



BrowserQuests™ Role-Playing Game Author's Guide

© 2014-2020 by Scott M. Huelsman

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1 CALLING ALL AUTHORS!

Have you always wanted to develop your own role-playing game (RPG)-based storyline utilizing a traditional pencil-and-paper, gamemaster-led system such as Dungeons and Dragons,® Basic Fantasy RPG or many others on the market? Are you interested in perhaps building such a campaign for a computer-based (online) framework, something you can share with potentially millions of gamers throughout the world? Would you prefer to have access to an online toolset that will help you create the many characters, places and encounters you'll need to help tell your stories? If so, this author's guide is for you!

1.1 PLATFORM OVERVIEW

The [BrowserQuests™](#) role-playing game engine is unique on the Internet, a sort of cross between a traditional pencil-and-paper RPG and a novel (or, more appropriately, an *interactive* novel). Players register with the site, choose a particular series of stories to interact with (called a "campaign"), generate their own custom hero from scratch and then enter the story, acting as the game's chief protagonist and eventually leading an adventuring party of virtual heroes on a series of heroic quests. While the experience is primarily text-based, associated artwork livens-up the user interface along with a full background musical score. A virtual gamemaster (GM) referees the overall experience as well, acting as a guide to facilitate the play typically found in a traditional person-to-person, table-top, pencil-and-paper gaming scenario.

1.1.1 Single Player, Persistent World, Browser-based Environment

The BrowserQuests™ RPG is single-player in scope; the system is NOT a massively-multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) as is common on the Internet today. Instead, players develop their own characters, lead a fictitious adventuring party of non-player characters (NPCs) and ultimately influence their own "instance" (copy) of the "Sisalus" fantasy world through a chosen campaign.

This "old school" experience is like computer RPGs of the 1980s and 1990s where a single player had complete control within the game and did not interact with other players. Actions that the player takes within his own game instance are preserved over time, so the player can log out, log back in later and resume the game from where he last left off (and from any Internet-connected device throughout the world). The overall experience is provided via a modern browser, utilizing a responsive design so that players can enjoy the game on both mobile devices and tablets as well as desktops.

1.1.2 Simulated Game Master (GM)

Unlike most other computer RPGs, a virtual gamemaster (GM) acts as an interface between the player and the BrowserQuests™ RPG system, providing encounter details, describing events, acting as a sort of referee and helping the game "feel" more like a traditional paper-and-dice RPG. Hence, the game is purposely designed to facilitate communication between the simulated GM and the player, and therefore provide the feel of a table-top conversation. Again, other players are NOT involved; the overall experience is simply between the player and the GM.

1.1.3 Basic Fantasy RPG Rule Set/Framework

Rather than design and develop an entire RPG rule set/framework from scratch, the open source [Basic Fantasy RPG](#) system has been leveraged instead. This system has already met with substantial success in

the RPG gaming community and is consistently being improved and managed via the open source process. The BrowserQuests™ RPG engine does NOT attempt to utilize every rule verbatim, but instead leverages the basic system and then customizes its own rules to better fit the scope and direction of the BrowserQuests™ web-based RPG.

1.1.4 A Massive, Living, Breathing Fantasy World

After a player begins the game and creates an initial character, she then embarks on an endless string of quests both epic and routine, her hero (and, ultimately, recruited fellow party adventurers) engaging in a series of encounters (such as dialogues, shops or combat) within individual locations (such as stores, caves or dungeons); groups of locations constitute a setting (such as a city, small forest or underground labyrinth), groups of settings constitute a country, groups of countries constitute a continent and multiple continents constitute the Sisalus gaming world. *Note that a separate BrowserQuests™ Content document has already been developed that includes specific details regarding the Sisalus fantasy world as a whole.*

1.2 AUTHORIZING PROVISIONS

While the original (alpha) version of BrowserQuests™ utilized a complete administrative backend of online forms to enter story-related content and build the first few story-based modules, that collection was only available to the original developer. Over the summer of 2020, however, a newer, “beta” version of the framework has been opened-up to allow serious, vetted authors the ability to create their own content and allow players additional quests, modules and even entire campaigns in which to adventure in. This administrative backend has been rebuilt to allow authors access to all appropriate story-based forms and mechanisms (and the individual forms themselves updated so that authors cannot see or update content previously developed by other authors).

1.2.1 Campaigns, Modules and Quests

All game play takes place within the single fantasy world of Sisalus. While an original story arc (“campaign”) was initiated for the BrowserQuests™ platform back in 2016, additional campaigns can now be developed by outside authors and entered into the framework as well.

Such campaigns are comprised of individual quests (stories with a definitive goal) and those quests are loosely grouped into separate modules (collections of stories that are told in episodic format, similar to a popular television show). Authors develop quests and group them together into a series of modules to form an overall campaign (which is separate and distinct from all other campaigns, including the original “The Sorrow of Sisa” campaign developed by [Scott Mark Huelsman](#)). Hence, new players registering with the BrowserQuests™ system (or those who wish to start over from scratch) not only create their own characters for the game but then select a particular campaign to play through as well, that character (and subsequent group of party heroes) not allowed to cross over into other campaigns.

1.2.2 Characters

While players create their own party-leading heroes from scratch, characters constitute the many heroes who will eventually join the party, villains that the player will ultimately need to overcome and a whole range of other non-playing characters (NPCs) to be encountered and interacted with. Within the BrowserQuests™ platform, characters are assigned their own abilities, statistics, equipment, graphic depictions and so forth, allowing authors to detail their characters and fully bring them to life.

1.2.3 Locations, Areas and Encounters

Each quest, module and campaign must take place somewhere within the world of Sisalus. Getting started, all game play is restricted to the large continent of Mairiga, comprised of 60 or so individual countries with their own populations, perspectives and lore.

As authors develop their quests, modules and campaigns, they begin with creating locations, general places (such as a smaller village, section of a larger city, outdoor ruins or underground dungeon) where the player and his party will want to visit. Locations are further divided into individual encounter areas (such as a city shop, wilderness river bank or dungeon crypt) that are actually visited by an adventuring party; while a location can hold up to 100 areas, 15-20 is more typical. Finally, each area consists of individual encounters, very specific sets of circumstances that the player must interact with and resolve (typically in sequential order but not always) in order to complete the encounter and move on to the next.

For example, the party may visit the LOCATION of the Village of Tabin, which consists of 13 or so individual AREAS (such as the Sisan Church, the town merchant, a local hotel, etc.). Once arriving at an area, the party undertakes the area's initial ENCOUNTER such as talking to the town merchant (and, often, a particular area will challenge the player with several to many individual encounters). Once a particular area has exhausted its collection of encounters, the party is encouraged to move on to the next area.

1.2.4 Lore

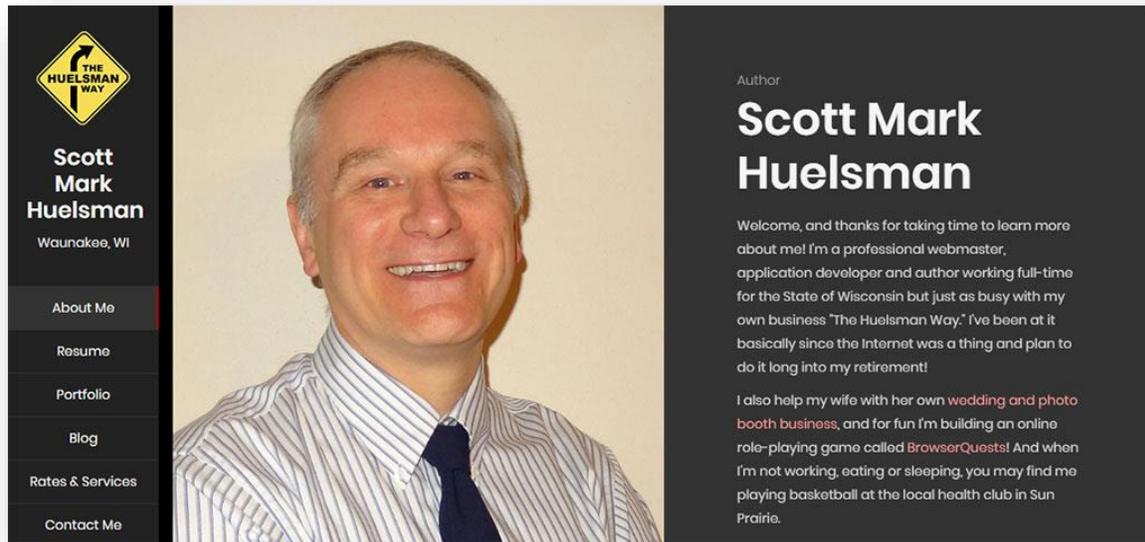
As an author develops her quests, modules and campaigns, a diversity of lore elements—topics of interest regarding story-related people, places, things and events—will need to be developed as well, as the player and his adventuring party will ultimately interact with that lore. Naturally, the world of Sisalus comes complete with its own collection of lore, but campaign authors will be encouraged to generate and manage their own lore database entries as well.

1.2.5 Parties and Heroes

When a new player (or one wishing to start the game over again from scratch) generates a new hero, he is made the leader of the party and hence makes all the decisions. At first, the player's custom hero IS the party—just the single character. In time, however, other characters will join (or otherwise be recruited) into the adventuring party—up to eight altogether—working together as a team for a common goal. While the player's hero is generated randomly, all the heroes that the player invites into her party originally start-out as characters that must be developed by the campaign's author.

1.3 FRAMEWORK DEVELOPER OVERVIEW

BrowserQuests™ is the culmination of nearly 40 years of general fantasy role-playing design, development and experimentation by [Scott M. Huelsman](#) (Waunakee, Wisconsin). First introduced to the paper-and-pencil game "Dungeons and Dragons" as well as the [Commodore VIC-20](#) back in 1982, Scott went on to develop a multitude of fantasy-themed games for the Commodore 64, Windows PC platform and eventually the Internet, producing his own multimedia-enhanced MediaNovel® "Convictions" in 1995 (later renamed "[Wizard Reborn](#)"), a subsequent role-playing novel in 2008, a follow-up interactive fiction prototype "Dogma" in 2014 and then "BrowserQuests" in late 2016.



Scott has also produced a plethora of professionally-developed business websites and online applications since 1999; today, Scott is not only a .NET programmer and webmaster for the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#) but also runs his own web consulting business [The Huelsman Way](#) and leases his own web server and associated resources from both [SiteGround](#) and [InterServer](#) to develop for and support dozens of local small businesses and organizations. Nearing retirement age now, Scott continues to develop and support his BrowserQuests™ creation and is looking forward to working with any RPG author interested in bringing their own quests, modules and campaigns to life via the unique web-based BrowserQuests™ framework!

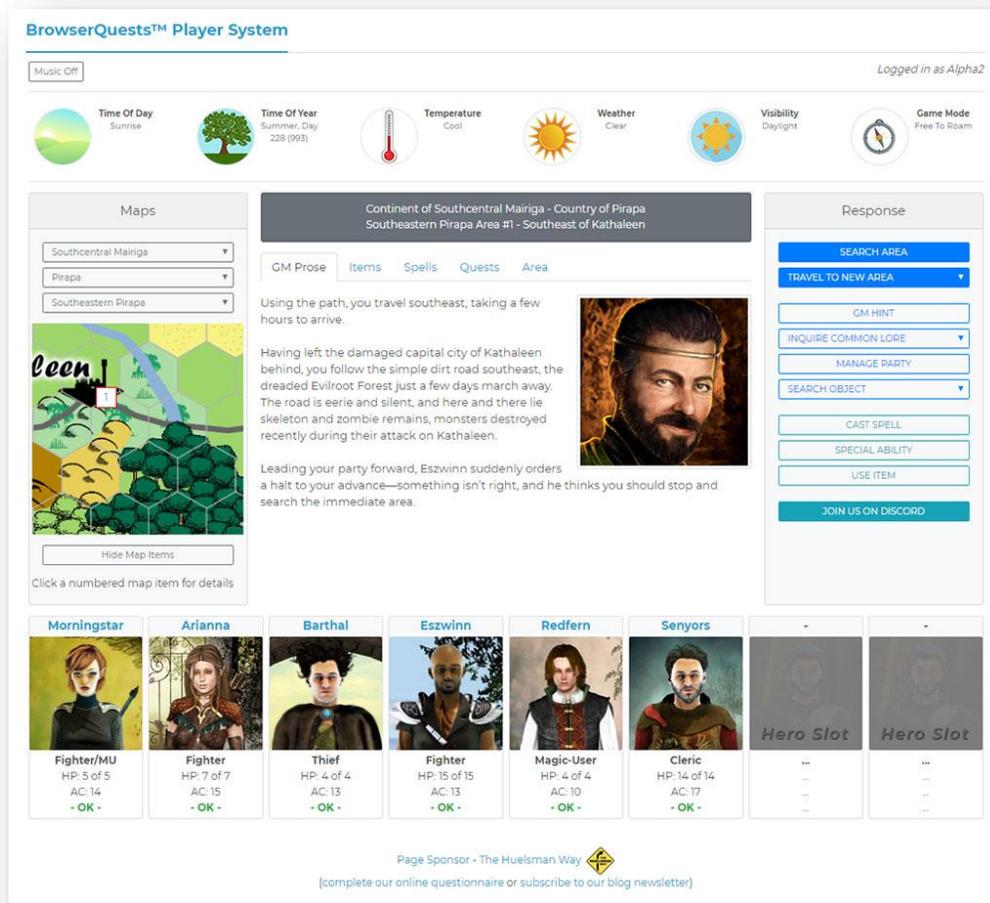
2 GAME INTERFACE

Naturally, in order to write quests, modules and campaigns for the BrowserQuests™ RPG framework, you’ll first need to know how to play the game. Accordingly, be SURE to first sign-up on the website as a player and experience as much of the RPG as you can before attempting to dive-in as an author.

