

The Dungeon

This is an alpha draft. Please send comments, questions, or play reports to rudym@miserytourism.com.

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Everyone's seen or read Harry Potter, with its precocious wizard teens running around fighting evil (when they aren't struggling with love, popularity, or teenaged angst). But what about the *other* kids? The kids with serious behavioral issues. The mentally challenged. Those with special needs. Where do they go? The Dungeon, that's where!

In The Dungeon, you'll get to play out the existence of the Wizarding World's special ed students, and the teachers who love them (and also love their tenure!).

Play Materials

To play The Dungeon, you need the following:

- A copy of each Form for the appropriate players (Teacher Evaluation Forms for Teachers, Client Information Forms for Clients)
- Paper and pencils
- Four, or any other even number of players above four

Character Creation

There are Teachers and Clients. Teachers teach (or try to) and Clients learn (on a good day).

Teachers

Teachers assigned to the Dungeon are different from their general education counterparts. Teaching magically sensitive children with disabilities is a struggle, and unlike their peers, they do not necessarily have the full attention and/or respect of their students. Sure, there's bad eggs in the "regular" classrooms, but a child with extreme Conduct Disorder is fucking *dangerous*. As a Teacher, it's up to you to keep things under control by any means necessary. Not just for your own classroom's integrity, but for the safety of the school.

Being in the Dungeon, you've pretty much seen it all. You're one jaded motherfucker. Between your limited resources, the constant challenges from the kids, and the lack of respect from your peers, you're almost ready to throw in the towel. Indeed, the Dungeon has a

high turnover rate for new Teachers.

To make your Teacher, take the test labeled "Teacher Evaluation Form," and use the results to find your Teaching Style. Try to answer the questions as though you were your Teacher character. The multiple choice questions are for your Teaching Style, while the short answers are to add flavor and help shape your character's personality.

Once you've completed the Teacher Evaluation Form, add up the number of A's, B's, C's, and D's you have.

If your highest number of responses were A's, you are a Bargainer. You make deals with kids to get through the day. You play their need for attention by handing out goodies like gold stars, stickers, candy or privileges. Maybe you have a secret relationship with one of your students that extends outside of the classroom.

If your highest number of responses were B's, you are a Good Cop. You're that special, happy jokester who can hold the children's attention by making them laugh or "getting down on their level."

If your highest number of responses were C's, you are a Threatener. If some punk kid fucks with you, they're getting turned to stone! You use dubiously ethical means, usually involving force, to keep control over the classroom.

If your highest number of responses were D's, you are a Mentalist. You're a pill pusher and a mind-expander. Ritalin; that'll fix the little bastards! If it doesn't, you can always twist things around by using reverse psychology and other mind tricks to subdue and confuse children who are already mentally unstable to begin with.

Count up your second highest number too. This is your secondary focus. You can mix this with your primary to help solidify your character concept.

Keep in mind that your Teaching Styles are just generalizations to help get you started. Feel free to expand your character any way you want. Additionally, Teaching Styles only represent the outward persona of the Teacher. The primary mandate of this game is meeting your Teachers' goals *by any means necessary*. This means that even

though your Teacher might be a “Good Cop,” that's just their means of getting what they want. No Dungeon Teacher is really “in it for the kids”; they want to get their job done, and go home.

The Teacher-Client Conference

After you've generated Teachers, pair each Teacher with a Client and hold a Teacher-Client Conference. There are always as many teachers as there are students.

During the Teacher-Client Conference, players who want to play out an interview session with the Teacher who is attached to them.

Teachers should ask the Client questions, and the Client should answer them in a way that suggests something about their character. The purpose of this scene is to help the Clients' players come up with characters on the fly; be sure to ask some colorful questions. All of this takes place in character, so both players will kind of have to think on their feet.

Whatever the Client says about themselves will come true. You're basically molding the character the way you want through a roleplay that establishes things about them. If you need some preliminary ideas, take a look at the Clients section below.

As the Teacher, you can ask anything you want. Try to let the conversation go where it wants to; let things flow naturally. Here are some things you might ask about to get the conversation rolling:

- The Client's home-life
 - “Are mom and dad both at home?”
 - “What do you think about your parents?”
- The Client's problems, as you perceive them
 - “Do you get angry a lot of times?”
 - “Do a lot of people usually pick on you because you're blind?”
- What the Client expects you to do to help them (if it's not

obvious).

