

Comfort Quest:
Designing a Game to Help People with Anxiety Disorder Through Wellness Strategies and Comfort

By

Samantha Graham

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Abstract

Comfort Quest is a game to help people ridden with anxiety disorders take back control of their lives and minds by providing a safe and comfortable world and teaching wellness strategies. By deciding what elements of design are shown to decrease stress in reality and how one can design a video game with these elements in mind to positively impact those with anxiety disorders, *Comfort Quest* can be established to a reasonable design. This expository essay discusses four significant aspects of game design that have been shown to affect players' mindsets, including comforting companions, worldbuilding, narrative, and mechanics, by combining game-based research and theoretical application of real-world theories. Once completed, *Comfort Quest* could be transitioned into the development process as a next step and make the intended impact on the anxiety community.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Samantha Graham. No part of this thesis has been previously published.

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Introduction

You are in a carriage going along a forest path; as the trees part before you, you see a city hidden behind high stone walls come into view. As the carriage stops, a friend from the past runs up to the carriage to hug you and exclaim how excited she is that you are visiting. Everything seems normal at first, you and your friend go to a quaint tavern for a warm cup of tea, catching up in front of the lit fireplace that gives off a subtle glow. That is, until a commotion outside begins a journey you never imagined. This is the description of *Comfort Quest*, a game meant to help those with anxiety disorders find a world where they feel safe and comfortable while teaching them wellness strategies to take back control of their mind.

This thesis will answer two main questions: what elements of design are shown to decrease stress in reality, and how can one design a video game with these elements to positively impact those with anxiety disorders? To answer these questions, I will use an expository essay that consists of five sections, four of which discuss significant aspects of game design that have been shown in previous research to affect the players: Section One: Comforting Companions, Section Two: Comforting World, Section Three: Journey Through Narrative, and Section Four: Comforting Through Mechanics. The fifth section of the essay will then discuss how real-world theories on creating comfort can be combined with the elements of the game to create a design of integration.

By doing this thesis it supports the ongoing research into games for change, a position that the industry is beginning to take (Games for Change). It creates a jumping-off point to inspire other designers to make games based on their needs or wants in society while positively helping players to change their lifestyles and take back control.

Defining Comfort and Anxiety

To establish a solid foundation for this paper, let us define the two key terms of this research.

Comfort is the action of cheering someone up or consoling them in their feelings to make them feel less worried, upset, or frightened (“Comfort”). There are several ways to comfort someone, which will be explored in each section.

Anxiety Disorders (hereafter referred to as anxiety), on the other hand, as defined by the DSM5, are excessive stress and worry that is difficult to control when experiencing everyday events or activities. These symptoms last at least six months and are not better explained by another mental disorder; symptoms that occur because of an anxiety disorder include restlessness, being easily fatigued, difficulty concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, and sleep disturbances (NCIB). Anxiety is not just

simply worrying about life; it is a way of living in constant fear, and that is why *Comfort Quest* is needed.

Games and Anxiety

The reason why this research is necessary is because of the ongoing mental health crisis. In short, anxiety disorders have been increasing steadily for the past few years, especially with the COVID-19 Pandemic and the corresponding quarantines (“Cycle 2”). In this trying time, many people have turned to video games as a form of entertainment and a coping mechanism to curve stress (Fleming et al.; Lau et al.). While video games and technology have been shown in the past to help decrease stress and anxiety within the medical field, there are still a lot of uses that have yet to be discovered (Fleming et al.; Wallace). One example is being able to teach players wellness strategies to help anxiety over a controlled period of time versus a quick therapy process. Traditional therapy may lead to even more stress, a common concern stated by many people in therapy (Soelro), that could be aided by gamification.

It is important to comfort those with anxiety because these symptoms can continually get worse and affect not only a person’s mental health but also their physical health through panic attacks and being unable to determine actual danger. This puts people with anxiety, as well as the people around them, at a higher risk for injury because the anxious person’s concept of danger becomes skewed from reality and may lead to others putting themselves in dangerous positions to protect them. Eventually, prolonged anxiety can lead to other serious medical conditions such as heart disease, addiction, respiratory disorders, chronic pain, and other mental disorders like depression (Lindner et al.; Mayo Clinic Staff). By comforting someone with anxiety as well as teaching skills that will help people regulate their symptoms, these impacts can be reduced. (Mayo Clinic Staff).

One way to limit the long-term impacts of anxiety is through games, as shown through previous research concerning the medical field. For years, game technology has been used in hospitals to decrease stress and comfort patients. Examples of this include exposure therapy for PTSD related to war and terrorist attacks (Rizzo et al. 255-264) and pain relief for burn victims through distraction techniques during wound care (Sharar et al. 1667-1674). This research shows that games can and should be used to comfort those with anxiety because they strongly tie with a form of escapism from reality, and is one of the better ways to deal with anxiety since the player can be who they want, without fear (David et al., 400; Schoneveld et al., 2170). Escapism in games allows players to push aside their worries and anxiety for a period of time and do something constructive through artistic expression and intellectual stimulation while learning how to deal with certain situations (Soliman).

Literature Review

Learning theory is the study of concepts and principles that help teach people difficult-to-understand ideas through different learning processes (Froehling; “Learning Theory”; Wells et al. 464-465).

Learning theory is used in games to teach methods in an interactive way that makes learning more effective due to better retention rates. This learning can occur on the cognitive, intrapersonal, or interpersonal level and is usually stated through learning outcomes. It explains the ‘why are we doing this’ that students ask when learning skills that seem mundane at the time. When looking into previous literature about learning theory and games, three main theorists arise as those that set the basis of research: Gagné, Gardner, and Gee (hereafter referred to as the Three Gs’).

Starting with Gagné, he theorised the ways of learning, otherwise known as the “Nine Events of Instruction.” These events go through the player’s learning process from beginning to end (“How are Games Educational”). The first event is getting the player’s attention and expanding their reception to learning. A game would not be able to teach anyone anything if the player never picks up the game or loses interest before learning can take place. The second event gives the player an objective to show what is expected. This will happen multiple times throughout a game, either through the narrative, other characters, or cinematics. It applies to learning about the victory condition, such as defeating the final boss or helping a child find their lost kitten. By creating these expectancies, players can compare them to other experiences they have by recalling or retrieving prior learning, which is the third event. This allows the player a frame of reference to go back on when they are challenged. Most commonly, this occurs as players learn new skills and combine them as the challenge increases (“How are Games Educational”).

From here, the events begin to focus more on learning the task at hand versus getting the player ready for learning. The following three events present the concept that will be learned, guide the learning through semantic encoding, and respond to the concept once learned. These three events make up a standard playthrough loop found in most games and are similar to the idea of hear, see, and do. The player hears of an intriguing challenge, then sees the game do something that acts as a guide, eventually ending with the player doing what the game showed them to solve the challenge (“How are Games Educational”).

The final three events are based on player reflection and are what make the lesson concrete. First, the player will be provided feedback based on their actions. This way, the player will know that they are one step closer to their goal and feel motivated to continue, which also corresponds with the eighth event of assessing the player’s performance. The player can take their feedback and modify their strategies moving forward, leading to achievement. The last event is the one that will be most crucial to *Comfort Quest*’s success, being able to retain and transfer the lessons the player has learned to

other scenarios, otherwise known as generalisation. This event will allow players to apply what they have learned elsewhere, as discussed in event three (“How are Games Educational”). For *Comfort Quest* specifically, this will be players learning wellness strategies and applying them to their real lives. Although Gagné’s theory is quite long, it sets the stage for other theories to build upon, such as Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences (“How are Games Educational”).

Gardner is a popular theorist in learning theory as it relates to games because of his significance in understanding different types of learners. His theory states that different people use various strategies to learn, so learning should encompass many different styles, which video games can accomplish through different mechanics and dynamics. Through a rich experience in a good game, a player can take advantage of their strengths and weaknesses in learning and create a method tailored to themselves (Cherry; “How are Games Educational”).

Gardner’s theory states that there are eight different intelligences, each of which can be applied to games as listed below:

1. **Linguistic:** Linguistic intelligence refers to written or verbal communication and applies to people who are strong readers, writers, and memorisers when learning. This type of intelligence is used in games when players interact with other characters textually or verbally.
2. **Musical:** Musical intelligence refers to thinking in sounds, patterns, and rhythms. It applies to people with musical/composition and pattern recognition abilities. This type of intelligence is shown in games through the soundscape, which provides feedback for the player’s actions.
3. **Logical-Mathematical:** Logical-Mathematical intelligence refers to logical thinking and reasoning when faced with a problem; people who learn this way think conceptually using numbers, patterns, and relationships. Within games, this intelligence depends on the game’s genre; some games use logical thinking, others use weighing options, manipulation of objects, and basic arithmetic.
4. **Spatial:** Spatial intelligence refers to visual intelligence within a space and applies to people who learn from pictures, videos, graphs, and charts. This type of intelligence is used in games when a player explores the game world, manipulates it, or switches between perspectives.
5. **Kinesthetic:** Kinesthetic intelligence refers to performance, body movement, and control, so people with this type of intelligence have good hand-eye coordination, dexterity, and crafting skills. Within games, this type of intelligence is not through the game itself but through the controller or physical prompts.
6. **Intrapersonal:** Intrapersonal intelligence refers to being in control and aware of oneself in a situation. A person with this intelligence tends to have skills in self-reflection, self-assessment, and exploration because they understand their state of mind. This type of intelligence is more challenging to see in games but can be showcased through ethical dilemmas and moral themes.

7. Interpersonal: Interpersonal intelligence refers to communicating with others and having a deeper understanding of them through interactions. This leads to high emotional intelligence, motivation, and desire in people who learn this way. Within games, this type of intelligence is mainly in multi-player games, though it can be seen in single-player games through NPC interactions.
8. Naturalistic: Naturalistic intelligence refers to having a solid connection to nature and nurture, with people being natural explorers and better awareness of change. Within games, this type of intelligence plays off of other intelligences, such as spatial and logic, focusing on surroundings. (Cherry; Gardner 77-292; “How are Games Educational”).

One thing to note is that not every game will use all types of intelligence. Instead, it will usually use some of the different learning types with a focus on one primary intelligence mechanism (Cherry; “How are Games Educational”). *Comfort Quest*, in this case, is unique because it attempts to be designed with all intelligences in mind, allowing players the freedom to choose paths that best suit their learning styles.

The final theorist of the Three Gs’ is Gee. Over the years, Gee has released multiple articles on game-based learning, which *Comfort Quest* could not be designed without (“James Gee’s”; What Video Games Have). This section will focus on his ‘Game Features that Facilitate Good Learning’ theory, which proposes six guidelines that should be found in games when meant to teach the player something (“Are Video Games Good” 172).

1. Embodied Empathy for a Complex System: Gee explains this idea as the thinking process during a simulation focusing on the full effect versus the singular events. What games can do is put the player in the game world and create a sense of sympathy during situations by giving them purpose and goals. This strengthens the player’s bonds with the game world, its inhabitants, and the lessons they are learning (“Are Video Games Good” 173-174).
2. Simulations of Experiences and Preparations for Action: This is the concept of generalisation and comprehension, as previously mentioned in Gagné’s theory. Gee explains this as a form of higher intelligence that people use to externalise their thinking by applying it to potential scenarios. Video games work well for this because they act as external simulations where players can try different actions with no real-world consequences. (“Are Video Games Good” 174-175).
3. Distributing Information Via the Creation of Smart Tools: The game is the Smart Tool in this case, which means that it is how the player offloads some of the cognitive burdens that would otherwise take place. Instead of the player having to come up with everything, the video game helps with creating characters, places, and quests, allowing the player to focus on what is

more important: the information and lessons within the game (“Are Video Games Good” 175-176).

4. Cross-Functional Teams: Normally, this would only apply to multiplayer games, but *Comfort Quest* has some semblance of this feature because it uses multiple companions. Gee explains this as using both the in-game and real-world knowledge and skill sets. Each player and character has different skills, which will change how the game is played (“Are Video Games Good” 176-177).
5. Situated Meaning: A word cannot be defined without considering the situation in which it is given; otherwise, there is no meaning. Video games simulate situations that allow the information/words to be situated and eventually generalised into real-world experiences. A unique feature that video games can do is create an almost ‘on-demand’ simulation where the information is controlled to not overwhelm the player (“Are Video Games Good” 177-178).
6. Open-Endedness: The final feature is a game that requires interaction from the players, allowing them to explore and define their own goals. Usually, these goals reflect personal goals they want to materialise in reality, mixed with the limits of the game world. Together, the goals will motivate the player to move forward and learn from their accomplishments (“Are Video Games Good” 178-179).

The last point I’ll make is that for games to be successful in helping mental health, they should explicitly state their intentions. Not only are people more likely to choose a game that is directly related to improving mental health, but they also perform better due to explicit goals and motivational dynamics (Mayer et al. 46-47; Poppelaars et al.).

Section 1: Finding Comfort in Characters

When a player picks up a game, their PC is rarely alone; usually, other characters populate the world where the game takes place. These non-playable characters (NPCs) are the backbone of society within the game world and are companions to the player. Most NPCs seem to be forgettable, but a few stand out: those that fight beside the player or help them in their time of need. These are the NPCs the player interacts with the most and with whom have the most profound relationships, but why do these characters stand out and make the players feel the way they do? A companion is almost always around the playable character (PC), providing a friend or can fight to protect them, but something appears to be overlooked, can this companion provide comfort?

Comfort is the action someone takes to make someone else feel less worried, upset or frightened by cheering them up or consoling them in their feelings (“Comfort”). However, the definition does not state specific ways to comfort someone and instead leaves it up to the interpretation of the people and the situation, something that a fictional character could easily accomplish through artificial

intelligence. People already play games to escape reality and comfort themselves through repetitive actions (Pallavicini), but can push this further by including comforting companion NPCs as a means to further support the gamers who play games for therapy. According to the DSM5, an anxiety disorder is excessive anxiety and worry that is difficult to control when experiencing everyday events or activities. By using games to create comfort, those who have anxiety disorders have easier access to something that may help and provide them with a sense of control in their life that they feel they have lost (Pallavicini).

With these ideas in mind, this section will explore the common traits of popular, non-playable character companions, what traits create comfort in reality, and how those with anxiety will be affected. Later, in Section Five, I will discuss how to combine these ideas to create comforting companions. By analysing these traits, game design can begin to care for players' mental health and, in turn, their emotional health.

NPC Companions Analysis

Over the many years that video games have been developed and published, there have also been many notable NPC companions that support the player throughout their adventures. These companions are an integral part of game design and are defined by Bouquet et al. (145) as “game characters that accompany the player throughout a longer part of the gameplay, complementing their character or skill set, and serving as part of the narrative. Because of their significance in many games, companions can have a great impact on the player experience.” This definition sets companion NPCs aside from regular game NPCs through their impact on the player versus just another body filling up a virtual society.

The data used looks at six lists of top companion NPCs from various websites and lists different traits to be compared (see Appendix A). The main characteristics were their species (human, animal, robot, etc.), their physical traits, such as hair colour and notable avatar characteristics, and their personality traits, including both positive and negative characteristics. This information was devised from what was given in each of the entries for the different lists, combined with the information described by the NPC's game wiki entries. Doing it this way focuses the analysis on the feelings of the players who have experienced the companions instead of the creator's perceptions of what this companion is supposed to be like.

Species

Going into this research, it initially appeared that most of the characters would be human, or at least humanoid, to allow for decent skills that help the player. The outcome was surprisingly different; only about half of the total NPCs were human. In total, 46 NPC companions were listed across the six articles, and 20 were human. This number excludes companions such as ghosts, vampires, voices, and

heads, even if they are human, because they could also be categorised as monsters or other beings. In terms of companions mentioned across multiple lists, there are only two human beings: Elizabeth from *Bioshock Infinite* and Ellie from *The Last of Us*, which both appear in three of the six articles.

The other half of companion NPCs consists of humanoid and regular animals, aliens/monsters, robots/AI, and anything else that does not have a specific category. When considering these entries, the most popular category is animals, with 10 entries across 26 results. This result can be broken up further, with dogs and dog hybrids being the most common. These numbers are essential to understand because they show that to have a memorable and possibly comforting NPC, humans are not always the best option, and animal NPCs may work just as well, if not better.

Physical Traits

One of the first things players notice about a companion NPC when they join the party is their physical traits. This section will focus mainly on human NPCs and human-esque NPCs, such as humanoid robots and monsters. This analysis includes gender, age range, hair colour, eye colour, skin colour, outfit type, and noticeable features, which are summarised in the chart below.

Physical Trait	Summary of Results	Implication
Gender	The ratio was 50/50 on the gender divide, with an equal number of both genders.	This shows that gender is not a primary trait to consider when designing comforting companions.
Age Range	Most NPC companions would be in the young age range category. Out of 24 possible humans and humanoids, 16 of them are considered young.	This shows that in terms of memorability or likability, younger NPCs do better with players, which can be transferred to the age of NPCs, which are the most comforting since a person needs to be likeable to be comfortable. Younger NPCs are also typically closer to the average age of gamers, which may also have some effect (Clement).
Hair and Eye Colour	Individually, these traits both favour a darker palette.	This shows that when designing an NPC, even though characters with darker hair and eye palettes are more common, focusing on characters with different

	<p>The number of companions with dark hair is 18 out of 24, and the number with dark eyes is 15 out of 24.</p> <p>What is interesting is that, more commonly, characters who have dark hair are shown with light eyes and vice versa.</p>	<p>tones of eye and hair colour for companions is more beneficial due to their likability.</p>
Skin Colour	<p>When analysing top companion NPCs' skin colour, most have light skin pigmentation.</p> <p>These characters consisted of 15 out of the 24 analysed characters.</p>	<p>This is a complex trait to manage when designing comforting companions because the ratio does show a preference for paler NPCs, even though designers want to be diverse within their designs.</p>
Outfit Type	<p>Most NPCs wear casual outfits, with a 14 out of 23 ratio.</p> <p>This was expected because most NPCs are average humans or humanoids from games with a high sense of realism.</p>	<p>This shows that casual clothes are best for comforting companions because they are the most realistic and common outfit type players will be used to.</p>
Noticeable Features	<p>One common noticeable feature is companions with facial hair, with 9 out of 24 characters. Facial hair can range from stubble to a full-grown beard and moustache and appears to have some correlation to age. The older the NPC, the more facial hair they have.</p> <p>The other common feature is to have some form of tattoo or marking at 5 out of 24 characters.</p> <p>The remaining features include freckles, glasses, missing body parts, and scars, all of which occurred twice.</p>	<p>This shows that one way companions can stand out from other NPCs within games is through noticeable physical features such as facial hair, scars, and tattoos.</p>

Table 1.1 Summary of Physical Trait Analysis of Companion NPCs

Personality Traits

Physical traits are much easier to quantify than personality traits, mainly because physical characteristics are extrinsic and noticeable just by looking, while personality traits are more intrinsic and opinion-based. This does not mean that personality is less important, especially when it comes to comforting companions. For this, a list of adjectives has been devised from the NPC's wikis, presumably written by players who have experienced these companions, and adjectives based on any in-game interactions. The list of words was then inputted into the Voyant Tools (Stéfan and Rockwell) to see what traits occur the most often and the categories Voyant has created from the words.

Most Common Traits

The data collected mentioned 301 personality traits, 204 of which are unique. One of the most common traits is humour, and the other is kindness. Typically, players are looking for companions who bring a sense of humour to the adventure and can break tension if needed or NPCs that instill other characteristics such as helpfulness, caring, and supportiveness during quests. These traits are good when designing NPC companions to comfort because they affect not only the PC but also the player themselves with laughter and support.

A few other common traits were loyal, sarcastic, empathetic, impulsive, intelligent, and upbeat; these stood out because they are a good representation and summary of some of the other words. Each of these traits would also be good to consider when making a comforting companion because they create a more well-rounded character. Some of these traits are more positive, such as loyal and empathetic, while others are more negative, such as sarcastic and impulsive. No human being is entirely perfect, so taking these six traits, along with the two most popular ones, creates a more realistic companion and allows the player to bond better emotionally through personalities and flaws.

Categories of Traits

One other way to look at common traits is to use categories and choose at least one word from each category to create a well-rounded character. Putting all the descriptions into Voyant created two broad categories of positive and negative traits. While negative traits do not make up the majority, there is still a variety. These traits include recklessness, frustration, loneliness, and arrogance, and they follow the pattern of how a companion starts before they evolve with the PC. Thus, while negative traits do not lend to comfort when designing companion characters, it is good to have negative traits to show well-roundedness and realism without perfectionism.

Comforting Real-World Traits

Two important factors to consider when designing comforting companions are the appearance and personality of the NPC, as stated above and understanding the traits that create comfort.

Physical Traits

Just as NPC companions have unique physical traits, so do actual people, but there does seem to be an issue quantifying these features. A significant amount of time was spent researching what physical traits create a more comforting person, such as whether people with dark or light hair are more comforting. This research was inconclusive, though, because only one paper had any significance to comforting companion creation, written by Gabele et al. (130-132), this paper discusses the characteristics preferred in non-playable character companions during serious gameplay, according to participants who are rehabilitating for brain damage. This study created six different potential NPCs with slight variations between them; the first three were female, and the last three were male. Within each gender group of NPCs, there was a young NPC under the age of 35, a middle-aged NPC between 35 and 49, and an older NPC 50 or older. These are the same age categories used when analysing the top NPC companions. Through this study, Gabele et al. discovered that most participants preferred the middle-aged female companion with a final score of 50% preferability or the young male NPC with 25% preferability(135-137). The NPCs with the lowest score were the older NPCs in both genders because they were thought to be too old and too strict (135-139). This study shows that the age of the most comforting NPCs would be middle-aged females and young males, but more research would be beneficial to corroborate the findings, expand the scope, and see if there is a difference when different features are used.

Diversity

Designers also need to consider the prospects of diversity when designing their characters at this point. While diversity is not limited to physical features, it is the physical features of a character that usually lead the player to assumed conclusions (Heussner et al. 89-92). This issue often arises because designers only consider general diversity in their games versus authentic diversity (Heussner 13-14). The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion will define diversity to set a baseline. It reads, “Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities, and characteristics we all possess, and the mix that occurs in any group of people. Race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, economic status, physical abilities, life experiences, and other perspectives can make up individual diversity. Diversity is a fact, and inclusion is a choice (Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion 8-9).” While this definition gives the basic ideas concerning diversity, there is a lack of guidance on authentically representing diversity. Diversity is not just about changing a character’s skin tone from a shade of white to a shade of black or adding some rainbows because there is no thought or meaning that has been put behind this decision (Heussner 13-14). According to Heussner, authentic diversity is when there is a thoughtful representation of all types of people that acts as a normal part of their everyday lives; no longer is there a reliance on stereotypes or tropes to provide context to certain characters or a need to explain and justify diversity

decisions. Specifically, authentic diversity should be achieved by working with actual members of the community the designer is attempting to represent when personal representation is not present (Heussner 13-14). In other words, authentic diversity means putting in the time and effort to truly understand a community and how to represent it accurately instead of adding it at the end because it was forgotten.

Concerning *Comfort Quest*, research has been taken from various cultural backgrounds on diverse topics, with the caveat that more research would need to be done through various perspectives if the game were to be fully developed. At this moment, the companions and other non-playable characters are meant to represent an idea of how they can be portrayed using the research found on comforting physical and personality attributes, allowing them to morph over time with new development.

Personality Traits

Myers-Briggs

One way to understand the personality traits of real people is to use standardised personality tests, like the Myers-Briggs test. The Myers-Briggs personality test asks a variety of questions that will then decide based on the answers what sides of the four categories the person best belongs to. These categories include introverted or extroverted, intuition or sensing, feeling or thinking, and perceiving or judging. The categories will then be combined into a string of four letters to show which traits were more dominant, for example, INTJ (introverted, intuition, thinking, judging) and ESFP (extraverted, sensing, feeling, perceiving) (*16 Personalities*). While Meyers-Briggs personalities have been discredited by academic psychologists, those in the academic game design field use this theory often in their designs. For game designers, the different Myers-Brigg personalities are a helpful way to design diverse characters because they can provide a detailed and practical summary of characters based on flaws, merits, strengths, and weaknesses while still being open enough to variation (Heussner et al. 87). I will also use Myers-Briggs to create overarching categories for comforting companions that can be further developed later to expand on any potential issues.

According to articles written by therapeutic recreation researchers, chief editors and writers of major media sources, and certified practitioners, there appear to be four leading Myers-Briggs personalities that work best for comforting others and are more prone to enter fields of work that involve caring for people (DeVries and Beck 250-252; Shatto; Storm). Due to this, these are the four best personalities to analyse for comforting companions because they correlate with care and comfort.

ENFJ- The Protagonist

The first personality that shows a stronger connection to comfort is ENFJ, or the protagonist. This personality is known for being receptive to others, reliable, passionate, altruistic, and charismatic. The reason that ENFJs are good at comforting others is because of the purity of intent and non-judgmental attitude they use, which makes them seem compassionate, dedicated, loyal, and sensitive to the needs of others without it being vocalised (*16 Personalities*; DeVries and Beck 253-254; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm).

INFP- The Mediator

The second personality that shows a solid connection to comfort is INFP or the mediator. This personality is known for being empathetic, generous, open-minded, creative, passionate, and idealistic. The reason that INFPs are good at comforting others is that they use their shared values and interests to connect with the other person's feelings, and provide a calming and loving energy to make others feel safe when opening up (*16 Personalities*; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm).

ESFJ- The Consul

The third personality that shows a strong connection to comfort is the ESFJ or the consul. This personality is known for their practical skills and sense of duty that leads them to be loyal, sensitive, and warm when connecting with others. The reason that ESFJs are good at comforting others is that they provide a sense of security and stability to people, and are loyal enough to stick by, no matter the problem (*16 Personalities*; DeVries and Beck 254; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm).

ENFP- The Campaigner

The final personality that shows a strong connection to comfort is the ENFP or the campaigner. This personality is curious, perceptive, enthusiastic, good at communicating, and good-natured. The reason that ENFPs are good at comforting others is that they are great listeners and focus on meaningful and emotional connections, to fully understand the situation at hand (*16 Personalities*; DeVries and Beck 254; *Similarminds.com*; Storm).

An interesting thing from researching these Myers-Briggs personalities, is that they all have one thing in common, and that is they all are dominant in feeling. This might be something to research in the future and understand better because it could provide insight into what is required to work with and comfort others most effectively.

Additional Character Characteristics

Backstory

It is easy when there is a single playable character in a game to have everything focused around them; it is their life a player plays through, after all, but this makes for a lack of tension when the playable character is in a narrative down moment and keeps companions on the outside of thought processes. Due to this, many supporting characters, especially companions, can feel isolated from the narrative and not important to the actual gameplay (*On Writing I* 91-93).

To address this issue, one of the best ways to create meaning for a companion is by providing the character a backstory that entwines with the playable characters, even with the simplest overlap. These connections do not have to be the most expansive backstories or complicated quests, but does require information about the companion to be learned that otherwise would not be told (*On Writing I* 91-93). Doing this creates a sense of true struggle and fear in the companion, which now has meaning to the playable character by giving the companions integral roles to play in the climax. Ultimately this leads to a more tense, emotional, and thematically complex relationship between not just the characters, but the player as well; the player will realise these companions may be struggling with some of the same anxieties that they are and show the player that they are not alone in this struggle (*On Writing I* 91-93). There are numerous ways in which the backstories can become interrelated; one of the key ideas is based on the relationship the playable character has with the companion, which is further discussed below.

Character Relationships

The most important aspect to consider when creating comforting companions is to make sure the player and PC can connect with different companions. Creating a relationship between characters is not just referring to romantic relationships or positive ones, any relation, whether it be lover, friend, or fiend, positive, neutral, or negative, affects the connection and emotional impact.

Character relationships can be divided in a number of ways, each adds a layer to the connection visible to the player while organising the designer (Dille and Platten 68). The first is whether a connection already exists between two characters in the world or if the relationship is completely new (Dille and Platten 66-68; *The Lazy DM's Workbook* 23; *The Lazy Dungeon Master* 14). A pro of having a pre-existing relationship is that there is already a cohesive bond, which only requires fleshing out the exact details versus the creation of something new. With this, there is a built-in level of emotion and trust in the relationship because somehow the characters dealt with each other before and remain on amicable terms. A con though, is that the player will be missing information on the relationship unless it is directly stated to them. How the characters met, what they mean to each other, and why they are just coming together now, can cause stress in the player. To make this type of relationship successful, it

needs to be specific but also open to interpretation (Dille and Platten 66-71; *The Lazy DM's Workbook* 23).

On the other hand, when companions are designed with little to no existing connection, a stronger bond can be built as the characters learn and grow with each other in front of the player. The player will know everything about the relationship, just like the playable character, and create trust alongside the relationship verses in the middle. With this freedom, there also comes more work. Designing new connections for every character takes up more time and energy than one might think; without a preexisting connection, a designer has to design for any potential relationship, which can be hundreds of different branching pathways. The relationships also cannot contradict any other relation, plot point, world-building, etc., which entails having to go back and forth constantly checking the previous work. A game would not be able to support this for every companion and/or NPC, and would most likely overwhelm the player (Dille and Platten 68-71).

With *Comfort Quest* being designed for people with anxiety, trust and socialisation are some of the harder actions to create. Being introduced to numerous new people and needing to form a personal connection with them, would be no different than going to a new school, and may cause the player to revert back to anxious habits. To combat this potential distress, having a mix of pre-existing relationships and new ones with the ability to choose can mitigate some effects. This allows players to have control over their gameplay and wellness by choosing what works best for them and having the choice to expand their skills.

There is not one strict method to designing these relationships, but there are theories to help. The other method of categorising character relationships is using a grid chart with the type of relationship on one axis, and the type of motivation on the other. The type of relationships refer to the categories of ally, neutral, and enemy, while the types of motivation are player-centric, location-centric, and self-motivated. For now, I will use these categories, with allowance to evolve over time (Dille and Platten 67-69).

	<p>Ally: Those with a positive relationship to the PC, that either provides support in quests and challenges or needs to be helped by the PC. Companions fall here on the chart because of their helping nature.</p>	<p>Neutral: Those who have neither a distinctly positive nor negative relationship with the PC, instead existing in the middle on a scale of morality. There is a large variety of neutral character personalities due to this scale, as it allows them to have positive and negative interactions with the playable character, but not be defined by them (Dille and Platten 66,69). Neutral relationships make a majority of non-playable characters in a game, as they act as citizens, shopkeepers, wanderers, ect, and bring life to the world.</p>	<p>Enemy: Those with a negative relationship to the PC, that actively try to halt progress, with varying levels of power. The overall antagonist of a game fits into this category, but so do their minions, and some normal NPCs that feel wronged</p>
<p>Player-Centric: These characters solely decide what to do based on the PC's actions. To them everything revolves around the player instead of their own thoughts and morals.. Primarily, companions and main antagonists fit into this category</p>	<p>A character who supports the playable character by devoting their entire being to them, in exchange for being helped during times of need.</p>	<p>A character who exists in the same world but remains separate from the main narrative. This character may help the player, depending on the circumstances, and has neither a positive nor negative relationship.</p>	<p>A character whose only mission is to stop the playable character from succeeding in their goals, by any means necessary. A game usually revolves around this relationship as the central tension.</p>
<p>Location-Centric: These characters belong to a specific area with the goal of staying there. This</p>	<p>A character who will help the playable character while in a specific location, but is left behind when</p>	<p>A character who is specific to one location, and does not directly aid or hinder the progress of the</p>	<p>A character who acts as a patrol for certain locations and will attack the playable character when</p>

includes side quest characters, citizens, and minions because they are restricted to one location and have a goal within it.	moving on. These are usually short-term companions who help with quick quests.	playable character. This is similar to the idea of a true neutral character when their existence does not usually have significant change over the playable character, the villain, the world, or the narrative.	the threshold is crossed. There is no personal relationship between this character and the playable character, instead, they are just doing their assigned job as protectors.
Self-Motivated: These characters only care about themselves and their personal goals.	A character who is willing to support the playable character, but only if it aids themselves as well. Typically this character cares more about their personal goals, and may indirectly cause trouble for the playable character.	A character who is trying to achieve their own goals, while existing in the same world as the playable character. There is no allegiance to either ally or enemy, even when met, to maintain a sense of freedom.	A character who will attack the playable character when personally threatened. These enemies are purely in it for personal gain and do not care about the rest of the narrative. Commonly these characters are found randomly in games, acting as minor rivals versus villains.

Table 1.2 Categorising Character Relationships Chart
(Dille and Platten 66-71)

How Companions Will Help Anxiety

Anxiety is not something that will be solved by just adding an interesting companion to a game. Still, that companion will provide the opportunity to comfort those who are anxious. This can be done in several ways but depends on the anxious person and their background. The first way that companions can help anxiety is by being a realistic character who is trustworthy and secure enough to share sensitive information. Due to the companion being an NPC, they cannot share information that the player is stating, but still need to give the impression that this is possible (Bouquet et al. 145-146; Warpefelt and Verhagen 41-42). This idea is commonly known as personification, which studies have shown can alleviate loneliness and promote social connection, which are common side effects for those with anxiety (Luu).

This idea of realism and personification can be divided into seven main categories according to Bouquet et al. (146), some of which have been analysed above. The categories include appearance, sentience,

individuality, behaviour, communication, relation to the player, and significance, in which each trait plays an important role in creating a realistic NPC that has a stronger relationship with the player (Bouquet et al. 146-151).

Throughout this thesis, appearance, individuality, behaviour, and communication are discussed in detail through the lens of personality. By doing this, the characters designed as examples (see Appendix B) use the aforementioned traits, which should be realistic enough for the player to be able to personify and create a strong bond with. This should help alleviate some anxiety because players now have someone they trust and can tell their thoughts and feelings to, and loneliness can be curbed through social connection (Luu). This is similar to the person with anxiety seeing a therapist, which is a common method of dealing with anxiety disorders without the feelings of judgement from the therapist (Soelro). With a comforting companion, players can choose when they want to talk to someone who is always available, can create a bond between themselves and the companion by going on adventures, and do not feel judged because, at the end of the day, the companion is not real.

The second way that these companions can comfort someone with anxiety will be through comfort strategies, which will be used across all NPCs regardless of personality because all personalities relate to the strategies. It is important to have NPCs use multiple strategies to allow for a wide array of players. Two people with anxiety may not experience the same effects from certain strategies, so having multiple strategies across characters will allow players to choose what works best for them. The strategies that will be discussed come from the Clark et al. study (331-337) and the Bippus study (309-312) and include the idea of companionship overall. According to the Clark et al. study (334-335), the comfort strategy of just pure companionship, also known as other orientation (Bippus 309), is the most preferred strategy at 55%. This will be easy to incorporate because the comfort companions are supposed to be characters that follow the player and provide companionship to combat the loneliness mentioned above (Luu).

The other well-received comfort strategies include giving advice, having sympathy, problem-solving, refraining from general negativity, and providing a different perspective on the situation (Clark et al. 331-337; Bippus 309-312). This will be done through the conversations and behaviours the companion NPCs have with their players as they explore the game world together. These comforting strategies will help reduce players' anxiety because they mimic the two types of therapy that work best for those with anxiety: cognitive therapy and behavioural therapy. Cognitive therapy is when someone examines how their thoughts or cognition leads to their anxiety, while behaviour therapy deals with how a person behaves and reacts in a triggering situation. These comforting strategies can lead the player to self-reflection on their own thoughts and behaviours to make them more aware of their triggers and how to lessen or avoid the ones that lead to anxiety (Smith et al.). One thing to note is that these

comforting companions might also use the lowest received comfort strategy of account to teach the player about themselves in ways the player will understand while continuing to create a strong bond of trust (Clark et al. 337). This is important when dealing with anxiety because it changes empathy to sympathy, which is shown to be more comforting (Gabele et al. 138-139; Steber).

