the ever-present threat of discovery.

As a Hybrid, you'll choose one Trait from the list below, and a Tell - the physical manifestation of your other-worldly nature.

Skill Adjustments

Since Hybrids aren't completely human, it makes sense that their skills aren't the same, either.

- Family: Take a downshift on your Family skill, to a minimum of "D." It's not that your family doesn't like you, it's just that your family, home, and reputation have become associated with "unnatural goings on." If Family is already a "D," add a star next to the skill.
- Appeal: Take a downshift on this skill, too (minimum of "D"). Most Hybrids are somewhat off-putting, even before people notice the gill slits or extra limbs. If Appeal is already a "D," add a star next to the skill.
- Upshift any two Mundane Skills (not including Family or Appeal) by one (maximum of "A"). Your alien physiology has some advantages, after all!

Traits

Traits are the cool and bizarre mutations possessed by Hybrids. When you create your Hybrid, select one Trait from the list below. The Grade of your Trait is equal to your Mutation skill and increases as your Mutation skill increases.

Each Trait includes a note as to whether the use of the Trait requires a Pass/Fail (Flight) or Contested (Natural Weapons) Skill Test. Some Traits are listed as Automatic. You do not need to make a Mutation Skill Test to activate the advantages of an automatic Trait. The Trait is always in effect. To apply the associated bonuses, however, you may need to make a related Skill Test (Aquatic). Alien Mind, for example, always provides a Downshift when someone attempts to control your mind. However, simply having an Alien Mind is not an automatic guarantee of success against hypnotic effects. You may have to make a Skill Test to resist the controlling effect. Likewise, Inhuman Senses is always "on," but that doesn't mean you'll automatically be successful when trying to find something, although your chances of doing so are greatly enhanced.

Alien Mind (Automatic)

Your brain is wired a bit differently than everyone else's. In this case, that's a good thing. The alien nature of your mind makes it more difficult to read or control your mind. When targeted by hypnotic effects (including Brainwashing), telepathy (including Mind Probe), or Possession (including Switch Minds), your attacker suffers a penalty as noted on the chart below. On the downside, this isn't something you can switch off, even if you wanted to.

Grade	Penalty Mod.
FACULTY	4 Downshifts
A	3 Downshifts
B	2 Downshifts
C	1 Downshift

Aquatic (Automatic)

You are perfectly at home under the water and can stay submerged for as long as you like. In fact, you probably have a little Deep One DNA. You can see underwater with no penalty, even in the darkest depths. The chart below indicates your movement speed underwater. You may also substitute your Mutation skill for any Mundane physical skill while underwater, using the listed Bonus Modifier. This Trait does not bestow the ability to speak with fish.

Aquatic Grade	Bonus Mod.	Range
FACULTY	+6	1,000 Feet
A	+4	500 Feet
B	+2	100 Feet
C	+1	20 Feet

"I shall plan my cousin's escape from that Canton mad-house, and together we shall go to marvel-shadowed Innsmouth. We shall swim out to that brooding reef in the sea and dive down through black abysses to Cyclopean and many-columned Y'ha-nthlei, and in that lair of the Deep Ones we shall dwell amidst wonder and glory for ever."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow Over Innsmouth"

Armor (Automatic)

Your character is covered with thick scales, chitinous insect armor, or your body is soft and gooshy. This Trait functions just like body armor with two, big exceptions: First, your armor doesn't degrade as you get hurt. Second, as your armor grows tougher, you won't take a skill Penalty when you hit Grade "A" and "FACULTY." The benefits of worn armor and natural armor cannot be combined; apply the best protection value.

Armor Grade	Protection
FACULTY	6
A	4
B	2
C	1

Consume (Automatic. Contested to Attack)

You can pretty much eat anything. You probably have some ghoul blood running through your veins, but there are some advantages to being a human woodchipper. First, you can use this Trait instead of Smackdown when trying to bite an opponent. If you successfully hit your opponent and do damage, add the Damage Modifier for the Trait to your total. Secondly, you can subsist on pretty much anything you can stuff into your mouth and swallow. Rocks, old cans, Styrofoam, tires, roadkill – they may not be tasty, but you can live on them. Finally, you are immune to any orally ingested poison or disease equal to your Trait Grade or lower. This is a good thing if you plan to eat a lot of ripe roadkill.

Weapon Grade	Damage Mod.
FACULTY	+6
A	+4
B	+2
C	+1

Flight (Pass/Fail)

This one kind of speaks for itself. Most Hybrids with this Trait have dripping, membranous bat wings that they must keep stuffed under a trench coat. To figure out how far you can fly in a turn and how much you can carry while airborne, consult the chart below. Under most conditions, flying has a Target Number of 7. You're also capable of hovering like a big moth. For fancy maneuvers or mid-air dodging, use your Mutation skill instead of the Phys. Ed. skill. You can also use this Trait to dive-bomb your enemies. Roll your Mutation skill against your opponent's Phys. Ed. skill. If you win, your opponent takes the Margin of Success as Physical Damage.

Flight Grade	Range	Carry Capacity
FACULTY	Up to 1,000 Feet	+ Twice Your Weight
A	Up to 500 Feet	+ Your Weight
B	Up to 100 Feet	+ Half Your Weight
C	Up to 20 Feet	Nominal

Inhuman Senses (Automatic)

Your senses are well above the normal human range or you have senses that humans simply do not possess, like darkvision or the ability to sense body heat. As you grow in skill, the number of new and enhanced senses you possess will grow (see the chart below – the effects are not cumulative). For enhanced human senses, like being able to smell blood at a greater range or the ability to taste with a touch, you may add your one or more Upshifts to your Paranoia tests. For entirely new senses, like radar, or the ability to sense a dimensional rift, roll your Mutation skill in lieu of your Paranoia skill.

Sense Grade	Extra Senses	Bonus Mod. (New/Enhanced)
FACULTY	6	+6/4 Upshifts
A	4	+4/3 Upshifts
B	2	+2/2 Upshifts
C	1	+0/1 Upshift

Invisibility (Pass/Fail)

You can warp light or perceptions around you to become camouflaged or invisible. To become invisible, make a Mutation test against a Target Number of 9. To avoid being discovered, don't do anything stupid. Anyone who's searching for you must make a Contested Paranoia test (with a penalty as noted on the chart below) against your Mutation skill. Unless your opponent passes the Paranoia test, they also receive a penalty to defend against your physical attacks.

Invisibility Grade	Penalty Mod.
FACULTY	4 Downshifts
A	3 Downshifts
B	2 Downshifts
C	1 Downshift

Larvae (Pass/Fail)

You can spew a rat-sized creature that will obey your will. The chart below indicates how many Mundane Skill levels your larvae will possess and how much Physical Damage it can sustain before it is destroyed. The Target Number to generate larvae depends upon the Grade of larvae you intend to produce. You may produce some weaker, shorter-lived larvae than your Mutation Grade, but you may not produce one of a higher Grade. If you successfully spawn larvae, you may allocate different skills depending upon its intended purpose. Unlike people, however, any skill the larvae do not possess defaults to a Grade of "D" (not "C"). Your larvae's appearance will depend on the skills you assign. If you assign it a high Paranoia, for example, it might be covered with eyes. With a high Smackdown, it might have large pincers or wicked spines. You may give your larvae commands prior to spawning (a sort of "pre-programming") but after it has been created, all additional commands must be delivered verbally. You can maintain a sensory link, seeing and hearing through your larvae's senses, as long as you remain within range. While not terribly durable, larvae are reasonably intelligent and very loyal. They will do their best to follow orders and can improvise to a limited degree. After the duration has expired so will your larvae, which will dissolve into a stinky puddle of goo. You may only have one larvae at a time.

Grade	Target #	Duration	Link Range	Skills	Damage Boxes
FACULTY	13	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up 1,000 feet	2 Grade "A" Skills, 2 Grade "B" Skills, and 1 Grade "C" Skill	6
A	11	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 500 feet	1 Grade "A" Skill, 1 Grade "B" Skill, and 2 Grade "C" Skills	4
B	9	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 250 feet	1 Grade "B" Skill and 2 Grade "C" Skills	2
C	7	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 100 feet	2 Grade "C" Skills	1

Upward he shoots / By the springs on his boots
Like an inverted angel / We've been afraid of this terrible / Strange, elusive monster for years
It seems to be superstitious lunacy / But in fact when things go black / Old Spring Heeled Jack appears

Lemon Demon, "Springheeled Jack"

Leaping (Pass/Fail. Contested to attack)

To figure out how far you can jump and how much you can carry, consult the chart below. A leap under favorable conditions where you have an unobstructed view of your path and destination has a Target Number of 7. You can also use this Trait to leap on or kick your enemies. Roll your Mutation skill against their Phys. Ed. skill. If you win, your opponent takes the Margin of Success as Physical Damage. Also, when plummeting to your doom (or significant injury) you can use this Trait instead of your Phys. Ed. skill to try to land on your feet like a cat (instead of landing like a watermelon).

Leaping Grade	Range	Carry Capacity
FACULTY	Up to 1,000 Feet	3x Twice Your Weight
A	Up to 500 Feet	2x Your Weight
B	Up to 100 Feet	Your Weight
C	Up to 20 Feet	Nominal

Leech (Contested)

You can steal the vitality from others to heal your own injuries. When you first choose this Trait, you must decide if you can leech Physical Damage or Mental Anguish. Whenever you employ this Trait, test your Mutation skill instead of the Smackdown skill. If you successfully hit your opponent, you regain a number of damage boxes up to the Margin of Success and your opponent loses an equal number of damage boxes.

Mental Blast (Contested)

With this Trait, you project terrifying and disorienting images directly into the brain of your target, doing Mental Anguish damage. To attack with this Trait, test your Mutation skill against your opponent's Cool skill. If you successfully hit your opponent and do damage, add the Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success. If you want to strike multiple targets, you can split the attack by Downshifting your Mutation Skill Grade per the rules on pg. XX.

Grade	Damage Mod.	Range
FACULTY	+6	2,000 feet or more
A	+4	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet
B	+2	Across the street/Up to 500 feet
C	+1	Across a room/Up to 100 feet

Mind Control (Contested)

Whether by subsonic vocalizations, hypnotic eyes, telepathic commands, or a nasty little parasite that crawls into peoples' ears, you can bend lesser minds to your will. Your target must be within 20 feet, but you may give commands telepathically. The victim resists with Cool. If you pass the Mutation test and you beat the victim's Skill Total, the victim must follow your commands. The chart below will determine the level of complexity your mental slave will be able to undertake. A simple command with only a couple of steps that require no skill or interaction is a "D". A slightly complex command with several steps that require a couple of Skill Tests is a "B." A very involved command with many detailed steps that require the victim to interact normally with friends or colleagues and to pass challenging Skill Tests is "FACULTY." Giving commands beyond the complexity permitted by the Trait will result in incomplete or failed objectives. Commands that would cause the victim to put themselves in a dangerous situation or are contrary to their nature grant *at least* one Upshift to the Cool test. After the elapsed Duration, the effect will wear-off, even if your command has not yet been completed.

Grade	Command Complexity	Duration
FACULTY	Virtually Impossible/Up the Creek	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	Difficult	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	Tricky	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	Typical	Up to 2 Turns

What about Grades Greater Than "FACULTY?"

Your character may run into powerful mutants and alien entities with a Mutation skill greater than FACULTY. To determine the appropriate effects, use the Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart.

Natural Weapons (Contested)

You've got built-in weapons! These could be rending claws, razor-sharp fangs, a barbed tongue, squeezing tentacles, etc. Whenever you use this Trait in hand-to-hand combat, roll your Mutation skill instead of the Smackdown skill. If you successfully hit your opponent and do damage, add the Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success. Damage from this Trait is Physical Damage. If you want to strike multiple targets, you can split the attack by Downshifting your Mutation Skill Grade per the rules on pg. XX.

Weapon Grade	Damage Mod.
FACULTY	+6
A	+4
B	+2
C	+1

Paralysis (Contested)

This Trait allows you to immobilize your enemies. Paralytic venom is always a fun approach, but this Trait could manifest as some form of mental control or webbing. You'll need to decide how to deliver the method of paralysis when you select this Trait. Make a Contested Mutation test against the victim's defense. If the paralysis is delivered via a means that can be dodged, like a bite, the target defends with a Phys. Ed. test. If the target cannot dodge the method of delivery, they resist with Brawn. If the effect is purely mental, the target resists with Cool. If you succeed, apply the Penalty Modifier to the victim's Phys. Ed. for the listed Duration. If this reduces the skill to zero, the victim cannot move at all. The victim's allies may be able to assist. To break free, the target must make a Pass/Fail Skill Test using whatever skill is most appropriate (Brawn for webbing, First Aid for venom, etc.) against the listed Target Number.

Paralysis Grade	Target #	Penalty Mod.	Duration
FACULTY	13	4 Downshifts	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	11	3 Downshifts	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	9	2 Downshifts	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour
C	7	1 Downshift	Up to 2 Turns

Ranged Attack (Contested)

With this Trait, you can puke acidic bile, shoot razor-sharp spines, or emit a sonic scream like a banshee. Whenever you use this Trait, make a Mutation test instead of the Shoot skill. If you successfully hit your opponent and do damage, add the Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success. Damage from this Trait is Physical Damage. If you want to strike multiple targets, you can split the attack by Downshifting your Mutation Skill Grade per the rules on pg. XX.

Weapon Grade	Damage Mod.	Range
FACULTY	+6	Up to 1,000 Feet
A	+4	Up to 500 Feet
B	+2	Up to 100 Feet
C	+1	Up to 20 Feet

Regeneration (Pass/Fail)

Planning on getting beaten-up a lot? Regeneration allows you to heal physical injuries very quickly. Right before your eyes, bone and flesh knit themselves back together. Each scene, roll your Mutation skill against your current wound level. If you succeed, you heal a number of Physical Damage boxes equal to the margin between your roll and the Target Number. There are limits to your remarkable healing, however. Once you've hit the "Special" level, your injuries are far too severe to be healed with this trait.

Wound Level	Regeneration Difficulty
School Infirmary	*Special*
Disemboweled	13
World of Pain	11
Pretty Messed-Up	9
It's Just a Flesh Wound!	7
Bruised	5

Stretching (Automatic)

You have tentacles, eyestalks, a prehensile tongue, or limbs that can elongate horribly. Aside from being useful in limbo contests, your limbs can twist, flatten, contort, and stretch as though they had no bones, easily navigating through small openings. The distance to which you can stretch your limbs is on the chart below. You may use this Trait in place of your Phys. Ed. skill when climbing (using the listed Bonus Modifier). You may also use this Trait instead of your Smackdown skill when grappling or wrestling (using the listed Bonus Modifier).

Grade	Bonus Mod.	Range
FACULTY	+6	Up to 200 Feet
A	+4	Up to 100 Feet
B	+2	Up to 50 Feet
C	+1	Up to 20 Feet

Switch Minds (Contested)

This Trait allows you to swap your consciousness with another sentient being. While in their body, you will possess their physical skills but you will retain your mental and social skills, and vice versa. The target may (and probably will) attempt to block your attempt with a Cool roll (or Mutation, if they also have this Trait). You can attempt this ability with non-human entities, as well, but you'll take at least one Downshift on your Mutation test and if you fail, you'll suffer Mental Anguish equal to the Margin of Failure.

Grade	Duration	Range
FACULTY	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours	Up to 1,000 feet
A	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours	Up to 500 feet
B	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour	Up to 250 feet
C	Up to 2 Turns	Up to 100 feet

"It was horrible, Dan - she was stealing my body - crowding me out - making a prisoner of me. I lay low and pretended to let her do it, but I had to be on the watch. I could plan if I was careful, for she can't read my mind literally, or in detail. All she could read of my planning was a sort of general mood of rebellion - and she always thought I was helpless. Never thought I could get the best of her . . . but I had a spell or two that worked."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep"

Telepathy (Contested)

This Trait gives you the ability to read minds or to communicate non-verbally. To communicate, you only need to know your target and they must be within your range. The target may block your attempts to contact them with a Contested Cool test (or Mutation, if they also have this Trait) against your Mutation skill. Optionally, they can simply refuse to respond. To read surface thoughts or emotions from a target, you need to make a Contested Mutation test against their Cool skill (or Mutation, if they also have this Trait). If you succeed, you'll get a basic idea what they're currently thinking or feeling. This can be handy when trying to get a date for the school dance! If you fail the Skill Test, they'll know what you were trying to do, and it probably won't go well for you. This ability transcends the barriers of language, so you can also try communicating with sentient, non-human entities, but you'll take at least one Downshift on your Mutation test and if you fail, you'll suffer Mental Anguish equal to the Margin of Failure.

Grade	Range
FACULTY	Up to 2,000 feet
A	Down the street/Up to 1,000 feet
B	Across the street/Up to 500 feet
C	Across a room/Up to 100 feet

Unnamable (Automatic)

You are humanoid only in the loosest sense of the word. Your non-human ancestry is dominant, and the very sight of you could shatter weaker minds. In other words, you could make a shuggoth throw-up (or fall in love. It's hard to tell with those things). Anyone – friends and foes, alike – who sees you needs to make a Cool test against a Target Number set by your Trait Grade. Anyone who fails this roll takes Mental Anguish equal to the Margin of Failure. You may add your Bonus Mod to bullying and intimidation attempts. To have any semblance of a social life (and not attract villagers with torches and pitchforks), you're going to need to bundle-up to hide your appearance.

Unnamable Grade	Target Number	Bonus Mod.
FACULTY	13	4 Upshifts
A	11	3 Upshifts
B	9	2 Upshifts
C	7	1 Upshift

"The basis of all true cosmic horror is violation of the order of nature, and the profoundest violations are always the least concrete and describable."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Selected Letters"

Unnatural Agility (Automatic)

If you select this Trait, you receive a pool of free Upshifts each turn that you can apply to appropriate skills when performing Skill Tests requiring coordination, balance, and manual dexterity. You could apply your Upshifts when ducking and weaving around bullets, kicking off a wall to flip over someone, or swinging from ledge-to-ledge to climb a building. Usually, these skills are limited to Phys. Ed., Smackdown, Medieval, and Shoot, but if you can make a reasonable argument to your GM that your action depends upon your incredible acrobatics, you can apply the Upshift. You cannot combine the effects of Unnatural Agility and Unnatural Strength on the same Skill Test.

Agility Grade	Upshifts/Turn
FACULTY	4
A	3
B	2
C	1

Unnatural Speed (Automatic)

You're fast – really fast. Your running speed and your reflexes put you in a class with professional athletes. This Trait provides a bonus to your Initiative MOD. You also receive an Upshift to your Phys. Ed. skill when used for full movement actions and running Skill Tests (but not climbing, jumping, etc.).

Grade	Initiative Mod.	Phys. Ed./Full Move
FACULTY	+6	4 Upshifts
A	+4	3 Upshifts
B	+2	2 Upshifts
C	+1	1 Upshift

Unnatural Strength (Automatic)

Wilbur SMASH!!! If you select this Trait, you receive a pool of free Upshifts each turn that you can apply to appropriate skills when performing feats of strength. You could barrel through your opponents in the varsity football game, reduce your enemy to a greasy stain on the pavement, or fling large objects around. These Upshifts are limited to Brawn, Phys. Ed., Smackdown, and Medieval, unless you can make a reasonable argument to your GM that your action depends upon your monstrous strength. You cannot combine the effects of Unnatural Strength and Unnatural Agility on the same Skill Test.

Strength Grade	Upshifts/Turn
FACULTY	4
A	3
B	2
C	1

Tells

As we mentioned before, every Trait has a physical manifestation, something you can point to and say, "*that's not right*." Tells are a sure sign that your character is a Hybrid, and people don't generally react well to that; so, it's in your best interest to keep your tells hidden as best you can.

You pick the Tell for the Trait you choose. Go wild. Here are some examples to get you started:

- **Aquatic:** Large, fish-like eyes. Fins.
- **Mind Control:** Oversized cranium with throbbing veins. Bulging eyes with scar tissue around the sockets.
- **Natural Weapons:** Claws. Tusks.
- **Regeneration:** Skin looks like melted wax. Skin shifts and moves on its own.
- **Unnamable:** Your internal organs are visible, and your body is covered with gibbering mouths, eyes, and wavy tentacles.
- **Unnatural Agility:** Vestigial arms and legs growing from your body.

If you get stuck, you can look at the Servitor description list (pg. XX) or you can always go with "tentacles." Tentacles work with almost everything.

Being Discovered

There aren't a lot of Hybrids at the Academy, so those in attendance have gotten pretty good at hiding their inhuman nature. Nobody's made the connection between the students who wear heavy trench coats year 'round and the Hybrids, so disguise is still a good option to avoid discovery (Use the Art skill with a Specialization in Disguise). If you've got a buddy who's a Mad Scientist or a Witch, a good disguise spell or gizmo can be a lifesaver.

If someone has a reason to suspect that you're a Hybrid (they've seen you use your Trait, they caught a glimpse of your tell, etc.), they can make a Contested Mutation lore test against your Art skill (with the Disguise Specialization) total to real-

ize that something is . . . wrong. Depending upon how good your disguise is and how well covered-up you are, your GM may assign an Upshift or a Downshift on your skill. If you make no effort whatsoever to conceal your tell, your opponent automatically succeeds. You may also try to talk your way out of the situation with a Contested Trash Talk test.

Students who are revealed as Hybrids receive a Downshift on all attempts to charm, convince, or impress any non-Hybrid who knows their secret. As you might imagine, blackmail is a common tactic.

Stunts (A.k.a. Instant Evolution)

Aside from the risk of discovery and total social ruination, Traits are a LOT safer to use than most of the other Disturbing Skills. There are no charges or components, no risk of backlash or your Trait going berserk. You can use them all day long, if you want. And Traits can perform Stunts. (If this was a movie, there'd be cool music here. You'll just have to imagine it.)

Once you achieve a Grade of "B" in your Mutation skill, you can begin learning stunts. Stunts allow you to use your Trait in new and cool ways, mimicking the effects of other Traits you didn't choose the first time. When your Mutation score reaches "B" and every Grade thereafter, you may pick one new Trait. The trick is that you must somehow connect the new Trait to your existing ones. If you can reasonably justify the stunt to your GM as an extension of your Traits, you can try it.

Example: You have the Telepathy Trait. You'd like to use it to do a little damage to someone's psyche, and Mental Blast sounds like a good match. You tell your GM that instead of sending images or impressions, you'd like to be able to flood their mind with horrible images and thoughts of pain. That sounds reasonable.

Example 2: You have the Stretching Trait and you'd like to use your abilities to control someone's mind. Your GM looks at you like you're out of your mind and says "I've got to hear this one. Lay it on me." You explain that the tips of your tentacles are equipped with a sharp barb that can penetrate your victim's nervous system and control them like a puppet. Because your explanation was pretty good, your GM might allow you to get away with it. If you had said something like, "Well, um, I think that the fear of seeing all those tentacles will make someone do what I want out of fear," your GM would probably give you the thumbs down. It's all about the packaging!

Once you've selected your stunt and you've gotten approval from your GM, write it down on your character sheet. Choose wisely – once you've filled a stunt slot, you're stuck with it!

Mutation Grade	Total # Of Stunts
FACULTY	3
A	2
B	1
C	0

There are a couple of rules when performing stunts:

- When you perform a stunt, Downshift your Mutation Grade by one level. In the example above, if your Mutation skill was a "B" and you decide to use your Mental Blast stunt, your Skill Grade would be treated as a "C" for the stunt.
- Instead of using a stunt slot to learn a new stunt, you can choose to improve your expertise with an existing stunt. An improved stunt no longer carries the Downshift penalty described above. You can only exercise this option once per stunt and you cannot improve your original Trait in this manner. Improving your original Trait requires the expenditure of Experience Points to improve your Mutation skill.
- Stunts are used in place of your Trait – *not* on top of it. If you have Natural Weapons (fangs) and stunt the Paralysis Trait (your fangs inject a neurotoxin), you may choose to attack with your Natural Weapons or your venom. It's one or the other.

Servitors: Pets For The New Milleniuim Or A Threat To Humanity?

It had been an uncharacteristically warm fall day, and William Chaloux had decided to spend the afternoon on the Yard, vainly trying to teach his Servitor, Nyhorr'urah, to play catch. The small creature either had no idea what it was supposed to do, or it simply didn't care.

For the first ten or twelve tries, William gently lobbed the tennis ball underhand to the monster, and each time, it simply hovered in place as the ball landed on the ground right in front of it. Each time, William trudged over to the ball, picked it up, and gently tried to explain that Nyhorr'urah should catch the ball. To illustrate, he tossed the ball up in the air and caught it.

This time, William misjudged the throw and accidentally hit Nyhorr'urah with the ball. It lodged in the creature's feelers with a soft "splat" before falling to the ground, covered with slime. Nyhorr'urah buzzed angrily at him.

"It's not my fault, try catching it next time!"

Three tendrils uncoiled themselves from Nyhorr'urah's body and slowly descended to the ground, slithering like a skinless snake towards the ball.

"That's it! Yeah, get the ball! Pick it up," William shouted with encouragement.

The tendrils slid over the ball, caressed it, and slowly raised it to the worm-like body.

"Good boy! Now, throw it back! Throw it back to me!"

The grasping feelers pulled the tennis ball into the convoluted body, followed by a deep ripping sound. Four or five pieces of shredded tennis ball fell back to the ground.

As William stood staring at the remains of his tennis ball, Nyhorr'urah darted away, its membranous wings fully extended and vibrating with a deep buzzing noise.

William groaned, "Not again," as he took off after the monster. He'd have to add "catch" to the list of things Nyhorr'urah wouldn't do. So far, that list included "fetch," "shake hands," and "beg."

As he ran, William wondered whether Nyhorr'urah was annoyed . . . or laughing at him.

> "They all died vast epochs of time before men came, but there were arts which could revive Them when the stars had come round again to the right positions in the cycle of eternity. They had, indeed, come themselves from the stars, and brought Their images with Them."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"*

Somehow or another you came into possession of an unspeakable little horror. *Maybe it's some new breed of alien entity? Maybe it's the larval stage of one of the Elder Gods?* No one knows what these things are, but a lot of people would like to find out.

These horrible little creatures are Servitors. They don't obey well, in fact they have an annoying tendency to run amok, so it's kind of a misnomer. Anyway, your Servitor bonds to you for some reason, so if it's going to listen to anyone, it's you. It might not be an enthusiastic fan of giving snuggles, but it won't bite your face off. Probably. Maybe you should get a pet badger, instead.

There are a few steps you need to go through to create your Servitor:

How Did You Find It?

Servitors are rare - outside the Academy, of course. Otherwise, we'd all have one. How did you find yours? Here are some suggestions:

- Summoned in a magical rite conducted by family members.
- It's been living in the attic, scaring family members for generations.
- Found it locked in a closet in Grandma's house.
- Found it playing in the graveyard one night.
- Found it at the site of a meteor impact.
- It was bound to an ancient relic.
- Washed ashore on the beach overnight.

What Does It Look Like?

Mix and match different descriptions until you come up with a combination that you think would be fun to play.

1. Amorphous
2. Amphibious
3. Aquatic
4. Aquatic Invertebrate
5. Asymmetrical
6. Bestial
7. Bubbling/Wriggling
8. Cephalopod
9. Claws and Talons
10. Decomposing
11. Elemental
12. Energy/Light and Color
13. Exposed Viscera
14. Eyes
15. Feelers
16. Fungus/Vegetable
17. Geometric
18. Hooves
19. Humanoid Features
20. Insectile
21. Mist/Shadow
22. Mouths/Suckers
23. Ophidian
24. Partially Invisible
25. Pseudopods
26. Rubbery
27. Scaly
28. Sensory Protrusions
29. Slimy
30. Wet/Dripping
31. Wings
32. Worm-like

Personality

Pick 1 or 2 personality traits for your Servitor or roll on the charts below. You should notice that "obedient" is not among the options!

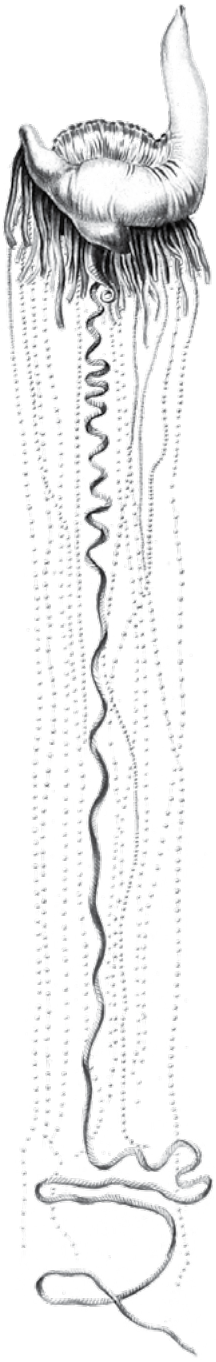


Chart 1

1. Aggressive
2. Affectionate
3. Aloof
4. Calm
5. Clingy
6. Cruel

Chart 2

1. Curious
2. Demanding
3. Destructive
4. Easily Distracted
5. Energetic
6. Impulsive

Chart 3

1. Hoarder
2. Jittery
3. Lazy
4. Messy
5. Mischievous
6. Noisy

Chart 4

1. Playful
2. Protective
3. Quiet
4. Solitary
5. Sneaky
6. Shy

The Naming Of Names

What is the name of your Servitor? Most alien entities have names that pre-date human language, so they're not super-eay to pronounce. *Cthulhu? Sounds like someone was holding back a sneeze.* Unfortunately, your servitor probably isn't going to respond to "Kitty," unless it just ate one. Of course, that doesn't stop most students from giving their Servitors a cute moniker, as well.

If you can't come up with anything, we have yet another handy-dandy chart (*I wonder if the Necronomicon had a lot of these same charts?*).

W + X (+Y) +Z

W	X		Y	Z
Ab-	Abb	Tal	-a-	-akh
As-	Ach	Tann	-aeg-	-ath
Az-	Agg	Tar	-ai-	-augn
C-	Arl	Tha	-al-	-cha
C'	Ath	Thog	-al-	-de
Ch-	Ath	Thu	-cho-	-en
D'	Dag	Thul	-de-	-gha
Dh-	Ell	Ur	-dy-	-gua
G'	End	Val	-go-	-hu
Gh-	Gni	Zhah	-il-	-hya
Ha-	Goth		-no-	-on
Ia-	Has		-o-	-orra
Kth-	Horr		-og-	-orth
M'	Hy		-ol-	-oth
Mi-	Ibb		-om-	-pa
Ml-	Ith		-qu-	-ra
N-	Kaal		-ry-	-rah
Ny-	Nem		-scha-	-rth
P-	Nemb		-u-	-tha
Qua-	Nigg		-was-	-tho
Sha-	Noth		-xan-	-tur
Sho-	Orl		-xo-	-uhg
Vul-	Shal		-ye-	-uth
Xo-	Shan			-veg
Y-	Shub			
Yi-	Soth			
Yog-				

Building Your Little Buddy

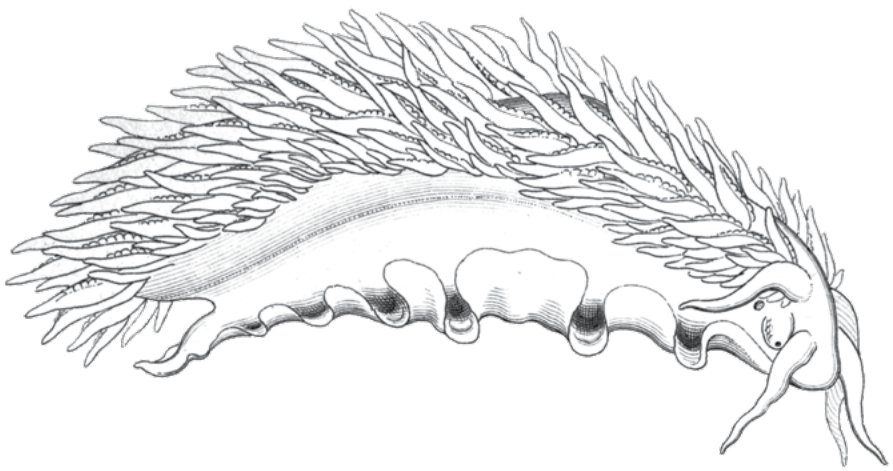
Your Summoning skill determines the overall strength of your Servitor, per the chart below:

Skill Grade	Physical Damage Boxes	Mental Damage Boxes	Skills per Grade	Servitor Size
FACULTY	17	15	+1 Skill Level	Big (bear, horse)
A	15	13	+1 Skill Level	Average (human)
B	13	11	+1 Skill Level to 2 Different Skills	Small (dog)
C	11	9	Starting Skills	Tiny (rat or cat)

Your Servitor starts with the following skills:

- 3 Grade "B" Skills
- Everything else is Grade "C"

Servitors also begin with one Minor Power (see below).



Servitor Skills

Your Servitor has an abbreviated list of skills from which you can pick. Some skills are similar to skills your student already has, while others are entirely unique to Servitors. Analogous skills are marked in parentheses. If your Servitor must make a Paranoia test, they would use Awareness, instead.

Awareness (Paranoia): This is your Servitor's ability to perceive the world around it, through whatever means it uses to sense things.

Cunning (Brainiac & Cool): Servitors are intelligent, albeit in an incomprehensible and alien fashion. Although your Servitor cannot speak, it is capable of following commands. The greater your Servitor's cunning, the better it will understand and follow your commands. Unfortunately, cunning Servitors tend to be willful creatures, and may escape your control. This skill also resists Mental Anguish.

Cunning Grade	Command Complexity	Example
FACULTY	Up the Creek	Complete sentences – limited technical or occult understanding
A	Difficult	Three or four-word commands that allow value judgments (climb the tall building, attack the big one)
B	Tricky	Two-word commands using simple words.
C	Typical	Simple, mono-syllabic commands (Fetch, Come, Stay, Heel)

Lurk (Delinquent): Some Servitors are sneaky critters and are good at moving silently and hiding so they can ambush their prey.

Rend (Smackdown): This is your Servitor's hand-to-hand (or the equivalent appendage) attack ability – whether it's slashing talons, crushing tentacles, acidic slime, or something even less wholesome. When you create your Servitor, you'll need to determine how it attacks.

Scare: Servitors can be nasty-looking. Your Servitor's Scare skill is also its Terror Grade. Your Servitor can attempt to frighten a target (other than another Servitor, see below) by rolling its Scare skill against the target's Cool skill.

Scuttle (Phys. Ed.): Whether it hops, skitters, rolls, or crawls, this skill measures your Servitor's agility and speed as well as its ability to climb or swim. If your Servitor needs to dodge an attack or escape a near-sighted dog-catcher, they'll be using this skill. Just remember, when your Servitor goes berserk and runs off, you'll be the one who must try to catch it.

Scuttle Grade	Movement Rate/Turn
FACULTY	100 Yards
A	50 Yards
B	20 Yards
C	10 Yards

Spew (Shoot): This is your Servitor's ranged attack ability. Before you start conjuring images of a little shuggoth wearing a bandana and carrying an M-16, most Servitors come with their own built-in weapons, like electrical discharges, damaging winds, or the ability to cast sharp spines. When you create your Servitor, you'll decide what kind of ranged attack it can perform.

Tenacity (Brawn): This skill measures your Servitor's physical strength, endurance, and general toughness.

> "Something was creeping and creeping and waiting to be seen and felt and heard."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "The Colour Out of Space"*

Minor Powers

Minor powers are exactly what they sound like. They're not as powerful as traits or spells, but they can be handy, nonetheless. Your Servitor begins with one minor power and gains another each time your Summoning skill improves.

Advanced Tech: The Servitor can operate gizmos using its Cunning skill.

Armor: Your Servitor has 2 points of natural armor. This armor does not degrade.

Cute: Your Servitor is cute! Treat the Servitor's Scare skill like the Appeal skill.

Chromatophores: The Servitor may change its coloration and texture. It gains an Upshift to its Lurk skill when hiding.

Dieting: The Servitor doesn't need to eat.

Environmental Immunity: The Servitor is immune to extremes of temperature, lack of oxygen, and complete vacuum.

Fast: Modify your Servitor's Initiative MOD by +2.

Flyer: Your Servitor can fly. Add 20 yards to the Servitor's base movement rate when flying but subtract 10 yards from the base movement rate (minimum of 1 yard) when moving on the ground.

Luminous: The Servitor can generate light out to a 50-foot radius.

Nocturnal: Your Servitor can function without penalty in total darkness, so long as it was not created using Disturbing Skills or other supernatural means.

Pointy Bits (Close): If your Servitor hits an opponent with a successful Rend test and does damage, you may add a +2 Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success.

Pointy Bits (Ranged): If your Servitor hits an opponent with a successful Spew test and does damage, you may add a +2 Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success.

Parasite: Your Servitor can feed on you to heal its wounds. Once per turn as a minor action, you may sacrifice one Physical Damage box to heal one of your Servitor's Physical Damage boxes.

Psychic Attack: Your Servitor's Spew skill does Mental Anguish instead of Physical Damage. Opponents resist with their Cool skill. This power cannot be combined with Pointy Bits (Ranged).

Psychic Link: Once per scene, you may use your Servitor's Cunning in lieu of your Brainiac skill.

Mimic: Like a parrot, the Servitor can imitate sounds and voices, although it probably won't know what its saying. Anyone hearing the Servitor must make a Contested Paranoia test against the Servitor's Lurk skill to distinguish the difference.

Morph: The Servitor may assume the form of an animal or person of roughly the same size and shape. The shapechange isn't perfect; something is always "wrong." Too many legs or eyes, fur is patchy and falling out, strange glow, bat wings on a bird's body, etc. Observers may make a Contested Paranoia test against the Servitor's Lurk skill. The Servitor may hold this shape for up to one scene and may only change shape once every 12 hours.

Out-of-Phase: Once per scene, the Servitor can become immaterial and may pass through solid objects (but not barriers or containment fields). All physical attacks against the Servitor suffer a Downshift, but all energy-based and psychic attacks receive an Upshift. Likewise, the Servitor suffers a Downshift when making physical attacks.

Self-Destruct: Your Servitor can explode, doing damage to everything in a 20-foot radius. Everyone within the blast radius must make a Pass/Fail Phys. Ed. test against a Target Number determined by the Servitor's Tenacity skill. Anyone who fails takes damage equal to the Margin of Failure plus the Servitor's Tenacity Mod. The Servitor will reform as normal in 24 hours. If it makes more sense, the GM can also decide this attack causes Mental Anguish instead of Physical Damage, resisted by Cool.

