

MARTIN LLOYD

AMAZING TALES



A GAME FOR CHILDREN WHO LOVE ADVENTURES

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A game for children who love adventures.

For Maria, Lisa and Ruben. The best adventure of all.

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Why tell Amazing Tales?

This book describes a game. A game designed to be played by an adult and one or two children. A game where, instead of someone winning and someone losing, all players get the reward of a shared experience and a unique story. It's been three years since I played the first game of *Amazing Tales* with my four-year-old daughter. Since then I've learned that:

- ★ Making up stories together creates shared memories that are unique and will last.
- ★ This is a game that's fun and challenging for both adult and child. Both of you will get to give your brains a workout and flex your creative muscles.
- ★ This is a game that stresses playing together. If you play with more than one child at a time, they'll learn about teamwork and cooperation.
- ★ Playing *Amazing Tales* is a lot of fun.

If you're thinking that this book looks a little on the large side for a four-year-old, don't worry, they don't need to read it. The game's rules fit on a single

page – the next page, in fact. The rest of the book is full of advice, suggestions, settings and pictures.

You can make up *Amazing Tales* set anywhere, and the characters can be anything you like. But to get things started, the book includes four settings where *Amazing Tales* could happen.

They are...

- ★ The Deep Dark Forest
- ★ Magical Kingdoms
- ★ The Pirate Seas
- ★ Adventures Among the Stars

Amazing Tales has been kept as simple as possible so it can be as flexible as possible. My son likes to make up *Amazing Tales* about a super-stealthy four-armed robot tyrannosaurus called King Tyrannosneak. There's nothing in the rules about making up robot dinosaur characters, but there's nothing in the rules stopping you either.

So give it a go.

Amazing tales in one page

You're going to make up a story with your child. It will take between half an hour and an hour, and neither of you knows how it's going to end. At times you'll roll dice to see what happens next, and it's going to be amazing. Ready?

Here's how it works, in five steps...

1. Decide what kind of story it's going to be. An adventure in space, a voyage on the wild blue yonder, a quest in days long gone by, or an adventure in a deep dark wood? All these stories are possible. If you need help, there are ideas for different settings in the last section of this book.
2. Help your child make up a hero to play. The hero can be anything and anyone they want. A brilliant scientist with a robot sidekick, a magician who lives in a castle in the clouds, a fairy who rides a lizard. Let your child's imagination run wild. Make a list of four things the hero is good at, and assign a different-sized dice to each one.

3. Start telling the story, perhaps using one of the story seeds in this guide. As soon as something happens, ask your child 'What do you do?' Incorporate their answer into whatever happens next.
4. If your child wants their hero to do something that might not work, such as climbing a mountain, casting a spell on a dragon, or flying a spaceship through an asteroid field, look at their skills. Pick whichever seems most relevant, and ask them to roll the appropriate dice:
5. If they get a three or more, they succeed! Ask them to describe what happens. Then continue the story until the next moment you can ask 'What do you do?'
6. If they get a one or a two, they fail, and things get worse! Describe how things get worse and ask them 'What do you do?'
7. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until the story ends.

That's it. For more ideas and suggestions on each of these steps, read on!



Amazing settings

“What kind of thing will our story be about?”

Talk to your child and let them pick the kind of story they want to make up. It could be a story about magic and monsters long ago, an adventure in space, or a voyage on the pirate sea, or anything else.

The second half of this book includes four settings ready to go. But making up your own setting is easy.

Ask your child what kind of things they'd like to see in the story. If they want a space story, does that mean zapping aliens and flying space battles? Or exploring new worlds and making friends with new creatures? Let your child use anything they like as a point of reference: favourite TV shows, places you've been on holiday, artwork they like, toys they have, or things they remember from bedtime stories. And of course show them the pictures in this book.

It's quite likely that your child

will pick some things that don't normally go together. Knights in armour with superheroes, fairies and rocket ships, dinosaurs and talking rabbits. Your job is not to say no to this stuff, your job is to make it work: and the way to do that is to ask questions. Questions like...

“Are the dinosaurs in modern times, or the rabbits in dinosaur times?”

“Are there lots of dinosaurs or just a few?”

“Do the rabbits talk to the dinosaurs?”

“Are the dinosaurs the rabbit-eating kind?”

Indeed it's worth asking supportive questions about anything your child suggests, because they probably aren't quite thinking about things the way you are. It's always good to explore an idea a little bit.

As your child makes suggestions, throw in thoughts of your own, building on their ideas. I often draw a picture, sketching some of the key things in the

world. Later on, this becomes a reference for making things up: when something needs to happen, I can just use something I drew on the paper. However you record these ideas, it's good to capture them somehow. It's a handy reference for you – and evidence for your child that their ideas are being used.

Keep asking questions until you and your child are comfortable with the idea. If an idea is really not working for either of you – drop it.

At the end of this process you should have a place in which to put your story. Now you need a hero.



Amazing heroes

Heroes need a name, a description and some skills. Come up with those three things, and you're ready to go.

Name

"What would you like your hero to be called?"

Your child's hero can be called anything they like, but I wouldn't suggest letting your child use their own name. Heroes might get attacked by monsters, have spells cast on them by witches, be blown out of airlocks, or be made to walk the plank. Even though they'll always survive, it's important your child remembers that it's just a story. Picking a different name for the hero helps with that.

Appearance

"And what do they look like?"

Ask your child to describe their hero, ask them what they wear, whether they're tall or short, what kind of hair they have. Listen carefully to the answers, as you might want to reference

their appearance later in the story. My children often like their heroes to carry things; often a picnic basket or telescope, but sometimes a sword or laser gun. Objects like these are a great setting-off point for a story.

Skills

"What are they good at?"

Help your child come up with four things their hero is good at. I often ask this question in more general terms like "What do superheroes do?" When your child answers this question they're telling you two things. First, they're telling you what they think is important for their hero; and next to that, they're telling you what they want to happen in the story.

A child who says their fairy hero is good at being brave, fighting monsters, flying quickly, and finding hidden things, is expecting a different story to a child who picks being friendly, doing magic, talking to animals, and hiding.

When choosing skills, try and keep the skill categories broad, and varied. Skills like 'Being brave' or 'Running and jumping' can be used for lots of situations. Skills like 'Row a rowing boat' are more limiting. I find having at least one broad physical skill, like 'Running and jumping', makes storytelling easier.

Once you've got four skills that will work for both of you, ask which skill their hero is best at. Assign that the D12, then ask which of the three remaining skills they're next best at – give that the D10. Then ask which of the remaining two they're best at – give that the D8. The last skill gets the D6 – don't describe this as their worst skill. This is something a hero can do – it's awesome!

When I assign dice I physically hand them to the kids, telling them "This is your being-brave dice", "This is your fighting-monsters dice" and so on.

Story sheet

At the back of this book is a story sheet to record the details of your child's hero on. Since there isn't much to record, most of it is blank – use the space for drawing pictures of the hero, or other things in the adventure.

Dice

To play *Amazing Tales* you'll ideally have dice with 12, 10, 8 and 6 sides. You can get these at games shops or online. Dice are named D (pronounced Dee) and then the number of sides they have. D6, D12, and so on.

See page 18 for more on dice, and what to do if you only have six-sided dice available.

Creating a hero

We're making up a story about adventures on the pirate seas, and my daughter wants to play a pirate. Called Jim Slim. We talk about what pirates do, and she decides that Jim has his own ship, called the *Rapscallion*.

She tells me that Jim is quite young, with red hair. He wears big boots, a blue coat and has a pirate hat. He's a very smart pirate who reads treasure maps and sails the pirate ship himself. He has a pet octopus. The octopus is called Wriggle, and is very good at finding treasure under the water.

I suggest some skills that Jim might want to have, based on what I've been told and the list of suggested skills for adventures on the pirate seas...

- ★ Sailing ships
- ★ Octopus care
- ★ Seeking treasure
- ★ Navigating
- ★ Swashbuckling

My daughter likes the sound of navigating, because it involves

maps and sailing. But she has to pick four, so eventually we choose

- ★ Sailing ships
- ★ Octopus care
- ★ Seeking treasure
- ★ Swashbuckling

Since Jim can't navigate I can just decide to leave that out of the adventure, or make it a plot point. Maybe Jim will need to befriend someone who knows the way to the treasure island. Anything Wriggle the octopus does will be covered by the octopus care skill. Meanwhile Swashbuckling is a very flexible skill that will cover any physical stuff Jim needs to do.

Now all we have to do is pick dice for each skill. My daughter says that Jim is best at Sailing ships, so that gets a D12. Then she picks Swashbuckling, which gets a D10. Then Octopus care gets a D8 and finally Seeking treasure gets a D6.

Captain Jim Slim is ready for his adventure!



Telling an amazing tale

So you have a setting, and a hero. Now all you need is a story. If you're out of practice at making up stories, don't worry. Your child is going to help. Still, here are some tips...

The basics

- ★ **Don't over-prepare.** A tiny bit of an idea is all you need. The story seeds in this guide are plenty to start with. Pick one and spend a few minutes thinking about it, or invent your own, and off you go.
- ★ **Hold your ideas loosely.** Your child isn't going to do what you expect, so don't get attached to things that haven't happened yet.
- ★ **Ask lots of questions.** If you're describing something, ask your child what it might be like. If you make the question specific, it will be easier to answer.

"As you get closer, the space station comes into view. What shape is it? Where do spaceships land on it?"

"The monster jumps down from

the trees behind you. It reaches for you with its – what do you think – claws or tentacles?"