2.1 INTERFACE INTRODUCTION

The BrowserQuests™ RPG interface is designed for a single player—with access to the Internet—to play a series of fantasy-themed quests within a fictional world called “Sisalus.” The RPG system is intended for modern browsers (HTML 5 compliant) and is fully responsive (formatted to function well regardless of screen size or resolution).

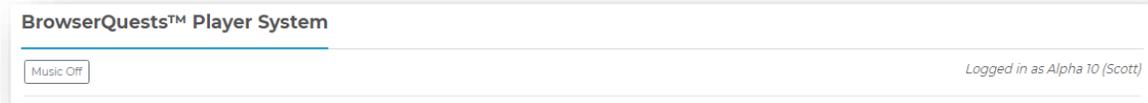
Once a player has registered with the system, verified her new account via email and selects the [PLAY!](#) Button on the BrowserQuests™ website, the following player system interface is displayed:



The interface structure is introduced as follows.

2.2 SITE HEADER & SYSTEM CONTROLS

Below the overall website's navigation and header, the RPG module itself displays the name of the player's current quest (defaulting to #1) in the upper left corner. A few system-level mechanisms are then displayed below:



- **Audio.** Button used to turn the background music on and off (music provided automatically on desktop experience only).
- **Spinner.** Animated GIF that displays whenever the browser is asynchronously connecting to the game server (appears between the audio and player elements in the middle of the site).
- **Player.** Text that shows the player's display name and first name (indicating who is playing).

2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL ICONS

A total of six separate icons are displayed along the top of the game interface (just below the site header and system controls), each icon dedicated to a certain aspect of the current party location: time of day, time of year, temperature, weather, visibility and game mode.



Icons are presented in the following order:

2.3.1.1 Time of Day

References the general time of day (such as "Sunset"). To keep things simple and intuitive, the world of Sisalus uses familiar time periods: 60 seconds = 1 minute, 60 minutes = 1 hour, 24 hours = 1 day and 360 days = 1 year.

2.3.1.2 Time of Year

Displays the current season (such as "summer"). All seasons last a total of 90 days.

2.3.1.3 Temperature

Displays a description of the current temperature (such as "cold" or "very warm"). Temperature-based icons are generally defined at every ten degrees Fahrenheit.

2.3.1.4 Weather

Displays a description of the current weather (such as “sunny” or “stormy”). Note that weather is dependent on temperature (a cold day will result in snow, while a warm day results in rain, for example).

2.3.1.5 Visibility

Displays visibility within the current area (such as “Daylight”). Outdoors, visibility is controlled by time of day, but indoors visibility is set by encounter area.

2.3.1.6 Game Mode

Four specific game “modes” are used throughout the BrowserQuests™ experience: Free to Roam, Encounter, Combat and Shopping. These modes are set depending on what the adventuring party is doing at the moment and influence what commands are available.

2.4 MAPS PANEL

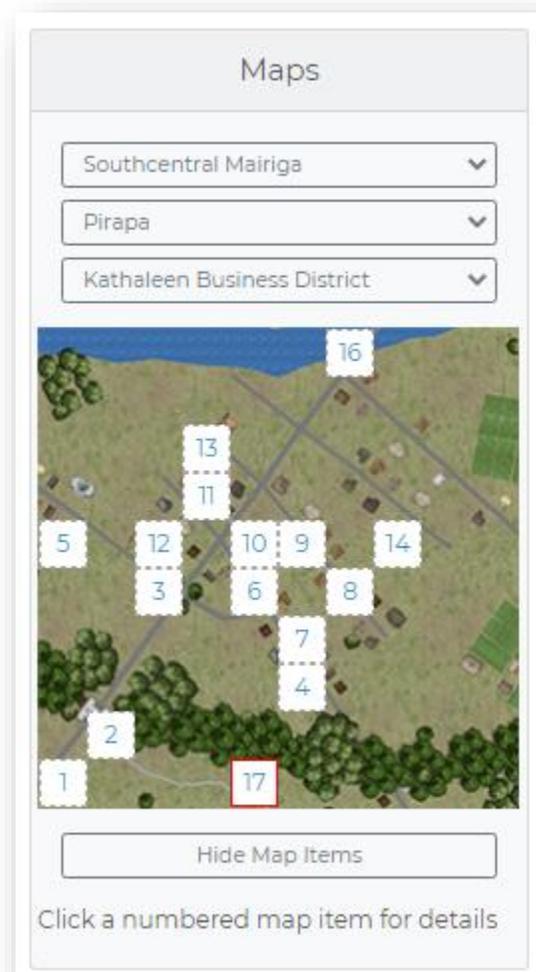
To help provide location context for the player, a simple map system is integrated into the game. These maps are displayed as 10x10 unit grids with a graphic background and numbered points of location (associated with the scale of map being presented: World map, continent map, country map or location map). Numbered points are dynamic and display further information when clicked.

Through this system, the Sisalus world can contain up to 100 continents (although only one is officially in use, the continent of “Mairiga”), a continent can contain up to 100 countries (Mairiga contains 60 or so), a country can contain up to 100 locations (but normally only contains a handful) and a location can contain up to 100 areas (although 15-20 is more the norm). Some countries may contain several adjacent locations that collectively comprise a single unit, such as a large city or massive underground dungeon.

Three dropdown menus are used to control what type of map is displayed, introduced below. When a particular dropdown is selected and an option chosen, the associated map is displayed (along with all associated elements, such as areas within a location map). These menus are introduced as follows:

2.4.1.1 Continents

Displays the five major landmasses that comprise the Mairigan continent.



2.4.1.2 Countries

Displays each of the 60 or so geopolitical regions that comprise each continental region.

2.4.1.3 Locations

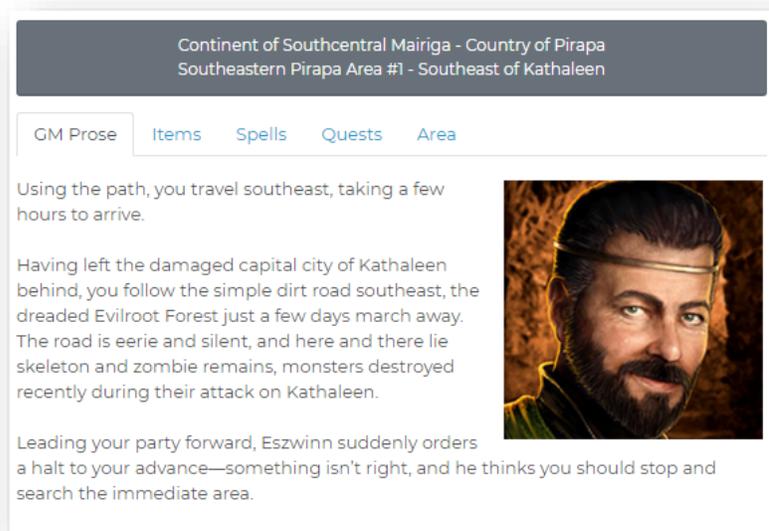
Displays the many locations of each country, places such as cities, dungeons or ruins where adventurers go to resolve assigned quests.

2.4.1.4 Map Elements

Again, numbered items on the map consist of elements associated with the currently-selected continent, country or location. For example, the player will typically be reviewing a particular location, which therefore displays individual encounter areas on the map.

2.5 GAME MASTER PANEL

The BrowserQuests™ RPG system is intended to “feel” like a traditional in-person, pencil-and-paper role-playing experience where a player interacts with a “Game Master” or GM. This experience is simulated through the browser by using a virtual GM that reveals what is happening to the player and his adventuring party, providing strategic advice and general conversation as well. This panel dominates the central area of the game interface and utilizes five separate tabbed areas to help convey key GM-based elements to the player.



2.5.1 GM Prose

Dominating most of the panel is the game master prose where text coming from the GM to the player is provided. A graphic depiction of an associated character (or encountered NPC or monster) is also provided in the upper right corner of the window; if no such character is defined for the dialogue, the GM depiction is displayed instead. Note that, occasionally, the prose panel will display additional information, such as a note from the GM or the fact that the party has just been rewarded with additional experience or wealth.

2.5.2 Items

The second tabbed panel displays all hero equipment possessed, providing possession name, quantity, weight and gold piece worth. Possession names are dynamically linked to provide full descriptions as well. Entire inventories can be reviewed or just a possession type. Possessions can also either be given to other heroes within the adventuring party or dropped to the ground/floor altogether.

2.5.3 Spells

The third tab focuses on all the spells potentially assigned to heroes of the adventuring party. The modal window also allows the player to assign different spells (recovered the next time the hero sleeps a minimum of six hours).

2.5.4 Quests

The fourth tab displays information regarding all assigned player quests, divided into three quest categories: Current, completed and other. When a quest is selected, its name and a brief overview is provided along with a “Show Log Entries” button that, when clicked, displays information highlighting all relevant quest log entries (automatically written into the player’s quest log after key encounters).

2.5.5 Areas

The fifth and final tab displays details regarding the current encounter area, including a brief description of the area, all known exits (and where they lead), all known area objects (such as desks, tables, beds, flooring and the like) and even any enemies lurking about. Both objects and enemies are further linked to modal windows that display additional information when clicked.

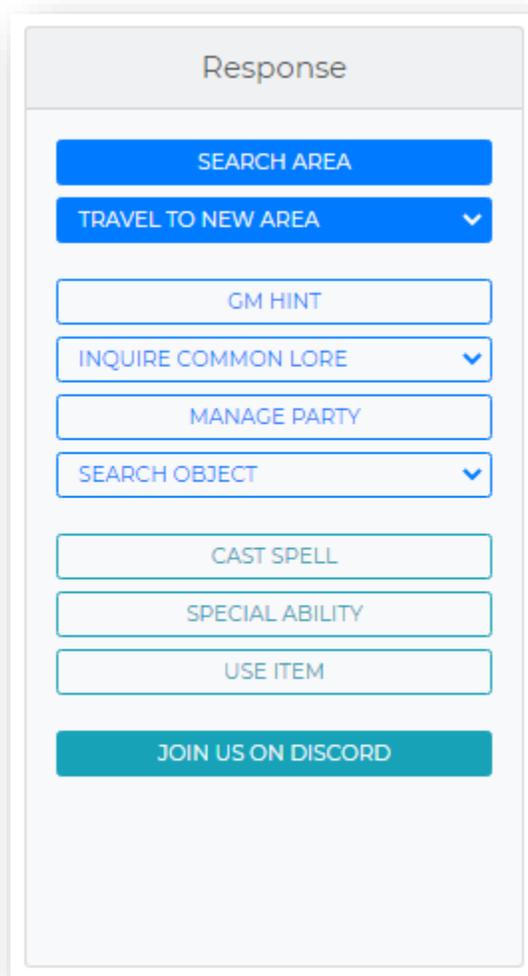
2.6 RESPONSE PANEL

To the right of the Game Master panel is a collection of buttons and dropdown menus meant to allow the player to respond to the GM and provide specific instructions on what to do next. These controls are color-coded and context sensitive, displaying only those commands associated with the game’s current status.

A complete summary of these buttons and dropdowns is provided in the next chapter regarding game commands below.

2.7 HERO PANEL

First and foremost, the player’s character (along with up to five fellow heroes and two henchmen) are graphically represented horizontally across the screen. Each depiction includes the character’s name at the top and four informational elements along the bottom (class, hit points, armor class and status). When a hero’s name is clicked, an associated modal window presenting the character in detail appears, while the status indicator at the bottom of the panel displays the hero’s current status (typically “OK” but, if wounded, “Wounded” will appear, and if the character is suffering from some sort of ailment (such as “poison”) that descriptor will appear instead).





When a hero name is clicked, appropriate information is displayed (along with a graphic depiction of the hero):

2.7.1 Abilities

Displays all six abilities (strength, intelligence, wisdom, dexterity, constitution and charisma) and how those abilities currently affect the hero.

2.7.2 Attributes

Provides hero details including class, race, gender, morale, level, experience points, hit points, armor class, platinum saved (in a bank), movement rate, encumbrance (weight carried) and primary language.

2.7.3 Saving Throws

Displays saving throws for the hero (death ray or poison, magic wants, paralysis or petrification, dragon breath and spells).

