

## The Story Stack

The story stack is a system of prioritizing importance in the creation of a video game. The most important elements are listed first, with the least important placed last. Player fantasy and actions a player can take being most important and story being placed last.

- Legend of Heroes: Trails in the Sky
- The elements of the story stack, from least-flexible to most-flexible:
  - Player fantasy: Uncover a large-scale conspiracy.
  - Actions: Exploration, tactical turn-based combat, equipment management, and interacting with NPCs.
  - Economy: Get new equipment, new quartz to upgrade spells.
  - World: Medieval fantasy world where technology is growing by leaps and bounds. 52 years have seen people go from wood stoves and stone homes to trains, airships, cell phones, and a facsimile of the internet, high speed computers and Wi-Fi.
  - Story: A pair of heroes becomes accustomed to the local culture in all areas of their country as they work together toward a common goal. Throughout their journey they encounter mysteries and intrigue that ultimately leads to them uncovering a vast conspiracy and doing their part to circumvent it.

Following are three alternative stories based on the elements of the story stack that could have worked for the Trails in the Sky.

## Concept 1:



A young girl wishes to become a professional reporter and sneaks around following two Junior Bracers from her hometown and sending information to the local paper. Unbeknownst to her, these reports are being intercepted by a group of Jaegers (mercenaries) who send this information along to the secret society that seeks to use one of the two Junior Bracers to their own mysterious ends. As the story unfolds, our heroine gets hired by Liberl News and is assigned a photographer. After finding out that many of her stories never made it to Liberl news, she becomes

obsessed with finding out who has been stealing her hard work. She uncovers the secret society and informs the Royal Army's Intelligence division. She then follows them as they attempt to uncover their location. The Intelligence Division eventually finds their hideout but fails to put a stop to their nefarious plans. Our Heroine finds her missing work and submits it to Liberl News to be printed as part of the ongoing story.



This story follows the structure of the world, and allows for improving equipment, investigation of mysteries, and finding cool gear while exploring the world along with interacting with NPCs.

## Concept 2:



You play as a member of the Imperial Intelligence Division. You and your squad of handpicked members of various agencies from government to Ex-Bracers are tasked with acquiring information about the military movements of Erebonia and Calvard. These two countries have been putting pressure on the Independent State of Crossbell. You learn of a plot



by Erebonia to infiltrate and upturn Calvard's government through a series of carefully planned strategic moves. When the Non-Aggression treaty is planned to be signed, your squad



be  
is,

instead, tasked with moving the president of Calvard to an undisclosed location. While watching over him, an unknown third party arrives and incapacitates you and your squad. It seems that despite your best efforts, you have failed to keep the Calvardian president safe. Just as you awaken, you hear the noises of an Airship taking off. You rush outside in time to see the ship. After reporting to your superiors and describing the ship, you are issued an airship of your own and must recover from your previous blunder by returning the president safely.

Like the previous story, this allows for gear upgrades, exploration, talking with NPCs and tactical combat.

### Concept 3:



As a member of the Royal Guard your job is to keep the Royal Family safe. When the princess goes missing, 3 squads are sent to find her. This includes yours. You and the rest of Squad 3 search high and low for her, until you start catching wind of some rumors in the town of Ruan. Some are saying that they saw the missing princess on a boat headed out to sea. While most others are saying there's no way that's possible, your squad is expected to investigate any lead they find. After exhausting all possible resources, you have learned three things... One, the ship she was on was leaving during the evening raising of the bridge. Two, someone rushed her into the ship so she wouldn't be seen as they

passed through town. Three, there were Royal Guard markings on the ship.

Your squad ends up requisitioning a shipping vessel from the town and tries to follow them using directions from one of the witnesses, eventually leading you to an island. On this island you must fight your way through Jaegers and mutated wild animals to retrieve the princess and bring her home. When you finally catch up to them, you find that they are led by none other than the second in command of the Royal Guard. Though your sense of duty is in crisis, you must take him down to save the country's princess and sole heir to the throne.



You must investigate by speaking with NPCs, get strong enough gear to take down the big bad in a tactical combat confrontation along with exploring every nook and cranny looking for the missing princess.