



Libraries

June Bordas
Lindsey Shanks-Abel
Margherita Tramontano



LETTERS FROM THE FLAMING CRAB LIBRARIES

Publisher Alex Shanks-Abel

Development and Layout J Gray

Writers June Bordas, Lindsey Shanks-Abel, Margherita Tramontano

Editors/Playtesters Alex Shanks-Abel, J Gray, JEM, Lucas Palosaari, Joe Quello

Art ALA TechSource, Hermann Goll

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Letters from the Flaming Crab is a monthly series of Pathfinder-compatible supplements. Each Letter focuses on exploring a different topic to give gamemasters and players new, exciting options that can be dropped into any campaign.

Coming in August: Imaginary Friends

Coming in October: Religious Communities



I should have known our fortunes would take a turn for the worst. The Goddess of Fortune rarely smiles on anyone for long, after all, and our last several jaunts from plane to plane had been uneventful, peaceful, and even beneficial! Of course, it could not last. Imagine our surprise when, upon exiting the miasma between universes, the Flaming Crab found itself not in the sky but hovering a few scant inches above the floor in what appeared to be a massive library! The sudden appearance of our ship had caused an awful mess, knocking over scores of shelves and scattering texts everywhere.

Fortunately, none of the scholars or librarians present on that day were injured. It seemed we had somehow entered this universe inside the archives of a ~~very old~~ particularly prestigious college of magic. Exchanges of information immediately began. The scholars of the college were thrilled to learn more about our technology, magic, and travels. The more scholastically inclined among the crew, including my own beautiful Marina, were equally thrilled to learn what they could from this collection of knowledge.

Despite this happy circumstance, we find ourselves in a bit of a ~~bind~~ bind. When the Flaming Crab slips from one plane to another there is quite often an elemental effect. The portal seems to generate fire or lightning, ice or storms. How then can I take my ship away from this library without destroying the precious knowledge contained inside?

DATE	Day 1,210
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From the logs of Molly Shell, Captain of the UCS Flaming Crab



Libraries! These wonderful institutions hold a special place in the heart of any gamer. After all, even if a gamer has never visited a library as an institution, chances are they have a stack of game books on a shelf somewhere in their home. Their own personal library.

Still, there's little out there for GMs and players looking to insert a little library magic into their own game. There are rules for researching in libraries and for constructing them for such a purpose but they are all mechanics. There isn't much guidance for just what libraries might be in a fantasy society or how they might be inserted into an existing community.

This book, put together by scholars who love books, learning, and libraries, is our answer to that oversight.

Enjoy!

J Gray



A Brief History of Libraries

At its heart a library is simply a collection of recorded knowledge, whether it be written, spoken, or imaged. Libraries have been around since humans started to create documents, and the oldest examples we have come from Sumer in 2600 BCE. These first libraries were generally simple, containing archives of commercial transactions or inventories recorded on clay tablets. Libraries of this type were kept by the government or religious institutions. The first evidence of private libraries comes from the ancient port city of Ugarit in the Fertile Crescent. In addition to inventories and correspondence, these libraries contained texts of myths. Discovery of the 7th century BCE Library of Ashurbanipal, in modern-day Iraq, gave us the oldest known work of great literature, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, as well as omens, divinations, and texts on some sciences. The process of collecting these texts was primarily accomplished in two ways: sending scribes to copy texts held by other regions, and through warfare. In China, the oldest evidence we have for libraries comes from the Zhou Dynasty, and was overseen by the great Taoist philosopher Laozi.

The most famous of the ancient libraries, however, is undoubtedly the Library of Alexandria, which likely held tens or even hundreds of thousands of texts, with most being recorded on papyrus scrolls. Many scholars traveled from around the ancient world to learn from their collection about mathematics, natural sciences, and many other subjects. While many have heard about *the* burning of the library, in reality there were many fires that either partially or completely destroyed the collection at Alexandria, with its final destruction occurring in the late 3rd century CE.

During the classical period associated with Greece and Rome, the western world had both private and public libraries, with some public libraries allowing readers direct access to the texts. Most of the texts at the time were either written on parchment or papyrus scrolls. In the east, the Han Dynasty created three large imperial libraries, and it was there that Liu Xin created the world's first library classification system and book notation system. Texts were initially written on fine silk and stored in silk bags, but later also included wood-block printing on paper.

The European Middle Ages saw the proliferation of monastic libraries. Many of these libraries literally chained their books to the shelves, since texts were so rare and thus valuable. Books were occasionally loaned if provided with a security deposit, and this allowed for more texts to be copied and spread throughout Europe. However, this practice was put to a stop in 1212

by Pope Innocent III, who forbade the monasteries to loan out books.

Early in the Renaissance, the papal library was created, but in general libraries remained small due largely to the manual writing needed to produce copies. Thus many collections consisted of Greek, Roman, or biblical texts as these sources were considered the most valuable. The invention of the printing press radically changed the scope and scale of libraries. Libraries grew in size, but also began to hold more and more modern informational texts.

The golden years of libraries are largely considered to be during the 17th and 18th centuries. During this time period, many libraries were established throughout Europe, and some of these are considered to be the first public libraries. The 18th century saw a rise in the subscription libraries, where members paid a fee to have access to a library's materials. However, increased demand soon led to the creation of circulating libraries, with the first being opened in 1737. While subscription libraries were often focused on a narrow range of subjects, circulating libraries contained books on a range of topics, including fiction novels, and allowed members of the library to borrow materials.

The first modern national library was founded alongside the British Museum in 1753. It was vastly different in that it was run by the state, not a religion or private owner, and it was free and fully open to the public. Additionally, it was not focused on a specific topic, but aimed to collect knowledge of everything it possibly could. Perhaps the most famous example of a national library is the American Library of Congress, which was initially established in 1783.

Although the subscription and circulating libraries of the past seem similar to the modern library, the first truly modern library system was established in Britain with the Public Libraries Act of 1850. This piece of legislation gave power to local governments to create completely free public lending libraries. Today, libraries are not only brick and mortar institutions which serve as centers of learning and the community, but also vast digital archives available to anyone, anywhere in the world.

What is a Library?

Fantasy settings seem to go along well with libraries. Many famous sagas deal with a library sooner or later.

But what exactly is a library? Just saying "a collection of books" is too narrow a definition. The very concept of "book" greatly changes depending on the era and location. Books were once handwritten rolls of papyrus or parchment in ancient Europe. Even before, they could be etched on tablets. History and legends have been recorded as mosaics and frescoes on walls, pictures on vases, bas-reliefs, and in oral traditions. After all, not all knowledge is written. Even in modern libraries, one can often find collections of videos, sound recordings, and audio books.

Perhaps a good definition, then, is as follows.

"A library is a collection of information and/or entertainment, often, but not always, composed of written words".

However, this is only a technical definition, because a good library is so much more. A good library is an endless adventure.

