1) Core Concepts & Glossary

• **Aspect**: Word or sentence which describes something important about a character or situation.

  • Well-written aspects infer how they can help and/or hinder characters when invoked or exploited.

  • **Character aspect**: Personality, past history, relationships, items, problems, goals, reputation, etc.

    • **High concept**: Summarizes a character's primary identity.

    • **Trouble**: Describes how a character always gets in trouble or is hindered, e.g. weakness or enemy.

    • **Consequence**: Injuries or other lasting combat trauma that take a while to go away.

  • **Situation aspect**: Notable detail about a situation's circumstances, surroundings, environment, etc.

  • **Boost**: Temporary, advantageous aspect which can be invoked once and is then dispelled.

• **Approach**: Specific manner in which tasks or actions may be accomplished.

  • **Careful**: Paying attention to detail, taking your time to do it right.

  • **Clever**: Thinking quickly, solving complex problems, analyzing intelligently.

  • **Flashy**: Commanding attention, distracting, encouraging or even humiliating.

  • **Forceful**: Using brute strength and/or powerful magic.

  • **Quick**: Fast, with dexterity and/or reflexes, e.g. dodging a projectile.

  • **Sneaky**: Misdirectingly, stealthily, or deceivingly, e.g. lying or picking a pocket.

• **Stunt**: Special trait that may be invoked on occasion to favorably bend the rules under specific circumstances.

• **Fate points**: Points that players can spend or receive through interactions involving aspects.

• **Refresh**: The minimum number of fate points that a character may possess at the beginning of each session.

  • If the character has less, they gain fate points until the balance matches the refresh.

  • If the character has more, their current fate point balance remains unaltered, i.e. it is not lowered.

2) Roll Procedure

1) Each roll is made with 4 fate dice, outputting a total. The initial total is 0, and the dice alter it as follows:

  • Each ➕ (plus) adds 1 to the total.

  • Each ➖ (minus) subtracts 1 from the total.

  • Each ⬛ (blank) does not alter the output.

  • Note that the output could be negative, i.e. below 0.

  • Alternately, a card from a *deck of fate* can be drawn to replace any dice roll entirely.

➖➕⬛➕ = +1   ➕➖⬛⬛ = 0   ➕➕➕➖ = +2   ⬛⬛⬛➖ = −1

2) The following bonuses are then added on top of the total, if applicable:

  • Approach rating.   • Aspect invocation bonus.   • Stunt bonus.

3) Compare the final total with the fixed difficulty rating or the GM's opposing roll. Possible outcomes are:

  • Roll **<** Target/rival roll: **Fail**   • Roll **=** Target/rival roll: **Tie**

  • Roll **>** Target/rival roll: **Succeed**   • If the roll is 3+ above target/rival roll: **Succeed With Style**

LESSER THAN	**-**	*← **Roll** →*	**+**	*GREATER THAN*	*3 OR MORE ABOVE*
Fail		Tie		Succeed	With Style
		Target/Rival Roll			

3) Character Creation

1) Create the following aspects for the character:

  • 1 high concept.   • 1 trouble.   • 1-3 general aspects.

  • You can choose to leave the last 1-2 general aspects blank and create them later during the game.

2) Describe your character's appearance and give them a name.

3) Distribute bonuses to your character's approaches:

  • Set 1 approach at Good (+3).   • Set 2 approaches at Fair (+2).

  • Set 2 approaches at Average (+1).   • Set the last approach at Mediocre (0).

4) Set your refresh to 3 and define 1-5 stunt(s) for your character.

  • You can choose to start with just 1 stunt and define other ones later during the game.

  • The first 3 stunts do not alter the refresh. Each additional stunt after the first 3 reduces the refresh by 1.

    • The refresh cannot go below 1. Therefore, a character cannot have more than 5 stunts initially.

4) Templates For Creating Stunts   Follow either of these archetypes to create your stunts.

A) **Bonus**: The stunt provides a +2 bonus to rolls with a specific approach, action and circumstance.

  • Because I am/have [**feature**], I get a +2 when I [**approach**] [**action**] when [**circumstance**].