In conclusion, comforting companions can stand out and make the players feel the way they do through deliberate design choices. This section explored the common traits that popular non-playable character companions have, what traits create comfort in reality, and how those with anxiety will be affected. Together, these ideas will allow a game to be created with characters that help care for the players' mental health and, by extension, their emotional health and guide those with anxiety to a less stressful life. One thing to consider, though, is a game is not a game if it only has comforting companion characters, a game needs to have a world, a narrative, and mechanics, all of which can also lead to comfort.

Section 2: Comforting World

One of the first things a player sees when they open a new game is the vast game world before them to explore. Without a world in which the game takes place, there is no place for characters, narratives, or quests. While certain game worlds stand out, others get lost and forgotten. There are few, if any, game worlds built to mimic the best parts of reality and comfort players by enveloping them in a safe space to explore without fear. Why is it, though, that game worlds focus more on the brutality and violence of a world instead of the creature comforts everyone craves at some point? Maybe it is because the world is based too much on reality and the following hardships, or no one has ever thought of creating a world different from the almost apocalyptic norm and instead focusing on comfort.

In this section, taking trips to relaxing locations or understanding comforting architectural concepts is a way to create comfort. By doing this, the hope is that a world will be created where players can escape from reality and comfort themselves (Pallavicini). With these ideas in mind, this section explores four subsections on world-building that commonly occur in world-building literature, real-world locations, and concepts known to improve comfort, including settlements, buildings, landscapes, and religion/spirituality/pantheons. Each subsection was chosen based on the number of times synonymous concepts were mentioned in world-building literature, and the amount of related research done in their real-world counterparts. By analysing these concepts, a game can be created where players can have open access to a space that cares for their mental and emotional health by making them equal in terms of wellness using the real-world research already discovered and the effects each subsection can provide.

World-Building Literature Analysis

Over the years, many books have been released about the art of world-building due to its importance in not only game design but creative writing, art, and storytelling. A lot goes into building a whole new world to explore, which requires backing in reality to make it seem real and a place that players and readers alike could visit (Ellefson, *The Art of World Building* 15-17). Many people have experienced, at some point, being enveloped by a fictional world and losing themselves in it. They become immersed in the landscape, the settlements, and more to allow themselves a break from the harshness of reality. This is why it is essential to understand what goes into world-building and why world-building is such an integral part of the design process, especially when designing a game to help those with anxiety disorders.

Here, I will examine multiple world-building aspects commonly discussed across the literature, comparing the information and theories provided, including works by D'Amato, Nelson, Trvana, and Ellefson. Appendix C contains the full scope of the information, but focusing on some aspects allows for a more in-depth examination of the possibilities.

Settlements

Settlements are one of the most critical aspects of world-building. They can be where a character starts and grows or the goal that a character is working towards. It offers exploration, safety, and a slew of new people to interact with (Ellefson, *The Art of World Building* 299-331). These are some of the reasons why the creation of settlements is discussed in seven of the nine world-building works of literature being compared by this paper. While not every book gives the same focus to settlements, they are commonly shown to be something a world cannot live without (see Appendix C). There are also quite a few sub-concepts, such as the size and shape of the settlement, age, is it the capital, etc. To do this, let us compare some literature about settlements by different authors.

Within James D'Amato's book *The Ultimate RPG Game Master's World Building Guide*, settlement creation is condensed into one neutral chapter with information that any genre could use. This chapter includes activities to help create the basics of the settlement, such as age, shape, size, and population, as well as defining characteristics such as landmarks, residents, and stories. This world-building literature is good for the initial planning of settlements (D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 254-264). A shortened example of this chapter can be seen in Appendix E.

Trevena's books are unique from the rest of the literature discussed here because they are structured more as workbooks than traditional theoretical literature. With this said, though, she does have quite a few activities that pertain to the creation of settlements, such as designing the capital of a world and the structures needed to maintain a settlement. The major point to get out of Trevena's books is that the question 'Why'? Why is the settlement located here? Why is this the layout of the settlement? Why do the people in the settlement not get along? This question of why is what connects and makes sense of everything within the design of the settlement. For example, a settlement with few residents and lots of land/space will rarely be described as bustling since the population density does not match the descriptor. Understanding this is important because it ensures the designer knows what they are doing and provides information to fall back on in case of issues (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 11; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding 2ed.* 18; Trevena, *From Trevena, Sanctity to Sorcery* 7-35). Settlement is also where Trevena mentions the concept of food briefly in her books, questioning how food is harvested, caught, killed, prepared, stored, preserved, and imported, among other things. What sets her apart from the other authors, however, is when she questions if there was once plentiful food that has become more difficult to source over the years or completely wiped out. This is important to consider because of the implications for people's lives in the natural environment regarding the food chain and its effects on other societal systems such as trade, religion, health, gender roles, culture, and environment (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 16; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding 2ed.* 21).

To round off the discussion on settlements within world-building literature, I will finish by talking about Randy Ellefson, a designer of fictional worlds and a writer of theory. Ellefson is an author who has spent years studying world-building and has an extensive set of theories. Once again, an entire chapter is dedicated to the creation of settlements, but Ellefson's work goes into much more detail than any other book. Ellefson starts, as the other authors do, by discussing the basic aspects of the settlement, such as population, size, location, and type. However, he expresses it in more detail with ideas about climate, land features, quarters, and population representation. The chapter does not stop there, though, and explores defence and offence for the settlement, government and politics, and history and culture due to this being the information that brings life to the settlement (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 459-512; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 60-63). While additional information is not necessary for this paper, as it is only exploring the basics of settlement creation, it does make a designer think about where to take the settlement in the future and how connections can be made for tension (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 299-331; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 41-43).

Buildings

With all that said about settlement development, though, buildings are more unique regarding world-building because while many works of literature discuss buildings in passing, they rarely go into much detail. Luckily, even if the world-building literature tends to skip over some of the aspects of buildings, the authors at least give some larger concept ideas, which will be explained below.

Fantasy World-Building is a different kind of book than the others being discussed. Instead of discussing world-building from a writing or designing perspective, it focuses on the world's visual art. This is a unique take on world-building because a designer can physically see the world coming alive through art instead of just words (Nelson 1-3).

In terms of buildings and architecture, Nelson spends a short chapter showing how to draw specific aspects of buildings and how buildings are meaningful to a story. What is interesting, though, is that Nelson quickly mentions two significant factors of designing buildings: how and with what a person builds. This is important because building materials will likely be the main factor in creating comforting buildings (Nelson 97). Nelson also mentions that a way to make impressive fantasy-esque buildings is to exaggerate the most intriguing details (Nelson 101-102). This could be the tower that holds the trapped princess or the loose stone to solve the puzzle. This idea also helps with comfort by exaggerating the comforting details over the everyday design elements (Nelson 97-106).

Trevena discusses buildings the most in her world-building literature, dedicating one section to them in two different books. Within each section, she starts by discussing the reasoning behind the buildings being designed, such as sanctuaries or prisons; whether they are to include or exclude people; and

what makes the building meaningful. Trevena then discusses the building's characteristics, such as its age, building materials used, and location within the settlement. One interesting idea in this section is that designers should remember that the entire building does not have to be unique and can instead have secret rooms or tunnels that create interest. Finally, Trevena discusses how people in the settlement react to these buildings: Who built these structures? Do people frequent them often? Is there a dark tale attached to the building? And what does the building mean to the individual, the settlement, and the rest of the world? (*How to Create History* 26; *From Sanctity to Sorcery* 64-65)

While James D'Amato's book does not technically include a chapter on buildings in general, there is a chapter about taverns. For this reason, the book has been included in the list and the chapter activity has been included in Appendix F. Throughout this chapter, the design of taverns is discussed in terms of the culture and how people interact within the tavern to give it a distinct feel, which could include comfort (D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 239-243).

Landscapes

Landscapes are the last element to discuss that was common among world-building literature, and is the world aspect of world-building. When Nelson talks about landscapes, which he refers to as habitats, he tends to focus on different biome characteristics and where there are overlaps. He starts by breaking down the habitats into four types: temperate, subtropical, tropical, and polar. He then goes on to discuss terrestrial vegetation types, freshwater habitats, and marine habitats (Nelson 9-25). Interestingly, he goes on to discuss the different shapes of the landscapes, with curves being more prevalent along the shore and in the tropics, and jagged edges more inland and in the mountains (Nelson 9-25).

Regarding landscapes, Trevena starts by saying that one of the worst decisions a designer could make is throwing random biomes onto a map to create the landscape. While it might seem like a good idea due to its ease and quickness, the logic tends not to make sense. Many times, landscapes follow patterns, such as mountain ranges existing in lines. Instead, they should be aware of how different biomes and landscapes blend together and what biomes are used as a transition. One other thing to consider is how the landscapes have changed over the years based on weather and inhabitants. Actions such as war will also affect how the landscape forms due to the stress on the ground. Most important, though, is to maintain that these different actions or features are important to a world or story and are meant to show the consequences of some action (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 12; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 2ed. 14).

Compared to the other authors, Randy Ellefson goes into extreme detail on all the different aspects of a world in regard to landscapes and land features. He begins by explaining how the Earth is made up of

different tectonic plates that can form land masses and volcanos anywhere in the world when they overlap (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 227-230, 236-237; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 34-35). Eventually, after the complex scientific discussion, Ellefson moves on to discussing specific landscapes such as mountains and how height versus width is important when considering the impressiveness of a mountain; (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 235-238; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 34); the correlation between a river's age and canal patterns, with younger rivers tend to move quickly, with multiple rapids and have a straight canal, whereas older rivers are slower, wider, and more curvy in their patterns; and making forests distinguishable with varying woodscapes like savannahs, woodlands, and jungles. (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 239-246; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 35).

The concept that I found most interesting was how one type of landscape connects to another. Grasslands are located farther from mountain ranges than other landscapes due to the rain shadow that a mountain casts. This leaves one side of the mountain to be forested and the other to be deserts of hard-packed clay. Then, between the different landscapes are typically wetlands, including mires, bogs, swamps, and marshes, which form boundaries of places where people do not want to enter and where strange creatures live (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 246-251; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 35-36).

The last element that Ellefson mentions is understanding how every location in world-building will have been affected by some amount of terraforming. Areas can be untamed expanses or cultivated areas created by burning down forests, dumping toxic water, and turning deserts into cities (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 254-255; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 36).

Religion, Spirituality, and Pantheons

Of all the world-building features authors discuss, more often they tend to focus on two areas, the first is religions, spirituality, and pantheons, which acts as a backbone to history, magic, and government.

When James D'Amato refers to a pantheon, he usually refers to it in connection with magic, by having mirroring activities for creation. For D'Amato, a pantheon refers to the gods inhabiting or influencing the world as a way to add action, drama, and obstacles, and while religion is not always shown in games, when it comes to *Comfort Quest*, it follow D'Amato's approach by connecting it with a lot of magic (D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 57-70). D'Amato teaches six overall domains: natural, cerebral, celestial, conceptual, mortal, and elemental, each with eight subcategories. However, these are just examples of what it could be. A designer will typically choose one of these domains and subcategories and build everything else around it, including the aspects that are the next part of the pantheon system (D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 57-70). These aspects refer to power, interest, passion, form, and thought, which are discussed in more detail in Appendix E, but generally refer to the limits the

gods will have, their personality and diversity, as well as similarities and differences between each individual god. When a designer combines these together, they will be able to answer questions such as what is their name and title, what heralds this god's presence, and how does this god communicate? These are critical in the ways of practice because this is where the ideas of spirituality and religion occur through worship, rituals, and rules (D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 57-70).

For Angeline Trevena, creating religion and spirituality is one of the most entertaining parts of world-building because a designer gets the opportunity to design many interconnected elements, such as deities, creation stories, festivals, holidays, rites and rituals (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 44; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 2ed. 52; Trevena, *From Sanctity to Sorcery* 7-15, 48-80). What a designer will have to remember, however, is that there is a difference between religion and spirituality. This concept will be delved into further in the Comfort in the Real World heading. Still, Trevena specifically mentions that a person can be deeply spiritual without adhering to a religion, and allows them to pick and choose what parts of a religion they might want to follow based on their personal beliefs (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 2ed. 52; Trevena, *From Sanctity to Sorcery* 7-8).

Typically, there is more than one religion or spiritual belief in a world, and they have changed over time. So, once a designer has created religions, they also have to figure out the relationship between different religions; how they are similar and different; if there are any conflicting values or views; and what religion or spirituality contains. Religion and spirituality, in reality, have, led to wars, genocide, changes in government, changes in law, and shock waves to the way that society works, but can also work together to better the society of people (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 44; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 2ed. 52; Trevena, *From Sanctity to Sorcery* 7-15).

Trevena states that similar to magic systems, religion or spiritual systems should also have consequences and limitations based on the pantheons created in order to create conflict intention within a world. What happens if a deity is not listening or willing to intervene in religious matters, especially if this is something they were known to do in the past? The consequences and limitations can also just occur based on a character's knowledge and abilities about aspects of said religion, causing misguided intentions and opinions to spread. Most importantly, though, these consequences and limitations will create moral choices within a game, placing barriers between the playable character and their goal, creating struggle along with opportunities to learn (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 44; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 2ed. 52; Trevena, *From Sanctity to Sorcery* 7-15, 51-52).

Lastly, when world-building, it's crucial to consider the day-to-day impacts of religion or spirituality on a character, both believers and non-believers. These beliefs inform many of society's cultural attributes. For instance, religion might be closely tied to education and curriculum or set the dates of

major festivals (Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding* 44; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding 2ed.* 52; Trevena, *From Sanctity to Sorcery* 7-15, 51-52).

Randy Ellefson might not discuss spirituality throughout his books, but he does have a chapter on religion and pantheons (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 27-44; 555-572; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 9-12, 68-70). When it comes to religion, Ellefson takes a much broader approach than other authors because he believes that religions are mostly tied to history rather than anything else within world-building. So, once a designer has the initial elements of a religion, everything else falls into line (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 555-557; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 68). However, the three specific attributes he mentions add some interesting ideas. The first is making sure to invent the people or clergy of the religion, distinctly looking at how they act and the restrictions that are placed on them. This is because the people of religion reflect the entire religion and how society views it. The second attribute is designing the symbols for this religion based on aspects of an origin story. Pictures are easier to understand than words when it comes to societal attributes and can be easily added throughout a world to show interconnectedness. The last attribute is the amount of control that religion has over a society within a world. Religion very commonly exercises control over a person's life regarding how often they pray, when, where, and what words are said, and what actions can be performed before, during, and after said prayer. When somebody is being controlled by religion, how different is it to somebody outside of this religion and if these two people were to meet, how would they deal with each other (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 560-567; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 69)?

The real interest in Ellefson's work, though, lies when he begins to discuss pantheons. He tends to use gods as an overall idea in world-building to act as a universal force instead of something a character can directly connect to. One way to approach this is if the gods are actually real beings or if they are just cosmic forces discussed without real proof or appearance. The latter would mean that they do not interfere with other world-building events yet still be blamed for occurrences (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 29-34; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 9-11). Yet, even though Ellefson continually talks about making things simpler for oneself by limiting designs, he contradicts himself here by stating if a designer is set on creating a pantheon, then they should design more than one god to have within a world. Even though it is more work, it offers more opportunities for conflict among the other deities and mortals in their beliefs. Pantheons offer better ways to characterise the residents of a world through their beliefs and can provide context to cultural and moral issues (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 29-30, 43-44; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 11).

Lastly, Ellefson continually returns to the most important point: a designer needs to make gods have limitations and vulnerabilities no matter what they are or how integral they are to the world. This

allows them to maintain interest by showing that they can be wounded, that the connection between mortals and god is not as vast as everyone thinks, and that the pantheon could come crumbling down one day (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 33-34; Ellefson, *185 Tips* 11).

Comfort in the Real World

To make an immersive fictional world, according to Randy Ellefson, one must design the world. Hence, it could exist somewhere in reality, whether on Earth, a planet close to Earth, or an entirely new universe. To do this, Ellefson suggests using analogues, and what better place to find analogues for comforting and relaxing places than those already found (*The Complete Art of World Building* 299-331; *185 Tips* 16-17). This part of the section will explore real places, buildings, and theories found throughout Earth that are known for comforting and decreasing anxiety.

Settlements

When looking up lists of locations known to be comforting, there is usually a divide between the type of lists: places to visit versus places to live (Bicha; Insight Guides; Romano; Sills). This is important to understand because there are some similar features between the aspects of the different settlements and some differences that are important to decreasing anxiety.

Settlements To Visit

It appears that when people are deciding what places to visit known for being comforting, there is a preference for settlements that have a lower population density, which makes sense because other people are one of the biggest stressors in life (See Appendix D). Okulicz-Kozaryn and Valente state, “POPULATION correlates negatively with PLACE SATISFACTION at $-.38$ and with LIFE SATISFACTION at $-.15$ (206).” This correlation is also shown via the descriptions of the places, where the ones to visit are more likely to have been described as quiet or have low tourism. On average, $1446/\text{km}^2$ is the population density to base fictional settlements on that are not a primary location for the characters to live in but one commonly visited to improve the character’s mental, physical, and emotional health (See Appendix D).

Settlements to Live In

On the other hand, the settlements that have been described as the best places to live have a higher average population density, sitting at approximately $2885/\text{km}^2$ on average. Most places are either large or capital cities, whereas the places to visit include cities, municipalities, provinces/territories, republics, and landmarks. With this being said, most descriptions did not include the concept of quiet and instead focused on the active lifestyle of the population (See Appendix D). This type of settlement will be the best for capital settlements within the fictional world and the place where the characters end up living.

Similarities Between Settlements

While the population density and noise activity are major differences between the two types of settlements, there are more similarities than differences.

Age

Age was among the most surprising and hardest to determine statistics for the listed settlements. While some newer settlements had their historical dates listed, many older settlements either did not list their settlement date or gave a century. Due to this, the age of the settlements is largely approximated. What was interesting, however, is that there was no determinable difference between the age of the settlements to visit versus the settlements to live. This shows that the age of the settlement does not have a major impact on the comfort and tranquillity of the place and instead should focus on the visual aspects (See Appendix D).

Water

Out of all the aspects for both the settlements to visit and live in, one stood out the most. According to the descriptions of the settlements and the linked pictures, the common aspect was that they are near bodies of water. This included lakes, oceans, ponds, rivers, hot springs, and more, which were thought to have health benefits or uncommon natural beauty. Submerging oneself in the water or watching it flow was said to bring peace and relaxation through the movement (See Appendix D). This information was then corroborated by two studies based on media descriptions of similar locations that stated being near water is an essential element to higher tranquillity ratings (Wartmann et al. “Assessing experienced tranquillity” 2353; Wartmann et al. “Exploring tranquillity” 5).

Nature

Along with being close to water sources, being near nature was another major aspect of the comfort and tranquillity of these settlements. It did not matter whether this nature was beaches, hiking trails, or mountain ranges (See Appendix D) (Pheasant et al. 504-506; Tsunetsugu et al. 93; Wartmann et al. “Assessing experienced tranquillity” 2353; Wartmann et al. “Exploring tranquillity” 2-7). This is thought to be the case because not only is nature quieter, but also there is less pollution in the air. According to Kaklauskas et al., “Air pollution contributes to decreased happiness and life satisfaction and increased anxiety, annoyance, self-harm, mental disorders, and suicide, (641-642)” so allowing people access to nature minimises the effects of air pollution within busy settlements.

As a side note, an interesting statistic found when researching settlements is that one of the reasons why people enjoy Nordic settlements is that there is the idea that a settlement should be one-third water, one-third green space, and one-third architecture to create balance (Sills).

Food and Drink

As aforementioned, food is commonly associated with settlements due to the cultural elements it creates, and the comfort it can provide. I am choosing to include this because it is something everyone can understand and connect to, while also addressing a controversial world-building element. Many people know that food can comfort somebody with anxiety based on the emotions and experiences it brings them of past memories but there is no direct reason for this (Moyer). In some places, porridge, soup, cinnamon rolls, bread, roasted potatoes, ginger cookies, and meatballs are the things that people find comforting; for others, it is chilli, mac and cheese, spinach dip, stew, and pasta (Day; Endicott; Jones; Lowder; Piro). What one can get out of these examples are a few patterns; the first is that almost all of these are warm dishes; the second is that many are carb-heavy foods. Only assumptions can be made at this time as to why, but it is a possible area for future research on the correlation between warm carb-based food and reduced anxiety.

When discussing food, one also has to consider drinks, but drinking has a different connotation than just a beverage. In this case, I want to discuss drinking in video games. Many video games show alcohol use in a lighthearted way, where playable characters and NPCs have low tolerance and are more fun to interact with when drunk. During this time, mechanics are not changed; instead, players are shown the less dangerous sides of alcohol (Cranwell, Jo, et al. 428-429; MacLeod). This has caused many players to be more likely to try alcohol due to the promotion within games (Cranwell, Jo, et al. 432).

When it comes to anxiety, however, alcohol increases anxiety by affecting coping mechanisms and different parts of the brain (Cherney; Clerkin et al. 166-168; Kieffer et al. 60-62, 73-74; Kim and Kwon 10-11; Mosel; Smith). It causes dramatic level changes in serotonin, which is the main brain chemical that deals with anxiety, so fluctuations and levels tend to set off anxiety symptoms (Cherney). When it comes to anxiety, it has even been shown that those who have panic disorder specifically become dependent on alcohol to control their symptoms 25% of the time (Cherney; Mosel; Smith).

The reason why showing alcohol in a game such as *Comfort Quest*, which deals with anxiety, is conflicting is that people with anxiety disorders are already more likely to reach for an alcoholic beverage. Even if alcohol does make anxiety worse in the long term, it deals with some of the physical symptoms, such as tension reduction and decreased emotional representation, in the present (Cherney; Clerkin et al. 166-168; Kieffer et al. 60-62, 73-74; Kim and Kwon 10-11; Mosel; Smith).

In some cases, the anxiety is not even due to a person's internal feelings, but how they believe they will be judged within society; thus, another main reason why people with anxiety tend to have an increase in alcohol use is to be able to cope and conform. Alcohol allows them to attend what they see as typical social situations, which could lead to a fear of negative evaluation if they do not participate

(Kim and Kwon 10-11; Norberg et al. 562-564; Scalzo and Martinez 945-946; Terlecki and Buckner 80-81). Alcohol has always been known as liquid courage, but for anxiety, it is the complete opposite.

Buildings

Occupying a settlement is useless if there are no buildings to fill the space and allow the residents to live. Because of this, this section will focus on some real-world concepts used to create comforting buildings, including the idea of hygge, and the best building materials to use.

Hygge

There have been many cultural concepts that help make a setting or building into a comforting and relaxing spot. One of these concepts is the Danish (and sometimes Norwegian) Hygge (“Hygge”). Hygge is a word used to describe the mood of feeling comfortable and cosy in terms of psychological wellness as “a form of everyday togetherness (“Hygge”). It is usually expressed in various ways, from clothing to tea, but is most commonly shown as building features and décor. Examples include watching a movie in front of a roaring fireplace; taking a walk in a chunky knit warm sweater; cooking by candlelight; or surrounding oneself with comforting items, including particular people (Kythor 78). The most crucial aspect, though, is that one is spending this time of hygge with their loved ones, whether friends or family, and reconnecting with one another through conversation, laughter, and comfort (Linnet 22-24).

There is also a social aspect to hygge, which is meant to be a safe, low-key, and intimate form of socialisation. Specifically in Denmark, hygge is an everyday concept that takes place during everyday social interaction, where people are greeted with the phrase “Tak for sidst” or “Thanks for the last time we were together,” which would be returned as “Yes, that was hyggelig (Linnet 23).” “That was hyggelig (Linnet 23)!” is also a form of farewell that is customary to give in any situation to calm the hosts’ expectations that something went wrong. Hygge is supposed to be an easy-going, natural way to socialise instead of overly exciting or rambunctious (Linnet 23).

One of the most important aspects that someone needs to understand about hygge is that it is supposed to represent the middle class of society who have enough to be comfortable, but not extravagant. This is important because this concept makes the hygge low-key and enjoyable without the need for excessive spending (Linnet 24-27). Having wide-open rooms goes against the idea of hygge because they do not create the closeness needed for people within the room (Linnet 34). One does not need to spend much money for hygge because the true hygge is through the togetherness of loved ones, though it does not hurt to have the creature comforts (Linnet 41). Overall, hygge, whether through objects, adventures, or people, is an interesting way to comfort and calm oneself.

Building Materials

While many people think that comfort comes from what is inside a building, the materials the building is made of can also have a comforting and tranquil effect. There is one building material that seems superior to others in terms of comfort, and that material is wood. For centuries, buildings have been made of wood due to easier access. However, even with other common materials being available, wood still seems to have the most statistically significant benefits. A building made of wood makes the rooms inside feel warmer and cosier. This affects people by lowering their blood pressure, calming their autonomous nervous system, and decreasing their heart rate. This not only affects a person's physical health but also their mental health, since emotional states are usually manifested as physical changes and allow a person to calm down (Heath; Watchman et al. "A Post-occupancy Evaluation" 8714-8718; Watchman et al. "Wood and Comfort" 173-179; "Wood Construction Reduces Stress and Offers A Healthy Living Environment"). Not everything has to be made of wood, though, to gain benefits. In the study by Morita et al., they discovered that if the building is 45% wood, it allows for the best calming effects (2).

Wood also has other unique attributes that make it the best material for buildings. Firstly, wood absorbs noise, which is beneficial when living in a busy settlement ("Prioritise Comfort for Building Users"). Secondly, wood is known to affect the thermal, visual, olfactory, and acoustic parameters of the people within (Watchman et al. "A Post-occupancy Evaluation" 8710-8720; Watchman et al. "Wood and Comfort" 173-180). A building becomes more immersive when made of wood because of the warm yellow tones over blue, the smell of pine or cedar, and the gentle creaks as the building settles, which mimics the forest where the tree came from (Watchman et al. "A Post-occupancy Evaluation" 8710-8720; Watchman et al. "Wood and Comfort" 173-180). Finally, wood has also been shown to improve sleep and cause less insomnia for people because of the better overall average of comfort (Morita et al. 7-8).

Landscapes

The interesting thing about anxiety is that there are so many ways to help that do not require the effort required to do most daily activities. If therapy, medications, or alternative forms of medicine are not within somebody's budget, there are still things that they can do to help ease some anxiety symptoms. Going out into nature is one of these, or specifically going out into different landscapes (Oh et al. 7-9; Song et al.).

Research has suggested that even looking at forests, whether real or in a picture, can help decrease anxiety symptoms. While it is better to be within these forests, taking a more urban approach is okay. One of the leading alternative therapies combining landscapes and anxiety relief is forest therapy when someone exposes themselves to forested areas for a period of time and notices specific natural

elements. Forest therapy tries to incorporate all five senses when experiencing nature and landscapes by focusing the brain on particular aspects and centering the person. It is believed that forests are one of the better landscapes for dealing with anxiety because the trees have a type of essential oil called photonicides, which calms down the nervous system and allows more than just the senses of sight and sound within the forest. Research recommends being in the forest for about 120 minutes, but any amount of time is better than none (Abookire; Division of Lands and Forests; Guan et al. 333-335; Kang; Oh et al. 7-9; Roberts; Song et al.; Yeon et al.; Zhou et al. 142-146).

If forests are not someone's thing, they can also try going to wetlands. Wetlands are relatively equal in their stress relief to coasts but are easier to find for most people because they can be inland. With wetlands, it tries to combine water with forests to receive the benefits of both. This type of therapy is built on tension restorative therapy, similar to forest bathing, which brings their attention back to a singular point and immerses themselves in a specific landscape (Lee et al.; Maund et al.).

The biggest issue with landscape-based alternative therapy options is the ability to access them. People need easy access to these green and blue spaces for most of these therapies to work. So, while it is believed that rural forests/wetlands are the best option because they are more natural, urban forests/wetlands created by people still have significant impacts with the additional effects of control and orderliness. If this is still too much to try, one can also use VR forests/wetlands in terms of videos or a walking simulator to provide similar effects (Guan et al. 333-335; Song et al.; Trupp et al.; Zhou et al. 142-146).

Religion and Spirituality

Even though this is one of the big sections of world-building, there is not much information on how religion or spirituality generally comforts people. Moving past this, though, some important concepts have emerged from studies on how religion and spirituality affect people's anxiety levels (Abernethy et al. 371-372; Barber; Testoni et al. 197-180).

To begin, though, a designer first needs to understand the difference between religion and spirituality; while some people might use them interchangeably, they are two ends of a spectrum that use differing ideas and have very different impacts on anxiety ("Are You Spiritual"). Religion is a structured form of worship in which a major deity or multiple deities are worshipped, following a specific set of rules and practices ("Are You Spiritual"; "Pantheon (religion)"). Spirituality, on the other hand, is not structured at all. It is solely up to the person to customise their experience, meaning they can choose the deities they want to follow. Spirituality also differs from religion because there are no specific rules that must be followed, though many people use guidelines to guide their rituals, reflections, worship, etc. The most essential characteristic of spirituality, though, is that it is solely for the benefit of the self; it is

meant to make someone the best person they can be physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually ("Are You Spiritual"; Scarboro and Luck 75-77).

Moving forward in terms of religion with anxiety, studies have shown that many who are religious tend to have higher anxiety because the community of religion can bring about either peace or shame due to the idea of God being very judgmental. On the other side of this, though, a lot of religions are also based around the concept of forgiveness, which can decrease anxiety but not by much. God is also seen as actively helping deal with eternal life and adds a sense of socialisation to people's lives, which also are thought to improve anxiety symptoms (Abernethy et al. 371-372; Barber; Rettner; Sohi et al. 2068-2067; Stewart et al.; Wood 227). This is not the experience that everybody has with religion and anxiety, and it depends a lot on their culture as well as their life events. Multiple studies have shown that those who are ill, typically with a chronic disease and have some connection to God, have less anxiety and less harmful coping mechanisms because the belief in a higher power allows them to accept these struggles better (Barber; Francesco et al. 714-715; Gozan and Asih 45-47; Lea et al. 332-333; Testoni et al. 197-180; Zarzycka 1833-1834).

On the other hand, spirituality is still highly unknown regarding its effect on anxiety, as there have been conflicting thoughts; overall, research has shown slight decreases for those with anxiety when using spirituality, compared to those of religion, because no anxiety or low anxiety is better than high anxiety. One reason why this could be is that spirituality is focused on self-understanding the problems that a person faces, which uses problem-focused coping versus emotion-focused coping methods that occur more often in anxious people (Abernethy et al. 371-372; Rowell et al. 248-249; Stewart et al.; Wood 227-228).

A secondary concept that shows the difference between religion and spirituality is when the concepts of internal versus external are also introduced. Religion is more external and common to see within society based on the buildings, practices and items that represent the practice. Whereas with spirituality, there is not one specific place, practice or thing to directly mark a person as spiritual, showing that it is more of an internal sense. Studies have shown that with an external approach, there is an increase in anxiety by 23%. In contrast, internal only increases anxiety symptoms by 4%. Thus, looking at the impacts, 23% versus 4% shows the difference between religion and spirituality when it comes to anxiety (Forouhari et al. 44, 49-50).

Pantheons

If one looks at real-world pantheons, there are multiple that include specific gods for health and comfort. There are ones for herbal medicine or healing waters such as Airmed (Irish), Maponos (Celtic), Aja (Yoruba), Shennong Da Di (Chinese), and Sirona (Callo-Roman); modern medicines and potions such

as Panacea (Greek), Sekhmet (Egyptian), Asclepius (Greek), Iaso (Greek), Ixtlilton (Aztec), Eeyekalduik (Inuit), Eir (Norse), and Žywie (Slavic); and comfort or wellness in Brigade (Celtic), He Xiang (Chinese), Epione (Greek), and Paregoros (Greek). This is not an exclusive list but showcases the variety of pantheons from many different cultures (“List of health deities”; “Pantheon (religion).”; “Paregoros”; Wigginton), as well as when there are gods to believe in with direct connections to health and wellness there tends to be a stronger belief in religion or spirituality leading to a decrease in anxiety (Rowell et al. 248; Testoni et al. 197-180).

How Games and World-Building Will Help Anxiety

Building a comforting world will not immediately cure anxiety; still, it will help players relax and become immersed in a world where they feel comfortable, safe, and in control. This idea is essential because recent trends show a steady rise in the number of people being diagnosed with anxiety disorders who are struggling with safely expressing their concerns due to societal judgement (David et al., 399-400; Pallavicini et al.; Schoneveld et al., 2169).

The first way creating a comforting world through world-building concepts decreases anxiety is by designing a world that acts as a safe place to express emotions and thoughts; it creates a world where the players can be themselves without judgement since the game is not real and escape from the stresses of reality (David et al., 399-400; Pallavicini et al.; Schoneveld et al., 2169). By taking the time to research the world-building strategies and their counterparts in real life, it is easier for our brains to transfer ideas from the real world to a realistic fictional one versus to a world where everything is a menagerie of fantasy concepts (Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building* 16-27).

The second way that creating a comforting world will help anxiety is by applying the effects of real-world concepts such as settlements, buildings, religion/spirituality/pantheons, and landscapes to the designed ones in a game. As discussed in the Comfort in the Real-World section, many design choices have physical and mental perks. While some of these concepts will work better in games than others, they should still have some effect on the player, which can lower stress and anxiety and protect the player’s physical well-being. If the player is more relaxed, then they most likely feel less anxiety and reduce the associated risks (“Prioritise Comfort for Building Users”; Watchman et al. “Wood and Comfort” 169; “Wood Construction Reduces Stress and Offers A Healthy Living Environment”). This shows that everything affects everything else, and taking one simple step can cause a butterfly effect of benefits.

In conclusion, comforting worlds can stand out and make the players feel the way they do through deliberate design choices. This section explores topics on world-building that commonly occur in world-building literature, and their real-world concept equivalents known to improve comfort. This

section shows the importance of using worldbuilding to help those with anxiety because it allows for a player to have easier access to safe spaces where they can express themselves without fear of judgement going from broad landscapes to specific internal thoughts. Together, these ideas will allow a game to be created with worlds that help care for the players' mental health, in extension to their emotional and physical health, and guide those with anxiety to a less stressful life by providing them with a place to escape to when they just need a moment to breathe.

Section 3: Journey Through Narrative

What is a game without a story? Even the most basic games have a narrative to tell, whether that be a direct external story like being the last defence in saving Earth from invading aliens (AKA: *Space Invaders*) (“Space Invaders”) or an internal struggle of tension as it repeatedly refuses [the player] the piece they need to survive (AKA: *Tetris*) (Kreminski),” (Champagnat). A game narrative is one of the essential elements to consider when designing, for without it, the game would not be able to provide a hook to bring players in or tension to keep them playing. A story allows the player to connect the actions they are taking to the purpose of why they are playing and creates a problem that only the player can solve (Bryant and Giglio 25-26, 55-59; Skolnick 7-11).

With this being said, a genre of games stands out as having important narrative structures within game development, the Role Playing Game (hereafter known as RPG). RPGs are important because the narrative does not have to be strictly linear; players can explore and then return to the quests when ready (Heussner et al. 55-58). Throughout this section, I will analyse three popular RPGs through the lens of one of the most common game narrative structures, the Hero’s Journey. This structure, created by Christopher Vogler, divides narratives into twelve parts that show different plot beats; and is a refined version of the Monomyth narrative structure created by Joseph Campbell (Dunniway; Skolnick 27-28; “The Hero’s Journey”). Using the Hero’s Journey, I will be able to see what trends occur through text analysis and argue that RPG quests follow predictable narrative structure patterns that can then be used to the advantage of the designer to design quests that expand the player’s learning through emotional influence.