Snacks: There's something your Servitor enjoys. If you use that item as a bribe, you gain an Upshift on your Summoning skill when it tries to disobey. This power cannot be combined with Dieting.

Symbiote: Once per scene, you may use your Servitor's Tenacity in lieu of your Brawn skill.

Telepathic: Your Servitor can communicate telepathically. Mostly, it comes across as a jumble of impressions, images, and emotions.

Teleport: Unless restricted by a barrier or containment field, your Servitor can automatically teleport to your side, no matter the distance, so long as you are both on the same planet, in the same dimension, and in the same time/space.

Tough: Add 2 damage boxes to the Servitor's Mental Anguish or Physical Damage track.

Tracker: Your Servitor can track targets by scent (or whatever it has that passes for a sense of smell) using the Awareness skill (modified by the age of the

trail and the terrain). The Servitor must have a sample item with the target's scent.

Vampire: If your Servitor hits an opponent with a successful Rend test and does damage, your Servitor heals 1 point of damage.

Wallcrawler: The Servitor may walk along walls and ceilings at one-half its normal speed without needing to make a Scuttle Skill Test.

Example: You've decided to play a Summoner, so you'll need to design your Servitor. First, you have to decide what your little bundle of horror looks like. A slimy, worm-like creature with hairy feelers and wings sounds like fun. "Nyhorr'urah" has a nice ring to it. Since you're only a starting Summoner, your Summoning skill is a "C" – which means that little Nyhorr'urah is about cat-sized and has 11 Physical Damage boxes and 9 Mental Anguish boxes. Before you assign skills, you'll want to decide what kind of Servitor you want. You decide it would be nice to have a Servitor that can protect you from the many threats on campus. You assign one "B" skill to Rend. You assign one of the "B" skills to Tenacity. You've got one "B" skill left. You could assign it to Cunning so that you can give it more detailed fighting commands, but you're worried that it might break free of your control. You could assign the final "B" skill to Scuttle, allowing it to move around the battlefield quickly, or you could assign it to Spew, making Nyhorr'urah effective in hand-to-hand and ranged combat. You finally decide upon Scare. If Nyhorr'urah can frighten opponents away, it won't need to fight! All the other skills are Grade "C." Nyhorr'urah is tough, but it only understands simple commands. Fortunately, "Attack!" is one of them! Now you have to pick a minor power. Pointy Bits (Close) and Armor seem appropriate, as they would allow Nyhorr'urah to inflict or absorb additional damage. However, you've got your heart set on Nyhorr'urah having wings, so you pick Flyer. You can get one of the other powers when your Summoning Grade improves.

Initiative

Servitors roll for initiative just like students and other creatures. To calculate a Servitor's Initiative MOD, add their permanent Awareness and Cunning MODs together.

Improving Your Servitor

As your Summoning skill grows, your Servitor will evolve (or devolve, or whatever it does). Your Servitor will grow, learn new abilities, and be able to withstand more damage. As your Summoning skill increases, you may increase your Servitor's skills per the chart above. You may increase two different skills at Grade "B" and one skill per Grade thereafter. Skills may increase to a maximum of FACULTY. You may also choose one new minor power.

Injury And Healing

The Servitor's Damage Tracks

Your Servitor can take a number of Physical Damage or Mental Anguish boxes as indicated in the chart above.

Servitors aren't like normal, earthly animals – they don't have internal organs and nervous systems like anything we can understand. As a result, they don't

suffer skill Downshifts due to injury. When a Servitor takes damage, check off a number of boxes equal to the damage. When your Servitor has crossed-off their final damage box, whether it is Physical Damage or Mental Anguish, your Servitor dissolves into a foul mist and disappears. Twenty-four (24) hours later, your Servitor will reform somewhere near your character, as good as new and fully-healed.

Servitors are generally tough. As we mentioned, they don't take penalties from wounds. In addition, Servitors cannot be scared – they cannot take Mental Anguish from fear. This makes sense; when you look like that, there isn't much that can scare you. They also can't take damage from insults. It's hard to make fun of a squidgy, tentacled worm's mother.

Recovery

Just like people, Servitors naturally heal one Physical Damage box and one Mental Anguish box each day. Servitors also recover one box of Physical Damage at the end of any scene in which they suffered a physical injury and one box of Mental Anguish at the end of any scene in which they suffered a mental injury. This may be accelerated using the Servitor's minor powers.

First Aid and Empathy cannot heal an injured Servitor.

Commanding Your Servitor

Servitors aren't stupid, but it can be a challenge to train them. Their ability to understand and follow instructions is limited by their Cunning skill and their personality.

Servitors are willful, and may try to break free of your control . . .

- If it doesn't understand what you want.
- If your command requires something it considers unpleasant or is contrary to your Servitor's personality.
- If it feels bored or neglected.

If such a situation should arise, make a Contested Summoning Skill Test against your Servitor's Cunning. If the Servitor wins, roll 1d6:

- On a result of 1-2: The Servitor ignores you and does what it wants. You can try a Summoning test again next turn.
- On a result of 3-4: The Servitor becomes obstinate and refuses to budge. You can try a Summoning test again next turn.
- On a result of 5-6: The Servitor runs amok.

If the Servitor breaks free of your control and runs off, you'll need to chase it down and try to reassert your control with another Summoning test (and maybe a bribe). Hopefully, you'll be able to catch up to it before it does too much damage.

Obviously, the cleverer your Servitor becomes, the more likely it is to test your control or manipulate you to get what it wants! If you start having strange urges and bizarre nightmares, your little friend might be to blame.

Feeding

Most Servitors need nourishment of one kind or another. Some Servitors are happy with a bowl of dry kibble, but many

have unusual dietary needs: Carrion, blood, life force energy, etc. You'll need to spend one scene per day with your Servitor while it hunts and feeds. You don't need to make a Skill Test, and this doesn't need to be played-out, unless the GM has something "special" planned, just assume that your Servitor was able to feed.

Fortunately, the elimination of bodily waste doesn't seem to be a biological imperative for Servitors (poop. We're talking about poop, here), so you won't need a litter box or biohazard bags.

Containment

Monsters are not allowed to wander everywhere, and they are not allowed off campus at all (for obvious reasons). Every student who has a Servitor has a containment circle inscribed into the floor of their dorm room. Servitors are to be "caged" while their students are in class.

The magical containment circle is a specialized barrier spell, designed to keep a Servitor trapped within the circle until released by a student or a member of the faculty or staff. A Servitor may attempt to break free of the circle, using the lower of their Tenacity or Cunning skills against a Target Number of 13. Be considerate of your Servitor when you leave for class; leave the radio on.

Experimentation

Servitors, as we mentioned, are uncommon, even at the Academy. Thanks to a little clause in the students' admission agreement, the faculty are permitted to examine (experiment on) their unnatural little friends.

Once a week, students must drop off their Servitors at the Peterson Building of Biology and Vivisection Science for two scenes. Some students have taken to calling it "the menagerie." Students are not allowed to be present while their Servitors are being examined, but Servitors aren't terribly fond of the experience. Students may have to trick or lie to their Servitors to get them into the building or they may have a rampaging monster on their hands.

The Colosseum

Some Servitors really like to fight. The only place on campus sanctioned to hold Servitor battles is the old colosseum. If students are discovered to have taken part in a Servitor battle anywhere other than the colosseum, both parties involved will receive Demerits. Word of a Summoner challenge spreads quickly and Servitor battles have become a popular spectator sport for students. Illegal betting at Servitor battles is common . . . and an easy means of raising funds if you are familiar with the competing Servitors' strengths and weaknesses.

Sample Servitors

Below are some sample Servitors to get you started. Just add a name and you're all set!

Brawler Servitor (Grade "C")

Rend "B," Scare "B," Tenacity "B"

Initiative: +0

Base Movement Rate: 10 yards per turn

11 Physical Damage Boxes

9 Mental Anguish Boxes

Appearance: Cephalopod, Bestial, Claws & Talons

Personality: Aggressive, Clingy

Minor Power: Armor

Cute Servitor (Grade "C")

Awareness "B," Cunning "B," Scare "B"

Initiative: +4

Base Movement Rate: 10 yards per turn

11 Physical Damage Boxes

9 Mental Anguish Boxes

Appearance: Amphibious, Rubbery, Extra Eyes

Personality: Playful, Easily Distracted

Minor Power: Cute

Gross Servitor (Grade "C")

Lurk "B," Scare "B," Scuttle "B"

Initiative: +0

Base Movement Rate: 20 yards per turn

11 Physical Damage Boxes

9 Mental Anguish Boxes

Appearance: Decomposing, Exposed Viscera, Wet/Dripping

Personality: Messy, Noisy

Minor Power: Parasite

Sniper Servitor (Grade "C")

Awareness "B," Scuttle "B," Spew "B"

Initiative: +2

Base Movement Rate: 20 yards per turn

11 Physical Damage Boxes

9 Mental Anguish Boxes

Appearance: Insectile, Sensory Protrusions

Personality: Aloof

Minor Power: Pointy Bits (Ranged)

Spy Servitor (Grade "C")

Awareness "B," Cunning "B," Lurk "B"

Initiative: +4

Base Movement Rate: 10 yards per turn

11 Physical Damage Boxes

9 Mental Anguish Boxes

Appearance: Ophidian, Partially Invisible, Slimy

Personality: Shy

Minor Power: Chromatophores

Life Is But A Dream...

Evan was trapped in a nightmare, only it wasn't his. He was a Dreamer and savvy enough to realize that this wasn't a nightmare conjured by his own psyche. He could've put a stop to that. Rather, this was being impressed upon his mind from an outside force. A very powerful outside force. He didn't think that the nightmare was directed at him, per se; it was powerful enough to influence sleeping minds throughout Slumberland.

He found himself in a desolate, rocky landscape, oozing with muck, as though the land had just been vomited from the sea. Stranded sea creatures wriggled here and there. The sun was a thin, red slice on the horizon, backlighting a strange, distant city.

Although he couldn't escape from the nightmare, he still had power. Evan effortlessly launched into the sky, flying over the city . . . if he could call it that.

The alien architecture shot up from the ground at crazy, disturbing angles, more like shards of broken glass than real buildings. Despite the wrongness of the buildings, it was clear that their design had some intent and purpose behind them. In the dim light, Evan thought he could make out windows and archways dotting the structures. But he didn't dare study the buildings too closely, lest he become dizzy.

As he flew over the city, Evan saw no signs of habitation. There were no lights, and nothing stirred, but in his mind, he could feel a rhythm, like a steady drumming. It pulled at him, beckoning him deeper into the bowels of the city.

Eventually, Evan spied a vast clearing. What he saw there was even stranger than the city itself. A pair of vast, intricately carved doors embedded in the ground. The doors rocked and strained as a great force attempted to push through from the other side. All around the doors, strange creatures danced in the dim light. From this distance, Evan could not clearly see the creatures, and he was relieved. He was certain that they were not human.

Fearing for his sanity, Evan squeezed his eyes shut. He concentrated on erecting a Dreamward, and a translucent suit of medieval armor coalesced around his body. The familiar warmth of the construct steeled his confidence and gave him the strength to observe the macabre scene below.

As Evan watched, the creatures began shrieking an inhuman rallying cry as the doors buckled. A tidal wave of psychic energy, as solid as a sledgehammer, hit him and stole his consciousness.

Evan awoke in a cold sweat, the details of the nightmare vivid in his fevered mind. Had it not been for his Dreamward, his mind would've been consumed in the psychic backlash, likely leaving him a gibbering vegetable. He also knew that what he had experienced wasn't a phantasm. It was a vision. Either the scene was playing out at this very moment or the doom implied in his vision would be unleashed soon.

"The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind."

Sigmund Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams"

When we dream, our minds travel beyond the boundaries of the Veil of Sleep to an extra-dimensional, semi-reality comprised of the collective unconscious of humanity. The aborigines called this place "The Dreaming," or "Tjukurrpa," but Dreamers have named this surreal and chaotic dimension "Slumberland," in reference to *Alice in Wonderland*.

Unlike the rest of humanity, referred to as "sleepers," Dreamers have the ability of Oneiromancy, which allows them to control their journey through the surreal and distorted landscape of Slumberland and visit the dreams of sleepers. Talented Dreamers can manipulate the dreams of sleepers to communicate, learn guarded secrets, or inflict traumatic nightmares. But such travel is not without risk; other entities dwell in Slumberland, as well.

Oneiromancy can be a subtle and insidious power, as the effects are usually undetectable or appear as natural phenomena. Once aware of the threat of Oneiromancy, however, there are precautions that sleepers can take. When placed on a Dreamer, a ward or similar means of containment will impede their ability to invade sleepers' dreams, while a ward on a sleeper will block access to their dreams.

Dreamer Difficulty

Planning to see if that girl you like is dreaming about you? Unlike powers in the waking world, range is not as much of an issue for a dreamer. The real trick is finding the right mind, and for that, you need to be familiar with the subject. When trying to target a specific sleeper, use the higher Target Number for either familiarity or distance (i.e., if you know someone very well, but they're more than 200 miles away, the Target Number is 11).

Target Number	Familiarity With Target/Distance
13	Someone you've never personally met or know very little about, a virtual stranger/Other side of the planet
11	Someone you've seen a few times or have heard about/On the same continent
9	Someone you've met several times, an acquaintance/Within 200 miles
7	Someone you know very well, a close friend or family member/Within a few miles

Dreamer Powers

All Dreamers start with the following two powers:

Lucid Dreaming

The character can control the course of their own dreams and, barring some kind of medication, sedation, or supernatural power, can wake up whenever they wish. In addition, the character can visit the dreams of other people, where they can communicate with sleepers or utilize one of their amazing dream-manipulation powers. At Grade "B," the Dreamer may fall asleep whenever they wish, once again, barring some kind of medication or supernatural power. At Grade "A," the Dreamer can use this power to invade daydreams, although the Dreamer must be asleep, as well. This power is resisted with Cool, the Telepathy Trait, or the Oneiromancy skill.

Dreamrider

The Dreamer may bring willing sleepers along on their nocturnal adventures. The accompanying sleepers will have no ability to manipulate or navigate Slumberland on their own and may be subject to attack (see the section on Dream Combat). Additionally, accompanying sleepers cannot utilize their Disturbing Abilities (they are merely projections, their bodies lay elsewhere). For the sake of expediency, the GM should allow the Dreamer to locate other players without having to make an Oneiromancy test, unless a player's mind has been shielded or is otherwise under some kind of influence. Dreamrider does not work with animals, Servitors, or non-human entities. This power may be used in conjunction with other Oneiromancy powers.

Upon attaining a new Grade in Oneiromancy, a Dreamer may pick an additional power. Unless otherwise noted, a Dreamer may only use one of these abilities per night, and both the Dreamer and the target Sleeper must be asleep. For example, you can't use Brainwashing and Curative Rest during the same night. They take too much "time" in Slumberland. However, you could use Brainwashing, Dreamward, and Façade during the same night. You can also use Trance and Sandman as much as your little heart desires when you and your target are both awake.

Brainwashing

By subtly manipulating the sleeper's subconscious, you may reward (or punish) selected thoughts, slowly programming the sleeper's behavior while they rest. Make a Contested Oneiromancy test against your opponent's Cool, Telepathy Trait, or Oneiromancy skill. Suggestions that are wildly out of character for the sleeper will merit a Downshift on your Oneiromancy test. If you are successful, you may give the sleeper one suggestion. You may take one Downshift per additional suggestion. For the next 24 hours or until the next time they sleep, the sleeper will suffer a Downshift on all appropriate rolls whenever they act or think contrary to your suggestion. This power isn't the same as mind control; you're only implanting suggestions, tweaking emotions,

and pushing desires. You're not going to get a sleeper to shove their friend off a cliff, but you could suggest that their friend has been talking behind their back and can't be trusted. Likewise, you could "push" a sleeper to act like a chicken all day. They might be privately amused by the idea and would seriously consider wearing a chicken costume for Halloween, but they're not going to publicly embarrass themselves. Now, if a group of people were doing the "chicken dance," the sleeper would be hard-pressed not to join. Unlike mind control, the sleeper doesn't look "zombified" and will believe that the thoughts and emotions were their own. If you fail to brainwash a sleeper, their unconscious defenses become stronger, and they receive one Upshift to resist your influence going forward.

Collective Unconscious

While visiting Slumberland, the Dreamer may dip into the vast pool of human experience to gain a temporary boost to one of their mental or social skills. The Dreamer may either substitute their Oneiromancy Grade for one mental or social skill or they may gain one Specialization, regardless of the number of Specializations they already have in the skill. For example, if you have a Grade of "B" in Oneiromancy, a "C" in Scouts, and a "B" in Education, you could either replace your Scouts Grade with your Oneiromancy Grade, or you could add one more Specialization to your Education skill (for a total of 3). All knowledge and skills gained in this method fade away after 24 hours or the next time the Dreamer sleeps.

Curative Rest

You may bring soothing relief to yourself or a sleeper by providing restful and relaxing dreams. The character is automatically healed a number of Mental Anguish boxes equal to the Dreamer's Oneiromancy Bonus Modifier when they awaken (in addition to the one box that is automatically healed). No roll is required. This power may also dispel nightmares, either naturally-occurring, magical, or inflicted via the Night Terrors power. To dispel the nightmare, test the Dreamer's Oneiromancy skill against the intensity of the nightmare or an opposing Dreamer's Oneiromancy skill. An average nightmare is a "C" while a heart attack-inducing whopper that turns your hair white would be a FACULTY Grade nightmare.

"Wonder had gone away, and he had forgotten that all life is only a set of pictures in the brain, among which there is no difference betwixt those born of real things and those born of inward dreamings, and no cause to value the one above the other."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Silver Key"

Déjà vu

You've seen this scene play-out before in your dreams, but now you can alter the outcome! Once per day, a Dreamer can declare that they remember an action from their dreams. Whether the Dreamer initiated the action or is responding to someone else's action, they may immediately elect to re-roll their Skill Test, hoping for a better result than in their dream. Any Upshifts from the expenditure of Merit Points on the first Skill Test also apply to the second test. Talented Dreamers can make better use of their foreknowledge, gaining a bonus to their re-roll. For better or worse, the new results are final. This power can be used in conjunction with other powers and can be used whether the Dreamer is asleep or awake.

Oneiromancy Grade	Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	2 Upshifts
A	1 Upshift
B	—

Dreamward

When most students are at their most vulnerable, Dreamers are at their strongest. While sleeping, a Dreamer can focus a part of their will to prevent unwanted intrusions into their mind, even against alien entities. Against an attack that deals Mental Anguish damage, like Mental Blast or Night Terrors, the power provides an armor bonus. Against non-damaging mental attacks, like Telepathy, Mind Control and most Oneiromancy powers, Dreamward Upshifts the Dreamer's resistance Skill Test. Additionally, Dreamward may be used in dream combat to provide virtual protection against assault (see the section on Dream Combat). Dreamward may be used in conjunction with other powers.

Oneiromancy Grade	Armor/Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	6/4 Upshifts
A	4/3 Upshifts
B	2/2 Upshifts

Exorcise

Just as some Dreamers can possess minds; some Dreamers can prevent minds from being possessed. The Dreamer can shatter the influence of Mind Control, Mentalism, Hypnosis, Switch Minds, Possession, Communicate, and Telepathy on others. Make a Contested Oneiromancy test against the opponent's Skill Total. If the Dreamer wins the contest, the subject is immediately freed from control. The Dreamer may be awake when using this power. If the Dreamer wishes to use this power while they are asleep, the target must also be asleep. Exorcise may be used in conjunction with other powers.

Façade

You can change your appearance in Slumberland. You may appear as another person, regardless of the subject's sex or age. You receive a bonus to your Delinquent/Cool skill (see the section below on skill conversions) and may pass yourself off as someone else or hide from a sleeper's id. Façade may be used in conjunction with other powers.

Oneiromancy Grade	Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	4 Upshifts
A	3 Upshifts
B	2 Upshifts

Feign Death

The Dreamer may enter a state of deep sleep that is almost indistinguishable from death. The Dreamer's heartbeat and need for oxygen are reduced, and the effects of poison and disease are suspended for the duration of the power. Anyone attempting to diagnose the character must make a Contested First Aid test against the character's Oneiromancy skill. If they fail the roll, they will believe the Dreamer to be dead. The deception also extends to Telepathy and similar mental powers (test against the power's Grade instead of Cool). While under the influence of this power, the Dreamer only has a vague sense of their surroundings (2 Downshifts to Paranoia Skill Tests). The Dreamer may remain in this state for a maximum of 12 hours. Feign Death may be used in conjunction with other powers (as appropriate).

Mind Probe

By travelling deeply into the sleeper's mind, you can discover all kinds of hidden secrets. However, the human mind is a complicated place and you need to know what you're looking for. Test your Oneiromancy skill against your opponent's Cool, Telepathy Trait, or Oneiromancy skill. If you are successful, you may ask one question, which the sleeper must answer truthfully. You may take one Downshift to your Oneiromancy skill per additional question you wish to ask. If you fail to read a sleeper's mind, their unconscious defenses become stronger, and they receive one Upshift to resist your probes going forward.

What about Grades Greater Than "FACULTY?"

During their adventures, your character may tangle with supernatural entities, Slumberland creatures, and the rare GMC with an Oneiromancy skill greater than FACULTY (*in fact, there may be such an individual right on the campus of the Academy*). To determine the appropriate effects, use the *Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart*.

Night Terrors

With this power, you can subject a sleeper to horrible and disturbing nightmares, inflicting Mental Anguish. Test your Oneiromancy skill against your opponent's Cool, Telepathy Trait, or Oneiromancy skill. If you successfully hit your opponent and do damage, add the Damage Modifier to the Margin of Success. If you've been doing your homework and you know the sleeper's fears, you gain an Upshift on your skill. Night Terrors may also provide a bonus to attack in dream combat, coalescing ambient fears into a formidable weapon. This aspect of Night Terrors may be used in conjunction with other powers.

Oneiromancy Grade	Damage Modifier
FACULTY	+6
A	+4
B	+2

Possession

This power allows you to seize control of someone's body while they are asleep. While in their body, you will possess their physical skills, but you will retain your mental and social skills. The target's unconscious mind will automatically attempt to block your attempt with Cool, the Switch Minds Trait or Oneiromancy, whichever is strongest. While you are in possession of their body, your body will remain asleep and potentially vulnerable. You can relinquish control at any time, and the sleeper will have no memory of the events that transpired. If you fail to possess the sleeper, their unconscious defenses become stronger, and they receive one Upshift to resist your attempts at possession going forward. You must have the Mind Probe power to gain this ability.

Oneiromancy Grade	Duration
FACULTY	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour

Prophetic Dreams

This power grants you a precognitive vision of a specific location or person. When the Dreamer uses this power, they must decide what they wish to see. The difficulty is determined by the date of the event. If the Dreamer is not familiar with the place or persons in the vision, they receive a Downshift on their Skill Test. If the Dreamer successfully beats the difficulty, they will see a vision of the past or future. While visions may be confusing and may not tell the whole story, visions are always accurate. If the Dreamer fails to beat the Target Number, they will have muddled and disturbing dreams that inflict the Margin of Failure in Mental Anguish. After a failed Skill Test, this power cannot be used again for 1d6 nights.

Target Number	Date
13	Up to 1 Month in the Future
11	Up to 1 Week in the Future
9	Up to 1 Day in the Future

Reduced Sleep Requirement

The Dreamer needs less sleep. While they can sleep for the entire night, they don't have to, freeing up time for studying or illicit activities. This power is automatic; no roll is required. Obviously, this power can be used in conjunction with other powers, although the Dreamer will need to sleep for powers that require it.

Oneiromancy Grade	Sleep Needed
FACULTY	None
A	2 Hours
B	4 Hours

Sandman

This power allows you to lull your opponents to sleep. Both the Dreamer and the target must be awake to use this power. Make a Contested Oneiromancy test against the victim's Brawn. Take an Upshift to your skill if the target is already sleepy or a Downshift if the target is fully-rested. If you succeed, the victim will become very drowsy. Apply the listed penalty to the victim's Phys. Ed., Brainiac, and Paranoia skills for the listed Duration or until the victim rests. If this reduces the victim's Brainiac to WASHOUT, the victim falls asleep until roused or the duration has passed. If the target has no biological need to sleep, this power has no effect. The successful use of this power is physically and mentally exhausting for the Dreamer, as well, and they may only use it once per day. Sandman may be used in conjunction with other powers.

Oneiromancy Grade	Penalty	Range	Duration
FACULTY	3 Downshifts	Across the street/ Up to 500 feet	Up to 4 Scenes/12-24 hours
A	2 Downshifts	Across a room/Up to 100 feet	Up to 2 Scenes/4-6 Hours
B	1 Downshift	Within a few steps/ punching range	Up to 1 Scene/1 Hour

Trance

The Dreamer can captivate someone's attention completely, rendering the entranced individual oblivious to their surroundings and the passage of time. Both the Dreamer and the target must be awake to use this power. The Dreamer must lock eyes with the target and make a Contested Oneiromancy test against their target's Cool. If the Dreamer is successful, their target is entranced, a sort of mental paralysis. A herd of elephants could walk past, and the target wouldn't notice. The target will remain entranced for as long as the Dreamer maintains eye contact, until someone attempts to rouse the target, or until someone attacks the target. When contact breaks, the target regains their senses, as though they suddenly emerged from a daydream, with no memory of anything that transpired during the power's effect. This power has a maximum range of 15 feet, as both the Dreamer and the target must be able to see one another's eyes. Trance may be used in conjunction with other powers.

True Sight

The Dreamer can see through mind and vision-obscuring effects, and gains a bonus to resist the various forms of invisibility and illusions, including Hologram, Cloak, Phantasm, etc. The use of this power requires a minor action and may only be used while the Dreamer is awake. This power may be used in conjunction with other powers.

Oneiromancy Grade	Bonus Modifier
FACULTY	4 Upshifts
A	3 Upshifts
B	2 Upshifts

"Slowly there filtered into his mind the truth that this strange chanting ritual had been one of instruction, and that the Companions had been chanted by the Most Ancient One into a new and peculiar kind of sleep, in order that their dreams might open the Ultimate Gate to which the Silver Key was a passport. He knew that in the profundity of this deep sleep they were contemplating unplumbed vastnesses of utter and absolute Outsideness with which the earth had nothing to do, and that they were to accomplish that which his presence had demanded."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Through the Gates of the Silver Key"

Visiting Slumberland

A Dreamer must be asleep to use their powers, unless otherwise noted. As a result, the Dreamer is usually unaware of what of what is happening to their body. They might get a sense of motion if their body is moved but won't know to where or by whom unless they choose to wake up. If a Dreamer wakes, they abruptly disappear from whatever dream they inhabited, along with any Dreamriders.

Using Lucid Dreaming, a Dreamer manifests an avatar, a likeness of themselves pulled from their own subconscious. In this state, they can interact with Slumberland, the surreal landscape of dreams, as though it were real. Although a Dreamer can hide in Slumberland, they cannot normally change their appearance.

Slumberland is an insane wonderland filled with colorful, luminescent cloud-stuffs that gradually shift into half-formed images before returning to their original, chaotic state. Even a well-formed dream will retain a hazy, warped aspect. Dreaming minds appear like brilliant stars, colored by the mood of their dream: white or gold for a pleasant dream, blue for a sad dream, red for a violent or angry dream, black for a nightmare, etc. Time and direction are ephemeral concepts in Slumberland, as well. Although these may be more stable within a dream, outside of a dream, there is no up or down and no apparent passage of time.

Dreamers, and those they bring with them through the Dreamrider power, may walk or fly through the surreal landscape as they wish. No Skill Test is required to fly; one merely must will themselves to do so. Since time, perspective, and distance are not consistent, flight is not necessarily faster than walking, just more fun.

When visiting a sleeper's dreams, a Dreamer can manipulate the dream and interact with the constructs, the inhabitants of the dream populated by the sleeper's dreaming mind, but many of them have a limited capacity for speech or action, if any. Like the secondary characters in a video game, most constructs have a defined repertoire of responses and knowledge but can be a useful source of clues. Most constructs will possess a couple of skills relevant to the current dream at a Grade of "C" or "D."

The Sleeper's Id

Sleepers are not defenseless. If their unconscious mind detects an intruding consciousness, their "id," the purely instinct-driven aspect of their personality, will search for the invader and attack. Although the id has all the sleeper's skills, it cannot be negotiated with. The id will manifest as a bestial or demonic version of the sleeper.

- If a Dreamer attempts to interact with the sleeper, the GM rolls 2d6. If the GM rolls doubles (i.e., two 2s, two 4s, etc.), the id has caught the Dreamer's scent. The Dreamer may choose to hide, flee the sleeper's mind, or fight.
- If a Dreamer fails a Skill Test in someone else's dream and rolls double 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s or 6s – the sleeper's subconscious has detected them and the id is on the way. The Dreamer may choose to hide, flee the sleeper's mind, or fight.
- If a Dreamer fails a Skill Test in someone else's dream and rolls double 1s, the id has snared them in the dream and they will have no choice but to fight.

Changing Slumberland

Dreamers can change the details of a dream with an Oneiromancy roll. Minor changes, such as unlocking a door, are easily done (Target Number 7). Radical changes or changes to elements that are integral to the dream, such as creating an exit from a maze, are much more difficult (Target Number 13) and may rouse the attention of the id.

The sleeper will always be present at the center of their dream and will possess their full faculties, although the reality of their current dream will consume them, like an actor who does not know that they're playing a role in a movie. Be warned: A Dreamer who interacts directly with a sleeper risks alerting their presence to the id (see below) or confronting the sleeper with the unreal nature of their dream, which may cause them to awaken.

When a sleeper begins to awaken, the dream will begin to crumble. This is the Dreamer's cue to get the heck out of there. Should a Dreamer be dumb enough to stick around in a sleeper's dream while they awaken, they will suffer 1d6 Mental Anguish damage as the world shatters around them.

The id will attack the Dreamer using the sleeper's skills but gains a +2 to its Initiative MOD. The id also has an Upshift on attack and defense Skill Tests as it turns the entire dream against the invader. Simple constructs will turn into swarms of ravenous undead, tranquil lakes will turn into burning pools of lava, etc. If the sleeper is also a Dreamer, their id will only manifest if their avatar is not present (i.e., the avatar is elsewhere in Slumberland). A Dreamer and their id will never appear in the same dream.

If a Dreamer engages in combat with the id, the id won't stop until it forces the intruder back across the Veil of Sleep (reduced to zero Mental Anguish) or the id is wounded. Whenever the id suffers damage, the sleeper suffers an equal amount of Mental Anguish and makes a Pass/Fail Cool test against a Severe (Target #11) difficulty. If the test fails, the id retreats to lick its wounds and the Dreamer will be free to depart. If the sleeper falls to zero Mental Anguish, the Dreamer will be expelled as the sleeper's mind sinks into a catatonic state. Regardless of the winner, the sleeper's unconscious mind will now be on the lookout for the Dreamer and the difficulty for that Dreamer's incursions will increase going forward (1 Downshift on Skill Tests).

If You Die In a Dream...

Although the most common foes in Slumberland are constructs or the id, other Dreamers or malevolent entities may be encountered, and combat might ensue. Dream combat is like combat in the "real" world, only there are fewer skills and no weapons. Substitute the following skills as noted:

Weapons and defenses are imaginary, conjured by the combatants and are purely symbolic, although some entities may have supernatural abilities to supplement their attacks. The Night Terrors power, for example, can manifest and act as a "physical weapon" in dream combat, adding the Bonus Modifier to the damage inflicted. Likewise, the armor provided by Dreamward will fully manifest in

dream combat, protecting the Dreamer from harm like physical armor (using the Armor Bonus).

Other individuals, present with the Dreamrider power, will find that Disturbing Abilities outside of Oneiromancy don't function in Slumberland or other people's dreams. They do retain their Disturbing lore skills, however.

If you successfully hit your opponent and do damage in dream combat, apply the damage as Mental Anguish. If a Dreamer is reduced to zero Mental Anguish, they are immediately ejected from Slumberland. When a sleeper (or their id) falls to zero Mental Anguish, their mind severs the connection to Slumberland to prevent any further damage to the psyche and all dreamers are ejected from the sleeper's dream. Other entities are either destroyed or banished when their Mental Anguish is depleted.

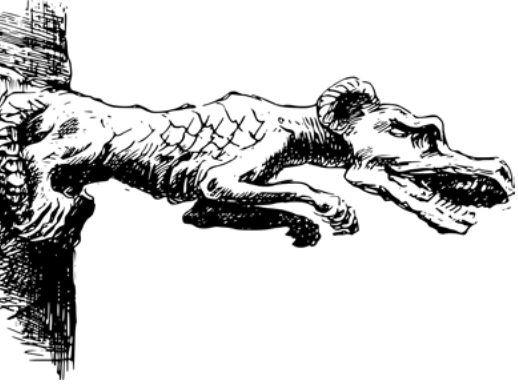
Real World Skill	Dream Skill
Brawn	Cool
Delinquent	Cool
Medieval	Brainiac
Paranoia	Empathy
Phys. Ed.	Cool
Smackdown	Brainiac

The Dreamlands

It is widely believed among Dreamers that there is a world *beyond* the collective unconscious of humanity, a world where the gods still tread: *The Dreamlands*. If one believes the stories, the Dreamlands are a fantastic land of magic, ancient mysteries, and horrible perils, where bird-like shantaks dwell and subterranean dholes turn the very bedrock of the world into Swiss cheese. There are but two means of entering this extra-dimensional dreamworld: The Seventy Steps of Light Slumber and The Silver Key.

A few Dreamers have found the fabled Seventy Steps of Light Slumber in their nightly excursions through the dreamlands, but only a mere handful have been judged worthy to further descend the Seven Hundred Steps of Deeper Slumber into the Dreamlands. Although travel in this method is akin to astral travel, the risk of harm or death is very real in the Dreamlands.

The Silver Key is a fabulous artifact that allegedly allows the holder, whether they are a Dreamer or ordinary human, to physically enter this alternate dimension. Unfortunately, the last recorded sighting of the Key was more than five-score years ago.



6

MARKS, MATES, AND MENTORS

Merits and Demerits

The Merit system is a sliding scale that measures "proper" behavior among the students of the Academy. Corporal punishment was banned at the school in the 1950s, when the school overhauled the Demerit system. (However, there's nothing stopping a particularly cruel administrator or professor from engaging the services of *other* students to this effect, and then conveniently forgetting to issue Demerits to the offenders.) Merits will earn students certain benefits, while Demerits will bring you nothing but trouble and misery (although the things you did to *earn* the Demerits might be totally worth it). The fact that you saved the world from a potentially catastrophic psychic event may be a small comfort while you're sitting in detention.

A character must be physically present and conscious in a scene to spend Merit Points. A character cannot spend Merit Points to improve skills and abilities that are remotely triggered or have a delayed effect unless they are present when the Skill Test is made. Nor can they spend Merit Points to aid a Servitor who is not in the character's current scene.

How to Use Merit Points

- You may spend 1 Merit point to heal one box of damage, either Physical Damage or Mental Anguish.
- You may spend 1 Merit point to get a grip on a quirk, ignoring the penalty for one whole scene.
- You may spend 2 Merit Points to get a grip on a disorder, ignoring the penalty for one whole scene.
- You may spend 2 Merit Points to gain 1 Upshift on one Mundane Skill Test. The Merit Points must be committed before making the Skill Test. A Summoner may spend Merit Points on behalf of their Servitor.
- You may spend 4 Merit Points to gain 1 Upshift on one Disturbing Skill Test. The Merit Points must be committed before making the Skill Test.
- You may spend 5 Merit Points to make minor edits or additions to the details of a scene. Edits must make logical sense and you may not contradict any fact that has already been established, nor may your edits cause direct harm. For example, you cannot spend Merit Points to "wish" a bottomless pit into existence under an enemy or open a door that you know to be securely locked. However, you could spend Merit Points to state that the key is in a nearby desk drawer, provided it makes sense for the key to be there. All edits are subject to the GM's approval.
- Merit Points automatically erase Demerits on a 1:1 basis. If you earn a Demerit, and you have one or more Merit Points stockpiled, you must erase one Merit point and the Demerit goes away. You're not the "Golden Child" you once were, but professors are willing to look the other way for now. Likewise, if you have a Demerit point, and earn a Merit point, you've redeemed yourself a little. Erase the Demerit and ignore the Merit point. You cannot begin accruing Demerits until all your Merit Points have been used up!

Gaining Merit Points

- Acting on your Motivation when it would put you in a tough situation (i.e., stealing another student's notes to ensure they fail the upcoming test and don't make the Varsity team; aiding an investigator because they have the translation you need to decipher the Kt'vla Tablet) = +1
- Class Clown. Amuse the other players or suggest a brilliant plan that impresses everyone = +1
- Pass a quiz = +1
- Pass a test = +2
- Passing room inspection = +1

- Impress a member of the faculty or staff (some faculty/administration members are much more difficult to impress than others) = +1
- Tutor another student, with approval from a faculty member (the character must have a higher Grade in the subject than the other student with an appropriate Specialization) = +2/week *OR*
- Assist a faculty member with research (does not include Demerit-mandated research. You must have a relevant skill level of "B" or greater with an appropriate Specialization) = +1/week *OR*
- Perform volunteer work on campus (i.e., office assistant, library aid, etc.) = +1/week
- Lead an off-campus reporter or investigator astray = +1
- Covering up proof of the paranormal before a mundane human can see it (provided you weren't the one responsible in the first place) = +1
- Make a scientific or magical breakthrough = +2
- Join a sports team = +1
- Win in a sporting event against another school = +2
- Attend a sporting event = +1
- Join a club = +1
- Perform at a school event or concert = +2
- Attend a campus event = +1
- Participate in the weekly blood drive (excluding Hybrids) = +1

A character may have a maximum of 15 Merit Points at one time. Any additional Merit Points are lost.

Gaining Demerit Points

It's a lot easier to gain Demerits than it is to gain Merits. However, unlike Merits points, a member of the faculty or staff must catch you in the act or have a reasonably strong suspicion that you are the responsible party before you can earn the Demerit(s). As you might imagine, there's a lot of ratting-out of fellow students and a healthy trade in blackmail.

- Breaking school rules (other than those listed below) = +1
- Being disrespectful to a member of the faculty/administration = +1
- Being tardy to class 3 times in a single semester = +1
- Missing class without an approved excuse from a member of the faculty/administration = +2
- Failing room inspection = +1
- Being found in the dorm room of a student of the opposite sex = +5
- Breaking the school dress code (second and additional violations) = +1

Transferring Credits

If you're really in a jam and you're out of Merit Points, you could trade your precious Experience Points to get some. For every XP you trade-in, you get 3 Merit Points. The exchange rate is terrible, but the option is there if you need it.

