

I. Collaboration and World Building

- A. Collaboration here means games or campaigns where players do some or all of the world building— that is establishing facts about the world, beyond the standard play.
- B. Reasons for doing collaborative world building (preaching to the choir)
 - 1. Player buy-in and expertise
 - 2. Putting all players on the same level (*Star Trek* example)
 - 3. Reduced workload
 - 4. Writer's Room feeling
 - 5. Fruitful gaps
 - 6. Shared cognitive load
- C. Places where it works less well (but still possible)
 - 1. Where the canon is already tightly developed and intricate
 - 2. Where players are looking for an introduction to the setting
 - 3. Where the mechanics of the setting itself are tightly baked into the system (requiring more tweaking).or cosmology (*Glorantha*)
 - 4. Where you're going to be adding players later
 - 5. ***The Question of Trust***
- D. Letting It Go.
 - 1. Record Keeping
 - 2. Reincorporation
- E. It Can Go Wrong: *Strixhaven*
 - 1. Not on the same page
 - 2. Player discomfort
 - 3. The *Pandemic* problem

II. Big Picture Tool: Microscope

- A. While others exist, *Microscope* a key collaborative world game. System of step by step building up a history.
 - 1. Eras, events, scenes, light/dark
 - 2. Lens and the structural question of no kibitzing
 - 3. Sidebar: The importance of the Palette: what Add or Ban means
- B. For focused collaboration we can modify it in several ways
 - 1. Rather than playing out scenes we ask questions at the lowest levels. Using these to explore events
 - 2. We can shift how we handle in between turns
- C. Other Modifications
 - 1. Changing time span: a year, a century, a decade— the impact that has.
 - 2. Establishing initial points: beginning and ends. "The Death of X"/"The Hunts Begin"
 - 3. Changing end of turn to establish other things: Gods, Icons, Factions, etc.
 - 4. Building cities (Neighborhoods, Locations/People, Rumors)
 - 5. Filling in between campaigns

6. Using it to establish the afterwards of existing media: what happens next: the challenge of managing player knowledge levels

III. Other Big Picture Tools

- A. Playing out small stories to set up the framework of play
 1. *Kingdom, Follow* also from Ben Robbins
 2. *Arcana Innominata*
 3. Similar approaches could be drawn from *Companions Tale*, *For the Queen*
- B. Map Building
 1. *Deck of Worlds*
 2. Online Map Building as a component of this collaboration
 - a) Mind mapping tools: Jam Board
 - b) Using existing image pools to help set things up
 - c) Figuring out a structure for this.

IV. Questions and Collaboration as Play

- A. The most common kind of collaboration comes from leaving space and asking questions in character creation: a loose approach
 1. Example of *Hearts of Wulin*
 2. Characters by their nature establishing facts about the world: built-in assumptions. Many (if not most) games do this if the GM allows the players to define things about themselves and let that set the world
 3. *Masks* and the different levels of establishment. Characters like the Scion, Legacy, and Soldier strongly establish things. Some playbooks don't, like the Nova (internally focused).
- B. Established World Building Questions
 1. Having a set of baseline questions which you put to the group.
 2. Recommended *The Ultimate RPG Game-Master's Worldbuilding Guide*
 3. How *Girl by Moonlight* handles this for the different campaign levels– for good and bad
 4. Various BOB games: *Balikbayan*
 5. *Spectaculars*
 6. Combining this with Map Building
 7. Techniques
 - a) Vary the leader
 - b) Watch for player buy ins and for folks negating earlier things
 - c) Balance the questions
 - d) Don't underestimate the importance of aesthetic questions
- C. Focused Expertise (aside)
 1. Giving explicit authority to players during the process
 2. Example of *Questlandia* and assigning authority
- D. Character Playbooks Slicing World Building
 1. How *The Veil* handles this: allows players to establish interests

2. Modification to the Clan Playbooks for *Free from the Shadow*

E. List Picks

1. This combines with questions above: lists vs examples.
2. Providing lists of things for people to build from: requires more pre-prep but also gives people an easier focus
3. Establishing the Foe in *Free from the Shadow*
4. Creating Courts and Other Supernaturals in *Hearts of Yokai*

V. Using Collaboration for Existing Settings

A. Why do this?

1. Levels of expertise
2. Making it your own: finding an entry point
3. Keeping the essential nature (modifying *13th Age*)
4. Most importantly: you like the vibe and feel of something.
 - a) Example: *Household*

B. Boiling Down the Cool

1. What do you like?
2. What are the most essential features of the concept?
3. Scale: what do we actually need to define— and how do we make that interesting. (avoiding filler questions)

C. Where are the spaces that don't matter?

1. *Blades in the Dark's* Duskvol
2. What do we have to keep to keep it feeling like Blades?
3. What can we have the players define?

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<https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/185sPG8L9y7H-FSsg4QifHEyki-ijJxKQHUTWZsV7U74/edit?usp=sharing>