Literary Theory

One way this will happen is through using literary theory to explore the texts of the different quests. Literary theory refers to understanding literature through a set of principles, revealing what the literature may mean. While it is called literary theory, the concepts do not just apply to literature but can also address other concepts that require practical and critical reading. This is important to consider when designing a game, or more specifically, quests, because it is the connection that builds a relationship between the player and the designer, allowing them to understand what each other experiences when playing (Brewton; Mishra “What are the types”; Mishra “What is”). Because of this connection, the designer can teach the player about certain elements or ideas by putting them on an equal playing field.

Background

Literature and narrative have been a part of human society for centuries, leading to the discovery of many theories and concepts regarding its form. Below is some information based on how a narrative is structured, which will be important when examining the RPG quests.

The Difference Between A Narrative/Story, Quest, and Task/Step

In this section, I will use quite a few terms related to game design. To clarify what they mean, below are some definitions concerning narrative aspects. **Tasks** or **steps** refers to a single objective and the smallest element in a quest design. It describes one goal to one activity in the path of what the player needs to do to complete a quest (Heussner et al. 110; Pavlina). A **quest** is a collection of one or more tasks/steps connected through a narrative framework. Game entities often give quests, whether NPCs, found objects, or locations, and can occur anytime during gameplay (Heussner et al. 110; Pavlina). Lastly, the **story** or **narrative** refers to the collection of quests and additional experiences of one or more characters that have these characters wanting something and having to overcome obstacles to get it. This journey is almost always told linearly because it relates to history and timelines (Bryant and Giglio 66-67; Heussner et al. 110-111; Skolnick 7-11).

Types of Narrative

When creating a narrative for a game, there are multiple approaches based on how a designer wants the story to move and how much interactivity they want in the game. Narrative types are typically divided into three main categories: linear, branching, and open. Each narrative style requires different skills and mechanics based on the game's length, genre, and audience (Bryant and Giglio 91-93, 102-106; Dille and Platten 19-21; Heussner 107-123).

Linear Narratives



Illustration 3.1 Linear Narrative Diagram

Linear narratives are the type found within stories and movies. Every player experiences events in the same order every time they play the game, and the story becomes predictable. The most important thing within a linear narrative, especially concerning player interactivity and agency, is that the players need to feel that they are controlling the game; this can be done using a series of pass-fail missions resulting in either advancement or death, which can then be made more complicated with more criteria (Dille and Platten 19; Heussner et al. 107-110).

Open Narrative

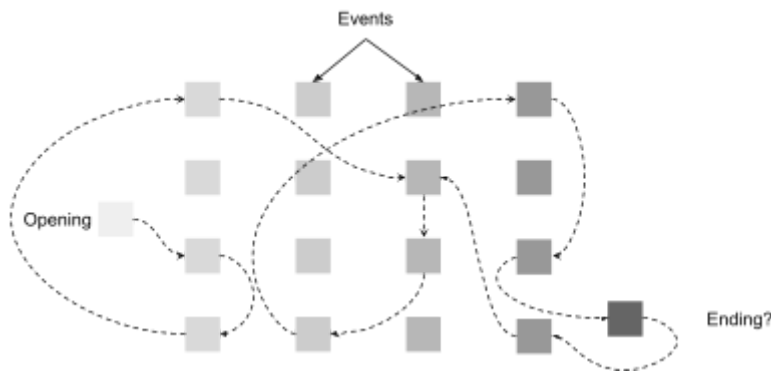


Illustration 3.2 Open Narrative Diagram

Open narratives are typically used in sandbox games or massively multiplayer online games that appear almost completely non-linear. Players can choose the order when completing any quest, narrative, or event and decide not to do certain events in a game. This narrative method is not commonly used because it is very challenging for designers to make a story not bound by an ordered sequence of events (Bryant and Giglio 105-106; Dille and Platten 19-20; Heussner et al. 119-123).

Branching Narrative

Branching narratives are similar to that of a tree in which there is a primary trunk. Then, each event within the narrative splits into a branch and reaches outward at specific decision points. Branching narratives are commonly used within games because they allow for player agency and choices over what to do next or how they approach a particular event while maintaining narrative structure. The most critical element of branching narratives is to make sure every choice is meaningful in the context of the game and the player (Renke). Branching narratives can further be divided into three main categories: limited branching, open-ended, and funnelling (Dille and Platten 20-21).

Branching Narrative Category	Definition	Diagram
Limited	Limited branching stories have the least noticeable outcomes from their branch. They are typically based on yes or no objectives where the game will branch out to a different story thread depending on the player's choice. Limited branching	<p><i>Illustration 3.3 Limited Branching Narrative Diagram</i></p>


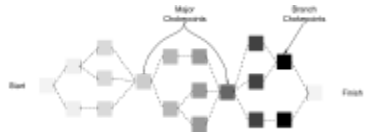
	<p>rarely allows for in-depth decisions or meaningful choices because there is little consequence on the ending, making it harder for a player to become emotionally attached.</p>	
Open-Ended	<p>Open-ended branching stories are when players face many storylines that each have multiple permutations; every decision they make within a game branches off into its own path. This type of story quickly gets out of hand because, with every additional choice, the story has to change, leading to hundreds of possibilities. Meaningful choice is also rare because the work required significantly limits the game's scope for the designers and developers.</p>	 <p><i>Illustration 3.4 Open-ended Branching Narrative Diagram</i></p>
Funnelling	<p>Funnelling narratives, or choke points, are the most common structure for game stories because they are controllable and definable for the designer to set the players back on the right path. Using this method still allows a designer to give players the freedom to explore, but can steer the player back when they want the story or game to progress. This type of branching narrative is the best for meaningful choice because each stretch between checkpoints can show the consequences and allow for replaying.</p>	 <p><i>Illustration 3.5 Funnelling Branching Narrative Diagram</i></p>

Table 3.1 Types of Branching Narratives

(Bryant and Giglio 103-105; Dille and Platten 20-21; Heussner 111-114)

Plot Elements Formula

According to experienced writers, some aspects of a plot act as universal truths to the design. When these elements are combined, they create a formula to guide the plot's development. The plot is typically the first instinct when someone asks us to tell a story, showing the main actions and filling in any missing details (Dille and Platten 26). Most people do not typically consider what goes into making the plot. The plot is an account of the dramatic tension experienced by the player or reader, which is the conflict being faced and the corresponding stakes set over a specified period of time based on the jeopardy and consequences the protagonist faces (Dille and Platten 26). In other words, this can be written as

Plot = Dramatic Tension (Conflict * Stakes/Time = Protagonist Jeopardy)

(Dille and Platten 26)

To better define each element, I will deconstruct them:

- **Conflict** refers to the nature of the plot point; these are the actions currently happening in the narrative or the gameplay.
- The **Stakes** refer to the reason behind the plot point or the purpose of its happening.
- The **Protagonist's Jeopardy** refers to the risks the main character faces when the conflict and stakes are lost. What will happen to the protagonist if they lose, who will be hurt, and what will happen to the world around them?
- The **Dramatic Tension** refers to the actual consequences the player faces after everything else has happened.
- Lastly, the element of **Time** refers to the period of time the conflict takes place, which would be the amount of in-game or in-story time (Dille and Platten 26).

To put this all together, this formula could look like:

Plot = Retrieving the Caustic Camera but becoming fearful of what comes next (Fighting the Guardian of the Caustic Camera * Without retrieving the Caustic Camera, the villain will divide the races and start a 100 year war/2 hours in-game time = character death and loss of progress)

Corpus

For this analysis, I will use a corpus that I have developed based on information found on Fandom.com in extension to a common narrative structure called the Hero's Journey. The corpus will include three quests from three open-world RPG games spanning three categories: the main questline, a side quest, and a miscellaneous (misc quest). The main questline, known as the critical path, is the game's primary story. It follows the playable characters through their introduction, trials, significant battles, and a conclusion while providing insight into the world where the game takes place. A side quest is a

multi-objective quest that does not directly relate to the main quest line but can provide items and information to help, while a misc quest is a quest with one or two objectives. Commonly, side quests involve multi-setting investigations and defeating a hoard of enemies, and misc quests include fetching items, escorting characters, or solving problems (“Dragon Age” *Dragon Age Wiki*; Pavlina; “Portal: Skyrim”; “The Witcher 3” *The Official*).

Games

Keeping these ideas in mind, I will analyse three RPGs throughout this chapter: *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* (hereafter referred to as *Skyrim*) by Bethesda, *Dragon Age Inquisition* (hereafter referred to as *Inquisition*) by BioWare, and *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* (hereafter referred to as *Wild Hunt*) by CD PROJEKT RED. These games were chosen because, while released years ago, they are still critically acclaimed today as some of the best RPGs and have continued to have a wide fan following; because of this, an abundance of information can be used for review and analysis (“Dragon Age” *Wikipedia*; Mercante; “The Elder Scrolls V”; “The Witcher 3” *Wikipedia*). Appendix H summarises each game to provide background knowledge but is not required for the text analysis.

The Hero’s Journey

The narrative structure of the Hero’s Journey accompanies these three games through the analysis. This narrative structure is a refined version of the Monomyth narrative structure created by Joseph Campbell, which was one of the ways narrative was first organised. In 2007, Christopher Vogler updated the Monomyth to make it easier to read and more aligned with modern media (Dunniway; Skolnick 27-28). This narrative structure is one of the most commonly used guides for game narrative because of its simplicity, sense of action, and how almost everyone knows a story that uses this structure, making it familiar (Dunniway; Skolnick 27-28; “The Hero’s Journey”).

There are twelve steps to the Hero’s Journey, which are explained below:

1. **The Ordinary World:** When a player meets the hero who is shown as mundane and is meant to allow players to identify the hero as someone normal or someone like them.
2. **Call to Adventure:** When the challenge is introduced. This might be as big as saving the world or as small as placing down the first block as a foundation. It takes the player and the hero out of their comfort zone and gives them a purpose.
3. **Refusal of the Call.** While most mediums that follow the hero’s journey would include step three, video games seem to skip over this step. Usually, this step is where the hero refuses to follow the prophecy or go on the adventure. In game design, though, the narrative does not imply that this is an option that the player can choose.
4. **Meeting the Mentor.** When the adventure truly begins, the player sets out to face their inexperience until a mentor is introduced to aid them with knowledge and training. Many

heroes would perish without this step because they do not understand what they are about to do.

5. **Crossing the First Threshold.** The hero is off in the fifth step and moves into the second phase of the narrative structure. From here, there is no turning back; the hero must complete what they have started and complete their first main objective.
6. **Tests, Allies, Enemies.** The sixth step is the longest one of the Hero's Journey because this is where the bulk of the story is told. Along the way, the hero may meet new friends, learn secret powers, and find out how special the world they are in is. The hero and the player learn new rules and begin to find themselves both as a hero and a person.
7. **Approach to the Inmost Cave.** The hero will face their biggest foe. While the hero has yet to quite reach the problem, this step concerns their approach until they stand at its front door. This step is needed to defeat the boss because it lays the groundwork for everything the hero has learned.
8. **Ordeal.** Once the hero opens that representation of a door, step eight begins, where the hero faces the threat head-on. Whether this is the final climax or the main event, will change the way the hero approaches things, as this moment will inform every future decision and be the point of survival. Here, the hero should fully come to earn whatever title they were given.
9. **Reward (Seizing the Sword).** After that ordeal, the hero can breathe and reflect on what they have done and what to do next. Usually, they will receive some form of reward, even if that just means the knowledge they have finally used, but this only lasts for a while because the hero is now set with a choice.
10. **The Road Back.** The threat comes back to overthrow the hero if the final climax is not reached within step eight. While the hero would prefer to go back to their ordinary world, this is a time to deal with the consequences of their previous actions. If the main issue is not solved, then the hero will never be safe and can never return to normalcy.
11. **Resurrection.** The final and true climax is reached in step eleven, which is the last test for the hero. Think of this step as the final exam, where everything learned so far is needed to succeed. It is where the hero either lives to uphold their title or dies trying.
12. **Return with the Elixir.** Finally, if they survive, the hero gets to return home with the spoils of their achievements. Though they may try to return to their normal life they lived before, they are now forever changed, awaiting the next time they are needed.

(Dunniway; Skolnick 32-37; "Story Structure"; "The Hero's Journey")

As one can see, these steps are commonly found in many of the stories told through the ages and are detailed enough to understand without impeding stories that are different from the norm. This leaves the freedom to classify the game quests into these steps. As a note, not every quest goes through every

step, but that is a normal trait of narrative based on how the stories are written (Dunniway; Skolnick 32-37; “The Hero’s Journey”).

Initial Analysis

This analysis has two sections. The first is an initial analysis of the quests as a whole before they are classified, and the second is a simplified analysis of the classified parts. Specifically, I wanted to get a foundation for the theory based on how the overall quests should be written. To do this, I used the Voyant Tools summary tool to look at the readability of the different texts and the specifics of why this would be, including the number of words per sentence and the density of the language used (Sinclair and Rockwell).

I included sentiment analysis in this initial review of the texts as a whole and after the parts of the narrative structure were classified to see the types of descriptive words used. Whether the objectives are described using positive, neutral, or negative language would significantly change how the player responds to them due to their emotional connection to the character. To do the sentiment analysis, I used two different sentiment dictionary tools. Dr. Daniel S. Soper, vice chair of Information Systems and Decision Sciences at California State University, developed the first tool. It follows the American National Corpus to provide an overall sentiment analysis of the text without being oriented to a specific domain of use (Soper). The second tool is a demo by a company called Meaning Cloud, which uses its own sentiment corpus. While the demo does not have full functionality, it does provide a fundamental sentiment analysis that includes any detected polarities, the objectiveness of the text, and whether there is any detected irony (“Sentiment Analysis API”).

The final aspect of this initial analysis is using Voyant tools to find interesting common words for each part of the Hero’s Journey. Using the cirrus and terms tools while selecting each document made it easy to see what words could stand out against the other parts in no particular order (Sinclair and Rockwell). One caveat is that I focused on specific transitive/intransitive verbs and common nouns not specific to the games. To clarify, I did not include proper nouns such as ‘Dragonborn,’ ‘Inquisitor,’ or ‘Witcher,’ which are only found within their respective games to focus on the narratives as a whole.

Initial Analysis Findings

In general, it appears that the *Inquisition* style of writing is the most readable, with a readability score of 11.882, to players while *Wild Hunt* has the lowest readability of the three, with a readability score of 10.220. One reason why this may be is that *Inquisition* is the shortest document at approximately 27000 words while *Wild Hunt* is nearly twice as long at approximately 45000 words. It is interesting, however, that the two games are switched in terms of vocabulary density, with *Inquisition* having a

more dense vocabulary than *Wild Hunt*. This might be because the walkthroughs for *Inquisition* are more linear and streamlined than the ones for *Wild Hunt*, which goes into more detail about the specific actions that need to be taken and additional setting descriptions. This is also shown in that the average words per sentence concerning *Wild Hunt* are the longest at 21.7 words (*DAI Main Corpus*; *Witcher Main Corpus*).

Throughout this analysis, *Skyrim* continually appears to be the middle ground between the two other games, creating an average for each component. From a design standpoint, following how *Skyrim* quests and walkthroughs are written is a good starting point for designing new game quests (*Skyrim Main Corpus*).

Initially, I would have included a sentiment analysis for each quest but there were conflicting results for the side and misc quests between the two sentiment analysers and a lack of function for the main quests. These issues are most likely due to the length of the narrative walkthroughs; the side and misc quests needed longer, while the main quests were too long ("Sentiment Analysis API"; Soper). Instead, I used the sentiment analysis for each part of the Hero's Journey, as shown below.

The other half of the primary analysis was investigating the individual parts of the Hero's Journey. For this, the focus was on differentiating between the steps when writing a new quest. To do this, each part was analysed through Voyant Tools (Sinclair and Rockwell) to find what unique words stand out and the overall sentiment to provide context. This can then be used to create the narrative theory to guide the possible actions and objectives for each aspect of the Hero's Journey.

1. In the ordinary world, the most common words are fight, choose, note, conversation, talk, follow, and choice. This is likely due to many games starting with a life-altering experience as a tutorial for the mechanics, which requires the player to understand how to move, interact, and fight with their surroundings. Overall, even with this exciting start, the sentiment of the part is neutral, which would allow the player to begin with limited expectations.
2. The call to adventure also has a neutral sentiment but differs in common words. For this step, the most common words are shout, gift, path, tell, trap, time, think, follow, begin, and kill. During this step, the excitement from the initial experience slows down, allowing the player to collect their bearings. This could be why the words are less direct in their actions for this step.
3. For meeting the mentor, it uses words such as entry, travel, defeat, shout, power, unlock, use, talk, choose, and option, with a neutral context. Some words make sense regarding the player having to travel to the mentor versus the mentor coming to them, but I expected more communication terms to be used since the mentors give lessons typically.

4. Crossing the first threshold is the first time the two sentiment analyses disagree; while one sees the text as neutral, the other sees it as positive. This could be because the two programs use different dictionaries for sentiment or because sentiment analysis is only correct about 80% of the time. The common words show a mixture of negative and positive words: help, kill, time, follow, save, fight, party, right, rescue, and note.
5. Tests, allies, and enemies are the longest parts of the Hero's Journey because this is where most of the action occurs. Once again, the sentiment analysis did not work for this document, meaning more research is required. The common words used, however, are approve, talk, make, earn, ask, need, fight, kill, loot, help, leave, conversation, open, follow, time, and enter, showing a variety of actions which would make sense with the trials associated with this part.
6. As the last step before a major battle, this step uses words such as travel, taking, time, journal, investigate, speak, ask, lexicon, and left, most likely representing that last piece of knowledge before a battle. It might be done by finding a book or talking to a captured NPC. The sentiment ranges from somewhat negative to neutral.
7. Ordeal was another step in which my hypothesis differed from the result. In terms of sentiment, I thought there would be a more intense view of the situation because of the major battle in a game, but the sentiment ended up neutral. This concept is perpetuated by the common words return, dialogue, approval, enter, vestibule, blackmail, turn, time, secret, kill, and loot, which seem more negative than the analysis states.
8. While the concept of a reward usually seems positive, the step of reward in the Hero's Journey is not always so. This reward could be surviving the battle but losing everything else, leaving the hero with nothing. This is reflected by the words note, ally, order, dialogue, ritual, siege, fight, help, power, group, and war, and it can go from somewhat negative to neutral.
9. Concerning the road back, it is interesting that many of the common words are part of the direction category. Out of twelve words, north, south, earn, attack, loot, battle, entry, note, story, right, left, and follow, a third are directions. This is also the only step with a positive sentiment result, possibly because the player thinks the trouble is over or more confident in what to do next.
10. Resurrection is another step that involves a massive battle, so words like attack, kill, shout, shield, magic, encounter, help, strike, portal, summon, fight, time, and ability are understandable as common occurrences. Similar to the other step involving a major battle, resurrection is also neutral in sentiment.
11. For the last part of the Hero's Journey, the common words fight, make, end, dead, conversation, wish, start, earn, meet, and kill, show the different types of endings games have. It also explains why one sentiment analysis deems it somewhat negative and serious, whereas the other finds it neutral.

(Crossing the First Threshold; Innermost Cave; Ordeal; Ordinary World; Meeting the Mentor; Resurrection; Return the Elixir; Reward; Test, Allies, Enemies; The Call to Adventure; The Road Back)

Secondary Analysis

While the first analysis of the texts did provide a foundation upon which a theory could be built, a secondary analysis is needed to explore the relationships between the texts and their context. I noticed that when reviewing and comparing the words between the different parts, there was either a lot of overlap between the same words or synonyms of words. For example, the word 'kill' was common in seven of the eleven steps, but 'fight,' 'battle,' and 'strike' were also common. Due to this, I sorted the terms into twelve categories: communication, conflict, broad concepts, collaboration, direction, choice, beginning/end, heroic actions, items, neutral actions, adventure actions, and narrative. Each category was analysed using the trends tool and the links tool of Voyant (Sinclair and Rockwell), comparing similar words and seeing where the individual words are most commonly used within the text. It is important to compare the individual words and not just the categories because the words used should relate to the sentiment of each part. If 'kill' is the most commonly used phrase for one aspect of the Hero's Journey, then the sentiment should not be positive unless context is missing. The links tool also uses the words to see what is commonly attached to improve the writing of the theory.

Secondary Analysis Findings

The visualisations used for this secondary analysis revealed quite a few trends, but I will only discuss the top five trends that will significantly affect the theory of narrative development.

1. In the analysis concerning the communication category, certain types of communication are more prominent in specific parts. For example, talking is the most common form of communication in the ordinary world, asking is during tests, allies, and enemies, and dialogue is prominent during the rewards step. Even though the different terms used all have to do with communication, they have distinct contexts regarding narrative; talk refers to the everyday communication that occurs throughout the narrative; dialogue is the term used when there are options for the player to choose from; conversation is communication meant to show respect; ask is associated with specific characters, and speak pertains to when questions are being asked. What this means is that a designer has to be aware of not only when there is communication between characters but also the type of communication they are having.
2. The second trend concerns the category of conflict. As aforementioned, the step of the reward had some different findings than expected, which have continued throughout this secondary research. When looking at the trends graph, there is a significant spike in conflict terms being used during resurrection. This makes sense as it is associated with a final battle. However,

instead of the other spike being at the step of the ordeal, where the other major fight is supposed to occur, it happens during the reward. To fully understand why this is would require more research, but a theory is that the character might be discussing the fight after it is completed, causing the term frequency to be higher than it should be.

3. The third trend is that throughout most of the steps, there is the recurring concept of options allowing players to choose what they want to do, even if these options are not explicitly mentioned or significant. This trend corresponds with the rates at which the terms left and right are used, even if the concepts are not linked. This could refer to the possible types of advancements through settings and the player's choices when exploring.
4. The fourth trend deals with synonyms related to different concerns. In crossing the first threshold, the term rescue is used more than any other term, but when looking at the rescue links, they refer not to rescuing a specific person but rather to a group, place, or concept. Instead, when a person or character is in trouble, the term used is help, which occurs the most in reward, the road back, resurrection, and return with the elixir. This may refer to the hero rescuing or aiding someone by protecting their property, while later on, the hero saves someone close to them, such as a companion or possibly themselves. This would make sense in saving oneself during a massive battle, but helping others on the journey to become a hero.
5. The fifth trend is that the topic of use dramatically increases during the resurrection step of the Hero's Journey when a battle takes place. Commonly, the term use refers to the special powers the hero has trained because those powers are necessary to defeat the boss. While this is true, I also believe there is a strong use of items to help heal the hero throughout the battle, even if these terms do not fall under common words.

("Crossing the First Threshold"; "Innermost Cave"; "Ordeal; Ordinary World"; "Meeting the Mentor"; "Resurrection"; "Return the Elixir"; "Reward"; "Test, Allies, Enemies"; "The Call to Adventure"; "The Road Back")

Additional Considerations For Narrative

Overall Narrative

Designing A Critpath

A crit path is the main storyline that builds up an RPG or the main quest. Looking back on the analysis done within this section, the crit path of those games refers to the primary storyline. All other quests typically surround this crit path and have some purpose to put towards it. The most important thing when considering a crit path is that these are the quests that must be completed to complete the game; if it does not get the player one step closer to the game's completion, it is not a crit path quest. A second consideration a designer needs to have when making a crit path is having back-to-back quests and keeping it simple and linear. This way, all parts can function separately. It is why many games, such

as those that have been analysed, have the basic structure of an ancient evil force rising, so the player needs to collect powers, allies, or items to defeat them. There are clear steps for the beginning, the middle, and the end that can be designed and developed (Heussner et al. 116-118).

One thing that will be a common theme amongst these additional considerations for narrative is that everything written needs to have a purpose; specifically, for this crit path, a designer needs to make sure that the goal is worthwhile, concrete, and easy to remember. If players can easily get lost in the game and forget what they are supposed to be doing, then a better crit path needs to be designed, so that it is memorable, motivating, and immersive to the players (Heussner et al. 116-118).

A significant component is keeping the crit path alive in a large RPG game. There are typically many other simultaneous quests, and it can be easy to lose the thread of the critical path. It is prevalent for players to get distracted by side quests that seem more interesting or more entertaining than what is currently being asked of in the main quest line (Heussner et al. 116-118). There are multiple ways to do this, but the simplest way is to make sure that every quest, even if it is just a side or a miscellaneous quest, has some relation back to this critical path. This crit path should be built with player agency in mind so that the players feel like what they are doing is important to the plot while maintaining the flow of the game and understanding the stakes that are in place for their success (Heussner et al. 116-118).

Primary and Secondary Conflict

To make meaningful quests and crit paths, especially when a game deals with comfort and anxiety, a designer should be aware of the conflicts a game is tackling. Every story designed needs conflict, from defeating the major villain on the crit path to understanding the relationship between two NPCs for a misc quest. Returning to the formula from the beginning of this section shows the importance of conflict because it is a crucial element to the plot ($\text{Plot} = \text{Dramatic Tension} (\text{Conflict} * \text{Stakes} / \text{Time} = \text{Protagonist Jeopardy})$) (Dille and Platten 26) This does not mean, however, that one can just throw in a battle between two people and hope that it does what it needs to. Conflicts need to be planned just as well as any other choice, and when it comes to *Comfort Quest*, it is even more critical because I do not want to make a player more anxious or stressed than they already are (Hickson Vol. 1 83-85).

To better design conflict, I suggest using the concepts of primary and secondary conflict, as discussed by Timothy Hickson (Vol. 1 81-89). Breaking this down, the secondary conflict is the visual aspect of the confrontation, who is bigger, better, stronger, etc. Primary conflict, though, is that battle someone can not see; it is the internal struggles relating to the characters, the theme, and the reasoning behind the conflict. Typically, the primary conflict is the ultimate decider of the final battle outcome, whether the character has changed and grown or is still struggling with a part of themselves. These hang ups would

negatively affect a fight in the real world, so it stands also to affect a fictional one (Hickson *Vol. 1* 81-83).

There are a number of ways these conflicts can play out: the player loses both conflicts, the player wins both conflicts, or they win one and lose the other with the primary conflict being won more often. Technically, any of these ways work, though they are not equally satisfying for the player. No matter which method is chosen, a designer needs to have it make sense to the story they are telling (Hickson *Vol. 1* 85-87). For *Comfort Quest*, the plan is to have the player win both battles because the game is attempting to help players overcome some of their anxiety through wellness strategies. Anxiety is a primary conflict internalised by the player and character, so to take back one's brain from anxiety, one needs to defeat it in some way. The secondary conflict will also eventually be won in *Comfort Quest* because it is the visual representation of anxiety. Anxiety is not something that can be seen and is not portrayed the same in everyone, but defeating a character meant to represent anxiety can be the push someone needs.

Ludo-narrative Harmony

One of the biggest issues that the narrative will face when attempting to help ease symptoms of anxiety within players is within the ludo-narrative harmony of the game. Ludo-narrative harmony means that the gameplay/mechanics and the narrative must work together to create meaningful and immersive experiences that are synchronous with the needs and wants of the player. This relies mainly on the context given to the player when experiencing the in-game systems. Dissonance is created when this ludo-narrative harmony is interrupted by gameplay, mechanics, or narrative elements that stand out from the rest of the game. Ludo-narrative dissonance is the opposite of ludo-narrative harmony, with a spectrum of combinations in between (Ash; Skolnick 131-132; Young).

The best way to avoid ludo-narrative dissonance is to continually ensure that motivations between all aspects of the game are closely aligned. This refers to what the player wants, what the playable character wants, and what the player and playable character are either doing or being asked to do. This can be done by asking three more questions, such as who the playable character is, what makes sense in the story, and what is consistent with the gameplay that has already been experienced. These considerations ensure that a game's overall feel is consistent and that a designer is not throwing new mechanics, stories, or elements at a player for no reason (Ash; Skolnick 131-132; Young).

To reiterate, a designer always wants to ensure that every action they have within a game narrative has a purpose that relates back to the playable character in some way. Common game examples are when the game's antagonist is doing something that either targets the playable character or another NPC, creating emotional turmoil within the player to protect the innocent. Setting it up this way shows the

playable character and player as heroes wanting to protect either themselves or NPCs. It makes sense because the antagonist is seen as the overall conflict that, when defeated, helps move the game forward (Ash; Skolnick 131-132; Young).

Still, it can also be good to look at ludo-narrative dissonance and if there are possibilities within a game that could lead to this misalignment, which can occur in several ways. The most common is when the playable character does or wants to do something that the player does not want to do or does something that goes against their personality, the objective, or the action taking place. It can be helpful to look at where dissonance might be within a game because it is not always bad; sometimes, it can create a stronger emotional reaction, which acts as a teachable moment when making games with a purpose. This could be especially useful in *Comfort Quest* because it explores the deep underlying attributes of anxiety in players, which require them to experience some form of dissonance or stress so that they can learn from their own reactions (Ash; Skolnick 131-132; Young).

How Will Narrative Help Anxiety

Over the years, there has been a substantial increase in therapy methods, including those to help with anxiety. This increase also applies to the integration of narrative into many aspects of everyday life. With this, there is an overlap between therapy and narrative, called narrative therapy, that has been shown to improve anxiety symptoms, along with other mental conditions (“About Narrative Therapy”).

Narrative therapy was first discussed in the 1980s by Michael White and David Epston but has continued to be a research point in current times (“About Narrative Therapy”). This type of therapy is a collaboration between the therapist and the client, where the client tells stories about their life that, when combined, create a plot and a timeline. Often, during these narratives, the clients focus on the problems they face in life and use language that makes themselves and the problems one and the same. During these moments, the therapist will step in and help their clients resist the urges from the influences and effects of problematic thinking by breaking the problems down and finding their counters (“About Narrative Therapy”; Narrative Therapy Center; Payne 5-17).

Narrative therapy's key elements include deconstructing and reauthoring personal stories, learning to embody empowerment and resilience, exploring alternate understandings and perspectives, and understanding how people internalise and perceive their problems (“About Narrative Therapy”; Payne 5-17). *Comfort Quest* will attempt to mirror these elements by helping players create narratives through the use of playable characters and fictionalised scenarios they could face in reality (Tadros 445). Thus, by applying the principles of narrative therapy to a gamified experience, there should be a decrease in anxiety symptoms with *Comfort Quest*, even if it is not a direct reflection of the practices.

Already, narrative therapy has been shown to help with a wide array of mental conditions, including but not limited to social anxiety (Raina, Afrasiabi); fear of positive evaluation or praise from others (Afrasiabi 183-184); severe phobias, Illness Anxiety Disorder, and Learning Disabilities. Most of this information has been discovered through individual case studies detailing each person's experiences and common trends among these experiences. Some of these trends include making sense of how a person's past experiences affect and can be mapped onto a present problem to better understand the influence they have (Horner and Tully 41-43; Lewis and Rose 210; Philips 21; Tadros 450-452); recognising a person's value in society and belief in themselves by reinvigorating their dreams and goals (Lewis and Rose 210; Philips 28; Horner and Tully 41-43; Tadros 450-452); creating alternative stories with a preferred sense of identity and distinct voices to externalise and decentralise themselves from being the problem (Horner and Tully 41-43; Lewis and Rose 210; Philips 21,28; Tadros 450-452) and supporting a bridge of comfort to better connect a person with the therapist allowing an open, proactive, and co-creative process of healing (Horner and Tully 41-43; Lewis and Rose 210; Philips 21; Tadros 450-452). This relates to *Comfort Quest* because instead of the player telling life stories, they get to relive and immerse themselves in the life of the playable character that they have control over and focus on their narratives, which include similar issues people with anxiety in the real world face daily.

I want to highlight one case study, which shares five moments that affected a teenage boy with anxiety and contains goals easily incorporated into *Comfort Quest*. Presented is the case of a teenage boy named Andrew who suffers severe symptoms of anxiety and hypochondria, leading him to seek therapy due to it compromising his ability to function and his overall well-being (Lucas and Soares 70-71). The moments are times that encompassed the primary therapeutic goals of narrative therapy, providing examples of success (Lucas and Soares 74).

Moment 1: “Establishing a satisfactory therapeutic relationship”

This moment describes the reason why Andrew put off seeking help sooner, as he was scared about the diagnosis he would face and the delay of other health investigations. Getting the initial mental health diagnosis can be devastating for some people because of the stigma that follows. This, along with Andrew's hypochondrias symptoms, also created a fear that other health conditions, particularly physical ones, would not be taken seriously and thus neglected due to a mental health diagnosis. To help with this, it was deemed of utmost importance to demonstrate empathy and reassure the physical concerns were real and would not be neglected due to the psychological variables (Lucas and Soares 75).

The other important aspect of this moment was using metaphors to explain the therapy process and create a more digestible layer between Andrew and the clinical aspects. For Andrew, this was his

interest in sports, so the psychologist was the coach, and the rest of the care team was his team. This decreased anxiety within the first session and created a basis for the relationship (Lucas and Soares 75).

Moment 2: Providing psychoeducation about the problem

This moment discusses the importance of beginning at the root of an issue and understanding anxiety, but not in the clinical definition sense. For Andrew, this occurred through reading a book about a child overcoming fear, which was essential to normalise fear and allow areas of reflection, interpretation, and dialogue. This book did not define anxiety but showed it through emotion. From here, the team worked with Andrew to use externalised language when describing problems to separate himself from the problem and find alternative stories (Lucas and Soares 75-76)

Moment 3: Coping with somatic and anxious symptoms without the use of safety behaviours

For this moment, two distinct areas evolved throughout Andrew's treatment. The first area is again returning to using metaphors to fight his fears. Andrew loves to surf and would like to become a professional surfer one day, so he used 'Surfing the Fear' as his metaphor. It refers to not letting the strength and intensity of the waves overpower him. This metaphor was a point to return to when anxiety and fear struck. The other area explored was learning different anxiety management techniques, including diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualisation imagery, and not looking for constant reassurance. These techniques were used when Andrew felt the feelings of anxiety and fear overpowering him as a way to recenter and calm the problematic narratives (Lucas and Soares 76-78).

Moment 4: Promote the development of autonomy and the construction of a life project

In short, this moment was about defining a goal to work towards and understanding how fear could affect this. Andrew never wants to give up being able to surf, so understanding how his hypochondria could affect this motivates him to continue therapy (Lucas and Soares 78-79).

Moment 5: Consolidating therapeutic changes

The last moment is understanding that this therapy is subject to change. There were times when Andrew reverted to some of his old ways, while other times, he was more open to new activities. However, he did begin to understand that his fears are a perception of safety and protection, while his health concerns hold him back from what's important (Lucas and Soares 79).

Because of these moments, based on the elements of narrative therapy, I believe *Comfort Quest* and its narrative will help with anxiety.

Overall, by analysing three popular RPGs through the lens of The Hero's Journey, numerous trends have been shown concerning length, readability, and how unique words can provide insight into sentiment, usage, and links. With these trends in mind, I created a theory that designers can use when designing game narratives to help evoke certain emotions and, thus, learning. When this theory is combined with additional narrative research regarding different considerations, it sets the ground for the development of a functional game narrative while also maintaining a space of learning. Altogether, it shows the effect that narrative and storytelling have on anxiety and learning, leading to the possibility of a comforting narrative.