"Hidden in the underwater cave is the pirate treasure. There are crates of gold and jewels and one very special thing. What is it?"

- ★ **Use the skills written on the story sheet to give options.**

"The angry hedgehogs are getting closer. Do you – try to make friends with them? Fly away quickly? Bravely wait to see what they do?"

"The wizard waves his wand and the curtains come to life and try to wrap you up. Do you use your own magic? Fight them with your sword? Run and jump past them?"

- ★ **Build on your child's ideas.** Don't take decisions because "that couldn't happen" or because "that doesn't fit" or because "that wouldn't work". Take the ideas and build on them. Try and avoid responding to anything your child says with a negative. Instead go for a "Yes, and..." response.

“The ferocious dragon is going to eat you up!”

“I tickle the dragon with a feather.”

“Yes, and he laughs so loud the building starts to collapse – what do you do?”

“The goblins lock you in a dungeon””

“I open the door with a key.”

“Yes, those goblins never saw you steal it. And now you’ve got to get past them – how do you do that?”

Story structure

Stories need a beginning, a middle and an end. One approach is to fill these in by:

★ **Starting with a bang.**

Something should happen early. Something that creates a problem and lets you ask the essential question “What do you do?” Try to get to that bit in no more than a couple of sentences. Here’s an example.

“All seems quiet on the Interstellar Cruiser HMS Starshine, when the alarms sound. The ship is getting faster and faster, and rushing toward an asteroid field. What do you do?”

Perhaps resolving the immediate problem reveals the real challenge. In this case, the ship is accelerating because the engines have been sabotaged.

★ **Having one thing lead to another.** Complex interlinked narratives aren’t what we’re looking for here. To solve the problem created at the start, maybe three different things are needed.

“To stop the starship’s engines exploding, you’ll need to find the mechanic, shut down the flux capacitor, and destroy the evil robots in the engineering bay.”

Doing each of those things might involve a number of challenges, but the key one could be tied to the skills your child selected for their hero. In this case, perhaps; ‘Being friendly’, because the mechanic is hiding and has to be coaxed out; ‘Inventing things’,

because the flux capacitor is complicated; and ‘Shooting my laser gun’, because that’s what takes care of evil robots.

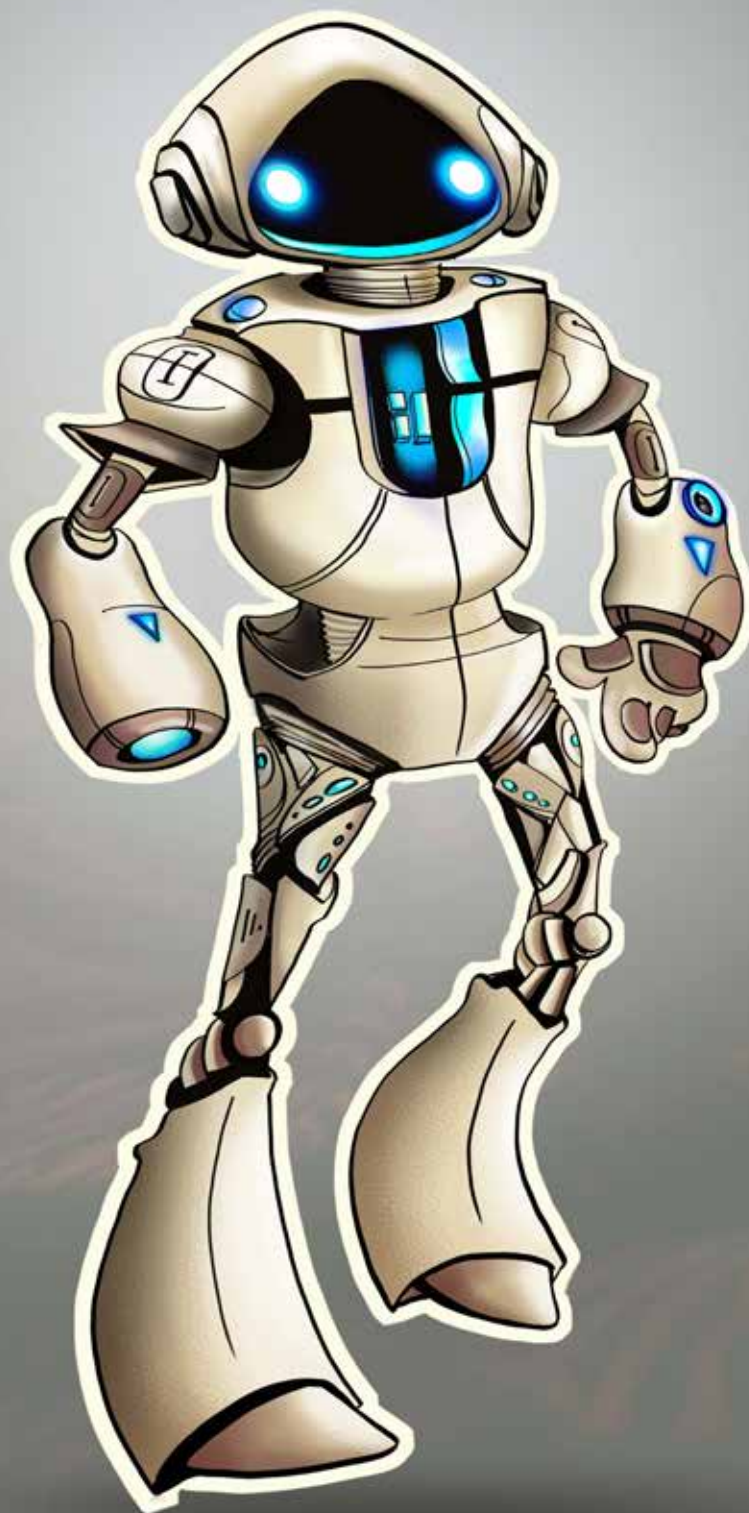
Of course your child might invent a robot mechanic, shoot the capacitor and make friends with the robots – and let’s be honest, that all sounds like more fun – but the key is that there is an obvious, entertaining way forward at every step.

★ **End in a satisfying way.** Kids like happy endings, which generally means everything back in its right place, and

back to normal. It also helps if there’s a big showdown with the ultimate cause of the problem.

“The robots agree that they should not blow up the ship, and decide to help you. But suddenly the airlock bursts open and in comes Mecha Grimclaw, the cyborg inventor. ‘You’ve foiled my plan’, he shouts, ‘but now I’m going to deal with you myself!’”

For some examples of *Amazing Tales* take a look at the website at www.amazing-tales.net/read-amazing-tales/



Drama and dice

The dice that you'll be using are there to help the story along. Heroes don't always get everything their own way. Plus children like rolling dice. When is it the right time to roll a dice?

- ★ If the hero tries something that seems like it might fail;
- ★ If failure would be as interesting as success;

then it's probably a good time to roll the dice.

Roll the dice related to the most suitable skill. **If they get a three or more, their hero succeeds.**

For example, Space Explorer Louie is piloting his starship through an asteroid field. His 'Flying spaceships' dice size is 10. So his player rolls a ten-sided dice, and it comes up five – Louie successfully flies his ship through the asteroids!

Children like to describe exactly what happens when their hero succeeds at something. Let them make it as exciting and amazing as they want.

What happens if they fail?

If a child rolls a one or a two, then their hero has failed at whatever it was they were trying to do.

Here's what to do when a failure happens. Move quickly so that instead of dwelling on the failure the child moves straight on to answering the important question – "What do you do now?"

First, make the situation worse, but don't bring it to an end. So...

- ★ The monster catches you, **but it doesn't** eat you up.
- ★ Your jump across the chasm falls short leaving you clinging to a cliff, **but you don't** fall to your death.
- ★ You're too scared to go into the tunnel and the wolves are getting closer, **but you don't** run away.

Once you've described the failure and escalated the situation, ask the child "What do you do now?" If they don't have an idea, look at the skills on your child's story sheet and offer them choices

based on those.

As long as each failure makes the situation worse, but doesn't end it, then there will always, eventually, be a happy ending. Meanwhile, things will get more and more dramatic. But just in case things don't start to turn around, here's some extra advice.

What happens if they fail repeatedly?

Sooner or later your child will roll a 1, then another 1, then a 2, then a 1... You may reach a point where escalating the situation some more just isn't feasible. Here are some routes out of this mess:

Have something work – you don't have to roll the dice. Yes, that works! This can feel a little forced; but if your child has thought of something very different, the impression is it succeeded because it was a good idea – and that's fine.

Shift the context to remove the immediate peril:

- ★ The monster throws you in a

cauldron to eat later – how will you escape?

- ★ You fall, but there is a lake at the bottom of the chasm – can you swim?
- ★ Something comes out of the tunnel and pulls you in – but what was it?

Introduce a white knight who turns up to rescue the hero. This can feel somewhat unsatisfying, so be sure to give your child a chance to rescue them right back before the end of the story.

Optional Rule: Try something new

If you don't let a child use the same skill twice in a row during a situation, you'll force some extra creativity into the story.

For instance, while exploring a cave Captain Jim Slim is ambushed by his arch rival, the ferocious Captain Dread.

"I'll swashbuckle him with my cutlass," states Jim Slim's player; but he rolls a 1 on his swashbuckling dice. Captain Dread disarms Jim Slim with a

secret move and then prepares a fresh attack.

Usually, Jim Slim's player could simply ask to try swashbuckling again. But with the 'Try something new' rule, he has to choose from his remaining three skills: Sailing ships, Octopus care and Seeking treasure.

