

# Storyteller Manual



Games, activities, and other creative  
ways to use Storyteller Cards.

**Storyteller Cards** are 54 playing cards that each feature 4 unique elements. There is a **character**, holding an **item**, completing an **action**, in a **location**. Each of these elements can be used to create something new, get you out of a mid-project slump, or just to have some creative fun with family and friends.

The cards also feature additional icons in the corners to help you dig a little deeper into storytelling, creating, and gaming. The icons represent a **rank**, **suit**, **mood**, **season** and a **letter of the alphabet**.

Available now at **StorytellerCards.com**



# Storyteller Manual



Games, activities and other creative  
ways to use Storyteller Cards.



1st Edition

©2013 Button Shy

Storyteller Cards were designed by Jason Tagmire  
and illustrated by Campbell Whyte.

The games and activities in this manual were created  
by Scott Almes, Charles Beauvais, Marty Cobb,  
John du Bois, Scott King, Luke Milton,  
Gaetan Pappalardo, Carey Pietsch, Tim Rodriguez,  
Ryan Sanders, Daniel Solis, Ive Sorocuk,  
Jason Tagmire, Jay Treat and Campbell Whyte.

07	Introduction
-----	
09	Director's Cut
11	Comic Challenge
13	Once Upon A Time
15	Possibilities
19	Freudian Knot
23	ChromaCards
27	ChromaCribs
29	To Be Continued
31	Pitch it
33	Tough Audience
35	Grow Up Hero
37	Short Stories
41	25 Word Stories
45	Pyramid Scheme
49	Sound Effects
51	Who What When Where Why How?
53	Coloring Pages
-----	
57	Contributors



# Introduction by Jason Tagmire

First of all, I want to thank everyone who made this project possible. From artist Campbell Whyte to everyone who contributed to the project (creatively and monetarily), I could not have done this without you.

Storyteller Cards was a dream project for me. It was the first large production that I decided to do on my own, which is an adventure in itself. I was (and still am) responsible for almost every part of the project, from organization to fulfillment. This is a massive undertaking for just one person. And it's an extremely fulfilling undertaking for just one person. It's the kind of thing that will make or break you, and I'm happy to say that I'm ready for the next project.

This was also a dream because I was able to work with Campbell Whyte. I've been a friend and fan of his for years now, with his 8-Bit Dreams series consuming a large part of my internal NES fanboyism. It's a beautifully illustrated series of classic video games that should be seen by every retro gamer. As the ideas for Storyteller Cards bounced around in my head, so did Campbell's illustrations. I told Campbell that there is no other artist that I would have wanted to do this with, and it's 100% true. I wanted it to be whimsical and quirky and fun and emotional. He managed to do all of that and sneak a few more surprises in.

Another dream was to be able to work with a wonderful group of designers, artists and writers to create the games and activities within this manual. Each contributor is extremely talented and I'm forever thankful that they took the time to contribute their ideas to my silly little idea. This manual is filled with their contributions and each one is a world of fun.

And finally, this was a dream project because of how well it has gone so far. We went to Kickstarter to see if it was even

a possibility, and received such a warm welcome. Out of the projects I've been a part of there, Storyteller Cards was the smoothest. We still have a few weeks to go as I wait for everything to arrive here, but it funded fairly quickly thanks to an amazing group of communicative backers, and is on its way to an on-time delivery. I can't ask for much more than that.

And now that we're near the end of production, it's just the beginning for Storyteller Cards. This manual can get you started. Before you know it you will create an elevator pitch, draw your own comic, write short stories, experience the journey of a hero, and create your own personalized card game. And those are just a few examples of what is inside the Storyteller Manual.

Thanks again to everyone! Remember to share your creations with us on twitter **@StorytellerCard** or on our website **StorytellerCards.com**.

# Director's Cut

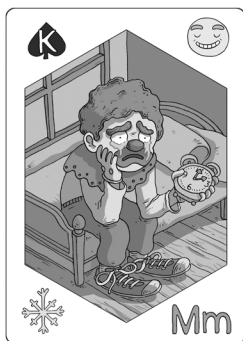
## by Jason Tagmire

*Create your own film using just 8 cards.*

For each of the below categories, you will draw a card and describe the item in the category based on an element from the main image. You will say the category name, your contribution and then proceed to the next category. When you have finished, name your film and pass the deck to the next player.

- 1) Setting
- 2) Character 1
- 3) Character 2
- 4) Their Relationship
- 5) Their Goal
- 6) The Conflict
- 7) The Resolution
- 8) The Twist

Film Name \_\_\_\_\_



Looking at the above card, the Setting could be one of many things depending on which element of the card you choose to work with.

Clown - circus, clown school, birthday party

Clock - clock tower, Big Ben, watch repair shop

Cry - funeral, onion field

Bedroom - your own bedroom, someone else's bedroom

Then you draw the next card and continue to the next category. By the end you will have two main characters, we'll know their relationship to each other, what they are trying to accomplish, what is preventing them from accomplishing it, whether they were successful or unsuccessful, and the twist ending that nobody expected.