• *Because I am a* **Smooth Talker** *, I get a +2*	• *Because I have a* **Magic Fire Wand** *, I get a +2*
when I **sneakily create advantages**	*when I* **forcefully overcome**
when **I'm in conversation with someone** *.*	*when* **I face icy obstacles or enemies.**

  • **Note**: If the [**circumstance**] is especially restrictive, you might be permitted to create a stunt that applies with both **create an advantage** and **overcome** actions.

B) **Open-ended**: The stunt lets you bend or break the rules once per game.

  • Because I am/have [**feature**], once per game session I can [**rule-bending endeavor**].

• *Because I am* **Quick on the Draw** *,*	• *Because I am* **Well Connected** *,*
once per game session I can	*once per game session I can*
choose to go first in a physical conflict *.*	**find a helpful ally in just the right place** *.*

5) Actions

5.1) Basic Actions   The main actions PCs and NPCs may take to spend their turn.

5.1.1) Create An Advantage   Create, discover or take advantage of an aspect.

1) Choose 1 approach and explain how it applies. Roll with that approach, incl. aspect and/or stunt bonuses if any.

2) Pick 1 goal below and resolve the roll:

   A) Create a new situation aspect, i.e. do something that affects the situation.
   - **Fail**: The aspect is not created, or it is created with possible alterations at the GM's discretion.
     - The enemy team gets 1 free invocation of the new aspect.
     - For your team, invoking the new aspect will still cost 1 fate point as per regular rules.

   - **Tie**: You gain 1 boost. Your team can invoke it once for free.
   - **Succeed**: The aspect is created. Your team can invoke it once for free.
     - **With Style**: Your team can invoke it twice for free instead.

   B) Discover an existing but currently unknown situation or character aspect, e.g. through observation.
   - **Fail**: The aspect is not discovered, or it is discovered but the enemy team can invoke it once for free.
     - For your team, invoking the new aspect will still cost 1 fate point as per regular rules.

   - **Tie** or **Succeed**: The aspect is discovered. Your team can invoke it once for free.
     - **With Style**: Your team can invoke it twice for free instead.

   C) Take advantage of an existing aspect, i.e. earn free invocations.
   - **Fail**: No additional benefit is gained from the aspect. It will still cost 1 fate point to invoke.
   - **Tie** or **Succeed**: Your team gets 1 free invocation of the aspect to be used on a later turn.
     - **With Style**: Your team gets 2 free invocations of the aspect instead of 1.

5.1.2) Overcome   Overcome an obstacle or inconvenient situation aspect, or achieve an objective.

1) Choose 1 approach and explain how it applies. Roll with that approach, incl. aspect and/or stunt bonuses if any.
- **Fail**: Either the obstacle prevails, or it is overcome at a serious cost imposed by the GM.
- **Tie**: The obstacle is overcome successfully, but that comes at a minor cost imposed by the GM.
- **Succeed**: The obstacle is overcome successfully.
  - **With Style**: You also gain 1 boost. Your team can invoke it once for free.

5.1.3) Defend   Stop someone from succeeding with their action.

- This action is a reaction to other actions. During conflicts, it is performed outside your turn as a free action.
- You can either defend against an action directly, or defend on behalf of an ally if you can explain how you do it.
  - If you defend for an ally this way, you will be the recipient of any negative consequences.

1) Choose 1 approach and explain how it applies. Roll with that approach, incl. aspect and/or stunt bonuses if any.
- **Fail**: You completely fail to prevent the opponent's action.
- **Tie** or **Succeed**: You managed to hinder the opponent's action. Refer to outcome of opponent's action.
  - **With Style**: Your opponent totally fails. You gain 1 boost. Your team can invoke it once for free.

5.1.4) Attack   Attempt to hurt someone, whether physically or mentally.

1) Choose 1 approach and explain how it applies. Roll with that approach, incl. aspect and/or stunt bonuses if any.
- **Fail**: The attack fails to connect, or is parried/blocked.
- **Tie**: The attack connects without causing damage. You gain 1 boost. Your team can invoke it once for free.
- **Succeed**: The attack connects and inflicts damage.
  - **With Style**: You can choose to reduce damage dealt by 1 to gain 1 boost instead.
    - Your team can invoke any boost created this way once for free.