2.7.4 Behaviors

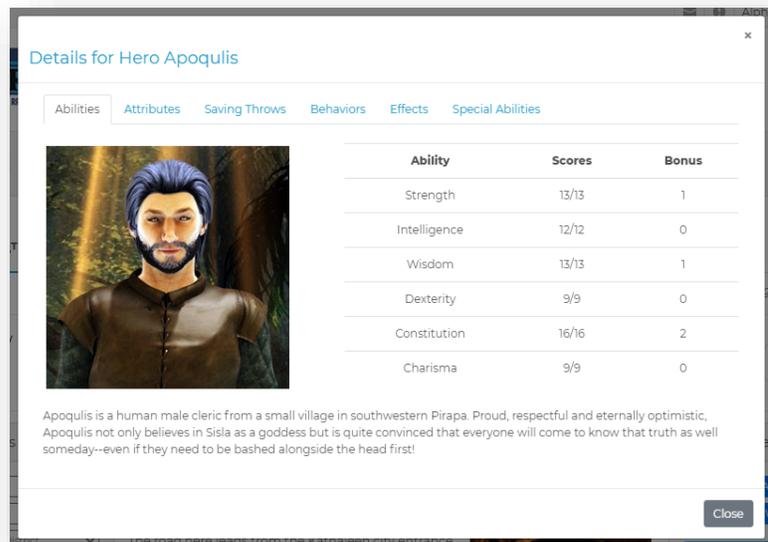
Six general behaviors are tracked within the game, intended to assign “personality” to recruited heroes. These include curiosity, diplomacy, empathy, honor, optimism and reason, and how those parameters can potentially affect the hero (and even the entire party) is provided as well.

2.7.5 Effects

Lists all current effects (typically negative effects such as level drain) that is affecting a hero.

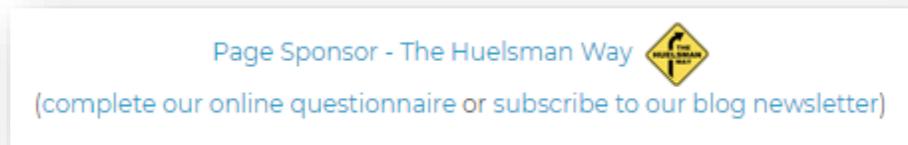
2.7.6 Special Abilities

Lists any special abilities assigned to the hero (typically based on race but temporary abilities based on magic is provided as well).



2.8 FOOTER BANNER

Finally, a small rotating banner mechanism is displayed at the very bottom of the page, a small graphic and single line of text that potentially supports the site. Such banners are subtle and displayed last within the presentation as to not be obnoxious or offensive to game players.

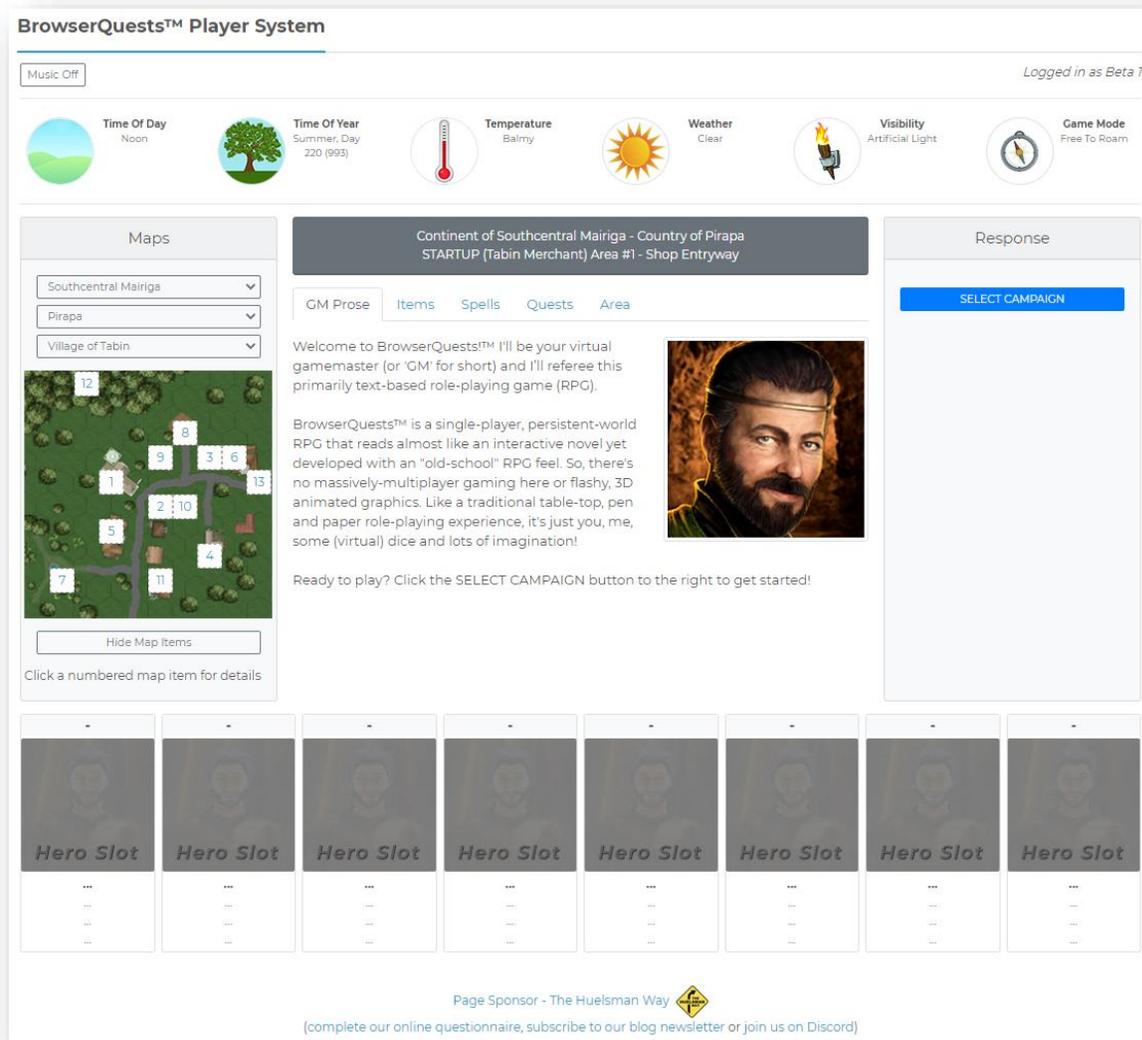


3 GAME MECHANICS AND PLAY

Now that you have a basic understanding of the player interface and how that works, this next chapter introduces how the game itself is played (and WHY things work the way they do). While the chapter is fairly detailed, it's important to understand the various elements, mechanisms and details regarding what happens when, and what should be displayed within the player interface.

3.1 GETTING STARTED

When a new player registers with the system for the first time and initiates play, the virtual Game Master (GM) will introduce himself along with the BrowserQuests™ platform, then ask the player to click the SELECT CAMPAIGN button from the Response panel in order to get started.



3.1.1 Selecting a Campaign

All game play within the BrowserQuests™ framework takes place within the fantasy world of Sisalus and, getting started at least, within the continent of Mairiga, which consists of 60 or so separate geopolitical countries, each with their own populations, governments and general mindset regarding the world. Against this common backdrop, however, individual authors can design and develop entire collections of quests called “campaigns” that tell a grand story across all the individual quest-based stories developed. Accordingly, the player must select one of these campaigns to play through.

When the SELECT CAMPAIGN button is clicked, a modal window appears that provides a dropdown of all the campaigns currently available within the BrowserQuests™ system. At that point, the player selects a particular campaign and clicks the “Select Campaign” button in the lower right corner of the modal window to continue.

3.1.2 Selecting a New Hero

Once a campaign is selected, it's time for the player to create a new hero from scratch! Accordingly, the player clicks the CREATE NEW HERO to initiate the process.

Currently, players can choose from four races: Dwarf, Elf, Halfling and Human. Once a race is selected, the player must choose an appropriate class: Cleric, Fighter, Magic-User or Thief. Note that some races don't allow specific classes (dwarves can't be magic-users, for example), while an elf can choose from two additional dual-classes, fighter-magic user and magic user-thief.

×

Select a Campaign Below!

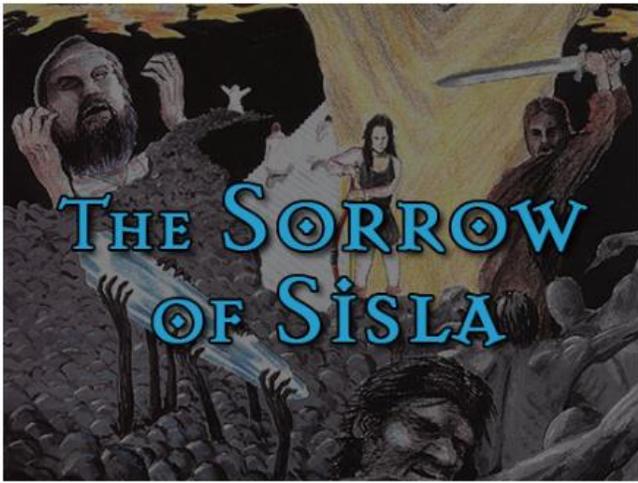
A campaign is a collection of quests that, over time, tell a larger, grander story (just like individual episodes of your favorite television show, over time, tell a larger, grander story). Campaigns are written by different authors and hence offer alternative storylines that you can interact with.

For now, there's just the default campaign available. However, additional campaigns are in the works (sign-up for our blog newsletter to stay up to date with our progress!).

Select A BrowserQuests™ Campaign

▼
The Sorrow of Sisla

by Scott Huelsman



THE SORROW OF SISLA

Enter the world of Sisalus, named after the great goddess who, ten centuries previously as a mortal woman, almost single-handedly defeated the demons from the Realm of Nightmares and ended the Age of Damnation., bringing peace to the continent of Mairiga and ushering-in the Sislal Utopia. A full millennium later, become a new adventurer within the country of Pirapa and lead your own party on a series of heroic quests to suppress a new evil within the land and ultimately discover the true fate of Sisalus (original campaign from the developer of BrowserQuests™, Scott Mark Huelsman).

Cancel
Select Campaign

Once a race and class is selected, the player must roll his ability scores (again, made dependent upon the race and class chosen). If a player doesn't like the values rolled, she can click the "Reroll Ability Scores" and try again. After the player accepts her ability scores, she must follow a similar procedure to roll her new hero's behavior scores as well.

Next, the player is presented with nine potential avatar images to choose from (dependent upon the selected gender), and once an avatar is chosen, the player must either accept the avatar's assigned name or enter a custom name.

Once the player is OK with these selections, she then clicks the "Accept Name" button in the lower left corner of the modal window to complete the process and review her new hero. At this point, the player can either go back and re-create a new hero or click the "Create New Hero!" button in the bottom right corner of the modal window to complete the process and continue.

Create New Hero Panel

Work your way down the left side of the panel below to create your new hero. When you're done, click the CREATE NEW HERO! button in the bottom right corner to complete the process!

Select Race

Dwarf

Select Class

Cleric

Accept Class & Continue

Roll Ability Scores

Accept Ability Scores

Roll Behavior Scores

Accept Behavior Scores

Select Avatar

Female Avatars

Select Name

Fotralsia

Keep the original hero name or enter your own custom name (up to 16 characters in length)

Accept Name

A New Hero is Born!



Fotralsia

Level 1 Female Dwarf Cleric

Well done! You've created your own custom hero and you can now proceed--just click the blue CREATE NEW HERO! button below to continue! Or, if you're not happy with this hero, just use the controls to the left to go back and create a new one.