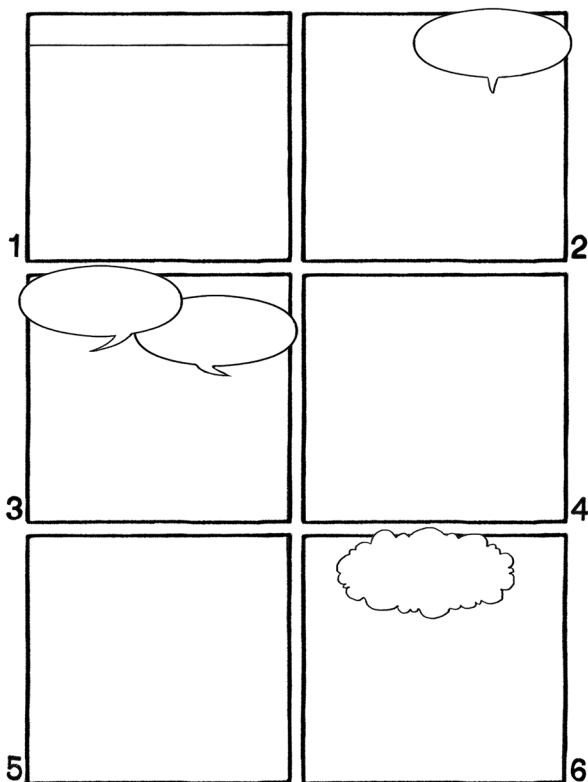


# Comic Challenge

by Carey Pietsch

*Create a comic, alone or with friends!*

1. Pick card from the Storyteller Card deck.
2. Roll a six-sided die to choose a panel. Make a drawing based off of that card, then pass the comic to the next player.
3. Next player (if you are with friends). Roll the die and continue the story in that panel. If you roll a panel that was completed, you may choose any open panel.



Below is an example of a mostly completed comic based on the 3 of Spades card. Panel 1 is open and available for you! Feel free to set the tone for the story in its establishing frame.



And just so you can see how the story creatively unfolded, here is the order in which the panels were drawn:

Panel 2 - by Carey Pietsch

Panel 6 - by Ive Sorocuk

Panel 4 - by Marty Cobb

Panel 3 - by Luke Milton

Panel 5 - by Campbell Whyte

# Once Upon A Time

by Elle Tagmire and Jason Tagmire

*An activity where the kids tell the story.*

Draw 3 Storyteller cards and use them as inspiration to fill in the blanks. (Parents: You may need to write while their imagination runs wild!).

**Once upon a time there was a \_\_\_\_\_  
who lived in a \_\_\_\_\_. One day, they  
decided to go on an adventure. They  
grabbed their favorite \_\_\_\_\_,  
because it \_\_\_\_\_.**

**While walking, they came across a  
\_\_\_\_\_. ! This made them feel  
\_\_\_\_\_. So they decided to  
\_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Eventually they found what they were  
looking for. It was a \_\_\_\_\_. They  
returned home and lived happily ever  
after, and decided to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.**

**THE END.**

**Story Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Below is an example of a story created by my 5 year old daughter, Elle. While it may not make much sense to anyone else, it's been 6 months and she still talks about this story from time to time.

**Once upon a time there was a** SPACEMAN  
**who lived in a** JAIL **. One day, they**  
**decided to go on an adventure. They**  
**grabbed their favorite** FLOWER **,**  
**because it** WAS A SUNNY DAY **.**

**While walking, they came across a**  
BEDROOM **! This made them feel**  
HAPPY **. So they decided to**  
PLAY WITH HIS TOYS  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Eventually they found what they were**  
**looking for. It was a** CLOCK **. They**  
**returned home and lived happily ever**  
**after, and decided to** FIND THE SUN  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**THE END.**

**Story Name:** ONCE UPON A SPACEMAN  
**Your Name:** ELLE

Gotta love their imaginations. See what your kids can come up with!

# Possibilities

by Jay Treat

*A game where YOU make the rules.*

Possibilities is a game for 2-6 creative players where you make the rules. The game is what you and your friends make of it. Feeling silly? Make players act out their cards. Looking for something strategic? Nothing's stopping you. Just remember, your friends can do anything too! Seeing what happens as you change the game together is always a blast.

Possibilities starts with 5 simple rules and play begins immediately. Make new rules, change existing rules, or remove any that you like. But don't be a jerk, or your friends will overrule your change. The game is different every time (potentially Very VERY different), but sometimes it's fun to bring back old rules from previous games. Anything is possible. Make it happen.

You will need Pencils/Pens, the following 5 rules cards and blank paper, cards or index cards.

<p><b>SETUP</b></p> <p>Shuffle the Storyteller deck. Place the starting rules cards. The funniest player takes the first turn.</p>	<p><b>ALTERNATE SETUP</b> (for subsequent games)</p> <p>Shuffle the Storyteller deck. Place the starting rules cards. Place any number of old rules cards that the group unanimously agrees to. The funniest player takes the first turn.</p>
Front	Back

<p><b>TURN</b></p> <p>On your turn, draw and play a Storyteller card from the deck face-up in front of you. Play passes to the left.</p>	<p><i>Some rules may refer to the cards in front of you as your 'tableau.'</i></p> <p><i>The next player should start his/her turn while you write any rule changes that weren't voted down from your turn.</i></p>
Front	Back

<p><b>DEFAULT TRIGGER</b></p> <p>When you play a card, if no other rules trigger*, propose a change to the rules:</p> <p>You may add a new rule; reinstate an old one; or replace, modify or remove an existing rule.</p>	<p><i>*A rule is only considered 'triggered' if it happens when a card is played, and only if the rule requires that the played card must have a particular characteristic that some cards don't.</i></p>
Front	Back

*\*If the rule change is voted down, the player who proposed it does NOT get to propose another change in its place.*

Back

## CONTEST

Each player may contest any rule change before it is enacted. Everyone votes and the contesting player breaks ties.