"Wriggle will squirt octopus ink in his face!" suggests Jim's player. He rolls a 7 on his Octopus care dice. Wriggle squirts ink into Captain Dread's face, blinding him, while Jim Slim picks up his cutlass and dashes deeper into the cave.

Playing with ordinary dice

Don't worry if you've only got normal, six-sided dice available. There are two ways to work around that.

1. Simply use a six-sided dice for everything, and leave the target number as a three or more.
2. Use a six-sided dice for everything, but vary the target number. For the skill the hero is best at, make it a two or more. For the thing they are least good at, make it a four or more. And for the two skills in the middle, stay with three or more.



Tips and tricks: Amazing magic

What it looks like

Lots of different kinds of heroes can do magic. The best way to handle this is to ask your child to describe what happens when a spell works. Maybe the witch is turned into a frog; maybe the chair grows wings and flies across the chasm. Maybe there's just a bit of stardust and the broken plates are all back together. This is a great opportunity for using "Yes, and..." storytelling techniques. So:

"There are glowing lights, and the plates stick back together."

"Yes, and from then on there was a picture on the plates of the helpful fairy who fixed them."

The obvious problem

By its very nature, magic can accomplish the impossible. For example, on a quest to recover the Golden Necklace from the top of Snowy Mountain your precocious child declares "Monty the Wizard does a spell to bring

him the necklace" – what do you do?

Go with it – maybe getting the necklace is just the start of things. Maybe it was a test to see if Monty was clever enough to try the real quest. Sometimes it's good to let bright ideas pay off; just remember that it may not make for a satisfying story this way.

Provide an explanation – the necklace is too far away. The necklace is in a magic box. Whoever stole the necklace has put a spell on it so Monty can't magic it back. As long as there's an explanation, your child will probably be fine with it. Just be sure to give them a chance to succeed at a magic test pretty quickly so they remain convinced that Monty is a brilliant wizard.

Cause a problem – messing about with magic causes all kinds of problems. Maybe the necklace was around the neck of a Yeti, and now Monty's got to deal with an angry Yeti who wants to go home.





Tips and tricks: Thrilling fights

Like most challenges in Amazing Tales , fights are handled with a single roll of the dice. Focus on making the description exciting: and if the hero fails their roll, escalate the situation quickly. If the hero wins, encourage your child to describe their victory

Making them last

If the adventure is climaxing with an epic showdown, it could be that a single dice roll doesn't feel like enough. The easiest way to stretch out a fight is to think of it as a series of challenges. For instance:

"First the bad guy sends his minions to attack you. What do you do?"

"Then he unleashes his secret weapon – how do you survive?"

"Next he leaps to a high gantry – can you follow him?"

"Finally you face him in hand to hand combat – will you triumph?"

Alternative victories

"I chop off his head," shouts your child, displaying a bloodthirstiness you hadn't expected. Don't worry: stories are full of this kind of thing. However, this might not be something you want as part of a game you play with your child. The good news is, there are plenty of ways to resolve fight scenes that offer more drama and less brutality...

The monsters run away – this is the easiest one. The hero rushes forward swinging his sword, and the bad guys run for their lives. Which means they can come back later.

The bad guys surrender – after a dramatic and satisfying exchange of blows the bad guys surrender and promise to be good.

The monsters are humiliated – cutting off the giant's head is far less amusing than spanking him on the bottom until he cries.

The monsters are captured – pushed into a big hole, locked

in a dungeon, thrown into jail – there are lots of ways for heroes to end a fight by capturing their opponents.

The monsters aren't real people – robots, skeletons, giant vegetables propelled by magic. All fair game for a hero's sword.

Will you child accept these substitutes for blood and gore? My experience is that the answer is almost always yes.







Tips and tricks: Gaming with kids

Here's a rundown of ten things I've learned while roleplaying with kids:

1. Pick a good place to play – whether snuggled up on the sofa, or sitting at the table, make sure everyone is comfortable. Make sure everyone's been to the bathroom. And make sure you have a good place to roll dice.

2. Try and keep distractions to a minimum. The TV, younger siblings, a tablet, a pile of lego bricks can all distract. Telling and following a story is hard work for young children: give them room to focus by keeping distractions away. "First we'll tidy up, then we'll make up a story" is a good way to start.

3. Let them run around – if your story is so exciting that the players just have to jump up and down, re-enact their actions, and celebrate their victories, then you're doing well.

4. Kids can be scared of all kinds of things – if children start making themselves small, become passive, and don't seem

to want to engage with the game anymore, it might be that things are just too frightening. Don't carry on: stop, and talk to them.

5. Talking to strangers can be hard – even if they're strangers in a story, made up by you. Don't rely on young players asking for information, or picking up on hints in conversation: be prepared to volunteer information right from the start.

6. Kids love props – spend five minutes drawing a treasure map ahead of time. Or hand them a calculator and tell them it's a super-mini-computer. Work things you picked up on a nature hike into your story, or remind them of things they've seen in a museum. Grab some toys. Anything that makes things tangible is good.

7. Remember that they haven't seen all the cliches yet – so you can use them! Swords stuck in stones. Bombs with a red wire and a green wire. A monster that is really the janitor in disguise. To young children, these are brilliantly original ideas.



8. Children are easily upset if their characters get injured or lose their treasured possessions. Be very careful if you have this happen in your story.

9. If it's not working, let it go – sometimes they're just not in the mood.

10. Roleplaying with your kids is one of the most enjoyable things you can do. One that gives you shared experiences and points of reference that really last. So be sure to enjoy it.



Introducing the settings

This book contains four settings to help you make up Amazing Tales:

The Deep Dark Forest – where fairies and talking animals live far from ordinary people.

Magical Kingdoms Long Ago – where knights, wizards and witches do mighty deeds.

The Pirate Seas – where adventure waits beyond the horizon.

Adventures in the Stars – where a galaxy full of aliens, robots and mystery awaits.

In each section you will find:

A guide to making up a hero, including suggested skills for heroes and descriptions of those skills. You don't have to stick to the skills suggested. Indeed, you should use them as jumping-off points for more ideas. And there's no reason to stick strictly to the settings. Pirates, or piratically-inclined heroes, could turn up in space. Fairies could go to sea. But if you do stick to the

guidelines here, you'll know that things should run smoothly.

Advice on making up stories in the setting, including suggestions about friends and foes, and descriptions of things you could see, smell, touch, taste, or feel in the setting. Use these last notes to liven up your descriptions and bring your stories to life.

Story seeds for the setting. These are short ideas for a story. Each seed includes a straightforward version, and a twist to add extra depth and a surprise as the story unfolds. Using the twists usually makes the resulting stories about twice as long.



Tales from the Deep Dark Wood

“In the deep dark wood you will find trees that move by themselves, animals that talk, and fairies who look after the forest. Who would you like to be in this story – a fairy, or a talking animal?”

Fairies

“Fairies are very small, no bigger than the palm of your hand. They have wings like butterflies or dragonflies, and love to play in the sunshine. There are boy fairies, and girl fairies. What is the name of your fairy?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“Is your fairy tall or short? What do they wear? What colour hair do they have? Is it long or short? What do their wings look like?”

“Do they carry anything with them?”

Draw the fairy onto the story sheet.

“Fairies can do lots of different things. What is your fairy good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto

the story sheet.

- ★ Being brave
- ★ Being friendly
- ★ Doing magic
- ★ Talking to animals
- ★ Flying quickly
- ★ Fighting monsters
- ★ Finding hidden things

“Which of these things is your fairy best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the remaining skill.

Suggested Fairy Skills

These are examples of the kinds of skills a fairy hero might have, and the kinds of situations they might be used in. Feel free to invent your own, and keep interpretation of them as flexible as possible.

Being brave

Fairies are small, and often have to be brave. They can be scared of monsters, or the dark, or of being alone.

Being friendly

The deep dark wood is full of all kinds of strange people and creatures who just want to be left to their own business. But a friendly fairy can always find friends to help them.

Doing magic

Some fairies can cast magic spells. Fairy magic can do all kinds of things. Healing hurt creatures, turning monsters to stone, or even making things disappear!

Talking to animals

Not all the animals in the Deep Dark Wood can talk to other creatures. But fairies who can do this can always talk with animals. What the animals say might not always make much sense, though!

Flying quickly

All fairies can fly, but some can fly quicker than others. Fairies who can fly fast are very hard for monsters to catch.

Fighting monsters

Fairies might be too small to fight big monsters; but spiders, beetles, rats, and other nasty creatures sometimes need to be chased away.

Finding hidden things

Fairies are very good at spotting things that big people don't see. This could be clues, or treasure.





Talking Animals

“Talking animals live in the deep dark forest. There are all kinds of talking animals, like foxes, badgers, mice, deer, sparrows, and owls. The talking animals like to play with the fairies in the deep dark woods. Talking animals never eat other talking animals.

“What kind of animal are you?”

Fill in on the story sheet

“What colour is your fur or feathers? Is there something about you that looks different – like a pattern in your fur, or a different-coloured feather?”

Draw the animal onto the story sheet.

“Animals can do lots of different things: what is your animal good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being brave
- ★ Being cute

- ★ Smelling things
- ★ Flying quickly
- ★ Hiding
- ★ Climbing
- ★ Being fierce
- ★ Running and jumping

“Which of these things is your animal best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.

Suggested Animal Skills

These are examples of the kinds of skills an animal hero might have, and the kinds of situations they might be used in. Feel free to invent your own, and keep interpretation of them as flexible as possible.