Ability Scores Behavior Scores

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Strength | 14 |
| Intelligence | 9 |
| Wisdom | 18 |
| Dexterity | 14 |
| Constitution | 10 |
| Charisma | 7 |

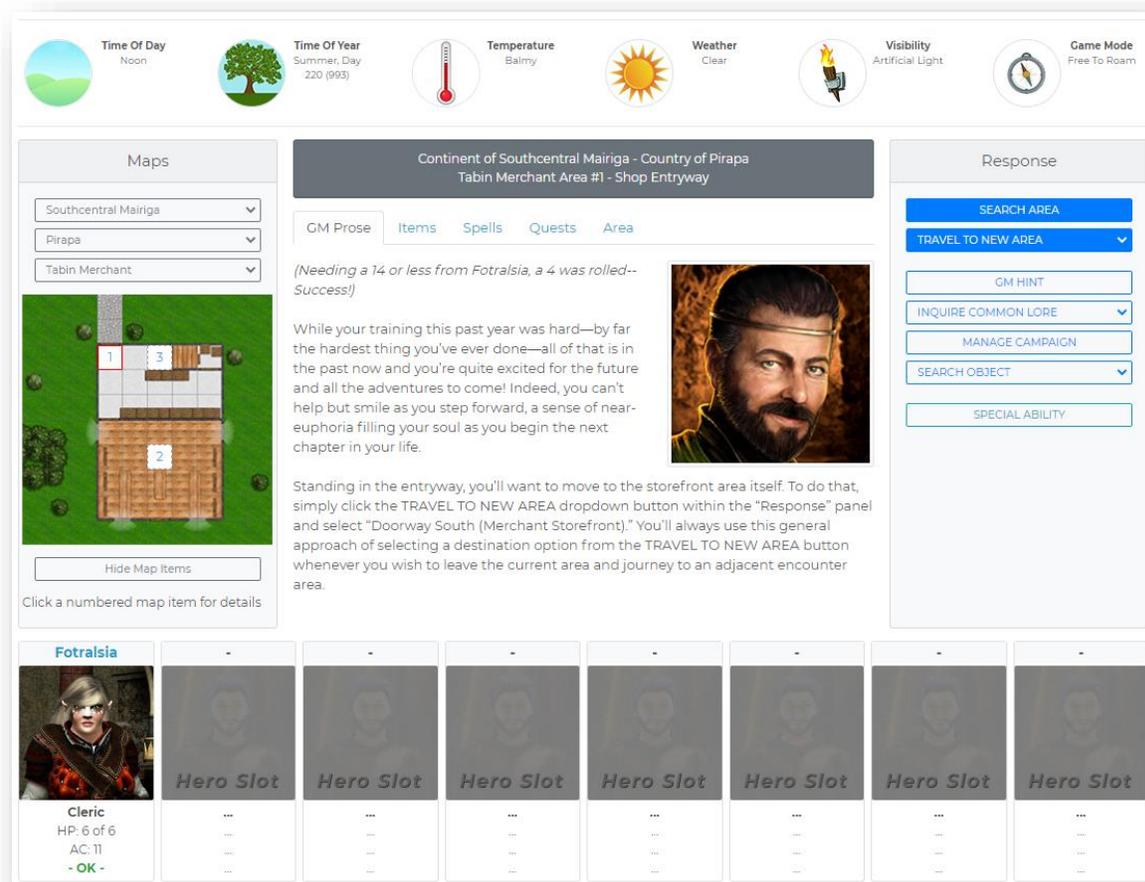
Cancel
Create New Hero!

3.1.3 Tutorial Quest

All new players begin the game as first-level characters within the small village of Tabin. At this point, the player can elect to go through the small tutorial quest that's made available, a series of short encounters that will introduce the player to the BrowserQuests™ system and point-out all of its major features. Players can elect to either go through the brief tutorial (which only takes five minutes or so to complete) or skip the tutorial and head straight to the very first encounter area of the first quest associated with their chosen campaign.

3.2 GAME PLAY

Once the player reaches the initial encounter area, the GM will provide associated prose to get the player started; all of the game's status indicators will display appropriately (Time of Day, Time of Year, Temperature, Weather, Visibility and Game Mode), the current location map will display, appropriate options will appear within the Response panel and the player's new hero portrait will appear near the bottom of the player interface.



At this point, the same screen-based events begin to cycle in a consistent fashion:

1. The GM explains what is happening at the moment (via text within the GM Prose tab)
2. Options relevant to the situation are displayed within the Response panel
3. The player must make a choice regarding how to best respond to the GM
4. A formal response (and, potentially, collection of consequences) are determined
5. The cycle repeats, returning to the first step above

Hence, to allow the player an opportunity to respond to the GM and potentially move the story forward, a wide variety of game commands are available. Nearly all of these commands are context-sensitive to some degree, becoming available only when the current circumstances allow.

3.2.1 Game Command Modes

Four distinct “modes” exist within the game that determine which actual commands are made available to the player during play:

- **Free to Roam** – The party can utilize the TRAVEL TO NEW AREA command and do almost anything
- **Encounter** – The party has just encountered other creatures and must interact with them
- **Combat** – The party is engaged in combat with all encountered beings within the area
- **Shopping** – The party is visiting a store and allowed to buy and sell certain items

Each of these modes dictate which commands are made available throughout the game, helping to provide context and keep the Response panel from becoming bloated with too many options.

3.2.2 Specific Options

Occasionally, a particular encounter will require that the player choose from one to three specific options, each manually developed for a particular resolution to the encounter. When these specific options are provided, no other options are provided. Hence, the player's ONLY way forward in these situations it to make a choice and accept its consequences.

3.2.3 Game Command Groupings

Otherwise, a collection of game commands are displayed, divided into three general groupings.

3.2.3.1 Primary Party Options

Displays the most important party-based options that players will use.

3.2.3.1.1 Attack (button) – Encounter

Instructs the party to attack all characters and monsters within the encounter area (automatically activating combat mode).

3.2.3.1.2 Borrow Money (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Allows the player hero to borrow up to 10 platinum pieces per level from any city bank. Monies can only be borrowed if the player doesn't already have a loan. No time limit is placed on repaying the loan, but all future bank deposits are used to first repay the loan (and interest is always the same as the original amount borrowed, so players borrowing 10 platinum pieces would need to ultimately repay 20 platinum pieces).

3.2.3.1.3 Buy Items (button) – Shopping

Invokes a modal window that allows all party members to buy particular possession types within the area. Up to ten similar items can be purchased at one time (such as 10 torches). The Buy Items modal window remains available until the player no longer wishes to keep buying items.

3.2.3.1.4 Camp (button) – Free to Roam

Instructs the party to secure the area and bed down for the night. Camping can only be done outside of cities, and then only in specific areas designed by a quest author (“safe” zones where the party can be reasonably assured that it will not be attacked while resting). Camped parties rest for eight hours—causing 480 game minutes to pass—and allow each hero to regain three lost hit points as well as all lost spells.

3.2.3.1.5 Concentrate (button) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Potentially dispels any illusions within the current encounter area. The command only appears when the associated encounter allows.

3.2.3.1.6 Converse (button) – Encounter

Attempts to initiate a conversation with any creatures or NPCs encountered within the current area.

3.2.3.1.7 Deposit Money (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Allows a player hero to deposit a selected amount of his carried wealth into a bank. All banks throughout the fantasy world operate the same way, so money deposited is always safe (and an unlimited amount can be deposited with no fear of losing it).

3.2.3.1.8 Gamble (button) – Free to Roam

Invokes a modal window that allows a selected hero to play a simple slot machine at a city area casino. Wagers can be made from 1 to 250 gold pieces. Three windows display one of four objects: Apple, Orange, Banana and an ‘X’ symbol. Matching two items doubles the bet, matching three items returns 500% of the bet and three ‘X’ symbols returns a jackpot of ten times the bet. Otherwise, the bet is lost.

3.2.3.1.9 Heal Wounds (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Allows a selected hero to have all wounds healed (at a cost of one gold piece per lost hit point). This option only appears when the party is visiting a place of healing (such as a city temple).

3.2.3.1.10 Intimidate (button) – Encounter

Attempts to drive away encountered creatures through bullying and force of will. If the command fails, however, those who aren't intimidated immediately attack instead (activating combat mode).

3.2.3.1.11 Listen for Rumors (button) – Free to Roam

Potentially provides a random lore item within a city tavern (only available within cities). Each attempt to listen for rumors takes a full hour of game time.

3.2.3.1.12 Offer Item (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Allows the party to offer a particular possession (and associated quantity) to advance a particular quest. This command only appears when the associated encounter requires such an offer.

3.2.3.1.13 Pay Money (button) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Attempts to resolve an encounter by offering a bribe or otherwise paying for a service (according to a set fee assigned by the quest author). This command only appears when the associated encounter requires such a payment. Most Pay Money commands don't involve any expenditure of time but a few do (such as the time required to listen for rumors at a local tavern, that consumes 60 minutes with each try).

3.2.3.1.14 Recruit Character (button) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Allows the player to invite an encountered character into her adventuring party. Only a relatively-few characters within a world can be invited into a party, specifically designated by the campaign's author. Hence, this command only appears when the associated encounter calls for it.

3.2.3.1.15 Recruit Class (button) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Allows the player to invite a new hired hero (henchman) into her adventuring party via a city-based guild (such as hiring a new magic-user from a local Wizard's Guild). Up to two such henchmen can be hired and they can be any class (such as two fighters if desired).

3.2.3.1.16 Reinvite Character (button) – Free to Roam

Allows the player to re-invite a previously-lost hero back into her adventuring party. This command only appears when the associated encounter calls for it.

3.2.3.1.17 Research Lore (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Allows the party to research one particular lore subject associated with the current country. The option is only available within a city library.

3.2.3.1.18 Restore Hero (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Removes all afflictions and restores a selected hero to normalcy (fee of 25 gold pieces per affliction). Only available within an area of healing (such as a city church).

3.2.3.1.19 Resurrect Hero (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Returns a slain henchman back to life (fee of 1000 gold pieces per level). Only available within an area of healing (such as a city church).

3.2.3.1.20 Retreat (button) – Combat

Instructs the party to flee from combat and retreat to the last encounter area visited. The command may not always work depending upon a variety of factors, but it's an option for parties who need it.

3.2.3.1.21 Search Area (button) – Free to Roam

One of the most widely-used commands within the game, it instructs the adventuring party to search the current area, often revealing hidden objects or elements and sometimes advancing the story as well. So long as the area hasn't been searched before, the command ALWAYS appears when the area is first entered (and no combatants exist). The command automatically finds all hidden objects and MAY find associated secret doors and traps as well.

3.2.3.1.22 Sell Items (button) – Shopping

Invokes a modal window that allows all party members to sell particular possession types within the area. All possessions are sold at a base of 80% of their purchase value. Between 1 and 100% of all carried possessions of the selected type can be sold at one time.

3.2.3.1.23 Sleep (button) – Free to Roam

Allows the party to sleep for eight hours within a rented city hotel room (adding 480 minutes to the game).

3.2.3.1.24 Stand Down (button) – Combat

Instructs the party to cease combat, with the hope that all encountered beings will do the same (if that happens, combat ceases and the game mode returns back to Encounter).

3.2.3.1.25 Travel to New Area (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter, Shopping

Allows the party to travel to a connected area from the current area within the location. Naturally, traveling can take some time, advancing the game by the number of minutes associated with the area's exit (time to travel).

3.2.3.1.26 Withdraw Money (dropdown) – Free to Roam

Allows a player hero to withdraw any funds previously deposited within a city bank. Note that each transaction costs the player one silver piece.

3.2.3.2 *Secondary Options*

Provides general party-based options players will use less often.

3.2.3.2.1 Destroy Object (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Instructs the adventuring party to destroy a particular encounter area object. The floor/ground itself can never be destroyed, and previously-destroyed objects can't be destroyed a second time. Otherwise, the object is destroyed (which may advance the encounter resolution). The command only appears when the associated encounter requires it to move the story forward.

3.2.3.2.2 GM Hint (button) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Allows the player to ask for some subtle help from the GM regarding what to do next. The GM response is typically helpful without just blurting-out the appropriate answer. No penalties are ever incurred by the player for asking for a hint.

3.2.3.2.3 Inquire Lore (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Allows the player to ask all of his recruited heroes about a general lore element (one not associated with a particular country or quest).

3.2.3.2.4 Manage Campaign (button) – Free to Roam, Encounter, Shopping

This option opens a modal window that not only displays the current campaign being played (along with a few base statistics regarding the player's progress through the campaign so far) but also allows the player to select another campaign to play. Further, the modal window contains a "reset" button that, when clicked (and a subsequent "Are you sure?" button is clicked as well), will totally reset the current campaign, allowing the player to create a brand new hero and start the campaign over again from scratch.

3.2.3.2.5 Manipulate Object (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Instructs the heroes to push, pull or otherwise manipulate a particular object within the area. The command only appears when the associated encounter requires it to move the story forward.

3.2.3.2.6 Renew Party (button) – All Game Modes

Heals all party heroes and removes any effects. This command is only available to players whose party has been marked as “beta test” by a campaign author.

3.2.3.2.7 Search Object (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Instructs the party to carefully examine a specific object within the area. The command only appears when the associated encounter requires it to move the story forward.

3.2.3.2.8 Unlock Object (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Instructs all thieves in the party (or any heroes possessing a skeleton key) to try and unlock a selected locked area object.

3.2.3.2.9 Wait (dropdown) – Free to Roam, Encounter

Instructs the party to wait for a particular amount of time (one minute up to four hours). The command can be useful when waiting for something to happen, such as a city shop that is not yet open for business.

3.2.3.3 *Hero Options*

Provides options to be executed by a single party hero (including the player hero when appropriate). Some of these options are only invoked during combat (and so the game already knows which hero is involved) while others open an associated modal window and require that the player first select an associated hero in order to complete the command.

3.2.3.3.1 Bind Wounds – Combat

Instructs the current hero to immediately bind the wounds of any other heroes who have less than zero hit points. Upon command execution, the most severely-injured hero will automatically have his hit points returned to zero and therefore prevent any further bleeding (during combat, heroes whose hit points are below zero lose one additional hit point each round). Note that once combat is over, all unconscious heroes within the party automatically receive one hit point (so they're no longer unconscious).