Each book is a portal to the mind of its writer, and the fantastic world kept inside it- whether it's a pirate story, a heroic chivalric saga, a fairy tale, or a text of medicine or mathematics. In many tales, a library is the preferred place for adventurers to research information, but it is also a labyrinth where a million minds and universes are cramped together, a place of strange and unusual encounters, a mysterious house of forbidden lore, or a gateway to other planes. The secret you need to beat the dragon can be within the page of a book; a book can give you the long-yearned answer to your deepest question; or you just can spend countless hours dreaming on a story well written. There is always something of interest to be found in a library.



Where do you research your knowledge? A Lovecraftian university building guarded by a mutated custodian? A lost collection of forgotten scrolls hidden away in some ancient desert? A magical cavern where enchanted stones continuously inscribe themselves with exquisite verses in an unknown language, documenting the events of creation? A never ending collection of every possible combination of letters in every current, extinct, and yet to be alphabet? An intricate web of quipu spun by a giant sage spider between a jungle's tallest trees? A regal palace where a godly scribe dutifully registers a world's past and future? And what about a living library: a collection of people, each charged to preserve one book in their memory or on their skin? The possibilities are infinite!

Building Libraries for Verisimilitude

Libraries can pose a problem for a GM. It can be hard to make "learning montages" feel as gratifying as the thrill of combat or roleplay. But, with a little forethought, libraries can be a wonderful opportunity to create mystery, depth, and history to any campaign world.

Whether it's an airy marble-floored gallery, a rack of dusty shelves, a hidden cache of buried clay tablets, or an infinite crystal bound mind-scape, libraries say a lot about the world around them. Just as art or books can inform and shape a culture, the knowledge that a culture saves is a powerful reflection of its values. Whatever the trappings, when building libraries for your own campaign world, there are several things to consider. In addition to the categories already presented in a standard library stat block, gamemasters should also consider a library's type, access, circulation, and audience.

Type

Libraries may be communal affairs where patrons and visitors can borrow and return books freely (sometimes with heavy fees, fines, and penalties for overdue books), or they may be merely for reference, with restrictions on borrowing books, or even on making copies of contained information. When considering lending libraries, the more precious a library considers each copy of its works, the more strict their rules regarding lending will tend to be. Public civic libraries will tend to allow lending, though they may have requirements such as registration or fees for the privilege. An authoritarian state might charge a steep fee for borrowing and might even require damage deposit or collateral. Particularly paranoid or harsh societies may even utilize magic to enforce their rules, placing *lesser geas* or even *curse* on those who fail to return their books on time.

The easiest way to protect the information in a library is to make sure it never leaves. Most reference libraries

typically have someone or something keeping people from simply walking away with their precious books. A library might chain their books to shelves, use wards and magic to keep their books in place, or simply carve their information into the walls themselves. More actively, they might engage librarians, curators, or guards to ensure that the libraries' works remain safe. Psychic or virtual libraries built in mindscapes or demi-planes might simply not have any physical means of transferring or tampering with the information to begin with.

Access

A civil democracy that prizes knowledge may make their libraries (or at least some of them) open to anyone, while guilds and magical societies may charge a fee to use their libraries. A religious cult might only open their halls to initiated members. Personal or hidden libraries could be even be harder to access, tucked away in hidden or remote locations or protected by spells, traps and wards. For particularly hidden or powerful knowledge, simply finding the library could be an adventure in itself!

In general, libraries should reflect both the society, group, or person that created them as well as the type of information contained within them. The more authoritarian or oppressive the culture, the harder it will be to access information (or at least the harder it will be to access useful information), and the more dangerous or powerful the information, the more likely that information is to be hidden or concealed. While the official history of a famous king is likely open and public knowledge in every hall of learning in the kingdom, the journal of the midwife who delivered the king where she suggests that he might have been a tiefling is likely very well hidden knowledge indeed.

Circulation

Not all libraries are in the business of keeping secrets. Libraries built for knowledge and learning tend to allow for some level of circulation, whether it is assisted (a guide, librarian, or other entity brings forth the requested information) or open (anyone with access to the library is free to explore the collection). As a general rule, the more massive and wide in scope a given collection of knowledge, the more likely it is to be assisted. This is presuming that the library's creator is willing to pay the enormous expense assistance entails. Whether they are employees, magical constructs, or bound spirits, skilled labor and knowledge are never cheap.

Curators, librarians, and assistants should be more than just a card catalogue; they may serve as stewards, gatekeepers, and guardians, ensuring that valuable knowledge is passed on to users who they deem worthy. From a game-play standpoint, a curator or librarian is a wonderful opportunity to pose new challenges or give help to players who may be struggling with a given investigation. Characters in their own right, curators allow a GM to inject more direct roleplaying into a research portion of an investigation.

Discovering how to better utilize a curator's skills can give non-research based characters another way of supporting the primary researcher without reducing the investigation to a quickly repeated series of static dice rolls.

Librarians and other assistants can have a wide array of attitudes toward the PCs and may be influenced just as any other NPC (though influencing constructs or bound spirits may be quite a tricky proposition). Similarly, their attitude should impact the level of assistance they are willing to provide. Libraries with open circulation tend to be either highly specialized, private affairs or large public general information systems whose size, scope, and attendance make it infeasible to have an individual curator assist every group of researchers. Either way, the key to effectively using an open circulation library is in understanding its organizational scheme.

Every library is organized in some fashion. This organization might be highly regimented, with shelving by subject with multiple levels of suborganization, or something much more organic, such as a piling of books on the floor in the order they were last read. As a rule, the more individuals a library's creator expects to use the library, the more systematic the organizational scheme will be.

Bookstores, libraries, catalogs, and museums can offer some great inspiration for how to organize information (though using the dewey decimal system in your campaign world will likely strain verisimilitude). Likewise, more private or secret libraries can be a wonderful chance to interject strange or novel organizational schemes (such as books grouped by moods or memories linked to particular smells). Regardless of the sort, a library's organization and structure should say something about its creator(s) purpose and audience.

Audience

Often, when thinking of fantasy libraries, it can be easy to think of a library's creator, be they an eccentric wizard or long dead cult, but thinking about a library's audience can be just as critical to determining its place in the world. Ultimately, libraries are tools, and tools are built for their users. When building your own libraries, think about who, when, how, and why of its use. Libraries used by common folk in a grecian style city-state will likely be very different in type, circulation, and access than the restricted necromantic research library of a lich.

Curator Attitude

Hostile: A hostile curator actively attempts to ensure the PC's failure by providing incorrect information (acts as -4 circumstance penalty to research checks within the library), or by outright attempting to remove them by force (social, political, or lethal as appropriate), or both! Curators who begin with this attitude toward the PCs should be considered a separate challenge from the library itself and should award gold and experience accordingly. A necromancer's ancient vault of souls guarded by the bound ghost of her slain apprentice is an example of a library with a hostile curator.

Unfriendly: An unfriendly curator is willing to provide nothing more than the barest required amount of assistance. Unfriendly curators tend to answer posed questions or pull requested books or materials for the PCs, but such answers and information may be overly literal, ambiguous, or otherwise unhelpful. Working in such a library applies a -2 circumstance penalty to research checks within the library. A labyrinthine library of unlabeled tomes curated by a cleric of secrets and riddles who takes glee in leading people astray is an example of a library with an unfriendly curator.