Being brave

Animals often have to be brave. For instance, mice are scared of cats and foxes, while foxes are scared of wolves, and wolves might be scared of hunters. Dark caves, witches, or monsters can be scary too.

Being cute

Animals can be very cute. Cute animals can easily make friends with people or fairies, and people often want to help them.

Smelling things

Some animals have an amazing sense of smell. They can smell things from far away, and tell which other animals have been somewhere.

Flying quickly

Some animals can fly, and animals that can fly quickly are really good at it. They can loop the loop, race other flying animals, or fly through thick forests without slowing down.

Hiding

Hiding and sneaking is something some animals are great at. Moving so quietly they can't be heard, disappearing from sight when the scary creatures appear, or sneaking up on other creatures are things these animals can do.

Climbing

The deep dark wood is full of trees: being able to climb them quickly is very helpful. There might be other things to climb too; like cliffs, towers, or magic beanstalks.

Being fierce

Some animals can be very fierce; using their teeth, beak, or claws to fight other animals, chase away monsters, or catch prey.

Running and jumping

Animals who are good at running and jumping have no trouble getting around the deep dark wood. They can dash through thick forest, and jump over fallen logs and holes in the ground.



Making up stories in the Deep Dark Wood

Imagining the wood

To make making up a story easier, think about the answer to some of these questions, or ask your child...

What's your wood like?

Some woods are deep, dark, and scary. Some are bright and sunlit. In some woods trouble lurks behind every tree: other woods are happy places where monsters are rare.

Is someone in charge?

It might be that your wood is ruled by a fairy king or queen. Or maybe there's a particular animal who is in charge – a bear or stag, or a very wise mouse. Where does the ruler live, what does it look like, what makes it special?

What else lives in the wood?

The wood could be home to all kinds of amazing creatures. There might be:

★ Dragons

★ Unicorns

★ Nymphs

★ Witches

★ Wizards

★ Sprites

★ Goblins

★ Boggarts

Natural hazards

The wood also contains plenty of natural hazards that could be challenging. For instance:

★ Swamps

★ Poisonous berries

★ Deep pools

★ Rushing rivers

★ Fires

★ Falling trees

★ Dark caves

★ Wells

Sounds in the wood

Birdsong, crackling twigs, rustling leaves, wind in the trees, faraway howling, buzzing insects...

Smells in the wood

Fresh tree smell, wildflower scent, wet moss, rotting wood, fur...

Sights in the wood

Tall trees, pools of sunlight, hollow trees, abandoned burrows, wild orchids, twisted roots...

Tastes in the wood

Sweet berries, crunchy nuts, bitter leaves, fresh water, sticky honey...

Feelings in the wood

Clouds of insects, soft moss, sharp twigs, crumbly old leaves, rough bark...



Story seeds in the Deep Dark Wood

Play these straight, combine them, or use the twists to add a bit more fun to the story:

1. A wicked witch has kidnapped a baby owl. Can the heroes rescue her?

Twist: The witch is lonely since her cat died, and wants an animal to be her friend.

2. Beavers have dammed the river and it is flooding! The rabbit warrens will soon be under water.

Twist: The beavers have been tricked into this by a cunning fox who likes to eat rabbits.

3. A confused wizard keeps turning animals into other animals. Can he be stopped?

Twist: The wizard cast a spell on his glasses, and everything looks wrong to him.

4. Wolves have moved into the forest and are hunting the nice animals.

Twist: The wolves themselves are

fleeing a worse threat – a hungry dragon!

5. Fire is raging through the woods, can the heroes save their homes?

Twist: The fires were started by people who want to turn the woods into fields.

6. The fairy king has a new cloak. It is so beautiful all the fairies are fighting over it!

Twist: The cloak was a gift from his wicked uncle who wants to be king.

7. A giant hole has appeared in the wood and foul smells are coming out of it.

Twist: The hole is part of a goblin mine.

8. In a storm the heroes are blown far away and must find their way home.

Twist: The place they are blown to is a magical kingdom in the clouds where they are trespassers who cannot leave.

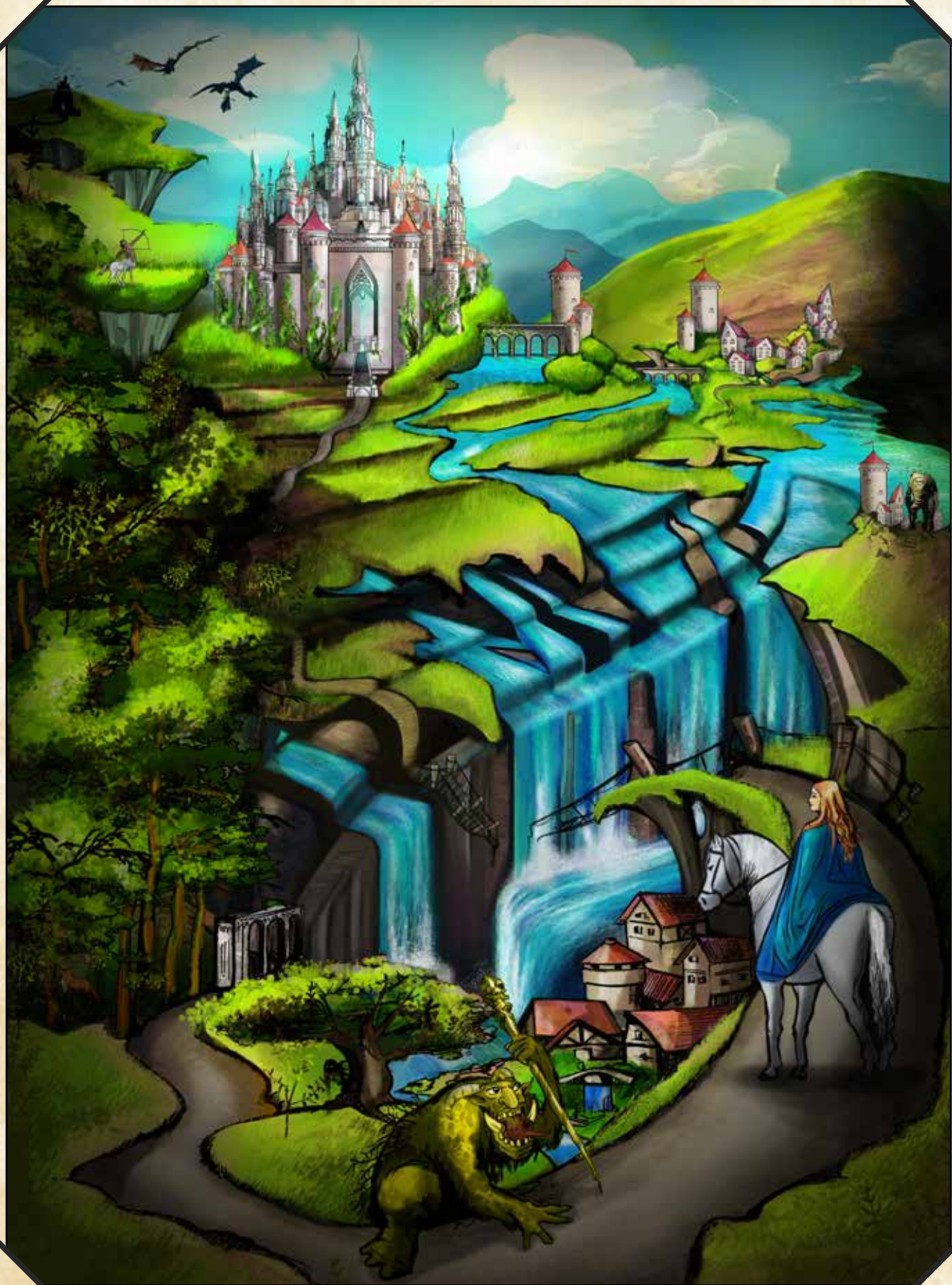
9. Three hedgehogs arrive, explaining they are people who have been turned into animals. Can the heroes help?

***Twist:** The three hedgehogs were transformed as a punishment for stealing, and are no better now than then!*

10. The Spider Queen's silk cloak has been stolen. Can the heroes recover it?

***Twist:** It turns people invisible: so how can you find the thief?*





Tales from Magical Kingdoms Long Ago

“In the magical kingdoms you will find kings and queens, warriors and wizards, dragons, unicorns, and giants. Who would you like to be in this story – a prince or princess, a knight, a witch or wizard, or an explorer or ranger?”

Princes and princesses

“Princes and princesses are the guardians of a kingdom. They protect and look after all the inhabitants, help them when they have problems, and deal with monsters that threaten the kingdom. Sometimes they can do magic. What is your prince or princess called?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your prince or princess look like? How do people in the kingdom recognise you? Do you live in a castle?”

Draw the prince or princess onto the story sheet.

“Princes and princesses can do lots of different things: what is your hero good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being brave
- ★ Doing magic
- ★ Fighting monsters
- ★ Knowing things
- ★ Making friends
- ★ Running and jumping
- ★ Talking to animals

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.







Knights in armour

“Knights in armour are the bravest fighters in the kingdom. They look for the most dangerous monsters to defeat, and go on quests to find treasure or rescue people. What is the name of your knight?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your knight in armour look like? Do they have a shield with a picture on it? What is it? Do they ride a horse, or something else? What is it called?”

Draw the knight in armour onto the story sheet.

“Knights in armour can do lots of different things: what is your hero good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being brave
- ★ Being strong
- ★ Being fast

- ★ Fighting monsters
- ★ Riding
- ★ Running and jumping

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.



