

THE LIVES OF THE STARS

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This is a game of uncovering a universe together.

Together we will create a **map** of stars and planets. We will build up the map as we play.

Throughout, you can enjoy randomness or choose instead.

PLANET CREATION

First we'll describe a **planet**. To create your world, take a sheet of **paper** and draw a small circle, about the size of a coin if you want to make a solar system, or a dot if you want to make a galaxy. Now follow these seven steps.

1. ATMOSPHERE

What is in the **sky**? Roll dice or **choose**.

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. twin moons | 1. howling winds | 1. multichromatic haze |
| 2. blazing sun | 2. gentle breeze | 2. eerie stillness |
| 3. bitter cold | 3. toxic fumes | 3. roiling gases |
| 4. endless rain | 4. sheet lightning | 4. stifling humidity |
| 5. drifting mists | 5. pillars of flame | 5. shimmering aurora |
| 6. orange glow | 6. billowing clouds | 6. something else |

2. TERRAIN

What does the **surface** look like? Roll a dice or **choose**.

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. vast ocean | 1. cracked earth | 1. rolling hills |
| 2. verdant grasslands | 2. great mountains | 2. boggy marshland |
| 3. misty valley | 3. sweeping desert | 3. snowy highlands |
| 4. ominous forests | 4. jagged rocks | 4. great canyons |
| 5. deep caverns | 5. profound jungle | 5. endless city |
| 6. blue dust landscape | 6. murky swamp | 6. something else |

3. ECOSYSTEM

What signs of **life** do you find here?

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. vivid flowers | 1. large footprints | 1. delicate nests |
| 2. strange critters | 2. noisome stench | 2. great flocks |
| 3. lumbering beasts | 3. intricate hives | 3. buzzing swarms |
| 4. constant chittering | 4. gargantuan carcass | 4. huge herds |
| 5. distant bellows | 5. intense scent | 5. glowing moss |
| 6. creeping fungi | 6. shed skins | 6. something else |

4. PEOPLE

Who could live here? How do they **communicate**?

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. large | 1. reptilian | 1. psychic |
| 2. small | 2. mammalian | 2. gestural |
| 3. rough coated | 3. vegetal | 3. vocal |
| 4. smooth | 4. fungal | 4. tactile |
| 5. lithe | 5. amphibian | 5. musical |
| 6. ponderous | 6. piscine | 6. something else |

5. SOCIETY

What kind of lives would they have? What is central to their **culture**?

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. noise | 1. playing | 1. painting |
| 2. quietude | 2. fighting | 2. looking |
| 3. eating | 3. storytelling | 3. reading |
| 4. drinking | 4. debating | 4. building |
| 5. dancing | 5. creating | 5. burrowing |
| 6. singing | 6. cooking | 6. bathing |

6. SETTLEMENTS

What have they **built**? Give your planet a **name**.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. simple huts | 1. spherical dwellings | 1. smooth stone bastions |
| 2. intricate treehouses | 2. cuboid architecture | 2. modular buildings |
| 3. labyrinthine burrows | 3. fractal forms | 3. vine-covered domes |
| 4. magnificent citadels | 4. organic biomes | 4. grown structures |
| 5. sculpted crystal | 5. elevated homes | 5. metal configurations |
| 6. a heaving metropolis | 6. dusty bioshells | 6. something else |

7. EMPIRE'S LEGACY

In the past, an alien empire held this planet. What have they **left behind**?

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. a language | 1. a foodstuff | 1. a city |
| 2. a custom | 2. a belief | 2. communication device |
| 3. a plant | 3. a social structure | 3. a ruin |
| 4. a creature | 4. a bureaucracy | 4. a mine |
| 5. a machine | 5. a drink | 5. an altered climate |
| 6. a technology | 6. an object | 6. something else |

8. RESOLUTION

What **problem** does this create? How are the people trying to **resolve** this?

THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Draw another dot or circle near your planet, slightly larger. This is your star, the sun at the heart of the solar system. Give it a **name**. How many other planets are near this star?

Choose a number between 1 and 6, or roll a six sided dice. Repeat the Planet Creation process with each of the other planets, or leave them blank, to be investigated.

MAPPING

We're now going to form connections between planets, marking the simple space travel unhindered by asteroid belts, solar storms or unaligned orbits. To do this, draw a line connecting the first planet to its nearest neighbour. From that planet, draw a line to its closest neighbour. Do the same from that planet to its nearest neighbour, repeating until most planets are connected. Draw a line from any unconnected planets to its nearest neighbour.

Now **explore**.

PLANET NAME	_____
ATMOSPHERE	_____
TERRAIN	_____
ECOSYSTEM	_____
PEOPLE	_____
SOCIETY	_____
SETTLEMENTS	_____
LEGACY	_____
RESOLUTION	_____

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RESOLUTION	_____

TRANSMISSION REPORTS

Transmission 2928889

Greetings to our celestial neighbours from a crimson sunset atop our crystalline forest. May the boundless bless you with verdant tidings. How is the horizon where you reside? I hope it's optimistic. Being part of this venture is most fascinating to me. Our society has for the most part been so very insular for most of my life. More for survival dynamic than introspection, so it feels exciting to be sharing correspondence with a being from a new world.