Section 4: Comforting Through Mechanics

Without mechanics, there is no interactivity between the player and the game and no system to provide feedback. This section of this thesis will focus on how mechanics can create comfort in a game through the incorporation of real-life methods into existing game systems. To understand this, I will first define what mechanics are and what a game is. I will start by briefly examining some definitions of games and the concept of mechanics. An introductory understanding of mechanics lays the groundwork for understanding the goals they serve in games generally and in *Comfort Quest*

Definition of Mechanics

In the past, mechanics had a more technical definition within the field of game studies, and this is because mechanics were heavily tied to the ideas of rules in a game, becoming almost one and the same. Over time, however, this has changed, allowing rules to be separated from mechanics because what players are allowed or not allowed to do in a game does not necessarily reflect what a player may try to do and may accidentally achieve (Bryant and Giglio 44-46; “List of common game mechanics”). For the rest of the chapter (thesis?), mechanics will refer to Miguel Sicart's definition. This definition states mechanics as ‘methods invoked by agents for interacting with the game world’ (Sicart). While it might seem even more simple and broad, it focuses on mechanics being invoked by game elements and opens the possibility for multiple relationships to occur.

Definition of Games

Moving on, using this definition of mechanics, it shows how it is integrated with the definition of games. The definition used is by Schell, and while it once again looks simple in nature, it is used because of the buildable complexity that it offers. Schell states that a game “is a **problem-solving activity** approached with a **playful attitude** (Schell 48).” This definition is simple, elegant, and understandable to everyone based on its simple language, making it more accessible than definitions specific to game design or development terminology (Schell 47-48). For me, this is important because *Comfort Quest* is meant to be a game to help people of the general public.

Goals of Mechanics

A game does not exist without mechanics. (“16 James Paul Gee’s Principles”; Gee, “Learning by Design” 6-15). For *Comfort Quest*, mechanics contribute to the learning outcome of the wellness strategies, which are guided by 16 principles.

I will review 14 of the 16 principles, excluding the two that require multiplayer functions, which are not part of *Comfort Quest*. These principles were designed by James Paul Gee, who was also

mentioned in the literature review in the opening section of this paper because his speciality was using games to teach ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 5-15).

- **Identity:** Players should be able to have a sense of identity throughout the game, either through direct input or actions taken by the playable character ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 7-8).
- **Interaction:** This is the required communication between the game and the player. When the player does something in the game, the game provides feedback ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 8-9).
- **Production:** The player can produce some form of story through their interactions with the game, such as solving puzzles or completing levels, creating a sense of emergent understanding within the game world ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 6-7).
- **Risk-taking:** Within the game, players can take risks that they cannot usually take in real life because there are fewer consequences when working with a fantasy object. This empowers players to take risks and explore without fearing failure or being stuck with their decisions ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 12-13).
- **Customised:** It is prevalent in games to have some form of learning outcomes or, in general, offer some form of customisation in how players can play. This allows players to match the game with their skills and competencies, making it the most enjoyable for them and allowing the best chance of knowledge to be learned ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 7).
- **Agency:** This goal relates closely to customisation and is about how the players have some control over the gaming environment. This can come through in choosing the types of skills and paths they want to take and how interactions can be done with other world-building elements ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 8-9).
- **Well-Ordered Problems:** When attempting to teach something, the learning path needs to flow naturally from one problem to the next, which is no different in games. This allows for the player's mastery to grow at an understandable rate ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 9-10).
- **Challenge and Consideration:** The other part of this well-ordered problem is that the challenges faced within a game often have to consider what players already know. Coming into a game there is the expectation that the player has used a controller; this is the same with learning foundations, where it is expected that players to have previous knowledge that can be built upon within the game ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 10-11).
- **Just in Time or On Demand:** A significant aspect of game-based learning is the use of problem-solving and puzzles that require specific solutions. There needs to be some

information about what is necessary in order to solve the puzzle, but not enough to give the player the answer. Not giving the information right away teaches players a sense of patience and perseverance in critical thinking to break down the problem and try different solutions before receiving help ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 11-12).

- **Situated Meaning:** Players learn new skills by playing the game and finding solutions to each situation they face. Typically, these will appear as new vocabulary words, but they do not have to. ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 14-15).
- **Pleasantly Frustrating:** When playing a game, especially one meant to teach, there needs to be some moments of frustration that are just challenging enough to require thinking through but still easy enough to ensure the player believes they can still overcome this challenge. This line is relatively small in design but has strong connotations of balancing the game and ensuring players have everything they need to succeed ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 10).
- **System Thinking:** When players pick up a game, they are less likely to see each of the individual elements and instead see the game as a whole. This leads players to think about the bigger picture of how different objects can relate to one another within a system ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 14).
- **Explore, Think Laterally, Rethink Goals:** Players can choose between courses of action and expand their situational knowledge. Players are able to decide what they want to do next and approach situations differently depending on what they have done before in the game ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 13).
- **Performance before Competence and Abstraction:** Games work well for teaching because they allow people to learn through doing. Often, people are told how to do something before being allowed to do it themselves, whereas games combine these steps. This works better for learning because it better connects how the lesson can work in the real world ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 12).

The Ways Players Experience Games

An interesting characteristic of mechanics is that even when broken down into the simplest of actions, they can differ vastly depending on how a player experiences the game. Every player will experience a game differently, even when a game involves walking from one side of the screen to another (Macklin and Sharp 75-76). This is where the concept of action theory comes in as a framework that ensures game designers understand the cognition they are designing into their game and that players will experience through their interactions. They need to understand things such as how to perceive the play space, how much information will be given, how they might process this information, the challenges that keep them entertained, how their skills develop, and how a game's context affects the player's experience (Macklin and Sharp 78-79).

In short, action theory as a framework is a sociological concept designed by Talcott Parsons, an influential figure in sociology in the 20th century, to understand the dynamics of what happens when people encounter something. It is the belief that a person will experience a cycle of ideas that will continue until the experience is over. This cycle comprises beliefs, reactions, desires, intentions, actions, and repetition. Beliefs are any pre-existing knowledge or opinions that a person has prior to an experience, which creates a schema for how they might understand. In contrast, the reaction is when the beliefs collide with the current situation and the thoughts that come about. This reaction then leads to the desire of what the player wants to do next with the intention of developing a plan based on this desire, Eventually allowing the player to enact that action that was planned from the intention in order to test beliefs, reactions and desires that occurred previously. The cycle begins anew after a person is given feedback on the outcome of the action, and the next step is required. Within video games, this is very commonly seen as a core gameplay mechanic, especially when games use exploration and experience-based play because it provides a model of thinking that will evolve over time and can be returned to at any point (Macklin and Sharp 78-79; Parsons and Shils 3-29).

There are many reasons a designer would want to understand how a player experiences games: it changes how people approach mechanics and ideas. These player experiences show concepts such as reflective attention, or what makes people pay attention to certain things, versus executive attention or voluntary attention, which is what people choose to acknowledge. One of these types of attention is forced, and the other is offered, which can increase or decrease anxiety symptoms by limiting the pressures that a player faces when making decisions, as well as acting as distractions to overwhelming experiences (Macklin and Sharp 86). This also helps us create mental models or schemas that will continue to affect us. A mental model or schema is a script containing information about previous experiences and how that information relates to the experience at hand. These affordances of perceived properties show possibilities and provide corrections when needed, along with hidden affordances or actions that are not obvious (Macklin and Sharp 91-92).

General Mechanics

No matter the type of game being played or the way the players are playing, there will always be a set of general mechanics for every game. These general mechanics are the necessary actions in a game to make it function and interactive; without these, a game would be nothing more than a story or a toy (Adams and Dormans ch. 1; Bryant and Giglio 44-46; Fullerton 40-44).

Progression Mechanisms

RPG games are known for quite a few elements, but one that stands out is how objectives are used and their relation to progression mechanics. Objectives are the goals a player is working towards or the

quest lines they follow, which allows them to progress through the game upon completion. Typically, when written out, the objective is used as an overall theme for the quest, whereas the quest is the specifics of what happens in an objective, and the goals are steps in the quest process (Fullerton 68-73; Heussner et al. 110).

Objectives are closely related to progression because it is a common way to show the player moving through the game and the story and is easily definable by the number of tasks players have completed (Adams and Dormans ch. 10). One caveat, though, is that there has to be variety in the tasks, which is where the concept of different objectives comes in. When a designer mixes different types of objectives, they create different types of tasks that the player can interact with, allowing them to choose what they like and what they want to try (Fullerton 68). There are many types of objectives with varying degrees of difficulty or intrigue, which usually leads the player to find something they prefer. Below is a list of objectives that discuss their main themes and examples of how they are used (Fullerton 68-73).

Objective Type	Description	<i>Comfort Quest</i> Example
Capture	This objective occurs when a player needs to take or destroy something from an opposing force while avoiding capture or death by the opposing force. It is typically found in strategy games.	Retrieve the Caustic Camera from the labyrinth under the library while avoiding the ghostly guards. If they capture the player, they will take them back to the start of the labyrinth.
Chase	This objective occurs when a player needs to catch the opposing force or elude them. (No harm or death comes to either party.)	A group of bunnies has escaped from their pen to play hide-and-seek, and the player needs to find, capture, and return them.
Race	This objective occurs when a player needs to be the first to reach a physical or conceptual goal. It requires physical dexterity, chance, and/or strategy.	Some of the local children in the town ask the player to a race after seeing how fast they are. They also set traps to slow them down.
Alignment (Sort)	This objective is when a player needs to arrange a group of objects in the correct orientation/spatial configuration.	Arrange the potion bottles in the correct order based on the riddle given to make sure the player chooses the right potion

		for the task.
Rescue or Escape	This objective is when a player needs to get something or someone to a safe location. Often, this objective is combined with another to make it more challenging.	Escape the fearscape caused by the Myopic Mirror with all the companions who are paralysed in fright while coming to terms with personal fears.
Construction	This objective occurs when a player needs to build, maintain, or manage elements within the game world.	Brew potions or make items based on the materials collected as a way to improve skills, stats, and items.
Exploration	This objective is when a player needs to explore an area. Due to its simplicity, it is also commonly used with other types of objectives.	Wander around the village to familiarise themselves with its layout and people. The player may learn about new quests or find secrets in the area.
Solution (solve a puzzle)	This objective is when a player needs to solve a problem or puzzle quicker or more accurately than the opposing force.	Solve the mystery of the disappearing party staff by locating clues and combining them to determine what happened and where they are now.

Table 4.1 List of Objective Types

(Fullerton 68-73)

Chart of Flow

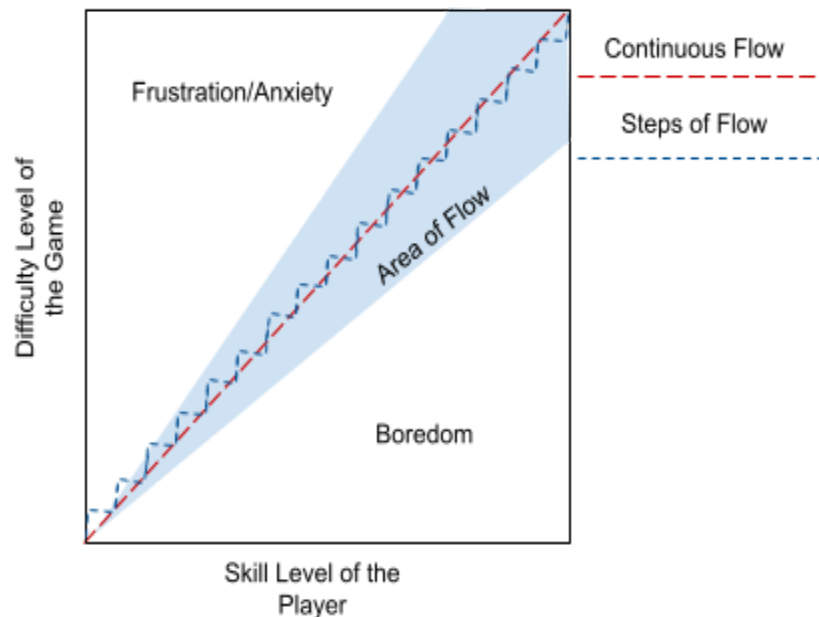


Illustration 4.1 Flow as adapted from Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

With game design being such a new and ever-evolving field, there is always new information to be learned and multiple methods to do things, but one concept that is always discussed is the chart of flow (Fullerton 97-99, Macklin and Sharp 25-26, Schell 145-147).

The chart of flow (see Illustration 4.1) is a simple diagram created by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a Hungarian-American psychologist, that shows the correlation between the player's skill and game difficulty by how it affects the player's immersion in a game. When a challenge or complexity escalates, so should the skills a playable character has and the skills a player has learned. When there is an even match between the two, the player enters a state of flow, which allows them to remain immersed in the game and continue playing. However, when the two variables clash, issues arise, and the player is negatively affected. If the player's skill far exceeds the difficulty level of a game, the player will become bored due to the lack of challenge and will progress too rapidly in the game; if the difficulty of a game far exceeds the player's abilities, then the player will become frustrated or anxious as they will not be able to complete the objectives they are required to do to progress through the game (Fullerton 97-99, Macklin and Sharp 25-26, Schell 145-147). Thus, because *Comfort Quest* is made for those with anxiety symptoms, the chart of flow is probably the most essential concept to consider because a designer does not want to add more stress to the player. They might already be coming into the game on edge, not wanting to play and not being open to the experiences. In addition, then, suppose the flow and immersion are not correctly matched. In that case, whether it be too frustrating

or too tedious, the player will use this as the reason why they will not play the game and possibly never return to try again, even if it would benefit them.

Feedback

Another vital mechanic in games is feedback loops. When the player performs an action, they should receive feedback on the effects that occurred. Simply put, a feedback loop is an effect that occurs when one part of the system has changed but then comes back and effects the same part of the system at a later moment. Typically, these loops show what a player can and cannot do within a game and what will happen if they do or do not do that. A good example of a feedback loop outside of games is in a predator-prey situation. When there is an increase in predators, the prey dies out quickly, and there is not enough food for the predators to live. However, when there are many prey and fewer predators, the system works well as the predators can find food, and the prey can continue to populate (Adams and Dormans ch. 3; "Types of Feedback Loops").

Feedback loops are important, especially as a part of progression, because they can stabilise or destabilise the game system. A designer wants to have a stable game system that allows the player to progress; otherwise, the player will be in the chart of flow area where the difficulty is too high, and skill is too low, leading to frustration (Fullerton 97-99, Macklin and Sharp 25-26, Schell 145-147). The other part of feedback loops is having both negative and positive loops to maintain balance. Negative feedback loops are the primary reason a game would be balanced. It works so that when one part of a system changes, another either increases or decreases depending on the effect needed through self-correction. This is the predator-prey situation mentioned above. Positive feedback loops are self-reinforcing, meant to amplify changes made within the game system and continue to grow and increase aspects. An example of this is when a player has to put items in an order. Once they have one item in the right place, putting the others in place becomes easier because it decreases the complexity. However, a designer needs to be careful with positive feedback loops, especially when they do not have the same number of negative feedback loops, because it can become a volatile system that can severely hurt a game (Adams and Dormans ch. 3). The feedback systems used in *Comfort Quest* will be very similar to those used in other mainstream games (Schell 145-147). As the player's skill increases, the game's difficulty increases as well through resource scarcity.

As a side note, in terms of amount, researchers have discovered the ideal number of feedback loops. They state the ideal number is between two to four primary feedback loops, which affect the entire game, depending on the complexity and endless amounts of minor feedback loops, which are specific to one area of the game with localised effects (Adams and Dormans ch. 6).

Rewards and Consequences

When it comes to making a game that deals with those with anxiety, one of the biggest concerns is the balancing of rewards and consequences. Severe anxiety conditions are defined as a persistent but typically unwarranted fear, such as that of failure (“Cycle 2”; NCIB). In most games, if a player loses or the character ‘dies,’ there are no dire consequences both in the game and reality, but it still can be frustrating and anxiety-inducing when failure continues to happen (Dille and Platten 71-72). This feeling is intensified when someone has an anxiety disorder, so it is essential to understand the power that rewards and consequences have (“Cycle 2”; NCIB). Below is a short list of some rewards and consequences commonly found in video games, with examples of how they function and how they could be incorporated into *Comfort Quest*.

Name	Description	Comfort Quest Example
Rewards		
Attaboys (Cut-Scene)	An animation is shown to the player when they have accomplished an objective to reward them with gameplay feedback and additional information.	Once the player completes the quest to save the party planners, they will be rewarded with a cut scene of the playable character and companions dancing and socialising at the party.
Status (Character/ Equipment)	When the player completes a large task or advances in some way, the character resource stats (health, stamina, armour) are reset to full.	When the player levels up after completing a certain amount of tasks, they will get to choose an ability to make better/more efficient and have their health, hunger, thirst, rest, etc stats set to full
Enhancement s	Objects are given to the player that improve existing items and stats, making progress easier.	Collecting resources will be a significant component of <i>Comfort Quest</i> , requiring the player to have space in their backpack. Upgrades to the backpack will be given after major game events to increase its capacity.
Insight (Knowledge)	After completing a task, the player is given information that allows them to	Talking to different townspeople will inform the player about points of

	progress throughout the game.	interest to visit and tips about completing quests.
Wealth	In-game currency can help the player progress more quickly, and in-game objects can also help the player progress more easily.	A simple gold economy will be used, so when the player completes a misc quest for a town person, they will receive some gold as a tip. This allows for the purchase of ingredients and resources.
Consequences		
Death	When a character reaches zero health or dies, the player sees a death/respawn animation of their final hit.	<i>Comfort Quest</i> will use a respawn animation, such as waking up from fainting with a companion caring for you.
Loss of Progress	This is when the character dies and respawns at the beginning of the level or last savepoint, forcing the player to replay certain areas.	Along with the respawn animation, the player will also be relocated to a safe area close to where they passed out, losing minimal progress.
Loss of Powers	This is when capabilities are removed from the playable character when certain levels/stats are unmet.	Suppose the playable character has been unable to sleep, eat, or drink anything within a certain amount of time. In that case, they will be unable to perform specific tasks and run/sprint.

Table 4.2 Rewards and Consequences
(Dille and Platten 72-73, 76)

Specific Mechanics

Along with the general mechanics that almost all games have, many games have specific mechanics that are unique to the type of game being designed and what the game is trying to convey (Adams and Dormans ch. 1; Bryant and Giglio 44-46; Fullerton 40-44). For *Comfort Quest*, this would refer to the different wellness strategy mechanics, lifestyle, the magic system, and puzzles. These will be incorporated throughout multiple mechanics and mini-games. *Comfort Quest's* specific mechanics aim to use complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) (Bystritsky et al. 266; “Complementary and Alternative Medicine”; “Holistic therapies”;). This method has been researched and developed across multiple studies to aid traditional therapies in decreasing anxiety by providing another layer of help (“Complementary and Alternative Medicine”).

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) refers to medical products and practices that are not part of conventional medical care. Conventional medicine includes prescriptions that influence the chemicals in the brain, traditional therapy, and psychiatric care as prescribed by doctors. Alternative and complementary medicine, on the other hand, includes lifestyle changes (“Holistic therapies”); supplements (“Holistic therapies”), new age therapies such as music or animal/pet (“Animal-Assisted Therapy”; BBC Reel; Giorgi; “Our Programs”), and natural remedies using herbs and plants (“Complementary and Alternative Medicine”; “Holistic therapies”). This connection acts as an integrative medicine that stresses people's preferred path and addresses concerns about their overall health (Bystritsky et al. 268-271; “Complementary and Alternative Medicine”; “Holistic therapies”; McPherson and McGraw 49).

Mindfulness and Reflection

When it comes to anxiety, there is a common misconception that it can be controlled, and that one must practise mindfulness if one cannot. Mindfulness is a specific form of meditation that gets a person to become innately aware of what they are sensing and feeling at the moment, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Typically, mindfulness is not a place for interpreting what those feelings could mean or judging oneself based on their feelings, instead, it is meant to help direct attention away from overthinking about planning, problem-solving, daydreaming, and negative thoughts that can drain a person's well-being (“Holistic therapies”; Page; Scott).

Method	Description	Reasoning
Diaphragmatic Breathing	This is a technique to help a person slow down their breathing when feeling anxious. To do this, breathing: Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, breathe out for 4 seconds, and hold for 4 seconds, repeat at least five times.	When feeling anxious, our breathing quickens and becomes shallower, making it harder to get enough oxygen. This then increases our heart rate and leads to dizziness and headaches, worsening anxiety symptoms.
Progressive Muscle Relaxation	This technique teaches a person to relax their muscles in a two-step process: first, they tense particular muscles in their body and then un-tensing them to feel how the muscles feel when relaxed.	Having anxiety tends to make people tense up so often that they can no longer tell when their muscles are relaxed or tense. Doing this method helps people learn what this feels like and recognise signs of tension earlier.

Guided Imagery	This technique is when a person sits or lies down and imagines being in a different, peaceful place or an abstract representation of what they are experiencing. Examples are imagining oneself at a beach or hitting a pinata filled with stresses to beat them out.	When people are taught to imagine sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or other sensations, they are transported into another world where they have control. Anxiety commonly occurs when one does not feel in control of oneself, so imagery reinvigorates that.
Aromatherapy	This technique involves surrounding oneself with a comforting smell, usually through diffusing oils or using body products infused with essential oils. The most common relaxing scents are lavender, rose, and orange.	This method is thought to work because it triggers the olfactory senses. When triggered, the olfactory bulb transmits signals to the limbic system, hypothalamus, and olfactory cortex, which release neurotransmitters to relax the autonomic nervous system that is in charge of anxiety symptoms.

Table 4.3 Methods of Mindfulness
(McPherson and McGraw 49; Page; Scott)

The other side of mindfulness, which focuses on the present, is reflection, which focuses on the past. Reflection is a mental process that helps a person understand who they are, their values, and why they think, feel, and act the way they do. It is critical because it can give them perspective by engaging in introspection about what really matters to them so that they can pursue those needs and interests. Reflection also helps people respond more effectively because when they better understand themselves, they can make changes that allow them to respond to circumstances differently based on what is required (Henrico 4-8; Page; Scott). Reflection is more complex than mindfulness to incorporate into game mechanics because it requires more conscious thought than just following instructions at the moment. A designer needs players to think about themselves in the past, present, and future, which can be challenging to do in a game (Henrico 4-8; Page; Scott). However, this does not mean it is impossible, and some potential methods.

Method	Description	Reasoning
Journaling and Labelling	When a person feels anxiety symptoms coming on or are starting to feel out of control, they write down what they are	Keeping a journal will help show triggers and trends when it comes to anxiety so they can be more aware of what to

Emotions	experiencing in a journal and label the emotions they feel at that moment.	avoid or look out for.
Morning Ritual	A person tries having a set routine for what they do in the morning, including when they wake up, go for a walk, write, etc.	Having a morning ritual that someone does daily helps prepare them for the day at hand by ensuring they always have a strong start and provides stability in at least one aspect of the day.
Write and Repeat Affirmations	Create phrases that a person can tell themselves whenever their anxiety is worsening.	These affirmations will help remind and affirm that a person is safe and that it is okay to feel stressed, as well as bring focus back to themselves.
Goal Setting/Action Plans	For each day/week, a person plans what they need to do, what they want to do, and what can wait.	Setting goals or making an action plan shows where anxiety may arise in the day and prepares a person for potential changes. It also reminds them of their past, present, and future tasks to show how far they have come.

Table 4.4 Methods of Reflection

(Henrico 4-8; Kabrick; ; McPherson and McGraw 49; Page; Peterson; Small 100-104; “Tips and Strategies”)

Lifestyle

Lifestyle wellness strategies deal with many routines that require daily maintenance and time that not every player is afforded (“Healthy lifestyle habits”; “Take Charge of Your Health”; Zelman). When I am referring to lifestyles, I am mainly focused on healthy routines that can aid anxiety by helping to calm the mind and maintain a healthy physical body that, in turn, will help with the mind. Some of these routines include a healthy sleep schedule, remembering to eat and drink, having a check-in schedule with trusted support, learning to accept self-care and relaxation, encouraging socialisation, and maintaining a form of physical activity (“Healthy lifestyle habits”; Kabrick; Scott; “Take Charge of Your Health”; Zelman).

For example, research has shown that there are certain things a person wants to consider within a routine:

- Teenagers should aim to have 8 to 10 hours of sleep each day, decreasing to 7 to 9 hours per day as they age (Kabrick; Scott; “Take Charge of Your Health”; Zelman).

- Food is less about the number of calories that a person is consuming and more about the types of foods that they need. The Food Guide of Canada suggests for each meal, about half should be fruits and vegetables, a quarter should be protein-based food, and the last quarter should be whole grain foods. (“Canada’s food guide”; (“Healthy lifestyle habits”; Kabrick; Scott; “Take Charge of Your Health”). The other aspect to consider with food is ensuring that there are key nutrients a person may easily be missing. The four main missing nutrients for people are calcium, vitamin D, potassium, and fibre (“Holistic therapies”; “Take Charge of Your Health”).
- Two hours a week should be set aside to do an artist or inner child date; this is something that a person does on their own and is not meant to be related to school or work; it is not intended to be educational; this is a time when they go and do something that makes them happy and nurtures their creative consciousness by playing (Cameron, “The Magic of Artist Dates”; Cameron, “The Road Less Travelled”).
- Physical activity research widely varies; some people and organisations say 60 minutes of activity per day (“Take Charge of Your Health”), while others say three and a half hours every week or 30 minutes every day (“Healthy lifestyle habits”; “Tips and Strategies”; Zelman). This activity however includes both everyday activities and traditional exercise.

Hard Magic System

Magic is an important component of many fantasy games. How characters use magic to solve problems, or even the problems that the magic can create itself, is typically integral to the narrative and mechanics of fantasy settings. Because of this, having a unique and robust magic system can set one game apart from another (Hickson, *Volume 1* 107). Magic systems can be divided into two different types. The first is a soft magic system, which is when the magic in a world is vague, undefined, and mysterious within its rules and limitations. Typically, these magic systems use the reasoning of ‘because it is’ rather than any specific details of what can and cannot be done. Softer magic systems are a more traditional trope of magic because of their relation to mythology and lack of direct facts (Hickson, *Volume 1* 107-108). The other type of magic is a hard magic system. With this system, magic has clearly defined rules, consequences and limitations. It governs how people can use magic and what they can/cannot do (Hickson, *Volume 1* 108-109). But with these two concepts in mind, it is good to clarify that a system of magic can exist on a spectrum between the two and that both styles have merits and disadvantages depending on the type of mechanic being created (Hickson, *Volume 1* 107-129).

Sanderson presents three laws for magic use. The first of Sanderson’s law is that “*an author’s ability to solve conflict with magic is directly proportional to how well the reader understands said magic* (Hickson, *Volume 1* 109)”. This is the most critical rule when working with a hard magic system because it deals directly with the reasoning of why things are happening. Without it, players would be led to

believe that any person with magical capabilities can solve any problem whenever they want and without consequences.

Moving on to Sanderson's second law, this principle states that "*limitations are more important than powers* (Hickson, *Volume 1* 111)" in a hard magic system. Three primary elements must be considered: limitations, weaknesses, and costs to perform magic under this system. These three elements create the rules upon which the system is built and are ingrained in all other aspects (Hickson, *Volume 1* 112, 115-117). To provide more information, limitations are what the magic in a world cannot do; most games will have limitations with vague definitions such as strength, talent, willpower, training, or mental acumen. When it comes to weaknesses in a magic system, this refers to a vulnerability in using a power that can drastically change the outcome when using magic. It creates a sense of caution for the player by judging the advantages and disadvantages while creating interesting dynamics that limit how much power the player can draw from the magic system. Lastly, cost within a magic system is the more common rule-creation method; a cost usually needs a physical or quantifiable amount to be tracked when used (Hickson, *Volume 1* 113-115). For example, a person has a specific amount of energy; every time they use magic, it detracts from that overall amount. Then, to regain it, a player either needs to perform an action or use an item (Hickson, *Volume 1* 113-115). With these ideas in mind, a designer can create unique systems for their magic to distinguish one from another.

The last of Sanderson's three laws of magic is to "*expand on what you already have before you add something new.*" This way, a designer can focus on how a story or game explores singular magical concepts in depth versus multiple concepts at a very shallow level. To do this, they can weave magic systems into world-building, narrative, or the arcs of specific characters. By doing this, they are showing that the magic system in place does not exist within isolation (Hickson, *Volume 1* 130-131).

Magic and Anxiety

Magic's ability to work with anxiety is heavily based on the ways that spirituality affects anxiety and comfort, which is discussed within the world-building section of this paper. Magic has many ties to spiritual-based practices, pagan beliefs, ceremonial magic for Indigenous communities, and traditional/folklore concepts from ancient civilisations and mythology (Greek, Roman, Norse, Egyptian) (Jolly et al). Those who have a strong sense of spirituality tend to have fewer anxiety symptoms and harmful coping mechanisms, though this is different from those who are primarily religious (Abernethy et al. 371-372; Barber; Rettner; Rowell et al. 248-249; Sohi et al. 2068-2067; Stewart et al.; Wood 227-228). To clarify, religion is a structured belief system that typically is passed through tradition and culture and uses a set of rules and paths to follow, including days of worship, dress codes, and specific holidays ("Are You Spiritual"). Spirituality is a method of living that is not tied to any organised structure, deities, rules, or paths; instead, it focuses on the deeper meaning and purpose of life guided

by self-discovery, inner peace, and universal power. Commonly, spirituality is practised through introspection, meditation, and mindfulness ("Are You Spiritual"). The decrease in anxiety is said to be due to the presence of a positive force and hope, belief in rewards for good people, and a sense of emotional control through the use of prayers and rituals. It also feels like being part of a community that shares an emotional connection and can help fulfil needs when needed (Abernethy et al. 371-372; Rowell et al. 248-249; Stewart et al.; Wood 227-228).

Puzzles

Puzzles are an interesting way to get the player to work through problems rather than rushing in and doing the first thing that comes to mind. Players can slow down that point in our lives and can regroup us in many ways (Allan; Mazzocco et al. 36-38). Definitions of a puzzle are inconsistent, but the one referenced here is "a puzzle is a game with a dominant strategy (Schell 253)". This definition works because by comparing a puzzle and a game, it gets the key components of both having some form of goal to reach, some form of interaction, and some form of rules. This puts puzzles and games on a similar level, which is only differentiated because a puzzle has a dominant strategy, whereas a game does not (Schell 252-253).

There are three key components to ensuring a good puzzle within a game that focuses on the player's needs (Pusey et al. 754).

1. **Autonomy** is used within puzzles to satisfy the need for freedom of choice and the ability to have control over actions rather than feeling controlled or coerced. For autonomy, puzzles should have multiple approaches to achieving one goal and not rely on skill (Pusey et al. 754).
2. **Competency** is about the flow of immersion and the feelings of success for the player. This is when the player feels capable of what they are doing instead of doubting their capabilities and motivates players to finish what they started (Pusey et al. 754).
3. **Relatedness** connects people to both in-game characters and real-life people to ward off feelings of loneliness and exclusion. One way to incorporate this component is when the player completes a puzzle, the game world changes around them. This way, the game provides feedback and praise for accomplishing the puzzle without words. This is a crucial component of puzzles because, for most players, it gives a reason for their character and actions and a chance to communicate with others to solve (Pusey et al. 754).

Puzzles and Anxiety

Incorporating puzzles is a great way to deal with anxiety because there are many positive benefits to problem-solving and puzzle solutions that can be applied to everyday situations. According to Olivia James, puzzles are a way to give a sense of control and satisfaction to a person because they can

create and then test their own theories to be provided feedback (Hannah). This puts them at the forefront of understanding what is happening and gives them control over the pace. This is only strengthened by the idea of rules within puzzles, even if they are not explicitly stated. One symptom that many people with anxiety struggle with is not having guidance on what to do next while also not wanting somebody to have complete autonomy over them. Puzzles give the player a choice of how to interact with them, but they also narrow down what it means to have the right solution (Allan; Hannah; Hitchings 20).

In many cases, solving a puzzle is a reminder of self-confidence because the player was able to solve a difficult problem, showing their worth in problem-solving. Then, by doing it within the game, this confidence can be used to solve problems in their everyday lives by reminding them to think through all the details and remain calm if something does not go right the first time (Allan; Lowney 72-73; Pusey et al. 766-767). This can otherwise be known as Self-determination Theory. This theory explains why people are intrinsically motivated by certain activities, particularly the satisfaction and frustration of the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. By understanding these motivations, a designer can better design puzzles to be more motivating and challenging for certain types of players to tailor the experience and improve potential learning capabilities (Hitchings 20-21; Pusey et al. 766-767). For an example of a puzzle, try the The Librarian Puzzle found in Appendix M.

Controversial Mechanic: Violence

Over the years, video games have been criticised for their possible connections with violence. The research fronts were simultaneously trying to either prove or disprove this connection. In many cases, the data is statistically insignificant in proving any correlation and instead theories that violence is more associated with mental disorders and personal life experiences, which likely lead youth to seek out videogames as a form of escapism or relaxation (“A Timeline”; Duncum 34-35; Garakani 465; Krcmar et al. 543-545; Merritt et al. 255-256; Milani et al. 465-466; Travers 418-419; “Video Games and Children”).

In terms of violence in video games and anxiety specifically, there have also been no significant connections made through the research of other scholars (Barrington and Ferguson 506; Milani et al. 465-466). The only time there has been any minimal significance is with those who have a previous diagnosis that relates to increased violent tendencies within their symptoms (Krcmar et al. 536-537; Merritt et al. 255-256). Many times, it is not the violence in a game that causes a player to act out, especially when it relates to anxiety. Instead, it is the fear that violence creates within people (Duncum 34-35; Garakani 465; Merritt et al. 255-256; Milani et al. 465-466; Tortolero; Travers 418-419). Physical bullying, verbal abuse, and mental degradation cause people to act out as a way to protect themselves. In video games, this concept is shown by beating up the enemies that they are meant to

invoke short-term fear within the players in a fantasy setting (Duncum 34-35), whereas, in reality, the players have to be pushed past a breaking point in which there is real and severe fear for their life that will continue to occur if nothing else is done (Duncum 34-35; Garakani 465; Merritt et al. 255-256).

One reason why it might appear that there is a connection between violence, video games, and anxiety is that, in some cases, violent video games may lead to longer latency and lower activation on parts of the brain that deal with concepts such as emotions and behaviour. While this does have the possibility to affect anxiety regulation, it has yet to be proven (Lai et al. 903-906). This could potentially show that in between violent behaviours within games, players need activities to recenter and ground themselves so that they can come back into their own emotions and behaviours while still maintaining the benefits of expressing stronger emotions in a controlled and fictional way (Duncum 34-35; Milani et al. 465-466; Tortolero).

In conclusion, this section has gone over the meaning of mechanics and the goals behind them, the ways players experience games, general mechanics, specific mechanics that will be used in *Comfort Quest*, and a quick insight into the relationship between violence and video games. Throughout this, numerous reasons as to why mechanics are important when designing for comfort have been discussed as it creates a bridge between the game world and the real world for the application of wellness strategies. By having the mechanics specified in *Comfort Quest*, it will help players learn and perform strategies to help decrease their anxiety and this leads to a better state of mind.

Section Five: Combining into an Example

Through the past four sections I have gone over four game elements: companions, world-building, narrative, and mechanics. I have also outlined theories on creating comfort that correspond to those four elements. In section one I discussed the top NPC companions in terms of their physical and personality traits, and the top personality types that are used for people in public health positions. Section two went on to compare the most comforting places to travel versus live, and elements of world-building that are discussed amongst multiple authors and literature with a focus on settlements, buildings, landscapes, and religion/spirituality/pantheons. These topics were then further discussed in terms of hygge, building materials, forests and wetlands, and religion versus spirituality concepts. The third section went over narratives by taking three popular RPG games, finding the main quest, a side quest, and a misc quest, and dividing the descriptions into the parts of the Hero's Journey to see what patterns emerge. Lastly, the fourth section went over mechanics both general and specific, including progression mechanics, mindfulness/reflection, lifestyle, magic systems, and puzzles, to see where the inclusion of wellness strategies could be implemented allowing players experience in managing their anxiety. With all this in mind this final section will be taking all those concepts and applying it to the companions, world-building, narrative, and mechanics of *Comfort Quest* at a top level design, meaning that not all details have been decided, providing examples of how the theories could be implemented and where this design could go in the future.