Neutral: A neutral curator provides the sort of service we would expect from a modern library system. They answer questions directly and with basic information and accuracy (they take 10 on checks for Knowledge skills they have ranks in) and may make reasonable suggestions if such a suggestion is likely to reduce the amount of time the PCs require their assistance. The massive research libraries of a magical academy, staffed by dozens of post-graduate students working on their own projects, is an example of a library with neutral curators.

Friendly: A friendly curator makes research easier. They preempt questions, suggest alternate paths of research, and will often work to help the PC's better understand the nature, implications, and context for their chosen topics. Friendly curators apply a +2 circumstance bonus to research actions taken within their library. A meta-planar library created by a good deity of knowledge and staffed by helpful Lantern Archons who are happy to aid any goodly adventures is an example of a library with friendly curators. (Or a hostile one depending on your PC's alignment)

Helpful: Using a library with a helpful curator is like asking a good friend for advice. Helpful curators are often willing to lend their own insight and skills to any research tasks, and may actively pursue further research in a topic without request if it seems like such work could be beneficial. Helpful curators will often aid the PCs directly (count as an automatically successful aid-another action which counts toward the limit of research assistants) in addition to providing a +2 circumstance bonus to research checks. Also, helpful curators might even take over an investigation while the PCs are off adventuring (though doing so will remove the library from play as an encounter, and should thus be used very sparingly). A young witch deciphering an odd collection of writings from a hag's coven in order to help the adventurers defeat the coven and save her village is an example of a library with a helpful curator.

Types of Libraries

There are many categories of library and they can serve a variety of functions. The following entries provide gamemasters both general concepts of library types to serve as inspiration as well as specific examples which can be plugged into a setting.

These sample libraries have been constructed using rules presented in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. For some libraries, one or more of the categories in the stat block might be marked as N/A because they do not apply.



Reading a Library Stat Block

The libraries presented below use the following format.

Library Name: This is the name of the library, archive, book, or other repository of knowledge.

CR: This is the CR of the library, representing its complexity and the possible dangers found within it.

XP: This entry lists the experience points gained for reducing the library to 0 kp.

Complexity: This value is the DC of the Research check required to reduce the library's kp.

Languages: This lists the languages necessary to navigate the library without magical aid or Linguistic checks. If a library has multiple languages, and the researcher does not possess the ability to read all the listed languages, she can still attempt checks, but for each language she doesn't know, she takes a -2 penalty on Research checks.

Type: Libraries can be Circulating/Lending, where books can be removed from the building by patrons, or Reference, where books are not allowed to leave the premises. This category is new for this document and not present in standard library stat blocks as presented in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*.

Access: This category offers a brief description of who has access to a library or how access might be gained. This category is new for this document and not present in standard library stat blocks as presented in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*.

Circulation: Libraries are either Assisted, meaning patrons are not allowed to peruse the books and instead must rely on staff to bring them requested texts, or Open, meaning patrons are allowed to search through the stacks themselves. This category is new for this document and not present in standard library stat blocks as presented in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*.

Research Check: This entry lists the skills (usually Knowledge skills) that can be used to attempt Research checks. If a library allows untrained Knowledge checks due to the extensiveness of its collections, that is noted in this section as well.

Knowledge Bonus: This entry lists the bonus (if any) a library grants on specific Knowledge checks. This bonus applies to all of the Knowledge skills that can be used for Research checks in that library, and affects all such checks attempted by a character inside a library or studying its contents, whether they are Research checks or single Knowledge checks.

kp: This entry lists the library's maximum number of knowledge points.

Research Thresholds: These entries list a library's research thresholds, and the specific piece of information learned at each threshold.

Some library stat blocks might contain additional information, including:

Library Encounters: Suggested encounters which might occur while PCs are inside a library.

Penalty for Failure: Problems or obstacles which might occur if a PC fails a research check.

Research Rewards: Possible treasures or benefits which PCs might find during their time in the library.

Academic Libraries

These libraries are associated with and utilized by academic institutions. The collections can be on a specific subject or range across many different fields of study, but are almost always limited to those taught by the institution in question.

Dwarven Mining College Library

A mining college set in a medium-sized dwarven town hosts a rather large collection of books describing the process for mining a multitude of materials, as well as documents detailing local mining operations.

Dwarven Mining College Library

CR 7

XP 3,200

Complexity 19 (easy)

Languages Common, Dwarven

Type circulating/lending library

Access Requirements organizational (staff or student of the college or with the written permission of the college dean)

Circulation open

Research Check Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (dungeoneering), or Craft (armor); **Knowledge Bonus** +3

kp 19

Research Thresholds

kp 15 Several mines have been closed recently due to infestations of dangerous fungi and slimes. A reward is being offered by the mining guild if the infestations can be cleared out.

kp 10 The infestations are recent and the histories show these creatures are not native to the area.

kp 5 A detailed report on rival mining concerns is found. Of particular note is the existence of a human and gnomish group which has a history of claim jumping.

kp 0 This area of the world is filled with many profitable mithril and iron mining operations. Buried deep in the stacks are old maps listing locations where untapped veins might be located.

Children's Libraries

Children's libraries exist primarily to entertain and educate the youth of a settlement. They are often attached to schools or temples dedicated to children.

Jolly Charred's Wagon of Wonders

Jolly Charred is a well-known and welcome figure across the countryside. The cheerful, bearded gnome wanders

from town to town with his donkey-trained wagon full of illustrated books and his arrival is always heralded by crowds of excited children. The traveling library and its curator survive entirely on voluntary fees and there's always someone willing to offer him a meal or a room for the night.

Jolly Charred only stays in each settlement for a single day; avid readers are forced to follow him on his route or to wait for his return.

Jolly Charred's Wagon of Wonders

CR 5

XP 1,600

Complexity 16 (easy) for children, 26 (difficult) for adults

Languages Common, Special (see below)

Type reference library

Access Requirements free to the public (voluntary donations accepted)

Circulation open

Research Check Knowledge (local) or Perform (oratory, sing); only children can try research checks untrained. **Knowledge Bonus** +5 (only for children)

kp 15

Additional Languages Some books are written in strange symbols that can't be deciphered with a Linguistics checks. Only children seem to understand the script but, if asked, they won't be able to explain what they read.

Library Encounters Charred (male NG gnome medium [storyteller] 6) is a good fellow who really likes children and wants them to enjoy the diverse experiences they can make with his books. He ensures that no visitor is ever in real danger.

Research Thresholds

kp 10 Dreams are real. Being able to daydream just means that you can contact the Dimension of Dreams, where all the stories come from.



kp 5 If you can imagine it, a portal exists at the back of the wagon. Beyond waits a young dream dragon eager to carry playmates around for a trip. The dragon always returns her playmates by dinner time.

kp 0 The command word to access the portal for the Dimension of Dreams is “hoplala.”

Lost Libraries

No matter the reason for seeking it out, a lost library is an adventure in itself. Whether under the sands of a desert, in a deep jungle, or beneath the eternal snows of a glacier, archeologists and scholars dream of finding one of these time-spared treasure chambers.

