

Board Enterprises'

Small Bites

Article Summary

Every month we will supply a series of “articles”, possibly seen like “columns” in a magazine. There will be some standard “articles” (we really wish we could find a better term for them), but each will revolve around the theme for the month. Sometimes there will be extras thrown in, and not every column will make sense for every month.

So what are these articles?

Fletnern Wiki

At its most basic, we are asking our patrons to help us continue publishing Fletnern as a **FREE** world. Since we started the wiki, it has shown itself to be one of the best ways for us to do that, so we are not going to let up. Our current promise is to publish four wiki articles a month (or more likely weekly), along with our weekly blog posts.

As Patreon subscriptions grow, we will increase the number of posts we make per month. It is as simple as that. We've got over 1,200 pages of information on Fletnern and see no problem with easily generating wiki content. But more importantly, we are going to be asking you the patrons to guide us. What do you care about? What did you want to know? What should we do first? That's the real reason we're doing this - to make sure we're giving you the content that you want and not just what we happened to write about that week.

Fletnern is intended to be free. So how does being a patron help you? While every entry will be posted to the public, they will be collected in a pdf for the patrons, to help hold them together, and perhaps make it a touch easier to refer to if you're in the middle of a gaming session.

The Sounding Board

Just as the Patreon project is to support the Fletnern wiki, it is also here to support our fantasy gaming blog. Not all of the Sounding Board posts will match the month's theme, but those that do will be repeated as part of this collection. We're hoping to keep things together for your ease.

Lifestyles of the Magical and Mundane

One of the things Board Enterprises is both known for and to be honest enjoys the most is the regular lives of these fantasy folks. We've put out supplements like **Grain Into Gold** (fantasy economics), **Urban Developments** (a guide for GMs to build cities and all manner of communities), and **Royalty** (over 250 nobles and castle dwellers to give

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GMs a base for an full and active royal court). **Lifestyles** is a further expansion of that.

These are going to be entries on how fantasy people live in their fantasy world. While it will be mainly about the everyday things that they do, it is intended more to show some examples of what fantasy life would really be like, because even adventurers don't spend their entire lives slaying dragons and hauling away loot. This is also going to be one of our first differentiations between the various levels of patrons. Where everyone will get the (prose) descriptions of what happens to the character(s) during their day, the Player and GM levels will get the money and math behind the scenes so these lifestyles can be used to represent characters in the games.

As a part of Lifestyles, we'll also get into an article we're starting to call “Wet Behind the Ears”. Everyone has to start somewhere, and here we lay out what we think a starting character needs to look like. We may give you the stats from a **LEGEND QUEST** point of view, but please rely on the narrative and not the numbers when making things work in your world or your campaign.

News of Fletnern

The majority of folks in the real world pay attention to the news. Why? Because it is often interesting, and we want to be informed. What about people in fantasy worlds? Yep, them too!

These will be actual news stories about things that are or could be going on in the game world. Sometimes they will be important. Sometimes they will be hooks into adventures. Most often they will be structured so that on “Day 1”, the folks in the tavern start talking about the news. Then on Day 2, they learn some more. At some point the player characters / party can get involved or they can sit this one out. We really think this is one of the best ways for players to get into adventures. By hearing what's going on, they will more naturally get involved as opposed to meeting the strange looking guy in the tavern and signing up for his mission. But let's be

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clear - not everything they hear is an adventure waiting to happen. Sometimes, a GM needs to throw a couple of red herrings out there to keep the players from assuming that everything they hear in the tavern directly relates to the mission at hand.

Here, World Walkers (WW) and Players (PC) will get the news as it is heard in the taverns. Game Masters (GM) will get the real truth behind the rumors. This will allow players and game masters to continue to support us without ruining the campaigns and the surprises. But this is us after all, and we can't come up with news stories like these without offering the GMs a couple of twists that they can use to make it their own.

The Good Life

World Walker

Fashion controls a big part of the world as we know it, and the same was true back in our own Medieval Period. While most players would scoff at the idea of fashion being an important part of a role-playing game, we're determined to change your mind.

Are we talking about plunging necklines and clothing fads? Well, yeah, but way more than just that! Fashion covers what the most popular entertainments are (are gladiatorial matches more fashionable than horse races, and if so what's the impact?), what the jewelry trends are (loot!), and how homes and castles are built. Fashion really is important in game worlds, and helps to differentiate cultures and people.

Gold, Silver, and WHAT!?!

Player

After the success of **Grain Into Gold**, many of our fans have asked for more, more of everything we have. But they are less concerned with the hows and whys, and just want to have price lists as big as we're willing to make them. So that's what we'll do here. There may be some additional interesting tidbits on economics, but for the most part, this will be price listings. Don't believe we can produce long price lists? You should check out **Pockets**, our d1000 guide to random loot found when picking pockets. It has over 1,100 unique items, and spare change is in a completely different chart, so we didn't pad that number!