Witches and wizards

“Witches and wizards can do magic. They are often very clever and know many secret things. They use their magic to solve problems and help protect the kingdom. What is the name of your wizard?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your witch or wizard look like? Do they have a magic wand or staff? Do they have a magical creature as a friend?”

Draw the witch or wizard onto the story sheet.

“Witches and wizards can do lots of different things: what is your hero good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being brave
- ★ Doing magic
- ★ Hiding and sneaking
- ★ Knowing things
- ★ Making friends

★ Running and jumping

★ Talking to animals

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.



Explorers and rangers

“Explorers and rangers live in the wild parts of the kingdom. They journey through the wilderness protecting people from monsters, caring for nature and looking for lost treasures. What is your explorer or ranger called?”

Write on the story sheet.

“What does your explorer or ranger look like? Do they have a big cloak or a hat? Do they have an animal friend?”

Draw the explorer or ranger onto the story sheet.

“Explorers and rangers can do lots of different things: what is your hero good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being brave
- ★ Being fast
- ★ Hiding and sneaking
- ★ Knowing things
- ★ Fighting monsters

★ Running and jumping

★ Talking to animals

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.

Suggested skills for Magical Kingdoms Long Ago

These are examples of the kinds of skills heroes in the magical kingdoms might have, and the kinds of situations they might be used in. Feel free to invent your own, and keep interpretation of them as flexible as possible.

Being brave

There are many scary things in the magic kingdoms. A hero might need to be brave to fight a dragon, explore a dark cave, or climb a high mountain.

Being fast

Some heroes are super fast. So fast they're almost never caught off guard and can catch arrows out of the air. They can run faster than horses, maybe even fast enough to run across water.

Being strong

Some heroes are super strong. Able to lift up a person in each hand, throw heavy rocks huge distances, and wrestle ogres.

Climbing and exploring

Magical kingdoms are full of mountains, tall trees, mysterious towers, deep swamps, wild wildernesses, and dark caves. Heroes who are good at climbing and exploring travel fearlessly, knowing they won't get lost and can tackle any natural obstacle.

Doing magic

Many people in the magical kingdoms can do magic. They can use it to brew potions, make fire, turn people into other creatures, fly, find lost treasures, and do many other amazing things.

Fighting monsters

The monsters of the magical kingdom can be fought in many ways. With bare hands. With swords, lances, and battle axes. With bows and arrows, lassos, and catapults.

Hiding and sneaking

Some monsters are so scary that it's a better idea to hide from

them, or maybe to sneak up on them, or past them. Heroes who are good at this are so stealthy it's almost as if they're invisible.

Knowing things

Why is the haunted wood haunted? What are the three things a troll is always scared of? How do you find a unicorn? Heroes who are good at knowing things might know the answers to any of these questions.

Making friends

Some heroes have no trouble finding friends. Maybe they already know someone who can help with their problem, or maybe they can charm the grumpy villagers into helping out.

Riding

Lots of heroes ride things. Sometimes they ride horses; sometimes dragons, pegasus, broomsticks, flying carpets, or giant eagles.

Running and jumping

Heroes in the magic kingdoms are often called on to run, jump, climb, swim, leap, lift, or throw in the course of their adventures.

Talking to animals

Some magical animals can talk to anyone. But heroes who can talk to animals can speak with any creature. What the animals say back might not always make much sense, though.



Making up stories in Magical Kingdoms Long Ago

Imagining the kingdoms

To make making up a story easier, think about the answer to some of these questions, or ask your child...

What's the kingdom like?

Is it big or small? Does it have mountains, hills, deserts, rivers, a coastline? Are there forests? Are there many small villages, big cities, towns or farmsteads? What about landmarks – spectacular waterfalls, stone circles, ancient trees, or the like?

Who rules?

Is the kingdom ruled by a king, a queen or someone else, like a wizard or a dragon? Are they kind or cruel? Do they have any unusual habits, or history? Or is the ruler missing, or are there multiple claimants to the throne. Speaking of which – where does the ruler live, and do they have a special throne?

Who lives in the kingdom?

A magical kingdom can be

home to all kinds of groups and creatures. Why not add some...

- ★ Peasants, farmers, townspeople, knights, lords and ladies
- ★ Priests of strange gods
- ★ Covens of witches
- ★ Schools of wizards
- ★ Travelling elven musicians
- ★ Giant insects
- ★ Dwarven inventors
- ★ Goblin mushroom hunters
- ★ Tribes of werebears
- ★ Meditating giants

Unexpected threats

A magical kingdom could contain plenty of challenges to delay an adventurer:

- ★ Avalanches
- ★ Blankets of fog
- ★ Hypnotic lights in the sky
- ★ Migrating wyverns
- ★ Plagues of locusts
- ★ Raging rivers
- ★ Spells gone wrong
- ★ Haunted houses

★ Will o'the wisps

★ Walking woods

Sounds in the kingdom

Market sellers, hurdy-gurdy players, clattering hooves, clanking armour, chanting wizards...

Smells in the kingdom

Roasting meat, leather tanning, old ale, unwashed peasants, perfumed silks...

Sights in the kingdom

Forbidding castles, rickety bridges, towering cliffs, ancient earthworks, majestic ships...

Tastes in the kingdom

Sweet wine, bitter apples, roast boar, stale bread, thick stew, candied fruit, fresh berries...

Feelings in the kingdom

Roughly-carved stone, smooth steel, cold iron, scratchy wool, wet leather, warm fires...

Story seeds in Magical Kingdoms Long Ago

Play these straight, combine them, or use the twists to add a bit more fun to the story:

1. A roaming troll is threatening a village. Can the heroes stop it?

Twist: The queen wants to add it to her magical creature collection.

2. Mermaids have invited the prince to an undersea party, will the heroes accompany him?

Twist: A mermaid falls in love with the prince and they will not let him go.

3. Pirates are raiding the coast, can they be stopped?

Twist: The pirates have magical flying ships.

4. Thick thorns have cut off Deepdale village. Someone must save the villagers!

Twist: The villagers made the thorns to keep a monster locked away from the rest of the kingdom.

5. Thanks to snow constantly coming from the high mountains, winter will not end.

Twist: A spell is making the same weather repeat every day in the mountains.

6. The princess has been carried off by a wicked wizard to his tower. She must be rescued!

Twist: The princess has locked the wizard in his own tower and wants him to make her beautiful.

7. Orcs and goblins are invading. The bridge at Riverpass must be defended.

Twist: The goblins have already crossed the bridge. It's a trap!

8. A dwarven inventor needs help collecting materials to make his hot-air balloon.

Twist: A rival inventor is determined to be the first dwarf to fly.

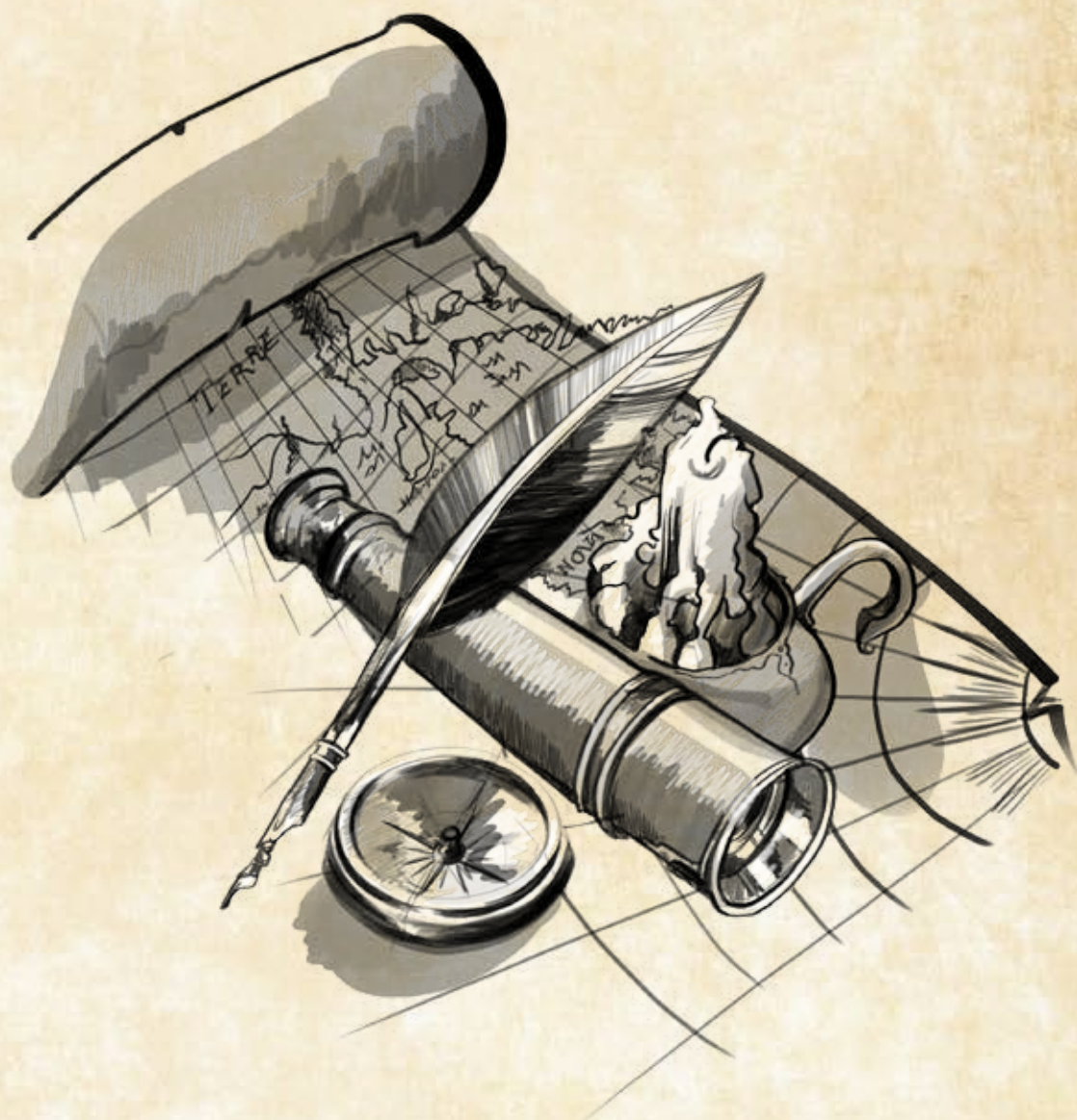
9. A rival kingdom has challenged the king to a contest. Which kingdom has the greatest

heroes?