Mistress Sandwind's Opera Omnia

Legends of the bard Sandwind depict her as both erudite and eclectic. More than 500 masterworks are credited to her name. The most famous, “The Epic of the Noble Prince and His Companions”, was left unfinished. Many have attempted to write a conclusion but with poor results. Stories tell that in a forgotten edifice under the desert, where Mistress Sandwind's natal city was covered by the shifting sands, every work written by her lies in wait, including the ones she never shared with the world.

Mistress Sandwind's Opera Omnia

CR 18

XP 153,600

Complexity 46 (difficult)

Languages A rare and ancient dialect of Common

Type n/a

Access Requirements n/a

Circulation n/a

Research Check Linguistics, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (engineering), or Knowledge (history);
Knowledge Bonus +5

kp 54

Library Encounters There is a 20 percent chance any entrance within the library has been obstructed by fallen stone and sand. A Knowledge (dungeoneering) check with a DC equal to the library's remaining kp and 1d4 hours of work are needed to clear any obstructed doorway.

Characters from Mistress Sandwind's stories occasionally drift free of their pages and wander the halls as ghosts. Researchers who gain the trust of one of these ghosts also gain their help and receive a +2 circumstance bonus on their next research check.

Research Rewards Bards who discover the Epic's real ending gain a masterpiece of their choice. They must meet the prerequisites for the masterpiece but do not need to otherwise pay the cost for it.

Research Thresholds

kp 50 If a good-aligned person picks up the quill near the Mistress's notebooks, they will be affected as with the automatic writing oracle revelation, and the pen will write the true end of “The Noble Prince and His Companions”.

kp 40 A scroll reveals that writing the true names of the characters of “The Noble Prince and His Companions” in order of appearance on a certain window in the library while shining light through it will reveal a secret door which leads to Mistress Sandwind's private study.

kp 30 Mistress Sandwind developed religious leanings in her final years and wrote a detailed account of her beliefs. These writings could form the basis of a new religion, centered on Sandwind as a goddess of the arts.

kp 20 Three unpublished or lost stories can be found in a remote corner of the building. Each is worth 3,000 gp to the right collector.

kp 10 A scribbled note in the Mistress's handwriting gives the true names of the characters in “The Noble Prince and His Companions”. It turns out the Epic is a true story and this knowledge could reshape the current understanding of history.

kp 5 Mistress Sandwind dedicated her life to her masterwork and left behind two volumes of notes about the ending in a hidden safe somewhere in the library.

kp 0 The location, but not the combination, of the hidden safe has been carefully marked on a map carved into the underside of the top shelf of a single scroll shelf.

National Libraries

National libraries are founded by the state for the express purpose of keeping official records and retaining the knowledge created by its citizens. They are usually under the direct supervision of a government agency, although the task may occasionally be outsourced to a trusted organization or religion.

Museum Verborum Dierum

A massive sprawling complex of stone built on the top of a hill near the capital, the Museum Verborum Dierum contains the official records of every transfer of property, estate, and heredity since the founding of the empire. While general inquiries are handled by servants at the Museum's lower annexes, the shackled and half-forgotten tomes of the lower stacks hide secrets that could shake the empire to its core.

Museum Verborum Dierum

CR 10

XP 9,600

Complexity 34 (challenging)

Languages Common, Infernal

Type reference library

Access Requirements A sealed records request letter signed by a high-ranking government official or landed member of a founding family. Records requests remain valid for a maximum of one fortnight.

Circulation assisted (Curator is unfriendly). Lower stacks are hidden and forbidden.

Research Check Knowledge (local), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (nobility), or Knowledge (planes)

kp 30

Research Thresholds

kp 25 The first empress was crowned not by consensus vote as the official histories report, but rather after all of her rival nobles were killed simultaneously in a single night. Eye-witnesses reported seeing “a choking cloud of shadow and fire”.

kp 20 Many records of the early empire have been “restored” after a catastrophic fire which consumed the Turiline hill 700 years previous. Their fragmented content bears obvious redaction and several edits.

kp 15 A curious carving in scrawled Infernal reads: “Lower Stacks.” The hill that now contains the Museum Verborum Dierum was originally named the Turiline after an extinguished noble family who originally settled the area. Maps of the time show several catacombs and viaducts that may still connect to the Museum’s lower levels, which are off limits to almost everyone.

kp 10 The now prominent Porterini family is first mentioned in record as the recipient of a small parcel of land outside the main gates of the city. The records receipts reads “for services rendered.” and the date corresponds to the coronation day of the first empress.

kp 5 Study of the hidden lineages of each of the original founding houses include several polysyllabic names, with diphthongs foreign to the common tongue. The names seem to all be epithets in infernal.

kp 0 A court reporter’s record of the first empress includes record of 100 captives and prisoners being executed in honor of The Archfiend Amaraxizks. A copy of her prepared notes includes an anagram of the fiend’s true name.

Private Libraries

While organizations and institutions are best known for gathering and organizing knowledge, individuals can do so as well. Many wizards, scholars, and nobles have their own private libraries which can range from a few volumes to a size which rivals the stacks of any college.

The Court of Lishaz, Sage of Winter

Not a library in the traditional sense, the Court of Lishaz is a bustling hub of information. Here, some of the finest scholars from the planes live and study, giving

what they discover as tribute to their most gracious host, the norn Lishaz. Outside, hundreds of confused and lost souls who bartered too much and too foolishly wander aimlessly; for amidst the cold blue blossoms and aspen colored walls, secrets and lore are the standard of trade. Anything can be learned, if you’re willing to pay the price. Research in the library is conducted by arranging an audience with Lishaz herself, who serves as the curator. She often requires payment in the form of knowledge and interesting facts, which she turns into motes of golden light and spins into thread with her ashen spindle. She takes pleasure in revealing just enough information to entice another question or line of research. She also has a soft spot for storytelling and has been known to accept a good falsehood just as readily as a vigorously researched truth.

The Court of Lishaz, Sage of Winter

CR 15

XP 51,200

Complexity 45 (average)

Languages (Sylvan, Aklo)

Type n/a

Access Requirement paid (one true and personal secret per piece of knowledge gained)

Circulation assisted

Research Check Knowledge (Planes), Knowledge (Nature), Perform (Oratory) Untrained.

kp 45

Penalty for Failure After 3 failed research checks in a row, the researcher finds themselves unable to use one Knowledge or Profession skill, randomly determined, for 1d100 days. They automatically fail at any check involving that skill.

Research Reward Upon reaching the kp 30 threshold, the researcher discovers a useful map of the planes. When using *planeshift* the caster now arrives within 1 to 100 miles (d%) of their intended location instead of the usual 5 to 500 miles (5d%).

Research Thresholds

kp 40 Many of the older fey remember the time before the birth of the material plane and as such might have a vast understanding of planar relations and the spaces between them.

kp 30 Many different planes bleed into the material plane in places where the work of creation was left unfinished.

kp 20 Lishaz’s enormous golden gown is actually woven of the memories and stories that seekers have spent in her court. Most of the wandering lost outside could be restored their memories and lives, if you could just untangle the right thread...

kp 10 Many powerful secrets have been willingly traded to Lishaz for safe-keeping from psychic threats and prying divinations, including: secrets to immortality, the location of a lich’s phylactery, formula, and causes and cures

for many powerful curses, diseases and calamities.

kp 0 Lishaz will part with any thread of her gown, any secret that she holds, in exchange for a vast amount of experiences. Anyone who trades in this fashion is permanently reduced one level which cannot be regained except through experience.