3.2.3.3.2 Cast Spell – Free to Roam, Encounter, Combat

Invokes a modal window that allows the selected hero to pick a spell (and associated targets if necessary). The modal also allows the hero to review all spells associated with a given level and even memorize a different spell if desired.

3.2.3.3.3 Close Attack (combatant) – Combat

Allows the hero to target and attack a nearby foe in hand-to-hand combat. All nearby foes within reach of the hero area provided within the dropdown.

3.2.3.3.4 Defend – Combat

Instructs the selected hero to utilize all his skill in defending himself during the combat round. As a result, the option increases the hero's armor class throughout the round (+3 to armor class).

3.2.3.3.5 Engage Enemy (combatant) – Combat

Instructs the hero to close the distance between herself and a chosen enemy so that the targeted enemy can be attacked in hand-to-hand combat the following round. Combatants typed as “evaders” receive a chance to avoid the engagement and remain as a distant combatant. Otherwise, the combatant becomes a close combatant and can be attacked by any hero within the party that is already attacking at hand-to-hand combat range.

3.2.3.3.6 Ranged Attack (combatant) – Combat

Allows the hero to attack and potentially damage a selected foe from a distance via ranged combat (assuming the hero has some sort of ranged-weapon within his inventory).

3.2.3.3.7 Special Ability – Free to Roam, Encounter, Combat

Invokes a modal window that instructs the selected hero to use a particular special ability within the current encounter area.

3.2.3.3.8 Take Items – Free to Roam, Encounter, Combat

Invokes a modal window that allows the selected hero to take specific items or ALL items within the current encounter area.

3.2.3.3.9 Use Item – Free to Roam, Encounter, Combat

Invokes a modal window that instructs the selected hero to use a specified possession within her inventory.

4 INTRODUCTION TO AUTHORIZING

Writing quests, modules and campaigns for the BrowserQuests™ online role-playing game system is very similar to acting as a game master (GM) within a traditional in-person, pencil-and-paper RPG. As the GM, it's your responsibility to create all of the characters of the story (some of which may eventually join the player's adventuring party), determine all the locations that the player will visit, establish individual areas within those locations (such as a city tavern, a grassy field or a dank underground crypt) and determine what will happen as the player reaches those areas, encounters what is there and make decisions that lead to appropriate resolutions of those encounters. While the BrowserQuests™ online form-based toolset will allow you create, update and manage all of these various elements of the game, it's still ultimately up to you regarding what story you wish to tell and all the details you want to provide.

4.1 FRAMEWORK ROLES

To get started, let's review the four general roles that interact with the RPG framework.

4.1.1 Player Role

For players of the RPG, their primary goal will be to successfully lead their adventuring party through a long and intriguing series of quests that allow them to face many challenges, gain experience, find treasure, become more powerful and be thoroughly entertained as they explore the Sisalus fantasy world and leave their mark within it. Like a reader of a novel, players are the reason that the BrowserQuests™ platform exists, and so authors must do everything in their power to entertain and satisfy game players.

4.1.2 Author Role

Again, YOU are the game master, generating most of the details needed for the player to explore the world and enjoy the RPG. You will focus on developing individual quests to challenge the player, either on behalf of your own series of modules (called "campaigns") or, with permission, for another established author. You will first document your new quest, then utilize a series of online forms to transfer your plans to the BrowserQuests™ engine, adding, editing and maintaining the various locations, quests, lore, characters, areas and encounters that support the engine and allow players and their adventuring parties to explore, interact and succeed.

4.1.3 Administrator Role

Certain supporting elements of the BrowserQuests™ toolset are required by ALL authors and hence can only be edited or changed by system administrators who have associated privileges. For example, campaigns can only be added to the RPG by an administrator, after which an author can begin to configure their quests associated with the new campaign. Administrators are also in full control of all the image maps, graphic depictions, background music clips, monster entries, area objects, possessions and many other world-based elements (continents, countries, governments, languages, etc.). That said, authors are always encouraged to make requests of new assets to the BrowserQuests™ framework when they need something new, such as a location map, hero depiction or monster type!

4.1.4 Developer Role

Developers are the programmers who maintain the overall system, managing the [DNN content management system](#) that drives the entire site, making coding changes to the underlying [VB.NET](#)

[codebase](#) that directly drives the player component, updating the [DNN Lissom Theme](#) that manages the overall site design and CSS, etc. While the development role is outside the scope of this Author's Guide, it's important to note that authors do NOT code anything—ALL programming code is handled by a small group of professionals utilizing a collection of Microsoft®-based tools (primarily [Visual Studio 2019](#) and [SQL Server Management Studio](#)).

4.2 CORE CONCEPTS

As an author, there are a number of core concepts you'll need to understand regarding the BrowserQuests™ framework and how the RPG system works. First and foremost, BrowserQuests™ is generally a text-based RPG with words being used to communicate most of what is happening (as opposed to an action RPG that is primarily visual or even a massively multiplayer online RPG that invites many gamers online at one time and is entirely visual). The intent of the BrowserQuests™ system is to not only simulate a traditional gamemaster-led experience but tell great, heroic, deeply engaging and interactive stories, something that can't be done with graphics alone. So, authors of the BrowserQuests™ framework are not just gamemasters but "authors" in the truest sense of the word, talented writers with a strong command of the English language and able to draw their readers into their fantastic stories!

4.2.1 The BrowserQuests™ Database

The entire BrowserQuests™ framework sits atop an underlying SQL Server database, consisting of dozens of associated tables, hundreds of pre-programmed stored procedures and everything else needed to provide data and persistence (long-term memory and storage) of all game elements. For example, when a new player registers with the website, that user's information is stored in the database, and when the player creates a new hero, that hero's information is stored in the database. Every single aspect of the game—from all the various continents of the world to all the items a hero can use within the game to many encounter areas to be explored and resolved—all of it are managed by a collection of appropriate database tables.

Further details regarding the database are beyond the scope of this Author's Guide, but be aware that when you work with the game's toolset, you are directly manipulating the system's underlying database (and doing so in real time—once an UPDATE button is clicked, changes are immediately saved and the entire gaming platform is updated).

4.2.2 Critical Data Structures

Of all the database tables and elements that constitute the overall BrowserQuests™ framework, there are initially just a small handful that you must intuitively grasp and understand. These structures are divided into three general groups introduced below.

To summarize, great stories generally consist of three elements: WHERE the story takes place, WHO are involved and WHAT actually happens. Accordingly, the critical data structures you need to learn and recognize are divided into these three elements.

4.2.2.1 WHERE-based Data Structures

Within the BrowserQuests™ gaming system, all game play takes place within the fantasy world of Sisalus and, getting started at least, the continent of Mairiga. The following database tables manage the WHERE-based elements you'll need to understand and know about.

4.2.2.1.1 Countries

The vast continent of Mairiga consists of about 60 COUNTRIES altogether, geopolitical territories that the player and her adventuring party can visit and explore. Each of these countries possess their own set of statistics used to describe and represent the country as a whole, parameters that provide motivation and character to those nations. Note that BrowserQuests™ are NOT allowed to edit or update any of these countries when developing their own quests—country data and details are provided for background only.

4.2.2.1.2 Locations

Within the RPG, specific places within a given country are generically referred to as a LOCATION, such as a smaller town, a section of a larger city, a particular section of outdoor forest or an underground dungeon. Like countries, locations are represented by maps that measure 10 x 10, each grid unit marking a potential encounter area.

As an author, you'll start by defining locations on the Mairigan map—what town or city section is your player hero born into, kidnapped to or otherwise raised within? Or, does your story begin in a secluded forest, along a raging river, near an active volcano? Initial quests can take place just about anywhere within the continent of Mairiga, so your first order of business will be to decide on an initial country, pick an appropriate location and then enter the details of that location into the BrowserQuests™ Locations form tool (documented within the next chapter below).

4.2.2.1.3 Areas

Every location within the BrowserQuests™ system consists of individual AREAS (also known as “Encounter Areas”) where actual game play takes place. For example, you may start your first quest within a small village (defined as a location) but the village itself will consist of individual buildings, roads, fields, parks and other places that people can go—all of those places are referred to as AREAS within the RPG engine and must be separately defined and documented (via the game's Areas form).

Encounter Areas are actually highly-detailed places, as they define the specific areas that a player will lead his adventuring party, explore and interact. Hence, each area within a location must be numbered, can be assigned both a function (such as “merchant”) as well as environment (such as “building”), can be assigned a lighting type (is the area naturally dark? Always lit? Magically dark?), can be trapped (so as the player and her party take action within the area, they risk succumbing to the trap), must be assigned X and Y map coordinates (so the area can be accurately seen on its associated location map), assigned a description and so on. Getting to know, understand and master the Areas form will be a significant early step in your own quest to develop a successful quest!

Because Encounter Areas are so critical to the overall BrowserQuests™ framework, three additional elements are associated with them, each available as modal (popup) forms within the main Areas form.

4.2.2.1.3.1 Area Exits

Every Encounter Area must consist of a way out, a mechanism by which the party can leave the area for an adjacent area. For example, a simple city park would likely consist of at least two exits, one into the park itself and a second out of the park and back into the city. Most locations will utilize just a few exits, but some (such as a city square where MANY areas are directly accessible from) would consist of many exits. Area exits are used for all kinds of distances within the game, from one doorway to another to one

country to another (available to the BrowserQuests™ player via the TRAVEL TO NEW AREA dropdown menu within the game). Note that not all exits will be obvious to the player, and a few will be totally inaccessible at first, made available only after the player has done something else.

Accordingly, all “Area Exits” must be properly implemented into the RPG as you design your quests, so game players are able to travel from one area to another (and, ultimately, from one location to another). For each area exit, you’ll need to assign a direction (such as a “Doorway North”), an exit type (hallway, locked door, open gate, road, path, etc.), the location/area destination, the number of minutes it will take for the party to arrive, etc.

4.2.2.1.3.2 Area Objects

All Encounter Areas contain something within them, objects such as tables, chairs, desks, chests, carpets, curtains or a wide diversity of other furniture, appliances and fixtures (including the floor or ground itself). All of these things are referred to generically as “Area Objects” within the BrowserQuests™ system and they must be fully added and configured to your authored areas. Note that Area Objects are meant to be permanent fixtures within areas; they can NOT be taken by an adventuring party (although they can be searched, manipulated and even destroyed if desired by the game player).

A wide diversity of Area Objects are available within the game for you to populate your areas with, and while you can't add your own Area Objects, you can always make a request to a game administrator to have one added (so it, too, can be shared amongst ALL BrowserQuests™ authors). When you assign a particular object to an area, you CAN change the name of that object as well as assign an appropriate quantity and description to the object, so the object is customized specifically for your area. You can also mark the object as “hidden” (so the player must first perform a SEARCH AREA command in order to find it).

As some areas may contain dozens of individual objects—which would be quite tedious and time-consuming to add one at a time—a mechanism exists to add an entire collection of relevant objects to a given area by function. For example, if you're building an area meant to serve as a merchant's showroom, you can choose the “Merchant” option that will automatically add all the objects appropriate for such an area (after which you can add, delete and otherwise customize the objects for your area).

4.2.2.1.3.3 Area Object Possessions

Typically, a few Area Objects will further contain possessions, items that CAN be taken by a particular hero within an adventuring party. Hence, a mechanism exists within the Areas form that will allow authors to assign appropriate possessions to any area object desired (including an associated quantity).

By default, area objects do not contain anything when first assigned by an author, and even then, most area objects aren't designed to contain anything (such as a typical wooden bench). However, objects such as cabinets, chests, desks, footlockers, trunks, etc. ARE configured to potentially contain items that the party can find and take (if they can unlock or otherwise get at the goodies inside). So, as you build your area objects, be aware that you can assign hidden possessions to them as well!

4.2.2.2 WHO-based Data Structures

Like all great RPG-based stories, yours will need to consist of protagonists (heroes), antagonists (villains), general characters (who may join the adventuring party to become heroes) and a vast array of non-playing

characters (NPCs) to breathe life into your quests and complete the “WHO” element of your stories. Accordingly, there are three database-driven online forms that you’ll need to learn, work with and master in order to meet your RPG authoring responsibilities.

4.2.2.2.1 Characters

First and foremost, you’ll need to design the specific CHARACTERS of the story that your player will interact with. Utilizing the [Basic Fantasy RPG](#) ruleset, you’ll name your characters, assign a class, race, gender, level and number of hit points to them, as well as a graphic depiction (chosen from a vast assortment of images already integrated into the BrowserQuests™ framework) and general description of the character. You’ll also mark whether the character is “recruitable” into a player’s adventuring party and therefore intended to be one of a small handful of heroes who will join the party and quest alongside the player hero (just be mindful that the RPG limits parties to six recruitable heroes altogether).

Because characters are so important to the overall RPG framework—especially when they are marked as “recruitable” and can ultimately become party heroes—four additional database elements must be properly configured to assign them appropriate abilities, behaviors, possessions and traits.