- Breaking curfew without authorization = +1
- Leaving campus without authorization (includes Billington's Wood) = +2
- Failing a test or quiz = +1
- Failing to turn in an assignment = +1
- Bullying = +1
- Fighting = +2
- Sending another student to the infirmary or Arkham = +3 (and the administration will investigate)
- Sending another student to the infirmary or Arkham (second and additional violations) = +4 (the administration will investigate)
- Theft or destruction of student property = +2
- Theft or destruction of school property = +4 (your family will receive the bill)
- Aiding a trespassing investigator or reporter = +2
- Demonstrating proof of the paranormal to mundane humans (monsters, magic, etc.) = +3
- Summoning something beyond your control = +2
- Servitor combat outside of the colosseum = +1
- Harming one of the stray cats on campus = +2
- Fishing in the lake = +3
- Cheating = +5
- Attacking a member of the staff or faculty = Expulsion
- "Acting in a manner unbecoming of an Academy student." This is a catch-all punishment used when the faculty/administration want to penalize a student who hasn't technically broken any rules = +1

Merits 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 Demerits 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Demerit Penalties

When you accrue enough Demerit Points and don't have any Merit Points to buy them off, the administration begins to take notice of your activities and may act against you.

# Of Demerits	Punishment
0	Model student.
1	Scamp!
2	This isn't like you . . .
3	Is there trouble at home?
4	You're starting down a very bad path . . .
5	Detention. The faculty member who gave you this Demerit has you spend your club period sitting quietly in class. A character may avoid this by testing your Family skill against a Target Number of 11.
6	Detention. The faculty member who gave you this Demerit has you spend your club period sitting quietly in class. A character may avoid this by testing your Family skill against a Target Number of 13.
7+	The faculty start looking at you like a troublemaker. You have one Downshift to all social rolls dealing with faculty until your Demerit score is 4 or less.
8	A note has gone home, and you have embarrassed your family. Downshift your Family skill by 1 (minimum of "F") until your Demerit score is reduced to 4 or less.
9	A week of detention. For the next week, the faculty member who gave you this Demerit has you spend your club period working on a special project for them. This will probably involve research, procuring unusual material components, and probably some questionable experiments. The work must be completed in 1 week or you gain +1 Demerit.
10+	You get to be a guinea pig! You "volunteer" to be a subject in a faculty member's experiments. Electricity and toxic chemicals are probably the least of your problems. You don't remember a whole lot about the experience, just some flashbacks, but you drop 1 Skill Grade in the Mundane Skill of your choice (minimum of "D") due to the effects and the amnesia. On the plus side, your record is wiped clean. Erase all your Demerits and wipe the drool off your chin.

After you have earned 10 Demerits and have served your punishment, your Demerits are reset to 0.

Appeals

Students may appeal the awarding of Demerits to the Student Council during their weekly meeting. You may argue based on your Trash Talk skill or Family skill. The difficulty is based on your current level of Demerits (including the contested Demerits). If you win, the contested Demerits are wiped from your record, although all other Demerit Points will remain. If the faculty member decides to testify against you, you suffer a penalty of 2 Downshifts on the Skill Test.

# of Demerits	Target #
9-10+	13
7-8	11
5-6	9
3-4	7
1-2	5

Gamemaster Characters and Merit Points

Your average run-of-the-mill Gamemaster character, the kind you have very little interaction with, won't have any Merit Points. They're minor actors, not much more than scenery. On the other hand, important characters, characters who your students deal with regularly, will probably have a couple of Merit Points. How can you tell the difference? If this game were a movie, major characters would have their full name listed in the credits whereas minor characters would be listed as "Nerdy Boy #1" or "Blonde Girl in Chemistry Class." GMCs can use Merit Points just like students: to heal damage, get an Upshift on Skill Tests, or reign-in a quirk or disorder.

Studying And Earning Good Grades

Students are required to maintain good grades ("Marks"), or they will earn Demerits and look stupid in front of their peers. In addition to nightly homework (called "prep") and studying, students also worry about quizzes and large assignments, like book reports or research projects.

Once a month, each class will be assigned a quiz or a project (possibly both, if the professor is really mean).

At the end of each semester, fall and spring, each class will have an exam.

Pop quizzes can happen anytime (but never more than once per week).

Quizzes and assignments are usually given early in the week, providing students an entire week plus the weekend to prepare. To pass, students will need to roll against a difficulty determined by their school year. As classes get progressively harder, so do the Target Numbers.

School Year	Quiz/Project Target #	Exam Target #
1st–2nd Year		
(7th-8th grade)	5	7
3rd-4th Year		
(9th-10th grade)	7	9
5th-6th Year		
(11th-12th grade)	9	11

Typically, the skill tested will be Education or Art, although a case may be made for substituting another skill (using the standard rules). Assignments are handled similarly, but use the Brainiac skill, instead.

If you beat the Target Number, you pass the exam or quiz, or you successfully complete the assignment (earning Merit Points). If you fail the roll, you fail the exam or quiz, or you turn in an unacceptable assignment (earning Demerits).

If you spend time studying for a class or doing research in the library (in the GM's eyes), you'll gain an Upshift on your Skill Test. On the other hand, if you spent virtually no time studying or doing research, you're going to get stuck with a Downshift. A good memory helps, too. If you have a Brainiac Skill Grade of "B," you gain an Upshift on your Skill Test. If you have a Brainiac Skill Grade of "A" or better, you get 2 Upshifts! On the other hand, if you have a Skill Grade of "D," you get a Downshift on the Skill Test, instead.

Given the danger of a pop quiz, you're going to have to balance your studies with your clubs, sports, shenanigans, and illicit activities!

"Nothing is so intimately a part of a man as his library. It contains just what the possessor wants to look at most often, and comes to form his window or gateway to the larger cosmos."

H.P. Lovecraft

Optional: The Roommate from Hell

Note: This step is optional, but if it is used, it should apply to all player characters.

By default, the game assumes that player characters of the same sex will be housed together in the same dorm. However, your GM can do whatever they want, so we added this section to design GMC bunkies.

Students are normally assigned 1 or 2 bunkies (except for students with a starting Family skill of "A" – they can select a single) based on some kind of "compatibility algorithm." A magic hat would probably do a better job. Still, there are advantages and disadvantages of having a roommate or two. For example, an intruder might decide to take them out first, giving you time to run away.

To create your student's roommate (or roommates), follow these steps:

1. Bunkies are <u>always</u> the same sex as the player character.
2. Bunkies are always the same year as the player character.
3. Roll for your bunkie's interests and personality (below). If the resulting interest and personality don't mesh well, either re-roll or pick one.
4. Bunkies have the same mundane starting skill allotment as player characters, so everyone should be on a level playing field. Try to select skills that reflect their personality and interests.
5. Most people at the Academy don't have Disturbing Skills. Roll 1d6. On a result of 6, the bunkie has one Disturbing Ability at Grade "C." Pick a character class and assign abilities as appropriate. All other Disturbing Skills default to lore skills at Grade "D." Note that the administration never assigns more than one Summoner to a room.
6. Select a Motivation for your bunkie. It should not be the same or aligned with the player character's motivation!

Interest/Background (Roll 2d6)

Roll	Result
2	Troublemaker/Punk
3	Goth/Emo
4	Nerdy/Geeky
5	Academic Achiever/Bookworm
6	Artsy/Musician
7	Athlete/Cheerleader
8	Rich Kid ("Trustie")
9	"Prince"/"Princess"
10	Clown
11	Poor Kid ("Rider")
12	Slacker/Underachiever

Noise Level (Roll 1d6)

Roll	Result
1	Super quiet
2	Quiet
3 or 4	Average
5	Loud
6	Obnoxiously loud

Neatness (Roll 1d6)

Roll	Result
1	Disgusting slob
2	Messy
3 or 4	Average
5	Neat
6	Pathologically neat

Personality (Roll 2d6)

Roll	Result
2	Has a Disorder
3	Naïve or clueless
4	Quiet and reserved
5	Pretentious and spoiled
6	Serious and competitive
7	Way too cheerful and enthusiastic
8	Mean-spirited or manipulative
9	Inconsiderate and rude
10	Self-conscious and shy
11	Sneaky and suspicious
12	Has a minor Quirk

Optional: Student (De/Mentor)

Note: This step is optional, but if it is used, it should apply to all player characters.

All incoming First Year students (as well as transfer students) are assigned a Student Mentor for their first semester at the Academy. All members of the Fifth Year Class are expected to help new students transition to boarding school life, acclimate to the campus, and generally learn the ropes at the Academy. Naturally, some students are better suited to this role than others.

Mentors are Gamemaster Characters and may help – or hinder – your character's quest for academic excellence, social acceptance, or miscellaneous mayhem. When you're in a jam, your mentor might be able to help, although there may be a price attached.

To create your student's Mentor, just follow these steps:

1. Mentors are usually the same sex as their charges (1-4 on a 1d6).
2. Mentors are normal students – no Disturbing Abilities – but they've been around the school long enough that they probably won't be shocked by most Disturbing Abilities, either (Roll 1d6: 1-4 = Eldritch Lore "C," 5-6 = Eldritch Lore "B").

> "Those who educate children well are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well."
>
> *Aristotle*

3. Roll for your Mentor's Interests and Personality (below).
4. Mentors are created just like students, but they may increase six different skills by 1 Grade each (to a maximum of "A") to represent their additional years of experience at the Academy. The Mentor's interests and personality will suggest appropriate skills (i.e., a rich kid would certainly need a high Family skill, and you'd expect a jock to by good at Phys. Ed.).
5. Select a Motivation for your Mentor.

Interest (Roll 2d6)

Roll	Result
2	Troublemaker/Punk/Bully
3	Goth/Emo
4	Nerdy
5	Academic Achiever/Bookworm
6	Artist/Band Kid
7	Jock/Athlete/Cheerleader
8	Rich Kid
9	Class Clown
10	Loner
11	Hippy
12	Slacker/Underachiever

Personality (Roll 2d6)

Roll	Result
2	Flirtatious and romantic
3	Mean-spirited or manipulative
4	Quiet and reserved
5	Pretentious and spoiled
6	Serious and competitive
7	Friendly and outgoing
8	Clueless and undependable
9	Self-conscious and shy
10	Paranoid and suspicious
11	Protective
12	Wise and Knowledgeable

Getting Better at Stuff

As you play the game, you'll have many adventures (if you live that long) and you'll accumulate Experience Points (XP). These can be spent to improve your Mundane and Disturbing Skills and giving your enemies even more reason to fear your growing power.

But first, there are a couple of rules:

- Skills may only be raised one Grade Level at a time. Even if you have the XPs to increase a skill by 2 Grades, you can only improve the skill by one Grade now. You'll have to wait until the end of the next game session to improve it again.
- Remember that Grade "D" skill that you put a star next to? That skill cannot be raised. Ever. You suck at it. Get over it and move on.
- Skills may only be improved to a maximum of FACULTY.

Awarding Experience

You may earn XP at the end of each session by:

- Adding to the overall enjoyment of the game: 1 XP
- Bringing food to the game (for everyone – not just you!): 1 XP
- Playing your quirk, disorder, or disorders well: 1 XP
- Discovering a secret about the school, faculty, or student body: 1 XP
- Defeating a challenging enemy: 1 XP
- Finishing a story arc: 1 XP
- Resolving your motivation: 1 XP

Most game sessions will earn you 2-3 Experience Points. Successfully completing a major adventure or finishing a story arc (a series of connected stories) could net you 6 or 7 Experience Points!

Improvement Costs

Improving your character's skill takes Experience Points, but you also need to practice the skill. How do you practice a skill? Well, using it during an adventure is a good start. Barring that, you could join a club or spend some time studying.

It costs 15XP to improve 1 Mundane Skill by one Grade.

It costs 20XP to improve 1 Disturbing Skill (Eldritch Lore, Mutation, Witchcraft, Summoning, Oneiromancy, or Science!) by one Grade, regardless of whether the skill is a Lore Skill or an Ability Skill.

It costs an additional 5XP to increase a skill to FACULTY and you need to do something special. You can't just fork over a couple of XP and expect to be the peer of some of your instructors. You're going to have to do something spectacular to earn it, and your GM won't make it easy for you. If you wanted to improve your Brainiac skill, for example, you might need to cut a deal with the Migo for an experimental brain operation. The Migo will almost certainly want something in return, and they might just steal your brain, anyway. If you wanted to improve your Family skill, you might need to quest for a legendary artifact carved from a single diamond. And, of course, the artifact will be cursed and heavily guarded.

The Trustie and the Prodigy are the only character classes that can increase

one of their skills to MASTER. This costs 25XP and, as above, the character needs to do something special.

Increasing Disturbing Skills

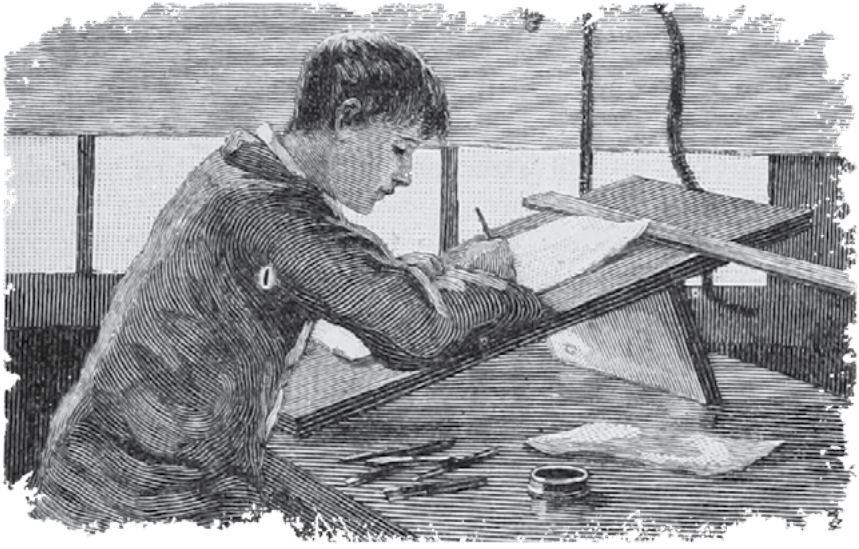
To increase a Disturbing Skill (Mutation, Science!, etc.) you must first increase your Eldritch Lore skill. These skills may never exceed your permanent Eldritch Lore skill score, although they may be equal to it.

Remember: Although you can advance your skills in Mutation, Witchcraft, Summoning, Oneiromancy, or Science!, only the appropriate character class can utilize the supernatural abilities associated with that skill (i.e., only a Witch can use Witchcraft to cast spells, although anyone with the Witchcraft skill can identify spells or spell paraphernalia).

Example: You're playing a Hybrid and you'd like to improve your Mutation skill, which is currently a "B." To increase this to an "A," you'll need 20XP. However, your Eldritch Lore is a "B" as well. You'll need to increase that to an "A" (and suffer the drop in Sanity) before you can increase your Mutation skill any further. Let's say that you also have the Summoning skill at a "C." You can freely increase this skill to a "B," since that would not be higher than your Eldritch Lore skill. You won't be able to summon your very own Servitor, however (that's reserved for the Summoner character), but you'll still be able to identify the abilities of a given Servitor.

Sanity

If, after several adventures, the PCs manage to destroy a powerful monster, disrupt the plans of the Great Old Ones, save everyone on campus from a horrible, supernatural threat, or forestall the end of the world, they may regain one lost Sanity point, up to their maximum (nine, or ten for Mondays, minus the number of Eldritch Lore Skill Grades above "C").



OR TWO STEP

PART

2

HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT

PREPARATORY ACADEMY

CAMPUS LIFE

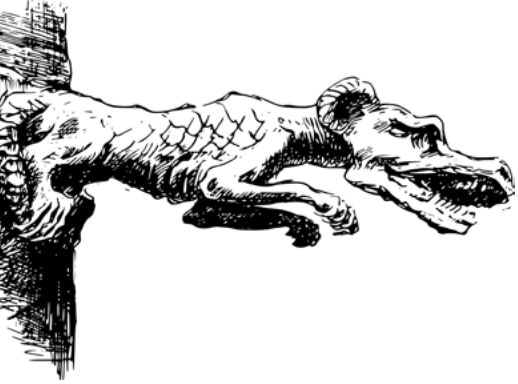
96 SHEETS • 5 x 5 QUAD

10⅛ x 7⅞ • 53-110

Let These Words Inspire You As You Study!

There's an ancient, ancient garden that I see sometimes in dreams,
Where the very Maytime sunlight plays and glows with spectral gleams;
Where the gaudy-tinted blossoms seem to wither into grey,
And the crumbling walls and pillars waken thoughts of yesterday.
There are vines in nooks and crannies, and there's moss about the pool,
And the tangled weedy thicket chokes the arbour dark and cool:
In the silent sunken pathways springs a herbage sparse and spare,
Where the musty scent of dead things dulls the fragrance of the air.
There is not a living creature in the lonely space around,
And the hedge-encompass'd quiet never echoes to a sound.
As I walk, and wait, and listen, I will often seek to find
When it was I knew that garden in an age long left behind;
I will oft conjure a vision of a day that is no more,
As I gaze upon the grey, grey scenes I feel I knew before.
Then a sadness settles o'er me, and a tremor seems to start -
For I know the flow'rs are shrivell'd hopes - the garden is my heart.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft



7

A TOUR OF THE CAMPUS

Around The Campus

Kelly Harper looked at the clock for the seventeenth time in as many minutes. *"Seventeen minutes late for the first day of class! Where was he?!?"*

Kelly had been looking forward to Introduction to Cross-Dimensional Harmonics from the moment she discovered the instructor was none other than Dr. Tillinghast. She was so excited, she read the first four chapters of the textbook last night just to make certain she was fully prepared for class this morning.

But Dr. Tillinghast hadn't shown up for class.

She looked around the small classroom. There were only five other students. One was absentmindedly flipping through the textbook and another was wholly absorbed in some notes they were writing . . . or maybe he was just doodling. The others looked as confused as she felt. She didn't recognize any of them from orientation, so they must be upperclassmen, she surmised.

As she looked up at the clock for the eighteenth time, she began to wonder, "What if something happened? What if . . . what if Dr. Tillinghast was delayed due to a breakthrough in his research!"

Just before 10:29, the door opened, and Dr. Tillinghast strode into the room, looking rather annoyed.

"This is Introduction to Cross-Dimensional Harmonics. This is an *advanced*-level course and shall be taught as such. You will be responsible for independent research and will have access to the Sixth year labs, as needed. We will meet here, once per week to discuss your research. I have a syllabus of required readings, in addition to the textbook."

He pulled some papers from his briefcase and looked directly at Kelly. "Please hand these out, miss?"

Kelly's voice stuck in her throat. "Um . . . Harper. You signed my letter of acceptance."

Dr. Tillinghast rolled his eyes. "Ah, yes. The First Year student." He emphasized "first" as though it were some kind of disease. "Miss Harper, let me assure you that I did no such thing. That was the work of my former secretary. I had my reservations about accepting a student as young as yourself into a class as advanced as this. However, your record seems to indicate that you may have the aptitude to pass. Rest assured, however, if you cannot keep up, I will not hesitate to send you back to whatever class the other First Year students are muddling through. I trust I am making myself clear?"

Stunned, Kelly could only nod as she calmly took the papers from him. Her cheeks burned as she quietly raged with indignation. But she knew that if she opened her mouth, Demerits would be the least of her problems. Instead, she silently vowed to pass this course, and do so with *top* marks.

"So Einstein was wrong when he said,
'God does not play dice.'
Consideration of black holes suggests,
not only that God does play dice, but
that he sometimes confuses
us by throwing them where
they can't be seen."

Stephen Hawking

The Main Building

Beyond the intimidating stone wall with wrought-iron tips squats the Academy's main building – a three-story high monstrosity. Shaped like a five-pointed star within a pentagon, this immense, twisted building is a confusing maze of twisting corridors and dead-end hallways. In the very center of the structure is a bizarre topiary garden, forming a perfect elder sign. Adding to the disorienting nature of the building, there isn't a single 90-degree angle in the building. Even the doors, floors, and ceilings are angled oddly. This sometimes makes people a bit nauseated their first few days, but it passes.

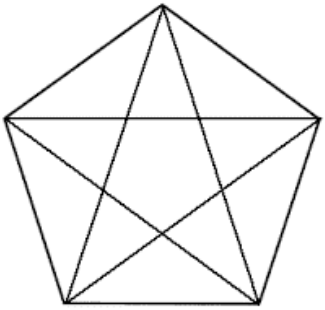
From the outside, the building is an intimidating, crumbling gray stone structure covered with ivy and faceless gargoyles. Strangely, the gargoyles seem to change locations on the building from day-to-day.

The outer pentagon houses the administrative buildings, infirmary, etc., while the inner star houses the classrooms, research labs and departmental offices. Although the main building is one, continuous and interconnected structure, each segment is treated as a separate building for organizational purposes.

The pentagon, from the bottom, going clockwise:

Faust Administration Building

Also known as "The Main Office," this building houses Headmaster Carter's offices, the bursar's office, student records and the student bookstore.



McGregor Dining Hall

The first-floor dining hall is where students take their meals. There is a smaller dining hall reserved for Seniors (Sixth Year students), and another for faculty and staff. When the weather is favorable, students may take their lunch outside in The Yard.

Upperclassmen like to tease the incoming First Years that the dining staff used to work at an upstate prison, before their cooking led to a riot among the prisoners. Honestly, the food isn't bad; it's usually a little bland and over-cooked, but you can generally find something you like, provided you arrive early enough. The dining hall also accommodates vegetarian and religious dietary restrictions.

It is commonly believed that the old hospital morgue was located in what is now McGregor Dining Hall, but it was actually located in what is now the library.

There is a large mural at one end of the dining hall that depicts the Academy mascot: A five-headed hydra. In the painting, the monster's body has the label "Academia" and four of the monster's five heads have labels of the names of the dorms: King, -Gust, Barker, and Stoker. The label beside the fifth head appears to have been painted over at some time in the past.

There are usually 2 main entrees per meal. Sample menu items include:

Breakfast

Porridge or cold cereal
Scrambled eggs or omelets
Sausage or bacon
Breakfast breads and pastries
Fruit and yogurt

Lunch

Salad
Minestrone or chicken noodle soup
Chicken pot pie/fried cod fillets/pizza/cold sandwiches
Vegetarian chili
Cookies/pastries/fruit

Dinner

Salad
Clam chowder or navy bean soup
Roll and butter
Lasagna/beef liver/chicken curry
Szechuan tofu / Mediterranean vegetable stir-fry
Basmati rice or au gratin potatoes
Boiled cabbage or creamed spinach
Vermont apple pie/rice pudding/fruit gelatin

The Charles Dexter Ward Memorial Infirmary

The infirmary can handle everything from minor scrapes to life-threatening injures (which occur with alarming regularity). Dr. West has a terrible bedside manner, but he's a virtual miracle worker when it comes to healing students. This building also houses basic psychiatric facilities on the third floor. Serious cases are referred to Arkham Sanitarium, which is just a quick ambulance ride away.

Lord Dunsany Hall

When the Academy was a hospital, this building housed the terminal Typhoid patients. Now, it houses club rooms, a

computer lab, and quiet rooms for studying and group projects. Located on the ground floor is the Grande Ballroom, an art-deco hall where they hold celebrations and social events, such as dances.

Zann Auditorium and Recital Hall

Music and Art classes are held in this building, which is decorated with some disturbing examples of student art. Plays and performances are held in the Auditorium, as well as mainstream religious services.

The interior star, clockwise from the upper left corner:

Northwest Wing

Science and Math classes, labs, and faculty offices. There is an observatory on the roof.

North Wing

Engineering

Northeast Wing

Social Sciences, History and Archeology

Southeast Wing

English and Foreign Languages

Southwest Wing

Occult Studies

Inside the Main Building

The interior of the building is utilitarian, revealing the school's institutional roots. Student lockers have been added, grainy photos detailing the history of the school have been hung, and the stark, white walls have been given a coat of green paint - but the shiny, white-tiled floors, the hanging fluorescent lights, and the heavy doors are a constant reminder of the building's intended purpose.

Some of the less-used areas of the building are showing their age and could use some TLC. Chipped paint, rusting steel fixtures, stained, cracked floor tiles, and buzzing, flickering fluorescent lights combine to create a menacing atmosphere.

The atmosphere isn't too wholesome, either. In the lowest levels of the main building, old pipes have asbestos insulation flaking off, dust motes swirl in the dim light and the smell of decay and rust are omnipresent.

Navigating the Main Building

To put it mildly, the school is horribly laid-out and, sometimes, even members of the administration get turned around. The first few times a student needs to find a new location in the Main Building, like a specific classroom or lab, they'll need to roll their Scouts skill against a difficulty equal to their current Sanity score. That's right: the more messed-up you are, the easier it will be to find your way around. If you fail the roll, you'll find yourself on the wrong floor, in a different wing, or standing outside the fire exit. Your GM may allow experienced students, Second Year and up, to add +1 to their roll per year of attendance.

Optional: Space Warps

It's no secret that whoever designed the main building was both a complete nut and a genius. Feel free to make the main building larger on the inside than it really should be. Move rooms around occasionally, although the players are the only ones who seem to notice. If you really want to step up the weirdness, have some long-forgotten door lead to a distant part of our world, an alien planet, millions of years in the past (when the Migo, Elder Things, and Yith ruled the planet), or millions of years in the future (after the fall of humanity, when a beetle-like race – their minds possessed by the Yith –rule the Earth). Make such gateways a very rare and temporary occurrence, or it will begin to seem mundane to your players.

Bookstore

The Student Bookstore is unimpressive. In addition to traditional Academy-themed school supplies, t-shirts and banners, the store stocks a small number of healthy snacks, telephone calling cards, toiletries, and sundries. The main draw for some students is the supply of magical or technological components. Although the components do not come cheaply, buying them through the store is more convenient, faster, and safer than trying to scavenge for components. The store does not stock any rare components, nor can they order them.

Bookstore Prices

Replacement uniform: $150

Sweatshirt: $40

T-shirt: $10

Academy pennant: $5

Autographed photo of a member of the faculty: $5

Dorm pin: $10

Dorm patch: $5

Notebook/Binder: $5

Pens/Pencils: $1

Toiletries (soap, deodorant, toothpaste, etc.): $2

Fresh fruit: $1

Crackers/biscuits: $2

Bottled water: $1

Bottled fruit juice: $2

Phone card: $10

Standard gizmo component: $40

Standard spell component: $20

Whateley Library

Whateley Library runs underneath much of the exterior pentagon, for two levels underground. Professor Alhazred is very knowledgeable, if not a little scary, but his organizational methods leave much to be desired. Although he has no issues navigating the library, it can be very difficult for students. Categories seem to have been set-up randomly and may appear in more than one section of the library. Add to this the maze-like construction of the library, and you have a recipe for utter confusion. It also means that you might find a hidden gem, like a restricted tome, filed where it does not belong.

Professor Alhazred also holds the key to the restricted section of the library, which holds the Academy's rarest and most dangerous books and artifacts. Professor Alhazred will not grant access to the restricted section, which resembles a fortified bank vault more than a room in a library, without approval from a faculty member and the office staff from Faust.

The jewel of the library's collection, a rare copy of *The Necronomicon*, has a place of honor, displayed in the restricted section, chained shut and locked within a bulletproof display case.

Books You Might Be Able To Find In The Restricted Section

Agrippa's Three Books of Occult Philosophy

Anton LaVey's The Satanic Bible

Book of Eibon

Celaeno Fragments

Complete Astonishing Stories

Complete Weekly Weird News

Magic Encyclopedia Codex

De Vermis Mysteriis

G. Mackenzie Bacon's On the Writing of the Insane

G'harne Fragments

Gray's Sports Almanac

Helena Blavatsky's The Secret Doctrine

Liber Juratus

Ludwig Prinn's De Vermis Mysteriis (Mysteries of the Worm)

Malleus Maleficarum

Pnakotic Manuscripts

Revelations of Gla'aki

Sefer Yetzira (Book of Creation)

Sepher Ha-Razim (The Book of Secrets)

Seraphinianus Heptameron (Seven Days)

Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan

The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage

The Collected Works of Sutter Cane

The Lesser Book of the Vishanti

The Magical Treatise of Solomon

The Munich Necromantic Handbook

The Picatrix by Ghâyat al-Hakîm fi'l-sihr

To Serve Man

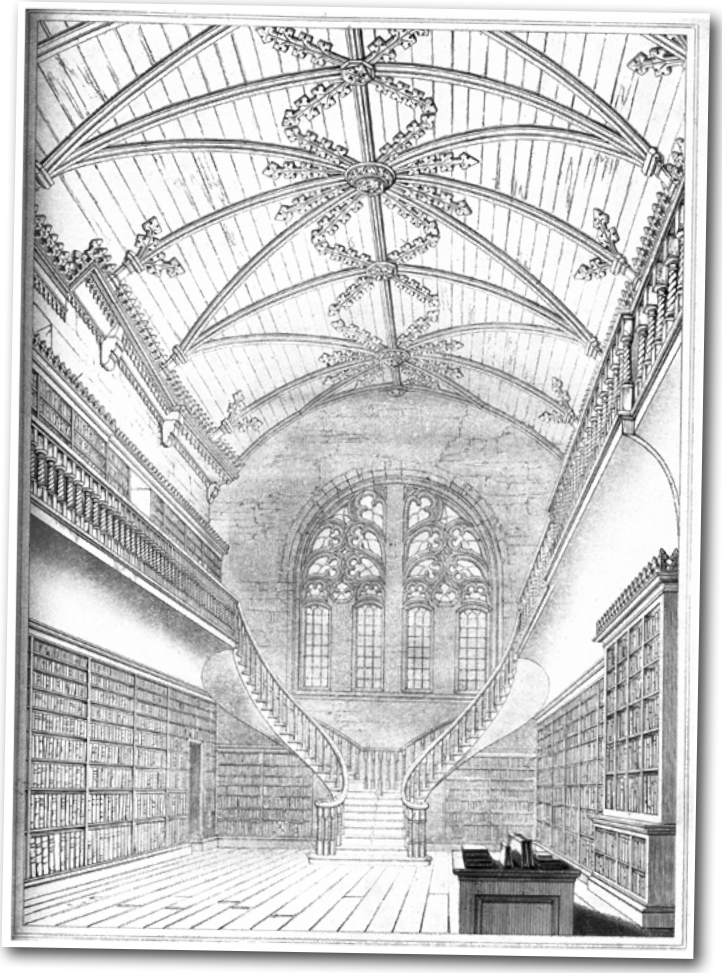
Tobin's Spirit Guide

Unaussprechlichen Kulten

Zanthu Tablets

"Pointing to a chair, table, and pile of books, the old man now left the room; and when I sat down to read I saw that the books were hoary and mouldy, and that they included old Morryster's wild Marvells of Science, the terrible Saducismus Triumphatus of Joseph Glanvill, published in 1681, the shocking Daemonolatreia of Remigius, printed in 1595 at Lyons, and worst of all, the unmentionable *Necronomicon*..."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Festival"



Museum of Local and Natural History

In the late '50s, the library curator was tasked with cataloging the school's collection of antiques and oddities. Rather than cart the whole lot off to the dumpster or hold the world's strangest yard sale, she decided to establish a permanent exhibit. Today, most students feel that the little museum is worth visiting once but seeing as how the exhibits haven't changed in years, there's little value in repeating the experience.

The museum is located on the first sub-floor of the main building, near the library.

Museum Exhibits

Shackles used during the Arkham Witch Trials
Elizabeth Borden's axe
Antique whaling harpoon
Model of a local Native American village
Photographs of mysterious lights off the Massachusetts coastline
Pen and ink set belonging to Nathaniel Hawthorne
Adolphus Greely's arctic gear from the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition
Robert H. Goddard's solar-powered generator
Fossils from the collection of Samuel Hubbard Scudder
An electric chair used in executions in Massachusetts until 1947
A Jenny Haniver
Beak of a giant squid
Preserved and mounted coelacanth
Non-Euclidean blocks of black and green basalt, covered with unrecognizable carvings
A glowing crystal formation
A meteorite
Carvings of unknown animals by the Massachuset tribe of Native Americans
Aleister Crowley's pyramid hat
Tsantsa (shrunken head) collection from Peru
Sealed Dybbuk box
Egyptian canopic jars
Carthaginian stone knife used in ritual sacrifices
Preserved specimens of large insects and arachnids
Skeletons of conjoined twins
Potato that looks like Richard Nixon
World's longest intestinal parasite, preserved in a glass jar
Jar containing Heinrich Himmler's brain
Primitive Geiger counter, dated 1887
Osteotome used in trepanning from 1833
Brain stimulation hat from 1911
Early sketches of Tesla's particle beam weapon

Puzzle Rooms

Hidden throughout the building are cleverly designed puzzle rooms. By standing on the correct floor tiles, entering the correct combination in a series of locks, or unlocking a hidden keyhole, a clever student might trigger a hidden passage or activate a mechanism that rotates or moves the entire room.

The puzzle rooms are dangerous in the extreme. Entering an incorrect combination could lock the student in the room for an undetermined period, open a pit trap, fill the room with gas, or engage some other nefarious mechanism. As these puzzles have been discovered, the administration has taken great pains to disable the mechanisms or, when the mechanisms proved too complex to disable, to padlock the rooms securely to prevent anyone from entering. Some puzzle rooms have been locked away for more than a century, waiting for some clever student to unlock their mysteries.

The designers were clever, however, and a few puzzles have escaped discovery, even after all these years.

Under the School

Beneath the library are the boilers and lots of sealed and forgotten storage areas. The walls in this area are uniform bedrock, but there are small, strange carvings near the floor and ceiling. Supposedly, there is nothing below this level.

Stories travel from upperclassmen on down that the school was built on a maze of natural (and unnatural tunnels) in which intrepid students might discover giant, tunneling worm-like creatures, ghouls, and an ancient race of serpent people bent on ruling the world. But that's just ridiculous.

Other Buildings

The Gatehouse

Unless you can fly or teleport, there's only one way in or out of the Academy. Other than the face that borders Billington's Wood, the entire campus is surrounded by a ten-foot stone wall, tipped with sharp, wrought-iron spikes.

The gatehouse is staffed always by an armed member of the campus security force, who has a direct line to the main office and campus security. The gatehouse and large sections of the wall are recorded by a suite of security cameras that point outside and inside the campus grounds. Campus security monitors the video feed 24/7.

Campus personnel and students must sign the log and present their Academy ID cards each time they pass through the gate. Parents and other visitors must contact the head office at least 24 hours in advance of their visit to arrange for a temporary pass.

The Peterson Building of Biology and Vivisection Science

The Peterson Building of Biology and Vivisection Science ("The Menagerie") is a squat, grey building made of concrete. This is the most modern building on campus, even if it resembles a grey box. It's widely believed that the building was constructed with a grant from the U.S. Government. No classes are taught here, and students are not permitted within. Students who have Servitors are obligated to bring their creatures here, once a week, for "routine examination."

The Clock Tower

The clock tower is the tallest structure on campus. It stands in the center of campus and is visible from just about anywhere on the school grounds. Although the clock keeps impeccable time, there are several unusual aspects to it. First, in addition to an hour, minute, and second hand, the tower also includes movement for month and day. Secondly, each of the five hands has at each tip an astrological sign, rather than a baroque arrow. Finally, the chimes seem to ring at random, rather than on the hour, as one might expect.

The grassy lawn immediately surrounding the Clock Tower is affectionately known as "The Yard." As the weather permits, students will take their lunches on the yard and the Dining Hall prepares picnic lunches for the first favorable days of spring.

The Hedge Maze

The hedge maze isn't large, but it's really maddening to navigate. There are no straight lines in the maze; it twists and turns in a chaotic fashion, and some of the paths appear to double-back on themselves. Many students have tried to map the maze, but no one has been successful. Adventurous students with a little time to kill will sometimes "run the maze" to try to beat the current record of forty-six minutes. However, students are advised to make sure they've got plenty of time; "runs" of two hours or more are common. A few students have claimed to experience strange, disorienting mists and disembodied sounds in the maze, and, according to rumor, a few students have entered the maze and never returned.

Williamson Gymnasium

The Williamson Gymnasium is a relatively new addition to the school, probably in the past 75 years or so. The gym houses basketball courts, locker rooms and showers, equipment storage, and administrative offices. There is a room with free weights and other exercise equipment, but most of them are so aged that hardly anyone uses it anymore.

Ashton Manor

Ashton Manor is the home of the headmaster, although he spends relatively little time here. On rare occasions, the headmaster may invite students to join him for dinner in his home. Students who have attended have commented that the headmaster has an impressive book collection.

"Cthulhu is gonna get rid of all the posers and make everything cool and black and stuff. It's gonna be like a Nine Inch Nails concert that goes on forever."

South Park, "Mysterion Rises"

Bloch Boarding House

Most of the tenured faculty lives in the nearby city of Arkham and commutes to the Academy every day. For visiting professors, the Academy provides a stipend for room and board as part of the employment package. While some professors seek off-campus housing and others prefer to sleep in their labs, the Academy offers comfortable efficiency apartments at The Bloch Boarding House.

Each apartment contains a bedroom, a small living room that doubles as a study, and a bathroom. Each apartment also includes a small kitchenette, but most of the faculty take their meals in the staff dining hall. Laundry facilities are in the basement. The top floor houses luxury suites for special guests or high-profile faculty.

During periods of extreme weather, faculty and staff may choose to stay at the boarding house rather than trying to drive home.

The Greenhouse

The Greenhouse is located near the edge of campus, not far from Billington's Wood. Whether by design or neglect, the Greenhouse has gone to rot and now houses an impressive array of spores, molds, and fungi. The Greenhouse acts as something of a lighthouse to new students, as a disturbing luminescent glow of an odd and distinct color is visible across campus at night.

The Graveyard

Surrounded by a low, deteriorating stone wall complete with a rusting, iron gate, the graveyard has not been maintained in many years. Weeds and sickly bushes have proliferated, often obscuring the headstones.

Patients whose families had not made other arrangements were buried here with a simple stone marker that gave their last name and date of passing. There are several mausoleums here as well, but neglect and the elements have taken their toll. Those mausoleums that haven't already collapsed are structurally unsafe and the doors have rusted shut.

Sometimes, the goth students will hang out in the graveyard, but students generally avoid the place (which is probably part of the reason why the goth kids hang out here).