Twist: While the heroes are away, competing thieves plan to steal the king's gold!

10. Ghosts are troubling the residents of the Queen's castle, screaming and shouting.

Twist: The ghosts are actually messengers from the future, trying to warn of a coming disaster.





Adventures on the Pirate Seas

The Pirate Seas are an exciting and dangerous place. Will you hunt for treasure, explore forgotten islands, befriend the mermaids, fight sea monsters, or brave the wild blue yonder?"

Pirates

"A pirate captain is master of a ship and its crew. They sail the seven seas in search of treasure and adventure. What is the name of your pirate?"

Fill in on the story sheet.

"What does your pirate look like? What's the name of their ship? Do they have a pet, or an eyepatch, or a hook hand?"

Draw the pirate onto the story sheet.

"Pirates can do lots of things: what is your hero good at?"

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being daring
- ★ Being ferocious
- ★ Cooking

- ★ Marksmanship
- ★ Navigating
- ★ Parrot care
- ★ Sailing ships
- ★ Seeking treasure
- ★ Swashbuckling
- ★ Swordplay

"Which of these things is your hero best at?"

Write 12 as the dice size.

"What are they next best at?"

Write 10 as the dice size.

"Which of the last two are they best at?"

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.





Suggested pirate skills

These are examples of the kinds of skills heroes on the pirate seas might have, and the kinds of situations they might be used in. Feel free to invent your own, and keep interpretation of them as flexible as possible.

Being daring

The sea is a dangerous place, full of beasts and hazards that would terrify landlubbers. But daring pirates know that the best way to deal with this is to laugh in the face of danger. Especially if the face of danger has teeth like daggers, and fishy eyes.

Being ferocious

Most pirates are frightening, but ferocious pirates are the most frightening of all. One good glare and a well-judged threat is enough to make their enemies run away, tell their secrets, or give up their treasure.

Cooking

The captain might think they're

the most important person on a ship, but the rest of the crew know it's really the cook. A pirate cook can turn anything into a tasty meal. Some pirates cook so well the results could even be a little bit magic.

Marksmanship

From cannons to pistols, pirates like things that go bang! Pirates who are good at marksmanship are crack shots with all kinds of guns.

Navigating

Shifting shoals, coral reefs, fog banks, incomplete treasure maps... just getting from one of the seven seas to the next can be a challenge. Pirates who can navigate have no trouble finding what they're after; be it safe harbour, or the way to the next adventure.

Parrot care

Many pirates own a parrot (or a monkey, or a ship's cat, or a surprisingly capable rat). If that pet is smart enough to help out

in an adventure, then this is the skill to use.

Sailing ships

Sailing a pirate ship is no simple undertaking. But good pirates know how to hoist the mainsail, and how to keep a steady hand on the tiller and the wind to their back. A key skill when you're racing other pirates, avoiding a sea monster, or seeing out a storm.

Seeking treasure

From finding clues in old log books, to knowing just where to dig on a desert island, some pirates have a knack for finding treasure. Maybe they can smell the gold.

Swashbuckling

Swing from the rigging, dash across rope bridges, and duel your rival on the edge of an erupting volcano. Pirates who swashbuckle find this kind of thing second nature.

Swordplay

Whether it's duelling with cutlasses, or fending off a sea serpent with a boarding pike, pirates who are good at swordplay excel at fighting.



Making up stories for Adventures on the Pirate Seas

Imagining the seas

To make making up a story easier, think about the answer to some of these questions, or ask your child...

What are the pirate seas like?

Is it hot or cold? Are there desert islands, or floating icebergs? Are there lots of other pirates, or just a few? Are there many ships, or many sea-monsters? Are there lost temples hidden in deep jungles, and pirate colonies? Do pirates and merfolk get on well with each other?

What is the pirate ship like?

Pirates need ships, and ships need names. It's also good to know how many masts a ship has, how many cannons it has, whether it has a figurehead, what the flag looks like, and how many crew there are.

Accounting for a ship in a game can be tricky. There are three ways to do it:

1. It's a one-pirate ship. Can one

pirate sail a ship, fire the cannon, read the charts and keep watch? In this story, why not? This is the easiest way to handle things.

2. The player is the captain. Whenever the hero does something they have the option of describing it as if the crew did it. For instance, fighting off a band of winged monkeys could be described as "I brandish my sabre and drive them off the deck," or "My crew seize their weapons and together we give the monkeys a taste of cold steel."

3. The player is part of the crew. If you go for this approach, make the captain the boss – sending the pirate hero out on adventures, or creating problems that the hero needs to solve.

Who might you find at sea?

All sorts of strange creatures can be found at sea:

- ★ Giant ship-swallowing whales
- ★ Glow-in-the-dark jellyfish
- ★ Talking narwhals
- ★ Mermaids and mermen

- ★ Merchant traders
- ★ Sky pirates on flying carpets
- ★ Swarms of tiny crabs
- ★ Man-eating sharks
- ★ Flying fish and their water-nymph riders
- ★ Saltwater crocodiles

Hazards at sea

The pirate seas are dangerous for even the most prepared pirate. Things you might run into on or under the sea:

- ★ Whirlpools and maelstroms
- ★ Jagged reefs
- ★ Clashing rocks
- ★ Erupting volcanoes
- ★ Underwater abysses
- ★ Sudden storms
- ★ Blankets of fog
- ★ Drifting ghost ships
- ★ Phantom lights
- ★ Dead calm

Sounds at sea

Creaking timbers, crying gulls, lapping waves, sea shanties, howling wind, mermaid songs...

Smells at sea

Salt air, rotten fish, boiling tar, exotic spices, acrid gunpowder...

Sights at sea

Blood-red sunsets, flying fish, grotesque pirates, circling sharks, breaching whales, shining gold...

Tastes at sea

Stale ship's biscuit, throat-burning rum, delicious coconut, smoky fish...

Feelings at sea

Rough timber, wind in your hair, splashing water, warm breezes, swaying hammock...

Story seeds for Adventures on the Pirate Seas

Play these straight, combine them, or use the twists to add a bit more fun to the story:

1. The pirate king is organising a contest to find the best pirate on the seven seas. Can the heroes beat their greatest rivals?

Twist: This is a pirate contest – cheating is allowed!

2. A treasure map leads to a jungle island.

Twist: The island is populated by dinosaurs, and the treasure is in a pteranodon's nest!

3. The pirates must brave traps and angry monkeys to steal treasure from an island temple.

Twist: After stealing the treasure, fog and wind make it impossible to leave the island. Can the pirates break the curse?

4. Dastardly pirates have stolen a magical trident from the mermaids: can the heroes retrieve it?

Twist: The trident controls the wind, making catching the thieves quite a challenge.

5. A stranger is found clinging to driftwood in the middle of the ocean. Can the pirates return him to land?

Twist: The stranger is the cunning Captain Bloodbottle. Marooned by his own crew, he has a plan to steal the hero's ship.

6. A huge storm drives the pirates far from home. Can they return to known waters?

Twist: To leave these strange waters they will need a magical compass.

7. The Pirate King wants to try the delicious coffee that comes from the unfindable island of Monta-Huli.

Twist: The island is unfindable because it moves! But a magic map exists that always shows its true location.

8. Rival pirates have stolen the hero's ship and left them on a deserted island – can they survive?

Twist: The coral reef off the island is home to mermaids and mermen. They'll help the pirates – but first they have to do something for them.

9. The terrifying ghost ship, The Wrecked Mary, has been sighted. It's said to be full of treasure.

Twist: The ship and its ghoulish crew can only be seen at night. If you're on board when the sun rises, you're trapped!

10. The direct voyage from Howling Rocks to Port Plenty has always been too dangerous to attempt, but the Pirate King has offered a rich reward to any crew that can make it.

Twist: Along the route is a fabulous, and deadly, treasure island that has lured all previous visitors to their doom.





Adventures Among the Stars

“Far beyond planet earth lies a world of adventure. Gleaming spaceships voyage from planet to planet, man meets alien, robots talk, and a universe awaits to be explored. What kind of hero will you be: a space ranger, a scientist, an alien, or a robot?”

Space Rangers

“A space ranger is an explorer, adventurer, and warrior. Pushing into the unknown, searching for new knowledge, wealth, or simply adventure. What is the name of your space ranger?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your space ranger look like? What do they wear? Do they have any special equipment? Do they have a space ship?”