4.2.2.2.1.1 Character Abilities

In keeping with the Basic Fantasy RPG system, all characters within the BrowserQuests™ game utilize the same six “classic” abilities as introduced below. These abilities are utilized in a variety of scenarios where a particular hero ability is tested. For example, an author may require that the player hero roll a 1d20 (twenty-sided die) against her Dexterity ability to determine whether the hero can accurately hit a particular target (if the die roll meets or exceeds her Dexterity score, the attempt succeeds). Character abilities also influence other parameters such as hit points (characters with high enough Constitution scores gain bonus hit points, for example). While the system accepts score values from 0-25, 3-18 is considered normal and should be respected by quest authors.

4.2.2.2.1.2 Character Behaviors

A completely-original addition to the BrowserQuests™ framework, behaviors are very similar to abilities but measure a character’s general emotions, attitudes and mindsets. And similar to abilities, these behaviors can be used in a variety of ways to determine the outcome of a particular encounter. For example, an author may develop an encounter where a particular hero must roll a 1d20 against his Empathy behavior to determine whether he is caring and compassionate enough to succeed during an emotionally-delicate situation. Similar to abilities, behavior values should be kept to 3-18.

4.2.2.2.1.3 Character Possessions

Extremely rare is the character that goes without ANY possessions (items carried upon their person to help them survive, interact and prosper within the game). Hence, a modal window form is available for authors to properly equip their characters, providing them anything from weapons to armor to supplies to treasures.

Note that for NPCs (who NEVER join the adventuring party and cannot be harmed by them), it’s not necessary to equip them as those possessions would never come into play. As a quest author, just equip your antagonists (potential enemy characters) and those marked as “recruitable”).

4.2.2.2.1.4 *Character Traits*

Within the BrowserQuests™ system, a “trait” is a way of marking a character (or monster) with a particular label that makes sense to the underlying game engine. For example, all “people” within your quests should have the “Person” trait assigned to those characters. A wide variety of traits are available for characters within the system, such as evil, giant, good, henchman, person, etc.

4.2.2.2.2 *Parties*

Adventuring parties are the collections of heroes—led by the player hero herself—who undertake great quests, visit encounter areas and attempt to successfully resolve those areas in order to advance the story. Every player commands their own party (one for each campaign within the RPG), with the player herself always the first hero presented within the party; other heroes will come and go, but the player hero will always remain first and foremost within her party.

Given the importance of the adventuring party, a fair amount of statistics are tracked, available through the Parties Form (and listed by campaign). As an author, eventually you will need to create a separate player account within the BrowserQuests™ website and playtest your quest-based creations, so you'll come to learn and manage the Parties Form intimately, controlling such elements as the party's current location (continent, country, location, area and encounter), the party's status, along with the current temperature, weather, time of day, etc. You'll also be able to mark any party as “Beta Test” so that player can playtest any authored quests not yet ready for release to the general public.

In addition to the variety of general party-based elements listed above, five modal forms are also provided that further list and manage particular party-based configurations within the game.

4.2.2.2.2.1 *Party Areas*

This first party-based modal form tracks a party's progress through a given area, recording the current encounter, whether the area is available to the player and whether the area has been searched. The form also tracks whether the area's assigned trap has been found and whether it's been sprung.

4.2.2.2.2.2 *Party Exits*

This second party-based modal form tracks which exit type is currently assigned to a particular area exit of a particular area of a given location. The form also lets an author know whether the area exit is currently blocked and whether it's actually been discovered.

4.2.2.2.2.3 *Party Objects*

This third party-based modal form tracks all objects of a given encounter area, including the status for each object (destroyed, hidden, manipulated, searched and unlocked).

4.2.2.2.2.4 *Party Object Possessions*

This fourth party-based modal form tracks any possessions associated with a particular area object, including the quantity of the possession type involved.

4.2.2.2.2.5 *Party Quests*

This fifth and final party-based modal form returns the current status of any quest associated with the adventuring party.

4.2.2.3 *WHAT-based Data Structures*

Once an author has identified WHERE her story-based quests will occur and WHO will participate, it's time to determine WHAT will happen. Three general database-based forms are used to manage the WHAT component of the game.

4.2.2.3.1 *Quests*

QUESTS are the individual stories that players will interact with, specific missions for the player and his adventuring party to accept, complete and be rewarded for. One (or a select few) may be involved with an overall "module", and a group of modules—developed one at a time and presented in specific order—comprise a campaign. But it's at the Quest level where authors will do all of their development work.

In terms of actual work, the Quests online form is actually very easy to work with and manage, consisting of just a few fields including name, location (the primary location in which the quest takes place), starting level of the adventuring party and basic description (which is provided to players when they open their quest logs). Quests can also be marked as "active" (otherwise, it's not available to players yet). Note that while entering a new quest into the BrowserQuests™ system is easy, it is referenced in several other toolset-based forms and so it should be added right away.

4.2.2.3.2 *Encounters*

Every Encounter Area consists of at least one ENCOUNTER, a list of parameters that structures and details what will happen—in a particular order—to the adventuring party within the area. Encounters range from the benign (resting at a local inn) to the benevolent (being attacked by a group of deadly spiders) and are hence the most interacted element within the RPG. *This aspect cannot be overstated—Encounters are the actual nuts and bolts of the game in terms of what the players interact with, and so, as an author, you'll spend the vast majority of your time designing, configuring, testing, tweaking and maintaining the many, many encounters developed for your quests.*

While all areas consist of at least one encounter, virtually all contain at least two (an "Introduction" and a "Final Resolution") and most consist of more than two that MUST be resolved—typically in order—according to each encounter's objective type (introduced below). Further, some encounters can "reset" the sequence, so that the next time the area is encountered, play reverts back to the initial encounter as if the player had never set foot within the area before. Think of Encounters as slices of time where players interact within an area and work their way from the initial encounter to, some period of time later, an ultimate conclusion.

4.2.2.3.2.1 *Encounter Basics*

Again, there is a LOT to know about designing and configuring encounters, as it's the mechanism used to convert the many ways a player could resolve a particular situation within a given encounter area into a way that the BrowserQuests™ framework can understand and process. Put another way, in a typical tabletop, game master-led RPG experience, human players could pose countless ways of resolving a particular encounter, but an Internet-based application running computer code can only do so much. Hence, developing encounters for the BrowserQuests™ system is first acknowledging that there are limitations to what the player can do, then designing intended results for the player to discover (without making it seem that the player has no actual control over her actions). The platform does allow for a LOT of

imagination and creativity, but it will take time for authors to discover those limits within the platform and push those limits as far as they can go.

To get started, all encounters must first be assigned to associated campaigns, locations and areas (managed via a small collection of dropdown menus within the Encounters Form, introduced in the next chapter below). Individual encounters can then be added to the system, focusing on name, objective type and order. While name and order is fairly straightforward (yet detailed within the Toolset Overview chapter below), encounter objective types definitely warrant a brief introduction here!

With each encounter, you, as the story author, will need to think about the PURPOSE of the specific encounter and what should actually happen within your story. Accordingly, every encounter MUST utilize an appropriate OBJECTIVE TYPE that acts as the intended purpose of the encounter (and fully dictates how the encounter will soon be resolved). To keep things as interesting as possible for the player, simulate her interactions with the virtual game master and maintain the illusion that the player has a lot of freedom in determining her own actions, a wide diversity of fully-configurable objective types have been integrated into the game, as introduced within the Toolset Overview chapter below. *As an author, you must not only learn these objective types but recognize when each is appropriate for the situation at hand and how to properly configure and manage the Encounters Form accordingly.*

4.2.2.3.2.2 *Encounter Details*

Once an encounter's name, order and objective type have been identified and entered into the Encounters Form, the remaining details of the form can be properly configured (according to which objective type was selected). These details are all documented within the Toolset Overview chapter below, but in general you'll configure the rest of the form to correlate with the objective type selected:

- Entering up to three OPTIONS (if the Choose Option objective type was selected)
- Configuring the Target, Ability, Behavior and/or Saving Throw Check dropdowns (if the Ability Check, Ability Use (Max in Party), Behavior Check, Behavior Use (Max in Party), D20 Check or Saving Throw Check objective types were selected)
- Configuring the Carried Possession and Carried Quantity dropdowns (if the Offer Possession or Possession Check objective types were selected)
- Configuring the Area Object and/or Area Possession dropdowns (if the Destroy Object, Manipulate Object, Search Object or Take Possession objective types were selected)
- Configuring the Character or Monster dropdowns (if the encounter involves a specific character or monster)
- Selecting an appropriate effect, musical mood (background music type) or graphic depiction
- Entering a particular objective text (if the Bribe/Give Money, D20 Check or Pass Time objective types were selected)
- Selecting an appropriate quest or GM Note for the encounter
- Indicating whether the encounter should not allow thief-types to pick locks, whether introduced monsters should be reduced to half-strength and whether the party must fight all encountered combatants within the area.

Finally, there is the DESCRIPTION text that must be entered, the actual prose that the GM will pass to the player. As an author, you'll want to construct this prose to be as clear, concise and conversation-oriented

as possible, keeping the amount of prose small yet adequately describing everything and ensuring that the player will completely understand what is happening.

4.2.2.3.2.3 Encounter Monsters

Every encounter can potentially challenge an adventuring party with monsters, assigned via this modal form. That said, monster-based encounters should be relatively rare, as adventuring parties won't survive too much combat (especially at their lowest levels). When monsters are called-for, the modal form allows an author to select which monsters to add, an associated quantity and even their attitude (some monsters may not be all that interested in attacking the party, for example). You can mix and match monster types within an encounter and, in theory, as many monsters as you wish (although you'll want to keep the types of monsters to a minimum).

If you want to add a character to an encounter (say, an evil wizard who is leading a small group of goblins), you'd first create that character and then assign it to the Encounters Form Character dropdown (the Encounter Monsters modal form does NOT manage which character is involved within the encounter).

4.2.2.3.2.4 Encounter Resolutions

Another rather involved form within the BrowserQuests™ toolset, it manages the various results and potential consequences of a given player-chosen resolution. Note that while most encounter objective types utilize just a single resolution, some types utilize TWO separate resolutions (such as the ability, behavior, D20 and saving throw checks, which require both a "success" option and a "failure" option) and the Choose Option resolution type can generate up to THREE separate resolutions (one for each option utilized). Hence, be sure that you complete the form for each encounter resolution that exists!

While a lot can happen with each encounter resolution (and hence the reason for the relative complexity of the form), most resolutions only use the Resolution text field (the actual prose returned to the player, viewed immediately before the prose of the subsequent encounter). Hence, most encounter resolutions only take a minute or two to configure.

In addition to providing the prose for a given encounter resolution, a small collection of additional functions/features are available (for when the circumstances of the resolution warrant them):

4.2.2.3.2.4.1 Changing an Area Exit

Some area exits are purposely locked, blocked or otherwise an impediment to the player and his adventuring party. Within the Encounter Resolution modal form, however, an author can have a specific location area exit changed from one exit type to another. For example, the party may initially find a locked door in an area, then talk to someone somewhere else that results in the locked door's exit type being changed to "Unlocked Door" (so when the party returns to the door it is no longer locked and can easily be passed through).

4.2.2.3.2.4.2 Resolving an Associated Area

Similarly, some encounter areas may have a specific encounter objective type set to "Wait for Outside Resolution" which will effectively prevent the player and his party from continuing to the next encounter. Later in the quest, however, an appropriate encounter resolution may have that same area's Resolve Area Encounter dropdown selected to the next encounter of the area, so when the party returns to that area it is no longer blocked and the player can continue with the next encounter in the area's sequence. Hence,

this mechanism is perfect for making sure that the party does something else first before being allowed to continue within a particular area.

4.2.2.3.2.4.3 Jumping to a Non-Sequential Encounter

Occasionally, an author may want to have a particular encounter resolution skip to a new encounter that's NOT in sequence. For example, a particular option within one encounter may "jump" to another encounter that is not in sequence, skipping encounters that the player should not see due to the choice made. Hence, it's possible to design a linear series of encounters for an area and then set up some resolutions that potentially skip appropriate encounters.

4.2.2.3.2.4.4 Awarding the Party

As a result of a particular encounter resolution, the player and his adventuring party can receive bonus experience points, gold and even a particular possession (and associated quantity). For example, an author may wish to reward a specific member of the party with, say, 100 platinum pieces (selecting the "Platinum Piece" possession and "100" as the quantity). Note that experience and gold awarded is split evenly across all current party members (so a 100 XP reward would assign 25 experience points to everyone within a four-hero party).

4.2.2.3.2.4.5 Updating the Quest Log

Occasionally, a particular resolution will need to update the player's corresponding quest log with a new entry. To enable this, the author selects the appropriate quest and enters the actual quest log text; if those elements exist, they will automatically be added to the player's quest log. Note that the author can also denote the chosen quest as complete (so the quest no longer displays under "Active" quests within the player's quest log).

4.2.2.3.2.4.6 Other Updates

Finally, authors can assign a particular effect (such as Cure Light Wounds) to be applied to a particular member of the party (or the entire party if desired). Authors can also assign an appropriate treasure type (for random adventures) and automatically disable any traps currently assigned to the area.