If the change is voted down, it doesn't happen\*.

If the change is voted up, the contesting player can't contest any more rules this game.

Front

## ALTERNATE END

The game ends when there are ten or more rules other than the starting rules AND one player has more points than anyone else.  
That player wins.

Back

## END

The game ends when no more cards can be played or at the end of the turn in which any player's score reaches or exceeds 30 points.

The player with the most points at the end wins.

Front





# **Freudian Knot**

## **by Jay Treat**

*A storytelling and deduction game for 3-5 players.*

All you need is a deck of Storyteller Cards and something to write on for each player.

### **SETUP**

Shuffle the deck and deal everyone a card. Each player secretly writes down one word describing the card's character, object, location or action. Then shuffle those cards with 2 more cards per player and remove the rest.

### **GAMEPLAY**

Players take turns going clockwise, starting with the boldest player. On your turn, reveal the top card of the deck, placing it in order with any previously revealed cards. The first player will begin a story and each other player will continue it, until the last card is played, when the last player will end the story (after three rounds).

The only requirement is that you pick up where the last player left off (except for the first turn of the game) and that the portion of the story you tell prominently include at least one element of the revealed card. Generally, a turn is two to three sentences, but there is no limit beyond what the group will tolerate.

While telling your part of the story, you also want to try to include a hint about the word you secretly wrote down earlier, but don't be too obvious. When it's not your turn, you'll want to pay attention, and maybe even take notes.

After all the cards have been revealed and everyone has told three parts of the story, each player writes down a single guess for each other player what their secret word was. When everyone is ready, compare your guesses and words.

Each player scores one point for each other player's word they guessed correctly. Then, if at least one player correctly guessed your word AND at least one player did not ("some but not all"), then you score 3 points. Synonyms are close enough and spelling is irrelevant. The player with the most points wins. If there's a tie, all tied players win.

You're welcome to try any kind of story you like, but I strongly recommend describing a dream, because it makes bizarre combinations and abrupt transitions seem natural.

A quick example of play: I secretly chose the word 'criminal' at the beginning; the player before me just explained that we rode over a rainbow on a giant cat; and I just revealed this card...



Looks like a wrestler lifting boxes in the sewer. Okay, here goes:

"When my meownt and I land on the other side of the rainbow, we see that the treasure... has been stolen! Just a few coins are left, leading directly into... the sewer."

That was a short one, but I progressed the story, made the sewer an important element that the next player can't really ignore, and subtly hinted at criminal activity. If I hint like that twice more, will it be enough for some players to pick up on my secret word or prove too subtle? In any case, I got to butcher the English language by making a portmanteau for the riding cat, and that's a personal victory right there.

Have fun, tell some zany stories, and remember it's just a game.



# **ChromaCards**

## **by Charles Beauvais**

*Strategic coloring for 3-5 players.*

ChromaCards is a card game for 3-5 players based on the strategy dice game, ChromaCubes.

\*For 2 players, try ChromaCribbs (page 27).

You will need:

- 1 deck of Storyteller Cards
- 1 ChromaCards puzzle (for each player. See page 26)
- 6 crayons (to share): 1 crayon of each color: red, blue, green, purple, orange, yellow.

### **GOAL**

Complete quadrants in your puzzle by coloring them before the other players.

### **SETUP**

Give each player a copy of the same ChromaCards puzzle. Shuffle the deck of Storyteller cards, deal 6 to each player, and place the rest face-down to form the deck. Each player keeps his or her hand of cards secret.

Select one player to start. Turns proceed clockwise.

### **ON YOUR TURN**

You may discard any of the following sets to color in an empty section of your puzzle.

- Discard 2 cards of the same color to complete a section of that color.
- Discard 3 cards of the same season to complete a section of that quadrant.
- Discard 4 cards of the same suit to complete any section.

If you have already colored in all the sections of that color or quadrant, you can color in any section instead.

If you have multiple sets, you may discard each of them to

color one section per set. No card may be used in more than one set.

*Note: If you do not discard any sets, you may choose to discard any number of cards from your hand to draw that many replacement cards. This ends your turn.*

## SCORE

When you color in the last section of a quadrant, circle the highest remaining score in that quadrant. Everyone else crosses out that score.

## DRAW

When you are done discarding sets, you may draw a card for each card you discarded this turn.

This ends your turn.

## EXTRA TURN

Instead of drawing the full number of cards, you may choose to draw one fewer card. If you do, take another turn immediately. Note that this will permanently decrease your hand size for the rest of the game. You can only take 3 extra turns this way during the game, and you cannot take multiple extra turns in a row.

## EXAMPLE

From her 6 cards, Sara discards two yellow cards to complete one of the 4 yellow sections in the Summer quadrant. She then discards three other cards from her hand that all have the summer symbol and colors in one of the 2 orange sections in the Summer quadrant. She then draws five cards to replace her discards.