Draw the space ranger onto the story sheet.

“Space rangers can do lots of things: what is your hero good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being daring
- ★ Fighting monsters

- ★ Flying spaceships
- ★ Navigating
- ★ Shooting lasers
- ★ Talking to aliens
- ★ Using computers

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

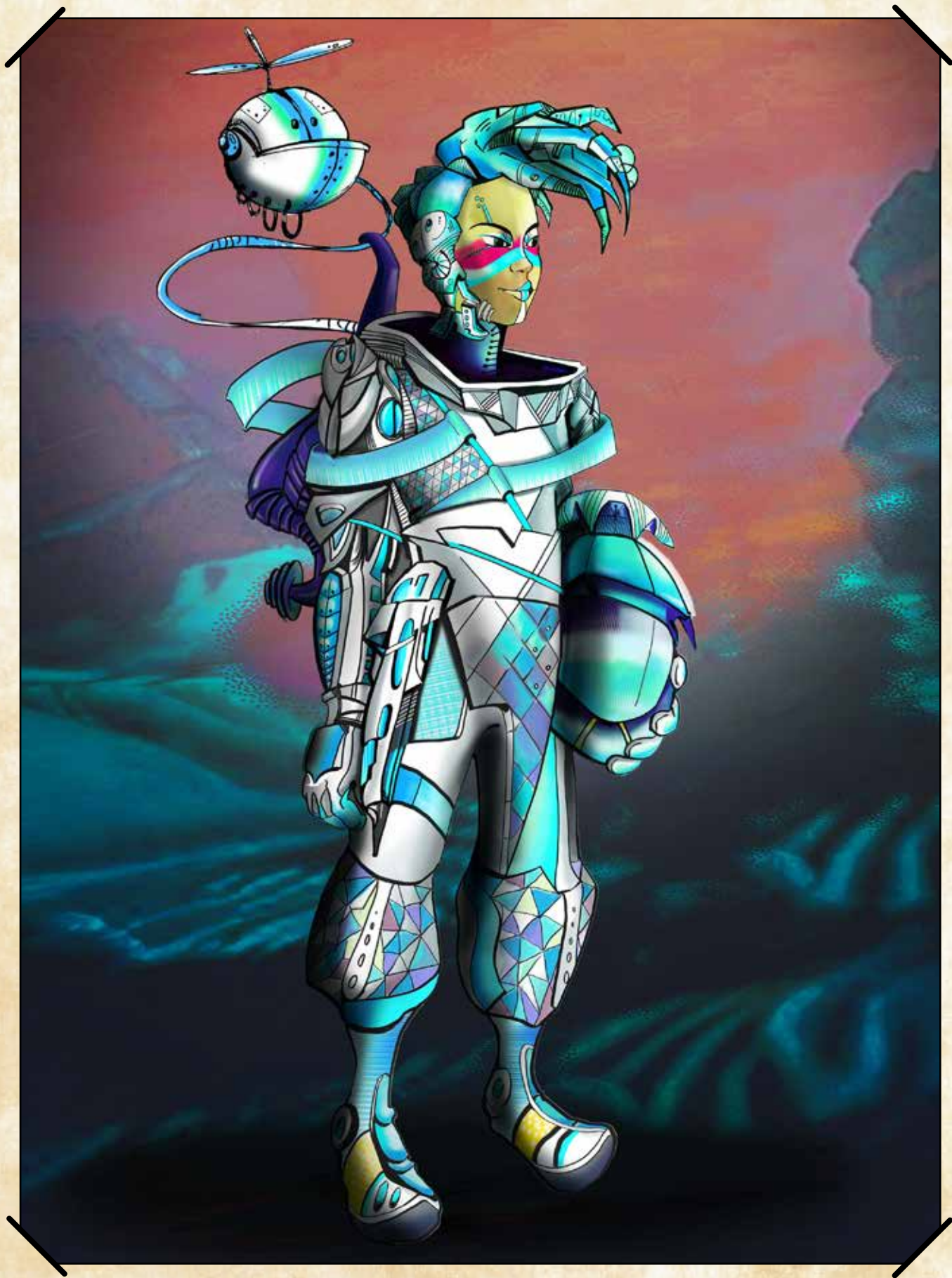
Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.







Scientists and inventors

“Scientists and inventors are always looking to discover new things. They love investigating new technology and solving problems by inventing new machines. What is the name of your scientist?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your scientist look like? What do they wear? Do they have a special invention or some tools that they always carry with them?”

Draw the scientist onto the story sheet.

“Scientists can do lots of things: what is your hero good at?”

Pick four of the following, or invent your own, and write onto the story sheet.

- ★ Being daring
- ★ Being fast
- ★ Doing science
- ★ Flying spaceships
- ★ Inventing things

- ★ Knowing things
- ★ Shooting lasers
- ★ Talking to aliens
- ★ Using computers

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.



Aliens

“Aliens abound in the galaxy. Some have five legs, some have none. Some have blue teeth, three eyes, and tentacles, some look almost exactly like us, just with an extra ear. Some are friendly, some are not. What is the name of your alien?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your alien look like? What colour are they? How many arms, legs, or tentacles do they have? What does it sound like when they speak? What do they eat?”

Draw the Alien onto the story sheet.

“Aliens can do lots of things: what is your hero good at?”

- ★ Being fast
- ★ Being scary
- ★ Being strong
- ★ Devouring things
- ★ Flying spaceships
- ★ Knowing things

- ★ Mind control
- ★ Shooting lasers

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.



Robots

“Robots come in all shapes and sizes. From robots the size of a house, to tiny mouse-sized ones. Robots help explore new worlds, protect spaceships, and assist scientists. What is the name of your robot?”

Fill in on the story sheet.

“What does your robot look like? What are they made out of? Do they have chrome trim? Do they have built-in gadgets? What do they sound like when they talk?”

Draw the robot onto the story sheet.

“Robots can do lots of things: what is your hero good at?”

- ★ Being strong
- ★ Fixing things
- ★ Flying spaceships
- ★ Navigating
- ★ hooting lasers
- ★ Talking to aliens
- ★ Using computers

“Which of these things is your hero best at?”

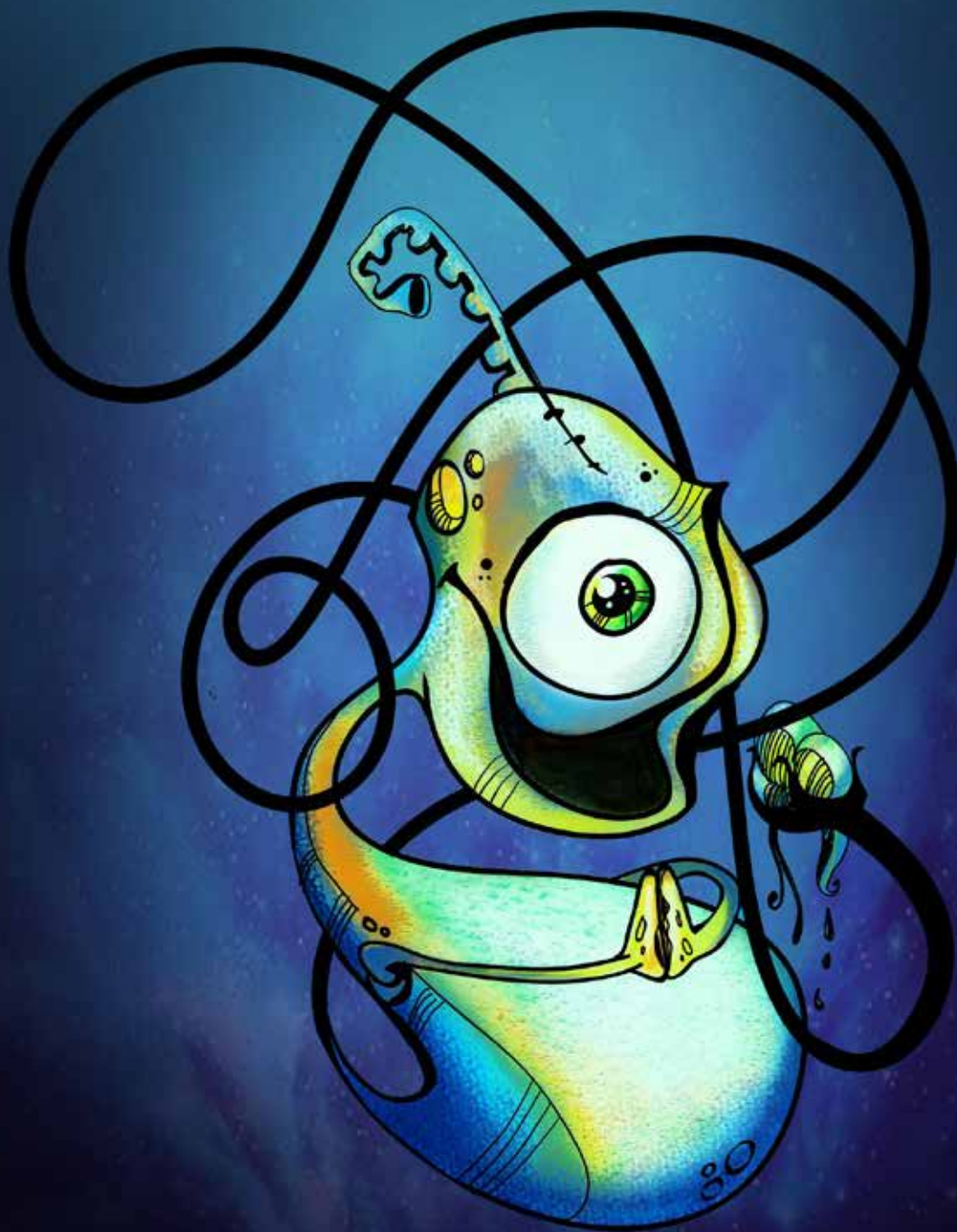
Write 12 as the dice size.

