

Sessions, Scenes, and Montages

Framing A Scene

Both GM and players can frame a scene. When you frame a scene, decide the following information:

- Where the scene takes place
- When the scene takes place
- Which characters are in the scene
- What your character hopes to get from the scene or what is at stake

Once these are decided, if a player is initiating the scene they roll Open A Scene:

Open A Scene

When you are initiating a scene, choose a stat that you expect to use in the scene or reflects what you expect from it and roll +that stat.

On a 10+ take two action points, on a 7-9 take one action point. This roll will also indicate how things are going for the characters as the scene opens.

You can spend an action point to gain advantage on a dice roll or in other ways as directed by your moves.

If the GM initiates a scene every player character starts the scene with an action point.

After A Scene

Any character who had action points during the scene and expended them all marks XP. Reset action points to zero.

If characters hit either of their current experience triggers mark XP. A character can hit each trigger once per scene, so the maximum XP from a single scene is 3 between triggers and Action Points unless they have a specific move that grants them more.

If a character reached a turning point during the scene, they can immediately clear their XP (no XP is carried over

between turning points, even if you have more than the required amount) and bring their new XP triggers into play.

Starting a Session

To begin a session, go around the table and remind yourselves of where you left off last time, what your characters were up to, and what had happened during the previous session.

Each player in turn should read out what their Poles and current XP Triggers are, how much XP they have, and what their next Turning Point is. Listen to your friends' XP triggers and look for opportunities to help them hit them during scenes. Early in the game it can be useful to remind the table what your character's Background and Complication are.

Depending on where you left off, you may decide to begin with the GM setting a scene or one of the players may have something their character wants to do and you agree to frame a scene around that. In general look for reasons for your characters to be driving scenes as their goals, plans and adventures are the heart of the story you are telling together.

Ending a Session

When you have reached a good stopping point you can finish the session. After the last scene, go around the table and count up your current XP.

If any player hit a turning point during the session and hasn't done so already, they should clear their XP to 0 and update their XP triggers to the new stage of their arc. They can pick a new Arc Move or choose to raise one of their stats by one point (this can only be done once per arc).

Any player who is close to a Turning Point should make sure the GM is aware of it so they can think about how to create opportunities to reach that in the next game session.

A Montage

When your characters want to do something challenging but which you don't

need to go into great detail on – travelling through hostile or little-trodden land, building a grand magical-mechanical machine, training a group of hapless villagers to be ready to defend themselves – you can choose to create a montage.

To start with, decide what success, mixed success, and failure look like from this montage, and give it an outcome score of zero.

The montage consists of one round for each player – the order doesn't matter as everyone will get a turn, so choose as you see fit.

During a round, each player (starting with the player whose round it is) describes a short, one-line summary of what they are doing, or what the "camera" sees during this part of your project. At the end of the round, the player whose round it is describes a problem that the group runs into at this point. This could be a challenge or an opportunity and it should be something that makes sense with what has gone before. You can choose to go into a Scene to play out how the problem is solved, or you can agree on a solution and describe it being put into place. If you narrate a solution, the player who proposed the problem will roll the dice for their character's part in solving it, using the stat that everyone agrees matches their role. The player whose round it is always makes the final roll. If you play out a scene use the result of your Open A Scene roll. If the outcome is a success add one to the outcome score; if it is a failure subtract one from the outcome score; if it is a mixed success the outcome doesn't change.

Once every player has completed a round the project is complete. If the outcome score is less than zero it was a failure, if it is zero it was a mixed success, and if it's greater than zero it was a success. The outcome will match what you decided before the montage.

Since You Ask Me For A Tale

When you have a character (or NPC) telling a story about some event from their past,

rather than playing out them recounting their story, you can use a variant of the Montage mechanic. Before you start:

Decide whether or not you already know the outcome of the story

Create companion characters for everyone taking part in the story- the character narrating should be playing their younger self, other players play characters who were present at the time. In general these are likely to be new characters but if your regular character was present you can play a younger version of them. It can also be a great way to learn more about other NPCs from your campaign.

Optionally the GM can also create a companion character if you choose to have the player narrating the story lead the narrative entirely.

Each player should begin by describing their characters - what their names and pronouns are and how they look, and what they are good at. After they have given their description the narrator will say what they remember about this character.

You then play out the story using the same mechanism as the Montage, each player has a turn and each turn consists of a snapshot from all the players followed by a challenge faced by the character whose turn it is. Unlike in a montage the challenge is established by the character narrating, and the character whose turn it is describes how they met the challenge and resolves it in the same way. The order of players is not important except that the narrator should go last.

If you know the outcome of the story, the narrator should guide the conclusion towards that result on their final turn. If you don't you can use the same scoring system as a Montage to decide whether the outcome was positive, negative, or mixed. The narrator should finish the story by explaining what they learnt from their experiences.

Use this mechanic when you want to learn more about a character's past or you want to dip into a different story and set of characters for a little while.

Shared Moves

Investigate A Place

When you spend some time investigating a location, piece of equipment, or situation in detail, describe how and roll +Mind. On a 10+ you can ask three questions from the following list, on a 7-9 ask one question:

- What is the greatest threat?
- What is the best way in/out/through?
- What is hidden here?
- What happened here recently?
- What advantage can I find here?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What evidence of [person or thing] can I find here?