In developing **Grain Into Gold** and then perfecting it over the years, we've come up with a lot of data on how things were built in the Middle Ages. We've used that data to come up with some formulas and educated assumptions. That means that we can do minor tweaks to just about any item and come up with what it would really cost to produce in a fantasy world. While we might only list one dagger in a rule book, here we can give you fifteen variations on it

pretty quickly. For GMs, that level of variety keeps their games from getting stale.

Monsters & Other Menaces

Player

Back in 1991, we promised to write a book called **Monsters & Other Menaces**, but our fans insisted they wanted other things. That is why **Book of Wishes** and **Optional Weaponry** showed up first. But there are so many things to talk about with the monsters and races from fantasy worlds. These entries will include brand new monsters, extended descriptions of monsters we've only covered briefly, and optional rules (talents and superior skills mainly) concerning these creatures.

Especially where we're covering extended descriptions of creatures, these won't be rules, but will cover things that we think just make sense. That's why this works on a generic fantasy game world level: because the rules aren't the most important things.

This may not be the spot to discuss this in length, but ... This is not a **LEGEND QUEST** project, but **LEGEND QUEST** is the game that Board Enterprises published and knows best. However - The World of Fletnern has been used for four different game systems. It is not a rule specific world. We focus far more on culture and interactions then on character statistics. That's why this truly is a generic project. No matter what fantasy role-playing game you're playing, you'll find things that work for your game, your world, and your friends. But by using **LQ** rules, you can get a sense of the game mechanics too.

Silver Sense

Player

With **Gold, Silver and What!?!** being more of a price list, **Silver Sense** will be a more in-depth view of gear. With most of the articles being on non-magical gear and some on non-combat equipment, we're hoping to offer some great ideas on things you may not realize you need along on your adventures. Of course, some of the articles will be on the best weapons or enchantments to use with different archetypes or builds.

By the Numbers

Player

These are games we're playing, and as such we can determine with absolute certainty what the numeric impact of certain decisions will be. Without ending the whole generic concept behind this project, this article will get into the details of what it takes to min/max your characters and your game. What makes an important difference (and why) and what does not?

We'll get into the math and the probability involved in game rules, but also how cultural impacts should affect the priorities behind those numbers. No matter what the game, elves and dwarves are different, and playing to the advantages of races, classes and special abilities can be the most important player strategy.

Campaigns & Campaign Starter Kits **Player**

This is probably the best place to really show some differences between the World Walkers, Players and Game Masters. A Campaign Starter Kit (CSK) gives the idea for a new campaign. It discusses the region where it is to take place, the theme and plot of the campaign, suggests starting characters, and even lists out what the missions could be. No - It does not give you the details you would need to actually run the campaign as there will not be any bad guys laid out with stats, but this allows you to make this a new campaign or perhaps a sub-campaign for the group you're running now. We'll also give you a number of "twists" to really make it your own and show how to make it work in your world (if you're not using Fletnern).

So here the WWs will get some of the basic description of how the campaign starts and the background / regional details. The PCs will also get the starting characters and probably a bit more of the background to help flesh them out. The GMs will also get the plot and the mission suggestions, along with a lot of the details on how to make it work. There really is something for everyone here, but depending on how deep you want to get into things, then you can choose which level you want to "visit".

Some of these campaigns are going to be monstrous. A CSK will help a GM kick off a new campaign or sub-plot, but we are also going to begin exposing you to some of our epic campaigns. These are the world altering type campaigns that will have broad impacts on multiple lands. Don't worry if you're using Fletnern, because we will let you know what the proposed dates are, so you can balance the timelines and make everything work for you. Those clever ones amongst you will start to see some of the seeds getting laid for future massive campaigns in some of the news articles as they come along.

Small Towns and City Neighborhoods **Player**

In many ways, this is replacing our planned series of Open Spaces. The actual posts as they are going out on the wiki will give some ideas of what is going on, but here we can get into so much more. The idea is to keep it small (geographically), because we believe that this way, you will be able to more easily drop these places into your existing world.

Trying to develop a major city may never fit your world properly, but a small neighborhood in a particular city or a small town to be encountered on the way to adventure should work far better.

Again, there will be a difference in what the different levels receive. WW will be more like a wiki post. PC will have a lot more detail, but none of the secrets. The GM level will get the secrets, plus anything else we think appropriate.

An additional part of Neighborhoods will be Tavern Talk. After all, adventurers spend a lot of time in taverns, so we feel that the best way to give you culture that can actually matter in your game world and game session is to describe those taverns.

Optional Rules **Player**

Now we put our best optional rules into the **Omnibus Edition**, but that doesn't mean we put them all in there. Here we will put some new stuff. It might be new skills, new spells, new creatures, or whatever. In some cases, it will be optional rules that more directly affect character creation and/or combat; it all depends on what seems to fit best.