## LAST ROUND

The last round is triggered when a player finishes his or her last quadrant, or uses his or her last extra turn. In either case, each other player gets one final turn. Players are still allowed to draw one fewer card after discarding, in order to



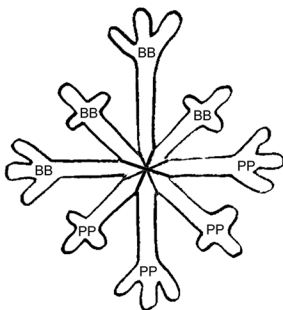
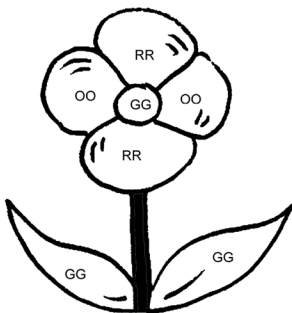
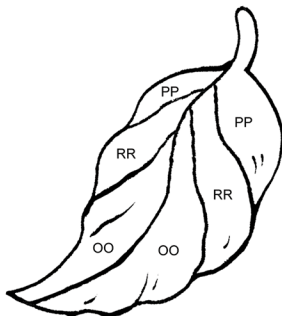
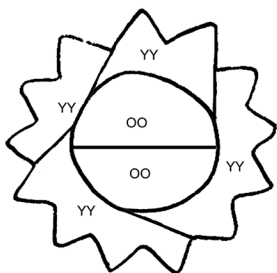
take an extra turn. The player who triggered the last round does not get another turn.

### FINAL SCORE

Each player adds his or her points from each quadrant they completed (incomplete quadrants score 0). Also, each player scores 1 point for each extra turn he or she did not take (maximum of 3). The player with the highest score wins.



# Seasons



ChromaCards@FlyingSheep.com  
Version 2013.04.27



# **ChromaCrib**

## **by Charles Beauvais**

*Strategic coloring for 2 players.*

ChromaCrib is a card game for 2 players\* based on the strategy dice game, ChromaCubes, as well as the classic card game, Cribbage.

\* For 3-5 players, try ChromaCards (page 23).

You will need:

- 1 deck of Storyteller cards
- 2 ChromaCards puzzles (one for each player - page 26)
- 6 crayons (to share): 1 crayon of each color: red, blue, green, purple, orange, yellow.

### **GOAL**

Complete each of the four quadrants in your puzzle by coloring them before your opponent.

### **ON YOUR TURN**

You may discard any of the following sets to color in an empty section of your puzzle.

### **CREATING THE CRIB**

Each player selects two cards from their hand and sets them aside (without revealing them) to form the crib.

### **PLAYING THE HANDS**

Starting with the player who has the crib, each player discards a card from his or her hand, keeping each player's cards separate. If a card creates a set with the immediately preceding card(s), then the player can color in a section per the rules below.

-2 cards of the same color complete a section of that color.

-3 cards of the same season complete a section of that quadrant.

-4 cards of the same suit complete any section.

If you have already colored in all the sections of that color or quadrant, you can color in any section instead.

If a single card satisfies multiple conditions, you can fill in multiple sections. For example, if you play a card that is the second blue card in a row as well as the third winter season in a row, you can fill in both a blue section and a section in the winter quadrant.

Players continue discarding until neither has any cards left.

## COUNTING THE HANDS

After the play is complete, each player counts his or her hand, starting with the player without the crib. Each player takes the cards he or she played and uses them (separately from the opponent's cards) to create sets and fill in sections of their puzzles. Sets of two colors, three seasons, or four of the same suit are used to fill in sections in the same way as while playing the hands.

The player with the crib counts the crib separately, creating sets and filling in his or her puzzle.

*Note: A card cannot be used in multiple sets of the same type, but can be used in different sets. For example, if you have three blue cards, you can only complete one blue section with them (not three). However, these cards can be used as part of a set of seasons or a set of suits.*

## SCORING

When you color in the last section of a quadrant, circle the highest remaining score for that quadrant. Your opponent crosses out that score.

## END OF GAME

Play until each player has had the crib three times.

Each player adds his or her points from each quadrant they completed (incomplete quadrants score 0). The player with the highest score wins.

# **To Be Continued...**

**by Tim Rodriguez**

*Match icons to continue the story!*

Deal six cards to each player and set the remaining cards in the middle face down.

One player is elected to go first. He or she will flip the top card of the deck, announcing "Once upon a time there was..." and invokes one or more elements from the card to start a story.

In turn, each successive player will play one card to the pile and continue the story. That card must match any of the criteria in the corners of the card: season/letter/color/-suit/rank/emotion. They may then use one or more element(s) from the played card in their addition to the story. They may also freely reference previously noted story elements.

## **Example**

1 (3 Spades): Once upon a time, there was an Astronaut

2 (K Hearts): Who liked to wink at psychics.

3 (8 Clubs): One day, a psychic foretold that the astronaut would Fall into a hole.

If a player cannot make a match, they draw cards one-at-a-time until they have a valid match, and then must play that card immediately.

When someone plays their last card, they announce "TO BE CONTINUED..." in an ominous voice. Shuffle all the cards and play again!



# Pitch It!

## by Scott King

*A short exercise where you use Storyteller Cards to write an original Elevator Pitch.*

What is an "elevator pitch"? It's a summary that's short enough for you to say to someone on an elevator ride between two floors. In it you should introduce the key elements of your story. It should be interesting enough to hook the listener so that they will want more, and it should clearly establish the tone and genre of your story.

For example an elevator pitch for "The Wizard of Oz" might read like this...