2) If the attack connected and caused damage, apply the difference between rolls, a.k.a. the shift, as the damage.
- Example: An attack roll of +5 versus a defense roll of +3 implies a shift of 2 damage.

3) The recipient of the damage chooses to incur either stress, a consequence, or both in combination.
- The combination of stress and/or consequence must absorb **all** of the damage incurred.
- The recipient is taken out if they can no longer incur any stress or consequence, or chooses not to.
  - A character that is taken out can no longer act, and the attacker describes what happens to them.

   A) **Stress**: Check 1 unchecked stress box to absorb damage.
   - Box #1 can absorb up to 1 shift of damage.   • Box #2 can absorb up to 2 shifts of damage.
   - Box #3 can absorb up to 3 shifts of damage.   • etc.

   B) **Consequence**: Fill 1 or more empty consequences with a negative character aspect to absorb damage.
   - The *mild* consequence can absorb up to 2 shifts of damage.
   - The *moderate* consequence can absorb up to 4 shifts of damage.
   - The *severe* consequence can absorb up to 6 shifts of damage.
   - Because consequences are aspects, the enemy team can invoke each of them once for free.

5.1.5) Help An Ally   Strengthen an ally's basic action.

- Each helper provides a +1 bonus to the receiver's roll.
- The GM can choose to impose a limit on how many helpers there can be in total for the receiver's action.

5.2) Other Actions During Conflicts   Special actions that may take place during conflicts.

5.2.1) Giving In   Surrender during a conflict that is not boding well.

- A player can forfeit and be taken out if they declare it **before** the opponent's roll. Then, the following applies:
  - The player gets a say in what happens to them, but the GM can impose some cost or negative outcome.
  - The player gets 1 fate point for conceding, and 1 fate point for each consequence incurred in the conflict.

5.2.2) Move Between Zones   Move to a different zone.

- Moving from 1 zone to a nearby adjacent zone is a free action, unless an obstacle or foe is hindering movement.
- Moving from 1 zone to a further, non-adjacent zone requires the player to spend their action.
- If an obstacle or foe is hindering movement, the player must spend their action in order to move through.

6) Fate Points & Interacting With Aspects   Things PCs and NPCs can do with aspects to affect basic actions.

• At the start of each scene, the GM sets up a pool for that scene with 1 fate point per PC which the NPCs can use.

• When the NPCs would receive fate points from players, these points go into the GM's fate point pool for the scene.

• If the NPCs receive fate points as the scene ends (e.g. giving in), they may be added to the next scene's pool instead.

6.1) Invoking Aspects   Spend fate points to aid yourself or an ally, or make things harder for a foe.

• Note that you can and should wait to see the initial result of a roll before you decide to invoke an aspect.

1) Choose an aspect your character knows about and explain how you intend to use it to your advantage.

    • It could be your own character aspect, an ally or foe's character aspect, a situation aspect or a boost.

    • You can invoke multiple aspects on a given roll, but each cannot be invoked more than once on that roll.

        • A free invocation does not count towards that limit. You can stack 1 free and 1 regular invocation.

2) Unless a free invocation has been granted to you prior, spend 1 fate point to invoke the aspect.

    • By default, the paid fate point is paid to the GM's infinite supply.

    • However, if you are invoking an opponent's own aspect against them during a conflict:

        • The fate point is paid to them instead. It is withdrawn right away and handed over after the scene.

3) Apply 1 effect you choose below for your invocation:

    A) Add a +2 bonus to your roll.   **B**) Help an ally by granting a +2 bonus to their roll.

    C) Reroll your dice.   **D**) Increase the difficulty level by 2 on an opponent's action.

6.2) Compelling Aspects   Offensively exploit an aspect at the cost of earning its victim a fate point.

1) Choose an aspect your character knows about and explain how you intend to exploit it at the victim's expense.

    • You may even compel 1 of your own character aspects, a.k.a. self-compel, as a direct way to earn fate points.

2) Choose 1 method through which you will compel the aspect:

    A) **Decision compel**: Describe a bad decision or action the victim should be making based on the aspect.