The Dig

A little more than a decade ago, the Academy broke ground on a new build-

ing, supposedly a new dorm to replace –Gust Hall. During the excavation, something was uncovered, and the project was abandoned. Today, a chain-link fence surrounds the area to prevent students from falling into the steep, muddy pit. Whatever they found, it's hidden at the bottom of the pit, underneath a deep morass of mud and icy rainwater. Some people say that the construction team found an ancient metal disc, six feet across, embedded in the stone at the bottom of the pit. If that were true, wouldn't the Archeology Department at Miskatonic University have removed it for study?

The Steam and Access Tunnels

Officially denied by the Academy, a literal maze of old steam tunnels and disused access passages crisscross the school, some of which haven't seen visitors in more than fifty years. Dark, smelly, and filthy, these tunnels might be useful when trying to cross the campus unseen, if there wasn't such a substantial risk of getting injured or horribly lost in them. Due to safety concerns, the Academy tries to keep the entries locked, but some of the doors have been forced open from the inside.

After a heavy rainstorm, the lower levels can flood very quickly as the groundwater seeps into the tunnels.

Campus Security

The Campus Security "Building" is a repurposed fallout shelter. Fifty feet below a concrete bunker, the campus security forces are ready for almost anything. The structure houses offices, a firing range, barracks, armory, and cells - both mundane and specially reinforced with containment fields. They're not the friendliest folks, but they're very good at what they do. Most of the security personnel are ex-special forces or former mercenaries, and a good portion of the tuition goes towards paying for their equipment and health benefits. Specializing in rapid-response and containment, these absurdly brave men and women can deploy at a moment's notice. In the highly unlikely event of a major incursion, they can field flamethrowers, rocket launchers, and much scarier stuff.

There is a small garage adjacent to the security building for patrol vehicles. Campus Security has a small fleet of modified golf carts for routine patrols, but they also have two, older model Humvees with heavy weapon mounts for emergencies.

Typical Loadout for Campus Security

- Pepper Spray
- Taser
- 9mm Pistol
- Baton
- Handcuffs
- Wireless Radio
- Nightvision Goggles
- Kevlar Vest
- Emergency Response Loadout:
- M16A4 Automatic Rifle (or bazooka or flamethrower)
- Grenades
- Wireless Radio
- Nightvision Goggles
- Riot Armor

Lake Hally

Not far from Billington's Wood, there is a murky, seemingly bottomless lake. Interestingly, the water temperature is chilly, but not as shockingly cold as you might suppose. As a result, a mist clings to the surface of the lake, particularly in the winter.

Lake Hally is where the swim team practices and holds meets.

Starkweather-Moore Arena

The name sounds grand, doesn't it? I bet you're picturing something like a football stadium, right? Guess again. The Starkweather-Moore Arena is a fancy, expensive-sounding name attached to the ruins of an ancient stone arena which pre-dates human civilization by a good 10,000 years. Known to students as "The Colosseum," sporting events, such as soccer, field hockey, football, and track are held here as well as Servitor battles.

The campus also houses a baseball field, tennis courts, and a small stable for students wealthy enough to provide their own horses.

Getting Around Campus

All the campus buildings, except Stoker Hall, connect through old brick walkways. Students from Stoker, of course, must contend with dirt paths that become muddy and treacherous in the rain.

The Academy does not offer a shuttle service, so students should expect to get wet during inclement weather. Furthermore, students are strongly encouraged to plan ahead, ensuring that they have enough time to cross campus from their dorms, particularly if they have not yet mastered the hallways of the Main Building. Of course, there are always the steam tunnels . . .

The campus is not well-lit at night, and shadows abound. While Campus Security has nightvision goggles, most students are not so well-equipped. The administration recommends that students travel together at night for their protection.

Student Dormitories

Students are supposed to be randomly assigned to their dorms, which will be their home for the next six years. In reality, it has more to do with the size of your family's donation to the school's housing fund. Each dorm is home to a Supervisor, a staff member who takes care of the day-to-day responsibilities of running the dorm, assigns the dorm rules, and metes out Merits and Demerits as they see fit. Their ~~lieutenant~~ assistant is the Hall Prefect, a 6th Year student appointed by the Supervisor. The Hall Prefect acts as the Supervisor's eyes and ears around the dorm and enforces the rules, usually with sadistic efficiency.

Each dorm houses about 200 students (32-36 students per Year), apart from King Hall, which only houses 84 students. Each dorm is arranged in the same fashion, more or less:

- **Basement**: First Year rooms, boys' bathrooms, girls' bathrooms, study lounge, and laundry.
- **First Floor**: Student mailboxes, bulletin board for announcements, main lounge, and Dorm Supervisor's apartment.

- **Second Floor**: Second Year rooms, boys' bathrooms, girls' bathrooms, and study lounge.
- **Third Floor**: Third Year rooms, boys' bathrooms, girls' bathrooms, and study lounge.
- **Fourth Floor**: Fourth Year rooms, boys' bathrooms, girls' bathrooms, and study lounge.
- **Fifth Floor**: Fifth Year rooms, boys' bathrooms, girls' bathrooms, and study lounge.
- **Sixth Floor**: Prefect's room, Sixth Year rooms, boys' bathrooms, girls' bathrooms, and study lounge.

Study lounges are situated smack in the middle of each floor, neatly separating the boys' rooms from the girls'. Boys and girls are strictly forbidden from visiting one another's rooms; if they need to work together on a project, they may use the lounge on their floor or one of the study rooms located in the Main Building. Lounges typically contain a few tables and chairs, a sofa or two, and a calling card-activated phone, although the age and quality of the furniture varies wildly from dorm-to-dorm. The Senior study lounge also has a TV.

The main lounge, located on the first floor of each dorm, is a combination hangout, game room and TV room. These lounges are furnished with tables, chairs, sofas, a television and a ping-pong table and/or a pool table. A small selection of board games is also available for residents. Some dorms also have vending machines that dispense snacks or beverages. As you might imagine, the main lounges tend to get rather loud, making them less than ideal for studying. The main lounge in Stoker, however, is the same as the study lounges: Sparse, functional, and uncomfortable.

There is an unwritten rule in the dorms that students may only visit floors that house students of their Year or lower, unless invited and escorted by someone of the proper grade. This means that Seniors have the full run of their dorms while First Years are restricted to the basement and the first floor.

The Houses (see below) are set-up a little differently than the dormitories. Built in a lavish Victorian style, the Houses were originally the homes of wealthy doctors and administrators who worked at the hospital that predated the Academy. The Houses can't accommodate as many students as the dormitories (only about 30-40 students each), but the rooms are larger and more comfortable. The floors are alternated male-female, and there is usually only one lounge, located in the lobby, but there is a spacious kitchen for students who enjoy cooking.

Your Dorm Room

Your dorm room is your sanctum. It's where you sleep and study. It's where you stash your material components and your gizmos. It's where you hide your blackmail materials and where your Servitor is supposed to stay while you're in class. It'd be perfect if you didn't have to share such a small space with 1 or 2 other kids with whom you share absolutely nothing in common. Doubles are the norm, but there are a couple of triple rooms. Singles are rare and the competition for a single is intense.

In addition to their trunk of personal belongings, each student has a bed (although these may be bunk-beds if the room is particularly small), a desk, desk chair, bureau, bookshelf, and a lockable closet. All other furnishings, includ-

ing desk lamps, must be provided by the student.

Each room also has one containment circle. The administration has been careful to ensure that only one Summoner is assigned to a room; they don't want two Servitors trapped in a single containment circle, especially if one of them is of an "antisocial disposition." Things could get messy.

In addition to normal wear-and-tear, some rooms still bear the marks of their earlier inhabitants. For the student unlucky enough to inherit one of these rooms, they can expect to find the walls (and sometimes the floor and ceiling) covered in arcane etchings, biblical quotes, or insane ramblings. As disturbing as this may be, posters and school banners are an easy and inexpensive fix.

There are four official dorms for students and three on-campus student houses:

King Hall

Dorm Emblem: A crown

This dorm is reserved for the wealthiest students and is the smallest dorm on campus, only housing a maximum of 84 students. Wealth is usually not enough to get a student assigned to King, however. The student's family also needs an impeccable reputation and a long history of providing financial support to the Academy. On the inside, this dorm is furnished like a 1920s hotel, except each room has a phone, high-speed intranet access (see below), private bathrooms and full maid service. All visitors, including other students, must be cleared at the front desk before they are allowed access to King Hall. Campus security keeps a watchful eye on King and its residents.

-Gust Hall

Dorm Emblem: A red, five-pointed star with squiggly arms

No one remembers what this dorm was originally called; the plaque is broken and it's not likely to be repaired anytime soon. Referred to as "Disgust" Hall by the students, this dorm is falling apart and should've been condemned years ago. At one time, -Gust Hall was a stately, well-appointed building with hand-carved moldings, soaring ceilings, crystal chandeliers, and fine art. Now, holes in the walls, cracked windows, and threadbare carpeting are a common sight. The furniture is sparse, the electricity is faulty, and hot water is a welcome surprise. Even the rats don't want to live here. At least the dial-up intranet connection usually works.

Some industrious students have discovered that there are some unusually large and unaccounted-for spaces between the walls in some parts of the building. Based on the age of the building, these crawlspaces could have been used by liquor bootleggers during the Prohibition Era. Assuming this theory is correct, no one has been able to find an entrance to the crawlspaces, and no one is willing to risk the wrath of the administration (or their fellow residents) by further damaging the building.

This is one of the three default dorms for your characters.

Barker Hall

Dorm Emblem: An eye on a yellow background

Barker is the most outwardly normal of the dorms. However, the building was constructed at a different time from the other dorms, using "non-standard"

Optional: Living in -Gust Hall

Once every week or two, have the resident students test their Paranoia or Phys. Ed. skill (whichever is better) against a Target Number of 7 to avoid twisting their ankle in a gap in the floor, having a bit of the ceiling fall on them, etc. If they fail, they take Physical Damage equal to the Margin of Failure.

Optional: Living in Barker Hall

Whenever you're feeling mean-spirited, have the residents make a Cool or Oneiromancy test against a Target Number of 7. If they fail, they suffer from headaches and nightmares, taking Mental Anguish equal to the Margin of Failure.

Optional: Living in Stoker Hall

Since there is no central heat (or air conditioning), the dorm can be very uncomfortable at night. On particularly cold (or hot) nights, have the unlucky students make a Brawn test against a Target Number of 7. If they fail, they don't get any sleep and suffer a Downshift to Phys. Ed. and any other applicable skills the following day (or until they can get some proper rest).

building techniques. Staring at the building too long will give you a headache, and nightmares are endemic among the residents. There are regular reports of strange noises and unexplained occurrences in this dorm, and one former resident, before they were carted-off to Arkham, claimed that the dorm is possessed by a malevolent entity that feeds on the life force of the students. Knowing that the residents of this dorm have the highest rate of mental aberration on campus kind of puts things in perspective, though.

What Barker does have, however, is a high number of disappearances, so there are usually a couple of rooms available at any time. Rumors of cult sacrifices in a hidden basement could explain some of the disappearances.

Barker is the second default dorm for your characters.

Stoker Hall

Dorm Emblem: A black silhouette of a wolf's head

Also known as "The Dungeon" by students, this dorm is run like a puritanical monastery. Lit by sunlight during the day and candles at night, students must make do with hard and uncomfortable utilitarian furniture. Artwork and music are absolutely forbidden, and the House Prefect has authority to use a switch to punish transgressions. There are no phones or televisions in this dorm. Students who need to place an off-campus call will need to visit Faust.

The Dorm Supervisor reputedly has a very low tolerance for Witches.

This is the third default dorm for your characters.

In addition to the four dormitories, students may elect to live in one of the other on-campus houses that have been set aside for student use. These houses tend to be nicer than most of the assigned dorms and students have the freedom to select their own roommates. Prior to entering their Third Year (9th grade), a student may apply to live in one of these houses instead of their assigned dorm (for an additional fee, of course).

Mu House

House Emblem: The Greek letter "Mu" (μ) inside a purple triangle

This house is the domain of the swim team and some of the odder students. Hybrids might find some sympathetic souls at Mu. Mu is the smallest of the houses, with only 25 students. Application is by invitation only.

Omega House

House Emblem: The Greek letter "Omega" (Ω) in green

Omega is the party house, home of the jocks, cheerleaders, and popular kids who couldn't get into King. If there's a school regulation on the books that limits stupid, juvenile behavior, you probably have Omega to thank. There's a long waiting list to get into Omega.

Cushing House

House Emblem: Eight white stars in a circle on a black background

If you really want to move out of the dorms, Cushing House is the easiest House to get into. Cushing is the largest House and could easily accommodate 60 students. Sure, someone was brutally murdered in one of the rooms back in the early '20s, but the Academy keeps that room locked. It's also the home of a bunch of religious nut-jobs. They're secretly a cult of Azathoth worshippers . . . so, yeah, nut-jobs. Although the cult members are in the minority at Cushing, the other residents grant them a wide berth, so they don't find themselves an unwilling participant in the cult's rites. Other than the occasional late-night chanting, the cultists mostly keep to themselves, so problems are rare.

Dorm Competition

In mid-spring every year, students in each dormitory (including Mu, Omega, and Cushing) are expected to participate in the Inter-Dorm Decathlon, a series of athletic events consisting of baseball, basketball, swimming, several track and field events, a race through the hedge maze, Servitor matches, and a campus-wide scavenger hunt. The dorm that wins the most events receives a gaudy trophy and extended privileges for one week, including a late curfew, dinner with the Headmaster at Ashton Manor, and off-campus weekend passes for First through Fourth Year students (who are normally not permitted to leave campus). Omega House normally wins the Decathlon, although reporters from the Illuminator have uncovered evidence that students in King have attempted to bribe or blackmail the Omega athletes into throwing the competition.

Student betting can get intense during the Decathlon.

At the end of the academic year, the dorm or house with the lowest average GPA (Grade Point Average) must spend several days scrubbing and cleaning the dorm with the highest GPA in addition to their own. Students who bring down the average GPA are usually singled-out for retribution by their fellow residents.

8

OFF CAMPUS

Billington's Wood

Just off the campus proper, there is Billington's Wood, a deep, dark forest with clinging mists that hide ancient and unidentifiable ruins. The residents of Cushing House have been known to gather at the ruins after curfew, even though the woods are technically off-limits.

The deeper parts of the woods grow so thickly that very little light penetrates to the forest floor, casting the woods in an eerie, perpetual twilight. Twisted trees and serpentine roots make this an altogether unwelcoming place and it's easy to become lost in the vast wilderness.

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the Native American tribes shunned this region. They believed that the deep woods were the domain of the Pukwudgie, a goblin-like race of shapechangers with a penchant for malicious and sometimes lethal pranks. They also believed that the woods were the home of an evil Manitou called The Hobbomock.

At the turn of the previous century, the woods sheltered a few small communities connected by twisting dirt roads. Today, whatever remains of those villages are abandoned and forgotten ghost towns.

> "West of Arkham the hills rise wild, and there are valleys with deep woods that no axe has ever cut. There are dark narrow glens where the trees slope fantastically, and where thin brooklets trickle without ever having caught the glint of sunlight.
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "The Colour Out of Space"*

The City of Arkham

While First Year students won't see much beyond the gates of the Academy, more than one student has tried to sneak off campus.

Arkham is a busy college town filled with row after row of cramped, symmetrical Georgian townhouses. The dull brick and stone façades are interrupted by quaint used bookstores, vintage clothing stores, crowded coffeehouses, inexpensive restaurants, and lots of bars and nightclubs – all catering to the students of Miskatonic University.

Where to Go

First through Fourth Year students (grades 7-10) cannot leave campus except for school-sponsored events. Fortunately, some of the off-campus eateries offer delivery service (students must pick up their orders at the front gate guard station). Below is a list of favorite haunts among the upperclassmen:

Anthony's Wicked-Good Pizza

Anthony's offers a broad selection of hot and cold grinders (subs), pasta, and pizza. Try the lobster pizza! Delivery is available.

Arkham Community Pharmacy

This small pharmacy has managed to survive, despite the power of the chain pharmacies. At one time, the pharmacy had a charming lunch counter, but the stools have been removed and space repurposed to display cosmetics. The pharmacist, a kindly older man, sometimes recommends alternative treatments that work surprisingly well.

Arkham Occult Bookstore. This is mostly a touristy shop for novices. Regardless, Arkham Occult is a decent source of inexpensive components and, occasionally, something winds-up on the

shelf that shouldn't be sold to the public.

Binder's Used Books

Dusty and poorly lit, Binder's is a reliable source for old and out-of-print books. There is a persistent rumor that there is a back room stocked with rare and valuable books for "special customers." Professor Alhazred has been spotted at Binder's numerous times, which has only fed the rumor. It is also rumored that Professor Alhazred shops here for romance novels.

Cluckers

A regional fast-food chain that offers Buffalo wings and fried seafood. Delivery is available.

Delilah's Arcanum

Unless you know where it is, Delilah's Arcanum is difficult to find. Unlike Arkham Occult Bookstore, Delilah's serves a knowledgeable customer base. Delilah's carries components, books, and implements for the major magical traditions. Although the store has a "no profane magics" policy, they rarely ask questions. They'll order rare components . . . for the right price.

Electronics Hut

This is a national chain of electronics and computer parts.

Hooray! Comics and Games

Hooray! offers a wide range of new and older board, roleplaying, and card games. They also offer a modest selection of comics and graphic novels.

Hunan Palace

An excellent Chinese restaurant, although the décor is a bit unusual. The walls are decorated with Chinese weapons, including swords, spears, chain whips, wind and fire wheels, and what could only be a flying guillotine. Delivery (of the food, not the weapons) is available.

Imperial Community Theater

Built in the late '30s, this theater once featured exquisite architecture, marble tile, and painted ceilings. Unfortunately, time and a lack of money have taken their toll on this once magnificent structure. The Imperial shows revivals and third-run movies, and is usually crowded for "Monster Movie Saturday Nights," which feature bad monster and horror movies from the '40s through the '60s.

Perk-Up! Coffee Shop

A 24-hour national coffee chain. Students from the university can be found here at all hours, lounging in the cushy chairs and sofas, and taking advantage of the free wi-fi.

Sushi-Go

Fast food sushi. Delivery is available.

Arkham is an old town. Stone bridges span the Miskatonic River and old timber mills have been repurposed as museums or craft galleries. During Prohibition, hidden sub-basements and camouflaged speakeasies were as common as the local five-and-dime store. Maybe more so. Many of the old speakeasies have been converted into warehouse space, legal drinking establishments, and in one case, an underground casino. However, several other speakeasies have been walled-over and forgotten. Mostly.

The local newspaper, the Arkham Advertiser, has been in circulation for

more than 120 years. While the paper covers local, regional, and national events and politics, occasionally the Advertiser prints a news piece that reads like something out of a bad tabloid. Recent issues of the paper are available to Academy students in the Whateley Library, and older issues have been scanned and saved electronically.

Witchcraft and the occult have been a part of Arkham since the early 1600s, and a student with the right connections and a limited sense of self-preservation could find just about any magical component imaginable, if they're prepared to pay the price. A few doomsday cults and secret societies still operate within the city, some with deep connections to law enforcement, City Hall, the University, and possibly the Academy.

Outside of the city proper are miles upon miles of farmland and old, virgin forest.

Boston Slang

Barrel: Garbage can

Chowderhead: a stupid person

Clicker: TV remote control

Frappe: Milkshake

Gravy: Tomato sauce

Grinder: Sub sandwich

Moxie: Chutzpah

No Sir! ("No Suh!"): I don't believe it

Ripper: Party

So don't I: Me too

Tonic: Soda or pop

Wicked: very or a lot, as in "it's wicked hot out there."

Wicked pisser: very cool or excellent

Arkham Sanitarium

On nearby Hobbs Hill, nestled between Miskatonic Power Tools and the Delta Iota Epsilon sorority house, Arkham Sanitarium waits . . .

Arkham opened its doors in 1905 under the name Arkham State Lunatic Hospital. Arkham was a shining example of progressive and humanitarian care, staffed by a caring team of mental health professionals.

However, government budget cuts and massive overcrowding soon took their toll. The patient population exploded to nearly 2,500; five times the intended capacity. Care quickly gave way to confinement and neglect. Ghastly experiments and operations were performed on the patients, who were often chained to the walls of their cell-like rooms for extended periods of time.

By the 1970s the abuse at Arkham had become so pervasive, it attracted national media attention. Amidst a great deal of finger-pointing, the hospital was closed, and the inmates were relocated to other facilities. The building sat empty for two decades, although urban legends suggested that some patients never left.

In 1992, the property was purchased, and renovations began on the structure. The new and improved Arkham Sanitarium reopened its doors in early 1997.

Today, Arkham Sanitarium is surprisingly boring. Along with the lead paint, asbestos, and faulty wiring, the hospital was stripped of its sinister identity during

the renovation. Arkham is now very sterile and very white. Hallway after hallway features the same whitewashed walls, identical polished, tile floors, aluminum fixtures, and bright, fluorescent lighting. The chemical scent of antiseptic and industrial cleaner hang in the air. Most of the rooms are spartan and institutional, with all the charm of a Soviet military hospital. Many rooms boast large windows to permit natural light. The windows are virtually indestructible, of course, and the glass is frosted to further isolate the patients from the outside world.

Naturally, wealthier patients merit more comfortable accommodations.

Security in the hospital is ubiquitous but low-key. Armed security guards are uncommon except in the high-risk wing. As a result, low-risk patients have the illusion of freedom, at least within their wing of the hospital. Patients may do as they please and interact with other patients, so long as they do not misbehave or skip their treatment sessions. In reality, however, cameras monitor every hallway, common area, treatment room, and patient room. Patients' movements are tracked and recorded via electronic ankle bracelets, which can also deliver a debilitating electric shock, if necessary. Visitors also receive electronic ID badges that track their movements and limit their access to approved areas of the hospital.

In the high-risk wing, patients are normally restricted to their rooms, unless they are undergoing treatment. Two-way speakers and observation windows permit doctors to monitor their patients without exposing themselves to unnecessary risk. The most violent patients spend their days in a sluggish, pharmaceutically-induced haze for their protection and the protection of their fellow inmates. In case of an incident, the doors to each wing and patient room can be locked-down and powerful sedatives can be released into the air via the ventilation system.

Patients undergo medically prescribed treatments as determined on a case-by-case basis. For most patients, this is routine: group therapy, art therapy, exercise, etc. For difficult cases, the doctors at Arkham are willing to experiment with untested or unorthodox treatments and medications. Unlike their predecessors at the former Arkham State Lunatic Hospital, they seem to get results.

Of course, if everyone brought to the hospital were admitted, Arkham would quickly become overpopulated again. So long as a patient can function reasonably well, has a good grasp of reality (the doctors at Arkham have been treating Academy students for a long time, and they understand that reality can be some-

"Your attention, please! Here is an announcement for all staff psychologists and psychiatrists. Those wishing to study the conversion of Number Six on the hospital's closed-circuit television, please report immediately to the hospital commons."

The Prisoner, "A Change of Mind"

what subjective), and they do not pose a threat to themselves or others, patients are treated on an out-patient basis (the "Visiting Arkham Sanitarium" box has been checked on the Mental Anguish track as opposed to a Sanity score of zero). These patients are given an opportunity to rest (under observation) followed by a one-on-one consultation with an attending physician. This process usually takes a few hours, after which they are sent home (or back to the Academy) with a new or "adjusted" prescription.

Not all the remnants of the old Arkham have been wiped away, however. Behind a sagging, chain-link fence, the old wing of the hospital waits for renovation or demolishment. Abandoned since the closure of the hospital in the '70s, the old wing housed the most violent patients and was the site of inhumane experiments. Over the years, the building has decayed, but lost little of its sinister and haunting presence. Most of the windows are broken and the dark hallways are covered in graffiti. Anything of value has long since been removed; only garbage and broken medical equipment have been left behind. Some of the ghoulish, experimental machines remain, although some are not as old and neglected as you might hope.

Guided tours of the old wing are offered every October. Some patrons claim to have heard ghostly voices whispering, "*Help me*."

Weather

Folks in New England can be heard to say: "If you don't like the weather, wait a couple of minutes and it'll change." In Arkham, it usually changes for the worse.

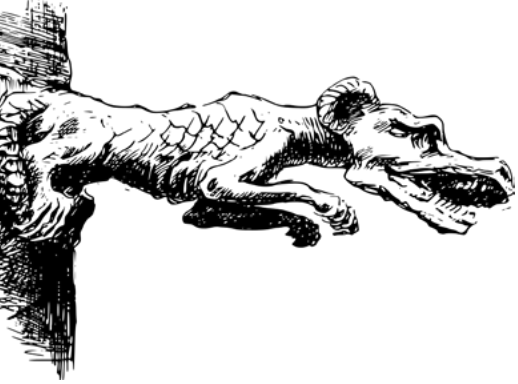
The Miskatonic Valley acts as a funnel for severe weather systems, channeling them right into Arkham. Thick fog, particularly overnight and in the early morning, unseasonably chilly winds blowing down off the mountains and strong thunderstorms add to the gloomy atmosphere of the New England college town. The locals just consider it to be part of the town's "rustic charm."

Unfortunately for the students at the Academy, classes are rarely cancelled due to weather. In the event of a particularly bad storm, the administration will make arrangements for the faculty to stay on campus. Even when the rest of Arkham shuts down, students will still have to trudge to class. Soaking wet and half-frozen, *Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy* students are still expected to demonstrate academic excellence.

During the winter, there are usually between 4 and 7 snowstorms, accumulating 6-12 inches of snow apiece. After a storm, students will "borrow" dining hall trays to go sledding on the many hills across the campus. Although Lake Hally never freezes, there are a few nearby ponds that are ideal for ice skating.

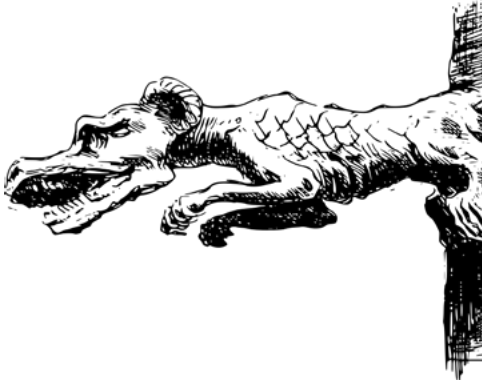
Boston Weather

- January is the coldest month with temperatures ranging from 22° to 36°F.
- The warmest month is July, with temperatures ranging from 65° to 81°F.
- Snow usually falls between December and March, but the season may begin as early as November and continue to April. The average total snowfall per year is 44 inches.
- April is the wettest month, raining nearly 50% of the time.



9

CAMPUS LIFE



Life On Campus

Christina Palmer sat on the roof of her dorm, enjoying the crisp, fall night. The clouds obscured the dim moonlight, plunging everything into blissful darkness. Christina sighed, and drew her leathery wings around her to ward off the evening chill.

Christina's wings weren't quite large enough to keep her aloft for very long - at least, not yet. But she relished the few opportunities she had to unfurl her wings and enjoy the freedom of flight, even if all she could manage was just a couple of short hops.

Unfortunately, she could only fly at night when she wouldn't be discovered. Her mother had warned her that it wouldn't go well for her if she was discovered. She'd been careful to keep her distinguishing characteristics, as she liked to think of them, hidden from her classmates. Even her roommate had no idea! Christina smiled at that. Her roommate, Kelly, was brilliant. Like, a real genius. If Christina could fool her, she could keep her secret safe from anyone.

Keeping her secret wasn't easy, though. Christina had notes excusing her from gym, took showers before or after the other girls, strapped her wings down and wore heavy overcoats in public, and went to bed after her roommate had gone to sleep or when she wasn't in the room. Heck, her parents even got some doctor to claim she had severe taphophobia, so she'd get a room on the second floor!

Her clandestine, evening flights were the only time she ever felt free. But once, she almost blew it.

One night, she flew back to the room too early, and Kelly hadn't quite fallen asleep yet. She managed to open the window, but the beating of her wings made too much noise and woke Kelly up. Christina managed to throw on her bathrobe and jump into bed before Kelly saw her wings.

No matter how many times Christina swore that she never heard anything, Kelly was convinced that a bat had flown into their room.

The next day, Kelly built some kind of machine to "repel chiroptera." Whatever else it was supposed to do, the machine stank, and it made a horrible noise that drilled right through Christina's skull. It didn't seem to bother Kelly, but Christina was able to convince her to get rid of the thing.

Christina brushed her hair away from her ears, exposing their sharply pointed tips, and listened carefully. Kelly had finally finished typing on her computer. If she followed her usual routine, she'd be putting it away and heading to the bathroom to get ready for bed.

Christina sighed again and stretched her wings. She'd only have a few minutes to fly down, open the window, slip inside their room, and dive under the covers while Kelly was in the bathroom.

It looked like she was done with flying practice for tonight. That sucked. Soon it would be too cold to practice.

With that, Christina stretched her wings and dropped off the side of the roof.

"The most 'worldly' society I have ever lived in is that of schoolboys: most worldly in the cruelty and arrogance of the strong, the toadyism and mutual treachery of the weak, and the unqualified snobbery of both. Nothing was so base that the school proletariat would not do it, or suffer it, to win the favour of the school aristocracy: hardly any injustice too bad for the aristocracy to practice."

— C. S. Lewis, "On Stories and Other Essays"

Aside from the occasional terrifying incident, life on campus is the same as at any other boarding school. The school routine is usually boring, the instructors are merciless, you must remember to avoid the bully, and your sports team sucks.

The Student Body

The school houses about 800 students, representing years One through Six (grades 7-12).

Each year has between 120 and 140 students, divided among 6-7 classes.

Wealth

Many of the students come from upper-middle class families, although financial support is available for promising students from lower-income families.

Lower-Income (Family Grade "D"): 3%

Average (Family Grade "C"): 28%

Above Average (Family Grade "B"): 48%

Wealthy (Family Grade "A"): 19%

Obscenely Wealthy (Family Grade FACULTY): 2%

Supernatural Students

The administration probably has very little idea how many of each type of student attends the Academy, but that'll depend upon how your GM runs the game. While most of the students attending the Academy have no supernatural or occult abilities, all students must learn Occult Studies as part of the basic curriculum.

Normal Students: 70%

Students with Disturbing Abilities: 30%

So Why Don't the Supernatural Students Rule the School?

With all the power at their disposal, you'd think the supernatural students would run the place, right? Actually, no. There are several factors to consider:

- Such abuses of power would certainly be noticed by the faculty and the administration, who would take immediate steps to rectify the situation, up to and including expulsion, before it tarnished the reputation of the Academy and attracted outside attention.
- Considering the history of Arkham and the superstitious nature of some of the locals, no one is eager for a repeat of the Arkham Witch Trials.
- Disturbing Skills are useful, but a punch to the gut is usually a lot faster than a gizmo or a spell, and there's no chance of backlash.
- No one wants to be ostracized as "weird," or "strange," even at *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy.* It's hard being on the outside, looking in. School can be a lonely place if you're not careful.

Holidays and Academic Schedule

- Last week of August: Students arrive
- First week of September: First Term Classes begin
- September 21st: Mabon (Autumn Equinox)
- First week of October: Homecoming Weekend
- October 31st: Samhain
- November 30th: Festival of the Crossroads
- First week of December: Study Week
- Second week of December: Final exams begin
- December 21st through first week of January: Winter Solstice Break
- Second week of January: Second Term Classes begin
- February 1st: Imbolc
- March 15th: Founder's Day
- March 21st: Oestra (Vernal Equinox)
- April 30th: Beltane
- Third weekend in May: Inter-Dorm Decathlon
- First week of June: Study Week
- Second week of June: Final exams begin
- June 21st: Midsummer
- Third week of June: Dorm cleaning begins
- Last week of June: Graduation/ Students leave campus
- July 1st: Campus closes for summer

Classes

Daily Schedule

A student's day begins early:

7:00 – Wake up

7:45 – 8:20 – Breakfast

8:30 – 9:00 – Religious Ceremonies/Study Period

9:10 – 10:00 – Class 1/2*

10:10 – 11:00 – Class 3/4*

11:10 – 12:00 – Class 5/6*

12:10 – 1:00 – Lunch

1:10 – 2:00 – Clubs & Activities

2:10 – 3:00 – Class 7/8*

3:10 – 4:00 – Supplementary Class 1/2*

4:10 – 5:00 – Study Period & Faculty Office Hours

5:10 – 6:30 – Clubs & Activities & Sports

6:40 – 7:30 – Dinner

7:40 – 9:30 – Study Period

9:30 – 10:30 – Free time

10:30 – Lights out

**The standard curriculum is eight classes, so the classes meet on alternating days. The first class will meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, while the second class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays. After Winter Solstice Break, the schedule switches for the second half of the year.*

Classes are almost never cancelled. There are no snow days and a substitute instructor will be assigned to administer a class if a professor is feeling ill.

Weekend Schedule

8:30 – Wake up

9:15 – 10:00 – Breakfast

10:10 – 11:00 – Religious Ceremonies/ Study Period

11:10 – 1:00 – Clubs & Activities/Free Time

1:10 – 2:00 – Lunch

2:10 – 6:30 – Clubs & Activities/Team Sports/Free Time/Visit Friends at Arkham Sanitarium* (Sunday)

6:40 – 7:30 – Dinner

7:40 – 9:00 – Events & Concerts**/Free Time

9:00 – 11:00 – Free Time (Friday and Saturday. 9:00 – 10:30pm on Sunday)

11:00 – Lights out (Friday and Saturday. 10:30pm on Sunday)

**This activity is optional. A shuttle bus departs from the campus every hour.*

***The Academy sometimes hosts special events on Friday and Saturday nights, such as movie nights, plays, or concerts by one of the groups on campus.*

The weekends aren't all fun and freedom for Academy students. Students are expected to stay current in their studies. Successful Academy students set aside time on the weekend to complete their assignments and study for tests.

Curriculum

The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy offers a robust and rigorous academic curriculum for students. The core curriculum covers eight subject areas, with additional courses designed to meet the interests and expertise of gifted students.

The scope and topics covered by a course will depend upon the expertise of the instructor. The faculty is hired based upon their proficiencies, so a history professor with a specialty in 18th century France will focus their instruction within this sphere. In general, the core subjects required of all students include:

- Art (Courses focus on art history, music history, painting, sculpture, or specific musical instruments)
- English (Courses focus on a specific period or nationality. Topics include literature and poetry)
- Foreign Language (Courses focus on a specific language, such as Latin, Hebrew, or Arabic)
- Gym (sports vary by season, but include baseball, softball, football, gymnastics, soccer, and track)
- History (Courses focus on a specific period or nationality, such as World War I or Medieval England)
- Math (Courses focus on algebra, geometry, and calculus)
- Occult Sciences (Topics include basic occult implements, philosophies, magical theories, and history)
- Science (Courses focus on a specific science, such as biology, physics, chemistry, or astronomy)

Students with a specific academic interest (specialization) will be assigned supplementary classes to address their interest or expand their exposure to the subject. A student interested in English may be assigned to a creative writing class, while a student with an interest in technology may find themselves in an

introductory programming or engineering class. Students that have demonstrated an aptitude will be enrolled in accelerated courses, which cover such advanced and esoteric subjects as particle physics, ancient Sumerian, or differential topology.

> "I was asked to memorize what I did not understand; and, my memory being so good, it refused to be insulted in that manner."
>
> *Aleister Crowley*

In the Classroom

Students are usually called by their surname, so a student should expect a professor or administrator to address them as Mr./Miss and their last name. Likewise, students are expected to call professors by their honorific (professor, doctor, etc.) and their surname. When in doubt, use "professor" for an instructor.

Classes accommodate 20 students or so and are taught in the Socratic Method. In this teaching style, the instructor randomly calls on a student to answer a question. The student must stand and provide the correct answer. The instructor will ask the student follow-up questions until they either mess-up or they have satisfied the instructor that they have mastered the material, at which point the student is permitted to sit once again.

Students who do not perform to a level commensurate with Academy expectations will be assigned a student tutor (or tutors) until their grades improve.

Advanced classes, or classes specializing in more esoteric subjects, are usually much smaller, with 5-10 students per class. These classes are taught conference style, with the students and the professor arranged around a large table to foster professor-student dialogue and ensure that every student participates in the discussion.

These classes can be extremely competitive, and wise students know better than to leave their class notes unattended, particularly near final exams.

Sixth Year students must complete a Senior Project, a year-long project that reflects the accumulated knowledge and experience they've masters during their stay at the Academy. This project is completed in conjunction with a faculty advisor.

Dress Code

As noted in the school rules, students must follow the prescribed dress code Monday through Friday. Some students supplement their uniforms with dorm lapel pins (for the desirable dorms, anyway). Students must also wear their hair in a modest cut and style. Outlandish hairstyles and colors are not allowed (except at sports events).

Boys

- Pale green long-sleeved shirt (shirt tails must be tucked-in)
- Black bow tie
- Black blazer with green trim and

school emblem on the left breast

- (Optional) crew-neck green and black sweater in the winter
- Black slacks with a belt or suspenders
- Black shoes and socks
- Hats may not be worn indoors
- Nothing yellow may be worn at any time

Girls

- Pale green long-sleeved blouse (shirt tails must be tucked-in)
- (Optional) green and black sweater in the winter
- Black blazer with green trim and school emblem on the left breast
- (Optional) green and black scarf
- Ankle-length Black skirt
- Black or green socks or tights
- Black shoes
- Nothing yellow may be worn at any time

Gym Clothes

- Pale green school t-shirt
- Black shorts (or black sweatpants in cold weather)
- Sneakers

Some of the female students have eschewed the traditional long skirt in favor of black slacks. While this might result in a raised eyebrow from some of the more hidebound staff and faculty, students are unlikely to receive Demerits for being out of uniform, unless the faculty member is out to get them.

Contacting The Outside World

Internet and Connectivity

The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy has its own intranet available to students free-of-charge. The intranet includes a closed, school-only email system, the school calendar, announcements, regulations, and class materials, such as reading material and assignments.

Students who do not own a personal computer are free to request time on one of the computers in the computer lab. Access to the web is severely restricted and email is electronically monitored, although a technically apt student should be able to bypass the security.

The intranet turns off at 11:00pm and switches on again at 6:30am.

Phones

Students are not permitted to have cell phones on campus. If a student needs to make an off-campus call, they will need to use the phone in their dorm lounge. The dorm phones require calling cards (good for 1+1d6 calls before the time runs out), which are sold in the Student Bookstore. The phones have a nasty habit of dropping calls when the school, faculty or administration is criticized, leading most students to believe the phones have been tapped.