- “And what things do you think you need help with?”
- “Is that usually hard for you to do?”

During the Teacher-Client Conference, the Client's player should write down things about their newly created character on the Client Information Form as they learn them. Under the Bio section, summarize these details in one or two sentences.

Individualized Educational Plans

Teachers, in addition to asking questions, have another responsibility during the Teacher-Client Conference: generating an Individualized Educational Plan for the Client. An IEP is a goal of some kind for the Client. It consists of 3 Objectives that you have for them, which are all **observable, quantifiable** behaviors. Your job, once the game proper starts, will be trying to make these behaviors happen as much as possible. You also need a Goal to go with your Objectives. The goal is the overall change you hope to see once the IEP has been completed. Write your Objectives down on your character sheet, **but keep them secret from the Clients' players**. Clients will be trying their damndest to guess what you've written down, so make sure you guard it carefully.

When a Client undertakes the behavior listed, put a checkmark next to the Objective. It is now complete. Each time an objective is achieved, cross it out and notify the Client that it has been achieved (you must read them the Objective itself). When all 3 of your Objectives have been achieved, the Client's behavior changes in a way that reflects the Goal. Behavioral changes will change the way a Client's player plays their character. Belligerent Clients may become more passive, shy Clients will become more vocal, etc. Players should discuss what the change means for their characters with the player of the Teacher, and come to some agreement (the change need not be *radical*, but it must be visible). After reaching an agreement about what the behavioral change means for the character, quantify it by writing down a promise on your character sheet. This is something like “I will not demonstrate X behavior more than Y times a day.”

Here is an example of what an IEP should look like:

GOAL: Edwise will increase his respectfulness toward his fellows.

OBJECTIVES

1. Edwise will have a positive interaction with another Client.
2. Edwise will avoid harming another Client when provoked.
3. Edwise will act on the positive suggestion of another classmate or Teacher.

Let's say Ed's Teacher completes all 3 Objectives. His player and Ed's player would have to have a talk about what that means for Ed. They discuss it, and Ed's player winds up writing down the promise: "I will not have violent outbursts in class more than once a year." Once you've completed all 3 of your Objectives, you should make a new IEP

Clients

Clients are at the heart of the Dungeon experience, since they're the reason for it existing. Everyone who winds up as a Client in the Dungeon is disabled in some way. The definition of "disabled" varies radically depending on who you ask, but for the purpose of this game it means "unable to be accommodated by a mainstream classroom."

There are many reasons someone might end up in the Dungeon, but here are a few ideas to get you started:

- The Client has a sensory disability that would cause inconvenience to normal classroom faculty (blind, deaf, auditory processing disorder, severe epilepsy).
- The Client has a severe developmental disability (mentally disabled).
- The Client's behavior makes them a danger to other students, or "unteachable" (Conduct Disorder).
- The Client is physically disabled in a way that makes normal spell casting difficult
- The Client is a non-human creature that ordinary classrooms are not equipped to handle
- Any combination of the above

To start off, choose your Client's disability. Pick a name for them, and consider what they look like. If you want to, draw a picture of them on your Client Information Form.

You start with a wand and materials you need for class, such as paper and pencils. You also start with access to some minor spells, found below. Most spells that find their way into the hands of Clients are passed down from relatives or "self-taught." Few Dungeon Teachers feel comfortable allowing their students to learn potentially dangerous or distracting magic.

Teacher Spells

After you've got a character concept, it's time to choose spells. All Teachers have 3 spell tiers.

Tier 3 can hold 1 spell. Tier 3 spells can be cast once per year.

Tier 2 can hold 2 spells. You can cast any one of your Tier 2 spells 2 times a year.

Tier 1 can hold 3 spells. You can cast any one of your Tier 1 spells 3 times a day a year.

Here is a base list of Teacher spells to get you started (you can buy access to customized Teacher spells as Resources during the Resource Auction):

Tier 1 (pick three)

Levitate: You can move yourself or an object vertically in the air.

Recover Wand: Your wand comes back to your hand on command.

Light: You illuminate a 10 foot space with bright sunlight. The light may be focused into a beam instead.

Disarm: Disarm someone of their wand.