Comforting Companions

In Section 1: Finding Comfort in Characters, there are many similarities and differences between common traits of popular NPC companions and comforting traits; from this, a theory can be designed that combines these traits to create comforting companions.

Physical Traits Comparison

The player will see a character's physical traits first, so making an excellent first impression of comfort is essential to start a bond between the companion and the player. Due to the need for more information in real-world research, this information will mainly be based on the physical traits of existing NPCs.

Based on the Gabele et al. study and the top companions, there is a preference for younger characters, who are closer to the player's age, no matter what gender they present. This will create the basis for the comforting companion designs, which can be differentiated through other attributes. One of these attributes is the colour palettes of the companions, which include skin tone, hair colour, and eye colour. While there is a discourse between character representations of different skin tones, the designs will mainly focus on lighter skin pigmentations with varying degrees of tans. This is not only because lighter skin tones are more common in top NPC companions, as aforementioned (see Appendix

A), but also because there is little information to display darker skin tones and their corresponding physical traits accurately. This will be something to explore further in the future alongside people of colour, but for now, the comforting companions will use lighter skin pigmentations. For hair and eye colour, the comforting companions will follow the correlation between light and dark, which seems significant when designing top NPC companions (see Appendix A). Most likely, the designs will match black or dark brown hair with blue eyes and blonde hair with brown eyes for the initial designs to mimic the above mentioned findings. A second defining attribute of the characters will come from their outfit choices, even though they will all be varying versions of casual clothes. For the outfits, most of the design will be based on the backstory and personality of the companions, as that can affect how people dress, adding to the sense of realism for the characters. Lastly, in terms of noticeable features for the comforting companions, these traits will also be determined by the backstory of the companion. At this moment, other than men usually having some form of facial hair, there is little significance for characters having noticeable features without a deeper meaning.

Personality Traits Comparison

Once a player has had the initial meeting with the comforting companion and their physical appearance, they will begin to see the companion's personality, which is when long-term relationships will form. Through the analysis of Section One, there seem to be quite a few similarities between the top NPC companion's personality traits and what is considered comforting real-world traits (see Appendix A; *16 Personalities*; DeVries and Beck 254; Gabele et al. study 138-139; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm). From this, I designed three main categories of personality traits that can be applied to comforting companions as a starting point for their design.

The Energetic Personality

The energetic personality contains the traits of upbeat, dynamic, friendly, and humorous, and is strongly connected to the ENFP Myers-Briggs personality (*16 Personalities*). The category of personality traits seems to be most common among the top NPC companions with some connection to real-world traits and comforting strategies (see Appendix A; *16 Personalities*; Bippus 309-312; Clark et al. 321; DeVries and Beck 254; Gabele et al. study 138-139; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm). This personality is suitable for a companion who is excited to accompany the player and creates comfort through their presence by providing a friend who knows how to lighten the mood when needed.

The Feeling Personality

The feeling personality contains the traits of empathy, sympathy, support, and caring, and is strongly connected to the ENFJ Myers-Briggs personality (*16 Personalities*). This category of personality traits seems to be more common in real-world comforting traits and strategies, with minor connections to NPC companions (see Appendix A; *16 Personalities*; Bippus 309-312; Clark et al. 321; DeVries and Beck

254; Gabele et al. study 138-139; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm). This personality seems suitable for a companion who is there for moral and mental support of the player, and at first, was ordered to be a companion, but grew into the player's friend. They create comfort by providing a safe place for players to express their emotions and thoughts without judgement and share their personal stories to develop trust.

The Companion Personality

The companion personality contains the traits of loyal, pleasant, positive, and kind, and is strongly connected to the ESFJ Myers-Briggs personality (*16 Personalities*). This category of personality traits seems to be equally present among the top companion NPCs, real-world comforting traits, and comforting strategies (see Appendix A; *16 Personalities*; Bippus 309-312; Clark et al. 321; DeVries and Beck 254; Gabele et al. study 138-139; Shatto; *Similarminds.com*; Storm). This personality is good for a companion who is a longtime friend of the player and wants to support them in their journey. They create comfort by being a constant in the player's life who will always be by their side no matter what. Using the theories above, I have designed six comforting companions; their portfolios are in Appendix B.

Comforting World

Section Two covered building a comforting world through settlements, buildings, religion/spirituality/pantheons, and landscapes. Below are examples of these ideas as they pertain to *Comfort Quest*.

Settlements

Aramore

The first settlement example discussed is Aramore, which represents a settlement where the game's characters will live and grow. According to their stats mentioned in Appendix D, some examples of settlements like Aramore are Helsinki, Finland, and Auckland, New Zealand. Aramore is a bustling city with a population density of about 2500/km² and is a more modern settlement that has been around for a few hundred years. The population of Aramore is widely varied, with about 50% of the population being Human, 30% being Anamalia, with Vilktaia here being the most prevalent subspecies, and 20% Vivien-Umbra who are usually secluded to the outer walls and the back alleys. This ratio rarely fluctuates, which is for the best because the city has little room left.

Aramore is an easy to find settlement as it is confined within a stone wall erected during a historic battle that stands out against the nature surrounding it. However, even though Aramore is contained, residents can still leave the settlement to quickly explore the forests and meadows found at the borders. Aramore is interesting because an old river runs through the settlement, above the ground and

below the settlement in the vast caves of legend. This allows residents to access the waterway through the settlement's green spaces, such as gardens, and take in the scenic sights and sounds of running water.

Due to Aramore being a city, there has been a focus for years on maintaining green spaces within the walls for everyone to experience. Around the river are flower gardens full of roses, daylilies, and anything else that comes in many bright colours. Whereas in the city's neighbourhoods, there are open parks shaded by massive trees and areas for community gardens filled with alchemy ingredients, healing salves, and cooking spices everyone can use. Flora has also gained interest in Aramore through the use of houseplants as a way to add greenery to the living spaces and reap the benefits of air purification and calming smells. Most plants in Aramore are the same as those in reality, but a few mystical plants will be discovered to fill in any gaps in the wellness benefits plants provide.

Aramore is known for its vibrant art scene and colourful culture that blends historic schools and universities with modern medical care. This art scene focuses on the world's natural beauties and is inspired by nature, so much so that, in some cases, the art cannot be differentiated from nature. These spaces create a relaxing and tranquil aspect to the industrialist feel that busy settlements can sometimes be consumed by. There has also been an interesting side effect to this vibrant art scene: the increase of fusion food that takes a creative approach to traditional comfort dishes. Suppose someone asks any of the local residents. In that case, they will insist on trying the 'Twisted Toastie,' two layers of melted gouda, cheddar and brie grilled with crisp slices of granny smith apples between three buttery pieces of sourdough and a side of celery bread, or the 'Redwaters Falls Soup; a tomato-based soup with 50 cloves of garlic melted in amongst other herbs, spices, and vegetables. If they prefer a sweet treat, they will guide them to one of the many bakeries that sell 'Magical Macarons,' a sandwich cookie with potion-infused icing between two almond-flavoured cookies, guaranteed to make their day a little bit more interesting.

What most residents of Aramore do not know, though, is why Aramore was built where it is. It is because it hides a terrible secret. The caves of legends aforementioned are not what most people would imagine. Instead, the caves hold an ancient metropolis that has decayed into a complex maze and contains a monster that caused everyone to flee for their lives. Aramore is the sole protector of this maze and has been struggling to keep the monster contained so it cannot do any more damage.

Violl Village

The second settlement in the game is Violl Village, a remote village northwest of Aramore that continues to practise historic traditions. The characters visit Violl Village for quests or specific items but do not live there full-time because they are not part of the close-knit community. Violl Village is

unique for its population; it is the only settlement in the nation with a nearly 100% population of one species. Violl comprises 99% Anamalia and 1% human. This is because Violl only accepts Anamalia residents unless they are students or heroes. This ensures that Anamalia always have a safe place to go when in trouble or where they can express their animal characteristics without stigma. All other settlements accept this boundary without fuss.

In terms of feel and age, an example of a real-world place like Violl Village is Takayama in Japan, but with a population more similar to Mykonos, Greece. Violl is a small village in the forests near the mountain ridge known for having amazing hot springs. They contain minerals to help with wellness and are called Okuma Springs. While it is much smaller than Aramore, with a population density of about 120/km², it is quite large compared to other remote settlements. One unique thing about Violl is that the settlement has maximised the potential for the space while preserving the surrounding nature by building within the trees instead of around them or removing them. Some of these trees include an odd collection of coast redwoods, Hinoki cypress, and weeping willows, creating a densely packed forest floor in which one can easily be lost. This can be seen through the iterations of the settlement, which has taken hundreds of years. While Violl is built within nature and has hot springs as its water source, it is also located fairly close to another water source known as Redwater Falls, named after the red colour it gets from reflecting the sunset.

One thing Violl Village is known for is that it is the only place, so far, where rare alchemist ingredients can be found, which are used in various medicines and magic. This flora is nothing like what is seen in reality as it takes on a prismatic colour. This commonly leads to adventurers going to the village to see if they can procure any, only to be led to a part of the village left to deteriorate. Overall, though, the people of Violl Village are some of the most helpful in the land if one can gain their trust.

A person will know when the townspeople accept them and when they begin to give them food. Unlike Aramore, Violl does not have restaurants or public places to buy food, apart from a local cafe; instead, the community works together to feed travellers by inviting them to dinner or having a massive pot-luck. Violl Village also leans more toward familiar and traditional foods, such as mac and cheese, meat on a bun, and chocolate cakes, but they are most known for their tea and coffee culture, where the events of the day revolve around breaks for this.

Buildings

One difference between designing settlements and buildings is that the settlements will differ wildly. In contrast, the buildings will almost always have similar features due to the materials available and the people building them. For this reason, buildings will be discussed in general terms, with examples shown in Appendices E and F.

Beginning with hygge, most elements will focus on the social aspect of the concept. Not only will the character be together with companions, but many buildings such as taverns, libraries, and hot springs also have their own social community. For example, the Drunken Pixie in Aramore and the Mantango Hearth in Violl are described as down-to-earth and homey, with the atmosphere comfortable and familiar. Most likely, within these taverns, people will recognise others and go to chat or go up to strangers they want to meet. To take hygge one step further with the buildings, it would also be easy to add décor that is thought to be hygge: fireplaces to sit by in the taverns, candles at the hot springs to light up the dark, or blankets at the library to read under. This will create comforting places players can visit to destress and relax in good company and take their minds off of the stresses of real life.

The buildings in Aramore and Violl Village will also be similar because the two main building materials will be wood and glass. The wood will make up the majority of the building between the floors and walls, taking on the benefits associated with wood that comes from the surrounding forests. The glass windows will allow natural light into the room. The hope is that by designing virtual buildings in the same way as real-world buildings that feel relaxing and comfortable, players will experience the same effects. One way to experience this is by looking at the photos in Appendix E and seeing how a person feels when they imagine themselves exploring them.

Religion, Spirituality, and Pantheon

Regarding religion, spirituality, and pantheons in *Comfort Quest*, there will be a more spiritual approach because of the increased benefits and creativity it allows when designing characters and other world-building attributes. Spirituality will only have a few ties to education, government, etc., unless it explicitly concerns magic that connects to the different goddesses in the pantheon. With all this being said, a vast pantheon for *Comfort Quest* has been designed. This pantheon has two levels, with two goddesses nicknamed the twins at the top and five goddesses underneath that represent the elements. While it is not clear if the twins are maternally related to the elements, there is a sense of hierarchy; the twins are seen as more powerful and are not commonly worshipped by mortals as they are seen as the overarching head divines who are in charge of the cosmic forces in the universe, whereas the elements are the more common amongst stories in the settlement. However, many townspeople exclude the goddess of spirit from any public holidays or ceremonies.

A full breakdown of the pantheon can be found in Appendix G, but to summarise:

- The first of the twins is meant to represent light and darkness, and her name is Etrella. Typically Etrella does not communicate with mortals because she is one of the head divines, though will communicate if it is necessary for the safety of the world.

- The other twin or head divine is the representation of life and death called Mortua, she has the same amount of power as her sister Etrella, existing at a cosmic level. Mortua is also more likely to communicate with mortals, though she does this through dreams as sleep is seen as the bridge between life and death.
- The goddess of fire is called Devredalm; unlike some of the other goddesses, Devredalm loves to communicate with Mortals, even if it is not necessary to do so. Some believe this is because they are very childlike in nature while others believe they seek attention.
- The next goddess is that of water, who goes by the name Midla. Midla will appear in front of mortals in their human body, but can also use the moisture in the air to create projections which are stronger in the areas where they are worshipped.
- The goddess of earth is Valeo; they are a bit more standoffish than the other goddesses and tend to take things to the extreme. The most difficult thing about Valeo is that they can never sit in one place too long, so they are extremely hard to find by mortals or goddesses alike because they explore anywhere they can go.
- The last of the accepted elemental goddesses is Eluqueake, who is meant to represent air. They prefer to live a simple life by guiding people along through gentle breezes or having a prophet help them spread their messages.
- The true last elemental goddess is often forgotten or looked down upon by mortal society and are only worshipped by the Vivin-Umbra. Astria is the goddess of spirit, or magical power, as they are very strong with her abilities, almost levelling the head divines. Anyone who follows Astria will be ridiculed by other members of society because they are seen as one of the most dangerous and unpredictable goddesses. Concerning the characteristics of Astria, they also tend to take notes from the other goddesses, such as Etrella and Mortua, but try to keep a low profile so as not to draw attention to her followers.

Landscapes

The landscapes where *Comfort Quest* takes place have many distinct land features. On one side, there is the rounded walls of Aramore, and on the other, a forested area home to Violl. Down the middle, there is a river, and in the backdrop is a mountain range with a waterfall. Each of these landmarks has specific features to help orientate people when travelling.

In the background, a mountain range stands tall with jagged edges of stones towering at about 5,800 m above the land. It consists of dark grey stone and dotted with green trees. In the centre of the mountain range lies Redwater Falls, which is known to look like blood when the sun shines on it in one particular way. After the Falls reach its pool at the bottom of the mountain, it turns into a lovely old river that gently flows down the land, carving a curved path, spanning 400 m wide. Turning to the forest on one side, it begins with a sparse area that quickly becomes dense and wooded, changing from

deciduous trees to evergreens that tower above anyone who enters. Most of the trees sit on top of jagged rocky outcrops with rounded canopies until the trees are so close together that one cannot even see the ground. There are a few small open areas within these woods that people will go to to camp for the night or to meditate, but they are still quite close to the entrance. On the other side, where Aramore sits, it begins with grasslands with open flat areas and plenty of short grass dotted with wildflowers. The further away someone gets from the river, the less grassland there is, as it slowly transitions into a dense farmscape and eventually hits the rounded wall of the city. However, behind Aramore, closer to the mountain's edge, a freshwater marsh exists, and is a popular place for fishing and gathering. This wetland was created from a small offshoot in the river and tends to receive most of the rainfall because of its location beside the mountain. One of the most unique things about the landscape within *Comfort Quest* is that it is largely meant to be untouched and remain in its wild state like it was centuries ago as if people had never cultivated it. Due to the deep naturalistic viewpoints, the citizens of the land have tried to keep the land as natural as possible, with only light landscaping to ease travel or protect certain areas, though it does draw attention to two major events that shaped the landscape for what it is today.

Comforting Narrative

From the discussion within Section 3: Journey Through Narrative, there are many aspects that can be combined to create a theory for writing game narratives and quests, which could then be applied to *Comfort Quest*. In general, I strongly suggest using a funnelling branching narrative type to allow the players control over the story they are playing and make meaningful connections within the game world. Doing this will allow for the player's choices to influence the game world, while still limiting the narrative to reasonable sections. I also suggest that miscellaneous quests should be around 250 words for a walkthrough, side quests should be between 3500 and 4500 words, and main questlines range from 25000 to 40000 depending on the length of the game. By making the walkthrough fit into these ranges, the quests will be similar to the middle ground where *Skyrim* quests are written, allowing a balance between vocabulary density and readability.

From here, the theory gets more broad in terms of definitive numbers. One guideline is that if the designer wants to easily match the sentiment to the research, then having an overall neutral sentiment would work. While there are some differences in sentiment throughout the Hero's Journey, a majority are either fully neutral or partially neutral. Only one step differs from this trend with an overall positive sentiment, which is the road back, and changing this step to fit the theory would be fairly easy. If the designer wanted to add some difference between steps regarding sentiment having certain negative objectives in the innermost cave, the reward and the return to the elixir step would be suitable. This could be done with the addition of more conflict, a character dying, or emotional trouble.

The final part of this theory is suggestions on what each of the Hero's Journey steps could be about. This was developed by examining the terms for each step in conjunction with the meaning of each part.

1. **Ordinary World:** The first step should focus on getting the concept of the quest's story across to the player. This allows them to have a reason why this quest is important and motivation to play it. This can be done through a combination of following a path or character that leads them to a reason to help. While not necessary for this step, a fight scene, which could be a physical or verbal fight, may be useful to show the tension of the situation.
2. **Call to Adventure:** Then, for the instantiating incident, the player should reach the end of the path, which will lead to them being asked for help while also allowing their own questions of the quest giver. This is a great place to make choices regarding what the player is questioning and receive a gift that will help them on this quest.
3. **Meeting the Mentor:** Sometimes the mentor will be the same person as the quest giver, but sometimes it will be different. No matter what, though, there should be some amount of travel by following someone to change the scenery. If the quest giver and the mentor are the same, the travel can just be to another room, while if the two are different, travelling to the mentor following a guide will work. Specifically, this step should be about learning how to help and what options are available.
4. **Crossing the First Threshold:** Once meeting the mentor is over, the fun begins, usually with rescuing someone or something important to the quest. This could be done by following a trail, fighting whoever has taken it, or performing a ritual to gain access to power beyond the player's abilities. Notes are also important in providing context and stating clear objectives to the player.
5. **Tests, Allies, Enemies:** For this step, a quest could contain a bit of everything. Killing enemies, asking allies for help, following tests, or anything else that helps the player earn their success. This is where the designer can be as imaginative as they want.
6. **Approach to the Inmost Cave:** The action is then rescinded a bit in the next step, acting as a form of breather from the fast-paced excitement. This step, particularly, should not have much conflict; instead, the player should be travelling to the location of a major battle and investigating along the way. They should learn helpful information, commonly found in the form of a journal, particularly what directions they need to go.
7. **Ordeal:** From here, the conflict begins again, as does the ability to help and/or save anyone or anything needed. Options commonly promote this step in the direction the player wants to take and the abilities they want to use. It should teach the player one last secret to deal with the enemy and show the corresponding consequences.

8. **Reward:** Once the enemy is defeated, the player can regroup with their party and additional allies who they might have helped. A gift is received, and the group leaves to return home. This is where the story ends for certain quests, but for others, it will continue.
9. **The Road Back:** The road back follows exactly what it states. The player and company should follow a path back to where the quest began, completing any additional tasks as they go.
10. **Resurrection:** If the quest continues, this step will result in the final conflict, in which the player should fight using all the tools and information collected along the way; sometimes, this may also mean helping others. About halfway through this step, there should also be a period where the player can restore themselves by using items or reconfiguring their weapons and magic. Create the ending with a final summon of power, metaphorically or literally. Eventually, the enemy is taken care of, any consequences take place, and things should return to a state of normalcy.
11. **Return with the Elixir:** The final step could end either positively, such as everything working out for the better, or negatively. The designer decides this, but it could also be based on the options the player chooses.

Comfort Quest Application

Below is an example of a quest outline that could be used in *Comfort Quest*, following the aforementioned theory:

- **General Information:**
 - **Type of Quest:** Side
 - **Length of Walkthrough:** 3500-4500 words
 - **Quest Description:** The ruler of the land has contacted the party and begged the player to find their missing event planners, who have all mysteriously disappeared. Within the day, they are supposed to hold a celebration for the visiting deities to bless the town. These planners are the only ones with the knowledge to successfully pull off this celebration.
- **Hero's Journey Steps:**
 - **Ordinary world:** As the player walks around town with their party, a messenger runs up to them, saying the ruler wants to speak to them and that they should follow him.
 - **Call to Adventure** - When they reach the palace, the ruler informs them of the missing event planners and asks for the party's help in finding them. There is a back-and-forth where the player can ask questions for more details.
 - **Meeting the Mentor** - The ruler will then direct the party to the room where the planners gathered, hoping they will find some clues as to what happened.
 - **Crossing the First Threshold** - When searching the room, the player will find three leads as to where the planners may be, which have all been hidden in some way.

Included will be a map with a location circled, a journal with a detailed to-do list, and a note written on the stationary of a tavern in the village nearby.

- **Tests, Allies, Enemies** - The players will then follow the three clues:
 - The map will take them to a location where they need to scare off some bandits who captured one of the planners as they were collecting decor for the party.
 - The to-do list will require solving a puzzle about the food for the party, leading them on a scavenger hunt for the second planner.
 - The note requires the party to travel to the tavern and talk to the bartender. The bartender told them that the third planner had come to ask a local bard to provide the entertainment but had gotten caught up in a drinking contest and ended up asleep in one of the rooms.
- **Innermost Cave**- With this, there is only one planner left to find, but there is no lead as to where they could be until one of the other planners states they found a mysterious journal at the palace. This journal is written by the main planner, who is meant to make sure everything works. Through reading it, everyone learns that there is one issue that no one else knew about and that this planner had to fix. One of the deities is upset that they were not invited, so the planner goes to make amends. Leading the party to the deity's main location.
- **Ordeal** - The party must navigate the maze of the location and fight off the deity's guards, eventually making it to the main throne room. There, they see the final planner fighting the deity's second in command and slowly being overpowered. A fight ensues to rescue the planner and defeat the boss, which also shows the deity's weakness.
- **Reward** - The battle then ends with everyone regrouping and heading back to the palace with the secret in hand and another special surprise: a new piece of equipment they looted from the boss.
- **The Road Back**—The player will then return to the palace to inform the ruler of what happened. The ruler is gracious and is about to ask the party to come to the celebration, but a commotion interrupts.
- **Resurrection**—It turns out that a deity who was not invited has stormed into the palace to ruin the plans. With no other option, the player has to get the deity under control using their power of persuasion and the knowledge they learned along the way about each of the celebrations. The final blow is when the player lets loose a chandelier that knocks out the deity just in time for the celebration to begin.

- **Return with the Elixir** - With this, the ruler instructs the staff to take the deity to another room to wake up and cool off with a peace offering of food, flowers, and music while the party joins the celebration.

Crit Path

The other aspect of narrative discussed in Section Three was the crit path. Concerning *Comfort Quest*, there is not a full crit path yet designed because it is in the early stages of design and development, but an example is shown below (see Illustration 5.1):

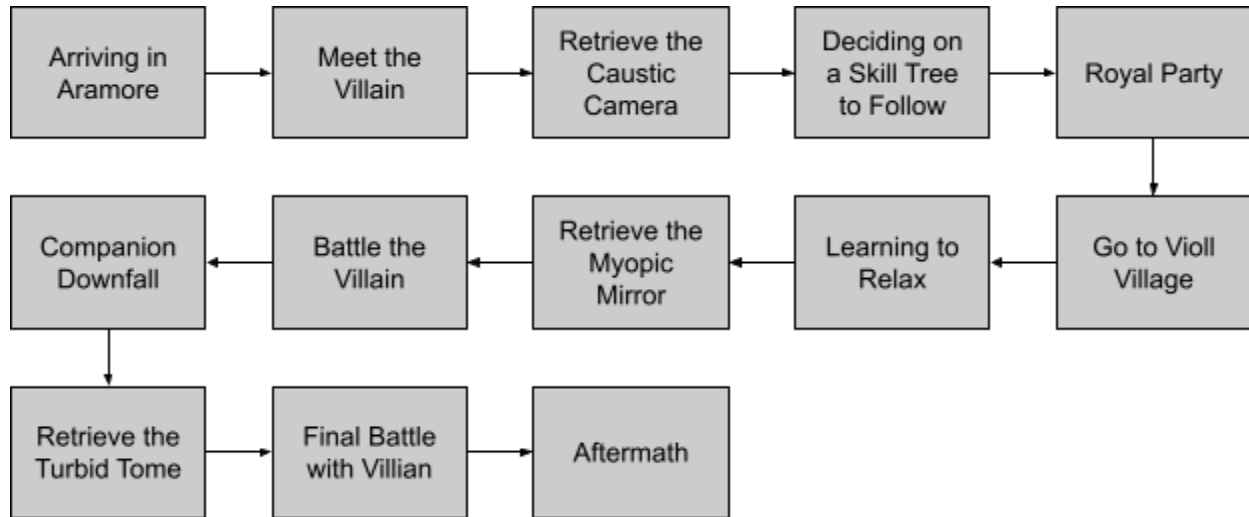


Illustration 5.1 Comfort Quest Crit Path Example

As a note, where there are arrows within this diagram, these can be where other quests or quest lines can be played. These may or may not be directly related to the crit path but must in some way show a connection to the overall narrative.

Comforting Mechanics

With *Comfort Quest* being in the initial stages of design, many mechanics are still at a basic level and discussed broadly; however, some ideas are still in place. Many of the designs will be based on the action theory framework and may look like this: Beliefs are the knowledge players already have about anxiety and anxiety disorders, even if these beliefs are inaccurate and come from first-hand experience or hearing about it secondhand. The reaction would then come when the players encounter one of the mini-games or narrative plot points that directly reflect an aspect of anxiety or wellness strategies. One of the items that the player will have to collect for the main quest line is the Myopic Mirror, which reflects the fears a character faces and requires them to acknowledge this fear to progress. In terms of anxiety, this will be related to how anxiety creates unprecedented fear for no reason and requires acknowledgement from the person experiencing it to overcome it. Moving on, the desire that would

come from this example would be the desire to overcome and progress in the game, even while understanding that it will be difficult and may cause further anxiety before comfort. Eventually, the action will come about as the player acknowledges said fear and does something that shows overcoming, which might be through text, a mini-game or other mechanics depending on the fear being approached, with everything being repeated for the companion's fears that the playable character has to handle. This logic will be used for other mechanics and mini-games that combine the research done in Section Four with varying game elements, as discussed below.

Mindfulness/Reflection and Lifestyle

When it comes to implementing mechanics that are either based on mindfulness/reflection or lifestyle, a lot of leeway occurs. In general, *Comfort Quest* will use mechanics that focus on routines, such as having the playable character and companions require a resting period at the end of each in-game day where relaxation can happen, having food and drink that are healthier provide more energy/stamina, incorporating quests in which the playable character must complete them alone based around possible artist date experiences or reminding the player to check in with their companions constantly. This way, the player can create healthy habits based on wellness strategies.

Journal Mini-Game

To give more detail on how this could work, one of the mini-games will be based on daily journal writing. At the end of each in-game day, the players will need to complete a journal writing activity. During this mini-game, players can fill in blanks with word buttons or their own text to explain the events of that day and fill in a little chart about how they are feeling. The hope is that this mini-game evolves to have the player writing out their own entries versus filling in the blanks. This mini-game could also have the players create a metaphor for themselves and create positive affirmations. See Illustration 5.2 below for a visual.

Day: 21

Comfort Journal

Goals of the Day:

Today I Felt

Happy Loved Motivated Sad Insecure Angry

Joyful Proud Productive Lonely Frustrated Tired

Bored Relaxed Exhausted Valued Annoyed Excited

How I Felt Today:

Did I:

Rest?

Meditate?

Breathe?

Eat Something?

Drink Water?

Talk with Companions?

Yes No

Energy Level:

Food and Beverages

Choose from the list to add ▼

Positive Affirmation:

I am in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing

Am I good enough? Yes I am!

What We Did Today:

Today, we were getting ready for the _____ party, but when we went to find the _____, they were nowhere to be found! We searched high and low for the missing _____, but they had disappeared without a trace. We finally found them hiding in the _____, and they were so embarrassed that they had lost track of time while _____ that they forgot about the party altogether!

Words

Cakes Tea Room Planner Decorations Reading

Queen's Midsummer Midnight Library Baking

Forest Village Tavern Knights Talking

Illustration 5.2 Journal Mini-Game

Potion Mini Game

In terms of teaching wellness strategies, this is the mini-game's purpose. There are multiple ways that this could be done, but for this example, the focus is on diaphragmatic breathing. Players will be prompted to breathe following a guide while making a potion. Whenever the player attempts to create a potion, they will be told it takes a steady, calm hand to do it properly. Due to this, they will be guided to breathe in and out with the rhythm of a sound and a visual, along with moving their mouse/joystick back and forth. With one hand, they are required to move the mouse/joystick in time with their breathing, while the other follows the instructions about the ingredients to add. As shown in the visual below, the breaths will be based on the box method or diaphragmatic method of breathing:

- First Blue Circle: Breathe in for 4 seconds
- Second Blue Circle: Hold for 4 seconds
- Third Blue Circle: Breathe out for 4 seconds
- Fourth Blue Circle: Hold for 4 seconds
- This will be repeated at least five times

See Illustration 5.3 below for a visual.



Illustration 5.3 Potion Mini-Game

Magic System

Comfort Quest's magic has several parts that comprise the entire system. The first part uses a soft magic system for overall magical concepts such as deities and magic not directly controlled by a particular person. Doing this provides a reason for magic and ways to build upon what is already there. The second part is a hard magic system that provides the rules for magic used by characters; this way, there is a structure for mechanics to be developed and allows magic to work with the principles of well-ordered problems, situated meanings, and system thinking ("16 James Paul Gee's Principles"; Gee, "Learning by Design" 10-15).

Within this hard magic system, there will be different types of magic that the characters can use to perform. Each magic type will be based on a wellness strategy theme, with rules corresponding to real-world concepts. Players can choose the types of magic they want to try and experience different magic system mechanics without explicitly stating that these relate to various types of wellness strategies. The types of magic systems in *Comfort Quest* will also be heavily related to the narrative and the main quest line because it will be centred around a form of magic that is taboo within society. That form of magic acts as a looming sense of anxiety and fear that, when the magic is used, can create significant waves within surrounding people and has led a group/race in the game world to become secluded, segregated, and stigmatised. This is similar to what can happen to those with

anxiety disorders who are open about their disorders only to receive backlash from their supposed support systems (“Cycle 2”). See Appendix L for specific examples of how magic looks and acts within *Comfort Quest*.

Fighting

For *Comfort Quest*, whether violence and/or fighting will be included within the game's mechanics, requires further investigation through playtesting and in-depth analysis with those who have anxiety disorders. Currently, a fighting system is incorporated into the game mechanics to interact with the narrative, but this could easily be transferred to a different style. One example of how this could be changed is through a card battle system in which there is no violence between player and NPC, but combat with cards. In every fight, disagreement or conflict is solved through a game with a winner and a loser, versus violence in a battle between the one who lives and the one who dies or goes unconscious. Doing it this way removes the player a few more steps from the actual violence within the game while still allowing conflict and resolution between the player character and companions versus the enemies and villains.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by using a combination of game literature ideas, game design concepts, and real-world research, a designer can create a game that can comfort those with anxiety and teach wellness strategies to affect their lives positively. While this can be done in numerous ways, I have used the examples of *Comfort Quest*'s companions, world-building, narrative, and mechanics to showcase this idea's potential.

To do this I went on the journey of exploring companions' personalities and physical traits and comparing them with the top traits of those that comfort people in the real world. This allowed a way to design three primary companion personality types that can be used as a foundation for the designing of comforting companions. I have also designed two different settlements of Aramore and Violl Village, each with multiple buildings using the concepts of what is comforting to either live in or visit. This included the concept of hygge or the Danish art of comfort, and the perks of using wood as a primary building material due to its connection to nature; along with the trends that landscape takes when designing land masses and the benefits of forest therapy, water, and wetlands. I went over the top level crit path for *Comfort Quest*, as well as an in-depth quest outline for a side quest using the patterns discovered by comparing *Skyrim*, *Dragon Age: Inquisition*, and *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* using the Hero's Journey to design a intriguing adventure of finding missing party planners, while also juggling three ancient relics that represent major symptoms of anxiety. Lastly, discussing types of mechanics, with a focus on specific mechanics, including mindfulness and reflection, hard magic systems, and puzzles, that were explored through mini games that get the player to work through wellness strategies, magic systems that are customizable to the needs and wants of each player, and puzzles involving critical thinking that can draw focus when anxiety is overwhelming.

For me *Comfort Quest* is deeply important because it is attempting to do something that I have yet to see in other games or other treatments of anxiety in a way that I know could change the world. By doing all of this initial work *Comfort Quest* could begin the development stage into making this game a reality for players, so that one day they could experience it through interactivity instead of reading. Along with paving the path for a new way of treating anxiety in a modern time that people need immediately. If this game were ever to be fully developed, it would impact the way that anxiety can be treated and allow anxious people control over their journey to wellness to take back control of their minds, as well as lay the foundation for more designers like me to make a difference in the world.