Student Life

Students are strongly encouraged to join sports teams and clubs. To reserve a club room and obtain funding from the Academy, clubs and sports teams must petition the student council for a charter. To maintain their charter, these teams and clubs must maintain a membership of at least five members in good standing at the Academy. There are also several unsanctioned clubs on campus.

Clubs

Chartered clubs meet in Lord Dunsany Hall, except for the Student Council, which meets in Faust, and the Fencing Club, which meets in the gym.

The Student Council (A.K.A. The Illuminati)

At *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*, the Student Council holds quite a bit of power. The council represents the students' interests (or as the council interprets them) when interacting with the administration. These duties breakdown as follows:

- The council speaks for the student body in monthly meetings with the administration.
- The council addresses issues of cultural and academic welfare facing the Academy and provides recommendations to the administration. This includes the sugges-

Optional: Alienating Your Family

Your Family Skill Grade can drop if you don't call or write home once per week. It takes one class period (about an hour) to write a letter. Phones are faster, of course, but there may be a line and you have to use a calling card.

tion of new school regulations as well as providing suitable student tutors to students whose grades have fallen below acceptable limits. As a result, the council members are aware of everyone whose grades have fallen to an unacceptable level.

- The council reviews petitions from student organizations seeking an Academy charter and reviews the charters of underperforming student organizations. The council also oversees the Academy's social calendar and works with the Black and Green Society to manage the implementation of student events, such as dances and holidays.
- The council acts as a Board of Review, adjudicating student disputes. In this role, the Student Council also hears appeals from students who feel that they have unjustly received Demerits. The awarding faculty member has the right to state their case against the student, however.

Representatives are elected from each class year in mid-September, with the representatives from the Fifth and Sixth years assuming the roles of Vice President and President, respectively. Two additional seats on the council are held by assigned members of the faculty and the administration. Competition for a seat on the Student Council is cutthroat. Wealthier students have been known hire campaign managers and private detectives to dig up dirt on the competition.

Once elected, student representatives must keep a "B" average or better and be a "citizen in good standing of *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*." Representatives who fall below the minimum average grade or who earn too many Demerits will be subject to a review by the council and may be removed from office.

Some conspiracy-minded students believe that, over the years, the Student Council has acquired far more power than they let on. These students whisper about occult rituals conducted in subterranean chambers, rituals in which the members of the Student Council barter their souls for success and power. The fact that no one has ever actually witnessed one of these rituals or found evidence to prove that these chambers exist has done nothing to dispel the rumors.

Student Council meetings are held weekly on the second floor of Faust.

> "True terror is to wake up one morning and discover that your high school class is running the country."
>
> *Kurt Vonnegut*

The Illuminator

The Illuminator is the weekly newspaper. In addition to publishing faculty profiles, dining hall menus, Student Council proceedings, alumni announcements, and original comic strips (the most popular being *Tortie*, a comic about a stray cat who believes he is the king of the school and his sarcastic raven sidekick), the paper does an excellent job of reporting the news, events, and scandals across campus. If something interesting or peculiar is happening, *The Illuminator* is on the case. The newspaper can be

a reliable source of clues, but similarly, when an investigation goes sideways, and your character does something to make them look stupid, *The Illuminator* will be there, as well.

Aside from one faculty advisor, the staff is entirely comprised of student reporters, photographers, and editors. Despite pressure from certain members of the faculty and the Student Council, The Illuminator retains a remarkable degree of journalistic integrity for a student paper. Attempts to censure the newspaper have rarely been successful, although the newspaper's operating budget always seems to be in jeopardy.

A digital copy of the paper is emailed to alumni and donors.

Back and Green Society

The Black and Green Society is one of the oldest organizations on campus, and dedicated to promoting school spirit. Members of the society assist with new student orientation, assigning student mentors, organizing pep rallies, fundraisers, and the weekly blood drive. It should not come as a surprise that many members of the Black and Green Society are also on the Cheerleading Squad.

Student Whispers

Student Whispers is a student literary magazine, featuring short stories and poetry. Most of the content tends to be a little unsettling; and there is a correlation between being published in the magazine and being confined to Arkham Sanitarium. A couple of past contributors have gone on to become successful horror authors. The magazine is printed once each semester.

The Aca-Yellers

The "Yellers" are an acapella singing group and have won several regional championships. Students must audition to join.

The Academy Choir

They mostly do Gregorian chants, but they're pretty good. Students must audition to join.

The A/V Club

Back in the day, the members of the Audio-Visual Club cataloged the school's library of educational movies and filmstrips and maintained the projectors. Since then, digital streaming and DVD players have mostly rendered the club obsolete. However, with a film archive that spans several decades, the A/V Club is the only source for recordings of school events, and the equipment to view them. Club members mostly hang out in the club room, watching DVDs and getting into trouble.

The Computer Club

Students get together to build computers, develop software, and talk about the latest innovations. A couple of the club members have started their own secret cult (*Followers of the Righteous Binary Information Network, or F.O.R.B.I.N.*) and have begun worshipping the school's servers. This club is in close competition with the robotics club to be the first to develop artificial intelligence.

Equestrian Club

The equestrian club is sort of an exclusive club. Anyone can join, but they must provide their own horse and foot the bill for feed and stabling.

The Hoofers

The Hoofers are a dance ensemble, featuring tap, jazz, ballet, contemporary and hip-hop. Prior to the Oestra Ball, they offer free formal dance lessons to students.

So Your Character Wants to Go on a Date?

So, you've got your eye on someone, do you? The easiest way to catch someone's attention is with a high Grade in Appeal. Appeal isn't only about physical appearance, it's also about your personal charm and how you carry yourself. Alternatively, you can try impressing the other person in an area of common interest, be it music, sports, or quantum physics. Ultimately, it's all about the chemistry - sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. As any Mad Scientist will tell you, it's not a precise science.

Now, where do you go on your date? First dates can be stressful, and it generally doesn't take long for rumors of a budding, new relationship to start flying. By design, there's a not a lot of places where two students can go on a date. The school kinda frowns on this sort of thing. The woods can be dangerous, particularly at night, and the common rooms usually have a bunch of other kids in them. It's secluded behind the colosseum, but that's become a popular make-out spot among the older students. Some kids like the library, because it's nice and quiet. However, Professor Alhazred will toss you out of the library if he catches you doing anything other than schoolwork, research, or reading. Students must be super-sneaky. If only there were some hidden passages somewhere on campus...

Inter-faith Association

According to the charter, the goal of this organization is to "celebrate the holy and joyous nature of all religions and spread understanding." However, the Interfaith Association has been gradually losing its focus on traditionally accepted religions and has slowly become a recruiting ground for mythos worshippers.

Jogging Club

(Unchartered) Members of this club get up at oh-my-God-o'clock for a brisk jog around the campus before breakfast. Most students, sleep deprived as they are, think the joggers are insane.

Junior Survivalists Club

(Unchartered) These students believe the world is going to end, and they plan to be ready. A couple of times each semester, these students sneak off into Billington's Wood for a weekend of camping, survival training, and paintball. Members of the club are expected to fend for themselves in the wilderness and navigate back to campus if they become lost. Sure, it's against school rules, but what's a couple of Demerits when you're preparing for the apocalypse?

The Lovecraft Academy Secret Society

(Unchartered) LASS was started as a joke several years ago in response to the number of actual secret and exclusive organizations present on campus. Since they claim to be the only "recognized secret society" at the Academy (though still unchartered), LASS members take great delight in exposing the secret meetings of other, "less recognized" organizations. While many students find their antics amusing, more than one cultist or secret society member would like to wring their necks. A few of the more

paranoid students have put forth the theory that LASS is the cover for a huge conspiracy or secret society, and their antics are a carefully constructed cover to throw off suspicion. "Secret Member of LASS" T-shirts are available for $20.

The Raven Watching Club

Just like it sounds, the members of this club study the ravens around campus. The members record the ravens' behavior, diet, favorite perches, etc., and have become adept at telling them apart.

The Robotics Club

The robotics club split-off from the computer club a few years ago and the rivalry between these clubs is intense. As a result, students cannot be members of both clubs, they must choose one and swear allegiance. They've built a couple of small battle robots for competition against the team at Miskatonic University and have done a respectable job holding their own against the college students. The club's current goal is to develop artificial intelligence, but they are having trouble getting access to the school's servers.

Society for the Creative Accumulation of Money

(Unchartered) S.C.A.M. is an exclusive investment club. To become a member, students must pass a rigorous portfolio review and provide at least $5,000 in seed money to the club each semester. Meetings are in King Hall, limiting access to many students.

Servitor Rights Society

(Unchartered) These students believe that Servitors are an intelligent species and to confine them within a containment circle is inhumane. They sometimes organize picket lines outside of the Peterson Building.

Other Clubs

- Anime Club
- Astronomy Club
- Band (flutes and drums are a popular choice)
- Book Club
- Chess Club
- Culinary Club
- Debate Team
- Drama Club
- Fencing Club
- Math Team
- Photography and EVP Club
- Psychology Club
- Science Olympiad
- Yearbook Staff
- Yoga Club

Sports Teams

Teams are organized by dorm, since few other schools, other than Innsmouth High School (their team mascot is "The Kraken," so you can imagine what their cheer is), Dunwich Prep, and Kingsport Boys' Academy are willing to visit the Academy. There is very little communication or cooperation with nearby Arkham High School, although many budding investigators and monster hunters get their start at Arkham High.

Most of the Academy's teams aren't very good, with the exceptions of the swim team and the track team. During the appropriate season, practices are held during the week at 5:10pm and games are held on the weekends.

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Crew
- Field hockey
- Football
- Gymnastics
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swim
- Track and Field
- Tennis

Most sports teams meet in the arena (for outdoor sports) or Williamson Gymnasium (for indoor sports). The softball and baseball teams meet at the baseball diamond and the tennis team meets at the tennis courts. The swim team meets at Lake Hally and the crew team busses to and from the nearby Miskatonic River for practice.

The "Innsmouth Look"

Many folks that hail from Innsmouth share some common physical characteristics, which tend to be more pronounced in older residents. Innsmouth used to be a secluded fishing village, so this may have been the result of a limited gene pool.

- Narrow head
- Bulging eyes
- Flat nose
- Receding chin
- Thinning & receding hairline
- Wide, thick lips

School Traditions And Rituals

Any private school, particularly one as old as *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*, will develop a unique culture, complete with rituals and ceremonies. Some of the more commonly-known traditions are listed below, although clubs and teams may have their own unique, mysterious, and potentially hazardous traditions, as well. The administration usually ignores these traditions, so long as the members are not seriously harmed, and no school rules are broken.

The Lantern Ceremony

The evening before the first day of class, each dorm supervisor and prefect hands out dark, hooded cloaks (when was the last time these things were washed?) and

small lanterns to all students. Nowadays, they use LED lanterns, which have cut down on accidents tremendously. When the sun has gone down, the students silently march from their dorms and surround the main building, swearing their loyalty to the Academy.

The Freshman Flush

During the first month of school, random First Year students are kidnapped from their dorms in the middle of the night and flung into Lake Hally for a brisk swim. Although the student council has ruled that "flushed" First Year students must be provided towels, students have gotten creative with the definition of "towel."

Homecoming Weekend

Held during the first week of October, the Homecoming Committee welcomes alumni back to the Academy for a weekend of sports, events, and catching-up with old acquaintances and favorite professors. It is a common sight to see alumni wandering about the campus, reminiscing about their school days.

The highlight of the weekend is a pep rally and an intra-dorm football game. In hopes of impressing wealthy and distinguished alumni, many of the clubs take part in Homecoming Weekend, as well. For example, the band and choir traditionally hold a concert, The Photography Club hosts a themed exhibit, and the Culinary Club assists the dining hall staff in preparing a special, gourmet dinner.

Barker Haunted House

In the early 1990s, a few Barker residents with a bit too much time on their hands decided that it would be fun to decorate the dorm like a haunted house for Samhain. Since then, it has become a tradition, with each display more elaborate than the last. Because of some of the more enthusiastic productions, the Student Council has ruled the attendees may not be touched or harmed, and Servitors cannot be used in the production.

Stoker Bonfire

On Samhain, the residents of Stoker silently gather around a large bonfire located near the dorm. Although the bonfire is supposed to "ward off evil spirits," some residents believe that the bonfire is meant to be a symbolic reminder of the Arkham Witch trials.

Crossroads Ball

During the Festival of the Crossroads, the school hosts a semi-formal masked ball. By tradition, students do not invite dates to the ball. Instead, students mingle anonymously. Theoretically, the idea was to encourage students to mix with students in different social circles. In practice, the ball has been the basis of many unexpected relationships, and the end of just as many friendships.

College Education Fair

During the early part of November, the Academy invites representatives from prestigious colleges and universities to attend an education fair for the benefit of the Fifth Year students (Juniors). Recruiters, admissions people, and (rarely) faculty gather in Lord Dunsany Hall to woo the best and brightest at the Academy to their institutions. Miskatonic University is always in attendance, usually

with members of the Occult Sciences and Metaphysics departments.

During this time, students are under the strictest orders: No supernatural shenanigans. That means no magic. No weird explosions. No rifts in time and space. Servitors are to be confined to their containment circles. Students who break this rule are dealt with harshly.

Rubbing the Gargoyles' Heads

On either side of the steps to the main building is a stone gargoyle. Prior to exams, it has become a tradition to rub the heads of the gargoyles for luck when entering or exiting the building. Over the decades, they have been worn very smooth.

Founder's Day

Founder's Day is celebrated on March 15th with a banquet in McGregor Dining Hall. The traditional meal consists of New England roast turkey, seasoned dressing, sausages, a variety of baked beans, cranberry sauce, and peas and onions. Desserts include a variety of cheeses and mince and fruit pies.

Oestra Formal

A formal ball is held the weekend of Oestra, and students are expected to present themselves like proper ladies and gentlemen. Formal gowns and tuxedoes are required. The Hoofers, the Academy dance club, usually offers dance lessons a week or two before the dance.

Name Carving

In their second semester, many First Year students will attempt to carve their names in the stone wall that surrounds the campus, with the most daring students carving their names near the front gate. Over the years, this has evolved into a contest between the First Year students, the administration, and campus security. If a student is caught in the act, they receive Demerits for damaging school property. But if the student manages to carve their name undetected, the incident is overlooked. It is considered bad form to try again once you've been caught.

Inter-Dorm Decathlon

As mentioned previously, all the dorms and houses compete in a variety of athletic events every spring. Events include baseball, basketball, swimming, several track and field events, a race through the hedge maze, Servitor matches, and a campus-wide scavenger hunt. The house that wins the decathlon receives a trophy and extended curfew, dinner with the Headmaster at Ashton Manor, and off campus weekend passes for First through Fourth Year students (who are normally not permitted to leave campus).

Mentor Ring Ceremony

Each spring, during the Beltane celebration, the First Year students present their former mentors with their school rings.

Dorm Cleaning

At the end of the spring semester, the residents of each dormitory and house are required to mop, scrub, polish, and fix their residences until they "represent each student's pride in the Academy." It's grueling, back-breaking work designed to "build character." However, the dorm with the highest Grade Point Average is exempt

from the work. Instead, that drudgery falls to the dorm with the lowest Grade Point Average, who must clean both their own dorm and the winner's. Residents are none too happy with students who bring down their dorm's GPA.

Graduation

Graduation is a somber affair, attended by the entire school, the faculty, administration, and the family members of the graduates. Students march down the aisle in their black caps and gowns, make speeches about their experiences and the future, and remember classmates who couldn't make the grade, disappeared without a trace, or found a new home at Arkham Sanitarium.

Graduates are expected to join the Alumni Association, and contribute their time, skill, and most of all, money, to support the school.

Dictionary Of School Slang

Bang = Fail.

Barbie = A girl who is pretty and rich.

Big Brother/Big Sister = Student Mentor

Blacks and Greens = School uniform.

Boarder = A student.

Bunk = Bed.

Bunkie = Roommate.

Cackle House = Barker Hall

Cardy = Running or Track.

Castle = King Hall.

Charlie = A cult member, usually the leader. Also, someone who is very persuasive.

Chill Pill = Sedative.

Chow Hall = Dining hall.

Civvies = Civilian clothes.

Clone = Someone who just got back from the Infirmary or Arkham Sanatorium and is still a little drugged.

Creature Feature = A group of students with Disturbing Skills.

Critter = a Servitor.

Disgust Hall = -Gust Hall.

Dodger = Thief or pickpocket

Dog Catcher = A Summoner.

Dungeon = Stoker Hall.

Duty Dog = Dorm prefect.

Earle = Someone who thinks they're better than they are.

Frank = Mad Scientist.

Glinda = A female Witch.

Going AWOL = Trying to run away from the Academy.

Going Tokyo = A Servitor running amok.

Hane = Someone who is not popular.

Hoodie = A cult member.

Igor = A normal person who hangs out with Mad Scientists.

Ken = A boy who is handsome and rich.

Mark = grade in a class, test, or project (i.e., a passing mark on a test).

Master = Male house supervisor, a term of respect.

Matron = Female house supervisor, a term of respect.

Head Med = Medication prescribed by a psychiatrist.

Ministry = The administration.

Minty = Cool!

Monkey = A normal person who hangs out with Witches.

Multi = Civilian clothes.

Monday = Mundane, someone without Disturbing Abilities.

Nemo = Dreamer.

On the Bell = Late (referring to the clock tower chimes).

Paid Up = Wealthy, as in "the country club dues are paid up."

Pet = A "teacher's pet." A student who has a lot of Merit Points.

Plebe = Underclassman. Any student other than a Sixth Year.

Prep = Homework.

Punny = Punishment or detention.

Rider = A student who is receiving financial aid to attend the Academy.

Senior = a Sixth Year student.

Slinger = A Witch.

Slums = -Gust Hall.

Squid = An unattractive person.

Squid Head = A worshipper of Cthulhu.

The (Bouncy) House = Arkham Sanatorium.

Toasting = Bullying.

Townie = A resident of Arkham.

Trog = A Hybrid.

Trustie = A rich student.

Tuck Shop = Student bookstore.

Unders = First and Second Year students

Vanilla = A term used by students with Disturbing Skills to describe normal humans.

Yard = The area around the clock tower.

Year = "Grade" in the traditional U.S. system. First Year is 7th grade, Second Year is 8th grade, and so on until Sixth Year.

YOLO = You Only Live Once. Usually said before a student does something exceedingly stupid.

School Rules

Failure to follow the school rules will result in disciplinary action. These rules are updated as necessary and the most recent iteration is posted on the Academy Intranet.

- Students are expected to act in a courteous and respectful manner to fellow students, faculty, and staff.
- Attacking a member of the staff or faculty will result in immediate expulsion.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and forthright manner at all times. Plagiarism, gambling for money, theft, and unauthorized removal of

Academy materials, including library books, are forbidden.

- Students are expected to adhere to the dress code Monday through Friday. Casual clothes that are clean, mended, and well-tailored may be worn on the weekends. Hats may not be worn indoors.
- Hair must be of a cut and style approved by the administration.
- Students must be showered and properly dressed before attending breakfast.
- Students are expected to keep their dorm rooms clean.
- Smoking is not permitted on campus.
- Pets, other than service animals and Servitors, are not permitted on campus.
- Students are not permitted to keep firearms.
- Students are not permitted to keep cell phones.
- Visitors must first obtain a pass from the Faust Administration Building. Students are expected to report trespassers immediately.
- With parent/guardian approval, Sixth Year students (12th graders) are allowed off-campus during the week (in addition to scheduled trips to Arkham or sanctioned sporting events).
- With parent/guardian approval, Fifth and Sixth Year students (11th and 12th graders) are allowed off-campus on the weekends (in addition to scheduled trips to Arkham or sanctioned sporting events).
- First through Fourth Year students are only permitted off-campus for class trips or sanctioned sporting events.
- Curfew is 9:00pm for all students when Aldebaran is visible in the sky.
- First and Second Year students (grades 7th and 8th) are not permitted to know things humanity was not meant to know.
- Students and faculty are forbidden from displaying the Yellow Sign.
- Fishing is not permitted in Lake Hally.
- Students may not swim in Lake Hally without a buddy.
- Students are not permitted to harm the stray cats on campus.
- The names of certain entities may not be spoken, whispered, shouted, or sung under any circumstances.
- Access to the restricted section of the library requires written approval from Faust Administration Building and the Head Librarian.
- No restricted books may be removed from the library for any reason.
- Students must clean up after themselves when using the school labs.
- Scooters, roller skates, bikes, and skateboards may not be ridden or used in any campus building.
- Running, shouting and unnecessary noises are not allowed indoors. Music, where permitted, must be played quietly.
- All students must attend all meals. A student may not skip breakfast to sleep late.
- No instructor may use students as experimental subjects without a signed consent form.
- Human sacrifice is punishable by expulsion.
- Do not summon anything you can't put back.
- Dorm supervisors may have additional rules.

PART

3

HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT

PREPARATORY ACADEMY

ADMINISTRATION

96 SHEETS • 5 x 5 QUAD

10⅛ x 7⅞ • 53-110

"Of Herbert West, who was my friend in college and in after life, I can speak only with extreme terror. This terror is not due altogether to the sinister manner of his recent disappearance, but was engendered by the whole nature of his life-work, and first gained its acute form more than seventeen years ago, when we were in the third year of our course at the Miskatonic University Medical School in Arkham. While he was with me, the wonder and diabolism of his experiments fascinated me utterly, and I was his closest companion. Now that he is gone and the spell is broken, the actual fear is greater. Memories and possibilities are ever more hideous than realities."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Herbert West, Reanimator"

10

FOR THE GAMEMASTER

Interpreting The Rules and Running The Game

So, you've decided to be the GM? If this is the first time you've run (gamemastered) a role-playing game, it may seem a little daunting. As the GM, you've got four jobs to do:

1. **Make sure everyone has fun.** This includes you! This is a game, and if you and your friends are not having fun, then it might not be the right game for you. Life's too short to play games you don't like.
2. **Craft the story.** As the GM, you'll come up with the adventures and mysteries for your players to solve. Don't worry, we gotcha covered. Most of the Gamemaster section is devoted to helping you create mystery stories.

3. **Control the Gamemaster Characters (GMCs).** Without GMCs, the PCs would be standing all alone in an empty campus, not another living thing around. No people. No animals. Only the sound of the wind. While this makes for a good one-off adventure or an episode of the *Twilight Zone*, it doesn't work as well, long-term, in a roleplaying game. As the GM, you have your own list of characters, GMCs, who will populate your stories. GMCs include students, faculty, animals, and even monsters! These characters, unlike the PCs, are under your control. You'll give them skills, personalities, and motivations as needed. Later in this section, you'll find some sample skill sets for different GMC and creatures that might pop-up in your game.

4. **Adjudicate the rules.** Most of the time, you'll be required to set difficulty levels for Skill Tests. Don't waste a lot of time looking up rules. There are a lot of rules in this book, but the rules are just a guideline for telling your story and the story of your players' characters. When in doubt, check the Master Skill Chart for an appropriate Target Number and move on.

Grade	Modifier	Description	Difficulty Level	Target #
ELDER	6+3d6	Cosmic	When Hell Freezes Over	31
INHUMAN	6+2d6	Legendary	Superhuman	25
MASTER	6+1d6	One of the Best in the World	Heroic	19
FACULTY	+6	Expert/ Substantial Skill/Powerful	Virtually Impossible/ Up the Creek	13
A	+4	Exceptional/ Skilled/ Talented	Difficult	11
B	+2	Good/ Proficient/ Initiated	Tricky	9
C	0	Average	Typical	7
D	-2	Sub-Par/ Novice	Easy	5
F	-4	Incompetent/ Sucky	Could do it Blindfolded	3
WASHOUT	N/A	Completely Incapable	Automatic	0

If this is your first time running a role-playing game, here are some tips that might make the experience a little easier:

- **The players' characters are the heroes of the story.** No matter how cool and interesting your GMCs are, they shouldn't steal the spotlight from the players. If your GMCs always come riding in to save the day, the PCs become insignificant and your players will become frustrated.
- **Don't force your story on the characters**. This is sometimes called "railroading" because the PCs' actions and options are limited, pawns in the GM's strict narrative. Gaming is a shared experience and it's the PCs' story, too. You can counsel them if they're about to do something reckless (and they will), but don't take away their freedom of choice.
- **Be flexible with the story**. If the players have come up with a clever way to short-circuit your carefully constructed plot, let them. Don't punish them for being creative. Likewise, if your players are getting frustrated or having trouble following your plot, give them some more clues or modify your plot.
- **Don't hinge your entire story on the PCs finding a clue or passing a Skill Test.** Because they might not. If the only way into the enemy's lair is to pass some ancient and complicated puzzle, you had better be prepared for the fact that the PCs won't figure it out. Then what? Make contingency plans to steer the players back on track. Maybe the library has something about Enochian locks, or perhaps there's a secret entrance that even their nemesis doesn't know about.
- **Be impartial and be fair**. It's not a competition! While your GMCs might be opposed to the players, you shouldn't be. Treat your players equally and with respect.
- **Be inclusive**. Some people are better roleplayers than others. Don't let a lack of experience, skill, or shyness keep someone from having an enjoyable time. Shift the spotlight around so all the characters are important, and everyone has their time to shine.
- **Highlight the PCs' strengths...** The players will build most characters to conform to an image or concept, such as a jock, nerd, cheerleader, etc. As such, there will be skills that each of these characters will specialize in, possibly to the expense of other, potentially valuable skills. A stereotypical jock will be good at sports, but probably not at academic subjects. The nerd might be the exact opposite. Give these characters plenty of opportunities to demonstrate their prowess. A character designed to be good at social interaction should have many opportunities to fast-talk, con, and persuade their way out of sticky situations. Some skills, like Art, may require some dedicated roleplaying time for the character to demonstrate their talents to an appreciative audience.
- **...and expose their weaknesses.** On the other hand, characters

shouldn't get a free ride when they lack necessary skills. No one can be good at everything. Use these situations to create dramatic roleplaying opportunities. For example, a jock may be good at sports and combat, with plenty of admirers on campus, but if they're as dumb as a box of rocks, they're going to have a challenging time passing exams. That could mean Demerits, detention, missed games, and worse. *Does the jock solicit help from the nerdy character? Do they appeal to a professor's love of sports to cut them some slack? Do they ask someone with telepathic powers to help them cheat?*

- **The rules are a guideline. Don't let them interfere with a good story.** As we mentioned before, the rules are a guideline designed to support your story. If they get in the way, change or ignore them. Just don't be arbitrary or unfair. If the high priest of the Cult of Cthulhu is performing a ritual to summon an elder entity, it may not make sense to follow the Witchcraft rules, as written. They weren't designed to handle the summoning of god-like creatures! On the other hand, a spell of that caliber has got to be difficult to perform and have a lot of requirements, otherwise some idiot would've done it already.
- **You don't always need to roll!** Don't slow down the game by checking Target Numbers and rolling dice when the results are either unimportant or there's very little chance of failure. If the players' Skill Grades are high enough, assume they'll be successful and move on.
- **You WILL make mistakes.** If this happens, don't replay the scene. You can always fix the mistake next time it comes up or change the story to fit the error. *Accidentally give a monster a power it shouldn't have?* This specimen is a mutant. If you make a mistake and accidentally hose your players, you can either make it up to them later or give them a couple of Merit Points as compensation.
- **Your players WILL mess up rolls.** It's going to happen. Don't let a single bad roll on an insignificant Skill Test ruin an enjoyable story. If you need to, you can fudge the results. That's right, I'm telling you that the GM can cheat . . . a bit. Think about that famous sci-fi movie (which shall remain nameless for copyright reasons) about a group of rebels who are trying to destroy a giant, planet-busting space station. How much would it have sucked if we get all the way to the end of the movie, and the lone starfighter misses the crucial shot and gets blown-up, instead? Total anti-climax. I don't know about you, but I'd have been pretty cheesed. Your players are likely to feel the same way. *Did a minor flunky do enough damage to K.O. the player in a single hit, eliminating their chances of stopping the main bad guy before his plans reach fruition?* Reduce the damage just enough to give the character the opportunity to take an action or run away. Just don't do it too often or be too obvious about it. On the other hand...

- **Actions have consequences.** When your players fail an important Skill Test or do something stupid, it should come back to haunt them, maybe not right away, but eventually. For example, if a reporter films the characters being careless with their powers, they're going to have to do something about it before it hits the 6:00 news or the administration will be quite displeased.
- **Make up new rules as you need them.** This book can't possibly cover every eventuality. Use the rules presented here as a guideline to make up your own. Just let your players know when you make changes so everyone is on the same page.
- **Never allow the weird and frightening to become mundane.** If you over-play the weirdness, your players will get used to it and it will lose its shock value. Don't hit them with everything at once and you'll help preserve the atmosphere of mystery and horror.
- **Don't gross-out your players.** Yeah, it's technically a horror game, but you should try to be sensitive to your players. Give as much detail as you need to get your point across.
- **Your players can be a great source of ideas.** While your players are puzzling through your mystery, they might float all kinds of wild theories, including a couple of winners. Keep notes and let them inspire you. Heck, if they accidentally come up with a better direction for the current story, feel free to run with it; just make sure you don't contradict any previously established facts.
- **Create GMCs ahead of time.** There are a lot of people on campus: students, faculty, etc. Come up with a list of names and important skills. The earlier you can introduce them into the story, the better. This will save time when you suddenly need a GMC and will avoid "new character syndrome", in which a new character suddenly appears, and the PCs start guessing whether they're the next bad guy or the next victim. The PCs are more likely to be shocked when the next victim is someone they've known for a while, even if they did know the victim very well.
- **Take good notes.** This will help you to keep track of important clues and important characters. Forgetting to include an important clue could make it impossible for your players to complete the story! Some GMs even assign this role to one of the players.

Vocabulary

"When I read Lovecraft, my prose became luxurious and Byzantine."

Stephen King, "The 'Craft' of Writing Horror Stories"

Lovecraft and his contemporary writers loved words. Lovecraft could turn a simple statement of fact into a verbose, compound sentence filled with metaphors. If you really want to maintain the "Lovecraftian" flavor in your game, we have a few recommendations:

Keep a thesaurus close-at-hand. Lovecraft really loved words, and he avoided stale words and phrases. Never say "gross" or "ugly" when you can proffer "nauseous" or "loathsome," instead.

Use compound sentences. Connect statements with "which," "and," "or," "that," "but," and "to." Draw-out your description until you've bludgeoned it witless and your intent possesses the clarity of the purest crystal.

Learn to love metaphors. Lovecraft was a master of comparative descriptions, and if you seek to emulate his style, you'll need to study the esoteric art of the metaphor, as well.

For example, never say "*she was sad*" when you can state that "*she had plummeted into an abyss of melancholia that enshrouded and impaired her every meditation and action, and from which, no mean entreaty could re-ignite her eclipsed spirit*." With a little practice, you'll soon learn to rival the literary styles of Lovecraft and his contemporaries.

Crafting a Story

HPL Prep was intended to be played as a semi-humorous game about the adventures of schoolchildren as they unravel ancient mysteries and conspiracies in a dark and frightening school. By default, blatant signs of the supernatural are uncommon (aside from the students' Disturbing Abilities), but this will depend, of course, on the kind of game you and your players want to play. Not all the children at the Academy have Disturbing Abilities; only about 30% of the students are so gifted. In some ways, it's a little like the cartoon mysteries we all watched when we were kids: A bunch of kids run around some spooky place trying to solve a "supernatural" mystery. *Have you ever noticed that nobody bats an eye at the fact that they've got a talking dog while everyone is losing their minds over some old farmer in a rubber mask?* Anyway, you aren't going to see a Migo flitting about campus, either. That's not to say that one or more of the Fungi from Yuggoth don't have an interest or presence somewhere on the campus. The Migo are very smart and they'll keep their plans hidden from anyone who might interfere.

"The appeal of the spectrally macabre is generally narrow because it demands from the reader a certain degree of imagination and a capacity for detachment from everyday life."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Supernatural Horror in Literature"

Every mystery and conspiracy can be broken down into *Who? What? Where? When?* And *Why?* If you can answer these questions, you've got the skeleton of your story!

Who? This is your antagonist, or 'bad guy'. Generally, the person who the players want to stop or catch. It's important to note that not all antagonists are evil! Some are misguided or not in control of their own actions. In some stories, the antagonist might be an organization, such as a cult or a terrorist group. Your antagonist might not be human at all! Aliens or supernatural creatures can also be antagonists, although their motivations will be different than those of a human being.

What? This is your plot. What is the antagonist planning to achieve? What will happen if they are successful? Your antagonist's goals should align with their motives. An alien isn't likely to be interested in material wealth and a well-meaning scientist probably doesn't want to destroy the world.

Where? and ***When?*** These two questions fill-in the details of your plot, dictating where and when important scenes will take place. You need to decide when the bad guy plans to make his or her move (if they haven't done so already), where the PCs will find clues, and when those clues will appear. Once you have the "When's" and "Where's" figured out, you can link them together to create a timeline of the antagonist's activities. This will help you plot-out each stage of the antagonist's plan (at least, until the characters become involved and start messing everything up).

Why? This is the antagonist's motive. They've got a reason why they're going through all this, and it's usually proportional to the scope of the plot. The bigger the plot, the stronger their motive. Remember to tie your "Why?" and "What?" together. A student who dreams of becoming the next Student Council President probably isn't going to release a monster to destroy the campus. There wouldn't be anything left to be the president of! Instead, blackmail or Disturbing Abilities might be more appropriate.

"In the end, my girlfriend became my arch enemy, my arch enemy became my best friend, and my best friend became my girlfriend. But, hey, it's high school."

Sky High

To start with, you'll need to create a mystery or conspiracy – the "*What?*" of your story – for your players to unravel. Common supernatural plots include:

- Someone is trying to summon something
- Someone is trying to unlock or open something
- Someone is trying to solve a riddle or prove something
- Someone is trying to escape or avoid something
- Someone is trying to hide or disguise something
- Someone is trying to prevent something from happening
- Someone is trying to become more powerful
- Someone is trying to find or acquire something
- Someone is trying to expand their knowledge
- Someone is trying to destroy something or someone else

How about a new, horror-themed trading card game that opens a dimensional rift when specific cards are played in combination? Second-string athletes who suddenly develop significant talent . . . along with some strange physical or mental traits? What if the choir's new chant is part of an ancient ritual?

Of course, your plots don't have to center on the supernatural. There are plenty of "mundane" mysteries around the campus for the players to solve, including blackmail, theft, cheating, and vandalism.

Once you've decided on the plot of your mystery, you'll need to decide on your "*Who?*" How does the antagonist figure into the Academy? Are they a visiting professor? The parent of a fellow student? An alum? The kid down the hall? It's best if your antagonist is a pre-established character, to throw-off suspicion.

Build your antagonist like you would any important GMC. Give the antagonist skills, an interesting background, and an appropriate motivation. Your enemy's motivation will also dictate how they deal with the PCs. If the PCs interfere with their plans, for example, the antagonist may send them a warning. If the antagonist is relatively benevolent, it may be a friendly warning. If they are crazy or power-hungry, they might send some thugs or summoned minions to deliver an ultimatum, instead.

Sample antagonists (select one or two options):

- Fellow student
- Parent
- Alumni
- Current or former professor
- Archeologist or historian
- Scientist
- Someone at Miskatonic University
- Conspiracy nut
- Former patient at Arkham Sanitarium
- Government agent/Government agency
- Terrorist
- Occultist
- Cultist or priest/Secret society or cult
- Witch/Mad Scientist/Hybrid/Summoner/dreamer

- Undead
- Possessed or being controlled
- Alien or monster
- Artificially-created device or magical relic (obviously, these won't have motivations or motives)

Now you need to connect your antagonist to the plot. Ask yourself *"Why would my conspirators go through all this trouble?"* No one acts without a reason, even if that reason only makes sense to them. Tie this reason to the conspirators' motivations. A character who wants to help humanity isn't likely to summon the Great Old Ones to Earth, unless they (mistakenly) believed that these entities would somehow usher in a golden age for humanity (they won't). If you get stuck, here are some suggestions:

- Love
- Rivalry
- Megalomania/insanity
- The quest for knowledge
- The desire for power
- To save to world
- To end the world
- To fix a mistake
- They don't have a choice
- They are being manipulated by someone or something else
- Vengeance

That last one – vengeance – is a common theme. Some baddies don't handle disappointment well. A recurring antagonist in a story arc, or one of their

Kids vs. Adults

Most of the foes that the PCs will encounter will be adults, and as adults, they may believe that kids are easily tricked, aren't very knowledgeable, and are weak or helpless. This can work to the PC's advantage.

Disturbing Abilities aside, the PCs' youth can be one of their most valuable tools for solving mysteries and staying alive. Overconfident or egotistical antagonists won't consider a couple of kids to be a potential threat to their carefully crafted plans, and as a result, may be somewhat careless around them. Incriminating evidence may be left in a professor's open briefcase, clandestine meetings may occur where young ears might hear, etc. This can give the PCs a bit of freedom to nose around and gather information while the bad guy focuses their energy elsewhere. Once the PC's investigations reach the point where they draw the villain's notice, their adversary may still consider them to be a nuisance rather than a credible threat to their plans. As a result, the villain may try to throw them off the trail or imprison them instead of seeking a more permanent solution. However, once the PCs have demonstrated their skill and determination, all bets are off.

On the other hand, an adversary that is familiar with the PCs' skills and abilities can pose a serious threat to the PCs, particularly if the villain is someone they trust.

followers, may shift their focus to the PCs or another adversary until their plans can move forward, unhindered.

Once you have the "*Who?,*" "*What?,*" and "*Why?*" nailed-down, try to include a link to at least one of your PC's motivations. Not only will it give the player an incentive to solve the mystery, but it could provide an interesting twist. If a character is searching for their lost sister, how would they react if they discovered their sister was helping their nemesis? *Is she helping them willingly? Why did she keep her disappearance a secret?* Questions like these can create great roleplaying opportunities and might become the seed for a continuing adventure!

Next, drop some well-placed clues for the PCs to find. Unless the antagonist is setting red herrings to trip-up the PCs, clues are usually unintended side-effects of the antagonist's plans or a careless error on the part of the antagonist or their minions.

There are all kinds of clues, such as a bloody handprint, eyewitnesses, shadowy figures moving around at night, odd behaviors in a classmate, a rubber monster mask and gloves, a scrap of paper with notes pertaining to a magical ritual, a dropped locker-room key, supernatural phenomena, an overheard rumor, or cult trappings. Regardless of how they appear, clues are breadcrumbs for your PCs, answering the questions we posed before: *"Who?," "What?," "Where?," "When?" and "Why?"* As the PCs discover and decipher the clues, the mystery will gradually be revealed. Just like putting a jigsaw puzzle together, the more clues they find, the clearer the picture will become, until, at last, the PCs are led to the Big Finale.