Public Libraries

Public libraries are open and free to any who care to use them, though they may restrict access to some services to residents of the area they serve. Public libraries are usually run by a local government but, occasionally, they are administered instead by a religious or educational institution.

The Library of the Sunken City

Deep beneath the waves, the sunken city lies nestled in a kelp forest. Its glimmering pearl of air houses several thousand residents: all that remain of an ancient and magical civilization. Over the years, this tranquil utopia has accumulated a vast sum of knowledge, which they are happy to share with all who can reach them.

Library of the Sunken City

CR 6

XP 2,400

Complexity 18 (average)

Languages (Common, Aquan)

Type Circulating Library for residents, Reference for visitors

Access Requirement Any resident or visitor to the city is welcome to use the library.

Circulation open, penalty for late books is light community service.

Research Check Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Planes), or Profession (Sailor).

kp 18

Research Reward Researchers who obtain copies of

the maps discovered at kp 10 receive a +2 to Profession (sailor) checks when navigating a ship.

Research Thresholds

kp 15 There is a slipstream which traverses the globe and can shave time off of a journey.

kp 10 The slipstream current branches off and rejoins like a river several times along its length.

kp 5 There is an underwater passage into the underdark off the southern coast guarded by sahuagin.

kp 0 There is a portal to the plain of elemental water at the end of one of the slipstream's branches.

Reading Rooms

Reading rooms are small reference libraries, often run by private organizations such as churches, museums, or even wealthy individuals. Often they are a single room within a larger building, thus giving the term its name.

Lidiana's Book Nook

In a bright corner of the thatched roof hut, under a simple horn chandelier and beneath a wicker shutter window lie two rough wooden bookcases. On the nearby wall, a charcoal mural depicts the surrounding area in surprising detail, flanked by several shelves which protrude from the daub. On the shelves and in the bookcases lie dozens of bark-bound books. This library is the private collection of a halfling witch and contains tomes detailing several uses for local plants and berries.

Lidiana's Book Nook

CR 3

XP 800

Complexity 14 (easy)

Languages Common, Sylvan

Type reference library

Access Requirements acceptance by Lidiana.

Circulation open



Research Check Knowledge (nature), Profession (herbalist), Survival

kp 9

Research Rewards Readers who reach kp 9 gain a +2 insight bonus to Knowledge (nature) and Survival checks made within the forest.

Research Thresholds

kp 9 Many of the region's native plants are edible or have medicinal properties.

kp 7 The foul-smelling grey speckled mushrooms that grow under fallen trees are actually edible if boiled in a mixture of potash and water.

kp 5 The broad tri-parted leaves of the endemic briar thistle or stauchweed are covered in tiny hairs which produce a gel when bruised that aids in coagulation.

kp 0 Deep in the forest is a magical oak tree with golden bark and vibrant purple leaves that produces sweet acorns. These seeds are the favorite treats of the local fey.

Religious Libraries

A religious library is run by a temple and most often specializes in theological texts dedicated to subjects held sacred by the temple's ruling deity.

The Temple of Healing's Medical Collection

This huge facility is attached to the biggest temple and hospital of the local deity of healing. It houses hundreds of volumes on anatomy, herbs, healing magic, strange and alternative medicines, and the handwritten notes of all the clerical and lay doctors who serve and have served in the hospital. The priests are very proud and protective of their collection.

The Temple of Healing's Medical Collection CR 9

XP 6,400

Complexity 27 (average)

Languages Common

Type reference library

Access Requirements organizational (staff of the temple or hospital or with the written permission of the grand cleric)

Circulation assisted

Research Check Knowledge (religion) or Heal; **Knowledge Bonus** +3

kp 27

Penalty for Failure After 3 failed research checks in a row, the library's kp reverts to the maximum and the characters must begin anew.

Research Rewards Some volumes in the library aren't

actually medical or theological texts. When the kp has been reduced to half, there's a 10% (non-cumulative) chance of finding an ancient manuscript of a long lost epic poem with each successful research check. Sages and experts will pay 1,000 gp for an accurate copy of the poem.

Research Thresholds

kp 25 According to the notes of, a recently deceased paladin named Wasinggh, a touch of her holy longsword could give normal water the effect of a *remove disease* spell for one hour, once per day.

kp 20 The village of Meridai is famous for its curative sacred springs and there have been no deaths due to illness within its borders for over three centuries.

kp 15 Wasinggh's longsword was stolen from her tomb by an ex-cleric who was seduced by a dark god.

kp 10 A yellowed note within a formula book holds a list of ingredients needed to craft a healer's kit which provides a +5 circumstance bonus on Heal checks instead of the usual +2, but costs only 10 gp more.

kp 5 The green hand plague is caused by ingesting sick woman's finger, a common local herb used in a multitude of dishes. The reason the cause of the plague isn't better known is because so few people are susceptible to it.

Green Hand Plague

This disease is so named because it dissolves the iron in the blood, causing the skin to turn pale and greenish in color. The discoloration of the skin begins in the hands but progresses to the rest of the body as the effects of the disease grow. Other symptoms include extreme weariness and a painful swelling on the joints.

Type disease, ingested (see note); **Save** Fortitude DC 20

Track physical; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1 Con damage, 1 Dex damage

Cure 3 consecutive saves or ingesting sick woman's finger which has been bathed in the light of the new moon for one hour.

Note: Green hand plague is contracted by eating the spice sick woman's finger but only a rare few are susceptible to the disease. To determine if a creature can contract the disease, roll 1d100 after eating food containing sick woman's finger for the first time. On a roll of 1, the creature contracts the disease. Even if cured, the inflicted creature does not gain immunity and will automatically contract the disease if they eat food containing sick woman's finger again. Creatures who do not roll a 1 are immune to the disease and need not roll again if they eat food containing sick woman's finger.

kp 0 While sick woman's finger is the cause of the green hand plague, it is also the cure, but only when bathed in the light of the new moon for one hour.

Research Libraries

Research libraries are meant to aid in the exploration of specific areas of study. These libraries can be associated with an academic institution, religious institution, discipline-specific associations such as a trade group or crafting guild, or even private researchers.

The Eccentric Professor's Library

A large capital city sits atop the ruins of an old civilization. Every 150 years a mysterious plague sweeps through the city and it is due in just a few short weeks. In an ancient tomb just outside the city, a local professor found a cache of remarkably well preserved texts. The professor moved many of the texts to his private library in the city and was researching a potential cure for the plague when he went missing. The city's rulers are looking for a group to pick up where the professor left off. The collection is comprised of the professor's notes, as well as many clay tablets and papyrus scrolls written in an archaic language.