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Appendix A: Top NPC Companion Characters Comparison

Companion	Game	Species	Physical Characteristics	Personality	Mentions
Cortana	Halo	AI/ Hologram/Voice	young, female, AI with pale skin, dark hair, blue lighting, holographic, tattoos/symbols, little clothing	witty, playful, humorous, objective, bored, self-confident	3
Dogmeat	Fallout Series	Dog	German Shepherd, can wear clothes and armour, male	loyal, faithful, happy	3
Elizabeth	Bioshock Infinite	Human	Female, dark short to medium hair, blue eyes, young, missing finger, pale, blouse and skirt	adventurous, supportive, helpful, mystical, free-willed, childlike, mischievous, determination, reserve, smart, reckless, dislikes violence, suspicious, mature	3
Ellie	The Last of Us	Human	young (child), female, brown long hair, tan, green eyes, jeans, and a shirt, backpack	rash, foul-mouthed, impulsive, temperamental, unfazed by violence, innocence, clever, witty, resourceful, enthusiastic, monophobia, justice, mature, talkative	3
Garrus Vakarian	The Mass Effect Trilogy	Alien	male, spikey whitish-yellow alien, spacesuit, dark eyes, purple techno spec	defiant, sneaky, strong, determined, courteous, calm, reassuring, ruthless, hotheaded, frustrated	2
Yoshi	Super Mario	Dinosaur	Green, White, Red, blue eyes, shoes, long tongue, male	not vocal, trusty, fast, generous, kind, childish, compassionate, playful	2

Tails	Sonic the Hedgehog	Fox	yellow-orange, white, humanoid, shoes, two tails, gloves, male	smart, sweet, superpower (flight), curious, youthful, gentle-hearted, timid, quiet, humble, confident, determination, self-doubt, babbles	2
Clank	Ratchet and Clank	Robot	silver shiny robot, small, green eyes, red antenna, vent on chest, male	intelligent, curious, optimistic, wise, naive, humorous, moral, defiant, grounded, focused	2
SHODAN	System Shock 1 and 2	AI	gender neutral, mainly voice, a green and grey cybernetic female face on screens (often with menacing glowing green eyes and green, grey and purple wires) wearing a malevolent expression	Self-sufficient, semi-intelligent, controlling, rebellious, snide, threatening	
Midna	The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	Alien	female, small blue alien, orange hair, yellow and red-eye, mask	condescending, kind, aggressive, supercilious, sacrifices self	
Urdnot Wrex	Mass Effect	Alien	male, alien, green face with red and purple cap, dark eyes, spacesuit	determined, religious, rebellious, self-leading, cool-headed, threatening	
Kazooie	Banjo-Kazooie	Bird	female, bird, red and yellow	wisecracking, obnoxious, sassy, cheeky, hot-tempered, egotistic, loudmouth, adventurous, hates boredom, prankster, rude, loyal,	

				helpful, justice, hates evil	
D-Dog	Metal Gear Solid 5: The Phantom Pain	Canine	Dog/Wolf, One-eye, male	Loyal, versatile, not vocal but barks	
Trico	The Last Guardian	Creature	large, male, hybridised beast with the face of a dog, the ears, body and tail the of a cat, and the beak, wings, talons and feathers of a bird, horns	dog-like, suspicious, affectionate, protective, rage, clumsy, childlike	
Bea	Night in the Woods	Crocodile	dark teal crocodile, female, humanoid, black dress and leggings, yellow eyes, ankh, smoker	gloomy, cold, no patience, sarcastic, anger, cynical, responsible, duty	
Dog	Fable II	Dog	A dog that changes breed with ethical alignment	helpful, protective	
Navi	The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time	Fairy	A blue ball of light with wings, female	helpful, annoying, apologetic, nags	
Agro the Horse	Shadow of the Colossus	Horse	female, horse, dark	loyal, speedy, self-sacrificing	
Epona	The Legend of Zelda	Horse	female, horse, brown and white	stubborn, helpful	
Alistair	Dragon Age Origins	Human	male, knight, pale, blond-red hair, stubble	strong, determined, helpful, naive, assertive, idealistic, angry, defensive, shy	

Alyx Vance	Half-Life 2 and Episodes	Human	young, female, dark hair, green eyes, tan, worn out casual clothes held together with duct tape, scar	skilled, put together, proficient, friendly, hostile, cheerful, optimistic, humorous, sensitive, lack knowledge	
Ashley	Resident Evil 4	Human	female, young, blond, modern clothes	flirty, can't fight, kind, sassy	
Atreus	God of War	Human	young (child), male, pale, brown hair, scars, freckles, blue eyes, leather, and fur clothes	happy, curious, kind, helpful, learning, gentle, rejected, no fear, rage, overconfident, cocky, impulsive, self-doubt, humble	
Dom	Gears of War	Human	Male, dark hair, dark eyes, beard, darker skin, middle-age	emotional, empathetic, upbeat, loyal, can be hostile, sarcastic, mental health issues	
Dorian Pavus	Dragon Age Inquisition	Human	male, goatee and moustache, tan, dark hair with side shave, dark eyes, robes	dramatic. social, witty, charming, angry, supportive, loyal	
Elena Fisher	Uncharted Series	Human	young, female, blonde, grey-blue eyes, casual clothes	charming, intelligent, tenacious, strong-willed, humorous, naive, compassionate, optimistic, cunning, driven, strategic	
Elkia	Prince of Persia	Human	female, young, tan, tattered clothes, brown hair, dark eyes	magical, secretive, selfless	
Jonah	Tomb Raider	Human	Male, dark hair, dark eyes, beard, darker skin, middle age, muscular, tattoos, wears adventure/climbing gear	earnest, spiritual, gentle, supportive, reassuring, questioning	

Kim Kitsurugi	Disco Elysium	Human	male, pale, brown hair, dark eyes, glasses, bomber jacket and pants, middle	moralistic, religious, dedicated, nerdy, wise, not emotional, scared, anxious, professional, sarcastic, mature, passionate	
Luigi	Super Mario Bros.	Human	brown hair, blue eyes, overalls, gloves, moustache, hat, pale, male	heroic, kind, sensitive, optimistic, cheerful, quiet, kind, shy, fearful, goofy, naive	
Nadine	Uncharted : The Lost Legacy	Human	young, female, black, dark hair, dark eyes, casual clothes	cool-headed, sensible, risk-averse, determined, confident, willingness loyal, caring, ruthless, unwilling to concede, stubborn, animal lover, knowledgeable, strong, fierce, warm, professional, selfish	
Otacon	Metal Gear Series	Human	male, pale, stubble, dark hair, dark eyes, glasses, lab coat, jeans, shirt, middle	intelligent, optimistic, selfless, emotional, fear of heights, scared, introverted	
Prompto Argentum	Final Fantasy XV	Human	young, male, pale, blond, biker attire, blue eyes, freckles, tattoo	playful, inferiority complex, upbeat, distractible, lighthearted, helpful. sad lonely, imposter syndrome, reactive, claustrophobic, acrophobic, animal lover, mature, independent	
Quiet	Metal Gear Solid 5: The	Human	female, young, long brown hair, green eyes, little clothes due to	efficient, ruthless, dedicated, impulsive, emotive, arrogant,	

	Phantom Pain		injury leading to suffocation, pale	caring, moral, benevolent, cruel	
Tifa Lockhart	Final Fantasy VII	Human	female, young, dark hair, red eyes, athletic, crop top, and short shorts	empathetic, motherly, reserved, observant, emotionally shy, empathetic, encouraging, aggressive, self-critical, low self-esteem, withdrawn, introverted, grief, anger, supportive, grounding, indecisive, optimistic, upbeat	
Uncle	The Red Dead Redemption Series	Human	tan, male, full beard and moustache, old, grey hair, PJs and a winter coat, or casual clothes, signature hat	lazy, seeking redemption, dysfunctional, intelligent, shrewd, laid back, carefree, humorous, caring, loyal	
Victor "Sully" Sullivan	Uncharted	Human	male, old, tan, moustache, dark grey hair, dark eyes, cargo pants, and shirt, thin	kind, caring, mocking, humorous, advising, protective, mean-spirited, self-interest, frustrated, friendly, sarcastic, prepared	
Yorda	Ico	Human Ghost	female, ghost, young, brown hair, pale, dress, brown eyes	magical, helpful, scared, assertive	
Mimir	God of War	Human Head	pale, one eye, beard/moustache, one white eye, and one dark, white hair, horns, tattoos, male	Scottish, smart, entertaining, well-mannered, kind, cheery, witty, sarcastic, gives good advice, sensitive, insightful, loyal, anger issues,	

				self-deprecates, humble, speaks his mind	
Delilah	Firewatch	Human Voice	voice	talkative, secretive, doubting, sarcastic, humorous, complains, guilty	
Serena	The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim	Human/Vampire	young, female, pale, dark hair, red eyes, light armour, cape	enterprising, friendly, lonely, wary, complains, happy, resentful, self-doubt, trapped, conflicted, defensive, curious	
Diddy Kong	Donkey Kong Country	Monkey	spider monkey, hat, shirt, blue/brown eyes, male	friendly, adventurous, helpful, peaceful, childlike, quick thinker, boisterous, smiley, excitable, energetic, emotional	
Weighted Companion Cube	Portal	Object	white and grey box with pink hearts on each side, weighted	possibly sentient, not vocal	
HK-47	Knights of the Old Republic	Robot	bronze, male, droid, humanoid	misanthropic, sociopathic, professional, prideful, superiority complex, secretive, innovative	
GLaDOS/PotatoS	Portal 2	Robot/AI	A white and black robot that hangs from the ceiling, cores, potato with mechanic parts, female	amoral, sadistic. sarcastic, dark/cruel, manipulative, passive-aggressive, friendly, apathetic disgust, fearful, dissociative	

("Agro"; "Alistair"; "Alyx Vance"; "Aperture Science Weighted Storage Cube"; "Ashley Graham"; "Atreus"; "Bea Santello"; Carroll; "Clank"; "Cortana"; "DD"; "Delilah"; "Diddy Kong"; "Dog (Fable II)"; "Dogmeat (Fallout 4)"; "Dominic Santiago"; "Dorian Parvus"; "Elena Fisher"; "Elizabeth"; "Elkia"; "Ellie"; "Epona"; "Garrus Vakarian"; "GLaDOS"; "Hal Emmerich"; "HK-47"; Jennings; "Jonah Maiava"; "Kazooie"; "Kim Kitsuragi"; "Luigi"; "Midna"; "Miles "Tails" Prower"; "Mimir"; "Nadine Ross"; "Navi"; Potter; "Prompto Argentum"; "Quiet"; Sawyer; "Serana"; "SHODAN"; "Tifa Lockhart"; "Trico"; "Uncle"; "Urdrnot Wrex"; "Victor Sullivan"; VideoGamer.com Staff; Wen; "Yorda"; "Yoshi (character)")

Appendix B: Companion Portfolios

Companion Name: Lucinda Black



(Picture Created With "Charat Genesis")

Physical Description:

Gender: Female

Species: Human

Race: Denetralla (Current Nation)

Age Range: Young

Skin Colour: Pale

Hair Colour: Black

Eye Colour: Light Green

Unique Characteristics: White birthmarks on both forearms kept covered by fingerless gloves, and chest scar from a childhood medical procedure.

Outfit Description:

Lucinda wears a black and white striped leather biker vest with silver details and a pair of dark teal cotton shorts. She pairs this with tall black suede boots and leather fingerless gloves. The signatures of Luciana's outfit are the black and white Breton hat she constantly ends up chasing and her glasses, which she needs to see for nearsightedness. This outfit is meant to make her look playful and energetic.

Personality Category: Energetic Personality

Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ENFP (Extraverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Perceptive)

Phobia: Lucinda has monophobia (fear of being alone), which limits her skills when separated/alone.

Personality Description:

Apart from the traits of the energetic personality, Lucinda is also naïve and mischievous, similar to a child, due to her overprotective upbringing and need for adventure. On the other hand, because of Lucinda's upbringing, she is also impulsive due to a lack of knowledge and is stubborn when someone tries to instruct her on what to do. She is also scared easily because she is unfamiliar with the wide-open world. Once you get to know Lucinda, though, it is easy to see that she is sassy with her use of humour, dedicated to the party and selfless enough to provide the upbringing she never got to have.

Companion Name: Rosalina Ashwell



(Picture Created With "Charat Genesis")

Physical Description:

Gender: Female

Species: Anamalia

Race: Rabitalia- Cloud

Age Range: Young

Skin Colour: Pale

Hair Colour: Golden Blonde

Eye Colour: Dark Brown

Unique Characteristics: White bunny ears with a matching tail, and a scar on her wrist that she got when protecting her little sister.

Outfit Description:

Rosalina wears a white button-down collared shirt with flared sleeves that cinches at the wrists, a black corset belt and a pink argyle skirt. She pairs this with white stockings and pink Mary Janes that match her skirt. Rosalina does not have a signature aspect to her outfit and instead is best known for her white bunny ears. This outfit is meant to make her look innocent and friendly.

Personality Type: Companion Personality

Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ESFJ (Extraverted, Sensing, Feeling, Judging)

Phobia: Rosalina has atychiphobia (fear of failure), which limits her skills when outcomes are uncertain.

Personality Description:

Apart from the traits of the companion personality, Rosalina is also intelligent and curious about her surroundings because she is usually outcast by others due to her ears. From these experiences, Rosalina became quite temperamental when upset and foul-mouthed to match. Not much is known about her past other than her scar because she is quite secretive about it for fear of rejection again. Once you get to know Rosalina, though, she takes on a motherly or big sister role and is determined and passionate to keep the party safe at all times from physical, mental, and emotional harm.

Companion Name: Gryphon Romero



(Picture Created With "Charat Genesis")

Physical Description:

Gender: Male

Species: Human

Race: Elvenquake (Neighbouring Nation)

Age Range: Young

Skin Colour: Tan

Hair Colour: Brown

Eye Colour: Blue

Unique Characteristics: Right eyebrow scar from a glass shard accident, and a tattoo on the back of his neck that is a compass.

Outfit Description:

Gryphon wears a camo button-down tank and khaki-coloured cargo capris. He pairs this with black leather combat boots, a pair of black leather bracers and a nylon midriff wrap. Gryphon also commonly wears sunglasses to conceal his emotions and is known for the goggles he wears on his head, which are used in combat or engineering. This outfit is meant to make him look strong but distant.

Personality Category: Feeling Personality

Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ENFJ (Extraverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Judging)

Phobia: Gryphon has decidophobia (fear of making decisions), which limits his skills when he needs to make a choice.

Personality Description:

Apart from the traits of the feeling personality Gryphon is also unfazed by violence due to his background in a fighting unit and resourceful from the amount of time on missions out in the wilderness. On the other hand, because of his training, Gryphon is also defensive when asked questions, ruthless when fighting, and suffers from imposter syndrome. Once you get to know Gryphon, though, he is shown to be thoughtful and grounding to the people around him and determined to not let the rest of the party follow the fate of his unit.

Companion Name: Octavia Parker



(Picture Created With "Charat Genesis")

Physical Description:

Gender: Female

Species: Viven-Umbra as Human

Race: N/A

Age Range: Young

Skin Colour: Dark

Hair Colour: Strawberry Blonde

Eye Colour: Dark Red

Unique Characteristics: A left forearm tattoo that relates to astronomy, and a darker coloured left leg which is a genetic mutation for Viven-Umbra.

Outfit Description:

Octavia wears a red above-the-knee jersey dress embellished with white stars and buttons and a long black leather coat with bell sleeves to hide her hands. She pairs this with thigh-high black nylon boots to hide her leg and silver jewellery. Octavia also commonly wears a black knit beanie, which she pulls down when embarrassed, but is best known for her black leather choker, which she constantly touches. This outfit is meant to make her look reserved but curious.

Personality Category: Feeling Personality

Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ENFJ (Extraverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Judging)

Phobia: Octavia has astraphobia (fear of thunderstorms) which limits her skills during weather changes.

Personality Description:

Apart from the traits of the feeling personality, Octavia is also cool-headed but fierce; as a Viven-Umbra, she has had to deal with a lot of negativity growing up that she has used to make her stronger. As a way to break apart from her past, Octavia learned magic to be able to disguise herself as human in an act of rebellion against her father, though still remains suspicious of everyone around her, afraid of what would happen if her secret escapes. One major thing about Octavia is that when she is uncomfortable, she tends to use dark or cynical humour to mask her uneasiness, which isn't always appreciated. Once you get to know Octavia, though, while she is shy around new people, she becomes playful with friends, and she has an unnatural skill at being sneaky, which helps a lot on adventures.

Companion Name: Solas Whitlocke



(Picture Created With "Charat Genesis")

Physical Description:

Gender: Male

Species: Anamalia

Race: Vilkitalia- Maluna

Age Range: Young

Skin Colour: Pale

Hair Colour: Light Gray

Eye Colour: Dark Green

Unique Characteristics: Gray wolf tail and ears with white tufts, and multiple piercings around his body, mostly on ears.

Outfit Description:

Solas only wears black and/or white clothes, with his main look being a black and white linen wrap shirt, black cropped denim pants, and a black linen cardigan. He pairs this with black leather derbys, and black leather fingerless gloves. While most notably, Solas has his wolf features, he is also known for his glasses for farsightedness, the collar he wears around his neck, and his multitude of silver piercings. This outfit is meant to make him look sophisticated and perceptive.

Personality Category: Companion Personality

Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ESFJ (Extraverted, Sensing,

Feeling, Judging)

Phobia: Solas has aphephosmophobia (fear of being touched) which limits his skills when in close contact and/or confined spaces.

Personality Description:

Apart from the traits of the companion personality, Solas is also cunning with his witty remarks during conversations and determined when it comes to protecting his fellow companions, similar to how he would be in a wolf pack. On the other hand, Solas can be a bit dramatic when it comes to issues outside of his control, which eventually turns to self-criticism since he doesn't have an acceptable coping mechanism. Underneath the sharp exterior, Solas is quite lonely and craves the companionship of the others. Once you get to know Solas, though, he is shown to be a clever soul, driven to face any problem that stands in his way, and charismatic enough to comfort those around him.

Companion Name: Cyprus Vespertine



(Picture Created With "Charat Genesis")

Physical Description:

Gender: Non-Binary

Species: Anamalia

Race: Kutalia- Kyloe

Age Range: Young

Skin Colour: Tan

Hair Colour: Brown

Eye Colour: Light Gray

Unique Characteristics: Brown cow ears beside little white horns with a matching tail, and covered in freckles from head to toe.

Outfit Description:

Cyprus wears a pumpkin orange crop sweater with a pink heart on the chest and brown suede short shorts. They pair this with green runners and golden arm cuffs for pops of colour. The signature of Cyprus's outfit is the dark brown light knit scarf she wears even when it's hot out and a set of buckles on her right thigh. This outfit is meant to be androgynous and make them look lively but cosy.

Personality Category: Energetic Personality

Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ENFP (Extraverted, Intuitive,

Feeling, Perceptive)

Phobia: Cyprus has nyctophobia (fear of the dark) which limits their skills when in pitch blackness.

Personality Description:

Apart from the traits of the energetic personality, Cyprus is an optimistic and selfless person whose goal in life is to make everyone smile and feel comfortable as their true self, just like they are. From dealing with these types of experiences, Cyprus has also been known to be overly emotional in tough situations and quite vocal or talkative in positive ones. These traits tend to get them in trouble when the situation calls for silence. Once you get to know Cyprus, though, they are surprisingly entertaining and innovative, coming up with unique ideas to brighten the mood with stories that stem from their childhood, and quick on their feet when making decisions that take everyone's perspective into mind.

Appendix C: World Building Literature

Link to Chart:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AUKSKnJbuLbyu5vXoihkDDIEI--r6n9RZqlwggJdk-k/edit?usp=s>
haring

	James D'Amato	Randy Ellefson	A Trevena				Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford	Mark A Nelson		
	The Ultimate RPG Game Master's Worldbuilding Guide	The Complete Art of World Building	185 Tips on World Building	30 Days of Worldbuilding (Original + Bonus)	30 Days of Worldbuilding (Updated)	How to Create History	From Sanctity to Sorcery	D&D Dungeon Master's Guide	Fantasy World-Building	Total Checks
Genre and Setting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
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Water Sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Seas and Oceans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Bays and More	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Landscape	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6
Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Wilderness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
Dungeons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
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Prairies/Grasslands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5
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Size and Shape	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
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Taverns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5
Landmarks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3
Residents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Rumors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
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History	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Secrets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7
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Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
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Class Divide and Social Mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
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Religious and Spiritual Belief Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7
Types of Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
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Who can Participate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
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Coming of Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Gender Roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Behavior Expectations and Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Sprint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1
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Uniforms and Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6
Rites and Rituals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Hierarchy and Election	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Prejudice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Education/Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Societal Influence/Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Environmental Influence/Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Weaponizing Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Magic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
Types of Magic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Cost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Potency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Commonality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Accessibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Mastery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
How to Cast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Creation Story	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
History of Magic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Lost/Forbidden Magic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Founders/Important People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Main Principles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Limitations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Who Has Magic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Initiation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Coming of Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Gender Roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Behavior Expectations and Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Consequences/Persecution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Myths, Legends, Superstitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Magical Texts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

Magical Items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Magical Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Uniforms and Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5
Rites and Rituals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Hierarchy and Election	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Prejudice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Education/Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Societal Influence/Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Environmental Influence/Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Weaponizing Magic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Festivals and Celebrations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5
Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Weaponry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5
Offense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4
Defense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4
Wars and their Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Specific Battles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Survival	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
Social change and Revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Specific Battles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
History	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Timeline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Erased History	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Historical Items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Historical Texts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Historical Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Historical Sites/Memorial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6
Societal Impact/Influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Physical Impact/Influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Language and Dialects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
World Figures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Places of Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
Myths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Myths and Messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Societal Impact/Influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Keeping Myths Alive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Legendary Item	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Pantheon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Domain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Aspects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Relation to Other Gods	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Relation to Mortals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Mythology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Creations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Otherworldly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4
Planets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Moons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Suns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Asteroids and Comets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Stars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Multiverse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Planes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Planar Travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Afterlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Rewards/Punishments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Mind, Body Soul	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Undead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

(D'Amato, *World Building Guide*; Ellefson, *185 Tips*; Ellefson, *The Complete Art of World Building*; Mearls and Crawford; Nelson; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding*; Trevena, *30 Days of Worldbuilding 2 ed.*; Trevena, *From Sanctity to Sorcery*; Trevena, *How to Create History*)

Appendix D: Best Places to Live and Visit

Link to chart:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Y_QupzSLMxu9pemUBZN3NqVR-gU-IDgaLRyafJbsnQk/edit?usp=sharing

Town/City/Settlement	Country	Population Density	Age (approx)	Type	Near Water	Rich Culture	Near Nature	Warm Weather	Quiet/Low Tourism	Good Food	Notes
(Any)	Maldives	1,102.5/km2		54 Republic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mentioned Twice
Ubud	Bali	1,800/km2		1321 Town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentioned Twice
Prince Edward Island	Canada	27.27/km2		149 Province	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Vienna	Austria	4,326.1/km2		585 Capital City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Takayama (Old Town)	Japan	41/km2		555 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Montecatini Terme	Tuscany Italy	1,200/km2		682 Municipality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
(Any)	Malta	1,633/km2		48 Republic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Glacier National Park	Montana United States	N/A		112 Landmark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Any)	Nepal	180/km2		14 Republic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reykjavik	Iceland	480/km2		1148 Capital City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sedona	Arizona United States	204.75/km2		120 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tulum	Mexico	N/A		822 Landmark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Phuket	Thailand	6,600/km2	Unknown	City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Langkawi	Malaysia	180/km2		621 District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Vientiane	Laos	251.14/km2		1221 Capital City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Casa Palopo	Guatemala	625/km2	Unknown	Municipality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Galle	Sri Lanka	5,712/km2		521 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Nha Trang	Vietnam	1,675/km2		369 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bagan	Myanmar	Unknown		1220 Ancient City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mykonos	Greece	120/km2		1021 Island	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dead Sea	Jordan	N/A	Unknown	Landmark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Nachi Falls	Japan	N/A	Unknown	Landmark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Lakshadweep	India	2,000/km2		66 Territory	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Brittany	France	141.96/km2		490 Historic Province	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mount Lassen Volcanic National Park	California United States	N/A		106 Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mendoza	Argentina	2,055.4/km2		461 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Hangzhou	China	710/km2	Unknown	City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dubai	United Arab Emirates	746.46/km2		927 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Lake Bled	Slovenia	N/A		421 Landmark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Osaka	Japan	12,214/km2		1732 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Helsinki	Finland	3,082.4/km2		210 Capital City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
San Diego	California United States	1,643.25/km2		253 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bergen	Norway	615.25/km2		952 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Honolulu	Hawaii	2,236.1/km2		115 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Toronto	Ontario Canada	4434.08/km2		188 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Brisbane	Australia	155/km2		197 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stockholm	Sweden	5,200/km2		770 Capital City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Austin	Texas United States	1,160.76/km2		187 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Auckland	New Zealand	2,400/km2		182 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Tel Aviv	Israel	8,468.7/km2		113 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Wellington	New Zealand	1,900/km2		183 Capital City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sydney	Australia	433/km2		234 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Copenhagen	Denmark	4,500/km2		621 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Zurich	Switzerland	4,700/km2		804 Municipality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kyoto	Japan	1,800/km2		1128 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dallas	Texas United States	1,482.99/km2		181 City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reykjavik	Iceland	480/km2		1148 Capital City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Charleston	South Carolina United States	462.81/km2		352 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Perth	Australia	331.12/km2		193 City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Note: The purple checked boxes are to signify caveats to the information mentioned or shown:

Examples:

- The pictures of the settlements show being near a water source, but the description does not mention it
- The weather is warm at only certain times of the year

- The settlements are quieter or have lower tourism at certain times of the year (“Auckland”; “Austin, Texas”; “Bagan”; “Bergen”; “Brisbane”; “Brittany”; “Charleston, South Carolina”; “Copenhagen”; “Dallas”; “Dead Sea”; “Dubai”; “Galle”; “Glacier National Park” “Hangshou”; “Helsinki”; “Honolulu”; Insight Guide; “Kyoto”; “Lake Bled”; “Lakshadweep”; “Langkawi”; “Lassen Volcanic National Park”; “Maldives”; “Malta”; “Mendoza Argentina”; “Montecatini Terme”; “Mykonos”; “Nachi Falls”; “Nepal”; “Nha Trang”; “Osaka”; “Perth”; “Phuket”; “Prince Edward Island”; “Reykjavík”; Romano; “San Diego”; “Santa Catarina Palopé”; “Sedona, Arizona”; “Stockholm”; “Sydney”; “Takayama, Gifu”; “Tel Aviv”; “Toronto”; “Tulum”; “Ubud”; “Vienna”; “Vientiane”; “Wellington”; “Zurich”)

Appendix E: Settlement Examples (with one Building)

We Built This City (on Talks and Rolls)- pg. 254

Every city is a world in its own right. They develop customs, landscapes, and languages that someone could spend a lifetime studying. That makes them a wicked problem for worldbuilders, especially in RPGs. PCs can pack years of adventure into a few square blocks, or visit a marvellous metropolis for a day before moving on to discover something new.

Population

To make a city you need a rough idea of how many people live in it. Numbers won't really tell you anything; in fiction big cities can have hundreds to trillions of residents. Instead, focus on how large that population is compared to other places in the world, and the physical space the city occupies.

Shape

After population, most people look to physical size as a characteristic for cities. The amount of space a city takes up is less important than how the space is used. The shape of your city says a lot about how people live in it.

Age

Cities grow like people and age like liquor. They trade potential for strength and ability; and slowly their sweetness ferments into a rich and alluring poison. The older a city is the more problems become its identity. Younger cities lack complicated history and character in kind.

Wealth

Cities are characterized by their relationship with wealth. Every city depends on a foundation of wealth and industry to form. The way those resources are allocated determines how a city looks and functions.

Traits

The choices you made are tied to the assets, eccentricities, and corruptions that define your city.

What is your city's name?

Name: *Aramore*

Population: Medium: This city is home to millions of people without functioning too differently from the rest of the world.

Shape: Contained: This city has grown to meet a distinct border and stands out against the scenery.

Age: Modern: This city has only been around for a few hundred years and has more or less always been the same place.

Wealth: Conspicuous: This city has been home to profitable industries throughout its history. That has resulted in truly impressive collective achievements, monuments, and institutions.

Assets:

- A vibrant art scene
- Exceptional schools and universities
- Advanced medical care

Eccentricities:

- This city is built around and above an ancient metropolis
- This city isn't laid out on a grid

Corruptions:

- None So Far

Name: *Violl Village*

Population: Small: This city holds less than a million people. It is larger than most of the towns nearby, but it holds little significance on the world stage.

Shape: Planned: This city was grown with careful thought in strategically preserving and distributing resources while maximizing space.

Age: Historic: This city has hundreds of years of history built into it and has seen a few different incarnations.

Wealth: Absent: Whatever resources used to exist in the city are now gone. Ageing infrastructure either struggles to function or lies completely dormant.

Assets:

- Access to unique natural or magical resources
- Accommodations for a specialized profession

Eccentricities:

- This city isn't laid out on a grid
- Wildlife and nature are incorporated into the city

Corruptions:

- Part of the city has been left to deteriorate

Landmark

In the real world we associate cities with the cool stuff in places inside them. Your city needs similar stuff to have an authentic identity.

Story

Finally, you need to know what kind of story those disparate elements are telling.

Name: *Aeri Library*

Concept: Public Building

History: Classic

Style: Iconic and Detailed

Primary Materials Used to Build Landmark: Glass and Wood

Type of Landmark: The story this landmark tells is ugly.

Traits:

- This place will act as a stage for a critical event
- The place commemorates a historic event

Questions:

What does this landmark look like?

- This landmark is a library with multiple floors of ground-to-ceiling windows, complemented by wood furniture, floors, and edging.

Example:



(Morton, Caitlin. "The World's Most Beautiful Libraries." *Conde Nast Traveler*, March 19, 2020, <https://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2014-09-02/10-of-the-worlds-most-beautiful-libraries>)

What is the landmark most known for? Who would tell you that information?

- This landmark is known to contain the entrance to the ancient maze below the city of Aramore, which contains one of the infamous relics.
- Only the librarians would know of this information, but they are sworn to keep it secret until a monster begins to break its way out and needs the PCs to protect the city's knowledge.

When would the PCs visit this place?

- The PCs can visit this landmark at any time to learn more information, bask in the quiet of the surroundings, or for no reason at all

Name: Okuma Springs

Concept: Monument (location)

History: Ancient

Style: Welcoming and Rustic

Primary Materials Used to Build Landmark: Stone and Wood

Type of Landmark: The story the landmark tells is inspiring.

Traits:

- This place will offer the PCs a gift

Questions:

What does this landmark look like?

- This landmark looks like a historic hot spring updated with wood features.

Example:



(Becker, Kraig. "The 20 Best Hot Springs Destinations in the World." *tripsavvy*, August 11, 2019, <https://www.tripsavvy.com/best-hot-springs-destinations-in-the-world-4169603>)

What is the landmark most known for? Who would tell you that information?

- This landmark is best known for its water, which is supposed to have healing properties due to the minerals in the mountains.
- Anyone from Violl would tell you this information because it is a pride the village shares.

When would the PCs visit this place?

- The PCs will be guided to the village of Violl for a quest and have multiple opportunities to relax in the hot springs as they complete the main quest line and side quests.

(D'Amato, *World Building Guide*, 254-264)

Appendix F: Building Examples

The Bar- Pg 239

One of the most important set pieces in an RPG story is a bar. Whether you call it a tavern, inn, saloon, pub, roadhouse, or café- these places are essential for any group of heroes. A bar can be a base of operations, a source of information, a neutral location to conduct business, or a place to celebrate victory with a meal and a drink. This exercise will help you quickly create a bar with a sense of character with options for multiple settings.

Discretion

Sometimes you need to go where nobody knows your name. PCs tend to lead rebellions, pull heists, and commit other off-the-book deeds to support their heroics. A bar that can keep a secret is vital.

Loyalty

There's a difference between being a patron, a regular, and a friend. In the world of an RPG, that difference can mean the difference between life and death.

Connections

Bars attract all sorts of clients. If you go to the right place you might be sitting next to the world's greatest assassin or the overworked assistant to the high-ranking executive. Every place has a different atmosphere; it just depends on whether you're aiming high or low.

Information

Adventurers always need incredibly specific information. The easiest place to start a hunt for any kind of information is a bar. The information you get is entirely dependent on the type of place it is.

Service

Sometimes you need to know how good your bar is at being a bar. The kind of food and drink a bar serves helps establish character. It also says a lot about the people who go there.

Name

Nothing is worse than panic-naming something that sticks around for a whole campaign. To generate something that fits, just choose the most appropriate genre from the table, then draw two cards from a standard deck.

Name: The Drunken Pixie (Aramore)

Discretion: only the most resourceful information brokers can get hints at deals struck here. There are secluded spaces to meet and the staff don't talk about your business, as long as you remember to tip.

Loyalty: perhaps the PCs have been regular customers for years, the owner has a crush, or the management just respects their profession. The party is treated well so long as they don't bring in too much trouble. Even if there is a little problem, management can probably be convinced to look the other way.

Connections: this place will surprise you. Someone here might be able to help you get 100 gallons of holy water pretty cheap, a rare out-of-print book, or a list of people to bribe to get into a secure location.

Information: someone here likes to keep tabs on things happening in the area and the world in general. They also make it their business to pass on what they know. It might be something they do out of a sense of moral obligation, to satisfy feelings of self-importance, or to make some extra coin. No matter the reasoning it means that PCs can usually find what they are looking for.

Service: this place is down to earth and homey. The food and drink invite nostalgia. The decoration and atmosphere are comfortable and familiar. If there is entertainment you are sure to hear your favourite songs. Everything about this place is cheap but it's cheap in all the right ways.

Name: The Matango Hearth (Violl)

Discretion: eavesdropping and gossip are practically a sport for the regulars here. In fact, sitting down almost guarantees that someone will eventually come over and get involved in your conversation.

Loyalty: one of the PC's old friends with management. They don't always take the party side in a conflict and even stick their necks out to provide an alibi. There are practical limits to this loyalty, but used judiciously this is an invaluable resource.

Connections: this place is frequented by working folks; Regulars include security guards, union workers, petty criminals, and minor heroes from a bygone age. There probably isn't a ton of direct power, but there's a wealth of knowledge and experience that might point you in a good direction.

Information: this place is home to a group with very specific expertise. They might be veterans, scientists, or historians. If PCs look, they can find people who know too much about weirdly specific stuff.

Service: this place is down to earth and homey. The food and drink invite nostalgia. The decoration and atmosphere are comfortable and familiar. If there is entertainment you are sure to hear your favourite songs. Everything about this place is cheap but it's cheap in all the right ways.

(D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 239-243)

Appendix G: Pantheon

(D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 56-74)

Domains

Every god needs an aspect of reality that they control or represent; we call this a domain. Usually domains can be summed up as a simple concept like 'The sea', 'Lies', or 'Wine'. They influence the god's role, looks, personality, goals, and powers.

Aspects

These aspects will help you define limits for the power of gods in your setting, shape their personalities, and help you create a pantheon of diverse beings that still feel connected.

To create a feeling of consistency when building a pantheon, choose three aspects: one to be a point of major similarity, one to be minor similarity, and one to limit.

The aspect chosen for major similarity will be the same for every god in your pantheon. The point of minor similarity will narrow the range of levels for a single aspect to one level above or below a single point. Finally, to create a limit, choose a level in a third aspect that gods cannot move above or below.

Power

Not all gods are created equal. Some are titanic forces that play games that rewrite the laws of the universe. Others play games with mortal kingdoms and shape events that change the world. Some grant mild fortunes to farmers who bring offerings.

Interest

This aspect determines the focus of the god's attention between the mortal and divine world. Some gods care only for divine matters, keeping their attention on their fellow deities and their heavenly domain. Some shun the divine all together to think only of the plights of mortal beings and material things. Others split attention between mortal and divine, contending with the other gods for dominion over followers, earthly possessions, and heavenly domain.

Passion

This aspect defines a god's emotions and will. Some gods are deeply invested in their ambitions, reacting to defeat with violent outbursts and success with exuberant celebration. Others are detached and almost mechanical in how they interact with the world with seemingly no desire at all.

Form

Gods have a vast range of possibilities for form and presentation. Some are difficult to tell apart from mortals. Others appear as animals or objects. There are even gods that exist entirely as abstract concepts.

Thought

It is difficult for mortals to understand the will of divine beings. Some gods think in fundamentally different ways than mortals do. There are some gods that resemble mortals in thought and action, but even they are sometimes subject to ineffable whims.

Etrella

Domain: Light and Darkness

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power is cosmic, interwoven with the fabric of reality. They can reshape existence, forge new universes, and even create new gods. This level of power represents a far-reaching omnipotence.
Interest	At this level a god will turn their attention to mortal and material concerns only if they are forced to. If a rival or allied god cares for mortal and material things, they might use those things as leverage. However, it would never be their first instinct.
Passion	At this level a god holds only a few things to be very sacred. Anything outside their specific interest is inconsequential. Without a deep understanding of their nature, they are nearly impossible to provoke into action.
Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level a god is so inscrutable to mortals that is hard to say they think at all. Everything they do seems random, counterintuitive, or so complex that it is impossible to understand.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

What is your god's name? Do they have titles? Every god needs a name even if some	This god's name is Etrella, who also has the title Mother of Dusk/Dawn, but is rarely ever referred to
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don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like “Keeper of the Maze” or “Poet of Stars”.	by their title unless in writing.
What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?	Because Etrella is the god of light and dark they are heralded by all the light being diminished into darkness, and then quickly brought back. For example, all the candles in a room at the same time extinguish without a reason and then flicker back to life stronger than before.
How does this god communicate with mortals? Depending on their whims, a god can personally appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.	Etrella does not normally communicate with mortals due to being one of the head divines but when necessary Etrella communicates through signs in the sky. This usually is seen as the sky turning different colours, or tricks of the light.
Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne, bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.	Etrella spends the majority of their time in the garden at the Divine Palace, sitting in the centre under the gazebo enjoying a cup of tea and sweets. Etrella loves to grow a myriad of different flowers and uses their power to always have the flowers in bloom.
What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.	Due to Etrella being the god of light and darkness, a common object connected to them is a combination of a sun and a moon dial. Etrella is commonly shown to be around this symbol in visualisations and their followers tend to gather around one for ceremonies.
How does this god prefer to be worshipped? Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?	While most mortals think that Etrella would be interested in offerings of candles due to being the god of light and darkness, this isn't actually true. Instead, Etrella prefers offerings of flowers to add to their garden and prayers from mortals about making them grow into better people.