Clues should provide the PCs with at least one of the following:

- The next scene in the adventure
- The antagonist's identity or some background information about the antagonist
- Someone affiliated with the antagonist or the antagonist's plot
- The antagonist's goal or motivation
- The ability to remove someone or something from suspicion

> Some clues might even tie-in with one of the PC's motivations – giving them a hint to help them resolve their own motivation and earn XPs!

Be sure to give your players enough clues to keep the action moving forward and make sure they're not too confusing. Keep your clues simple and you won't have to worry about your players running off in the wrong direction. If your players get stuck, it's probably time for another clue or more information about a clue they already found. The school library is a great resource for esoteric information. Remember: What's crystal-clear to you may not be obvious to your players.

All the clues should point the PCs to the Big Finale. This is where the mystery comes together, and the PCs confront the antagonist and their evil plan. This may require the PCs to split their efforts, with some confronting the bad guy and the others trying to stop the bad guy's plans from coming to fruition. Obviously, this is also the hardest part of the mystery, and the greater the stakes, the harder it will be. Two Migo scouts trying to abscond with a professor's brain are less of a threat than an entire cult of heavily-armed Deep

One Hybrids trying to summon Cthulhu. Set the Big Finale in a suitable location and hit the PCs with maniacal cultists, a monster or two, magic spells, environmental hazards, etc. The Big Finale should be exciting and dangerous, but the PCs should be able to overcome their adversaries with some teamwork, preparation, a little luck, and some supernatural firepower of their own.

Try to include a means to stop the antagonist that doesn't require the use of Disturbing Abilities, especially if any of your PCs is a Monday (you know, the character class without any special powers). All the players should be able to contribute more-or-less equally to the success of the story. Unless their characters have been incapacitated, no one should be left standing on the sidelines during the Big Finale.

As you and your players become more experienced, you might want to try intertwining multiple mundane and supernatural mysteries. Nothing happens in a vacuum; there are many people on campus and they all have their own plots and plans, even if they don't involve the end of the world. While following the leads on one mystery, the players may trip over a clue or overhear a rumor leading to a second one. These mysteries could be closely linked or completely unrelated. This can get complicated if you include too many mysteries or conspiracies, however, and your players are likely to get confused and frustrated.

Example: While breaking into the dorm room of a suspected cult member who is trying to channel the power of the Dark Mother, the players find a notebook indicating that the current student body president may have fixed the election. Are the two related? Has the cult infiltrated the entire student government? Is the student body president involved with the cult and using their influence to gain power over their enemies?

"No new horror can be more terrible than the daily torture of the commonplace."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Ex Oblivione"

Life Goes On

The game runs best when you mix supernatural elements and plots with mundane life. Don't neglect one for the other! Just like in real life, students are expected to attend classes and keep their grades up. Beyond this, students do what they always do: Hang out with friends, form cliques, play sports, etc. Now, combine the typical school experience with a sense of fear and impending doom. Add in sinister professors, strange figures in the dark, disappearances, unearthly noises, or inhuman runes. You don't have to rely on the supernatural to create a sense of foreboding, however. Pop quizzes and common bullies can be a major source of dread for your students, too!

Story Arcs

Most adventures are of the one-and-done variety. The PCs solve the mystery, deal with any fallout, and move on to the next adventure. Story arcs, on the other hand, are interconnected stories which

lead to a big confrontation at the end. The stakes and challenges are much higher – apocalyptic, end of the world kind of stuff – but so are the experience rewards. These types of stories usually involve powerful, recurring antagonists with extremely ambitious plans. As the PCs solve the individual stories that make up the arc, they grow ever closer to the antagonist, learn their weaknesses, and discover their ultimate goal. It's like a season-long story arc on a TV show. The "Big Bad" is introduced early in the season, presenting a continuing threat to the heroes. Throughout the season, the heroes take part in adventures and missions that bring them ever-closer to the antagonist and their ultimate goal, which may not be revealed until much later. Sometimes the heroes win, sometimes they lose, but they're always moving toward the season finale: The culmination of the heroes' efforts and the final confrontation with the "Big Bad". It may also be the heroes' final opportunity to foil the antagonist's plans.

Story arcs also provide an excellent opportunity for the PCs to discover hidden truths about themselves, their families, and their background through the intertwining of their motivations with the story arc. Story arcs take time to complete; a single-story arc could take an entire semester or an entire year for the PCs to complete and may create an ongoing "theme" for the school year.

Telling Different Kinds of Stories

Not every game has to have a mystery. In fact, you might prefer to make mysteries the exception, rather than the norm. The campus is a very big place, and there are plenty of ways for the PCs to get into trouble!

Skill Quest. As we mentioned before, a character must do something special to advance a skill to FACULTY. Depending upon the skill, they may have to quest for a special teacher, lost knowledge, or a super-rare component. This can (and probably should) be a story unto itself!

Adventure! Left to their own devices, the PCs will probably want to go exploring: spelunking in a cave, investigating the tunnels under the main building, wandering through Billington's Wood, a service tunnel door left invitingly open, etc. What will they find? *Lost artifacts? Forgotten traps? Monsters?* Let their curiosity get the better of them.

The Big Event. Some campus events are so significant that they deserve special attention, like the Oestra Formal Dance. PCs will need to find a date, get tuxedos or dresses, and maybe even learn how to dance. And that's before they even get to the dance! Stories like these often require a lot of roleplaying and allow the PCs to use skills that might not see a lot of use in other stories.

School Days. Not every day has to be an adventure. Sometimes, an average day can be an adventure unto itself. Instead of monsters and magic, let the PCs worry about homework, quizzes, ruthless professors, and bullies. Give the PCs an opportunity to pursue their own goals and resolve their motivations.

"Each weird story—to speak more particularly of the horror type—seems to involve five definite elements: (a) some basic, underlying horror or abnormality—condition, entity, etc.—, (b) the general effects or bearings of the horror, (c) the mode of manifestation—object embodying the horror and phenomena observed—, (d) the types of fear-reaction pertaining to the horror, and (e) the specific effects of the horror in relation to the given set of conditions."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Notes on Writing Weird Fiction"

Putting Horror Into Your Stories

HPL Prep is still a horror game, more-or-less, so you'll need to incorporate elements of horror into your game.

Suspense

First off, although you can scare the PCs with a simple failed Terror test, you probably won't scare your players, so don't be disappointed. Why? Well, audio-visual stimuli are an important element of fear, and roleplaying games don't have those components. Everything is narrated, and the scenes only appear in the players' imaginations. And it's hard to surprise the players when they have to roll for initiative.

Start with suspense, instead.

How are you supposed to do that? Well, fear of the unknown was a common theme in Lovecraft's stories. Whether the source of fear is an alien entity, a series of disappearances, a supernatural phenomenon, or an ax-wielding lunatic, you can create suspense by making the players worry "*What happened?*," "*Will it happen again?*," "*When will it happen?*," and "*Will it happen to my character?*" Ignorance can be a powerful tool. As you give your players clues as to what's going down, don't lay it all out for them. Let them be shocked and surprised when they figure it out.

Time is another mechanism for generating suspense. The pressure on the PCs will grow as the clock ticks away towards a deadline. Stopping a ritual spell or escaping a deathtrap in the main building are obvious examples, but what if their nemesis is a visiting professor and the PCs must catch him before he leaves the school with a valuable artifact?

Let your players know the stakes and make sure they realize that the consequences of their actions could impact their characters, valued GMCs, or both.

"The suspense is terrible . . . I hope it'll last."

Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory

Creepy Locations

Most horror stories don't take place in brightly-lit shopping malls full of people (OK, I can think of one right off the bat, but zombies don't count as people). By the time a monster decides to crash the local mall, the people who are hunting it are usually past the "what is it?" stage and are now looking for a means to destroy it.

Although your stories should not ignore the mundane world, when detailing locations, try to create a division between the sunlit world of school, study, and relative safety and the nighttime world of the supernatural and the unknown. A cemetery may not be so foreboding under the noonday sun and an old building may be occupied during the day, but both locations would assume an entirely different aspect at night.

Choose locations that not only advance the plot but add a suitably spooky atmosphere, such as:

- A dark forest
- An abandoned building
  - An old house
  - A cemetery
- A shadowy cave
- A maintenance tunnel filled with rusty steam pipes
- A dusty basement filled with old boxes

Horror Tropes

Create a feeling of dread by accessorizing your supernatural scenes with unsettling details. When adding to the narrative, don't settle for visual details and neglect your PC's other senses. Is there an odd smell in the air? Is it unusually warm or cold? Use these details to create a fully-immersive experience:

- Darkness
- Thunderstorms and flickering lights

- A mundane object that causes an odd reaction (nausea, dizziness, blurry vision, etc.)
- A smear of blood
- All the natural sounds suddenly cease (birds, wind, etc.)
- An eclipse
- A swarm of spiders, flies, or rats
- Cats or ravens that seem to follow the PCs and just stare at them
- Cryptic message scrawled on the wall
- Discordant music (as though played from a warped album)
- Electronics that turn on by themselves, even when unplugged
- Feeling like you're being watched or followed
- Hoarded piles in a few unused rooms (decayed dolls, bundles of old photos, painted-over antique mirrors, taxidermy, etc.)
- Inhuman footprints or handprints
- Odd lights in the night sky
- Peculiar sounds or images coming through televisions or computer screens
- Scratching in the walls
- Shared or disturbing dreams of strange places/beings
- Strange laughter in the distance
- Strange luminescence
- Strange smells (rot, blood, etc.)
- Strangers coming and going at night
- Sudden goosebumps for no reason
- Bone-chilling cold
- A cold, wet fog
- Sudden increase in the static electricity in the air
- Thick dust
- Things that seem to move but shouldn't (topiary, statues, doors)
- Trees that look like screaming souls
- Wind that sounds like whispers or moaning

"Atmosphere, not action, is the great desideratum of weird fiction. Indeed, all that a wonder story can ever be is *a vivid picture of a certain type of human mood.* The moment it tries to be anything else it becomes cheap, puerile, and unconvincing. Prime emphasis should be given to *subtle suggestion*—imperceptible hints and touches of selective associative detail which express shadings of moods and build up a vague illusion of the strange reality of the unreal."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Notes on Writing Weird Fiction"

You might find that some details can serve double-duty as clues for the players. For example, clear footprints in a dusty room are a good indication that someone's been there recently, and their position might suggest what the person was doing there. Just be careful you don't accidentally mislead the players!

Monsters

Unless you are looking to run a sillier game, use monsters sparingly. Otherwise, it lessens the shock value. Most of the time, the players will run into their agents or worshippers. You can treat your players to clues that might point to the existence of a monster, but save that monster for the final, or near-final battle.

While we're on the subject of monsters, you should understand that the creatures Lovecraft wrote about generally weren't evil, per se. Most were so ancient, alien, and incomprehensible that they were beyond our comprehension of good and evil. Lovecraft's creatures acted according to their own motivations, even if we could never understand them in a million years. It's doubtful that Cthulhu, if it were awake, would take the slightest notice of humanity or our civilization any more than we would take notice of an anthill before we crushed it underfoot. Even the monsters that could relate to humanity to one degree or another, like the Migo or the Yith, acted in accordance with their best interests. It just so happens that their best interests very rarely aligned with ours as a species.

The human worshippers of the Great Old Ones and the Outer Gods, however, are another story entirely. These people act with full knowledge of the chaos and destruction the return of the Old Ones would bring and are either deluded, bug-nuts insane, or power-hungry enough that they don't care.

Hope

Don't take away the player's hope. There's always a chance, although it may cost the PCs more than a few Mental Anguish boxes.

Rumors

Rumors about people, places, things, or events are a useful way to plant an adventure seed for your players to investigate. You can either tie these rumors to your mystery or conspiracy, or you can have them as stand-alone secondary adventures. But how do you get the players to bite? I've found that the old "carrot or stick" method works well. Either you give them a reason to investigate — the promise of rare components or a link to their motivation — or you can put them in a situation where they don't have much choice. You need to use the latter method carefully as you don't want to force the characters to act; they'll resent it. Never take away your players' freedom of choice – you have your own characters to play. The "stick" method is about consequences. If the players refuse a double-dog dare to investigate, for example, they'll look bad in front of their classmates. If someone has implicated the players in a heinous crime, it'll be up to them to clear their names. If not, they could be looking at a whole mess of Demerits. Or expulsion.

Remember that not all rumors are true. Otherwise they'd be called "facts." Some rumors will be utterly false while others will only contain a grain of truth. Let's face it, the longer that rumors make their way through the rumor mill, the

Do the Other Students Know About the Supernatural?

By default, students know little or nothing before coming to the school. The PCs have a basic understanding of their Disturbing Skill, but very little beyond that (which is why their other Disturbing Skills default to "D"). A Mad Scientist may know that mutants exist but has probably never seen one. Likewise, a Hybrid probably couldn't distinguish one Science! gizmo from another, let alone tell you how they worked. The majority of the "normal" First Years don't even know that much. These students have no idea what awaits them in the halls of the Academy.

The first day of school is a rude awakening for a lot of kids.

Witches, Mad Scientists, and Dreamers have no distinguishing physical characteristics (aside from some weird material components for their spells and gizmos), and Hybrids keep their tells well-concealed, but there's no hiding a Servitor. When the Summoners show up for orientation with their Servitors in tow, there's usually a little screaming. And fainting. As you might expect, being confronted with proof of the supernatural is a big adjustment for many students. You wonder why their parents would send them to a school like *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*?

The funny thing is, the "normal" students' parents, aren't exactly "normal," themselves. Many of the parents are alumni of the Academy and have a decent grasp of the supernatural. You'd be surprised how many of the parents are secretly worshippers of the Outer Gods, practitioners of the dark arts, students of the occult, or Hybrids. So, if they know so much, why haven't they deigned to share this key bit of information with their kids?

Because they can't be trusted with the knowledge.

The existence of magic and the supernatural is an open secret at the Academy. That's not to say that the campus is the "wild west" of the supernatural scene! The entire staff is tasked with concealing the existence of magic and the supernatural from the world while nurturing this knowledge in the students, along with the other, less important subjects expected of a modern educational institution. In a way, it's a bit like being indoctrinated into a secret society. After the students have a couple of semesters of Occult Studies under their belt, most have learned and seen enough weirdness to be pretty accepting of the existence of the supernatural and are prepared to keep the secret. However, students who pose a security risk will be firmly reminded about the dangers of exposing the world to things "man was not meant to know."

more exaggerated and outlandish they become. And when you're talking about a school that sees its share of unnatural occurrences, outlandish doesn't begin to cover it. Mix it up. You'll keep your players guessing.

Typical Academy Rumors

- The whole Academy is a giant psychological experiment funded by the government.
- The Academy is just a government program to train occult operatives.
- Headmaster Carter isn't the real headmaster. He's just the proxy for the real headmaster.
- The Headmaster's ex-wife is on the Board and she's working with Dr. Tillinghast to make the headmaster look bad, so the Board will remove him and make Dr. Tillinghast the new headmaster.
- Some of the patients who died of Typhoid are buried under Barker Hall.
- A dining services invoice lists a large order for something called "long pig."
- The researchers at Peterson are studying Servitors in the hopes of developing a new bio-weapon.
- The reason the administration hasn't fixed-up –Gust Hall is that the Academy is teetering on the brink of bankruptcy and the school can't afford it.
- Once of the professors has been acting strangely lately.
- Under the ruins in Billington's Wood there's a hidden stone staircase that descends far underground.
- Dr. West was fired from his previous post at Miskatonic for unethical experiments.
- The ubiquitous ravens around campus are highly intelligent and have been trained by the administration to keep tabs on the students.
- The cameras around the perimeter are mostly for show. The real cameras are high-tech spy models hidden all over campus.
- The dining hall adds behavior-controlling drugs to the food.
- Someone saw bubbles coming up from the mud at the bottom of the Dig.
- The reason the professors never get lost in the main building is that there's a whole network of secret passages that only the faculty and administration know about.
- No one likes the math professor, but they haven't been sacked because they have incriminating evidence about someone in the administration.
- The Supervisor of Stoker Hall comes from a lengthy line of Witch hunters and can trace her family tree all the way back to Salem.
- Headmaster Carter has some kind of strange sleep disorder and Dr. West is treating him.
- The lake is bottomless and connects to the ocean.
- The "missing" students from Barker Hall are all in Arkham Sanatorium.
- The missing students from Barker Hall were all wearing yellow wristbands in violation of school regulations.

Putting Your Adventure Together

Creating a mystery adventure for your players to solve may seem complicated, but it doesn't have to be. Below are thirteen questions that will help you flesh-out the *Who*, *What*, *Where*, *When*, and *Why* of your mystery, get you thinking about a couple of false leads and obstacles to throw in the players' way, and help you fit your adventure into the backdrop of *The Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy*.

Who is your antagonist? This could be one person, a creature, or a group working together. Make sure you reasonably (if not logically) tie your antagonist to the scheme. A mindless monster is not likely to try to steal a valuable tome on their own initiative, and the Migo aren't going to blow their cover by hatching a plan to reveal alien presences on Earth.

Who else is involved? A complex plan will require more assistance than a simple one. A high priest of Cthulhu might need the aid of her cult and a summoned monster. Not everyone who is involved in the plot must be a willing participant, however. Antagonists can blackmail or dupe people, even the players, into helping them advance their goals.

What does the antagonist want? Assuming your antagonist hasn't already succeeded, what would happen? This could be as simple as getting someone in trouble or as complex as opening a gate to let the Old Ones back into our world. Tie the goal to the antagonist's motivation. If their nemesis is acting out of love, they're not likely to intentionally harm the object of their affections. Likewise, if the antagonist is seeking vengeance, they probably won't show their rival mercy. It depends on the antagonist's personality.

Just make sure that the payoff is worth the effort. No one is going to spend millions of dollars in rare components and decades of their life doing arcane research to summon a puny, relatively common monster. Also remember that your antagonist's plans don't have to be huge; they just have to be compelling enough for the players to take notice and get involved.

> "Prepare a synopsis or scenario of events in the order of their absolute *occurrence* —not the order of their narration. Describe with enough fullness [sic] to cover all vital points and motivate all incidents planned. Details, comments, and estimates of consequences are sometimes desirable in this temporary framework."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "Notes on Writing Weird Fiction"*

How close is the antagonist to succeeding? The players might stumble across a plan in progress or a scheme that happened decades ago. Of course, if the plan happened a long time ago, it's unlikely that the antagonist is a fellow student, although a descendant of the antagonist might be charged with making sure that no one finds out.

What's stopping the antagonist? Again, assuming your antagonist hasn't already succeeded, what do they need to bring their plan to fruition? If the plan is close to succeeding, it could be as simple as waiting for the next full moon to conduct a ritual. If the plan is in the starting phases, there could a lot of moving parts to the plan, any one of which could be bollixed by the players. These obstacles can present your players with opportunities to stop the antagonist and save the day.

What loose ends are still lying around? No one's perfect, and your antagonist is probably no exception. Somewhere along the line, your antagonist or one of their minions is going to mess-up and leave a clue or series of clues for the players. *Did the players see one of the minions slip into a secret passage? Did some numbskull leave a copy of the ritual behind? Did a blackmailed agent reconsider?*

By default, your players probably won't know what the baddie has planned, at least, not fully. That can make it harder for the PCs to stop it. After all, if they know the full scope of the plan, they'll be able to figure out where and when it's going down. The clues you disseminate will help them put the puzzle together. Clues can also move your players from scene-to-scene and advance your story. If they get stuck, it might be time for another clue.

What do the players hear through the rumor mill? Either leading up to or during their investigation, the players might hear that something uncool is going on around campus. Rumors are endemic around the Academy, and they mutate with every telling. Some rumors might point the players in the right direction, while others are false and might lead them into trouble. The antagonist might start rumors of their own to throw the players off their trail or implicate them in the plot if they get too close to the truth. Stories of a more mundane nature might also be featured in the school newspaper.

Why should the PCs get involved? If you want the PCs to join the investigation, you must give them a reason to do so: a hook. Curiosity might not be enough of an impetus. Preventing the end of the world is something that everyone can get behind, but a request from a friend, the chance to resolve one of their motivations, or the need to clear their names if the PCs have been falsely accused of wrongdoing are all legitimate hooks.

How can I make this personal for the PCs? Throw your players off-balance with unexpected twists. A trusted confidant betrays them to the bad guy. A boyfriend/girlfriend is kidnapped. A close friend is killed. Just don't do it too often, just enough to shock your players, or they will see the GMCs as disposable characters and may avoid forming relationships with them.

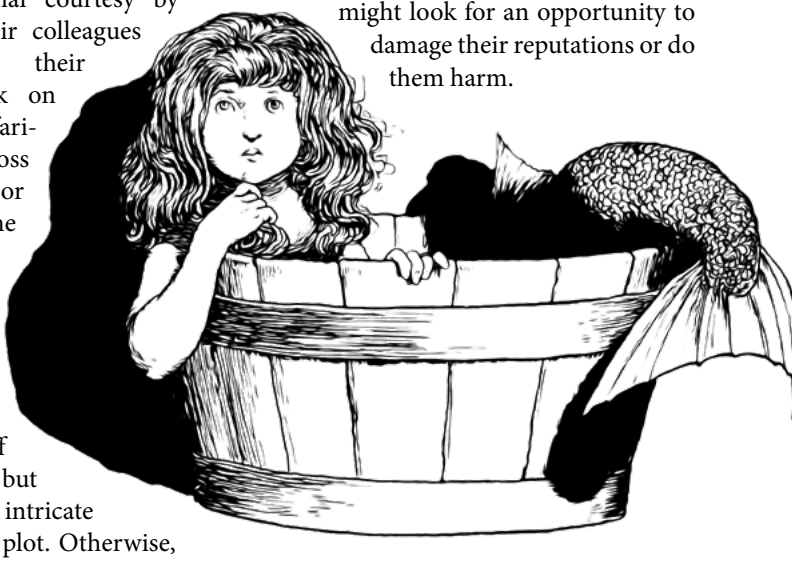
Where does the action take place? Pick interesting locations and try to tie the location of the scenes to the clues. For example, if someone is framing a member of the student council, making it appear as though they've been cheat-

ing on their exams, you might have one scene in the professor's office, located deep under the main building (where his file cabinet with the test answers was jimmied open). A second scene could take place in the gym locker room (where the test answers were conveniently discovered in the student council member's locker). In the third scene, the players might need to break into the student council chamber in the dead of night (where the meeting minutes can be scrutinized for potential suspects), and the Big Finale in the antagonist's dorm room (where they find evidence to prove the council member's innocence). Be careful that you don't over-use the same locations again and again. If knife-wielding cultists jump the players every time they enter their dorm room, they'll come to expect an ambush and will start entering with guns blazing. Finally, try to include a couple of creepy locations; it'll help maintain the atmosphere.

Are there any other mysteries or conspiracies taking place? Bad guys don't extend professional courtesy by waiting until their colleagues have finished their plans to embark on their own nefarious schemes. Toss another mystery or conspiracy into the mix, especially if the players are having too easy a time. The second mystery can be mundane, human-type stuff or supernatural, but should be less intricate than the primary plot. Otherwise, you risk confusing and frustrating your players.

What else is going on? The Academy is a big place, and there's always something on: a dance, roommate issues, mid-term exams, an athletic event, new student orientation, and so on. Life doesn't stop just because someone is about to summon an Elder God (it stops almost immediately afterwards). Mix-in a little "daily life" drama. This could create a sense of urgency, a convenient distraction, or some red herrings for the players to follow.

What fallout can the PCs expect? The PCs' actions will have an impact on Academy life. If they expose a professor as the bad guy, she may get the boot. If they broke a lot of school rules in the process, they'll probably get a bunch of Demerits, too. If things get really out-of-hand, the Student Council might post some new school rules to address the situation in the future. Additionally, some people might resent the PCs' role in the investigation and might look for an opportunity to damage their reputations or do them harm.



When you're finished you should be able to sum-up the mystery in a couple of lines, like this:

(Antagonist) plans to (Goal) at (Location/Time). If they succeed, then (Result). The only thing in their way is (Complication). To ensure they succeed, (Antagonist) has recruited (Minion/Minions) who are helping because (Motivation/Motivations). The PCs will realize that something is going on when they find (Clue/Clues) at (Location/Locations) or when they hear (Rumor) from (Rumor Source). To complicate the investigation, (Another Conspiracy/School Event) is happening at the same time.

"A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles."

Christopher Reeve

Heroes

Remember that the players' characters are the heroes of the story. That doesn't mean that you should take it easy on them. Nobody ever became a hero for doing easy things. Give your players difficult but not impossible challenges to surmount and hard choices to make. Let them earn their victories and their rewards.

By design, the player characters can't die, but they can get messed-up pretty good. Why did we make this design decision? Frankly, in most mythos-type games, life is cheap. The players generally know better than to read an ancient tome or to mess with an artifact. However, if we remove death from the equation, your players will take more chances, the way a kid might.

The bizarre entities and creatures out there are tough, smart and many are virtually indestructible. Their servants, on the other hand, are usually mortal, if not human. However, these fanatics will stop at nothing to further the goals of their deity, as they understand them, anyway. Only the player characters stand between them and their insidious goals.

Death

As we said, the player characters can't die. We never said anything about GMCs.

This game mechanic was included to allow the PCs to take foolish risks. Granted, reckless players are flirting with their characters' Sanity scores, but it's better than having to make a new character. GMCs don't have the same safety net, however. Every year, a couple of students don't make it to graduation.

Tweaking the Game

The game was written as a light-hearted horror game, but you paid for it (I hope) and you can play it any way you want. Here are a couple of ideas for tweaking the rules and setting:

- Have Insanity heal one level per week. That way, the fear of picking-up mental aberrations won't present such an obstacle to players. Heck, ditch it altogether if that suits your needs.
- Progression and Power. Depending upon your desired power level for starting characters and how quickly you want them to gain in power, you can increase or decrease the number of starting skills, the number of Experience Points awarded at the end of each session, and the cost of improving Disturbing Skills.
- Put a greater focus on the students and the instructors. Lovecraft's pantheon of gods was eternal and incomprehensible. That can be hard to fight, *so don't even try*. Put the mythos in the background or forget about it altogether. It's not like those things are even aware of the school, anyway.
- Noir Academy. A game where the players can't die doesn't necessarily lend itself to a grittier feel, but you can cut the number of injury boxes on the Physical and Mental Anguish Tracks. Alternatively, you could institute a rule that any character who takes 5 boxes of damage beyond the number needed to send them to the Infirmary is critically wounded and will be joining the "choir invisible" if help doesn't arrive within a scene. If you add a system for lingering wounds, say a Downshift on a relevant physical or mental skill for a week, even after you return from the infirmary or Arkham Sanitarium, your players will think twice before wantonly flinging their characters into certain doom. You can also make the characters accountable for their actions by rigorously enforcing Demerits.
- The Mad Mythos Party. Go for all-out parody and make the monsters more common and less frightening. How about a Migo as a biology instructor? A shy Ghoul who hangs around the dumpster behind the dining hall looking for scraps? Or a pet Shuggoth that lives under -Gust Hall? A Deep One exchange student? (I hope the student we sent has a SCUBA tank.) If you go this route, you might want to get rid of the Terror Grade for monsters or only ask the players to roll the first time they meet a member of the species.
- High School for Monsters. Dump the mythos altogether and use the core rules to create traditional monsters, like werewolves and vampires. This kind of game tends to lend itself nicely to high school drama. But with monsters.

The campus is a hazardous place. Professors can be devoured by shuggoths. Cultists can tumble into bottomless pits. Kids can get kidnapped by Migo scouts looking to fill their quota of brain canisters. If you need to permanently remove a GMC from the narrative, then do it. But remember these five things:

1. Such an event should be important and have meaning. Even if the PCs didn't know the victim personally, they should feel the impact.
2. The Academy will take this very, very seriously. An investigation is guaranteed, and if the PCs knew the character, they will be given mandatory sessions with a counselor.
3. Death should be rare. If you start killing-off GMCs willy-nilly, your GMCs will become a replaceable resource and the players may treat them as such.
4. Kill off the adults if you need to (they should've taken the PCs seriously when they came asking for help to fight a monster). Heck, nameless townies and cultists are practically monster-chow. If you must remove a student, however, a disappearance is a better choice.
5. Avoid gore. This seems counter-intuitive for a horror game, but an implied death, like a pile of bones in a monster's lair along with a familiar scrap of clothing, sends the same message without grossing-out your players.

Artifacts

Witches and Mad Scientists have access to some potent stuff, but that's nothing compared with the magical and technological artifacts that are just waiting to be unearthed. There are mystical tomes, such as the Necronomicon, that can impart dangerous and forbidden knowledge. There are relics dating back to the time of the great wars between the Elder Things, the Migo, and the Yith. Some of these artifacts have already been discovered and are gathering dust in private collections or tucked away in museum vaults. Others have found their way into the hands of madmen . . .

Now, if we made a list of artifacts for you to use in your game, you players would be like "*Oh, this is a thingamabob, it does X but causes Y.*" It kinda takes the mystery out of it. Figuring out what a relic is and what it does should be part of the story and part of the fun for you, as GM. However, we have some suggestions to get you rolling:

- A gem that can store spells and release them upon command.
- A spell that can summon one of the Outer Gods.
- A mirror that allows the user to see into different dimensions.
- A weapon that can do horrendous damage to organic life in a wide area.
- A rare element that provides a huge boost when used as a component in a gizmo.
- A crystal that allows the user to travel into the distant past.
- A stone dagger that provides an Upshift on spells that cause damage.
- A powder that counters magic spells.

Artifacts are not toys for your PCs. They should be used sparingly, as plot devices. These items are unbelievably

powerful, like the spell used to summon Yog-Sothoth to Earth in *The Dunwich Horror*, but they were never meant for human beings. The price required by these artifacts is just too great.

The more powerful the artifact, the greater the cost. And, unfortunately, most artifacts don't come with warning labels (or if they do, they were written in an incomprehensible alien language that's been worn away with the passing of eons). Even successful research may only hint at the danger an artifact poses. Most people only discover the cost (or costs) once they've tried to use the object, and by then, it's usually too late (which is why a smart antagonist will test a relic on their underlings, first). This cost imposed by an artifact can be...

- A limitation (such as a spell that can only be performed under strict conditions, or a device that can only be used once);
- A penalty (like a statuette that grants an Upshift or two to Conjuring spells but inflicts a Downshift on all other types of spells, or an amulet that allows the user to cast spells without needing material components, but attracts monsters);
- Harmful (such as an artifact that slowly drives the user insane, an ancient weapon that draws on the user's life-force, or a spell that will destroy the caster if performed incorrectly);
- A psychic phenomenon (such as horrible nightmares, an addiction to the power of the artifact, or possession by an entity connected to the artifact);
- Magical or technological Backlash, only more potent, such as permanent mutation.

And, of course, artifacts are very rare – priceless to the right person. There will always be people (and creatures) willing to do absolutely anything to acquire or destroy the object. If your players stumble across a prototype Yith weapon, you can be sure that at least one of the elder races is going to make a play for it. In short, simply possessing an artifact will put a target on your PCs' backs.

Example Artifacts

The Powder of Ibn Ghazi (Minor-Power Artifact)

Description: A fine, grey powder.

Power: Automatically makes invisible things visible. The user must throw or spray the powder in the general area of the target.

Price: The powder is not reusable, and the effect only lasts 2 turns. It does not work in the rain.

The Shining Trapezohedron (Moderate-Power Artifact)

Description: A glowing, multisided crystal.

Power: Gazing into the crystal allows the user to contact an alien entity, *The Haunter in the Dark*. The Haunter can teach the user about the true nature of the universe, increasing their Eldritch Lore or Witchcraft skills by one grade apiece.

Price: Each increase in skill reduces the user's Sanity by one. Furthermore, the Haunter is extremely evil, and requires the user to commit unspeakable acts before it deigns to share information. Additionally, the Trapezohedron does not work in brightly illuminated areas.

As we said before, artifacts should be relegated to the status of story elements, something the bad guy is trying to acquire or a tool they're using to accomplish their goals. If the baddie knows about the cost, it's a price they're willing to pay for power. It's part of what makes them bad. PCs, on the other hand, may find themselves in a situation in which they must make a moral choice whether to use a relic when fighting a greater evil.

Smart PCs will get rid of an artifact as soon as they are able; destroying it (if they can) or making certain that no one can get ahold of it ever again. This might be an adventure unto itself. As long as the cost (or costs) associated with the object balance or outweigh the benefits, your PCs will think twice before trying to claim an artifact's power for themselves.

Making Gamemaster Characters

1. As we mentioned before, most students do not have Disturbing Abilities. They're completely normal, vanilla kids (from well-to-do families that may worship the Great Old Ones). Anyway, creating GMCs is a lot easier than making a player character.
2. First off, GMCs don't have a class per-se. Most of them are ordinary Mondays without any special skills or abilities. If you want one of your GMCs to be a Witch, just give the character an appropriate Skill Grade in Witchcraft. While PCs are restricted to one set of Disturbing Abilities, GMCs are not. If you want to create a Deep One Hybrid Priestess of Dagon who has magical powers, do it. Give her a Skill Grade in Mutation and Witchcraft. Just be aware that a character with multiple Disturbing Abilities is going to be tough to beat!
3. Most First Year GMCs are going to be on par with the player characters; maybe a bit better at some things, and worse at others. Unless the GMC is important to the story or a recurring secondary character, don't waste a lot of time figuring out all their skills. Just note the most relevant skills for the purposes of your story and move on. You can always flesh them out later, if you need to.
4. Older students are going to have more or higher Skill Grades. If you were to fully stat-out these GMCs, they'd have 2-3 skill increases/year, spread over several different skills. Try to make sure that your GMCs aren't two-dimensional. If you're designing a Second Year bully, you might want to put one or two of the increases on Brawn or Smackdown and place the rest elsewhere.
5. Adults start with a default Skill Grade of "B" in physical and mental skills.
6. Damage tracks are easy. If the character is human (or humanoid), give them the same tracks as the PCs.
7. Sanity. Students are going to start at 9 or 10, minus one per Skill Grade in Eldritch Lore. Eldritch Lore usually defaults to "D" for a First Year Monday ("C" for a character with Disturbing Abilities). Assume that this skill will increase by +1 Grade for every two years of Occult Sciences study.
8. If the character is a major GMC, give them a few Merit Points (see below) and a motivation.

You might want to make up a bunch of GMCs ahead of time to populate your world. We've included some sample character templates later in this section.

Faculty

You're probably noticed that, aside from a couple of administrators, there's no faculty list. This isn't an accident and it's not because we're lazy (we are lazy, but that's not the point). The GM and their players will build the faculty roster together.

> "I don't know how you found out about the Stone, but rest assured, no one can possibly steal it, it's too well protected."
>
> *J. K. Rowling, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"*

By default, the adults at the Academy aren't particularly helpful, particularly when it comes to solving conspiracies and dealing with supernatural threats. At least, until it's too late. The PCs will find that the faculty don't believe them, are preoccupied with other projects, or their own motivations are directly opposed to the PC's investigations. Even the most cooperative faculty members may require additional proof before they become involved. When it comes to supernatural threats, the kids are on their own.

1. Design the student curriculum. Start with the core classes: English, Math, Science, Gym, History, Art, Foreign Languages, and Occult Studies.

In lieu of the listed core classes, gifted students (those who possess an "A" in an academic skill (like Education or Art) will be forced to attend advanced classes that focus on one or more of their skill Specializations. So, a student with an "A" in Education and Specializations in Chemistry and History should expect to be yanked out of the year-appropriate science and history classes that all their classmates are taking. Instead, they'll be placed into advanced chemistry and history classes with older or other gifted students. You can look online at college course listings for advanced class ideas.

Finally, take a cue from your players' skills and add a couple of supplementary classes to the schedule. These classes cover additional topic areas that haven't been addressed by the core classes. Examples include Music, Computers, and Engineering. If you prefer a sillier game, go for classes like Modern Conspiracy Theory, Introductory Genetic Engineering, and Extraterrestrial Biology, instead.

If you're feeling super-ambitious, you can also fill some of the support positions around campus, but this is up to you and your campaign plans.

You may have noticed that there are more core classes than class slots in the day. To accommodate the extra classes, the class slots are split so one class meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday while the other class meets Tuesday and Thursday.

Core Curriculum

Art, English ,Foreign Language, Gym, History, Math, Occult Sciences, Science

Supplementary Class Options

Anthropology, Astronomy, Comparative Religion, Computer Science, Dance, Drama, Engineering, Finance, Music , Psychology

Advanced Class Options

Ancient Chinese History, Applied Cryptography, Computational Astrophysics, Differential Equations, Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Medieval Literature, Neo Dadaist Art, Nuclear Engineering, Organic Chemistry, Quantum Physics

Sample Support Roles

Custodian/Groundskeeper, Guidance Counselor, Head of IT Services, Head of Security, Headmaster Carter's secretary, Student store employee

2. Decide who you would like to instruct each class. The GM and the players should work together on this stage, as a group. Pick characters from history, movies, books, or comic books. *Dr. Victor von Frankenstein for Biology?* Why not? *Why is a character from the early 1800s alive and well in a modern boarding school?* Who cares? You can ignore that fact, or you can create a mystery for the students to uncover. Just remember: The most interesting choices are also the least likely to be an asset to the players.

> "Never Explain Anything."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft*

If you find that you have multiple faculty ideas for a given class, that's perfectly OK. There are 6-7 class groupings for each grade, so the Academy will need additional instructors for some subjects as well as the advanced classes.

Most importantly, be considerate of your players and use good taste when choosing faculty. Some choices are just plain inappropriate, even for a humorous game. The goal is for everyone to have fun and not feel uncomfortable.

3. Pick a motivation for each instructor. What does the instructor want to accomplish while they're at the Academy? Some may be genuinely interested in nurturing a love of learning in young minds (yadda, yadda), but most, like Dr. Tillinghast, are conducting research or working on side projects when they aren't supposed to be teaching. Others may be involved with one of the many conspiracies on campus or trying to solve one of their own.

4. Choose an appropriate alignment for the faculty member. Some faculty members aren't going to be too fond of the players' characters and will try to oppose them at every turn. Most faculty members won't really care about the players unless they interfere with their goals, and a rare few faculty members will help the players. Make sure you have a wide range of personalities for the players to interact with.