The Eccentric Professor's Library

CR 13

XP 25,600

Complexity 33 (average)

Languages Common, Archaic Pictographs

Type n/a

Access Requirements n/a

Circulation n/a

Research Check Knowledge (history), Heal, or Linguistics; Knowledge Bonus +4

kp 40

Research Rewards Bringing the library down to kp 20 will grant the players a +2 competence to all Heal checks made within the library, while reducing the library to kp 0 automatically adds the archaic pictograph language to their languages list without needing an additional rank in the Linguistics skill.

Research Thresholds

kp 35 The plague is arcane in nature and cannot be cured by divine spells.

kp 30 A cypher, in the form of a clay tablet, is discovered which now enables the entire party to understand the archaic pictographs so long as they have the tablet with them.

kp 25 The plague is caused by the awakening of a demon, who causes havoc for about five years before sinking back into hibernation. Due to its immense power, the ancient civilization found it easier to invent a cure than to try to banish or destroy the demon.

kp 20 A recipe for the cure of the plague lies somewhere deep within the main treasure chamber of the tomb where the texts were found, along with several ceramic jars of pre-prepared solution. The solution is likely too old to be used.

kp 10 A mummy that lies in a sarcophagus buried underneath the floor of the tomb where the texts were found has a detailed map of all the traps within the tomb tattooed onto its dried, shriveled skin.

kp 0 The old professor's notes suggests a cure for the plague does exist, and details the location of a secret door within the tomb where he found the cache of scrolls and tablets.



Virtual Libraries

Not all libraries occupy physical space. In the modern age, a great deal of information is only available digitally via the internet. In a fantasy setting, virtual libraries might take the form of ancient spirits resting in the Akashic Record, balls of light in a pocket plane, as memories contained inside a treant's mind, or within an ancient bronze lamp.

MILI the Skyshard

One of the last pieces of an ancient structure that fell from the sky thousands of years ago, this clear irregular rhomboid gem glows with a calming green light. A glimmer shines through the crystal prism, bathing the room in brilliant rays of color. A level voice chimes. "Welcome, scholar. I am MILI. What is your inquiry?" MILI is an artificial learning construct from a crashed starship with vast amounts of information concerning the local galaxy and technical data on advanced technology. Sadly, much of the data was lost due to damage caused by the crash.

MILI the Skyshard

CR 8

Complexity 24 (easy)

Languages (any)

Type n/a

Access Requirement physical access to the rhomboid.

Circulation assisted (MILI starts off as neutral to all new users)

Research Check: Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (engineering), Linguistics.

kp 24

Research Rewards Upon reaching the kp 0 threshold, the researcher gains enough knowledge to repair the crashed starship.

Research Thresholds

kp 20 There are several inhabited nearby planets, which host their own civilizations and cultures. MILI stands for "Multimedia Interactive Learning Interface".

kp 15 There's a small planetoid in the outer planetary belt filled with heated water and a massive aboleth society.

kp 10 Dragon society is actually part of a galactic civilization though this planet is considered a far flung backwater colony unworthy of much attention. Most dragons who dwell here are either exiles or on an extended sabbatical.

kp 5 MILI's databanks are actually quite incomplete. Both age and the crash landing have corrupted the data. Pieces of the ship are scattered across hundreds of miles, and corrosion has severely compromised many key systems.

kp 0 MILI's databanks, when recovered from other similar gems which were lost in the crash, should include sufficient technical data to repair the ship.

Types of Documents

When it comes to understanding a civilization, the shape a document takes can be as important as the information it contains. Tablets and scrolls speak of a civilization less technologically advanced than books do. Illuminated manuscripts are beautiful and require hours of care and artistry. Civilizations differing from standard medieval fantasy setting might instead use knots of string, the bark of a giant tree, or even magic-soaked crystals to store their knowledge.

The following descriptions will detail different documentation methods and where they fit in time and space.

Tablets

Tablets can be made from many different materials including clay, stone, wax, and wood. All types were widely used as far back as the Bronze Age (circa 3300 BCE), and continued to be used up until the very early years of the CE. Tablets were used by cultures all over the globe, though the material varied depending on what was available. To inscribe text onto a tablet, a tool of appropriate toughness would be used to etch characters into the surface of the tablet. Clay and wax are both fairly malleable, thus more easily scribed than wood or stone. Tablets can be any shape, though rectangular and spherical were the most common. Some wax tablets may even possess wooden covers.

Scrolls

Scrolls are long documents made of a material that is able to be rolled into a cylinder. Initially less common than tablets due to their relative difficulty of production, scrolls have actually existed for nearly as long. Unlike the tablet, however, scrolls remained popular for a longer period of time, and continued to be used into the first few centuries CE. Like tablets, scrolls were made from regionally available materials. In ancient Egypt, the papyrus plant provided an excellent material to make scrolls. By contrast, the Chinese used silk to create their scrolls. In the Mediterranean, it was common to use parchment (made from animal hide) or paper. In all cases another substance, most often ink, is required to write on the surface.

Codices

Codices are early, handwritten books and differ from previous forms of documentation in that they have pages. There are two main forms of the codex: the Roman style and the Mesoamerican style. The Romans invented their codex in the 1st century CE. Roman codexes resembled an early form of books, with pages bound together on one side. In the early decades of codex use, papyrus was the main material used, but due to scarcity, parchment and vellum eventually became widely used as well. Codices of

this type were used until the invention of the printing press. The civilizations of Mesoamerica formed their codices by folding one long sheet accordion-style to form individual pages. These codices were often made of fig bark or other plant fibers before being whitewashed and then written on. Codices of this type were used in the last few centuries BCE up until the 16th and 17th centuries.

Books

Books are a collection of pages bound on one side, usually sandwiched between a cover. Books can be specifically distinguished from codices by the method in which text is placed on the page. Codices are handwritten while books are generally printed using a press. The modern book exists due to the invention of the printing press in 1440 CE.

Virtual

Modern computing began with the completion of the first computer in 1946 CE. Leaps and bounds have been made, and continue to be made in terms of computing technology. A large amount information and documentation now exists solely in the virtual world, whether it be on the internet or on portable physical media. Tangible forms

of virtual media include floppy disks (1970s to 2000s), compact disks (CDs, invented 1982), portable solid state drives (made popular in the late 1990s), and microchips (invented 1959). Accessing digital documentation can be accomplished through any number of different devices, some so small they can fit into a person's pocket.

Exotic

Cave or wall paintings: These have been around as long as humans have existed. Techniques and subject matter may have become more sophisticated over time, but many of these paintings tell a story or a bit of history.

Cave or wall etchings: Similar to paintings, etchings last many centuries longer. A classic example is the tomb walls of the ancient pyramids in Egypt, where pieces of the deceased's life story were recorded.

Quipu: Otherwise known as a "knot-record", quipu was used by ancient Andean cultures. A group of strings of various types and colors were knotted to pass along primarily numerical information.

Tattooing: Not overly common, information can be tattooed directly onto skin or hide. While it is possible to tattoo a dead body, the preservation of the material is significantly increased if the tattoo is on a living person since it has time to heal.



The following table provides statistics on a variety of blank documents.