The GM will answer your questions.

Examine A Person

When you spend some time trying to figure someone out through direct interaction, roll +Charm. On a success the GM will answer two questions from this list:

- Whose interests are they working in right now?
- Do they believe what they are saying?
- Do they mean harm to [person, place or thing]?
- What are they trying to hide?
- What would it take to persuade them to my side?
- What do they intend to do?
- What are they really feeling?

On a 10+ both answers will be truthful, on a 7-9 one will be more reliable than the other.

Persuade

When you attempt to persuade, reason, manipulate or seduce an individual to your way of thinking, roll +Charm. On a 10+ they will go along with your suggestion. On a 7-9 they are unconvinced, mark Stress and they will require some immediate guarantee or proof of good faith. They are unlikely to keep going along with you if they feel endangered or something betrays the reason you gave them.

Common Knowledge

When you actively seek to recall everything you know about a specific topic, roll +Mind. On a 10+ the GM will tell you something detailed about the topic and relevant to your situation, on a 7-9 the information might be vague or it may be down to you to figure out how it is relevant to your current situation. The knowledge is accurate to the world as everyone understands it.

Face A Challenge

When you need to escape an approaching danger or traverse a danger before you, describe what you are doing to resist it and roll: +*Strength* if you are resisting with sheer physical power or athletic speed, +*Mind* if your escape requires rapid problem solving or magic, +*Subtlety* if you are avoiding the danger with quick reactions, stealth, machinery, or precision, +*Heart* if your escape relies on faith, religious authority, or your ability to inspire others, +*Charm* if your escape relies on persuasion, lies, or soothing. On a success you meet the challenge successfully. On a partial success your escape creates a new problem, cost, or tough choice.

An Old Friend

When you need to find a contact who hasn't previously been introduced, explain who they are and how you know them or who put you in contact with them and roll +Charm. On a successful roll you find them, on a 7-9 choose one:

- Last time you parted, you owed them a debt and they remember it
- They are in some kind of trouble
- They carry some bad feelings about your previous relationship and are less welcoming than you expected
- They can no longer be trusted

Lend A Hand

When one of your companions asks for your help and you give it, before they make their roll describe how and roll: +*Heart* if you are sincerely encouraging them or using religious authority, +*Strength* if you

are physically aiding them, +*Subtlety* if you are guiding them with precision or machinery, +*Charm* if you are drawing attention from them, +*Mind* if you are using arcane means or little known information. On a success your companion gains advantage on their next roll. On a partial success you will be caught up in any negative consequences of their action. If they call for help after their roll, you can spend an Action Point to offer it retrospectively. In this case a success grants an additional die to their previous roll as though they had rolled with advantage. Only one person can lend a hand to any given roll.

Engage An Opponent With Force

When you engage an opponent in direct combat, roll: +*Strength* if you are using your physical power and force, +*Subtlety* if you are using accuracy and deft movement. On a 10+, deal your harm or achieve another simple goal (sweeping their leg, knocking something out of their hand). On a 7-9 you exchange harm.

Engage An Opponent At Range

When you engage an opponent with a ranged weapon or by throwing whatever is at hand, roll +*Subtlety*. On a success, you inflict harm as established by the fiction - if you are using an improvised object rather than a weapon you can cause a maximum of 1 harm. On a 10+ you can additionally choose one:

- Deal +1 harm
- Deal -1 harm but knock something out of their hand
- Deal -1 harm but limit their movement in some way or briefly stun them

Engage An Opponent With Wit

When you engage an opponent in debate or discussion, roll: +*Mind* if you are attempting to use sophisticated and accurate legal or technical knowledge and erudition, +*Heart* if you are attempting to use religious authority or sincere persuasion, +*Charm* if you are attempting

to use lies, sophistry, or simple charm. On success your opponent, or those watching your debate, are persuaded (your choice). On a 7-9 it was harder than you expected, mark stress and choose one:

- You owe them a debt or favour
- They remain uncertain of your case and suspicious
- They know something that undermines your case

Receive Harm

When you receive Harm from an opponent or another source as established in the fiction, roll +harm suffered after armour. On a 10+ the GM can choose one:

- You're out of action - physically trapped, unconscious, dazed, or ensorcelled
 - It's worse than it seemed – take an additional level of harm
 - Choose two from the 7-9 list
- On a 7-9 list the GM can choose one:
- You lose your footing
 - You lose your grip on whatever you're holding
 - You miss something important
 - An ally is placed at risk as well
 - The injury is frightening or distracting - mark Stress

On a 6- the GM can still choose an option from the 7-9 list but they choose it instead of some of the harm you would otherwise receive, so take one less harm if they do.

Stress is emotional or mental fatigue, trauma, or confusion. With all stress boxes full, your character is unconscious or incapacitated. When the GM tells you to mark stress, fill in one box.

Harm is physical injury. Level 1 is a cut or bruise, Level 2 is a sprain or broken bone, Level 3 is a serious injury. When you have a level 3 harm marked you roll at disadvantage on Strength and Subtlety. If you take level 4 harm you are dying, and you are incapable of making moves during the scene. If your harm boxes at the level you are given are full, take harm at the next available level.