Make Sturdy: Makes an inanimate object unbreakable for one minute.

Ethereal Cauldron: Summons an empty cauldron, 2 feet wide and 2 feet deep. The cauldron appears insubstantial, but can hold small objects that are placed in it. Things put into the cauldron become weightless, allowing them to be moved around easily.

Create Water: Summons a gallon of water.

30 Feet of Rope: Summon 30 feet of rope, because, who knows?

Tier 2 (pick two)

Passive Restraint: Safely restrains one human-sized target in magical bonds for one minute, or one larger target for 30 seconds.

Blink: Disappear and reappear moments later in another place up to 20 feet away.

Helpful Wisp: Summons a small, insubstantial will o'wisp that emits a buzzing noise. It will move around and follow orders the Teacher gives it.

Legerdemain: You can perform supernaturally quick acts of agility with your hands, such as juggling, pickpocketing an item, or doing "the shell trick."

Deflect Harm: You can deflect a harmful spell aimed at you. The spell is routed in a different direction, though it still remains active.

Tier 3 (pick one)

Multitask: You split into 3 identical clones of yourself. You control the activities of each clone, which can include casting spells, doing paperwork, speaking, or any other miscellaneous task.

Screamer: You shout a command word at a student, such as "Stop!" They are momentarily stunned and knocked off of their feet.

Anti-magic Bubble: Create a bubble that fills a 10 foot space. Magic

cannot be used within the bubble, nor can it penetrate it. Magic-fueled creatures, such as elementals, are pushed out of the bubble and cannot enter it. The bubble lasts for 2 minutes.

Treasure Chest: Reach into your magic chest and produce any non-magical item that would be deemed safe for school.

Client Spells

Clients have access to only one "tier" of spells. They start with access to 2 of these spells, and can cast any of them up to 4 times a year.

Levitate: You can move yourself or an object vertically in the air.

Light: You illuminate a 10 foot space with bright sunlight. The light may be focused into a beam instead.

Pass Note: Send a message discreetly to anyone within 100 feet of your location.

Create Noise: This spell mimics a sound that you make. The source of the sound can be moved, appearing to emanate from a location that you set.

Unlock: Bypass a simple mechanical lock. The lock will show signs of tampering. If cast on an unlocked door, harness, latch, or fixture, that item will open.

Rend: Write simple inscriptions on objects, or make shallow cuts on skin.

Magic Spitball: Your wand ejects a spitball, which flies towards a target and homes in.

Hound: Your target is subjected to cruel teasing and minor electric shocks from a phantom assailant.

The Classroom Resource Auction

After you've created Teachers and Clients, it's time for the Classroom

Resource Auction. During this part of the game Teachers come up with a “wishlist” of things that they need to, well, help them do their job. There’s probably a million things that could help a special education teacher, and in an ideal situation, funding would allow for you to have all of them. The Dungeon, however, is not an ideal situation; here you will have only the basics. The playgroup should come to some agreement about what constitutes the absolute barebones requirements of the classroom. Things like desks, chairs, a blackboard, and lights can be taken as a given. Everything else you must take a chance for.

At the beginning of the auction, the Teachers, as a group, start off with 100 points to buy what they feel they need. Teachers take turns proposing Resources, which can be spells, special equipment, modifications to the Dungeon environment, or support staff.

Once you have an idea of what materials you will want, each individual item goes up for auction. The auction that takes place is of the All-Pay Sealed Bid variety, meaning that none of the participants can see what the others are bidding until the bids are revealed, and everyone must pay their bid regardless of whether they win or not.

Teachers will bid against Clients during the auction. The Clients, as a group, also start off with 100 points to spend. “But wait,” you might say, “Why are the kids bidding? What happens if they win?”

If the Teachers win the bid, they get the item they proposed. If the Clients win the bid, they can either claim the item for themselves (in the event that it’s something like a spell), or they can turn the item into a Deficiency. A Deficiency is a negative version of the item proposed (or in some cases, the reverse of the item). After 5 rounds of bids have happened, the auction is over.

This might all seem a little confusing, so let’s take a look at a Classroom Resource Auction scenario:

At the beginning of the game, there are 2 Teachers, played by Jim and Sally. There are, of course, 2 Clients as well. They are played by Bob and Faith.