- *Against the PCs.* The instructor dislikes the player characters for some reason, which might be tied to their goal. The instructor will go out of their way to make life difficult for them whenever possible. Expect Demerits for minor infractions.

Superheroes as Instructors

Comic-book superheroes make poor choices for instructors. Aside from the fact that their motivations tend to be predictable, such characters can easily unbalance the game and lead the players to rely on them too much. The players should be the heroes of the story, not the Gamemaster characters!

- *Against the students.* The instructor doesn't dislike the PCs per se, they just dislike the students in general. Maybe they feel that teaching is beneath them, or their time is better spent on their research. Whatever the reason, the instructor is unlikely to assist the PCs unless they are clearly assisting in the completion of the instructor's goal.
- *Neutral.* They don't have a feeling one way or another towards the student body and may have personal preferences. Some professors may play favorites among the students, demonstrating a preference for one personality type or skill set over another. The instructor is likely to aid the PCs, overtly or covertly, if they assist the instructor in completing their goal (or can be manipulated into doing so). Likewise, the instructor may turn against the PCs if they get in the way. This is the default alignment for most of the faculty.
- *Champion of the PCs.* This professor will help the PCs, even if it conflicts with their goals. This doesn't mean the professor is any more likely to believe the players when they come running with an unbelievable (but true) story, but they're much more likely to listen and offer advice. They might be willing to look the other way when the players commit some minor infraction that would earn them Demerits. This is the rarest type of faculty member, but you should try to have one or two the PCs can turn to.

5. Assign skills to the faculty. Faculty members are not created using the same rules as player characters. Instead, use your common sense, but select whichever skills you think are most appropriate at whatever Grade you think best suits the character. The average Mental and Physical skill for a member of the faculty is a "B," and unlike students, faculty members will probably have one or two skills at FACULTY Grade. A few, unique individuals might even merit a MASTER Grade in one skill. You don't need to come up with the complete stats for every faculty and staff member. Knowing a few, key skills is probably sufficient. If the character shows up a lot, you can always flesh them out as you go.

Remember – the faculty are your players' foes, obstacles, and allies. They're not there to overshadow the players. A well-rounded faculty member will be good at their area of specialty and maybe one other area, poor at one or two things and average at everything else.

Optional: Teaching Ability

Some teachers are better than others. A good teacher can simplify complex ideas, whereas a poor teacher may make them even more confusing. Assign each professor a letter grade to reflect their teaching ability. A professor with a high Skill Grade will reduce the difficulty of exams and quizzes, while a professor with a low Skill Grade will increase the difficulty – requiring the PCs to spend extra time studying and preparing to offset the penalty.

Teaching Ability	Target Number Mod.
FACULTY	2 Downshifts
A	1 Downshift
B	1 Downshift
C	No Change
D	1 Upshift

So, if the PCs were taking a quiz with a Target Number of 7, and the professor was terrible (Teaching Ability "D"), the Target Number for the quiz would Upshift to 9. On the other hand, if the professor was amazingly gifted at presenting the material (FACULTY), the difficulty would Downshift to 3!

Example: The players think it would be cool to have Rasputin, the Mad Monk, as their Occult Studies instructor. They're probably wrong, but there are worse choices. The GM decides that Rasputin really wants to pursue his occult research and not be bothered. He's not really against the players, but he's not on their side either. If they had something he needed for his research, however, he might be ruthless in his attempts to obtain it. Rasputin supposedly survived all kinds of murder attempts and torture, so the GM decides to give him a Grade of FACULTY in Brawn. As the Occult Studies professor, she also assigns a Grade of FACULTY in Witchcraft. Rasputin is going to be able to cast spells. She decides that Rasputin was a good manipulator, so she also assigns a Grade of "A" to Trash Talk. Although the GM didn't raise Rasputin's Education skill above a "B," she decides to give him the Specialization of "Russian History." With a Grade of "B," the GM could assign a second Specialization to this skill, but she decides to leave it alone for now.

The Nyarlathotep Option

Also known as "The Crawling Chaos," Nyarlathotep is a servant of Azathoth. Capable of assuming any form it wishes, Nyarlathotep has walked the Earth for many ages, influencing human progress as it suits its unknowable goals. Terrifyingly intelligent, Nyarlathotep differs from most inhuman entities in that it understands humans and human motivations very, very well.

Nyarlathotep and the headmaster have a history, so it would not be out of character for this entity to secretly assume human form and masquerade as one of the faculty to keep an eye on its old rival. If you decide to take this option, don't tell your players. Let them find out the hard way!

Nyarlathotep

Damage Boxes: Whatever you think is appropriate given its current form. The players may injure it (slightly), but they're never going to destroy it.

Terror Grade: "ELDER" (when changing shape)

Brainiac: "INHUMAN"

Languages: "ELDER"

Cool: "MASTER"

Family: "F" (it's fair to say that it's never gotten a birthday card)

All skills: "A" (it's an expert shapechanger, and can have any physical skill it wants, up to INHUMAN)

Mutation: "ELDER" (may select any Trait when changing shape)

Witchcraft: "INHUMAN"

By three methods may we learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.

Confucius

Assigning Experience Points and Advancement

As we discussed back on page XX, your players should earn 2-3 XPs per session and as many as 6-7 for completing a major story arc. You can, of course, tweak these awards for particularly easy or challenging adventures.

At this rate of advancement, it takes an average of 6 sessions to improve a Mundane Skill one Grade, and 7 or 8 to improve a Disturbing Skill one Grade. This may seem slow but remember that improving a skill by one Grade represents a big leap in knowledge and ability. For example, a character with a Skill Grade of "C" has a 58% chance of passing an average (Target #7) Skill Test. When their skill bumps up to "B," their chances increase to 83%! And with a Skill Grade of "A," the character will pass average Skill Tests 97% of the time! If you want your PCs to advance at a quicker rate, you can award more experience points, but be warned: If you award too many experience points in a brief time your PCs may become the physical and mental peers of the faculty!

Obviously, the PCs aren't going to stay First Year students forever. Eventually, they'll graduate to Second Year and get into even bigger trouble. The tipping point is up to you and the game you want to run, but I recommend graduating the PCs after they've improved 3 Mundane Skills and 1 Disturbing Skill (or 4 Mundane Skills for Mondays). This takes 65 experience points to achieve. It's true that, for the same XP cost, the character could improve 3 Disturbing Skills, neglecting their Mundane Skills, but this can backfire in a big way. As the characters progress to Second Year and beyond, the Target Numbers for tests and quizzes increase.

If you're using the optional rule for Luck Points, you may reward the player characters with a Luck Point, up to their maximum, after a major story arc.

Optional XP Awards

Optionally, you can do away with experience points altogether, and simply award a single Mundane Skill increase to each player at the conclusion of each adventure. Major adventures would merit one increase to a Disturbing Skill, instead. Depending upon the number of sessions that comprise your adventures, this method could result in faster or slower advancement than the current experience system.

11

SAMPLE GAMEMASTER CHARACTERS

Below, you'll find a list of GMC Templates, characters who are controlled by the GM, for use in your game. The templates below are average examples and are suitable for quick encounters. For major GMCs, characters who regularly show up in play and are important to your story, you should customize the templates to fit your needs. Gamemaster characters, like Faculty, are not created using the Student Creation Rules. Those are just for the players. Instead, give the character whatever skills you think are appropriate. Just don't go overboard. If your story calls for an investigator who's hard to scare and knows a little magic, then give that character a higher Grade in Cool and Witchcraft.

As we mentioned in the section on Merits and Demerits, major GMCs will have 2-3 Merit Points. Really important characters could have 5 or more Merit Points. Note that, although Merit Points are a mechanism used by the school to reward student behavior, faculty and staff characters can be assigned Merit Points, too. In this case, the points reflect a degree of luck or experience rather than a reward provided by the school. Naturally, faculty and staff cannot accrue Demerits. Most of them have tenure, anyway.

People and humanoid monsters will have damage tracks like the players'. Other creatures will have a number of damage boxes as noted in their descriptions. For a particularly hardy or scrawny specimen, feel free to add or subtract a couple of boxes from the track. Some particularly alien creatures will have modified damage tracks. These creatures, like Servitors, may not have anything resembling internal organs as we know them, and may show little sign of injury until they drop. Such creatures can be very difficult to fight since they don't have any weak spots and they don't suffer injury penalties!

Any damage done to an animal or monster beyond the "Unconscious" level will destroy it. Intelligent, social monsters like Migo and ghouls will retrieve their fallen comrades. They know better than to leave evidence lying around where the "monkeys" (people) will find it. Other creatures, like Star Spawn and Shuggoths, dissolve when destroyed, leaving the player characters looking stupid in front of the authorities while insisting "it was right there!"

Need names for GMCs?

Go on the internet and look up male and female authors, then switch around the first and last names. Make a list in advance and you'll be ready whenever the need arises!

Typical Student

All skills: Grade "C"

No Disturbing Skills (lore only), Eldritch Lore: Grade "D"

Typical Adult

All physical skills: Grade "B"

All mental skills: Grade "B"

All social skills: Grade "C"

No Disturbing Skills, Eldritch Lore: Grade "D"

Dumb Jock

Brainiac: "D"

Brawn: "B"

Phys. Ed.: "B"

All other skills: "C"

Star Athlete

Brawn: "A"

Phys. Ed.: "A"

All other skills: "C"

Bully

Brawn: "B"

Smackdown: "B"

All other skills: "C"

Popular Kid

Appeal: "A"

Cool: "B"

Trash Talk: "B"

All other skills: "C"

Science Nerd

Boffin: "B"

Brainiac: "B"

Brawn: "D"

Education (Specializations in Computers and a science): "B"

Hobby (roleplaying games): "B"

All other skills: "C"

Typical Administrator

Cool: "A"

Education (Specializations in finance, school administration, and school regulations): "A"

All other physical skills: "B"

All other mental skills: "B"

All other social skills: "C"

No Disturbing Skills (lore only)

Campus Security

Brawn: "A"

Cool: "A"

Education (military tactics, hostage negotiation): "B"

Scouts: "A"

Shoot: FACULTY

All other physical skills: "B"

All other mental skills: "B"

All other social skills: "C"

Cultist

These guys try to sneak on campus from time-to-time to steal ancient texts or use the ancient ruins for their forbidden rituals.

Sanity: 5

All physical skills: Grade "B"

All mental skills: Grade "B"

All social skills: Grade "C"

Eldritch Lore: "A" (limited only to their cult and the entity they worship)

Witchcraft: "B" (head priests only)

Investigator

Investigators are antiquarians, private investigators, academics, and other semi-knowledgeable professionals who are trying to stop the coming of the Old Ones and save the Earth. These guys usually just bug the librarians at Miskatonic, but where cultists can be found, they're usually not far behind.

Sanity: 8 (more experienced investigators have a lower sanity)

Education: "A" (Specializations depend upon the Investigator's career)

All physical skills: Grade "B"

All mental skills: Grade "B"

All social skills: Grade "C"

Eldritch Lore: "B"

Conspiracy Nut

There are a couple of these poor souls in Arkham and they occasionally make their way to the Academy. Some will try to convince anyone who's willing to listen to their theories, and some are clearly insane, but a few of them have stumbled onto genuine evidence. It's possible that the latter may have been insiders who "had to get out" and are, even now, being tailed by their former agencies.

Sanity: 6 or 7

Hobby: "A" (the latest conspiracy theories)

All physical skills: Grade "B"

All mental skills: Grade "B"

All social skills: Grade "C"

Insanity: Paranoia

Bat

No creepy, old school worth the name would be complete without the occasional bat. Fortunately, these are of the typical small, insectivorous variety, although students have reported hearing the beating of very large bat wings during the darkest part of the night. There's always a chance that a bat is carrying rabies.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Pretty Messed-Up ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track *(Mental Anguish can only be inflicted by fear or mental attacks)*

OK

Picked Up a Tic ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Paranoia: "A"

Smackdown: "F"

Flight Trait: "B"

Inhuman Senses Trait: "A" (sonar)

Bear

Billington's Wood is off-limits to students for a reason. It's big, it's easy to get lost, and there are big, hungry animals. Like bears.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ◯◯◯

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ◯◯◯

Pretty Messed-Up ◯◯◯

World of Pain ◯◯◯

Unconscious ◯◯◯

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track *(Mental Anguish can only be inflicted by fear or mental attacks)*

OK

Stunned ◯◯

In Denial ◯◯

Picked Up a Tic ◯◯

Really Freaked-Out ◯◯

Unconscious ◯◯

Destroyed

Brawn: MASTER

Cool: "B"

Paranoia: "B"

Phys. Ed.: "A"

Smackdown: "A"

Natural Weapons Trait: "A" (claws and big, nasty teeth)

"Through all this horror my cat stalked unperturbed. Once I saw him monstrously perched atop a mountain of bones, and wondered at the secrets that might lie behind his yellow eyes."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Rats in the Walls"

Cat

There are several stray cats around campus and messing around with them could earn you a couple of Demerits. They're probably drawn by the vast number of ravens.

Physical Damage Track

OK

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ◯

World of Pain ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track *(Mental Anguish can only be inflicted by fear or mental attacks)*

OK

In Denial ◯

Really Freaked-Out ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Delinquent: "A" (stealth)

Empathy: "C"

Paranoia: "B"

Phys. Ed.: "A" (agility only)

Smackdown: "D"

Natural Weapons Trait: "C" (claws)

Inhuman Senses Trait: "B" (can see in the dark)

Raven

The campus is home to many large ravens, some of which have glowing red eyes. Other than the havoc they wreak on the faculty's cars, they seem to be harmless.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Pretty Messed-Up ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track *(Mental Anguish can only be inflicted by fear or mental attacks)*

OK

Picked Up a Tic ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Delinquent: "B" (stealing small items)

Paranoia: "B"

Smackdown: "F"

Flight Trait: "B"

Snake

It's usually too cold to find snakes on campus, but you might stumble across one in the woods in late spring or early summer

Physical Damage Track

OK

Pretty Messed-Up ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track *(Mental Anguish can only be inflicted by fear or mental attacks)*

OK

Picked Up a Tic ◯

Unconscious ◯

Destroyed

Delinquent: "A" (stealth)

Paranoia: "B"

Smackdown: "B"

Special: **Venom** "B"

Wolf (or Guard Dog)

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ◯ ◯

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ◯◯◯

Pretty Messed-Up ◯◯◯

World of Pain ◯◯

Unconscious ◯◯

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track *(Mental Anguish can only be inflicted by fear or mental attacks)*

OK

In Denial ◯◯

Really Freaked-Out ◯◯

Destroyed

Stunned ◯

Picked Up a Tic ◯◯

Unconscious ◯

Brawn: "B"

Paranoia: "A"

Smackdown: "B"

Cool: "B"

Phys. Ed.: "A"

Natural Weapons Trait: "B" (teeth)

Inhuman Senses Trait: "A" (hearing and smell)

"I think their predominant colour was a greyish-green, though they had white bellies. They were mostly shiny and slippery, but the ridges of their backs were scaly. Their forms vaguely suggested the anthropoid, while their heads were the heads of fish, with prodigious bulging eyes that never closed. At the sides of their necks were palpitating gills, and their long paws were webbed. They hopped irregularly, sometimes on two legs and sometimes on four. I was somehow glad that they had no more than four limbs. Their croaking, baying voices, clearly used for articulate speech, held all the dark shades of expression which their staring faces lacked."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow over Innsmouth"

Deep One

These guys are amphibious humanoids with big, dark eyes, fins, gills, and rubbery skin. They also live a long time. Barring death by accident or violence, there might not be an upper limit to their lifespans. The Deep Ones can breed with humans, which is where Deep One Hybrids come from. As the Hybrids mature, their inhuman parentage comes to the fore and they begin their metamorphosis into a Deep One. Eventually, the lure of the deep is too great to ignore, and they leave humanity behind to join their brethren in the dark abyss. It is believed that they have a colony near the coastal town of Innsmouth, which is, coincidentally, where a lot of the swim team hails from.

Damage Tracks: same as human

Terror Grade: "B"

Appeal: "D"

Art: "A" (they make pretty jewelry!)

Phys. Ed.: "A"

All other physical skills: "B"

All other mental skills: "B"

All other social skills: "C"

Witchcraft (lore only): "B" (High priests may possess the full Witchcraft skill)

Aquatic Trait: "A"

Natural Weapons Trait: "B" (Claws)

"Objects are eight feet long all over. Six-foot, five-ridged barrel torso three and five-tenths feet central diameter, one foot end diameters. Dark gray, flexible, and infinitely tough. Seven-foot membranous wings of same color, found folded, spread out of furrows between ridges. Wing framework tubular or glandular, of lighter gray, with orifices at wing tips. Spread wings have serrated edge. Around equator, one at central apex of each of the five vertical, stave-like ridges are five systems of light gray flexible arms or tentacles found tightly folded to torso but expansible to maximum length of over three feet. Like arms of primitive crinoid. Single stalks three inches diameter branch after six inches into five substalks, each of which branches after eight inches into small, tapering tentacles or tendrils, giving each stalk a total of twenty-five."

H.P. Lovecraft, "At the Mountains of Madness"

Elder Thing

The Elder Things (obviously not the name they use for themselves) lived on Earth at the same time as the Migo and the Yith. In fact, the Elder Things warred extensively with both races. The Elder Things built fantastic cities and excelled in art and the sciences, particularly biology. They created the Shuggoths as a slave race, but that didn't work out too well for them. The Elder Things aren't malevolent per se, just unsympathetic, particularly towards "lesser" species. Even by mythos standards, the Elder Things are strange. They seem to be a cross between animal and vegetable, with ridged, barrel-shaped bodies topped by a five-pointed head, kind of like a starfish. They have several arm-like appendages that resemble giant nerve clusters with multiple branches. They are amphibious and can fly using fan-like wings that extend from their torsos. While most members of the species returned to the stars or retreated to hidden cities deep under the sea, a few of the Elder Things went into hibernation, slumbering away the millennia.

Physical Damage Track

OK
Bruised ○○○○
It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○
Pretty Messed-Up ○○○
World of Pain ○○○
Unconscious ○○○
Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK
Stunned ○○○○
In Denial ○○○○
Picked Up a Tic ○○○
Really Freaked-Out ○○○
Unconscious ○○○
Destroyed

Terror Grade: "B"
Appeal: "F"
Art: "B" (painting)
Boffin: "A"
Brainiac: FACULTY
Brawn: "B"
Cool: "A"
Education: FACULTY (biology)
Empathy: "F"
Phys. Ed.: "A" (flying)
Smackdown: "C"
Science! (Mad Scientist): FACULTY
Alien Mind Trait: "C"
Aquatic Trait: "B"
Armor Trait: "C"
Flight Trait: "B"

Flying Polyp (Whistlers in the Dark)

The Flying Polyps came to Earth hundreds of millions of years ago, and built great cities of windowless, black basalt towers. Eventually, they warred with the Yith, who forced them underground. However, the Polyps broke free and would've destroyed the entire race if the Yith hadn't sent their minds forward into the future.

The Yith consider the Polyps to be completely alien and incomprehensible, and when a ten-foot-tall cone with eyestalks and tentacles thinks you're weird, that's really saying something. The Polyps aren't made of physical matter as we know it and can pass through matter and become invisible at will. They can walk about on five, stubby legs or levitate through the air, although they do not possess any visible means of flight. They can control the winds to communicate via whistling noises or generate hurricane-force gusts.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ○○○○

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○○○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK

Stunned ○○○○○○○○

In Denial ○○○○○○○○

Unconscious ○○○○

Destroyed

Terror Grade: "A"

Cool: "A"

Paranoia: "B"

Smackdown: "B"

All other skills: "C"

Alien Mind Trait: "FACULTY"

Flight Trait: "B"

Invisibility Trait: "B"

Tempest: "A" (wind)

Wormhole: "B"

Inhuman Senses Trait: "B" (X-ray vision)

Immunity: social, hand-to-hand, and normal ranged-combat attacks

"But damn it all, it wasn't even the fiendish subject that made it such an immortal fountain - head of all panic - not that, nor the dog face with its pointed ears, bloodshot eyes, flat nose, and drooling lips. It wasn't the scaly claws nor the mould-caked body nor the half-hooved feet - none of these, though any one of them might well have driven an excitable man to madness."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Pickman's Model"

Ghoul

Ghouls are pale, hairless humanoids with vaguely canine features and bright red eyes. They can eat pretty much anything but have an appetite for carrion. Sometimes, humans slowly devolve into ghouls, and some of them still wear the clothes from their former lives. Ghouls dwell underground, on the fringes of human civilization, where they can tunnel under graveyards and other sources of food. It is believed that the deepest ghoul tunnels physically cross-over into the Dreamlands.

Damage Tracks: same as human

Appeal: "D"

Education: "D"

Scouts: "A"

All other mental skills: "B"

Consume Trait: "B"

Terror Grade: "B"

Brainiac: "C"

Delinquent: "B"

All other physical skills: "B"

All other social skills: "C"

Immunity: disease

Natural Weapons Trait: "C" (claws and fangs)

Inhuman Senses Trait: "B" (can see in the dark)

> "It was a paw, fully two feet and a half across, and equipped with formidable talons. After it came another paw, and after that a great black-furred arm to which both of the paws were attached by short forearms. Then two pink eyes shone, and the head of the awakened gug sentry, large as a barrel, wobbled into view. The eyes jutted two inches from each side, shaded by bony protuberances overgrown with coarse hairs. But the head was chiefly terrible because of the mouth. That mouth had great yellow fangs and ran from the top to the bottom of the head, opening vertically instead of horizontally."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath"*

Gug

Gugs are big, nasty subterranean giants, about thirty feet tall. Each of their arms are split into two forearms, and each of those ends in a gigantic paw, equipped with razor-sharp talons. Their gaping, yellow-fanged mouths split their enormous skulls vertically, like some kind of hairy Venus flytrap. Their beady, pink eyes are set on either side of their mouths. Gugs use giant-sized clubs as weapons (weapon Grade "A").

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ○○○○○○

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○○

World of Pain ○○○○

Unconscious ○○○○

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK

Stunned ○○○○

In Denial ○○○○

Picked Up a Tic ○○○○

Really Freaked-Out ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Destroyed

Terror Grade: "A"

Brawn: INHUMAN

Cool: "B"

Phys. Ed.: "A"

Smackdown: "A"

All other skills: "C"

Armor Trait: "C"

Natural Weapons Trait: "A"

Unnatural Strength Trait: "B"

Immunity: social attacks

Hound of Tindalos

These cunning, extra-dimensional creatures are about the size of a large wolf and stand on four legs, but that's about where any comparison to terrestrial canines ends. The Hounds hunt any creature who has travelled between dimensions, including time travel, and attack. They can manifest in our time-space through any 90-degree angle, their coming forewarned by a strange mist issuing from a corner. Very few people have encountered a Hound and lived to describe them, but the survivors describe a lean, muscular creature with razor-sharp claws and fangs, and a horrible, long tongue.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ○○○○

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○○○○○○

World of Pain ○○○

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK

In Denial ○○○○

Really Freaked-Out ○○○

Stunned ○○○○

Picked Up a Tic ○○○○○○○○

Destroyed

Terror Grade: "A"

Brawn: "B"

Cool: "A"

Phys. Ed.: "B"

Brainiac: "D"

Empathy: "D"

Paranoia: "B"

Smackdown: "A"

Natural Weapons Trait: "B"

Wormhole: "A" (through 90-degree corners)

Inhuman Senses Trait: FACULTY (sense dimensional travelers)

Immunity: fear and social attacks

Why No Vampires or Werewolves?

Most of the horrors from Lovecraft's stories are from "outside," other worlds or dimensions. His creatures were utterly alien to our understanding, biology, and physical laws. That's not to say that Lovecraft didn't have bestial monsters that were once men or creatures that feasted on the life force of terrestrial beings. Lovecraft always included an otherworldly twist on his creations. Nothing was traditional generic monster stock. In *The Lurking Fear*, Lovecraft described a family that had devolved to a bestial, cannibalistic state: "The object was nauseous; a filthy whitish gorilla thing with sharp yellow fangs and matted fur." In *The Color Out of Space*, Lovecraft introduced us to a vampire, but not an undead, tuxedo-wearing Transylvanian. Lovecraft's vampire was a kind of alien radiation that slowly drained the life energy away from anything that dwelt nearby and slowly drove them mad. So, if you want to include "classic" monsters, go for it. Just give them a mythos twist!

Migo

The Migo are an alien combination of insect, crustacean and fungus from Pluto. Although they speak telepathically to one another, they can imitate human speech, albeit with a buzzing sound. They have several secretive mining and scientific outposts on our world and have been known to use human agents to further their plans. If necessary, the Migo can also put on relatively convincing "human suits" to interact with the locals. They are fond of stealing the brains of sentient species and putting them in canisters for weird experiments, or maybe just for jollies.

Physical Damage Track

OK
Bruised ○○○○
It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○
Pretty Messed-Up ○○○
World of Pain ○○○
Unconscious ○○○
Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK
Stunned ○○○○
In Denial ○○○
Picked Up a Tic ○○○
Really Freaked-Out ○○○
Unconscious ○○○
Destroyed

Terror Grade: "B"
Appeal: "F"
Art: "B" (Disguise)
Boffin: "A"
Brainiac: FACULTY
Brawn: "B"
Cool: "A"
Education: FACULTY
Empathy: "D"
Languages: FACULTY
Paranoia: "B"
Phys. Ed. (flying): "B"
Smackdown: "B"
Science! (Mad Scientist): FACULTY
All other Disturbing Skills (lore only): "A"
Flight Trait: "B"
Natural Weapons Trait: "C"
Telepathy Trait: "A"

Immunity: vacuum

"Telepathy is their usual means of discourse, though they have rudimentary vocal organs which, after a slight operation (for surgery is an incredibly expert and every-day thing among them), can roughly duplicate the speech of such types of organism as still use speech."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Whisperer in Darkness"

Migo Brain Cylinders

The Migo can keep a brain alive almost indefinitely in one of these 12"x10" metal cylinders. Machines fit to slots on the side of the cylinder, allowing the sentience within to see, speak and hear. When these mechanisms are not attached, the brain enters a dreaming state. If you find one of these, please be respectful and don't put stickers and magnets all over it. The stats below are for a typical adult's brain.

Damage Tracks: Brains have the normal number of Mental Anguish boxes for a human being, but the cylinder can only withstand 10 boxes of damage before it is destroyed (there are no physical penalties because it can't do anything, anyway).

Terror Grade: "D"

Sanity: Maximum 8

Appeal: "D"

Art: "F"

Cool: "D"

Paranoia: "C"

All physical skills: "F"

All other mental skills: "B"

All other social skills: "C"

". . . shocking and uncouth black beings with smooth, oily, whale-like surfaces, unpleasant horns that curved inward toward each other, bat-wings whose beating made no sound, ugly prehensile paws, and barbed tails that lashed needlessly and disquietingly. And worst of all, they never spoke or laughed, and never smiled because they had no faces at all to smile with, but only a suggestive blankness where a face ought to be. All they ever did was clutch and fly and tickle; that was the way of night-gaunts."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath"

Nightgaunt

Nightgaunts are a race of silent and faceless black gargoyles that subdue unruly prey by tickling them into submission. No, I'm not kidding. Victims are then carried into the sky and dropped from a great height. Nightgaunts possess claws, horns, bat-line wings and a barbed tail. According to ancient manuscripts, Nightgaunts are native to the fabled Dreamlands, but they have been spotted on our world and, on rare occasions, passing through Slumberland. This has led some experts to speculate that the creatures may be able to fly between dimensions. Since Nightgaunts lack a mouth, it is unclear how they feed, but it has been theorized that, as denizens of the Dreamlands, they might feed on nightmares and fear.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ○○○○

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○

World of Pain ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK

Stunned ○○○○

In Denial ○○○

Picked Up a Tic ○○○

Really Freaked-Out ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Destroyed

Terror Grade: "B"

Brawn: "A"

Delinquent: "B"

Smackdown: "B" (claws, tickling)

Any skill that requires speaking: "F"

All other skills: "C"

Flight Trait: "B"

Natural Weapons Trait: "B"

Lucid Dreaming: "B" (can physically manifest in Slumberland)

Immunity: social attacks

Reanimated

You know what's worse than a slow, shambling zombie? A zombie that can run, jump, climb, and open doors. However, these creatures are not technically undead; the reanimated are still alive, in a limited capacity, and can be put down by whatever means would destroy a normal human. They possess a mindless savagery that clouds their limited memories and permits them to shrug-off grievous wounds. The reanimated cannot speak beyond animal howls and shrieks. Initial findings erroneously attributed the reanimated's behavior to a variant of the rabies virus, except that the disease did not seem to be transmittable. Later examinations discovered found a strange chemical compound saturating the central nervous systems of the reanimated. No one knows the origin of this chemical.

Damage Tracks: same as human. No Mental Anguish track

Terror Grade: "C"

Paranoia: "C"

Phys. Ed. "B"

Smackdown: "A"

All other physical skills: "C"

All other mental skills: "D"

All other social skills: "D"

Immunity: Mental Anguish

Special: Reanimated ignore wound penalties until they drop.

"I know that you and Frank were planning to disconnect me, and I'm afraid that's something I cannot allow to happen."

HAL 9000, 2001: A Space Odyssey

Robot

With so many Mad Scientists around, it's inevitable that something will escape from a lab or a piece of complex machinery will gain sentience and go on a killing spree. Robots can't feel pain, but they do suffer penalties due to diminished function. Since they don't have brains (just messed-up programming), they can't suffer Mental Anguish.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ○○○○

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○

World of Pain ○○

Unconscious ○

Destroyed

Terror Grade: "C"

Brainiac: "B"

Brawn: "B"

Medieval: "B"

Paranoia: "B"

Shoot: "B"

All other physical skills: "C"

All other mental skills: "D"

All other social skills: "D"

Armor: "C" (+1)

Inhuman Senses: "B" (infrared scanners, motion detectors, etc.)

Natural Weapons: "B" (small buzz saw or welding torch)

Special: Robots do not heal damage. They must be repaired using proper tools and supplies.

Immunity: Mental Anguish

Serpent Man

The civilization of the Serpent Men fell long before the sinking of Atlantis, but their species did not become extinct. Some Serpent Men founded a new civilization, deep underground, where they plan for the day that they will claim the surface world as theirs once again. Serpent Men are roughly humanoid, with snake-like heads and scaly skin. All possess magical ability to one degree or another, which they can employ to appear as human when necessary. Some specimens also possess hypnotic eyes and venomous fangs.

Damage Tracks: same as human

Art: "B" (Disguise)

Cool: "B"

Smackdown: "B"

All other skills: "C"

Terror Grade: "C"

Brainiac: "B"

Medieval: "B"

Trash Talk: "B"

Inhuman Senses Trait: "B" (Smell)

Witchcraft (Witch): "C" ("A" for a priest)

Mind Control Trait: "B" (hypnotic eyes; select members of the race)

Natural Weapons Trait: "B" (venomous bite; select members of the race)

> "It was a terrible, indescribable thing vaster than any subway train - a shapeless congeries of protoplasmic bubbles, faintly self-luminous, and with myriads of temporary eyes forming and un-forming as pustules of greenish light all over the tunnel-filling front that bore down upon us."
>
> *H.P. Lovecraft, "At the Mountains of Madness"*

Shuggoth

A super-gross, bus-sized ball of snot covered with eyes, mouths, and tentacles. Used as a slave race by the Elder Things, the Shuggoths rebelled against their former masters and drove them from their cities. Shuggoths are intelligent, but their vocabulary is limited to "Tekeli-Li!" whatever that means. Larger specimens will have additional damage boxes and the Unnatural Strength Trait.

Physical Damage Track

OK

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○○

World of Pain ○○○○○

Bruised ○○○○○○○○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○○○

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK

In Denial ○○○

Really Freaked-Out ○○○

Destroyed

Stunned ○○○

Picked Up a Tic ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Terror Grade: "A"

Brainiac: "C"

Appeal: "F"

Brawn: INHUMAN

Cool: INHUMAN
Empathy: "D"
Paranoia: MASTER
Phys. Ed.: "A"
Smackdown: MASTER
Consume Trait: MASTER
Regeneration Trait: "B"
Stretching Trait: "B"

Immunity: social, hand-to-hand, and normal ranged-combat attacks

Star Spawn

Whether the Star Spawn are Cthulhu's creation or just his servants is a matter of debate. These creatures came to Earth with Cthulhu hundreds of millions of years ago and built the non-Euclidean city of R'lyeh. R'lyeh would later sink beneath the sea, taking with it Cthulhu and many of the Star Spawn. The Star Spawn look like miniature versions of their master, Cthulhu: They have rubbery bodies, long clawed hands, bat-like wings, and heads that resemble octopuses (complete with tentacles). They have a limited ability to shift their body mass around, which allows them to enlarge or elongate limbs by shortening other limbs.

Physical Damage Track

OK
Bruised ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track

OK
Stunned ○○○○○
In Denial ○○○○○
Picked Up a Tic ○○○○○
Really Freaked-Out ○○○○○
Destroyed

Terror Grade: FACULTY
Brawn: FACULTY
Cool: FACULTY
Phys. Ed.: "A"
Smackdown: "A"
All other skills: "C"
Alien Mind Trait: "A"
Aquatic Trait: "A"
Flight Trait: "B"
Mental Blast Trait: "A"
Regeneration Trait: "A"
Stretching Trait: "C"
Natural Weapons Trait: "C" (claws and tentacles)

Immunity: vacuum, fear, social, hand-to-hand, and normal ranged combat attacks

"What I saw in the glow of my flashlight after I shot the unspeakable straggling object was so simple that almost a minute elapsed before I understood and went delirious. The object was nauseous; a filthy whitish gorilla thing with sharp yellow fangs and matted fur. It was the ultimate product of mammalian degeneration; the frightful outcome of isolated spawning, multiplication, and cannibal nutrition above and below the ground; the embodiment of all the snarling chaos and grinning fear that lurk behind life."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Lurking Fear"

Wendigo

Wendigo are shaggy, ape-like humanoids with pronounced canines and bright, feral eyes. They are carnivores, cursed with a ravenous hunger that can never be satisfied. Any kind of meat will suffice, so long as it is fresh, but wendigo prefer human prey. While not particularly intelligent, wendigo possess an animal cunning and will stalk their prey, waiting for an opportune moment to strike. Some wendigo enjoy terrorizing their victims before closing-in for the kill. There are stories that say the wendigo were once human but devolved into bestial monsters after succumbing to cannibalism. Fortunately, wendigo rarely venture from the deep wilderness. Unfortunately, the school is adjacent to one such wilderness.

Damage Tracks: same as human

Appeal: "D"

Brawn: "A"

Paranoia: "B"

Scouts: "A"

All other physical skills: "D"

Terror Grade: "B"

Brainiac: "D"

Delinquent: "B" (stealth)

Phys. Ed.: "B"

Smackdown: "A"

All other mental skills: "F"

All other social skills: "F"

Inhuman Senses Trait: "B" (can see in the dark)

Natural Weapons Trait: "C" (claws and fangs)

Immunity: disease, cold, and social attacks

"The Great Race's members were immense rugose cones ten feet high, and with head and other organs attached to foot-thick, distensible limbs spreading from the apexes. They spoke by the clicking or scraping of huge paws or claws attached to the end of two of their four limbs, and walked by the expansion and contraction of a viscous layer attached to their vast ten-foot bases."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow Out of Time"

The Great Race of Yith

The Yith can project their minds forwards or backwards through time and space, swapping minds with resident sentient species. In prehistoric times, the Yith inhabited the bodies of weird conical mollusks, developing a great civilization that rose and fell long before the evolution of mammalian life. When the Yith faced extinction at the hands of the Flying Polyps, they projected their intelligences, en masse, into the far future, displacing the minds of the native lifeforms, a race of beetle-like creatures. The Yith were (are) historians and scientists. While they bear no ill will against humanity, they are, primarily, concerned with their research and the continued survival of their race.

Damage Tracks: Physical track is the same as the species whose mind they currently inhabit.

Physical Damage Track

OK

Bruised ○○○○

It's Just a Flesh Wound! ○○○○

Pretty Messed-Up ○○○

World of Pain ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Destroyed

Mental Anguish Track:

OK

Stunned ○○○○

In Denial ○○○○

Picked Up a Tic ○○○○

Really Freaked-Out ○○○

Unconscious ○○○

Destroyed

Terror Grade: "B"

Appeal: "B" (Varies with current body)

Boffin: "A"

Brainiac: MASTER

Brawn: "B" (Varies with current body)

Cool: "A"

Education: MASTER

Empathy: "C"

Paranoia: "B"

Phys. Ed.: "B" (Varies with current body)

Shoot: "B"

Smackdown: "B"

All Disturbing Skills (lore only): "A"

Science! (Mad Scientist): FACULTY

Switch Minds Trait: ELDER (across time and space)

Random Abominations

Lovecraft created a lot of throwaway monsters, creatures developed for a single story but didn't necessarily fit into the larger mythos. This didn't make them any less horrible or dangerous, though!

To create your very own crime against nature, follow the steps below:

Step 1: Type

What kind of monster are you creating? Each monster type adds one or more special abilities, which are added after you calculate the creature's skills. Roll 1d6 or pick one:

Roll	Result
1	Stealthy (+1 Skill Grade to Delinquent to a maximum of MASTER)
2	Brutish (+1 Skill Grade to Brawn, to a maximum of MASTER)
3	Quick (+1 Skill Grade to Phys. Ed., to a maximum of MASTER)
4	Clever (+1 Skill Grade to Brainiac, to a maximum of MASTER)
5	Parasitic (Gain the Leech power)
6	Alien – Go wild! How about an energy-based entity that only partially manifests in our universe, and whose presence is inimical to terrestrial life (+1 Skill Grade to any skill, to a maximum of MASTER, and gain one additional power)

Step 2: Size

How large is the creature? The larger the monster, the tougher it will be but the harder it will be for the monster to hide its presence. Roll 1d6 or pick one:

Roll	Result
1	Cat-sized or smaller (5 Physical Damage boxes/5 Mental Anguish boxes)
2	Dog-sized (7 Physical Damage boxes/7 Mental Anguish boxes)
3	Child-sized (13 Physical Damage boxes/13 Mental Anguish boxes)
4	Adult-sized (17 Physical Damage boxes/17 Mental Anguish boxes)
5	Bear-sized (19 Physical Damage boxes/19 Mental Anguish boxes)
6	Elephant-sized or larger (21 or more Physical Damage boxes/21 or more Mental Anguish boxes)

Split the Physical and Mental Damage boxes as evenly as possible between the 5 injury levels:

Physical: Bruised / It's Just a Flesh Wound! / Pretty Messed-Up / World of Pain / Unconscious

Mental: Stunned / In Denial / Picked Up a Tic / Really Freaked-Out / Unconscious

If you feel that your pet monster is so alien that it doesn't conform to any conceivable biological standards, feel free to eliminate inappropriate injury levels. Just be aware that this will make your monster much more difficult for the players to beat.

