

Group Worldbuilding Questionnaire - by Mitchell Hollis - <https://planetgnome.bearblog.dev/> - www.planetgnome.itch.io

Inspiration: Microscope by Ben Robbins - <https://www.lamemage.com/microscope/>

Session Zero: Use your first session to discuss these questions as a group and jointly create a campaign world. End by deciding what part of the world folks most want to explore and then create player characters. Since the scope and theme of the setting may vary wildly and a game system might not be locked in, at least decide on the backgrounds and relationships of the characters if not their stats and mechanics.

1. **What is the geographical scope of the campaign?** *A small region with local politics, a globe-trotting quest, interstellar power struggle throughout an arm of the galaxy, hopping back and forth to different planes of existence?*
2. **What is the biome and environment of the primary area?** *Volcanic city, bioluminescent jungle, floating motes of earth?*
3. **What is the current level of technology?** *Stone/bronze age, technology so advanced it looks like magic, a medieval fiefdom in the ruins of a high-tech world?*
4. **How concrete are religion and spirituality?** *Is faith a collection of cultural practices and stories or are the gods regularly intervening with the goings-on of the world?*
5. **How humanoid are the gods?** *Big man with beard vs divine beasts vs intangible force of nature?*
6. **How plentiful are humans?** *Are there other sapient species? If so, how alien are they?*
7. **Who has the most power and should they have it?**
8. **What political conflict forms the cultural backdrop of this era?**
9. **Where is an unsettled area and what is rumored to be there?**
10. **What makes the wilderness so dangerous?**
11. **What great civilization or empire has fallen in known history?**

12. **What group operates outside of the law?**
13. **Who has access to magic and how do they access it?** Who explicitly does not have access to it?
14. **How fantastical are the flora and fauna?** *Direwolves and unicorns, everything is a crustacean, or alien terrors lacking bilateral symmetry?*
15. **What is a terrible secret very few know?**
16. **Where has a vast fortune been lost or hidden?** Whose was it and what happened to them?
17. **Somewhere in this world there is an order of mystics.** Who are they and can they be trusted?
18. **What were the great beasts that came before?**
19. **Campaign Structure: one overarching conflict vs episodic monster of the week?** Doesn't have to be a binary answer, more of a sliding scale.
20. **What is something each of you would like to see in the world?**
21. **What is a single aspect of this world that everyone finds interesting and wants to interact with?**
 1. **Who is a group involved with that aspect?**
 2. **How are you related to that group?**
22. **Outline and discuss character concepts and relationships.**

GM Takes Ownership of the World: Once session zero is complete and everyone agrees on the scope of the campaign and has their characters created, the GM now takes ownership of the world. Using the discussion, decide on an appropriate system and treat it like any other RPG campaign. Hopefully since the players built the world, they'll have more buy-in in the setting and stakes.