    B) **Event compel**: Describe an event that hinders the victim which could take place based on the aspect.

    • For a self-compel, the effect applies immediately, and you receive 1 fate point from the GM's infinite supply.

    • Otherwise, for compelling at someone else's expense, proceed to step #3.

3) Describe your choice and offer to pay 1 fate point to the potential victim.

    • The players involved can negotiate and fine-tune the details and consequences. Then, a decision is made:

    A) **The potential victim accepts**: The fate point is paid to the victim immediately, and your choice applies.

    B) **The potential victim refuses**: The victim immediately pays 1 fate point to the GM's infinite supply instead.

        • When this decision is taken, the aspect is **not** compelled as a result.

        • A victim cannot refuse if they cannot afford to pay that fate point.

6.3) Establishing Facts   Cooperatively establish facts based on aspects.

• Players can propose, negotiate and agree on aspect-based facts to be considered canon in the game's world.

    • Example: "Fighter Jet Pilot" implies that fighter jets exist, the character is a pilot, and they can pilot such jets.

7) Challenges, Contests And Conflicts

• Simple but non-trivial hurdles may be resolved with 1 **overcome** action vs. target difficulty set by the GM.

• For more complex situations, the resolution methods below may be used instead.

7.1) Challenges   To resolve a complicated situation composed of multiple tasks.

• The number of players who participate is determined by the GM based on the situation.

• Players attempt to resolve each task or part of the situation with the **overcome** action.

• Alternately, the **create an advantage** action can also be used to faciliate the success of these **overcome** actions.

• The GM could present all tasks in one go, or could choose to reveal them 1 by 1 as prior tasks are completed.

7.2) Contests   When 2+ characters are competing over multiple rounds without trying to hurt each other.

• Examples include: car race, public debate, tournament, etc.

• For each exchange, each participant performs an **overcome** action. The results are compared as follows:

    • **Tie**: If the highest rolls are tied, no one earns a victory, and an unexpected twist may occur.

        • The GM explains the twist and creates a situation aspect to reflect it.

    • **Succeed**: The person with the highest roll gains 1 victory for the contest. They describe how it happened.

        • **With Style**: That person gains 2 victories instead of 1.

• The first participant to earn 3 victories in total wins the contest.

7.3) Conflicts   To resolve situations where characters are trying to physically or mentally harm one another.

1) Setting the scene.

    • The GM describes who is involved, and establishes zones where they are located.

    • The GM creates situation aspects for the conflict. The players may suggest some as well.

2) Determine turn order based on the type of conflict.

    • **Physical conflict**: player with the highest Quick approach goes first.

    • **Mental/psychological conflict**: player with the highest Careful approach goes first.

    • Ties are broken by narration/improvisation. The GM has the last word.

    • For NPCs: their turn order is based on the NPC with the best approach rating for the type of conflict.

        • By default, all NPCs will act on the same turn as the NPC which has the best approach rating.

        • At the GM's discretion, a specific order may be manually set for the NPCs instead.

3) Perform and resolve each exchange.

    • In order, each character spends their turn performing any action that isn't a free action.

    • Characters can interact with others in the same zone or in nearby zones if justified, e.g. ranged weapon.

    • The conflict is over when 1 side has been completely taken out or has given in.

8) Game Progression, Character Recovery & Advancement

8.1) End Of Scene

1) Each player clears/unchecks all their stress boxes.

2) Players clear their *mild* consequence if they can explain how and the character has a chance to rest after the scene.

　• For instance, it might not be possible to clear the *mild* consequence yet if a conflict scene leads into a chase.

8.2) Minor Milestone　　　　At the end of each session, or once a piece of story is resolved.

1) Each player's *moderate* consequence is cleared if all below criteria apply:

　• They can explain how the consequence was cleared.

　• It makes sense, within the story, for this consequence to be cleared.

　• The consequence was incurred in a past session. It cannot be cleared in the same session it was added.

2) Each player chooses 1 effect to apply below:

　A) Swap the ratings of any 2 approaches.

　B) Rewrite 1 character aspect that is not the high concept.

　C) Replace 1 existing stunt with a new one.