After a twister transports a Kansas farm girl to a magical land, she sets out on a dangerous journey to find a wizard with the power to send her home. Standing in her way is a wicked witch who more than anything else in the world wants her shoes.

The pitch above does four things. It introduces who the protagonist is, what the protagonist wants, what is getting in the protagonist's way and it sets the tone of the story.

To play Pitch it! you must draw three cards. Each will represent a different story element:



1st Card  
Protagonist



2nd Card  
What They Want



3rd Card  
Antagonist



When you draw a card, you can use anything on that card to inspire you just make sure that when you write your pitch you also make clear what the genre or tone of the story is.

For example, I randomly drew the following cards:

1st Card - **Zombie** - Drink - Teapot - Tree

2nd Card - Artist - **Kiss** - Saw - Jail

3rd Card - **Criminal** - Ride - Toy Truck - Graveyard

So a pitch I might write for this story would be:

A lonely zombie boy must get his first kiss so that he can be resurrected and stop his mother from marrying the ex-con that killed him.

# **Tough Audience**

## **by Scott Almes**

*A game of push-your-luck storytelling for 2-5 players.*

### **SETUP**

Shuffle the deck and deal each player 2 cards, which forms their hand. (During the game, your hand is kept hidden)

Place the deck in the middle of the table

The best storyteller goes first

### **GAMEPLAY**

Play goes clockwise, which each player taking their turn. On your turn, flip over the top card from the deck. Now you have two options:

Option 1: Take the card

Tell a one-sentence story revolving around an element on the card (The clown was happy, until he learned that balloon animals weren't good company.) Then place the card in your hand. It is now the next person's turn.

Option 2: Continue Drawing

First, tell a one-sentence introduction to your story. (The angry boxer was looking for a friend.) Then, flip over the next card, splaying the cards so you can see the emoticon in the upper right corner. Then, two things may happen:

The emoticon is different than any that have already been flipped over. In which you may take the card and give the story a happy, one sentence ending. Place the cards below it that you drew this turn into the discard. It is now the next player's turn.

The emoticon matches one of the cards that have already been flipped over. You have gotten a bad ending. Give the story a one sentence bad ending, and place all the cards you've drawn this turn into the discard. It is now the next player's turn.

The game ends when: there are no cards left in the draw deck, or one player has collected eight cards.

At that point, each player may select five cards from their hand and place them facedown in front of them. (*If you have five or less, simply use all of your cards*)

Once everybody has done this, everyone should flip over their chosen cards and reveal them. The player who has make the best poker hand wins!

# **Grow Up, Hero!**

## **by Daniel Solis**

*A storytelling game about the journey of a hero.*

### **SETUP**

Draw one card. That's the star of the story you're about to tell. Draw another card. That is who the star will become at the end of the story.

The story is about how the star changes from the character on the first card to the character on the second card.

### **PLAY**

Each player takes a turn starting a sentence of the story, with her neighboring players adding to that sentence.

### **TURN**

Draw three cards, choose one to keep, choose one to give the player to your left, and the third to give to the player on your right.

Start a sentence describing what the star is doing, using your card as inspiration.

The player to your right continues your sentence with the word "AND," using her card as inspiration.

The player to your left completes the sentence with the word "BUT," using his card as inspiration.

The next turn passes to the player on your left, who will start the next sentence of the story. Thus the complete story will form one sentence at a time, three players contributing a third of each sentence.

## ENDGAME

When each player has had a chance to start a sentence.  
Hopefully by the end, your star will have completed his or  
her transition.

# Short Stories

## by John du Bois

*An improvisational storytelling party game.*

### INTRODUCTION

Short Stories is a short improvisational storytelling party game in which 3-6 players try to use the cards in their hands to make up a story that solves the problem the round's Storyteller created.

### COMPONENTS

54 Storyteller Cards

Some way to keep score (dice, tokens, or pen and paper)

### SETUP

Shuffle the cards and place them face-down in a deck within everyone's reach.

Decide which player will be the first Storyteller. If it's hard to decide, the oldest player is the first Storyteller.

The first Storyteller deals 5 cards to each player.

### TURN

#### **Phase 1: Name a Problem.**

The Storyteller makes up and describes a problem that the other players must solve. This problem should be short and have multiple ways to solve it.

"Find a lost puppy", "Invent a more humane mousetrap", and "Build a sand castle" are good examples of problems to solve.

#### **Phase 2: Create a Story.**

Starting with the player to the Storyteller's right, each other player uses as many cards from his or her hand as he or she wants to tell a story about how they (or a character on a card) would solve the problem. Players can use any of the

elements on their cards except for rank and suit (characters, items, actions, moods, locations, seasons, letters, or colors) in their story, but they must be used as that element – for example, if the player uses a letter, the card must be used for that letter and not for an item or word starting with that letter.

As an example, when using the card to the left, the player could use any (or all) of:



Clown  
Clock  
Cry  
Happy  
Bedroom  
Winter  
The letter “M”  
Yellow

When creating their story, players can choose to use only one or two cards, which make it easier to create a story specific to the Storyteller’s Problem but would score fewer points (see Scoring below), or use all five cards, which would make it hard to create a story but would score the most points.

### **Phase 3: Scoring.**

The Storyteller decides whose story is the best and (in games with more than three players) second best. The player with the best story gets a number of points equal to the number of cards he or she played. The person with the second best story (if applicable) get a number of points equal to half the cards he or she played, rounded up.