Type	Cost	Weight	Durability	Time Period	Region
Tablet, clay	5 sp	2 lbs.	millenia	BCE	global
Tablet, stone	2 sp	5 lbs.	millenia	BCE	global
Tablet, wax	1 gp	2 lbs.	centuries	BCE - Middle Ages	global
Tablet, wood	1 sp	½ lb.	years	BCE	global
Scroll, parchment	1 gp	1 lb.	centuries	BCE - early CE	Mediterranean/Europe
Scroll, papyrus	1 gp	1 lb.	centuries	BCE - early CE	Mediterranean/Africa
Scroll, silk	2 gp	½ lb.	centuries	BCE - early CE	Asia
Codex, parchment	1 gp	1 lb.	centuries	1st - 15th centuries CE	global
Codex, papyrus	1 gp	1 lbs.	centuries	1st - 15th centuries CE	Mediterranean/Europe
Codex, vellum	2 gp	1 lb.	centuries	1st - 15th centuries CE	Europe
Codex, fig bark or plant fiber	1 gp	1 lb.	centuries	BCE - 17th century CE	Mesoamerica
Book, paper	1 gp	1 lb.	centuries	15th century CE - modern	global

Fluency

Variant Language Rule

It goes without saying that most of the documentation PCs are likely to encounter are written in one language or another. This puts languages at the core of scholarship and research in a campaign. Yet, despite their importance, languages in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* are treated casually with a point system and in a binary fashion: characters either know a language or they don't. There is little room for nuance, for roleplay of poorly understood languages, or for benefit from being an eloquent word-smith. For campaigns with a strong investigation focus, where communication, intrigue, and entendre become all the more important, the following Fluency system allows for a more accurate simulation and can serve as an easy way to introduce doubt and suspense to players.

Fluency Points

While the skill-point system makes acquiring language proficiency rather straight forward, games that feature many languages and varying levels of linguistic prowess can often demand that characters without high intelligence bonuses and racial language options invest heavily into the Linguistics skill in order to simply understand what is going on around them. While this can be helpful for immersion, being left out of conversations can quickly sour a session. To help counter this while still allowing for graduated proficiency, each skill point placed in the Linguistics skill grants 2 fluency points, which can be spent on acquiring or upgrading a character's mastery of languages.

Fluency Points	Level of Mastery
1	Competent
2	Fluent
3	Proficient

Competent

Characters that are competent in a language have a basic grasp of the mechanics and forms and are able to communicate their ideas to other speakers. However, they sometimes struggle with grammar and their vocabulary tends to be fairly limited.

Characters who are merely competent in a language suffer the following penalties:

- Trouble communicating complex ideas (such as battle plans, magic formula, or engineering specifications) or even simple ideas in stressful situations (such as during combat or while in the middle of a roaring storm). Doing so requires a successful Linguistics check (DC 15).
- A -1 penalty to Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform, some

Profession, Sense Motive skill checks made while communicating in that language.

- A -1 penalty to Disguise skill checks made to pass themselves off as a native of the region.
- A -2 penalty to skill checks when researching in a library which requires the language in order to make research checks.

Fluent

Characters that are fluent in a language have achieved a level of mastery that allows them to effectively and consistently communicate their ideas as well as a native speaker. While they may still have a noticeable accent or use regional slang, characters who are fluent are comfortable the language and can be relied on to understand and communicate with others. Characters are automatically fluent in their native tongue. A character fluent in a language can always communicate in it, understand it, and neither suffer penalties nor gain bonuses when doing so.

I Know a Few Words

It isn't uncommon to know a few words in another language. A character might know to count to ten or how to say "food" or "bathroom" or "help" or "please". Often, there are similarities in languages which can serve as the basis for a rough translation, especially with the help of hand gestures. This very basic level of linguistic understanding isn't covered by the Fluency system but can be simulated using the Linguistics skill.

When attempting to convey or understand meaning in an unfamiliar language, a creature can make a Linguistics check to do so adequately. This check must be performed each time they attempt to communicate or understand a different idea and is only possible for simple concepts. For example, "Please tell me where the monster is", might be possible to communicate in this way but explaining how to craft an alchemical item would not be. Use the following table to help determine the difficulty of communication when a character has not invested points in a language.

Circumstance	DC
Language is related to a language the character knows	15
Language is not related but the character has heard it before	20
Language is not related and the character has never encountered it before	25
Language is completely alien and not usually spoken by the character's race	30

Proficient

Characters that have reached the proficient level of mastery have spent considerable time and a concerted effort in learning the nuance and art of a language. Proficient speakers have mastered rhetoric, diction, meter, phrasing, and often find joy in wordplay and entendre. Characters who are proficient in a language gain the following bonuses:

- A +1 circumstance bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform, some Profession, and Sense Motive skill checks when communicating in that language to a native speaker of the language.
- A +1 circumstance bonus to Disguise skill checks made to pass themselves off as a native of the region.
- A +2 insight bonus to skill checks when researching in a library which requires the language in order to make research checks.

Magic & Libraries

Magic and libraries seem to go together; maybe it's because books and stories are a little magic in their own right. Whatever kind of facility you meet in your travels, be it one of the examples provided above or something completely different, chances are, in a fantasy world, a library contains a little magic.

The staff could use levitation spells to put or pick books on the highest shelves, or magic alarms to find out immediately if someone tries to slip out with a precious volume. Maybe a library contains books yet unwritten, or works that a long-dead author didn't make in time to write. Magic books can bestow curses on whoever opens them, be prisons for extraplanar beings, or sentient monsters long asleep, waiting for someone to teach to- or to devour. And the librarians? They can be a normal human, a thinking animal, an outsider, a divine avatar, or even... another book; their assistants could be golems, elementals, acculturated fey, or origami creatures of living paper.



Character Options & Items

The following character options might be useful for characters of an academic leaning. The table below lists a number of options already created for the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. After that are new options and items which can be available to PCs with a GM's permission.

Name	Type
Archivist (Bard)	Archetype
Living Grimoire (Inquisitor)	Archetype
Lore	Psychic Discipline
Lore	Oracle Mystery
Lore	Shaman Spirit
Order of the Seal	Cavalier Order
Order of the Tome	Cavalier Order
Scroll Scholar (Cleric)	Archetype
Scroll Scholar (Wizard)	Archetype
Scrollmaster (Wizard)	Archetype
Storyteller (Medium)	Archetype
Studious Librarian (Bard)	Archetype
Tome Eater (Occultist)	Archetype
LOremaster	Prestige Class
Pathfinder Chronicler	Prestige Class
Avid Spellbook Reader	Feat
Careful Reader	Feat
Book Thief's Satchel	Magic Item
Bookplate of Recall	Magic Item
Eldritch Scholar's Monocle	Magic Item
Helm of Comprehend Languages and Magic Reading	Magic Item
Mask of a Thousand Tomes	Magic Item
Origami Swarm	Magic Item
Scholar's Ring	Magic Item
Spectacles of Understanding	Magic Item

Name	Type
Codex Archon	Monster
Contract Devil	Monster
Guardian Scroll	Monster
Living Rune	Monster
Rune Guardian	Monster
Scrivenite	Monster
Book Ward	Spell
Erase	Spell
Explosive Runes	Spell
Illusory Script	Spell
Kreighton's Perusal	Spell
Legend Lore	Spell
Memorize Page	Spell
Page-Bound Epiphany	Spell
Parchment Swarm	Spell
Psychic Asylum	Spell
Scribe's Binding	Spell
Scrivener's Chant	Spell
Secret Page	Spell
Sepia Snake Sigil	Spell
Librarian	Trait
Scholar of the Analects	Trait
Self-Taught Scholar	Trait
Thirst for Knowledge	Trait
Wretched Curator	Trait



Library (Cleric Subdomain)

Associated Domains Community, Knowledge

Replacement Power The following granted power replaces the calming touch ability of the Community domain or the lore keeper ability of the Knowledge domain.