Example: I'm envisioning a giant monster that can shrug-off a lot of damage, but once it's damaged, it'll go berserk and ignore the pain from its injuries until it collapses. I'm going to split the damage boxes among the following injury levels:

OK / Bruised / It's Just a Flesh Wound! / Unconscious

Step 3: Appearance

Most of Lovecraft's monsters have absolutely no basis in the animal kingdom, so don't let pesky details like biology, physiology, or sanity worry you. Let your imagination go wild. Roll 1d6 to determine how many Traits your creation will possess:

Roll	Result
1-2	Roll twice on the chart below
3-4	Roll three times on the chart below
5-6	Roll four times on the chart below

Now, for each Trait, roll 1d6 to see which chart you'll be rolling on, re-rolling duplicate results. Alternatively, you can simply choose whichever Traits you like. Some Traits allow you to choose a related power instead of rolling randomly, so make a note of these for later.

Which Chart?

Roll	Result
1	Roll on Chart 1
2	Roll on Chart 2
3	Roll on Chart 3
4	Roll on Chart 4
5	Roll on Chart 5
6	Re-roll

Chart 1

Roll	Result
1	Amorphous/Gelatinous (you may swap one rolled power for Stretching)
2	Amphibious (you may swap one rolled power for Aquatic)
3	Aquatic/Piscine (you may swap one rolled power for Aquatic)
4	Aquatic Invertebrate (you may swap one rolled power for Aquatic)
5	Asymmetrical
6	Bestial (canine-like, ape-like, goat-like, etc.) (you may swap one rolled power for Natural Weapons)

Chart 2

Roll	Result
1	Cephalopod/Mollusk (you may swap one rolled power for Regeneration)
2	Claws/Fangs/Pincers (you may swap one rolled power for Natural Weapons)
3	Eyes/Eyeless (you may swap one rolled power for Inhuman Senses)
4	Energy/Light and Color (you may swap one rolled power for the Wormhole ability, per the Science! gizmo)
5	Fungus
6	Geometric

Chart 3

Roll	Result
1	Hooves
2	Humanoid Features
3	Insectile (you may swap one rolled power for Armor or Flight)
4	Mouths/Suckers (you may swap one rolled power for Consume)
5	Multiple Limbs/Facial Features
6	Ophidian

Chart 4

Roll	Result
1	Pseudopods/Tentacles/Feelers (you may swap one rolled power for Stretching)
2	Ridges/Fins/Scales (you may swap one rolled power for Armor)
3	Rubbery
4	Sensory Protrusions (you may swap one rolled power for Inhuman Senses)
5	Shifting Appearance/Partially Invisible (you may swap one rolled power for Invisibility)
6	Slimy/Dripping

Chart 5

Roll	Result
1	Squamous
2	Skeletal/Decayed
3	Vegetable/Plant
4	Viscera
5	Winged (you may swap one rolled power for Flight)
6	Worm-like

Step 4: Noise

What kind of sound does the creature make? Roll 1d6 or pick one:

Roll	Result
1	None
2	Mimic (it duplicates the sounds it perceives)
3	Baying/Howling
4	Musical/Flute-like
5	Clicking/Buzzing
6	Roaring/Snarling

Step 5: Powers

In this step, we'll determine how many special abilities your creation will possess, what they are, and how powerful they'll be. A creature with a lot of high-Grade powers is going to be more of a threat than a creature with fewer, lower-Grade powers.

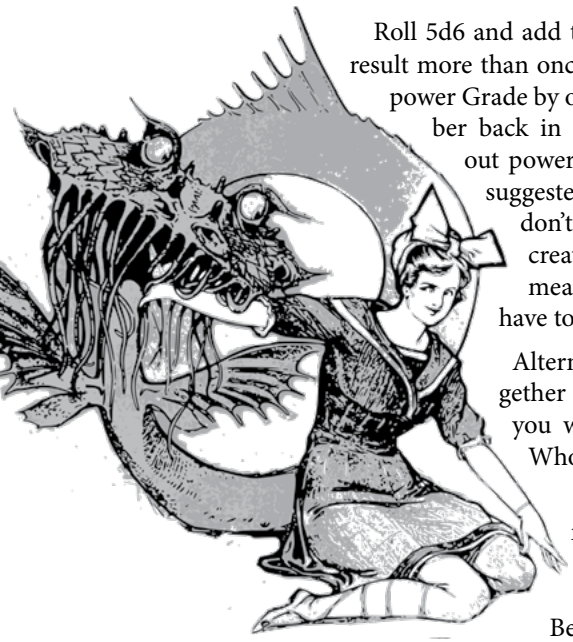
Roll 1d6 for the number of powers:

Roll	Result
1	Roll Once
2	Roll twice
3-4	Roll three times
5-6	Roll four times

To determine the Grade of each power, roll 1d6:

1	Grade "C"
2	Grade "B"
3-4	Grade "A"
5-6	Grade FACULTY

What Powers Will it Have?



Roll 5d6 and add the results together. If you roll the same result more than once, you may either re-roll or increase the power Grade by one to a maximum of MASTER. Remember back in Step 3 when we said you could swap-out powers? Instead of rolling, you can select the suggested power, or powers, instead. But you don't have to. Just because you've rolled-up a creature with a half dozen bat wings doesn't mean it has to be able to fly. Form doesn't have to follow function. Not here.

Alternatively, you can forget about rolling altogether and give your monster whatever powers you want it to have. Hey, it's your monster. Who am I to judge?

Note that many powers have a minimum associated skill. To use the power, the creature must have the associated skill at the level indicated or higher. Bear this in mind when you're assigning skills in Step 6!

1. Alien Mind Trait
2. Aquatic Trait
3. Armor Trait
4. Consume Trait – Brawn must be "B" or better
5. Curse (per Spell)
6. Darkness (per Spell)
7. Flight Trait
8. Immunity – the creature is completely immune to some form of attack (guns, melee attacks, psychic, electricity, etc.)
9. Inhuman Senses Trait – Paranoia must be "B" or better
10. Invisibility Trait – Delinquent must be "B" or better
11. Leaping Trait – Phys. Ed. must be "B" or better
12. Leech Trait
13. Mental Blast Trait
14. Mind Control Trait – Brainiac must be "B" or better
15. Natural Weapons Trait – Smackdown must be "B" or better
16. Immunity – Choose the attack type(s) to which the monster is immune
17. Paralysis Trait
18. Ranged Attack Trait – Shoot must be "B" or better
19. Regeneration Trait
20. Stretching Trait
21. Telepathy Trait – Brainiac must be "B" or better
22. Tempest (per Spell)
23. Unnatural Agility Trait – Phys. Ed. must be "B" or better
24. Unnatural Strength Trait – Brawn must be "B" or better
25. Witch (has the Witchcraft Disturbing Skill and abilities) – Brainiac must be "B" or better
26. Mad Scientist (has the Science! Disturbing Skill and Abilities) – Brainiac must be "B" or better

Step 6: Skills

Now we're going to figure out your monster's skills. All skills start at Grade "C". Roll 1d6 on the chart below for the number of skills that will be upgraded to Grades "B," "A," or FACULTY, or reduced to Grade "D." You decide which skills to increase (and decrease), but you must meet the requirements of any power rolled in Step 5. Skill bonuses from Step 1 are added after all other adjustments are made and may result in a Skill Grade of MASTER.

Roll 1d6	"D" Grade Skills	"B" Grade Skills	"A" Grade Skills	FACULTY Grade Skills
1	1	4	0	0
2	2	4	1	0
3	1	2	1	1
4	2	3	2	0
5	1	3	1	0
6	2	3	1	1

"Never trust anything that can think for itself if you can't see where it keeps its brain."

J.K. Rowling, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets"

Step 7: Terror Grade

Finally, we need to determine the monster's Terror Grade. Terror Grade starts at "C" and is modified as follows:

- Three appearance rolls = +1
- Four appearance rolls = +2
- Bear-sized or larger = +1
- Dog-sized or smaller = -1
- Alien type = +1

Step 8: Tweak it!

Use your judgement and feel free to tweak the final results until they fit your needs. Monsters should be challenging foes, but not impossible for clever players. For example, a very large creature with a wide array of powers may well be too powerful for a novice group of students. Likewise, a tiny creature with only one power and mediocre skills will probably be a pushover for an experienced team of student investigators, unless it represents a single creature in a horde of such monsters.

Example: Let's make up one of the Whateley brothers from The Dunwich Horror. If you haven't read this story yet… spoilers ahead!

"Bigger'n a barn... all made o' squirmin' ropes... hull thing sort o' shaped like a hen's egg bigger'n anything, with dozens o' legs like hogsheads that haff shut up when they step... nothin' solid abaout it—all like jelly, an' made o' sep'rit wrigglin' ropes pushed clost together... great bulgin' eyes all over it... ten or twenty maouths or trunks a-stickin' aout all along the sides, big as stovepipes, an' all a-tossin' an' openin' an' shuttin'... all grey, with kinder blue or purple rings... an' Gawd in heaven—that haff face on top!"

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Dunwich Horror"

Type: The 'Horror wasn't too smart and tended to smash everything in its way. Definitely sounds Brutish to me. That gives us a +1 Skill Grade to Brawn.

Size: It was big, so I'll go with elephant-size. That gives it 21 Physical Damage and Mental Anguish boxes. I could give it more, but I think that will be enough for now.

Appearance: Whew . . . this thing was ugly. It had a lot of mouths and eyes, way too many legs, and a humanoid face on the top. That gives us four Traits.

Noise: I'm going to exercise my creative freedom and go off the chart here. The 'Horror could speak, so I'm going to say that it had a humanoid voice.

Powers: The 'Horror was invisible, so this one is easy. I'll need a Delinquent skill of "B" or better to use that power. The 'Horror also made short work of a couple of homes, although I'm not sure they were up-to-code, so I'll go out on a limb and give it Unnatural Strength. I'll need a Brawn of "B" or better for that. To determine the power Grade, I roll 1d6 for each – getting a 4 and a 2. Invisibility will be Grade "A" and Unnatural Strength with be Grade "B."

Skills: I roll a 5, so I have 1 skill at "D," 3 skills at "B," and 1 skill at "A." While the 'Horror wasn't stupid, it was locked away for the vast majority of its life. I feel confident in saying that it probably never attended school, so I'm going to put the "D" on Education. I need to give it a Delinquent skill and Brawn skill of at least Grade "B," so I'll assign 2 of the 3 "Bs" to those skills. I'll assign the last "B" skill to Scouts, because it did well alone in the woods. Finally, I'll put the "A" skill on Smackdown. I get a +1 Skill Grade to Brawn, so my final skills are:

Education: "D"

Delinquent: "B"

Scouts: "B"

Brawn: "A"

Smackdown: "A"

Everything else: "C"

Terror: The Terror Grade starts at "C" and goes up by +2 (because it has 4 appearance Traits), and +1 (due to its size). The final Terror Grade is FACULTY.

The Tweak: The Brawn skill is a little low for something that can flatten a building, but Unnatural Strength should balance that. It should be a significant threat to most students, but against a

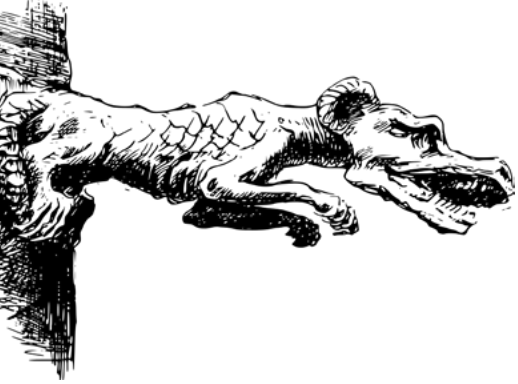
larger group of more experienced students, I'd probably add the Natural Weapons power, maybe increase the Phys. Ed. skill (to make it harder to hit) and add a few more damage boxes.

The Dunwich Horror

Terror: FACULTY
Delinquent: "B"
Brawn: "A"
Everything else: "C"
Unnatural Strength: "B.
Education: "D"
Scouts: "B"
Smackdown: "A"
Invisibility: "A"

21 Physical Damage boxes

21 Mental Anguish damage boxes



A

APPENDIX: WHO'S WHO IN THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

"...that last amorphous blight of nethermost confusion which blasphemes and bubbles at the centre of all infinity—the boundless daemon-sultan Azathoth, whose name no lips dare speak aloud, and who gnaws hungrily in inconceivable, unlighted chambers beyond time amidst the muffled, maddening beating of vile drums and the thin, monotonous whine of accursed flutes; to which detestable pounding and piping dance slowly, awkwardly, and absurdly the gigantic ultimate gods, the blind, voiceless, tenebrous, mindless Other Gods whose soul and messenger is the crawling chaos Nyarlathotep."

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath"

Along the way, your characters will have picked up a little knowledge — as represented by their Eldritch Lore skill — about the Cthulhu Mythos, the pantheon of ancient, unknowable, and utterly inhuman entities that ruled the cosmos and prehistoric Earth and will someday return. Unconcerned with, and perhaps unaware of human civilization, these entities slumber in the deep places of the world, or out in the darkest void, waiting for the stars to align. Of course, there are always those lunatics who would like to see that day come in their lifetime.

As a student at the Academy, Occult Studies are a part of the basic curriculum, so you'd better pay attention. You never know when you'll need to disrupt some forbidden ritual before some elder horror is released into our world!

These names may seem bizarre, even impossible to pronounce, but remember: They were never intended to be uttered by human lips. These beings were ancient when life on Earth was still in its infancy. When pronounced correctly, the pure alienness of the sound will send shivers down your spine and send dogs to whimper.

The difference between the Outer Gods and the Great Old Ones is hazy. Simply put, the Great Old Ones are immortal and powerful beyond our comprehension, but the Outer Gods are eternal. They transcend time and space. Some of the Great Old Ones can interact with human beings to a limited degree (Tsathoggua has been known to speak to worshippers in its temples and Cthulhu can communicate via dreams), but the Outer Gods are generally too far removed.

Azathoth

A blind, idiot god that seethes chaotically at the center of the universe. It is kept asleep by the monstrous dancers encircling it, who endlessly play monot-

Contributors to the Mythos and Inspirations

Many, many authors have written about the locations, creatures, and entities envisioned by H.P. Lovecraft, expanding the scope of the mythos exponentially. Some of the most notable writers include:

- Robert Bloch (the author of *Psycho*)
- Lin Carter
- August Derleth (who coined the term "Cthulhu Mythos")
- Robert E. Howard (the author of the *Conan* stories)
- Frank Belknap Long
- Brian Lumley
- Clark Ashton Smith

Likewise, Lovecraft was, himself, inspired by authors of weird science fiction and horror, such as Ambrose Bierce, Robert Chambers (the author of *The King in Yellow*), Arthur Machen, and Lord Dunsany.

"Cathulhu? I've heard of him. He's bad, right? He makes Gozer look like Little Mary Sunshine."

The Real Ghostbusters, "The Collect Call of Cathulhu"

onous music on alien flutes. If Azathoth should awaken, the cosmos would be destroyed.

Cthulhu

An immense, slimy, gelatinous humanoid being with vast bat-like wings and an octopoid head. Technically, Cthulhu is not a god, but rather some kind of a priest of the Great Old Ones. Cthulhu is currently believed to be sleeping in the sunken city of R'lyeh, located somewhere at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. Rarely, Cthulhu stirs, its vast psychic powers creating waves through Slumberland. When this happened in the past, as narrated in "The Call of Cthulhu," people across the globe reported sharing similar nightmares and many psychic sensitives went insane. The Deep Ones sometimes worship Cthulhu, as did some primitive Polynesian cultures in the past.

Hastur

Known as "Him Who Is Not to Be Named," very little is known about this god, except that the mention of its name will draw its attention. Hastur's name has become synonymous with decadence and decay, leading to the sobriquet "The Dead God." However, these associations may reflect Hastur's followers as opposed to the god, itself. Its followers seem to have some hatred of the Migo. Maybe they defaulted on a bet or something.

Mother Hydra and Father Dagon

Hydra and Dagon may or may not be gods. They are worshipped, however, as the patron deities of the Deep Ones. From antediluvian carvings, they appear to resemble immense Deep Ones.

Nodens

Also known as the "Lord of the Great Abyss," Nodens appears as an old man with grey hair. He is conveyed through the sea in a great seashell, drawn by dolphins. Nodens opposes the machinations of the other gods, particularly Nyarlathotep, and has been known to offer advice to mortals. An aspect of Nodens was worshipped by the Celts as a god of the sea, healing, hunting, and dogs. Nodens is the ruler of the Nightgaunts.

Nyarlathotep

Also not a god, Nyarlathotep is the servant of Azathoth and the messenger of the Outer Gods. A master of human motivations, Nyarlathotep has mastered all human languages and cultures. This being has meddled in human affairs many times in the past, changing our culture and aiding select individuals for its own, incomprehensible goals. An expert shapechanger, this being can appear wherever and however it wishes, even as a silver-haired schoolchild.

Shub-Niggurath

Also known as "The Dark Mother" and "The Black Goat of the Woods," this entity appears as a roiling black cloud, covered by mouths and tentacles. It gets its moniker from its two, goat-like legs. Some ancient cultures worshipped aspects of Shub-Niggurath as a fertility goddess.

Tsathoggua

This entity is depicted as an amorphous, toad-like creature covered with short, dark fur, like that of a bat. Its temples, usually found far below the earth where no man should be, are guarded by formless, oily creatures that move with surprising speed and can extend pseudopods to ensnare prey.

Yig

"The Father of Serpents." Appearing as a gigantic, snake-like creature or a man with a snake-like head, Yig is the patron deity of the Serpent Men and a few unsavory cults that existed before the fall of Atlantis. This being may have been the inspiration for the serpent Jörmungandr in Norse mythology, the Egyptian god Apophis, and the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl. Yig is known to have a terrible temper.

Yog-Sothoth

A constantly shifting collection of iridescent globes, this being exists outside of time; it sees and exists in the past, present, and future simultaneously. It is believed that the Migo worship Yog-Sothoth, or at least pay it deference. Yog-Sothoth fathered two children with a human woman in "The Dunwich Horror." As you can guess from the title, it didn't go well.

This list is far from exhaustive. There are many obscure entities dwelling in the dark places of the Earth and the space between the stars, such as the yeti-like *Ithaqua*, the great burrowing worm *Shudde-M'ell*, and the omniscient *Yibb-Tstll*.

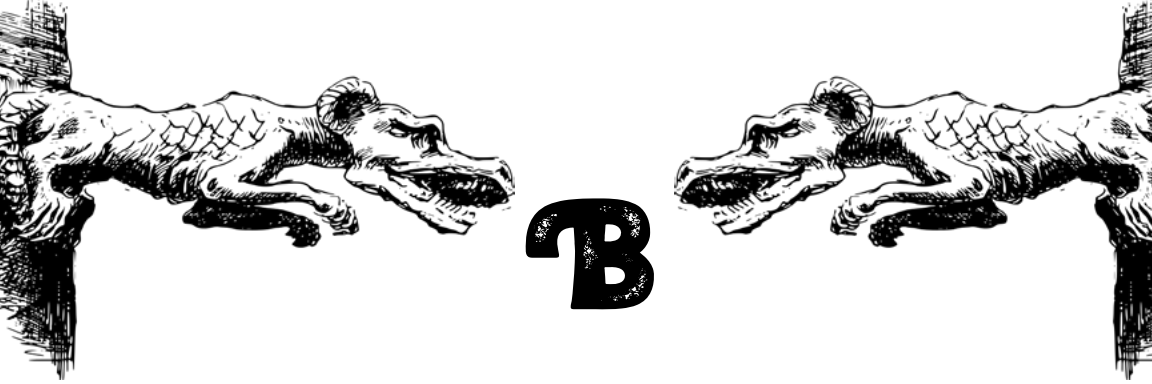
Whether you wish to help or hinder these beings' mortal cultists is up to you, but remember this: if these beings should awaken, it would be the end of our world – and the end of your game!

Why Don't You List Skills for the Outer Gods?

For a couple of reasons:

1. The players aren't going to be interacting with these entities directly. With one or two exceptions, they're simply too alien to relate to our species. The majority of the time, the players will be running interference with these beings' mortal worshippers and monstrous servants on Earth.
2. These things are big. Like, really big. The smallest ones are Japanese giant monster-size or larger. And their anatomy, if that term even applies, is utterly beyond anything we can comprehend. If we give them skills and damage boxes, we are implying that the players can influence them or hurt them in some way. They can't. Some of these entities, like Yog-Sothoth, represent primal forces of nature. It's doubtful if any of our technology, even technology developed through applications of the Science! skill, could affect them.

If you absolutely must assign them skills, most of them are in the INHUMAN and ELDER range.



B

APPENDIX:

LEXICON AND SUGGESTED READING

1d6: Roll one six-sided die.

2d6: Roll two six-sided dice and add the results.

Administration: These are the staff members who run the Academy, from the Headmaster and Registrar to administrative assistants.

Backlash: The result of attempting to harness powerful magical or scientific forces and failing to do so in a spectacular manner.

Bunkie: Bunkmate or roommate. Most students have 1 or 2 bunkies.

Casting Target Number: The difficulty to cast a specific spell.

Character Class: One of the five character types: Witches, Hybrids, Dreamers, Summoners, Mad Scientists, and Mondays.

Components: Common and rare materials needed to cast spells and create gizmos.

Containment: A means of confining a Servitor.

Contested Skill Test: A Skill Test that is resolved by comparing one character's Skill Total against their opponent's Skill Total.

Damage Level: One row on the Physical Damage or Mental Anguish Damage Track (i.e., "It's Just a Flesh Wound!").

Damage Tracks: A measure of physical and mental injury and the penalties for each. Severe injury will result in penalties to skills rolls. Once all the boxes in a given track have been filled-in, the character will be incapacitated.

Damage: Damage is a measure of physical or mental injury and is expressed in "boxes," where one point of damage = one box of damage.

Demerit Points: A penalty for violating school rules. Excessive Demerit Points result in penalties. Demerit Points reduce Merit Points on a one-for-one basis.

Disorder: A mental illness. Usually the result of a low Sanity score.

Disturbing Skills/Disturbing Abilities: Supernatural powers and occult knowledge available to individuals of the correct character class (i.e., Oneiromancy for Dreamers or Witchcraft for Witches).

Dorm (Dormitory): Assigned living quarters for students.

Downshift: A penalty that moves a character's skill one level down the Master Skill Chart.

Experience Points (XPs): Points earned by players for good roleplaying. Experience points are spent to improve your character.

Faculty: Professors. Faculty members are addressed as Professor + surname or Doctor + surname, depending upon the faculty member's level of education.

Full Move Action: Running as fast as your little legs can carry you, in lieu of another Skill Test. You can only take one movement action each turn, whether it's a minor action or a full move action.

Gamemaster Character (GMC): Any character who isn't controlled by the players. These include other students, the faculty, members of the administration, the crazy old coot who lives in the woods, monsters and everything else the players will meet.

Gamemaster (GM): The person who "runs" the game. They create the scenarios, control the Gamemaster Characters, and adjudicate the rules.

Gizmo: A super-science machine developed by a Mad Scientist.

Grimoire: A list of researched and perfected spells available to a Witch.

House: On-campus housing available to Third Year students and above. Houses are also considered dormitories.

Id: The defensive aspect of a sleeper's unconscious. The id will attack intruding Dreamers upon detection.

Initiative: A means for determining who acts first.

Initiative MOD: a roll of 1d6 + the character's permanent Paranoia & Brainiac MODs.

Innovation Target Number (IT#): The base difficulty to create a gizmo.

Lore Skills: The "academic" side of Disturbing Skills. This information can be learned by anyone without having to be the correct character class (i.e., a Witch may learn the lore skill of Oneiromancy but cannot acquire the special powers).

Main Building: A three-story building shaped like a five-pointed star within a pentagon. The main building houses administrative offices, the library, the infirmary, classrooms, and student clubrooms.

Main Office: Faust Administration Building, located within the main building.

Master Magic/Tech Modifier Chart: A chart that summarizes the effects available to characters with Disturbing Skills.

Master Skill Chart: A chart that summarizes the available Skill Grades, target numbers, and modifiers.

Mental Anguish: A measure of a character's mental damage, emotional state, and embarrassment.

Mentor: Fifth Year students (11th grade) assigned to help First Year students and transfer students adjust to life at the Academy.

Merit Points: A reward for following the rules of the Academy that can be spent to improve skill rolls or other benefits. Merit Points reduce Demerit Points on a one-for-one basis.

Minor Action: a quick action that does not require a Skill Test. On their action, a character may take 1-2 minor actions in addition to a Skill Test.

MOD: A positive or negative modifier based on the character's Skill Grade.

Modified Innovation Target Number (IT#): The difficulty to create and use a gizmo, after Design Modifiers have been applied.

Motivation: A character's goal. When goals are achieved, new motivations are chosen.

Mundane Skills: The physical, mental, and social skills that everyone possesses to one degree or another.

Mythos: The stories, mythology, and creatures envisioned by H.P. Lovecraft and other authors, such as Robert Bloch, Robert E. Howard.

Normal Students: Students who do not possess special powers.

Pass/Fail Skill Test: A Pass/Fail Skill Test is resolved by comparing one character's Skill Total against a difficulty determined by the GM.

Physical Damage: A measure of a character's stamina and wounds.

Player: One of the people who is playing the game. Unlike the Gamemaster, players only control one character, a student at the Academy.

Player Character (PC): A character controlled by a player, as opposed to a Gamemaster Character or GMC.

Quirk: A small behavioral aberration. Usually the result of a low sanity score.

Sanity: A measure of a character's mental stability. Mental Anguish, occult knowledge, or other factors can reduce sanity. When a character's sanity runs out, they are committed to the sanitarium.

Schematics: A list of researched and tested gizmo designs available to a Mad Scientist.

Servitor: A supernatural creature that is bonded to a Summoner.

Severity: A measure of an environmental hazard, like a fire.

Skill Grade: A score that indicates the level of mastery with a skill. Grades range from "F" to "A" and beyond.

Skill Test (Roll): Comparing a Skill Total against a Target Number to determine if an action was successful.

Skill Total: The sum of 2d6 plus modifier(s).

Sleeper: A sleeping person whose mind has travelled to Slumberland. A non-Dreamer.

Slumberland: An extra-dimensional space visited by the minds of sleeping people.

Specialization Skills: Skills requiring specific areas of study. Outside of areas of Specialization, the Skill Grade defaults to "C."

Spell: A magical power available to Witches and some supernatural creatures.

Stunts: Expanded mutant abilities available to experienced Hybrids.

Target Number (#): The number which must be beaten on a skill roll to be successful with an action. This may be based on an opponent's Skill Total or a difficulty determined by the GM.

Tell: The physical manifestation of a mutation that marks the character as a Hybrid.

Temporary Damage: Damage that heals quickly. Temporary damage is healed before regular damage.

Terror Grade: A gauge of the scariness of a scene or monster. If a character fails a terror roll, they take Mental Anguish damage.

Traits: Mutant abilities available to Hybrid characters.

Turn: A fluid measurement of time in the game. A turn is how long it takes for every character – Gamemaster or player – to take an action.

Upshift: A bonus that moves one level up the Master Skill Chart.

Year: The equivalent of grade (not to be confused with Skill Grade). First Year is the same as 7th grade. The Academy serves students from First Year through Sixth Year (12th grade).

Inspirations And Suggested Reading

Please be aware that Lovecraft was an author of horror, and many of these suggestions may be far too intense for younger or sensitive readers!

Books and Comics

The collected writings of H.P. Lovecraft, in particular:

- *At the Mountains of Madness*
- *From Beyond*
- *Herbert West – Reanimator*
- *The Call of Cthulhu*
- *The Color Out of Space*
- *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*
- *The Dunwich Horror*
- *The Shadow Out of Time*
- *The Shadow over Innsmouth*
- *The Whisperer in the Darkness*

From other authors

- Anne Applegate's *The Last Academy*
- *The Book of Cthulhu* & *The Book of Cthulhu 2* (collected stories), edited by Ross E. Lockhart
- Charles Stross' *Laundry* series
- Drew Hayes' *Super Powereds* series
- Fantasy Flight Games' *Grimm* RPG
- *The Gods of H.P. Lovecraft* (collected stories), edited by Aaron J. French
- J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*
- J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series
- Joe Hill and Gabriel Rodríguez's *Locke & Key* comic series
- Ken Hite's *Adventures into Darkness* supplement for the *Truth & Justice* RPG
- L. Jagi Lamplighter's *The Unexpected Enlightenment of Rachel Griffin*
- *Lovecraft's Monsters* (collected stories), edited by Ellen Datlow
- Mike Mignola's *Hellboy* comics
- Rachel Hawkins' *Hex Hall* series
- Ransom Riggs' *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*
- Roger Zelazny's *A Night in the Lonesome October*
- S. John Ross and John Kovalic's Pokethulhu RPG

Movies and Television

- American Horror Story: Asylum (2012-2013)
- American Horror Story: Coven (2013-2014)
- Army of Darkness (1992)
- Buffy the Vampire Slayer TV series (1997-2003)
- Cast a Deadly Spell (1991)
- Dagon (2001)
- Dead Poets Society (1989)
- Die Monster Die (1965)
- Dreamscape (1984)
- Ghostbusters (1984), Ghostbusters II (1989), Ghostbusters (2016), and The Real Ghostbusters Cartoons (1986-1991)
- Haiyore! Nyaruko-san anime (2012)
- Penny Dreadful (2014)
- Project A-ko anime (1986)
- Revolutionary Girl Utena (2007)
- Rosario + Vampire anime (2008)
- Scooby-Doo cartoons (1969+)
- Sky High (2005)
- The Curse (1987)
- The Dunwich Horror (1970)
- The Goonies (1985)
- The Last Lovecraft (2009)
- The Little Shop of Horrors (1960)
- The Mouth of Madness (1995)
- The Sarah Jane Adventures (2007-2011)
- The Woods (2006)

"I couldn't live a week without a private library - indeed, I'd part with all my furniture and squat and sleep on the floor before I'd let go of the 1500 or so books I possess."

H.P. Lovecraft, "Selected Letters"

HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT PREPARATORY ACADEMY STUDENT RECORD

Student
Photo ID
Here

Student Information

Student Name .....

Concept .....

Class ..... Player .....

Year ..... Dorm .....

Height ..... Weight .....

Current Sanity ..... Initiative MOD .....

Movement Rate ..... Experience .....

Motivation .....

Student Skill Assessment

Physical	Grade	Notes
Brawn		
Delinquent		
Hobby		
Medieval		
Phys. Ed.		
Smackdown		
Shoot		
Injury Penalty		

Mental	Grade	Notes
Boffin		
Brainiac		
Education		
First Aid		
Hobby		
Paranoia		
Scouts		
Injury Penalty		

Disturbing	Grade	Notes
Eldritch Lore		
Mutation (A or L)		
Oneiromancy (A or L)		
Science! (A or L)		
Summoning (A or L)		
Witchcraft (A or L)		
A = Abilities. L = Lore		
Injury Penalty		

Social	Grade	Notes
Appeal		
Art		
Cool		
Empathy		
Family		
Fixer		
Trash Talk		
Injury Penalty		

Posessions Inventoried for Insurance Purposes

Weapon ..... Damage MOD ..... Range .....

Armor ..... Protection ..... Hits Taken .....

Saved Money .....

Allowance .....

Merits
15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

Demerits
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT PREPARATORY ACADEMY STUDENT RECORD

Student Health Report

Physical Damage Track

Temporary ☐

- OK!
- Bruised ☐☐☐
- It's Just a Flesh Wound! ☐☐☐
- Pretty Messed Up ☐☐☐
- World of Pain ☐☐☐
- Disemboweled ☐☐
- School Infirmary ☐

Mental Anguish Track

Temporary ☐

- OK!
- Stunned ☐☐☐
- In Denial ☐☐☐
- Picked Up a Tic ☐☐☐
- Really Freaked Out ☐☐☐
- Gibbering Incoherently ☐☐
- Visiting Arkham Sanitarium ☐

Quirks and Disorders

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Clubs and Activities Joined

.....

.....

.....

Items Noted During Last Dormitory Inspection

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Class Schedule

S/Advanced = Supplementary/Advanced Courses

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:10 - 10:00 am	Class 1 Professor	Class 2 Professor	Class 1 Professor	Class 2 Professor	Class 1 Professor
10:10 - 11:00 am	Class 3 Professor	Class 4 Professor	Class 3 Professor	Class 4 Professor	Class 3 Professor
11:10 - 12:00 pm	Class 5 Professor	Class 6 Professor	Class 5 Professor	Class 6 Professor	Class 5 Professor
12:10 - 1:00 pm	Lunch				
1:10 - 2:00 pm	Clubs & Activities				
2:10 - 3:00 pm	Class 7 Professor	Class 8 Professor	Class 7 Professor	Class 8 Professor	Class 7 Professor
3:10 - 4:00 pm	S/Advanced 1 Professor	S/Advanced 2 Professor	S/Advanced 1 Professor	S/Advanced 2 Professor	S/Advanced 1 Professor
4:10 - 5:00 pm	Study Period & Faculty Office Hours				

A Teen Witch's Grimoire

Sisters and Brothers of the Night!
Guard well this book and make use of it to record thy spells of power!

Components

Components Available **Rare Components** **Maximum Components**

Spells

Name **Spell Type** **Test: Pass/Fail** **Contested**

Casting Target Number

Effects:

Name **Spell Type** **Test: Pass/Fail** **Contested**

Casting Target Number

Effects:

Name **Spell Type** **Test: Pass/Fail** **Contested**

Casting Target Number

Effects:

Form 2I92B : Student Hybrid Mutation Assessment

_____ has been tested for mutations as part of their regular physical examination in accordance with Howard P. Lovecraft Prepatory Academy policy. Per article 19.36M of Title D, Howard P. Lovecraft Prepatory Academy will develop an Individualized Educational Program to accomidate the student's mutations and allow them to fully succeed in our academic environment.

(student name here)

Primary Trait.....

Skill Test: Automatic ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Contested ☐

Effects.....

.....

.....

Tell.....

Stunt.....

Skill Test: Automatic ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Contested ☐ Grade ☐

Effects.....

.....

.....

Stunt.....

Skill Test: Automatic ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Contested ☐ Grade ☐

Effects.....

.....

.....

Stunt.....

Skill Test: Automatic ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Contested ☐ Grade ☐

Effects.....

.....

.....

_____ / _____

(Academy Nurse's Signature / Date)

This Dream Journal Belongs To

_____

You can control your dreams!

My Avatar Skills

My Brawn (Cool) is

My Paranoia (Empathy) is

My Delinquent (Cool) is

My Phys. Ed. (Cool) is

My Medieval (Brainiac) is

My Smackdown (Brainiac) is

My Powers

All is possible in the dream realm!

1. Lucid Dreaming

2. Dreamrider

3. _____

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____

4. _____

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____

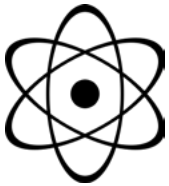
5. _____

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____



Young Scientist's Schematic Logbook

Maximum # of Gizmos		Components Available		Rare Components		Max # of Components	

Gizmos

Name:

Gizmo Type:

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____

Test: Pass/Fail

Contested

Active

Shelved

IT#

Modified IT#

Name:

Gizmo Type:

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____

Test: Pass/Fail

Contested

Active

Shelved

IT#

Modified IT#

Name:

Gizmo Type:

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____

Test: Pass/Fail

Contested

Active

Shelved

IT#

Modified IT#

Name:

Gizmo Type:

Effects: _____

_____

_____

_____

Test: Pass/Fail

Contested

Active

Shelved

IT#

Modified IT#

Adoption Certificate

This certifies that _____

has officially adopted _____

and welcomed them into their forever home!

All about your new friend

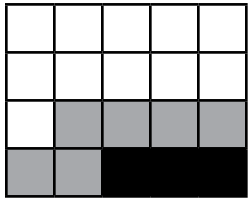
Appearance _____

Personality _____

Grade _____ Size _____ Movement _____ Initiative MOD _____

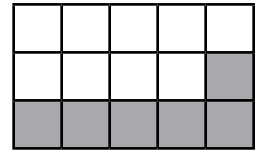
Take care of your new friend!

Physical Damage



This adoption is sealed on this day by my blood and print.

Mental Damage



Your new friend is special!

Skills				Minor Powers
Awareness		Scare		
Cunning		Scuttle		
Lurk		Spew		
Rend		Tenacity		

Form I97P : Faculty Summary Assessment

Name:.....

Professor ☐ Administration/Staff ☐ Other ☐

Class Taught/Role: .....

Notable Skills:.....

Motivation: .....

Alignment: .....

Possessions .....

Notes:.....

.....

Name:.....

Professor ☐ Administration/Staff ☐ Other ☐

Class Taught/Role: .....

Notable Skills:.....

Motivation: .....

Alignment: .....

Possessions .....

Notes:.....

.....

Name:.....

Professor ☐ Administration/Staff ☐ Other ☐

Class Taught/Role: .....

Notable Skills:.....

Motivation: .....

Alignment: .....

Possessions .....

Notes:.....

.....

Prepared by

_____/_____

(Headmaster Signature/Date)

Form I98L : Entity Statement of Intent

Howard P. Lovecraft Preparatory Academy policy asks that all visiting deities, elder spirits, cosmic beings, extradimensional tricksters, Gamemasters, and other entities of power fill out the following to inform the Academy of their intentions and any potential consequences to the facility, faculty, and student body during their stay on campus.

Who is your antagonist? .....

.....

Who else is involved? .....

.....

What does the antagonist want? .....

.....

.....

How close is the antagonist to succeeding? .....

.....

What loose ends are still lying around? .....

.....

Why should the PCs get involved? .....

.....

How can I make this personal for the PCs? .....

.....

.....

What do the PCs hear through the rumor mill? .....

.....

.....

Where does the action take place? .....

.....

Are there any other mysteries or conspiracies taking place? .....

.....

What else is going on? .....

.....

.....

What fallout can the PCs expect? .....

.....

Affix/Burn/Conjure
Seal/Sign/Sigil Here