#### **Phase 4: Discard and Draw.**

Place all cards played face-up in a discard pile, then all players draw cards from the deck until they have five cards in hand. If the deck runs out of cards, shuffle the discard pile and use it as the new deck. After all players have five cards in hand, the player to the Storyteller's right is the next Storyteller.

#### **ENDING THE GAME**

The game ends when the deck runs out of cards as many times as there are players (for example, in a four-player game, the game ends when the deck runs out of cards for the fourth time). The player with the most points is the winner. If more than one player has the most points, they share in the victory!





## 25 Word Stories

by Gaetan Pappalardo

*Tiny stories that go a long way.*

**Choose a Storyteller Card and write a mini story that is exactly 25 words long.**

Tips/Notes:

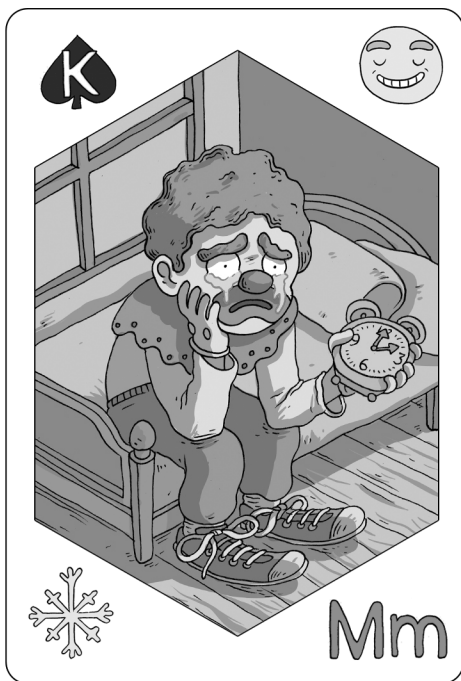
- For younger players or beginners, try to use a maximum of 20-25 words instead of the exact count.
- Try to squeeze a problem into the mini story.
- A great way to create quick writing ideas for longer stories.
- Exercises the mind's eye to produce creative scenes from different perspectives.
- Helps beginning writers to formulate story elements on the spot.

Try it yourself!

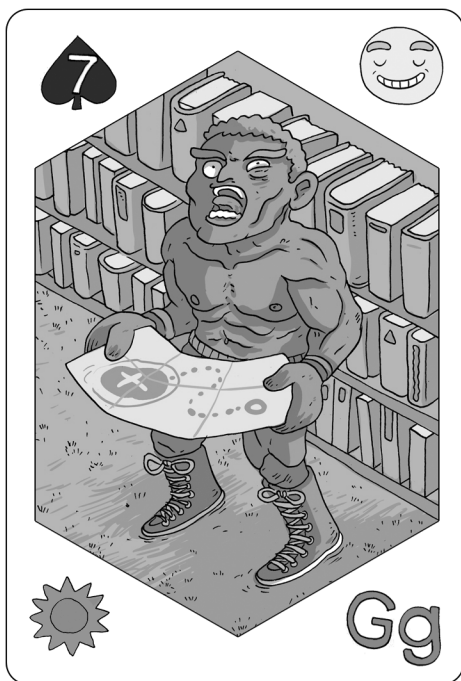
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



Mr. Faceplant twirled a rose in celebration after the nurse reset his shoulder. “Thanks, Sugar,” he crooned, then exited to a mob of screaming fans.



Flobo lost his rubber chicken  
at Clown School. “It just  
ran away,” he told his  
mom in a weak voice.  
Now he’s in time out.



Even with a detailed map drawn by his daughter, The Champ couldn't find the book on Fairy Princesses. "Bedtime will be a battle," he grumbled.

# Pyramid Scheme

## by Marty Cobb and Jason Tagmire

*A light storytelling RPG for 2-4 players.*

You will need:

- One six-sided die

### SETUP

Each player draws 6 cards and forms a pyramid with a card representing their character on top, two cards representing his/her skills below that, and three cards representing items below those.

The group will then take two cards and place them face down on the table.

Deal two cards facedown to the table. These will be the goal of the players, and the conflict they are facing.

Flip over one card, and as a group decide if this will be the **goal** or the **conflict**. Once decided, each player can elaborate on the idea, setting the stage for the game. Once completed, flip the second card and repeat for the other choice.

Example Goal: *Find and return the lost hospital key.*

Example Conflict: *Time is running out. A patient has locked himself in his room to avoid a surgery that may save his pinky toe!*

The player who most resembles his/her character goes first.

### ON YOUR TURN

You will draw a card from the deck and use the illustration elements on to tell the story of the characters.

Example: The patient threw the key out of the window, 7 stories above the ground. It could have landed anywhere on the east side of 15th Street.

Now that you have set the tone for your turn, you will choose one of your six cards. Each card has a number associated with it, based on the placement in the pyramid. Starting from the top and going from left to right: Character = 1, Skill = 2, Skill = 3, Item = 4, Item = 5, Item = 6.

• CHARACTER



• SKILL



• SKILL



• ITEM



• ITEM



• ITEM



Card types: A character, skill or item can be anything on the card. Use your imagination.

You will then roll the die to determine if there is a good outcome or a bad outcome.

A die roll must be equal to or lower than the pyramid number for the outcome to be good. A higher number means the outcome will be bad.

A good outcome will progress the story in a positive way for the characters using the character, skill or item from the card that you chose, leading the group closer to their goal. A bad outcome will be very negative and drive the group further away. Also with, a bad outcome, the player cannot use the character, skill or item that they chose.