My name is 'Dy'Nowsd' which in the universal tongue roughly translates to "Ascending Breeze". I write to you from the planet of Zephia, making me a Zephian. Given our introverted status, I do not know if you know about our kin, so I would love to explain.

We are mycelial beings, at one with the forest, connected by a neural network (a hive mind, if you will) that passes electrical signals through the electrolytes in our planets vast system of interconnected tree roots. It's a reciprocal relationship. We tend to the forest as its protectors, and the forest acts as the guardian of our consciousness, allowing us to pass freely from body to body. Some of us have spent millennia passing from body to body, form to form. Some choose to inhabit the same frame for their entire life.

I choose to body surf. It's in this interconnectedness of all things I find a serenity with the world around me. A 'one-ness' if you will. That isn't to say body-surfing doesn't come with complications. Existing within the hivemind presents challenges. Having shared so many memories, I cannot truly tell what are mine, and what are part of the greater shared consciousness.

I feel old? Am I old? I don't know. If we gauge the passing of time by how many sunsets we have seen, I must be an elder. When I close my eyes I can remember thousands, if not millions of different setting suns. But how many of them have I witnessed with my own eyes? And what even are my own eyes? Do I even have eyes of my own, if this body is temporary?

I'd like to think I can offer you the wisdom of an old man, but I don't know if I am old. Or a man. Or just a vessel for old memories.

Transmission 1547377

JOIN THE DAVE PLANETARY DEFENCE FORCE TODAY!!!!

ALL HAIL DAVE

CALL: 1974-2023 NOW AND GET A \$10,000 SIGN-UP BONUS

Transmission 183893

Report 12.830.1752.6011249.83

Mollusca group 83 moved further south of tectonic plate 12 and in greater numbers than originally anticipated. Seabed adjacent no longer inhabitable and we will need to consider a south-westerly diversion. Tectonic 12 remains unpredictable and has moved thrive in eight sunsets. No contact from Stereum for some time now and fear communications may have been intercepted between Stereum and the Chloridian Army.

Request for signal bounce from any receiving network put in but so far, no returns. May have to return to base to reconnect and ensure information is shared but fear this will be my last time separate to the Stereum. Without contact I cannot predict my journey home will be safe from the Mollusca as they grow increasingly volatile.

Transmission 6893468

The Disappearance

Random guy walks on rock towards cookie dog.

Guy: Aww hello, where did you come from?

The guy pets the dog.

The dog barks

Aren't you the cutest thing ever?

The guy looks into the cookie dog's eyes. They glow red.

The guy is put in a trance.

Tasty tasty, I must have a bit...!

The guy starts to take a bite out of the cookie dog's cookie body.

The guy says "I don't feel so good" and dies.

The cookie dog eats the guy's body and the part the person ate has grown back.

Transmission 6363884

So much to do today

too busy

the ritual is tomorrow, where has this month gone?

The phoenixes went in the liquid nitrogen at bam.

Salamander stew on the boil, just need to add seasoning.

Where are my knives, I bet Mark borrowed them again.

Only 2 hours until we need to get this food ready for the surface.

What am I forgetting?

Oh yes, the fungus!

Better start chopping some garlic to fry that in.

I hope Damp likes it this month, last month I burnt the phoenix!

Hunter:

Resenting Damp for sending them out again for more supplies.

- Phoenix sandwiches again for lunch? Eugh

- We've been discussing the situation and none of us are happy

- What Shall We do about it?

- Should we collect some rabbits and train them up? we could send them into the Damps cave!

- What about training the unicorns too?

- Oops... look at the time! we don't want to be late back to work.

- At least it's the ritual tomorrow, that will cheer us up!

Damp:

- Salamander for breakfast, it's lovely and cool down here today

- Got a new delivery of travel brochures through today- looking forward to seeing what other planets have to offer this year...

Nothing on us!

- Wait, whats this? someones out a note in amongst the leaflets.

- It says. the wet are thinking of rebelling.

That's OK though, Dave is having its monthly ritual tomorrow - that'll

Sort them out!

Cool- Busy, busy, busy day today!

- So much to prepare for the ritual tomorrow!

Salamander, Phoenix and liquid nitrogen all prepped and ready to go.

Transmission 3457456

I hate this rock, it is my home

I cannot leave it, it is my home

Another child-raising request, one more egg to lay

I hate this rock

I cannot leave

Dave looks nice this time of year

The people there sent another party invite

I hate this rock

I cannot leave

The offworld merchants reduced their passenger rate again

They want to help us leave

I hate this rock

I cannot leave

Tourists bring economy, economy is good, right?

That's what the brochures say

I hate this rock

I cannot leave

The people want to leave, the hunters want to go on strike,

I hate this rock

I cannot leave

I must protect them

They are all my children

I hate this rock

I cannot leave



CREDITS

The Lives of the Stars

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John Hansard Gallery / 11 February - 6 May 2023

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Photo: Deep Space Station 12 (DSS-12), California. Image: NASA

Image: The 64m Parkes Radio Telescope. Photo credit: Robert Kerton

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No
Limits
Helping Young People
Help Themselves



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
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