There will also be a point where we will be looking to assemble an online gaming group to help us playtest some of the optional rules that we didn't feel were quite ready for the **Omnibus Edition**, so stay tuned to hear more about that.

Mass Market Magic **Player**

We believe in enchantment factories, and those factories need to advertise to sell their wares. Mass Market Magics are presented as advertisements that might be found in a fantasy world. These will be fun looks at certain magical products available to the general public. PCs will see the actual advertisements (similar to a broad sheet), while GMs will get all the stats and behind the scenes information. In a world filled with magic and enchanter, the more successful magical craftsmen would need these advertisements.

A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to the Adventure **Game Master**

These will just be quick little encounters that can randomly (or not so randomly) be found along the way to the adventure. Eons ago, "wandering monsters" were all the rage in FRPG, but we always thought they were kind of silly. It seemed like these wandering monsters appeared out of thin air, only to attack the party and never have any true reason for existing. Well, these will feel random, but they will have just enough backstory so they don't feel forced.

Pull Back the Curtain

Game Master

John Josten is the chief game designer at Board Enterprises. It was over 25 years ago that he made the leap from fan to writer, and he's been producing product ever since, not all of it for Board Enterprises. In this column, he will share what he's learned about designing games, creating worlds, and some of the reasons why he went ahead and did it in the first place. While this is not intended to be a step by step case for how to create a game, it will give you some insights about how his mind works (worked?) and some pitfalls to avoid.

By pulling back the curtain, game masters and game designers can get some of his insights, but this is also going to be an invitation for everyone to join in the discussion. The way his brain works isn't necessarily how yours does, so input and questions from everyone will be encouraged and shared. There is always something more to be learned, and John is happy to learn from you folks as much as you might be looking to learn from him.

Y? Y? Y!

Game Master

Learning all about Fletnern and where things are is important if you want to use Fletnern either as a world or as an example. But what if you are building your own world and want some more direct advice on world building? That's what Y? Y? Y! is all about. Instead of telling you where a region is, here we will tell you why we placed it there. The hope is that in understanding why we did what we did (sometimes for good reasons, sometimes for not so good reasons) you can learn from our successes and our mistakes.

There is a popular problem solving method out there where they ask the question "why?" about five times in order to determine the root causes and solve the problems in the best way. This is our spin on that, and we're hoping that the story behind the site will help you.

Just to be clear - The difference between Pull Back the Curtain and Y! Y! Y? is that Y! Y! Y? is all about world building. Pull Back the Curtain could be about nearly anything, from game design to campaigns to creating characters.

Open Forum

World Walker

One of the main reasons we're doing this is to get better at communicating with the pen and paper role-playing community. We want to know what you want for content, and we want to answer your questions. The Open Forum will be just that - sort of an advice column, a letter to the editor kind of thing that gives and takes constructive criticism. Do you wonder how to make a culture work in your world? Do you want to better understand why we did

something the way we did? Let us know, and you'll likely be in an Open Forum segment.

This is mainly intended to be about game mastering and world building, but we're also interested in helping any would-be game designers out there!

More & More

Player

These are just some of the ideas we have been working on, but there is so much more. Expect to see new forms of magic, game aids of various types, and possibly even some short fiction. We're also working on opening up some live feeds for conversations and for gaming as well. Pile on more items, like campaign notes of ongoing action or fully developed characters, and you're going to have a ton of content!

A comment on adult content: Depending on your definition of adult content, most fantasy games will have something considered adult or not for minors. We're not looking to publish excessive adult content, but when drug usage, tobacco smoking, and swearing are all considered adult content, we will certainly venture in. Oh, and the real adult content (sex and blood splatter) will probably be there too.

Again, we're not looking to publish adult material, but in some cases, it seems to fit pretty well. Where we feel there is going to be adult content, we will first try to warn you it is coming. Secondly, we'll typically keep it at the GM level. So if you are helping your minor child participate, you might want to get them the Player level where the worst we'll probably do is describe someone as having loose morals and possibly smoking tobacco in a pipe.

On formatting: We have always assumed that the best way for a player or game master to play / run a game is to have the rule book in a three ring binder. When we published hard copy books, they were all three-hole punched to encourage this, and at conventions, we sold binder packs with additional content.

Well, we're going to continue that here. When we give you a new optional rule or a new monster or spell, we'll actually give it to you on its own page, and that page will be numbered as though it was to be inserted into the **LEGEND QUEST Omnibus Edition**.

This does not mean you need to be playing **LEGEND QUEST!!** (We're going to keep saying that as often as we can.) But if you are, this will make it that much easier to keep things organized. And if you aren't, having an optional rule or new creature on its own page will help you keep your stuff organized as well!