The player will then continue the story based on the outcome of his/her die roll. They should also turn the used pyramid card to its side, as it cannot be used again.

Play passes to the left, and each player continues to tell the story using their cards.

## END OF GAME

The game ends when all pyramid cards or deck cards have been used, or when the goal is accomplished, whichever happens first.





# Onomatopoeia

by Ryan Sanders

*Learn to write sound effects!*

Draw a card from the Storyteller Cards deck and write down three sounds that you think you would hear if you were witnessing the scene.

Example:



1. Tick,tick, tick
2. Squeak
3. Snnniff.

Try it yourself or with your kids!



# Who What When Where Why How?

## by Jason Tagmire

*Six age-old questions to shape your stories.*

Print/copy the six question cards. Try one of these activities or one of your own.

- 1) Shuffle them up and test your storytelling reflexes.
- 2) Keep them on hand when you need a little more detail.
- 3) Gather a group of friends. Place a Storyteller Card in front of you and pass out the question cards randomly to the other players. Then each other player will ask a question about the scenario on your card.

*Examples: **WHAT** is the title of the book that the Scientist is burying? **HOW** will she explain the sand in her shoes when she gets back to the lab?*

Once everyone has asked a question, the next player draws a new Storyteller Card.

WHO?

WHAT?

**WHEN?**

**WHERE?**

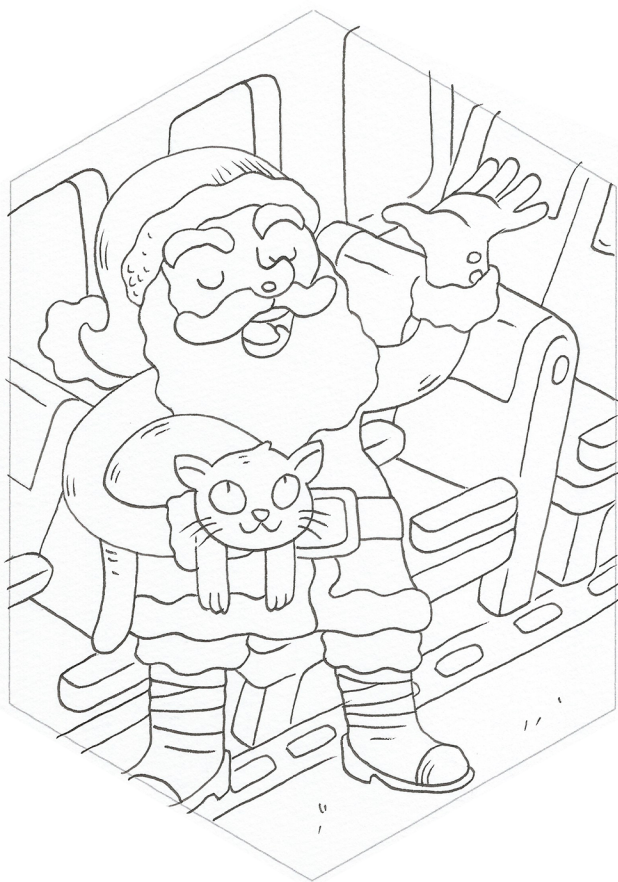
**WHY?**

**HOW?**

# Coloring Pages

*Color your own Storyteller Cards!*











# CONTRIBUTORS

## **Scott Almes**

*(scottalmes.wordpress.com)*

Scott Almes is probably best known for the mega-iconic dice game, *Martian Dice* where players abduct Humans, Cows and Chickens, while trying to fend off the military. As if alien abducting humans wasn't hard enough on its own! Playing this game is always a blast, and check out the awesome dice.

Another game that Scott designed (also released by Tasty Minstrel Games) is the Kickstarter mega-hit, *Kings of Air and Steam*. It's a steampunk airship delivery game... and I probably don't need to say much more than that. Super cool, beautiful production, and I can't wait to try it out.

## **Charles Beauvais**

*(flyingsheep.com)*

I met Charles at TotalCon where I was pulled into an impromptu game of *ChromaCubes*. It's a strategic dice and coloring game, which stood out among the crowd of Euro Games and War Games. By the end of our session everyone was buying a copy of the game to take home. I cherished my one page and talked about it for quite a while after the convention. It was one of those games that I dream of making, and Charles did it so elegantly that it puts my dream game to shame.

## **Marty Cobb**

Marty is my brother-in-law and pixel artist for games like *Pixel Lincoln: The Deckbuilding Game*, *Paper Route*, and more.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## **John du Bois**

*(johncdubois.wordpress.com)*

I met John at Gen Con last year where he was demoing his beer selling and purchasing game, Microbrew. The game had a very solid commerce system that left a big impression on me after the con.

John is also the designer of Bread and Circuses, a game that he created for National Game Design Month. It's a bluffing game in which 4-10 players are nobles trying to placate angry peasants with food and fun. Players gain more gold by offering something fewer other players are, but if the peasants aren't offered both bread and circuses, they riot, hurting all players. You can play Bread and Circuses today, as it's available as a free print and play game at John's blog.

## **Scott King**

*(scottking.info)*

Scott is a writer / college professor / gamer who I met through gamer friends on Twitter. He was one of the first suggestions I received when I announced the Storyteller Manual, and the first to submit a contribution.