4.2.2.3 Lore

Finally, once an author has created a quest and has developed all of its many encounters and resolutions, he can assign a variety of LORE items to the database, information-based elements that are associated to the quest being developed. Such elements are assigned to first a campaign and then a particular country, and consist of the lore element name itself, which quest it is associated with, the Intelligence score of a character or hero to know about the lore item as well as a brief description of the lore element itself. Authors can also mark whether the lore item is "fact" (if NOT marked, the lore item is likely fiction and meant to confuse the player in some way).

4.2.3 The Quest Design Document

When designing a quest—and determining all of the various characters, locations, areas, encounters, quests and lore that need to be developed, entered into the BrowserQuests™ system, tested, potentially modified and finally released to the gaming public—writing it all down on paper first to track it all makes tremendous sense; it's not mandatory of course, but it's virtually impossible to work with the game's toolset without some sort of formal documentation process first.

Accordingly, an appropriate Quest Design Document template (provided as a Microsoft® Word document) has been developed for all authors to utilize as they develop their quests. This template is structured to develop a single quest, focusing on a quest summary followed by all of the locations, areas and encounters to be developed. Once the template is completed, authors should find it much easier to not just enter data into the BrowserQuests™ form-driven toolset but playtest and manage all of the various configuration as well. Be sure to download and utilize the template when developing all of your quests!

4.2.4 Full “Vermin Extermination” Design Example Document

To provide aspiring quest authors a taste of what to expect, the entire first quest taken from the original “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign by Scott Huelsman has not only been released but appropriate screenshots of all the associated forms have been added as well, so authors can see firsthand how it was all designed and configured. Of course, feel free to reach out to Scott if you have any questions about the quest or the authoring process in general!

5 TOOLSET DETAILS

The BrowserQuests™ administrative toolset used to enter and manage author-based quests, modules and campaigns is found on the same website as the game itself (<http://www.browserquests.com>). To access the tools, an author simply logs in, navigates to the AUTHORS section of the website and selects the appropriate online forms (as introduced below).

Currently, an introduction to the authoring toolset can be found on the new beta website at <http://beta.browserquests.com/Authors/Authors-Overview>. This URL will change once the new beta site is migrated to the main BrowserQuests.com website.

5.1 BECOMING AN AUTHOR

All BrowserQuests™ authors must first be vetted in order to receive proper credentials and be provided access to all associated authoring tools. All requests must be made to the original developer of the BrowserQuests™ platform, Scott Huelsman. Requests can be [emailed to Scott](#) or prospective authors can utilize the website's Contact Us form as well. Prospective authors will need to think about how much content they'd like to contribute to the overall engine when requesting access to the toolset.

5.1.1 Quest Development

At the most basic level, authors can elect to develop simple quests, a short story that consists of a singular goal (such as “defeat monster X in location Y” or “retrieve item X from location Y”). Quests are normally generic enough that specific characters are not necessary (but certainly CAN utilize specific characters if desired by the author).

As quests are part of an overall campaign, the prospective quest author will first need permission from the associated campaign's author in order to integrate the proposed quest into that campaign, logistics that can be managed through the author's contact with Scott. If agreed upon, the quest author is added to the list of approved authors able to work on a particular campaign.

Note that separate, stand-alone quests can also be written by an author and submitted “as is” without the quest actually being entered into the BrowserQuests™ framework. If accepted, another author with access to the selected campaign will enter the quest into the framework on the original author's behalf.

5.1.2 Module Development

Modules are typically more involved stories—consisting of at least one quest but possibly more—and written to act as a sort of “episode” within a larger campaign (similarly to how an hour-long television show fits into the overall series). Hence, modules are developed and released in order, telling a story that fits into a much larger campaign-based story arc.

As modules are crucial to the overall success of a particular campaign, they require much more time and effort as compared to a single quest (although, again, modules are comprised of one or more quests). Accordingly, modules typically require a variety of dedicated characters, a few of which may actually join the adventuring party.

5.1.3 Campaign Development

Consisting of multiple modules presented in order, campaigns are major story arcs that tell a more complete story over time. Campaigns are generally developed by separate authors telling their own stories within the Sisalus fantasy world, and hence are telling complimentary stories as compared to the original “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign introduced by the BrowserQuests™ developer Scott Huelsman. Indeed—within reason—these alternate campaigns can focus on just about anything, so while all campaigns share the same fantasy world, a near-infinite storylines regarding the world can be told.

To properly determine all of the individual quests and modules to be developed within a campaign, the campaign's author will want to first document a summary of those quests and modules (and seek approval from Scott) before actually utilizing the BrowserQuests™ toolset.

5.2 AUTHORIZING TOOLS

The entire BrowserQuests™ RPG system is essentially powered by a small collection of online forms used to enter and manage all associated content. These forms are all designed in the same way, allowing authors to review, add, edit and delete just about any content element within the framework directly through a browser. Hence, updates to a particular data element is made in real time; as soon as the change is made, the change is reflected across the entire BrowserQuests™ platform.

The authoring toolset can basically be divided into two major components: Campaigns and Parties (Campaigns manage WHERE and WHAT occurs throughout the game, while Parties manage WHO throughout the game). In general, an author will first need to access all the various Campaign-based tools to create her associated quests, modules and campaigns, so that players can eventually interact with that content via their own parties and heroes.

5.2.1 Campaigns Administration

Every campaign author will need to begin with an initial module that consists of an initial quest that basically welcomes the player to the fantasy world of Sisalus and gets that new hero started somewhere within the vast continent of Mairiga. Within the original “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign for example, the initial module is called “Coming of Age” and consists of a single initial quest, “Vermin Extermination.” In that initial quest, the player is introduced to the small village of Tabin, sent to the village merchant to equip himself, and quickly undertakes a small quest to eradicate some rats within the merchant's basement (accompanied by his first party hero Rachel). Similarly, authors developing their own campaigns will need to decide on not only an initial quest for the player, but do so in a way that introduces the player to the Mairigan continent and sets the stage for all the modules to come.

Six general forms are used to manage campaigns within the BrowserQuests™ platform, typically in the following order provided below. Hence, authors will generally want to work their way through these six forms in order as they develop their quests.

5.2.1.1 Locations Form

Locations are general places within the world of Sisalus such as a smaller town (or section of a larger city), an overland ruins or an underground dungeon. Once a location is entered into the system, encounter areas (and their specific encounter details, monsters and resolutions) can be entered into the platform as well. Locations also drive the BrowserQuests™ mapping system, which utilize grids of 10 x 10 units to

display where individual encounter areas are located on a map. Typically, a smaller quest will utilize just one location, while a larger quest will likely involved multiple locations.

The following is a screenshot taken for the Tabin Merchant location, the initial location used within the original "The Sorrow of Sisle" campaign by Scott Huelsman.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Locations Form" for editing a location. At the top, there is a teal "NEW" button on the left and a red "DELETE" button on the right. A dropdown menu is set to "The Sorrow of Sisle (ID:1)". Below this, another dropdown menu is set to "Tabin Merchant (ID:17)".

The form contains several fields:

- Name:** Text input field containing "Tabin Merchant".
- Country:** Dropdown menu set to "Pirapa (ID:4)".
- Environment:** Dropdown menu set to "Building (ID:22)".
- Attitude:** Dropdown menu set to "Suspicious (ID:34)".
- Effect:** Dropdown menu set to "Select Effect".
- Monster:** Dropdown menu set to "Select Monster".
- Race:** Dropdown menu set to "Human (ID:5)".
- Country Map X:** Dropdown menu set to "3".
- Country Map Y:** Dropdown menu set to "6".
- Background Map:** Dropdown menu set to "Tabin Merchant (ID:13)".
- Encounter Chance:** Dropdown menu set to "Select!".

At the bottom of the form, there are two checkboxes:

- Active?** check if available to all players
- AutoMapped?** check if auto-mapped

A **Description** text area contains the following text: "The shop for the local Tabin merchant is larger than one would expect, built several generations ago and kept in good repair. The main floor is mostly dedicated to the business of buying and selling mundane items and goods, while the second floor is used as a private residence and not accessible to the public."

At the bottom center, there is a blue "UPDATE" button. To the right, there is a checkbox labeled "(Confirm Delete)".

At the very bottom, it says "Record Last Updated: 7/12/2020 4:04:02 PM".

To create a new location, first select the appropriate campaign from the top dropdown menu in the top center of the form. Then, click the NEW button in the top left and enter all associated data elements:

5.2.1.1.1 Name (required)

Specific name assigned to the location (limit of 32 characters).

5.2.1.1.2 Country (required)

Country associated with location. Again, the continent of Mairiga contains roughly 60 countries, any of which can be assigned to a location.

5.2.1.1.3 Environment (required)

Type of environment (or natural biome) that makes up the location. In the example above, the “Building” environment was chosen, indicating that the location consists of a building (the merchant store).

5.2.1.1.4 Attitude

General attitude shared by the majority of the location's population. Attitudes range from Respectful to Combative and influences how randomly-encountered creatures will react to the adventuring party.

5.2.1.1.5 Effect

Primary effect that may be in place when the location is visited. For example, if the location is intended to CAUSE FEAR to anyone who enters, such an effect would be selected.

5.2.1.1.6 Monster

Primary monster type that inhabits the location. Within the BrowserQuests™ system, “monsters” are anything that’s not a specific character. So, for example, a particular location could be mostly inhabited by giant scorpions (a typical monster) but it could also be inhabited by city guards. Monster selection is also used when generating random encounters.

5.2.1.1.7 Race

Primary race that inhabits the location, such as dwarf, elf, halfling or human. Race selection is potentially used when generating random encounters.

5.2.1.1.8 Country Map X

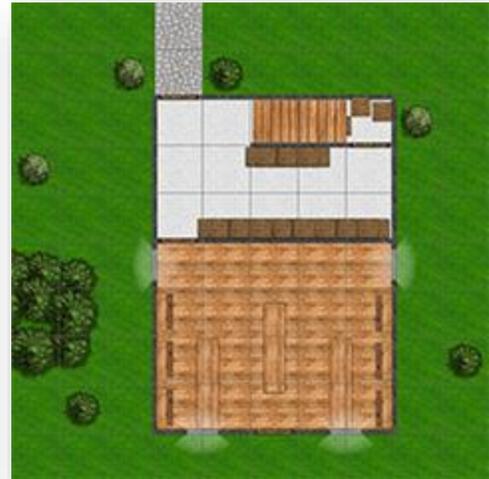
Determines map column (0-9) on a 10 x 10 grid associated with the country the location is in. In other words, for the country in which the location is found, this parameter maps the “X” (horizontal) coordinate.

5.2.1.1.9 Country Map Y

Determines map row (0-9) on a 10 x 10 grid associated with the country the location is in.

5.2.1.1.10 Background Map (required)

Graphic to display within the map player interface. To keep things simple and consistent, location maps must be developed by a BrowserQuests™ administrator—authors don't normally create them on their own. [Contact Scott](#) regarding how to have a map developed for a particular campaign location.



5.2.1.1.11 Encounter Chance

Percentage chance of a random encounter occurring each hour when entering or travelling within the location. Leave this set to 0 (“Select!”) to prevent any random encounters from occurring.

5.2.1.1.12 Active?

Checked if the location is active and available to ALL PLAYERS within the RPG. Naturally, this checkbox should NOT be checked until the location itself should be released to all game players of the platform. *Note that locations are automatically made available to any adventuring parties with the beta test property checked (so associated authors can test their own creations before releasing them to the public).*

5.2.1.1.13 AutoMapped?

Checked if the location automatically displays all areas when the player views the associated map. When a location is auto-mapped, the player can immediately see and review the various areas associated with the location, and when the player moves to a new encounter area, that area will be clearly titled (rather than presented with “???” within the TRAVEL TO NEW AREA dropdown).

5.2.1.1.14 Description

Description assigned (limit of 2048 characters). The location description is NOT displayed to the player at all—it's meant solely for the location author to properly describe and document what the location is all about. Hence, just about anything can be entered into the description field (or nothing at all if desired).

5.2.1.2 **Quests Form**

Quests are the individual stories themselves that comprise an overarching campaign. Smaller quests will normally take the player 15-30 minutes to complete, while larger quests should take the player several to many hours to complete. Quests have a definitive beginning and end, and all major events associated with the quest are automatically added to a player's quest log (via the Encounter Resolution Form). Keep in mind that players should be rewarded for completing individual quests, which will help them maintain interest in your campaign and keep returning to it!

The following is a screenshot taken for the “Vermin Extermination” quest, the initial quest used within the original “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign by Scott Huelsman.

Quests Form

NEW The Sorrow of Sisle (ID:1) **DELETE**

Pirapa (ID:4)

(Lvl: 1) - Vermin Extermination (ID:8)

Name
Vermin Extermination

Location Tabin Merchant Basement (ID:11) **Starting Level** 1

Active? check if quest is active to all players

Description
Visiting the Tabin merchant to equip myself, his daughter Rachel asked me to help her take care of a rat infestation problem they have in the cellar. I had imagined fame and glory for my very first quest, but I guess exterminating some vermin will have to do.