The group has already finished character creation, so Jim and Sally

know what kind of students they will have to deal with. In this case, Bob’s character is mentally disabled, and Faith’s is blind.

Both sides begin with 100 points to spend.

The Teachers start by proposing a modification to the Dungeon environment, padded walls, in order to cut down on possible problems with self-injurious behavior. The auction now begins.

Without showing their bid to the Clients players, Jim and Sally write down “40” on a piece of paper, fold it up, and put it in the center of the table. Bob and Faith write down “25” on a piece of paper, fold it up, and put it in the center of the table.

When both have bid, the slips of paper are opened. In this case Jim and Sally have won, because they bid more, but Bob and Faith still have to pay 25 of their points.

Because Jim and Sally won the auction, they get exactly what they proposed.

Now comes the second round of bidding. The Teachers this time propose a special wheelchair for Bob’s character. Once again, the auction begins.

Jim and Sally, who currently have 60 points, decide to make a shill bid of 1 point. They do this because they are anticipating a high bid from Bob and Faith, since the wheelchair would severely limit Bob’s ability to create problems on his own. Bob and Faith, who are now down to 75 points, take the bait and bid 30 points.

Bob and Faith have won the bid, but at what cost? They celebrate, and create a Deficiency for the wheelchair, saying that it “has a propensity to tip over when spells are cast.”

Jim and Sally are now sitting at 59 points, while Bob and Faith have only 45.

Jim and Sally use this point advantage to push through the item that they really wanted: a spell that prevents people below a certain age from crossing a magically-drawn line. They bid 46 for this spell.

Bob and Faith do their best to block the attempt, hoping that Jim and Sally have decided to lowball in order to save points. They bid 45, the rest of their points.

Jim and Sally reveal the 46, and win their spell. They now have 13 points, while Bob and Faith have 0. This is the close of the 3rd round of bidding, so there are 2 more to go. Jim and Sally have exhausted all of their ideas, so they decide to be merciful and end the auction.

Technically, they could have continued another two rounds, with Bob and Faith being defenseless against anything they proposed (basically, they would be able to get anything they wanted at a cost of 1 point, which is pretty damn sweet).

In the above scenario, Jim and Sally ended the auction with 13 points. These points will carry over to the next auction, which will happen at the start of the next Year. Note that this example has been simplified. In an actual auction, it's very likely that the Clients' players would ask for clarification on each individual item ("What exactly can that do?"). This is encouraged, as allowing a very powerful item to be bought could sway the game significantly. Also, when it comes to item power, ridiculous things like "a machine that makes whatever spells I want" or something similar should be vetoed as unreasonable by the majority of the group.

As you'll see later, the Classroom Resource Auction will become very important as the game goes on (see "Upgrading Your Dungeon" below).

Classroom Scenes

Classroom Scenes are a clusterfuck. Teachers are running around trying to accomplish their goals, spells are flying around, desks are getting tipped over; it's chaos.

There are 4 Classroom Scenes in each Year.

Classroom Scenes should each deal with a different scholastic subject. You might have one that's about Magical History, another about Defensive Spell Casting, and one about Potions. The subject of

the class is really secondary to the rest of the action (like IEP maneuvering), but the way the Teachers approach their IEP may vary depending on what's being taught. For example, a Teacher who knows that their student will have a tough time sitting through Magical History might have to adjust their strategy to accommodate behavioral changes. Teachers decide which subject is taught. If there is disagreement, put a bunch of ideas into a hat and draw one out.

Each Classroom Scene is a period of free-form roleplay, during which Teachers can try to accomplish their IEP Objectives. Let this play out to a natural conclusion, but in general, try to keep it to 15 minutes or under.

Upgrading Your Dungeon

When Teachers have success reaching their students, the budget for the special education program goes up. When they fail, the room slips more and more into dysfunction.

During Classroom Scenes, Teachers can earn points for the next Classroom Resource Auction by accomplishing Objectives from their IEP. Every Objective accomplished nets the Teachers 100 points to use in the next auction (this is, of course, supplemented by any points left over from previous auctions). Every Objective left unaccomplished when the Year ends gives the Clients 50 points (which are also combined with points left over).

At the end of each Year, both sides should tally up their points and hold another Classroom Resource Auction. The same rules apply, and like before, any points left over are carried over to the next Year's auction.