　D) Add 1 new stunt. **Reminder**: Each stunt after the 3rd one lowers the refresh by 1.

8.3) Significant Milestone　　　　At the end of a scenario or a big plot event. Usually every 2-3 sessions.

1) All benefits of a minor milestone are applied.

2) Each player's *severe* consequence is cleared if all below criteria apply:

　• They can explain how the consequence was cleared.

　• It makes sense, within the story, for this consequence to be cleared.

　• The consequence was incurred in a past session. It cannot be cleared in the same session it was added.

3) Each player increments 1 approach's rating by 1, up to a maximum of Legendary (+8).

8.4) Major Milestone　　　　At the end of a major story arc or critical event which affects the game world.

1) All benefits of a minor milestone and a significant milestone are applied.

2) Each player's refresh is increased by 1. The player can choose to spend that bonus to add a new stunt instead.

3) Each player can optionally choose to rewrite their high concept character aspect, if desired.

THE LADDER

+8	Legendary
+7	Epic
+6	Fantastic
+5	Superb
+4	Great
+3	Good
+2	Fair
+1	Average
0	Mediocre
-1	Poor
-2	Terrible

CYCLOPS HOUSE BULLY
Cyclops House Bully, Cowardly Without Backup
Skilled (+2) at: Frightening other students, weaseling out of trouble, breaking things
Bad (-2) at: Planning, studying
Stress: None (first hit takes them out)

SKY SHARK
I'm a Shark, Vulnerable Belly
Skilled (+2) at: Flying, biting
Bad (-2) at: Anything that isn't flying or biting
Stress: ☐ ☐

9) Game Master Reference

9.1) Setting Difficulty Levels

• **Difficulty < PC's approach rating**: To give the players a chance to show off.

• **Difficulty ≈ PC's approach rating**: To create tension without overwhelming the players.

• **Difficulty > PC's approach rating**: To emphasize how dire or unusual the circumstances are.

Difficulty vs. Approach	Succeed	With Style	Tie	Tie + Succeed
Approach - 5	100.0%	93.8%	0.0%	100.0%
Approach - 4	98.8%	81.5%	1.2%	100.0%
Approach - 3	93.8%	61.7%	4.9%	98.8%
Approach - 2	81.5%	38.3%	12.3%	93.8%
Approach - 1	61.7%	18.5%	19.8%	81.5%
Same as Approach	38.3%	6.2%	23.5%	61.7%
Approach + 1	18.5%	1.2%	19.8%	38.3%
Approach + 2	6.2%	0.0%	12.3%	18.5%
Approach + 3	1.2%	0.0%	4.9%	6.17%
Approach + 4	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	1.23%
Approach + 5	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00%

(Incl. With Style)

9.1.1) Recommended Static Target Numbers

• **Easy**: Mediocre (+0).　　　• **Moderately Difficult**: Fair (+2).

• **Extremely Difficult**: Great (+4).　　　• **Impossibly Difficult**: As high as you see fit.

9.2) Bad Guys & NPCs

• Major NPCs can be designed like player characters, with specific approach ratings, aspects, stress and consequences.

• For lesser NPCs, just 1 or 2 stats need to be fleshed out. See **Creating Mooks** below.

9.2.1) Creating Mooks　　　　Disposable thugs, monsters or goons.

1) List skills they are good at and/or things they are bad at.

　• For each skill listed, they will get +2 on rolls where they apply.

　• For each weakness listed, they will get -2 on rolls where they apply.

　• For everything else, they will have regular rolls, i.e. no bonus or penalty applied.

2) Create 1 or more aspects to reflects skills they are good at and/or things they are bad at.

3) Add 0-2 stress boxes based on how tough they are supposed to be, with 0 meaning they are taken out in 1 hit.

　• Mooks cannot incur consequences. They can only check stress boxes until they are taken out.

9.2.2) Creating Groups Of Mooks　　　　Groups of disposable thugs, monsters or goons.

• Large numbers of mooks can be treated as 1 single group, or multiple small groups, instead of separate units.

• A group acts as a single character, inheriting the mook's skills, weaknesses, etc. However, the following applies:

　• The group has 1 stress box for every 2 individuals in the group.