What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

A strong pantheon carries eons of history. Gods form alliances, exchange insults, bear grudges, play tricks, fall in love, and so much more on scales that boggle mortal minds. To help you create a messy web of connections, choose two gods from your pantheon and decide if their relationship is positive, negative, or complicated.

Positive	Negative	Complicated
Devredalm taught me a lesson I shall never forget.	Midla imprisoned me.	Valeo is a useful tool, but I feel no loyalty toward them.
Eluqueake once made me a splendid gift, and I shall never forget.	Astrya is my child, and they dishonour my name.	I depend on Mortrua, but we cannot help but hurt each other.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
This god is worshipped by a loosely connected following; much of their understanding of their own religion has been lost to time, and there is much debate over this god's will.	This church commands the fealty of other churches and even lesser gods.	Every being in every place across the mortal and divine realm worships this god in some capacity.

Mortrua

Domain: Life and Death

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power is cosmic, interwoven with the fabric of reality. They can reshape existence, forge new universes, and even create new gods. This level of power represents a far-reaching omnipotence.
Interest	At this level a god will turn their attention to mortal and material concerns only if they are forced to. If a rival or allied god cares for mortal and material things, they might use those things as leverage. However, it would never be their first instinct.
Passion	At this level a god holds only a few things to be very sacred. Anything outside their specific interest is inconsequential. Without a deep understanding of their nature, they are nearly impossible to provoke into action.
Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level a god is so inscrutable to mortals that is hard to say they think at all. Everything they do seems random, counterintuitive, or so complex that it is impossible to understand.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

What is your god's name? Do they have titles? Every god needs a name even if some don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like "Keeper of the Maze" or "Poet of Stars".	This god's name is Mortrua and has the title Queen of the Veil. Like their twin Mortrua also does not commonly go by their title, but some mortals use it to show respect.
What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?	Depending on how Mortrua is feeling will differ in how they are heralded. If in a good mood, their presence will be known through the smell of flowers; if in a bad mood the smell will instead be that of decay.
How does this god communicate with mortals? Depending on their whims, a god can personally	Mortrua is a god that communicates through dreams because it is a state of mind that is

appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.	closest to the realm between life and death. Usually, these dreams are neither pleasant nor nightmares, just an odd interruption to whatever dream the mortals were in the middle of.
Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne, bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.	While Mortua's twin is usually outside in the garden of the divine palace, Mortua prefers the cosy quiet library. Because there is nothing currently, or previously living (books don't count) they don't have to worry about their power accidentally going wild. Mortua loves to read fantasy books that have been gifted by mortals while curled up in a blanket.
What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.	As much as Mortua would prefer that books be the object connected to them, more commonly the connected objects are shown as their sceptre and matching headpiece. The objects are something Mortua is always shown to be wearing/holding and are split-coloured white and black with gold and silver accents.
How does this god prefer to be worshipped? Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?	Mortua may say that they prefer to be worshipped through silence, they actually love when mortals sing and dance around a fire. It comforts Mortua to know that even when worshipping the god of life and death mortals can still have fun with it.

What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

A strong pantheon carries eons of history. Gods form alliances, exchange insults, bear grudges, play tricks, fall in love, and so much more on scales that boggle mortal minds. To help you create a messy web of connections, choose two gods from your pantheon and decide if their relationship is positive, negative, or complicated.

Positive	Negative	Complicated
Midla is my child, and they bring me pride.	Valeo is an insufferable fool.	Eluqueake is my child with Etrella, and I cannot bear the memories.
Astrya commands much power and wisdom; it is right to pay them respect.	Devredalm is too influential, as they are becoming a direct threat to my power.	I depend on Etrella, but we cannot help but hurt each other.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
This god is worshipped by a loosely connected following; much of their understanding of their own religion has been lost to time, and there is much debate over this god's will.	This church commands the fealty of other churches and even lesser gods.	Every being in every place across the mortal and divine realm worships this god in some capacity.

Devredalm

Domain: Fire

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power can extend over large regions of the world or broad concepts. They might represent a powerful force like the wind or the sea. They can influence the world outside of their domain, using their domain. These gods can produce miracles and forge artefacts.
Interest	At this level gods care far more about mortal and material matters than heavenly ones. They only think about other gods when it affects their own mortal domains. They are very present in the lives of mortals appearing to followers and interacting with them frequently.
Passion	At this level a god is a torrent of forceful emotion and desire. They go out of their way to follow their whims and shape the world come what may. Their reactions are always extreme and waves that confound mortal understanding.
Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level a god thinks in ways more in line with beasts than humans. A mortal will most likely find the god's thoughts understandable, if unnaturally brutish or alien. They don't think like people, but it is easier to see how and why.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

What is your god's name? Do they have titles? Every god needs a name even if some don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like "Keeper of the Maze" or "Poet of Stars".	This god's name is Devredalm and also has the title Fire of the Heart. This title makes Devredalm really excited when it is used because of its connection to passion, thus they try to get all mortals to use it. (Plus it's easier to spell.)
What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?	Devredalm loves to make an entrance, and most commonly uses two ways to herald their presence. The first is the smell of fire, specifically a campfire. The second is the sound of beating drums; it might not be the most

	unique herald but it fits Devredalm just fine.
<p>How does this god communicate with mortals? Depending on their whims, a god can personally appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.</p>	Devredalm communicate directly with mortals even when not necessary; they love the attention it brings and affects them long after they have returned to the forge. At first, mortals would always be scared when Devredalm showed up, but now many are used to the childlike god.
<p>Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne, bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.</p>	With the fiery, yet unpredictable, domain of fire, Devredalm commands a forge to create miraculous wonders and tends to spend most of their time in the shop. Because the forge is so closely connected to them when they take a break the forge cools down and work slows. If Devredalm is taking a break they can most likely be found pestering one of the other gods.
<p>What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.</p>	While most mortals would assume that the object connected to Devredalm would be related to fire, it is actually a red fox. The fox is meant to represent all the different sides of Devredalm: playfulness, protection, and passion.
<p>How does this god prefer to be worshipped? Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?</p>	Devredalm won't accept any other kind of worship, only sacrifices of food or metal, they get especially excited when whatever was sacrificed makes the fire flare up. Examples include table salt, epsom salt, or iron (steel wool.) Dancing around the fire is also acceptable)

What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

A strong pantheon carries eons of history. Gods form alliances, exchange insults, bear grudges, play tricks, fall in love, and so much more on scales that boggle mortal minds. To help you create a messy web of connections, choose two gods from your pantheon and decide if their relationship is positive, negative, or complicated.

Positive	Negative	Complicated
I depend on the wisdom of Eluqueake constantly.	Mortrua is honoured in ways that are meant for me.	Etrella is moving down a dark path, but I feel it is my duty to help them.
I owe Valeo a deep debt of gratitude, and it brings me joy to offer them thanks.	Astrya leads their followers astray and perverts the rightful order of creation.	I love Midla. If I could, I would be them.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
Worshippers within this god's church are fanatical and willing to place their lives on the line in the name of their deity.	This church has access to resources to provide support to followers just about anywhere, either from the pool resources of a large community or from a few wealthy followers.	There are enough followers of this god to populate a small nation.

Midla

Domain: Water

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power can extend over large regions of the world or broad concepts. They might represent a powerful force like the wind or the sea. They can influence the world outside of their domain, using their domain. These gods can produce miracles and forge artefacts.
Interest	At this level gods care far more about mortal and material matters than heavenly ones.

	They only think about other gods when it affects their own mortal domains. They are very present in the lives of mortals appearing to followers and interacting with them frequently.
Passion	At this level a god is a torrent of forceful emotion and desire. They go out of their way to follow their whims and shape the world come what may. Their reactions are always extreme and waves that confound mortal understanding.
Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level a god appears to think like most sentient mortals with some very notable eccentricities. Perhaps they are too insistent on certain matters of social grace or they are too pliable with certain types of flattery. They are understandable- even reasonable- but with something seeming just a little off.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

What is your god's name? Do they have titles? Every god needs a name even if some don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like "Keeper of the Maze" or "Poet of Stars".	This god's name is Midla, they also have the title Divine of the Seas. Midla doesn't care how the mortals refer to them as long as they do it with respect.
What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?	Midla is heralded by the sound and smell of a light rain shower, sometimes this includes actual rain, but other times it doesn't, it really depends on Midla's mood or the needs of the mortals.
How does this god communicate with mortals? Depending on their whims, a god can personally appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.	Usually, Midla appears before mortals themselves when they need to communicate with them, if this is not an option they will send a projection of their form to the places of worship and inform the mortals that way.
Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne,	Midla isn't a fan of staying at the divine palace even though they have a room there, because of

bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.	an incident involving Devredalm. Instead, Midla spends most of their time at their “summer home”, located at the bottom of the ocean. Here Midla can practise the skills of alchemy, swimming, and transmutation without trouble from the other gods while watching colourful creatures swim past.
What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.	Whenever Midla is visualised they are drawn wearing a silvery blue cape that is said to flow like the waters of a gentle river. While Midla does own a similar cape, they prefer to only wear it for ceremonies or celebrations since it tends to get in the way. (And Devredalm once accidentally set it on fire.)
How does this god prefer to be worshipped? Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?	Midla loves it when the mortals worship them through dance, they find rain dances especially entertaining and cute, and will almost always make their prayers of water come true.

What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

A strong pantheon carries eons of history. Gods form alliances, exchange insults, bear grudges, play tricks, fall in love, and so much more on scales that boggle mortal minds. To help you create a messy web of connections, choose two gods from your pantheon and decide if their relationship is positive, negative, or complicated.

Positive	Negative	Complicated
I love to play games with Valeo more than any other.	I desire affection from Eluqueake, but they never offer it in a way that pleases me.	I love Astrya, who only has eyes for Devredalm.
Etrella is my protector, and I trust them.	I do not like the way Mortrua treats me, but I believe I must endure it.	Devredalm was once lovely, but is slowly losing what made me love love.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
Almost every worshipper within the church has a genuine dedication to this god and their domain.	Followers of this religion are close to second-class citizens in most places. Even pooling resources, they don't have much more than the strength of their arms.	This is a single and modest congregation dedicated to this god.

Valeo

Domain: Earth

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power can extend over large regions of the world or broad concepts. They might represent a powerful force like the wind or the sea. They can influence the world outside of their domain, using their domain. These gods can produce miracles and forge artefacts.
Interest	At this level gods care far more about mortal and material matters than heavenly ones. They only think about other gods when it affects their own mortal domains. They are very present in the lives of mortals appearing to followers and interacting with them frequently.
Passion	Most gods at this level appear to be extremely capricious to mortals. This apparent fickleness can be driven by the general difference between gods and mortals. However, sometimes a god's passion is tied to their domain, waxing and waning alongside natural forces.

Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level a god thinks exactly like a mortal person. The only real separation between these gods and regular folk is that they also have the responsibility of managing a divine domain.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

<p>What is your god's name? Do they have titles? Every god needs a name even if some don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like "Keeper of the Maze" or "Poet of Stars".</p>	<p>This god's name is Valeo, they also have the title Guardian of the Wild. Valeo loves this title and prefers it to every other name because it reminds them of their purpose to protect the planet from harm.</p>
<p>What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?</p>	<p>Due to Valeo being the god of the earth they are announced by a procession of bears with Valeo walking behind them. These bears are the pets of Valeo, who raised them from birth to be protectors of their territories.</p>
<p>How does this god communicate with mortals? Depending on their whims, a god can personally appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.</p>	<p>The way that Valeo communicates with mortals is one of the harder ways to understand. When Valeo wants to share a message they will make certain flowers and plants grow that together make up the meaning of the message. To understand this wonder though mortals have to have at least some basic knowledge of Floriography (the language of flowers).</p>
<p>Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne, bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.</p>	<p>Valeo is not a god to sit around and do nothing, they love to travel and explore the planet; because of this, there isn't one place where they spend the majority of their time. But no matter how far the journey takes them they will always return to the palace of the divine.</p>

What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.	Valeo is connected to the object, the willow tree, because of how it provides protection to other living things beneath its branches. If followers want to pray/worship Valeo they tend to do it under a willow tree.
How does this god prefer to be worshipped? Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?	Valeo has always preferred their followers to worship them through prayers. For Valeo it makes it feel as though the worshippers are growing roots into the earth and becoming more connected to nature.

What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

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Positive	Negative	Complicated
Mortrua taught me a lesson I shall never forget.	Etrella stole from me. I will never forget.	Devredalm is moving down a dark path, but I feel it is my duty to help them.
Midla is dutiful and understands respect in a way few others do.	If I had the power I would strike at Eluqueake without hesitation.	I must betray Astrya though it pains me.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
This god has at least one organized faith dedicated to them. Ecumenical politics still muddles the message from time to time.	This god's followers are modest. They can build temples, make congregations, and mostly worship unmolested.	A few scatter congregations exist for this god around the world.

Eluqueake

Domain: Air

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power can extend over large regions of the world or broad concepts. They might represent a powerful force like the wind or the sea. They can influence the world outside of their domain, using their domain. These gods can produce miracles and forge artefacts.
Interest	At this level gods care far more about mortal and material matters than heavenly ones. They only think about other gods when it affects their own mortal domains. They are very present in the lives of mortals appearing to followers and interacting with them frequently.
Passion	Most gods at this level appear to be extremely capricious to mortals. This apparent fickleness can be driven by the general difference between gods and mortals. However, sometimes a god's passion is tied to their domain, waxing and waning alongside natural forces.
Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level the god's thinking is understandable but only in themes and patterns. If a mortal understands the many intricacies of the god's domain, they might have some insight to its thoughts. Still, they do not behave like regular beings and make choices that even devout followers struggle to justify.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

<p>What is your god's name? Do they have titles? Every god needs a name even if some don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like "Keeper of the Maze" or "Poet of Stars".</p>	<p>This god's name is Eluqueake, who also has the title the Cerulean Mage, which was given to them by the mortals after a major storm dissipated for no apparent reason. The mortals believe Eluqueake heard their pleas and cleared the sky.</p>
<p>What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?</p>	<p>Eluqueake prefers the simpler thing in life, thus they decided to be heralded by a gentle warm breeze. When Eluqueake is in a particularly good mood this breeze can also sometimes carry a comforting smell that changes based on the individual's need or preference.</p>
<p>How does this god communicate with mortals? Depending on their whims, a god can personally appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.</p>	<p>Due to Eluqueake being quite busy looking after the divine palace, they tend to send prophets to communicate with mortals. Sometimes this will be another mortal who they have sent a message to, but other times it is more abstract like the wind. Typically Eluqueake selects a particular mortal and continues to use them as a prophet until they pass or are unable to preach.</p>
<p>Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne, bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.</p>	<p>Eluqueake is the only god that spends a majority of their time on their throne, mostly out of obligation since the other gods tend to disappear. Eluqueake doesn't mind this though since the throne room of the divine palace is a good place to meditate and do yoga.</p>
<p>What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.</p>	<p>Every follower of Eluqueake has a medallion inscribed with their name and a personalised blessing. On the front is a symbol meant to mean sky overtop of a cloud. This medallion has become the object connected to Eluqueake through the follower's ceremonies.</p>

<p>How does this god prefer to be worshipped?</p> <p>Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?</p>	<p>While the other gods may laugh at how traditional Eluqueake prefers to be worshipped, they don't really care. Eluqueake prefers to be worshipped through prayer because it is not something that needs skill or material goods; it allows any mortal the ability to connect with Eluqueake who is more than happy to accept anyone.</p>
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What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

A strong pantheon carries eons of history. Gods form alliances, exchange insults, bear grudges, play tricks, fall in love, and so much more on scales that boggle mortal minds. To help you create a messy web of connections, choose two gods from your pantheon and decide if their relationship is positive, negative, or complicated.

Positive	Negative	Complicated
Astrya is a beauty unmatched in any realm. I will adore them until the end of time.	Valeo destroyed something I love, and they will pay.	Midla ignores me, but I will force them to notice.
I depend on the wisdom of Etrella constantly.	Devredalm cannot be trusted, and I have learned this lesson far too many times.	I hurt Mortrua but have come to love them and cannot bear the guilt.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
Almost every worshipper within the church has a genuine dedication to this god and their domain.	There is an organized religion of sorts, but it mostly exists conceptually. With great effort the followers can accomplish small things.	This is a single and modest congregation dedicated to this god.

Astrya

Domain: Spirit

Aspects:

Power	At this level a god's power extends over entire planets. Should they desire they could rewrite the rules of their domain to suit their preference or impose the will of their domain to change natural laws entirely within certain areas. These gods can grant mortals extraordinary abilities that resemble the power of lesser deities.
Interest	At this level gods care far more about mortal and material matters than heavenly ones. They only think about other gods when it affects their own mortal domains. They are very present in the lives of mortals appearing to followers and interacting with them frequently.
Passion	At this level a god is deeply invested in all matters relating to their domains. They are compelled to do more than simply maintain their domains; they want to expand or shape them. This leads to plots, conflicts, and sacrifices.
Form	At this level a god is almost indistinguishable from a mortal being. They might bear halos, unnatural tones of skin or hair, and other markers of divinity; however, that is not necessary. These gods often walk among mortals without notice.
Thought	At this level the god's thinking is understandable but only in themes and patterns. If a mortal understands the many intricacies of the god's domain, they might have some insight to its thoughts. Still, they do not behave like regular beings and make choices that even devout followers struggle to justify.

Aspects and Domain (Questions):

<p>What is your god's name? Do they have titles?</p> <p>Every god needs a name even if some don't like to bother with them. A god may also have titles like "Keeper of the Maze" or "Poet of Stars".</p>	<p>This god's name is Astrya, they also have the titles Seer of Dreams and Sage of Magica. The reason why Astrya has multiple titles is to help hide their identity. Mortals who follow Astrya's will tend to be ridiculed so they use titles to protect Astrya's name. Astrya doesn't mind these titles but wishes that they are not a necessity for safety.</p>
<p>What heralds this god's presence? Some gods are announced by processions of beasts; others by the sound of instruments, the smell of flowers, or flickering stars. What indicates this god's domain and status?</p>	<p>Astrya tries to use more subtle cues to herald their presence, opting for a flickering of stars that make them look like they are sparkling. If Astrya needs to use a more obvious herald they take a cue from Etrella and use clouds of colour to surround themselves.</p>
<p>How does this god communicate with mortals?</p> <p>Depending on their whims, a god can personally appear before mortals and communicate through prophets, dreams, signs and wonders, or avatars.</p>	<p>Astrya also takes a cue from Mortua when communicating with mortals, they also use dreams as a form of communication, though typically the dreams are more pleasant than neutral. Sometimes Astrya will also personally appear before mortals but prefers dreams so they can make their followers happier.</p>
<p>Where does this god spend the majority of their time? Are they the type to sit on a throne, bask in a glade, commands a thundering forge? Describe the markers of their realm.</p>	<p>Typically Astrya is one of the hardest gods to find because they spend the majority of their time floating around the universe and following the stars. They are described to be a dreamer by the other gods, so they opted to make a comforting area on one of the planets to watch the skies. (In truth this comforting area is basically a pillow fort filled with Astrya's favourite things: blankets, pillows, candles, and sweets.)</p>

<p>What object is connected to this god? It can be a tool, plant, food, or piece of clothing. This is something the god might hold, or their followers might use in a ceremony.</p>	<p>When Astrya was ‘born’ they were given a telescope that could see the farthest reaches of the universe, including the mortal realm. This led to depictions of them commonly holding this telescope and mortal followers getting tattoos that represent this tool.</p>
<p>How does this god prefer to be worshipped? Even gods who don't care for mortals have some idea of how to properly be honoured. Do they like dance, songs, prayers, silence, sacrifices?</p>	<p>Astrya prefers not to be worshipped if possible because of the stigma around their teachings, but this doesn't stop mortals from trying. Since Astrya doesn't have a specific preference, mortals have developed the tradition of leaving a burning candle next to a small plate of sweets in a secluded gazebo, and Astrya doesn't mind this one bit and enjoys it when it happens.</p>

What are this god's relationship to other gods?:

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Positive	Negative	Complicated
I am amused by Devredalm and wish to spend most of my time in their company to laugh.	Midla destroyed something I love, and they will pay.	Valeo wants to teach me, but I think they are a fool.
Mortrua is my deepest and truest love; there is no me without them.	I do not like the way Etrella treats me, but I believe I must endure it.	I love Eluqueake. If I could, I would be them.

Following:

Even gods that shun the mortal world have followers who carry their word, tend their domains, and honour their names. In many cases PCs will interact with a god's followers more often than they will with the god itself. To determine a god's following, first add their power, interest, and passion together. The resulting number is the faith this god inspires. Then roll a D10 for each column in the

following table. You may spend points from the faith pool to move results up or down one level for each point. A god's following is defined by loyalty, influence, and size, once you are satisfied or no longer have faith points to alter results.

Loyalty	Influence	Size
Almost every worshipper within the church has a genuine dedication to this god and their domain.	Even hinting that you follow this god loses your respect in both the mortal and divine realms. Any worshippers must keep their faith secret to function in society.	There is a small and dedicated group of followers loyal to this god and their domain.

(D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 56-74)

Appendix H: Game Summaries

Skyrim

Skyrim is a game that was released by Bethesda originally in 2011 but has been remastered and released in 2016 and 2021 to keep up with the game's popularity. *Skyrim* is set in time 200 years after the previous game and takes place in a province called Skyrim that is suffering after the High King has been killed, leaving the threat of civil war in his place. Through this, the player plays as a customizable character who learns that they are Dovahkiin, otherwise known as Dragonborn, a prophesied hero with the body of a mortal but the soul of a dragon. The role of the Dragonborn is to protect the land from the threat of the returning dragon by defeating the leader, Alduin the World-Eater, the Norse god of destruction. Throughout the player's journey to complete the prophecy of the Elder Scroll, they will go through trials and tribulations concerning the two sides of the civil war, a secret organisation of dragon hunters, and esteemed scholars trying to learn the ways of the dragon. Similar to the other games from the *Elder Scrolls* series, *Skyrim* continues the use of open-world exploration that allows players to travel wherever they want to in the world, completing quests at their rate and avoiding the main storyline almost indefinitely (Bethesda Game Studios; "Portal: Skyrim"; "The Elder Scrolls V").

The three quests that will be followed during the analysis are the main questline in which the player learns they are Dragonborn and how to use this power to defeat Alduin with the help of the Greybeards and the Blades; a side quest called 'Blood on the Ice' where the player has to solve the murders of mutilated women happening in the town of Windhelm; and a miscellaneous quest called 'Caught Red-handed' where the player must collect three marks of Dibella, the goddess of love, from men around Riften to confront a woman named Haelga about her promiscuity (Bethesda Game Studios; "Portal: Skyrim"; "The Elder Scrolls V").

Inquisition

Dragon Age: Inquisition is the third game from its series by BioWare and was released in 2014, with a re-release in 2015. The game starts with the player at the centre of an explosion, leaving them as the only survivor and the receiver of a special gift. The explosion caused a hole to be torn in the Veil, a barrier between the mortal world and the world of demons and spirits and imbued the player with the power to close the holes in the veil and protect the mortal realm (BioWare; "Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Dragon Age Wiki*; "Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Wikipedia*).

While no one is sure where the player's customizable character came from, they are named the Herald of Andraste and taken in by the remaining members of the Chantry, a religious organisation left leaderless in the previous game (BioWare; "Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Dragon Age Wiki*; "Dragon Age:

Inquisition” *Wikipedia*). Through this, as well as the ongoing battle between the mages and the Templars, a military-based unit, one of the Divine's last orders is invoked to re-establish the Inquisition, “an organisation originally formed to defend against the dangers of magic and heretics (“Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Wikipedia*).” This leads the player to become the Inquisition’s hero known as the Inquisitor and go on adventures to close the tears in the veil, which are being opened by Corypheus, an ancient Darkspawn mage and his dragon while learning what happened to the original protectors of the world the Grey Wardens, and dealing with the ongoing civil conflict that holds the key to defeating Corypheus once and for all (Bioware; “Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Dragon Age Wiki*; “Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Wikipedia*).

Inquisition is another form of open-world exploration that is divided into sections that players can explore freely. While this game requires some parts of the main questline to be completed before certain areas open, there are many ways to hold off on completion, allowing the players the choice to play (Bioware; “Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Dragon Age Wiki*; “Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Wikipedia*).

The three quests that will be followed during the analysis are the main questline explained above with the inclusion of solving puzzles and finding secret histories; a side quest called ‘Chateau d’Onterre,’ where the player tries to learn the secrets of the Chateau d’Onterre, a mansion abandoned under suspicious circumstances; and a miscellaneous quest called ‘Rift on Frozen Water,’ where the player is closing on of the rifts while battling the hordes of enemies that come through it (Bioware; “Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Dragon Age Wiki*; “Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Wikipedia*).

Wild Hunt

Wild Hunt is also the third game in its series by CD PROJEKT RED, which was initially released in 2015, then remastered and re-released in 2023 after numerous setbacks. In *Wild Hunt*, the player plays as Geralt of Rivia, a witcher, who is a trained monster hunter with magical abilities and military-like training. The story takes place many years after the previous games and follows Geralt as he tries to track down and protect his adopted daughter, Ciri. Ciri is what is known as a Source, a human born with vast magical abilities that can alter the understanding of the world (CD PROJEKT RED; “The Witcher 3” *The Official*; “The Witcher 3” *Wikipedia*).

Geralt went to Ciri after the death of her parents and trained her as a witcher. She was also allowed to be trained in magic by the sorcerer and lover of Geralt, Yennefer. Due to her abilities, Ciri disappeared years ago to escape from the Wild Hunt, which is a group of spectral warriors led by the King of the Wild Hunt, Eredin, who comes from a different dimension. The Hunt is now after Ciri again because the leader, Eredin, believes her blood is the only cure to save his world from catastrophe due to the White Frost, and everything depends on who lives or dies. While *Wild Hunt* is more structured than the other

games discussed, it still has an open-world exploration mechanic and is heavily based on Slavic mythology (CD PROJEKT RED; “The Witcher 3” *The Official*; “The Witcher 3” *Wikipedia*).

The three quests that will be used for the text analysis will be the main quest line that begins with Geralt needing to track down Ciri using the help of multiple people from his past and turns into a prolonged fight to protect his daughter from the clutches of the Wild Hunt. The secondary or side quest will be ‘Carnal Sins,’ where an NPC is attacked, and Geralt, with the help of the bard Dandelion, takes it upon themselves to investigate not only this attack but also all the similar ones to prevent any more death or harm, leading to an interesting side discovery, and the miscellaneous quest ‘Contract: Jenny o’ the Woods,’ where Geralt will need to find and defeat a night wraith that is terrorising people (CD PROJEKT RED; “The Witcher 3” *The Official*; “The Witcher 3” *Wikipedia*)..

Appendix I: Skyrim Quest Tagging

Caught Red Handed (Misc)

Description

“Caught Red Handed is a quest available in The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim in which the Dragonborn must retrieve three Marks of Dibella from men in Riften to use to confront Haelga, a worshipper of Dibella, for Svana Far-Shield (“Portal: Skyrim”).”.

Part of the Opening Line

"Do you know she's slept with three different men in the last month alone? What kind of woman would do such a thing? Just for once, I'd like to see her squirm... to rub her nose in it.

—Svana Far-Shield (“Portal: Skyrim”)”

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary World	(The Dragonborn has been travelling around Skyrim, to find information to aid in the main questline.)
Call to Adventure	When Haelga's Bunkhouse is visited in Riften, talking to Svana Far-Shield reveals that she thinks her aunt is a "disgusting woman," and would like to get some revenge on her.
Refusal of the Call	If the Dragonborn agrees to her proposition (refusal usually does not occur)
Meeting the Mentor	Svana will tell them to get three Marks of Dibella from Haelga's lovers to "make her squirm." (Svana is less of a mentor and more a quest giver)
Crossing the First Threshold	This starts the next part of the quest, where the Dragonborn must talk to Bolli, Hofgrir Horse-Crusher, and Indaryn.
Tests, Allies, Enemies	In order to get the three Marks of Dibella, the men can be persuaded or intimidated, though to convince Bolli and Indaryn, a Speech skill of 50 is needed for the skill checks to succeed, while Hofgrir only needs a Speech of 25 to be convinced to give up his Mark. Bolli can generally be found in the Marketplace during the day, wandering around and examining the wares of the shopkeepers; Indaryn will be found in the Black-Briar Meadery, and Hofgrir is at the Riften Stables. Alternatively, their Marks can be pickpocketed. Killing any of them for

	the Marks will cause the quest to fail immediately.
Innermost Cave	Once all three Marks of Dibella are retrieved, return to Haelga's Bunkhouse and show them to Haelga. She does not want anyone else to know about her activities and will give a bribe to keep the Dragonborn quiet.
Ordeal	At this point, tell Svana that her aunt was confronted with the Marks. She is grateful for the help
Reward	and will give a random enchanted armour or weapon to them as a reward.
The Road Back	N/A
Resurrection	N/A
Return the Elixir	(Dragonborn returns to questing and exploring)

("Portal: Skyrim")

Blood on the Ice (Side)

Description

"Blood on the Ice is a quest available in The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim, in which the Dragonborn must investigate a series of murders in the city of Windhelm that has seen several young women dead and mutilated ("Portal: Skyrim")."

Part of the Opening Line

"Windhelm is plagued by a shadowy killer. I've been asked to help investigate the latest murder ("Portal: Skyrim")."

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary World	The Dragonborn will encounter a murder scene at night, between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM; several bystanders and a guard stand around the corpse of Susanna the Wicked atop a burial slab in the graveyard of the city.
Call to Adventure	The guard will approach the Dragonborn, telling them to keep their distance from the scene.

	After asking what happened and offering to help investigate, the quest will begin.
Refusal of the Call	(refusal usually does not occur)
Meeting the Mentor	As the guard directed, the Dragonborn should ask the witnesses gathered around the body if they saw anything. The witnesses include Calixto Corrium, Silda the Unseen, and Helgird.
Crossing the First Threshold	<p>After the Dragonborn has spoken to all three of the witnesses, they should speak again to the guard at the scene of the murder. (Who will direct them to speak to the steward, Jorleif)</p> <p>Once the Dragonborn has received permission from Jorleif to investigate the murders, the guards will assist the Dragonborn by providing advice and hints that will lead to the advancement of the quest. Upon returning to the guard at the crime scene, the body of Susanna will be gone and the guard will render assistance.</p>
Tests, Allies, Enemies	<p>Hall of the Dead</p> <p>Talking to Helgird here will reveal that the lacerations on the bodies of the victims were unmistakably caused by curved blades indicative of ancient Nordic embalming tools. Despite Helgird being the only person to obviously possess ancient Nord embalming tools, she insists that she had nothing to do with the murders. This indicates that the murderer also possesses such tools.</p> <p>Following the blood trail</p> <p>A trail of blood leads away from the crime scene and up to the upper residential level of the city. The Dragonborn can proceed to follow the trail of blood leading from the cemetery to Hjerim, a manor to the northwest. Approaching the door will complete the "Examine the crime scene" objective and remove the marker over the tomb near where the victim was found. The manor is master-locked and can be opened if the Dragonborn successfully lockpicks the door or by retrieving the key. Speaking to a guard will reveal that the only person with a key to the house is Friga Shatter-Shield's mother, Tova Shatter-Shield, as the house once belonged to her daughter before she was murdered by the Butcher.</p> <p>The Dragonborn does not need to talk to a guard before speaking with Tova, and</p>

	<p>can go straight to her instead. The Dragonborn, if skilled enough, can pickpocket the key from Tova directly or can just speak with her to gain access to the house.</p>
Innermost Cave	<p>When the Dragonborn enters Hjerim, they will need to investigate the seemingly abandoned property, including the furniture. Upon inspecting various elements throughout the house, it will become obvious that the house is not, in fact, abandoned, but has been recently accessed. They can investigate the following, yielding individual observations for each:</p> <p>Investigate Mead: From the dust, these look left over from when the previous occupant moved out.</p> <p>Investigate Chest: From the marks on the floor, it looks like this box was pushed against the wall recently.</p> <p>Investigate Pots and Pans: These haven't been used for ages. Nothing but skeever droppings and cobwebs inside.</p> <p>Investigate Bed and Chairs: The chair is stacked on the bed in an odd fashion.</p> <p>Investigate Wardrobe: This perfectly good wardrobe was left behind for some reason.</p> <p>Investigate Small Shelf: This shelf is filled with more of those "Butcher" fliers from around the city. One pile looks misshapen.</p> <p>Investigate Wardrobe: This wardrobe seems to be nailed to the wall for some reason.</p> <p>Investigate Altar: This altar is built to unknown magic. It looks like someone is using body parts towards some gruesome end.</p> <p>The bloody chest against the wall of the left of the entrance contains Butcher Journal 1, which details some of the Butcher's activities. In the northwest room of the first floor lie two wardrobes and a small shelf. On the shelf in this room is a stack of pamphlets entitled, "Beware the Butcher!" by Viola Giordano; obscured underneath these is an amulet with a jade carving of a skull, marked as, "Strange Amulet." The wardrobe on the right has a false back panel that hides a secret room, which contains an altar for the purposes of necromantic magic; also inside are bloody remains and Butcher Journal 2, the second half of the Butcher's personal details of his murderous activities.</p>

	<p>If the Dragonborn chooses not retrieve the Butcher's second journal, they can speak to Viola Giordano, the author of the pamphlets, who can assist the Dragonborn in investigating Hjerim further.</p> <p>Alternatively, if the Dragonborn has already investigated Hjerim and found the second journal, talking to Viola afterwards and showing her the journal will also result in her suspecting Wuunferth and telling the Dragonborn to talk to the steward about him.</p> <p>Appraising the Strange Amulet</p> <p>The Dragonborn can then go straight to Jorleif and accuse Wuunferth the Unliving of being the Butcher, or confront Wuunferth themselves. Alternatively, the Dragonborn, after recovering the Strange Amulet, can ask a guard about it, in which they will direct them to Calixto, the curator of Calixto's House of Curiosities</p> <p>Confronting Wuunferth</p> <p>Now, the Dragonborn must choose to speak to Jorleif or directly accuse Wuunferth.</p>
Ordeal	<p>Speaking to Jorleif First</p> <p>The Dragonborn can decide to go to Jorleif and tell him that the Butcher is Wuunferth, the court wizard.</p> <p>Wuunferth will now be imprisoned in the Windhelm Barracks, to which the guard will curtly say, "In you go," before closing and locking the cell.</p> <p>Speaking to Wuunferth First</p> <p>Alternatively, the Dragonborn may approach Wuunferth immediately and accuse him of necromancy as well as the murders.</p> <p>Speaking directly with Wuunferth instead of having him arrested results in a similar conversation with the Dragonborn, also directing them to keep watch in the Stone Quarter at night. The Dragonborn can then proceed with the quest without having to wait for the next victim and wrongfully imprisoning Wuunferth.</p>
Reward	<p>Wuunferth will now be imprisoned in the Windhelm Barracks, to which the guard will curtly say, "In you go," before closing and locking the cell. (One possibility)</p> <p>Speaking directly with Wuunferth instead of having him arrested results in a similar conversation with the Dragonborn, also directing them to keep watch in</p>

	<p>the Stone Quarter at night. The Dragonborn can then proceed with the quest without having to wait for the next victim and wrongfully imprisoning Wuunferth. (Second possibility)</p>
The Road Back	<p>With the quest complete, Windhelm appears safe once again; however, following a period of three days, the body of a young female with similar cuts to the previous victims will appear outside of Candlehearth Hall.</p>
Resurrection	<p>Wuunferth will reveal that he had been tracking the killer before he was arrested; on this note, he is able to determine when and where the Butcher will strike next according to the journals. The mage predicts that the next murder will occur within the next day or so; the Dragonborn must now patrol the Stone Quarter at night to catch the Butcher before he can strike again.</p> <p>Regardless of the earlier paths taken, the Dragonborn finds themselves in the Stone Quarter in order to thwart the Butcher once and for all. In the markets in the southwest corner of the city, the killer will strike again; the Dragonborn should be ready to act immediately if they wish to save the next victim.</p> <p>Calixto Corrium will be present in the market; however, unlike the other characters in the area, he will simply stand around and not interact with anyone. Soon, one of the following will walk into the Stone Quarter: Nilsine Shatter-Shield, Jora, Hermir Strong-Heart, Idesa Sadri, or Arivanya; if Wuunferth was not accused of being the Butcher, then Arivanya will always be the victim. Suddenly, the target will begin shouting for help as Calixto draws a knife and slowly approaches his next victim, revealing himself to be the Butcher.</p> <p>Despite this display, the guards will not react, and so it is up to the Dragonborn. Without incurring a bounty, they may attack and kill Calixto at any time, including before he draws his knife, when he is approaching his victim, and after he has killed her.</p> <p>If Calixto is able to kill his victim, he will make his escape and proceed to run to Hjerim and into the secret room there. Entering will result in the Dragonborn being attacked; Calixto cannot be detained, and the quest will only progress once he has been killed.</p>

Return the Elixir	Once the deed is done, the Dragonborn should then speak with Jorleif to confirm that the Butcher has been stopped.
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("Portal: Skyrim")

Skyrim Main Quest

Description

"Two hundred years have passed since the Oblivion Crisis, and it is now the year 4E 201. The High King of Skyrim lies dead, killed by Ulfric Stormcloak in a duel. A Civil War rages in the land. A rebel faction known as the Stormcloaks wishes for Skyrim to secede from the Empire. However, their cause is not supported by all of the land's people and leaders; many still support the Imperial Army. The war has reached a stalemate. This schism is the final event in a prophecy of the Elder Scrolls. It is foretold that this conflict will lead to the return of the Dragons, led by Alduin, the Nordic God of Destruction, also known as the World-Eater ("Portal: Skyrim")."