Scott created Holiday Wars, the very cool comic book about that time the "Easter Bunny declared war on the other Holidays in the hopes of gaining the one thing that can guarantee his immortality: The Holiday Spirit."

## **Luke Milton**

*(fruitlesspursuits.com)*

Luke is co-creator of Fruitless Pursuits, co-host of The Book Was Better podcast and wrote the comic Glorious Bounty.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## **Gaetan Pappalardo**

*(gaetanpappalardo.com)*

Gaetan Pappalardo is the creator and author of Louie Licks and the Wicked Snakes, a story about a young boy who uses Rock and Roll to save the world. Armed with his Battle Axe (a 1962 Phoenix III guitar) he ends up on an adventure when a mega-fan from outer space tries to steal his thunder. It's a very original idea with great artwork by Amy English.

Of course, Gaetan is a rocker himself. He's also a third grade teacher and writer for the George Lucas Educational Foundation, Edutopia.

## **Carey Pietsch**

*(careydraws.com)*

Carey created the art for my game ZombieZone as well as a world of awesome illustrations over at Carey Draws.

## **Tim Rodriguez**

*(brooklynindiegames.com)*

Tim is the man behind Brooklyn Indie Games and the designer of Ghost Pirates (as well as Hyperreality - which is very awesome). Ghost Pirates was an early Kickstarter success way back in 2011 before Kickstarter was Kickstarter. It's a really cool tactical two player pirate battle game, where you might just walk your pirates across planks onto your opponent's ship to destroy him. It's one of those rare games that it's even fun to sit back and watch other people play. I'm a big fan of Tim's games and I'm thrilled to have him as part of the project.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## **Ryan Sanders**

Ryan was a backer of the Storyteller Cards Kickstarter who sent me some great ideas for the Storyteller Manual.

## **Daniel Solis**

*(danielsolis.com)*

You may know Daniel from his storytelling games Do: Pilgrims of the Flying Temple or Happy Birthday, Robot!, or one of his many other wonderful projects.

Do: Pilgrims of the Flying Temple is a beautifully produced storytelling game about coming of age, set in a very Last Airbender-esque universe. It's one of those games that you fall in love with as soon as it's in your hands. And you won't be able to get your hands on Happy Birthday, Robot! because it's basically sold out everywhere. An amazing game that always starts with the saying "Happy Birthday, Robot!" and ends wherever you want it to.

Daniel is also one of the most open designers you will find. His website and twitter feed are a treasure of game ideas and discussion. It's all very inspiring and similar to what I'm trying to accomplish with Storyteller Cards. Take a quick look at his Pitch Tag thread (with Fred Hicks of Evil Hat Productions) and you will be designing games by tonight. It's creatively addictive.

## **Ive Sorocuk**

*(webcomicsnation.com/nonstopcomics/)*

Ive is the creator of the long-running webcomic, Comics Face.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Elle Tagmire

Elle is my wild-minded 5 year old daughter. She loves to make her own games using anything she can find.

## Jason Tagmire

*(buttonshy.com)*

I am a game designer from South Jersey, best known for reducing our 16th president to 16-bits in the card game / video game, Pixel Lincoln. I'm the designer of the AEG card-throwing game, Maximum Throwdown, co-set designer on Quarriors: Quest of the Qladiator, co-creator of the pop-culture site Fruitless Pursuits, and the Kickstarter curator for the Philadelphia chapter of the International Game Design Association.

## Jay Treat

*(jtreat.tumblr.com)*

Jay is a good friend and semi-local designer with some of my favorite unpublished games, a few of which I predict we will be hearing a lot of in the near future. First, there is his co-operative space station being overrun by aliens game, Assault on Khyber Station. It's a tough, engaging, blast of a game, where all players may end up surviving and destroying the aliens, or quite the opposite.

Then there is Intrigue, which is Jay's trick-taking game of plotting and manipulation. Being just a small deck of cards and a few tokens, I am hoping we will be seeing this soon.

Jay is a very knowledgeable and thinky game designer, which makes him an excellent play tester and fellow gamer.

So of course I wanted Jay to be involved in this project and he came up with 2 really cool games for the Storyteller Manual.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Campbell Whyte

*(campbellwhyte.com)*

You may know Campbell Whyte from his amazing illustration series 8-Bit Dreams, where he illustrated a whole bunch of classic Nintendo Games. I have quite a collection of the originals, snagging up Megaman 2, Blades of Steel and many others as soon as they went on sale. Campbell is a great friend and an amazing artist, so I'm thrilled to be able to work together on this project.



# Storyteller Cards



## Fantasy

COMING SOON.



Share your creations with us at  
**StorytellerCards.com!**

Within this manual are the secrets to  
**unlocking your inner storyteller.**

By the end you will write a **movie**, draw a  
**comic**, develop a **hero**, write **short**  
**stories**, write even **shorter stories**,  
create your own **card game**, and **more!**

CONTRIBUTIONS BY:

Scott Almes  
Charles Beauvais  
Marty Cobb  
John du Bois  
Scott King  
Luke Milton  
Gaetan Pappalardo  
Carey Pietsch  
Tim Rodriguez  
Ryan Sanders  
Daniel Solis  
Ive Sorocuk  
Elle Tagmire  
Jason Tagmire  
Jay Treat  
Campbell Whyte



Note: These games and  
activities require the  
Storyteller Cards deck.

Available now at  
**storytellercards.com.**