

CYBERWRITER 2022 🐦

An indie lit roleplaying game

You are all **cyberwriters**: the world's last hope for alternative literature published on the internet. Cyberwriters are creative (obsessed with autofictional poetry about gas station junk food), ambitious, entitled, and most of all, fucking stupid.

This is a **semi-collaborative game** where your group of internet weirdos are being interviewed by a major publication. That's right: Rebecca Stomper, reporter for *The New York Paper of Record*, has caught a whiff of your cyberwriting antics thanks to the recent breakthrough success of your ex-friend (and ex-Twitter mutual). Stomper has decided to dig up some goods on this hot new writing scene, and somehow has identified you idiots as the key players. The goal is for the group to ensure that Stomper has enough Paragraphs to pad out an article about "Cyberwriting in 2022" by the end of 4 rounds.

At the start of the game, determine who will be Rebecca Stomper (the GM). The remaining players all roll for a Personal Quirk, a Claim to Fame, a Niche Genre, and a Cool Item on the corresponding tables. Then, players agree on a Paragraph Goal based on the number of players and experience with the game. Basic Difficulty is 4 + the number of players: for 4 players, the Paragraph Goal should be 8. At the end of 4 rounds, the number of Paragraphs is totalled. If it is higher than the Paragraph Goal, the players win, and the player with the highest number of Paragraphs gets a book deal (maybe).

ORDER OF OPERATIONS FOR EACH ROUND

1. The GM rolls for a Hot Topic on the Hot Topics table and a Difficulty Level (1d6)
2. Player order for the round is determined
3. Player 1 concocts some bullshit based on their Personal Quirk, Niche Genre, and/or Claim to Fame.
4. The GM assigns the bullshit a Bullshit Score of either 1, 2, or 3, based on believability (1 = most unbelievable, 3 = most believable)
5. Player 1 rolls a number of six-sided dice equal to the assigned Bullshit Score. They may choose to use their Cool Item, or convince another player to use their Cool Item at this stage
6. If the player rolls a total of 2 or higher, they add relevant modifiers based on the Hot Topic and their Personal Quirk and/or Cool Item
7. If the total exceeds the Difficulty Level, the player is successful and earns a Paragraph
8. If the player rolls a total 1, this is an automatic failure – no modifiers are added to this roll, and all Paragraphs earned by the group so far during this round are discarded
9. The remaining players do steps 3–8
10. The round ends

Hot Topics

1. Writing on Your Lunch Break (Authenticity 📌)
2. Innovations and Influences (Knowledge 📖)
3. When Punctuation (Doesn't) Matter (Style 📝)
4. Who's Fucking Who (Gossip 🗣️)
5. Why Writing? (Relevance 📍)
6. Why MFAs are for Dorks (Authenticity 📌)
7. "Alt Lit" Is (Not) a Dirty Word (Knowledge 📖)
8. The Future of Literature is Now! (Style 📝)
9. That Book Reading Was Wild (Gossip 🗣️)
10. There's No Ethical Consumption of Writing Under Capitalism (Relevance 📍)

Personal Quirk

1. You constantly deactivate and reactivate your Twitter account, usually preceded by a bout of shittalky subtweets or embarrassingly self-pitying tirades (+1 Authenticity 📌)
2. You're secretly fifty-five years old and exclusively post pictures of yourself from the late eighties (+1 Knowledge 📖)
3. You just, like, really love anime and guns (+1 Style 📝)
4. You're thirty-eight and still do coke, but it's cool, because you do it at the KGB Bar (+1 Gossip 🗣️)
5. You're married to a rich pudding company heiress who has a real, actual book deal with a top five press (+1 Relevance 📍)
6. You were in prison and/or rehab recently and are in the process of selling nudes and/or Tarot card readings in order to pay off your debts (+1 Authenticity 📌)
7. You're an adjunct creative writing professor at

a midwestern satellite campus, but the good news is that you finally published your first book (on your own print-on-demand vanity press) (+1 Knowledge 📖)

8. You're the British one (+1 Style 🇬🇧)
9. You change your pseudonym and Twitter handle every few months to outrun your

Claim to Fame

1. You've never submitted a story. Solicitations only, bitch (+1 Authenticity 📌)
2. You actually did a reading once with Steve Roggenbuck once, making you uniquely suited to shittalk him whenever the opportunity arises (+1 Knowledge 📖)
3. Giancarlo DiTrappano once told someone he actually really liked your book, or maybe he was even gonna publish it, you know, like, you were in talks about your book bro (+1 Style 🇬🇧)
4. You've participated in both the Wr*ters Chat *and* the Silly Boys Chat (+1 Gossip 🗨️)
5. You have a book on Muumuu House lmao (+1 Relevance 📖)
6. You once got in a fist fight with George Saunders, although there's some disagreement as to who won (+1 Authenticity 📌)
7. You had a Penguin book and movie deal until a South American surrealist accused you of plagiarism in the comments of an HTMLGiant post (+1 Knowledge 📖)
8. Roxane Gay gave your book 4 stars on Goodreads (and *personally* emailed you asking that you don't use her review as a blurb) (+1 Style 🇬🇧)
9. You spilled the tea on a notorious lit mag editor's penchant for feet pics, resulting in the permanent closure of three different websites and the disappearance of more than five hundred classic pieces of internet writing overnight (+1 Gossip 🗨️)
10. You actually won a Pushcart Prize. Yeah, I know, it's weird (+1 Relevance 📖)

Niche Genre

1. You exclusively write sparse, cutting autofiction in which your eponymous man characters have lots of cool sex and do trendy drugs and smoke cigarettes
2. You write "from the expanded field", using GPT-2 and Adobe Illustrator to "construct" mostly incomprehensible, weird-looking visual poetry about video game shit
3. You write short poems about 80s pop culture (def better than all those other guys)
4. You emulate the greats, spanning westerns, Russian novels, road novels, you name it – but you *always* include the N-word
5. You write communist poems about how communism is good, and, actually, capitalism is bad. And you enjamb the *shit* out of your lines
6. You have a dead relative so basically just like CNF stuff about that
7. You're just trying to recreate Tao Lin's least interesting bullshit, but very seriously
8. Every one of your protagonists is a creepy serial killer who does weird shit, but, like, it's "literary"
9. You exclusively write about (pick one): barns, chainsaws, liver mush, or crabs
10. Trauma trauma trauma trauma bodies bodies bodies. . . and birds?

Cool Item (Can be used only once per game)

1. An email from Sam Pink telling you he liked your writing (Add +2 to Authenticity 📌)
2. A copy of every CCM book from before 2019 (Add +2 to Knowledge 📖)
3. A signed, first-edition copy of *Infinite Jest* (Add +2 to Style 🇬🇧)
4. Screenshots of Manuel's DMs (Add +2 to Gossip 🗨️)
5. A viral tweet about communism in the Dark Souls fandom (Add +2 to Relevance 📖)
6. A \$10,000 prize for a debut collection of fiction (Reroll a die)
7. Tao Lin's Joy Williams t-shirt (Add 1d6 to a roll)
8. Contact with someone on the editorial staff of the *Paris Review* (Add 1d6 to someone else's roll)
9. Over 10k Twitter followers (Add +1 any stat)
10. A secret MFA (Make the GM reroll the Hot Topic)