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	Unbound - Escape the village of Helgen, which is under attack by Alduin.
Call to Adventure	Before the Storm - Journey to Whiterun and speak with Jarl Balgruuf about the dragon attack. Bleak Falls Barrow - Delve into an Ancient Nordic Ruins to recover the Dragonstone, a map of dragon burial sites. Dragon Rising - Fight and kill your first Dragon at the Western Watchtower.
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	The Way of the Voice - Journey to High Hrothgar and meet with the mysterious Greybeards.
Crossing the First Threshold	The Horn of Jurgen Windcaller - Journey to a set of Ancient Nordic Ruins to recover the horn of the Greybeards' founder.
Tests, Allies, Enemies	A Blade in the Dark - Meet with Delphine, One of the last survivors of the Blades and learn more about the Dragon threat. Diplomatic Immunity - Infiltrate the Thalmor Embassy to find out what the

	<p>Aldmeri Dominion knows about the Dragons.</p> <p>A Cornered Rat - Journey through the Ratway of Riften to find the other member of the Blades before the Thalmor do.</p> <p>Alduin's Wall - Journey to Sky Haven Temple with the Blades to learn the secret of Alduin's Wall.</p>
Innermost Cave	<p>The Throat of the World - Meet with the leader of the Greybeards, the dragon Paarthurnax, to learn how to defeat Alduin.</p> <p>Elder Knowledge - Delve into Blackreach in search of one of the fabled Elder Scrolls to learn the shout needed to defeat Alduin.</p>
Ordeal	<p>Alduin's Bane - Battle Alduin with Paarthurnax at the top of the Throat of the World.</p>
Reward	<p>The Fallen - Prepare a trap for Odahviing, the right-hand dragon of Alduin, at Dragonsreach.</p>
The Road Back	<p>The World-Eater's Eyrie - Pursue Alduin through an Ancient Dragon Temple to the realm of Sovngarde.</p> <p>Sovngarde - Journey through Sovngarde to the Hall of Valor to enlist the help of three ancient heroes to fight Alduin.</p>
Resurrection	<p>Dragonslayer - Destroy Alduin and end his threat to Tamriel.</p>
Return the Elixir	<p>Epilogue - Return to Nirn and reap the rewards of your triumph.</p>

Not included due to exceptions

Season Unending - Negotiate a peace treaty between the Imperial Legion and the Stormcloaks.

Paarthurnax - Kill Paarthurnax for the Blades.

("Portal:Skyrim")

Appendix J: Dragon Age: Inquisition Quest Tagging

Rift on Frozen Water (Misc)

Description

“An active Fade rift has been spotted on Elfsblood River just outside Sahrnia (“Dragon Age: Inquisition” *Dragon Age Wiki*).”

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	(The Inquisitor has been travelling around, to find information to aid in the main questline.)
Call to Adventure	Automatically obtained when the Inquisitor first travels to Emprise du Lion.
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	N/A
Crossing the First Threshold	(Arriving at the North of the Sahrnia Inquisition Camp, on the frozen river)
Tests, Allies, Enemies	Option 1: Wave 1: Despair demon (1), Wraith (5) Option 2: Wave 1: Greater Shade (6) Option 3: Wave 1: Pride demon (1), Greater Terror (2) Option 4: Wave 1: Pride demon (1), Rage demon (1)
Innermost Cave	N/A
Ordeal	Option 1: Wave 2: Despair demon (3), Wraith (3) Option 2: Wave 2: Greater Terror (2), Greater Shade (4)

	Option 3: Wave 2: Pride demon (1), Despair demon (2), Lesser Terror (2) Option 4: Wave 2: Pride demon (1), Rage demon (1), Wraith (4)
Reward	Closing the rift yields: 1,324 XP Influence 600 Power 2
The Road Back	N/A
Resurrection	N/A
Return the Elixir	(The Inquisitor returns to questing and exploring)

("Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Dragon Age Wiki*)

Chateau d'Onterre (Side)

Description

"What exactly happened in the long-abandoned Chateau d'Onterre is a bit of a mystery. Perhaps exploring its darkest corners will uncover some truth—or treasures ("Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Dragon Age Wiki*)."

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	(The Inquisitor has been travelling around, to find information to aid in the main questline.)
Call to Adventure	Obtained by entering Chateau d'Onterre. (The Inquisitor is lead to the Emerald Graves through a different side quest, where they can stumble upon and enter Chateau d'Onterre)
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	N/A

Crossing the First Threshold	Head to the Formal Gardens (the area located in the centre of the ground level) and use the search function to find Codex entry: Sketch I of Chateau d'Onterre Interior which identifies the next location you need to find to solve the mystery of Chateau d'Onterre. The location of Sketch I is identified on the Sketch of Chateau Courtyard if you have previously found this.
Tests, Allies, Enemies	<p>Undead will start to spawn and will increase in number as you progress the quest. You will also find notes and diary entries that will allow you to piece together the story behind what happened at the Chateau.</p> <p>Return to the Gallery (bottom right of the ground level) and head up the main staircase. Turn around to find the bust statue overlooking the staircase. Interact with the statue to find the next clue, Codex entry: Sketch II of Chateau d'Onterre Interior.</p> <p>Head west through the Library and north into the Bedchambers hallway then into the second bedchamber on the left. Interact with the painting to retrieve Codex entry: Sketch III of Chateau d'Onterre Interior. Retrace your steps back down the gallery staircase and up the stairs past the Servant's Quarters (top left side of the map).</p>
Innermost Cave	Through the Antechamber you'll find the upper level of the Ballroom and the next part of the puzzle under the lion's head statue on the other side of the dragon bones. Interacting with it will cause the dragon's tail to straighten. A note and a balcony key will be found there.
Ordeal	Unlock the balcony on the bottom right side, defeat the undead and access the room behind the locked door to loot some notable items.
Reward	Interact with the glowing box to gain a permanent increase of +10 to the Cunning attribute of the character interacting with it.
The Road Back	An Arcane Horror will spawn in the Formal Gardens below.
Resurrection	Defeat the demon to complete the quest.

Return the Elixir	(The Inquisitor returns to questing and exploring)
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("Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Dragon Age Wiki*)

Dragon Age: Inquisition Main Quest

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	The Wrath of Heaven- It follows a lone survivor's involvement surrounding a mysterious explosion that occurs at the Temple of Sacred Ashes, located in the outskirts of the nearby village of Haven, and their journey to discover the truth.
Call to Adventure	The Threat Remains- The Herald awakens in a small house to a young elven woman bringing in medical supplies. Startled, she drops the supplies and apologises profusely.
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	She says that Cassandra wanted the Herald to go to the Chantry immediately after waking up then runs off.
Crossing the First Threshold	(Out of Order) In Your Heart Shall Burn- Featuring the Herald closing the Breach with help from either the mages or templars. Although seemingly a successful operation, the events later in the mission take an unexpected turn as Haven is attacked by unknown enemy forces.
Tests, Allies, Enemies	In Hushed Whispers- Redcliffe Castle and the mages who could close the Breach are under the control of Magister Gereon Alexius, a Venatori cultist with an unhealthy interest in the Inquisitor and the power to reorder time itself. He has "kindly" invited the Inquisitor to the castle - alone - to negotiate. It's an obvious trap, but Leliana and her agents can infiltrate the castle and remove the Venatori threat while Alexius's attention is diverted. A dangerous game, but it's our best chance.

	Champions of the Just- Leliana and Josephine have been working tirelessly to convince, coerce, and win over some of Orlais' most influential houses. Ten noble families will help the Inquisition pressure the templars into sealing the Breach, travelling to Therinfal Redoubt and demanding the Lord Seeker deal with them or face the wrath of Orlais. The Inquisition has promised the Herald of Andraste as its voice in these negotiations.
Innermost Cave	From the Ashes- As the Inquisitor arrives at Skyhold, several new quests open up, including this one. This is a short quest, pointing out the next course of action for the Inquisition.
Ordeal	Wicked Eyes and Wicked Hearts- The fate of Empress Celene, and in turn, all of Orlais, has been threatened. The Inquisition must intervene./Upon the Inquisition's arrival at the Winter Palace in Halamshiral, the Inquisitor is greeted by Grand Duke Gaspard de Chalons at the exterior entrance. Gaspard informs the Inquisitor that he believes Briala intends to disrupt the negotiations.
Reward	(Out of Order) Here Lies the Abyss- Varric has a friend named Hawke, who fought Corypheus once before and now fears Grey Wardens are under the influence of the ancient darkspawn. Hawke has a Warden contact who may be able to say more.
The Road Back	What Pride Had Wrought- The Inquisition's efforts have weakened Corypheus' attempts to stir unrest in Thedas. Now is the ideal time to strike. Consult the advisors to plan the next move. The Final Piece- Morrigan wishes to talk. She has a plan to counter Corypheus and his dragon. (Multiple paths)
Resurrection	Doom Upon All the World- It is time to prepare for the final confrontation with Corypheus.
Return the Elixir	

("Dragon Age: Inquisition" *Dragon Age Wiki*)

Appendix K: The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt Quest Tagging

Jenny o' the Woods (Misc)

Description

“Contract: Jenny o' the Woods is a contract quest in The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt. Despite the official suggested level of 10, this quest can prove a bit of a challenge to some, so waiting for level 15 is wiser (“The Witcher 3” *The Official*).”

Opening Line

“Hark!

Some devilry's taken hold of our fields, something neither spirit nor phantom. Old Wil swears on his mother's grave it's like to be Jenny o' the Woods. Whether it is or it ain't, be careful and don't go into the fields alone, and most certainly not without scythe or rake in hand.

But if you've the courage to drive the foul thing off, you'll receive a handsome reward.

- Bolko, ealdorman of Midcopse (“The Witcher 3” *The Official*)”

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	(The Witcher is exploring the world)
Call to Adventure	This quest can only be picked up by getting the notice, so get it off Midcopse's notice board, then go speak to the ealdorman about it. He'll eventually direct you to speak to Agneta ...
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	...who didn't see Jenny o' the Woods as she ran as soon as she appeared, but she does mention that she appeared after twilight.
Crossing the First Threshold	With this in mind, head out to the fields and use your Witcher Senses to find a torn piece of fabric and someone's tracks.
Tests, Allies, Enemies	With this in mind, head out to the fields and use your Witcher Senses to find a torn piece of fabric and someone's tracks. Follow them until you find a pool of blood and examine it to find the assassin's knife. Now follow the new trail until you reach the end: a shallow grave with a letter. With this, read the letter (earning 25 XP earned based

	on the Story and Swords! difficulty level)
Innermost Cave	head back to the ealdorman to ask about the names in the letter and he'll conclude the murdered woman, Zula, is the nightwraith. He'll then point you to the other end of the fields as one possible meeting spot that the young lovers went to.
Ordeal	<p>Head back out to find a small campfire at the other end. To start, you need to interact with the fire here, but if it's not night time (9 pm or later), you'll be given the option to meditate ahead to night. The nightwraith will then appear and the fight begins.</p> <p>Note that she can be difficult to fight for the unprepared. Like most wraiths, you will need to use Yrden to be able to hit her. She'll also occasionally disappear and 3 regular nightwraiths appear. Take them out quickly (1 hit should suffice) as Jenny will refill her health during this time if they get close to you, so the longer you take, the more health she regains.</p>
Reward	Once Jenny is defeated, loot the remains for the nightwraith trophy and Forgotten Vran Sword, then head back to the ealdorman for your reward and to complete the quest, earning 240 XP and 179 Oren.
The Road Back	N/A
Resurrection	N/A
Return the Elixir	(The Witcher returns to exploring)

("The Witcher 3" *The Official*)

Carnal Sins

Description

"Carnal Sins is a secondary quest in The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt ("The Witcher 3" *The Official*)."

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	(The Witcher is exploring the world)
Call to Adventure	After talking to Dandelion in The Chameleon, a messenger from Vilmerius Hospital bursts through the door, informing you that Priscilla has been attacked. Dandelion asks you to accompany him to the hospital.
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	The Hospital Upon arriving, Geralt and Dandelion find Priscilla in a terrible state, being tended to by the head doctor Joachim von Gratz. He discusses Priscilla's state, saying that she is critical, but expected to live; however she is not the first victim of this style of attack, as others were killed in similar fashion. He then mentions his idea of 'preventive medicine', suggesting that he and Geralt go to the morgue to see the previous victim's body.
Crossing the First Threshold	The Sewers and The Morgue Follow von Gratz through the sewers and fight off several drowners and a water hag. During the journey, Geralt and Joachim discuss how he tries to prevent attacks from happening in the first place. He also mentions that whilst he believes Priscilla is certain to survive, he fears for her singing voice.
Tests, Allies, Enemies	At the morgue, you need to search for a dwarven carpenter's corpse, found in the nearest room after you climb the ladder, though Joachim leads you to the other one. When you do find it, a small cutscene will begin and you can then examine his body to find evidence of the killer's M.O. before you are interrupted by the coroner, Hubert Rejk. He and Joachim have history, and they are not fond of each other. Pay attention to the dialogue, as it provides a subtle clue. As the conversation ends, Nathaniel Pastodi enters and

	<p>insists that you leave, while Hubert covers for you and then agrees to update you on any news. On the way out, Joachim mentions that the reverend used to be a torturer for the Eternal Fire before he was promoted to reverend. Joachim then leaves to attend to Priscilla while you go search for more clues.</p> <p>You now have three places to investigate: the location where Priscilla was attacked, the site of the woodcarver's murder, and Eustace the corpse collector. These can be investigated in any order. It is important to note that once you have completed any two of the locations, approaching the third location will have a guard approach Geralt to tell him that there has been another murder and the coroner wants to speak to him as soon as possible. The entire quest is directed to provide a sense of urgency, but nothing hangs on this - you can investigate all three spots.</p> <p>Investigate the site of Priscilla's attack</p> <p>Upon arrival, you will see some peasants and a prostitute called Whistling Wendy who walks away from you if approached. Eventually, the gate you entered through is closed and the three peasants attack you in a fistfight. Knock them out and then speak to Wendy, who believed you may have been the killer and she wanted to avenge Priscilla. As you search for clues, the objective for this location will complete, but continue examining until you find that the killer jumped over a wall too high even for a witcher. There is also a Concerned Citizen's sermon attached to the wall. You can speak to Wendy again for an additional conversation choice and to let her know what happened. Then head for the next objective.</p> <p>Investigate the site of the Woodcarver's murder</p> <p>Approach the closed door and knock. A voice from the other side will question you and then the woodcarver's brother Gus Meyer will let you in. Speak to him and then search for clues in the yard. Another Concerned Citizen's sermon will be found in the area. After finding all of the clues outside, either ask Gus to let you into the workshop or just try to enter and he'll unlock it for Geralt. After investigating</p>
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	<p>all of the clues in this area, you can speak to him again if you wish. An additional conversation choice will appear allowing Geralt to tell Gus what likely happened to his brother. If you don't have a new conversation choice, then there are still items to investigate. There is a very subtle clue here, particularly related to the blood stain, but Geralt will only mention it to himself and not while talking to the dwarf.</p> <p>Speak with Eustace</p> <p>Eustace is the corpse collector, who is rather blunt about his profession and disrespectful towards the corpses. You can loosen his tongue by either paying him 200 Oren3.png (20XP earned based on the Story and Swords! difficulty level) or using Axii (requires Delusion level 2 for a minimum of 35XP earned based on the Story and Swords! difficulty level), threatening won't achieve anything. However, he does reveal that inside the dwarf's body there was a note naming Priscilla as his next victim, which he kept to sell instead of providing it as evidence. You can choose to punch him or just walk away in disgust.</p>
Innermost Cave	<p>Return to the Coroner</p> <p>Speak to the coroner and you can ask some questions that raise some suspicious about Hubert, especially if you've paid attention so far. Then you can look over the body and Hubert will find a note indicating the next victim - Patricia Vogelbud. Head over to the Vogelbud Residence.</p>
Ordeal	<p>The Vogelbud Residence</p> <p>When you are allowed in by the guard, Ingrid Vogelbud will welcome you and take you to her mother's room, whilst mentioning that Patricia has denounced the Eternal Fire faith. On entering her room, you find Patricia murdered and the killer fleeing. Chase him (ignore the hostile dogs), until the guards mistake you for the killer and you are forced to fight them.</p>
Reward	<p>When you cut one down to almost dead, a cutscene will trigger and they lead you back into the house. Ingrid will then defend you and</p>

	allow you to search Patricia's body, where you will find a note with the final victim - Sweet Nettie of Crippled Kate's.
The Road Back	<p>Crippled Kate's</p> <p>Enter the brothel and you'll be told that Sweet Nettie is on the top floor. When you burst into her room, you find her tied up, gagged and about to be tortured by Reverend Nathaniel. You can choose to immediately attack him or talk first. Hearing him out will reveal that while he is sick and perverse, he is not the serial killer. You then realise that the coroner, Hubert, the coroner is the real murderer. Sweet Nettie will plead for your help, and you can choose to either kill Nathaniel (100XP earned based on the Story and Swords! difficulty level), use Axii (requires Delusion level 3; 40XP earned based on the Story and Swords! difficulty level) to make him leave, or leave him to his twisted desires. If you do not kill Nathaniel, you will miss the chance to loot the unique poker he is using to burn Sweet Nettie.</p>
Resurrection	<p>The Warehouse</p> <p>If you got the truth out of Nathaniel, head to the warehouse by the docks and find Hubert inside. After a bit of talk, Hubert will then reveal himself to be a vampire and will fight you in the form of a katan. After defeating him (500XP earned based on the Story and Swords! difficulty level), loot his corpse for Dearthdeith and a Katan mutagen.</p>
Return the Elixir	<p>Return To The Hospital</p> <p>Head back to the hospital. Priscilla is recovering and Joachim says that she will definitely survive and her voice isn't expected to be severely damaged. Dandelion thanks you and then says that for now, they will perform as him providing vocals and her playing the lute until her voice recovers. The quest will then end.</p>

("The Witcher 3" *The Official*)

The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt Main Quest

The Hero's Journey

Step	Example
Ordinary world	Kaer Morhen Lilac and Gooseberries The Beast of White Orchard The Incident at White Orchard
Call to Adventure	Imperial Audience
Refusal of the Call	N/A
Meeting the Mentor	The Nilfgaardian Connection Bloody Baron
Crossing the First Threshold	Ciri's Story: The King of the Wolves Family Matters A Princess in Distress
Tests, Allies, Enemies	Ciri's Story: The Race Ciri's Story: Out of the Shadows Hunting a Witch Wandering in the Dark Ladies of the Wood The Whispering Hillock Ciri's Story: Fleeing the Bog Pyres of Novigrad Novigrad Dreaming Broken Flowers Get Junior Ciri's Story: Visiting Junior Count Reuven's Treasure A Favour for Radovid The Play's the Thing A Poet Under Pressure Ciri's Story: Breakneck Speed Destination: Skellige

	The King is Dead - Long Live the King Echoes of the Past Missing Persons Nameless The Calm Before the Storm A Mysterious Passenger Ugly Baby Disturbance To Bait a Forktail... The Final Trial No Place Like Home Va Fail, Elaine Brothers In Arms: Velen Brothers In Arms: Novigrad Brothers In Arms: Skellige Brothers In Arms: Nilfgaard
Innermost Cave	The Isle of Mists
Ordeal	The Battle of Kaer Morhen
Reward	Blood on the Battlefield
The Road Back	Bald Mountain Final Preparations Blindingly Obvious The Great Escape Payback Through Time and Space Battle Preparations The Sunstone Veni Vidi Vigo Child of the Elder Blood Skjall's Grave
Resurrection	On Thin Ice
Return the Elixir	Tedd Deireadh, The Final Age

	Something Ends, Something Begins
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("The Witcher 3" *The Official*)

Appendix L: Making Magic- pg. 27-56
(D'Amato, *World Building Guide* 27-56)

The Six Aspects of Magic

Source

This determines where magic comes from. Magic can come from objects of power or sacred sites; it can stem from the will of living and thinking creatures, be captured in a scroll or book, or exist in all things at all times. Sources also have a hand in determining what the practitioners of magic value, their aesthetics, and how they spend their time.

Cost

Cost puts critical limitations on magic. Magic is a creative tool for players, and it can absolutely help them do whatever they want. However, if there is no cost for using magic, it takes tension away from the story. The cost of magic can be expressed physically, as in exhaustion, bleeding, and scars. It can be personal and metaphysical like corruption of the soul, shifts in emotion, or shortening of a life span. Cost can also take the form of external resources like magical ingredients, sacrifices, and even gold.

Potency

This helps you outline what affects the strength and effectiveness of magic. Some paths progress with the knowledge and skill of the practitioner, others depend on materials and equipment, and some are driven by environment and circumstance.

Commonality and accessibility

These are two different but related aspects. Together they shape who understands, controls, and uses magic in a setting. This lets your PCs know what expectations the world has of them and how open they can be about their abilities. It also tells you how much society may have developed differently because of the presence of magic.

Commonality determines how integrated into society a type of magic is. Some systems of magic are parts of everyday life, and some appear only for special occasions; some are available only to privileged classes, and some are hidden away in secret schools or exist only in story and memory.

Accessibility determines how easy it is for people to actually practise a type of magic. Some magic is available only to people born with special power. Other forms can be taught via various routes ranging from public education to specialised cloistered guilds. And some magic is available to virtually everyone to some degree.

Pillars of Mastery

The source, cost, and potency of magic tell you how spells are cast and to what effect. Mastery tells you what separates a novice from a master of a particular style. It defines what the path of learning magic looks like. It's important to understand mastery because one or more of your PCs will likely be following a path to mastery for their chosen traditions. The path to mastery has a basic structure for character narratives built in. It also defines the path powerful practitioners in your world have tread to get where they are- which can have a dramatic effect on their personalities.

Paths of Magic

Scientific

Scientific systems of magic represent the power of understanding and discovery. Characters who use scientific magic follow established processes to achieve repeatable results. These systems tend to look like alternative versions of real-world scientific disciplines involving similar methods like measurement, observation, and calculation.

Source: Scientific magic is unique in that it is the result of the interaction of natural forces. Like science itself, certain disciplines of scientific magic are applications of lessons derived from other disciplines. When considering sources, try drawing inspiration from real-world scientific disciplines.	Attributes	Specifics
Chemistry: Achieving magical effects through mixing elements and chemicals. Alchemy is a great example of scientific magic.	Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expense: Materials and tools used to practise this magic are rare or valuable, calling for many resources to practise properly.• Time: Effects of this magic are not instantaneous. They involve lengthy periods of distillation, treatment, and

		other techniques to work properly.
	Potency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material quality: Ingredients vary quality. The better your materials, the stronger the effects. • Material validity: The more unstable and dangerous your materials, the stronger their effect.
	Commonality and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as fact • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is a normal part of everyday life • Who can use this magic?: Privileged people (common) • Is this magic considered acceptable?: Yes • Is this magic respected?: Yes, in certain contexts • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: Yes, it is taught. By what entity? • Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: No
	Mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is more respected: innovators or educators?: Innovators • Can a person become a master through scholarship without practical experience?: No • Is any aspect of this magic

		still theoretical?: Yes
Physics: Magic that manipulates the interaction between objects and forces. This adds new laws to thermodynamics and creates new possibilities.	Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time: Effects of this magic are not instantaneous. They involve lengthy periods of distillation, treatment, and other techniques to work properly. • Complexity: Even working with exact methods, there are variables that are difficult to account for and can corrupt the process if they are overlooked.
	Potency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precision: The more exact and meticulous a practitioner is, the greater the effects they are able to achieve. • Scale: Simply practising your magic on a larger scale increases its power.
	Commonality and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as fact • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is a normal part of everyday life • Who can use this magic?: Privileged people (common) • Is this magic considered acceptable?: Yes • Is this magic respected?: Yes, in certain contexts

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: Yes, it is taught. By what entity? • Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: No
	Mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is more respected: innovators or educators?: Educators • Can a person become a master through scholarship without practical experience?: Yes • Is any aspect of this magic still theoretical?: Yes
Biology: Understanding and manipulating the properties of living things to achieve magical effects. Breeding magical plants and animals to create useful by-products.	Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expense: Materials and tools used to practise this magic are rare or valuable, calling for many resources to practise properly. • Waste: Use of this magic creates waste that is unpleasant or harmful, and disposing of it properly is a hassle.
	Potency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale: Simply practising your magic on a larger scale increases its power. • Complexity: The more elaborate your process, the greater your potential output.
	Commonality and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as fact

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is a normal part of everyday life • Who can use this magic?: Privileged people (common) • Is this magic considered acceptable?: Yes • Is this magic respected?: Yes, in certain contexts • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: Yes, it is taught. By what entity? • Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: No
	Mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is more respected: innovators or educators?: Educators • Can a person become a master through scholarship without practical experience?: No • Is any aspect of this magic still theoretical?: Yes
Engineering: Creating complex systems of interactions to build new tools. This usually depends on the interaction of several types of scientific magic.	Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precision: This kind of magic requires precise calculations, and errors can be disastrous. • Time: Effects of this magic are not instantaneous. They involve lengthy periods of distillation, treatment, and other techniques to work properly.
	Potency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precision: The more exact

		<p>and meticulous a practitioner is, the greater the effects they are able to achieve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material quality: Ingredients vary quality. The better your materials, the stronger the effects.
	Commonality and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as fact • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is a normal part of everyday life • Who can use this magic?: Privileged people (common) • Is this magic considered acceptable?: Yes • Is this magic respected?: Yes, in certain contexts • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: Yes, it is taught. By what entity? • Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: No
	Mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is more respected: innovators or educators?: Innovators • Can a person become a master through scholarship without practical experience?: Yes • Is any aspect of this magic still theoretical? Yes
Astronomy: Tracking an	Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precision: This kind of

<p>understanding of heavenly bodies to manipulate or understand the world characters live in. Astrology is a great example of this.</p>		<p>magic requires precise calculations, and errors can be disastrous.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity: Even working with exact methods, there are variables that are difficult to account for and can corrupt the process if they are overlooked.
	Potency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material validity: The more unstable and dangerous your materials, the stronger their effect. • Complexity: The more elaborate your process, the greater your potential output.
	Commonality and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as stories or rumour • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is normal only for certain people • Who can use this magic?: Privileged people (rare) • Is this magic considered acceptable?: No, it must be hidden • Is this magic respected?: No, with the exception of a few places • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: Yes, it is regulated. By the government and societal

		stigma. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: Yes, to keep practitioners safe
	Mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is more respected: innovators or educators?: Innovators Can a person become a master through scholarship without practical experience?: No Is any aspect of this magic still theoretical?: Yes

Legendary

Legendary magic is an expression of the powerful themes at the heart of the world. It is the sort of magic that moves the story or defines the lessons someone should take from a story. It is more likely to use characters than to be used by them.

Legendary magic is typically more powerful than any other system of magic, while simultaneously being less practical. Characters in the world might have an understanding of the general nature of legendary magic, but it's not the sort of thing that can be easily manipulated.

Source: Legendary magic draws on the foundational and ineffable laws of the universe. Sources for legendary magic are vast concepts that can actually benefit from being vaguely defined.	Attributes	Specifics
Gods: Magic is the result of the divine. It follows the will and action of divine beings in a detached and impersonal way.	Cost: Legendary magic is unique in that there is no cost associated with it. Other paths of magic have a reliable and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith: legendary magic is only available to those who are able to demonstrate unshakable belief in the

It can manifest as powerful artefacts left over from creation myths, odd serendipity, miracle-working prophet, or overt deus ex machina.	transactional relationship with practitioners. By its nature, legendary magic cannot operate that way. Instead, there are narrative rules that govern its appearance.	<p>underlying themes of the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omnipresence: legendary magic is always present during working, but in ways so subtle that it appears absent.
	Potency: Legendary magic is also unique in that it is always the most influential force when it is present. There are no factors that make it more or less powerful, just ones that determine how obvious and understandable its influence is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one can be sure it was present at all.
	Commonality and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as stories or rumour • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is a normal part of everyday life • Who can use this magic?: Almost no one • Is this magic considered acceptable?: Yes • Is this magic respected?: Yes, universally • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: No • Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: No
	Mastery: Legendary magic cannot be mastered in a traditional sense. These are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do beings have to be “worthy” of legendary magic, or can it work

	<p>elemental forces beyond mortal and occasionally even supernatural understanding.</p> <p>When a being assumes legendary power, they become a legend themselves. They feel less like an individual being and more like a vessel for the power and will of the universe.</p>	<p>through anyone?: Can work through anyone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can a being temporarily wield legendary magic, or does it require a permanent transformation?: Temporary • Does legendary magic typically solve or create problems?: Create problems
<p>Axiom: Magic is the expression of cosmic principles through individuals. Practitioners manifest the power of the universe through their connection to it, seemingly defying natural laws. It is a profound connection to cosmic order.</p>	<p>Cost: Legendary magic is unique in that there is no cost associated with it. Other paths of magic have a reliable and transactional relationship with practitioners. By its nature, legendary magic cannot operate that way. Instead, there are narrative rules that govern its appearance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith: legendary magic is only available to those who are able to demonstrate unshakable belief in the underlying themes of the world. • Omnipresence: legendary magic is always present during working, but in ways so subtle that it appears absent.
	<p>Potency: Legendary magic is also unique in that it is always the most influential force when it is present. There are no factors that make it more or less powerful, just ones that determine how obvious and understandable its influence is.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one can be sure it was present at all.
	<p>Commonality and Accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are people aware of this magic?: Yes, as stories or rumour • How integrated into society is this magic?: It is a normal part of everyday life

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can use this magic?: Almost no one • Is this magic considered acceptable?: Yes • Is this magic respected?: Yes, universally • Is this magic regulated, controlled, or taught?: No • Is this magic hidden or kept secret?: No
	<p>Mastery: Legendary magic cannot be mastered in a traditional sense. These are elemental forces beyond mortal and occasionally even supernatural understanding. When a being assumes legendary power, they become a legend themselves. They feel less like an individual being and more like a vessel for the power and will of the universe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do beings have to be “worthy” of legendary magic, or can it work through anyone?: Can work through anyone • Can a being temporarily wield legendary magic, or does it require a permanent transformation?: Temporary • Does legendary magic typically solve or create problems? : Create problems

Appendix M: The Librarian Puzzle

Puzzle

As you open the doors to the library, you're met with the smell of books and ink. If you didn't know any better, you would have thought you were transported to a different world; books are flying around, putting themselves away on floor-to-ceiling shelves, scrolls of parchment taking notes by themselves, and oddly enough a menagerie of animals lounging on the tables. As you take a few more steps inside, five librarians come to greet you, asking how they might service you today. Each one is surrounded by a unique coloured glow corresponding to different library areas. When you explain you heard of their secret, their faces fall to a more serious tone and state they cannot provide you with any information on that particular topic until you prove yourself worthy of critical thinking and problem solving. To do this, they give you a puzzle to figure out who they are and different aspects about them. If you cannot complete the puzzle, you can not move forward.

	Librarian #1	Librarian #2	Librarian #3	Librarian #4	Librarian #5
Aura Colour	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Familiar	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Specialty	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Favourite Book	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Books in Collection	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

- The librarian with the salmon aura is next to the librarian with 1400 books in their collection.
- Ecrosia is somewhere between Belladonna and Diphylla, in that order.
- Evanora is at one of the ends.
- At one end is the librarian with the largest book collection.
- The librarian with fewer books in their collection is next to the librarian whose specialty is magic.
- The librarian with an otter familiar has 1400 books in their collection.
- At one of the ends is the librarian with the turquoise aura.
- In the fourth position is the librarian, who likes books with alliteration.

- Azollava has 1300 books in her collection.
- The librarian with the salmon aura is somewhere to the left of the librarian whose favourite books have the initials Y.O.N.
- The librarian with 1300 books in their collection is next to the librarian with a specialty in history knowledge.
- At one of the ends is the librarian with 1300 books in their collection.
- The librarian who has 1400 books is exactly to the right of the librarian whose specialty involves mythology and storytelling.
- Diphylla is somewhere to the right of the librarian with the midnight aura.
- The librarian who especially involves antidotes and poisons is exactly to the left of the librarian who likes spooky books.
- The librarian with the reptilian familiar is exactly to the left of the librarian who specialises in lore.
- The librarian with the darkest aura colour is somewhere between the librarian whose favourite book is Echoes of Time and the librarian with 1300 books in their collection, in that order.
- The librarian who specialises in lore is next to the librarian who likes books about remnants and flowers.
- The librarian with the raven familiar is somewhere between the librarian with the orchid aura and the librarian with the otter familiar, in that order.
- The librarian whose specialty is lore is somewhere between the librarian with the owl familiar and the librarian whose favourite book is Ruins and Roses, in that order.
- The librarian who has a favourite book about a library is somewhere to the right of the librarian with the midnight aura.

Solution

	Librarian #1	Librarian #2	Librarian #3	Librarian #4	Librarian #5
Aura Colour	Orchid	Midnight	Salmon	Forest	Turquoise
Name	Evanora	Belladonna	Ecrosia	Diphylla	Azollava
Familiar	Owl	Snake	Raven	Otter	Cat
Specialty	Magic	Medicine	Lore	History	Flora and Fauna
Favourite Book	Echoes of	Must You Go?	The Haunted	Ruins and	Your Only

	Time		Library	Roses	Name
Books in Collection	1500	1100	1200	1400	1300