Mind Palace (Su): You may memorize the full text of a tome as part of your morning prayers. While a tome is memorized, you can perfectly recall every word and image contained within. You gain an insight bonus to Knowledge checks related to the tome's subject equal to 1/2 your cleric level (rounded down, minimum 1). To memorize a tome, you must spend one hour studying it; once memorized, a tome remains stored in your memory until it is replaced by further study. You can memorize a number of tomes equal to your Intelligence bonus.

Replacement Domain Spells 1st—*memorize page*, 2nd—*page-bound epiphany*, 6th—*psychic asylum* (library only), 9th—*scribe binding*.

Words (Oracle Mystery)

Class Skills An oracle with the words mystery adds Linguistics and Perform to her list of class skills.

Bonus Spells *comprehend languages* (2nd), *code-speak* (4th), *glyph of warding* (6th), *illusory script* (8th), *spellcasting contract (lesser)* (10th), *glyph of warding (greater)* (12th), *spellcasting contract* (14th), *word of recall* (you must write the word instead of saying it) (16th), *spellcasting contract (greater)* (18th)

Revelations An oracle with the words mystery can choose from any of the following revelations.

Automatic Writing (Su): Once per day, you can spend a full hour in uninterrupted meditation. During this period, your hands produce mysterious writing that pertains to the future. At 1st level, the prophetic writing manifests as an augury spell with 90% effectiveness. At 5th level, the writing takes the form of a divination with 90% effectiveness. At 8th level, the writing manifests as a casting of commune with no material component required.

Between the Lines (Su): After reading a text carefully from beginning to end, you can attempt a Diplomacy skill check to gain information about whoever wrote it, with a bonus equal to your oracle level + your Charisma modifier. At 5th level, you know what the author thought and meant when the text was written, as if using *seek thoughts*. At 11th level, you know many things about the author, as *legend lore*. This ability works also on texts written by long-dead authors. You may use this ability once per day, plus one additional time per day for every five oracle levels you possess.

Counterword (Su): You may counter magic effects and spells that depend on language or written texts. This works as the countersong bardic performance, but may

rely on audible or visual components, depending on the countered effect. You could, for example, prevent a *symbol* spell from working by designing a counter-symbol upon it, or write a counter-poem upon an explosive rune, or recite a soothing oration to counter a *command* spell. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.

Esoteri Research (Su): Your knowledge of various magical languages allows you to learn incantations usually prohibited to you. Choose any one class spell list. You may research spells from that list as if they were 2 levels less in terms of cost, time, and difficulty. Any esoteric spell researched is added to your known spell list as a divine oracle spell 1 level higher (for example, you could research a 7th-level wizard spell as if it were a 5th-level spell for the purpose of research cost, time, and difficulty; it would be added to your spell list as an 8th-level spell). You must be at least 7th level to select this revelation.

Inspired Interpreter (Su): You may read and understand texts in any language as if you were wearing a *helm of comprehend languages and magic reading*. You don't gain the ability to speak or understand spoken words in other languages, neither do you gain skill check bonuses.

It Is Written (Su): Once per day, you can cast a spell just by writing it on paper, earth, or in the air. Such a spell is not considered to have verbal or cheap material components. You can use this ability one additional time per day at 7th level and every 4 levels thereafter.

Spontaneous Symbology (Sp): Your knowledge of the secret history of the world has unveiled the mysterious symbols that govern reality. You can cast any "symbol" spell using a spell slot of the appropriate level, even if the spell is not on your list of spell's known. A symbol spell is any spell with the word "symbol" in its name. You must be at least 11th level to select this revelation.

The Pen Is Mightier Than the Sword (Su): As a swift action, you can enlarge a quill, pen, or other tiny writing instrument into a bladed weapon fit for your size. You are proficient with this weapon and it is considered as a longsword for the purpose of feats and prerequisites. On a successful hit, the blade deals 1d8 points of slashing damage + 1 point for every two oracle levels you possess, then it returns to normal. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.

Wall of Text (Su): You begin an endless litany which takes the form of a compact wall of script, protecting you and your allies from hostile attacks. The wall deflects arrows, bolts, loose debris, and Small or smaller flying creatures like a *wind wall* spell, except that they rebound harmlessly rather than being directed upward. The relentless flow of words forces creatures within 10 feet of you to a Will save; if they fail, they're stunned for 2d4 rounds. Touching and passing through the wall stuns a creature for 2d6 rounds +1 per oracle level. If you evoke the wall so that it appears where creatures are, each creature takes damage as if passing through the wall. An *erase* spell suppresses the wall within its area as if it were magic

writing, but only for a round. This is not a language-dependent effect. The wall works otherwise as a *wall of sound*. You can use this ability for 10 minutes per day per oracle level. This duration does not need to be consecutive, but it must be spent in 10-minute increments. You must be at least 7th level to select this revelation.

Whirlwind Lesson (Ex): You can quickly browse through a magical tome or manual, gaining its benefits with only a single 8-hour study session (rather than the usual 48 hours over a period of 6 days). At 7th level, you may allow another character to join in your study; both of you gain the full benefit of having read the book. At 15th level, you may share your whirlwind lesson with a number of characters equal to your oracle level. The benefits to you are permanent, whereas your students gain the tome or manual's benefits for a number of days equal to your Charisma modifier but then forget what they have learned.

Final Revelation Upon reaching 20th level, you have understood the full power of words. You become immune to spells and effects that rely on spoken or written words (like *power word*, *runes* or *glyph* spells). You can use the True Name wizard discovery once per day as if you had cast *greater planar binding*.

The Bookring (New Magic Item)

The Bookring

Price 2,000 gp; **Slot** ring; **CL** 1st; **Weight** —.; **Aura** faint transmutation

This ring is made of wood, varnished in gold. Twelve false gems are sculpted on its surface, painted in many colors. The paint comes off in some places, revealing the ring's true nature. At the wearer's command, each gem opens in myriads of tiny scribbled pages. *The Bookring* is a minor magic item created by a bard who wanted a way to always take her favorite books with her without encumbrance. Each of the twelve gems can store the contents of one non-magical book, and projects the pages before the owner's eyes upon command. Everyone can see the images projected by the ring. To store a book within *The Bookring*, the wearer touches the book with the ring and speaks a command word. The original book is not destroyed but, instead, a copy of the contents is stored within the gem. A stored book may be exchanged with another.

Construction Requirements

Cost 1,000 gp; Forge Ring, *scrivener's chant*



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