“What are they next best at?”

Write 10 as the dice size.

“Which of the last two are they best at?”

Write 8 as the dice size, and 6 as the dice size for the last one.



Suggested skills for Adventures Among the Stars

These are examples of the kinds of skills heroes among the stars might have, and the kinds of situations they might be used in. Feel free to invent your own, and keep interpretation of them as flexible as possible.

Being daring

Faced with petrifying aliens, black holes, dimensional rifts, and who knows what other hazards, ordinary folk might turn back. But a daring hero is brave enough to press on, even in the face of near certain doom.

Being fast

There's being fast, and then there's being really fast. Supernaturally fast. So fast no ordinary human could keep up. Really fast heroes can run, jetpack, or maybe even teleport at incredible speeds.

Being scary

There are plenty of frightening

things in space, and your hero is one of them. It could be the steely look in their eye that makes them so scary, or perhaps their tentacles, claws, and seven mouths. It's up to you.

Being strong

When you're exploring the galaxy, it helps to be strong. Able to lift up heavy machinery, wrestle giant alien monsters, or hold the airlock open against the vacuum of space. Strong heroes can do all these things, and more.

Devouring things

Aliens have all kinds of ways of eating things, including their enemies. Sometimes they chomp them in their massive jaws, and sometimes they wrap them up in sticky tentacles and digest them slowly. It doesn't matter: whatever an alien eats, stays eaten.

Doing science

Why is the transmatter unit not working? How can we track the Ulani fleet through the void? Is

that flower safe to eat? Doing science will reveal the answer to all these questions, and more.

Fighting monsters

Whether with bare hands, laser swords, or giant powered exoskeletons, sometimes alien monsters have to be fought. Heroes who are good at this will be a match for any foe.

Fixing things

If the hyperspace unit is out of order, if your communicator has been chewed on by a carnivorous snaarg, or if the rover unit is on the blink, you need to be good at fixing things.

Flying spaceships

Skirting the edges of black holes, piloting through asteroid fields, shaking off a swarm of enemy spaceships. This is the skill that lets you do all these things. Everyone else is stuck with the auto-pilot.

Inventing things

To create a way out of the interdimensional rift, just reverse the polarity on the teleporter and link it to the navigation system! Heroes who are good at inventing things do stuff like this all the time.

Knowing things

The skies on Belta 7 are deepest purple, the Zorgun Empire always appreciate gifts of honey and anchovies, the best place to find a Snookum is under a Gringledump. Those are just some of the things that ordinary people don't know, but heroes who know things do.

Mind control

Some aliens have the power to make others do what they want. Sometimes they do this through hypnotic eyes, or brain-waves; sometimes with their entrancing song. Mind control can do many things, but it can never make people hurt themselves.

Navigating

Space is vast, which can make finding things hard. And that's before you start thinking about wormholes, black holes, alternative dimensions, and rifts in the fabric of time and space. A good navigator can deal with all these things.

Shooting lasers

Some lasers go 'pew pew pew' and are part of spaceships, some go 'zzzap' and fit in your pocket. It doesn't matter: heroes who are good at shooting lasers are able to use them.

Talking to aliens

Gurglebrots communicate by waving their antennae, Kthaw talk in strange screeching noises, and Milbens hum intently. Heroes who can talk to aliens can communicate with any of these creatures.

Using computers

Download the plans of the enemy base, calculate the trajectory of the Patik 7 Meteor, and reconfigure the holo-sim. If your hero can use computers, they can do these things.



Making up stories for Adventures Among the Stars

Imagining Space

To make making up a story easier, think about the answer to some of these questions, or ask your child...

What is space like?

Is it big and empty, or full of planets? Are aliens friendly creatures that help people, or scary monsters out to conquer the earth? Are there space stations? What are they like? Does getting from one place to another take long?

What's the name of your spaceship?

If the hero has a spaceship be sure to learn all about it. How big is it, what kinds of gadgets does it have, is there an escape pod? How about lasers or torpedoes?

Accounting for a spaceship in a game can be tricky. See page 64 in the Pirate Seas section for advice on dealing with ships in games.

Science and magic

When it comes to inventing things, using computers, doing science, and mind control it's worth reviewing the guidance about using magic in stories on page 24. In stories these skills allow heroes to do amazing things, and that's how they're intended to work in this setting.

Who might you find among the stars?

All sorts of strange creatures can be found in space:

- ★ Asteroid-surfing space barnacles
- ★ Friendly blue jellyfish
- ★ Giant, peaceful interstellar moths
- ★ A hive mind of bear-like creatures
- ★ Little green men
- ★ Primitive civilisations
- ★ Convoys of merchant spaceships
- ★ Intelligent mushrooms
- ★ Escaped experimental organisms

- ★ Terrifying robot warriors

Hazards among the stars

Space is vast and empty, but somehow full of danger and excitement at the same time. Here are some examples:

- ★ A tiny hole in the spaceship
- ★ Asteroid fields
- ★ Rifts in the time-space continuum
- ★ Abandoned space stations
- ★ Supernovas
- ★ A fleet of ghost ships
- ★ Malfunctioning satellites
- ★ Drifting escape pods
- ★ Hurtling comets
- ★ Secret bases

Sounds among the stars

Firing rockets, whooshing doors, the hum of the life support system, bleeping robots, servo-motors, electronic voices, alien chatter, crackling radio...

Smells among the stars

Packaged food, rocket fuel, alien

flowers, machine oil, processed air...

Sights among the stars

Blazing stars, twin moons, planetary rings, looming space stations, derelict freighters, gleaming cities, fleets of spaceships, alien worlds...

Tastes among the stars

Alien ambrosia, food pills, shrink-wrapped rations, wriggling edible bugs...

Feelings among the stars

Zero gravity, smooth screens, the tingle of teleportation, slimy tentacles, engine heat, cold vacuum, rubbery space suits...

Story seeds for Adventures Among the Stars

Play these straight, combine them, or use the twists to add a bit more fun to the story:

1. The inhabitants of planet Xantor need a cure for a deadly disease. Can it be delivered in time?

Twist: The heroes must pass through sector 7, where the cure is viewed as dangerous contraband!

2. Prince Arim of planet Turan has been chased into exile by alien invaders. Can you help him reclaim his kingdom?

Twist: Prince Arim's younger sister invited the aliens in, and they have made her queen!

3. Chok Tan aliens are threatening a convoy of cargo ships. Can the heroes protect them?

Twist: The captain of one cargo ship has stolen alien treasures.

4. The primitive Grung inhabitants of an alien planet suffer under the tyrannical rule of an evil overlord.

Twist: The tyrant is a scientist from the hero's own world.

5. One by one the crew of Space Station Nautilus are disappearing.

Twist: A malfunctioning teleporter is sending them, one by one to the surface of Planet Nemo, from where there is no obvious means of escape.

6. A robot army, the Dilgon Swarm, is invading while demanding a treasure no-one has ever heard of.

Twist: The robots' Dilgon masters are long dead, they are running on autopilot.

7. A giant comet is hurtling toward planet Earth!

Twist: Aliens are riding on the comet, using it to sneak past Earth's defences!

8. An accident sees the heroes stranded on the deserted planet Thargo. They'll need to find specific parts to fix their ship and escape.

***Twist:** The planet is used as a secret base by a gang of smugglers. They won't be happy to see the heroes.*

9. A merchant wants the heroes to track down the rare Persipid flower, famed for its delicious smell. Can the heroes collect some?

***Twist:** Perisipid flowers only grow deep inside an active volcano on the jungle planet of Rhodor 5. The location is a closely guarded secret.*

10. A man claiming to be a time traveller from the 21st century is found drifting in space. To go back he needs his time machine, which is on the forbidden planet of Trajar.

***Twist:** He's not really a time traveller. He's a thief, trying to access Trajar's secrets.*

Story Sheet

My Hero's name is _____

My Hero is good at

Other important things about my hero are

My hero looks like this

Afterword

Amazing Tales was made possible by many people. In particular, thanks to:

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The Amazing Tales website features examples of stories made up with Amazing Tales and the latest news about the game. Take a look at: <https://amazingtalesblog.wordpress.com/read-amazing-tales/>

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AMAZING TALES

A GAME FOR CHILDREN WHO LOVE ADVENTURES

Amazing Tales is a roleplaying game, written to be played by children aged four and over together with their parents. With your child you will create an Amazing Tale, in about the time it takes to read a bedtime story.

Your child invents a hero, and decides what they will do at every step, while you conjure up a world of adventure. At key moments dice will decide if the hero succeeds.

IN THIS BOOK YOU WILL FIND

The short and simple Amazing Tales rules
Advice on creating Amazing Tales with your child
Four sample settings for Amazing Tales;
 The Deep Dark Wood
 Magical Kingdoms Long Ago
Pirate Seas and Adventures Beyond the Stars
Forty story seeds, amazing ideas
just waiting to become Amazing Tales

Needs dice!

AMAZING TALES CAN BE PLAYED WITH A SINGLE SIX-SIDED DICE.
BUT A D6, D8 D10 AND D12 ARE RECOMMENDED.

MARTIN LLOYD