UPDATE (Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 7/19/2020 10:47:00 AM

To create a new quest, first select the appropriate campaign from the top dropdown menu in the top center of the form, then select the country in which the quest is best associated with. Then, click the **NEW** button in the top left and enter all associated data elements:

5.2.1.2.1 Name (required)

Specific name assigned to the quest (limit of 48 characters). Try to enter something intriguing and memorable!

5.2.1.2.2 Location (required)

Location within the selected country where the quest begins. Often, you'll use the same location that you just created in the Locations form above.

5.2.1.2.3 Starting Level

Level of experience the player is intended to possess once the quest is assigned (plus or minus two levels). As quests are designed and implemented within an overall campaign, this value is not actually used by the BrowserQuests™ framework directly—it's merely an indication to how challenging the quest is intended to be (quests assigned as a "2" starting level will be more difficult than a "1", for example).

5.2.1.2.4 Active

Checked if the quest is fully available to all players within the RPG. Until the box is checked, it will NOT be available to players (unless the player party has been designated as a “beta tester”).

5.2.1.2.5 Description (required)

Simple description assigned to the quest (limit of 512 characters). This description is required, as it's used to summarize the quest and will automatically be provided within the player's quest log.

5.2.1.3 Lore Form

Information about a particular author location, quest or even encounter area can be entered and maintained via the Lore Form. Typically, such lore is added as information about a specific country or quest and made available to the player in a variety of ways (visiting a city tavern and listening for rumors, enjoying a play at a local city theater, conducting appropriate research at a city library, etc.). Note that some lore elements require a certain intelligence to learn or know, and that not all lore is factual (some lore elements are merely rumors intended to confuse or sidetrack the player).

A great deal of general Lore can be found by simply asking a player hero about a particular subject (so long as the lore element is not country-specific). However, authors are not allowed to enter such general lore elements; authors are intended to only enter lore items associated with their own campaigns.

The following is a screenshot taken for the “Lost Grandfather” lore item, the initial quest used within the original “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign by Scott Huelsman.

Lore Form

NEW

The Sorrow of Sisle (ID:1)
▼

DELETE

Pirapa (ID:4)
▼

Lost Grandfather
▼

Name

Lost Grandfather

Intelligence Needed

10
▼

Quest

(Lvl: 1) - Vermin Extermination (ID:8)
▼

Fact? check if lore item is a fact (otherwise it's a rumor)

Description

While the town needs its only merchant, the current owner is crass and grumpy—he lost his grandfather a few years ago and just hasn't been the same since. A few remember the grandfather as a happy soul who worked hard but drank hard, and hasn't been seen now in a few years.

UPDATE
 (Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 1/26/2020 2:12:00 PM

To create a new lore element, first select the appropriate campaign from the top dropdown menu in the top center of the form, then select the country in which the lore element is best associated with. Then, click the NEW button in the top left and enter all associated data elements:

5.2.1.3.1 Name (required)

Specific name assigned to the lore element (limit of 48 characters). This name element is not shown to the player—it merely references the appropriate lore item within the toolset.

5.2.1.3.2 Intelligence Needed

Intelligence ability score value needed by a hero to know the lore description. If no one within an adventuring party possesses a high enough score, the lore item itself will not be available for review.

5.2.1.3.3 Quest

Specific quest associated with the lore item.

5.2.1.3.4 Fact?

Checked if the lore element is a fact (otherwise, it's a potential rumor only and likely false). Of course, the player won't actually KNOW whether it's a fact or not—that's up to the player to find out!

5.2.1.3.5 Description (required)

Description assigned (limit of 1024 characters). This is the actual text displayed to the player, so it should be written to be as descriptive yet generic as possible.

5.2.1.4 Characters Form

Humanoid creatures (dwarves, elves, humans, halflings and such) that the player and his adventuring party meet throughout their travels are generically referred to as "characters" within the RPG (as opposed to "monsters" that generally will oppose the party), and, as such, are defined in certain ways. For example, all characters possess **abilities** (strength, dexterity, wisdom, etc.), **behaviors** (altruism, diplomacy, reason, etc.), **possessions** (items that can be carried and used) and **traits** (such as "evil" or "good").

While all manner of characters exist within the Sisalus fantasy world, many will serve as either protagonists (friendly toward the player) or antagonists (villains that will need to be overcome and defeated). Note that once a character joins an adventuring party, that character becomes a "hero" and is separately tracked and managed.

The following is a screenshot taken for the "Rachel" character introduced within the initial quest of the original "The Sorrow of Sisle" campaign by Scott Huelsman.

Characters Form

NEW The Sorrow of Sisle (ID:1) ▼ DELETE

Rachel (ID:17) ▼

Abilities Behaviors Possessions Traits

Name
Rachel

Class Thief (ID:7) ▼ **Depiction** Rachel (ID:86) ▼

Gender Female (ID:65) ▼ **Race** Human (ID:5) ▼

Level 2 ▼ **Hit Points** 6

Recruitable? check if recruitable

Armor Class 10 ▼ **Morale** 15 ▼

Description
Born and raised within the village of Tabin, Rachel is the daughter of the town merchant. A natural tomboy, she chose the profession of the thief about a year ago to follow in the footsteps of her grandfather, who abruptly disappeared a few years ago after himself leading a chaotic (but, mostly, honorable) life. Rachel seems fairly easy-going, but you can't help but feel that she's hiding something.

UPDATE (Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 1/24/2020 9:58:32 AM

To create a new character, first select the appropriate campaign from the top dropdown menu in the top center of the form. Then, click the NEW button in the top left and enter all associated data elements:

5.2.1.4.1 Name (required)

Specific name assigned to the character (limit of 16 characters). Not sure of what name to use? Try the [Fantasy Name Generators](#) website and explore thousands of potential names for your character!

5.2.1.4.2 Class (required)

Specific class the character belongs to. Getting started, options include cleric, fighter, magic-user and thief. If the character is an elf, however, then two additional “combination” classes are available: fighter/magic-user and magic-user/thief.

5.2.1.4.3 Depiction (required)

Default graphic depiction assigned to the character. To keep things simple, all graphic depictions are generated by a BrowserQuests™ administrator (utilizing the [ePic Generator](#) software tool).

5.2.1.4.4 Gender (required)

Gender assigned to the character.

5.2.1.4.5 Race (required)

Specific race assigned to the character. Getting started, four initial races are available to characters: dwarf, elf, halfling and human.

5.2.1.4.6 Level

Experience level assigned.

5.2.1.4.7 Hit Points

Number of maximum hit points assigned to the character.

5.2.1.4.8 Recruitable?

Check if the character can be recruited into an adventuring party. When a character is recruited, many of his original data elements are cloned and then become manageable via the BrowserQuests™ Heroes form. Note that marking a character as recruitable is the only way to add that character as a new hero.

5.2.1.4.9 Armor Class

Base armor class of the character. By default, this value is 10 and is automatically computed during game play.

5.2.1.4.10 Morale

Value of morale assigned (0-100). Morale is currently not yet implemented within the framework.

5.2.1.4.11 Description (required)

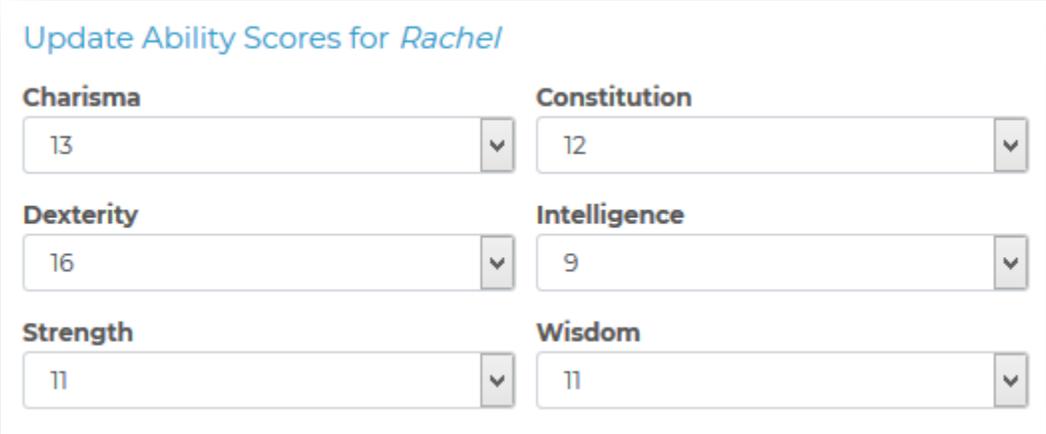
Simple description assigned (limit of 512 characters). This description is provided to game players when they elect to learn more about the character (or subsequent hero once the character has joined the adventuring party).

5.2.1.5 Additional Character Options

Near the top of the Characters Form are four additional buttons used to configure additional elements of each character: Abilities, Behaviors, Possessions and Traits. Clicking each of these will, in turn, invoke an associated modal window containing additional parameters to set.

5.2.1.5.1 Character Abilities

This modal window allows an author to configure the six basic abilities for a character: Charisma, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Strength and Wisdom. Values can range from 0-25, but 3-18 is considered the norm.



| Update Ability Scores for <i>Rachel</i> | |
|---|---------------------|
| Charisma | Constitution |
| 13 | 12 |
| Dexterity | Intelligence |
| 16 | 9 |
| Strength | Wisdom |
| 11 | 11 |

The following form fields are used:

5.2.1.5.1.1 Charisma

Ability to influence or lead people. Those with high Charisma are well-liked or well respected.

5.2.1.5.1.2 Constitution

A combination of general health and vitality.

5.2.1.5.1.3 Dexterity

Measure of quickness, balance and aptitude with tools.

5.2.1.5.1.4 Intelligence

Ability to learn and apply knowledge.

5.2.1.5.1.5 Strength

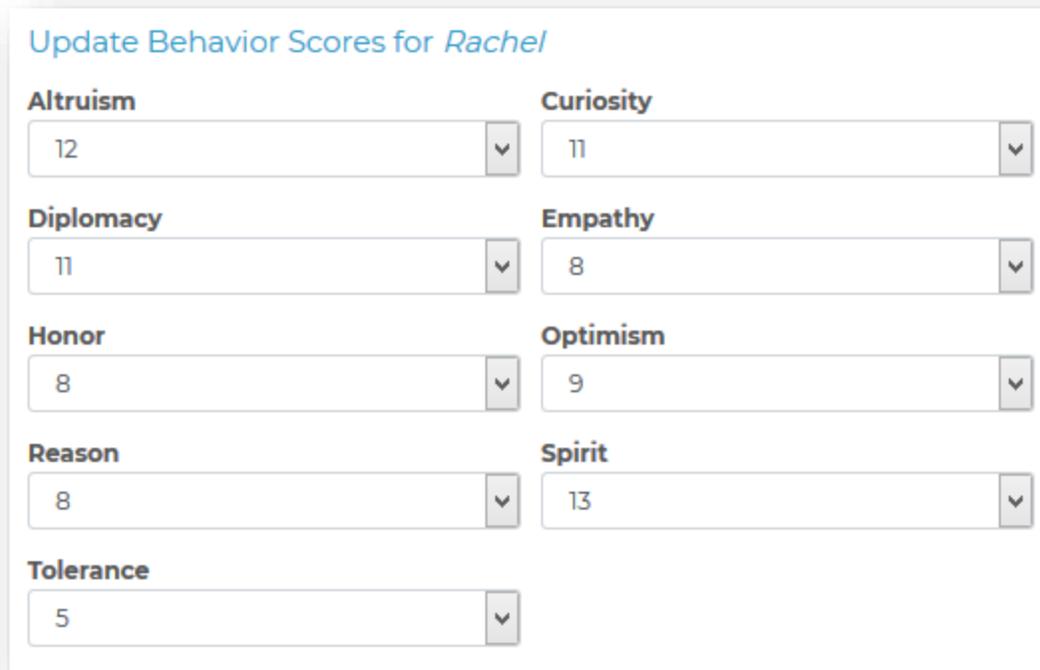
Measure of a character's raw physical power.

5.2.1.5.1.6 Wisdom

Combination of intuition, willpower and common sense.

5.2.1.5.2 Character Behaviors

Similar to character abilities, the behaviors measure nine important personality-based traits for each character: Altruism, Curiosity, Diplomacy, Empathy, Honor, Optimism, Reason, Spirit and Tolerance. These values also range from 0-25 (but 3-18 are considered the norm).



The screenshot shows a form titled "Update Behavior Scores for Rachel" with the following fields and values:

| Trait | Score |
|-----------|-------|
| Altruism | 12 |
| Curiosity | 11 |
| Diplomacy | 11 |
| Empathy | 8 |
| Honor | 8 |
| Optimism | 9 |
| Reason | 8 |
| Spirit | 13 |
| Tolerance | 5 |

The following form fields are used:

5.2.1.5.2.1 *Altruism*

Willingness of a character to give of himself, whether physically, materialistically or spiritually.

5.2.1.5.2.2 *Curiosity*

Measure of a character's natural desire for knowledge and universal understanding.

5.2.1.5.2.3 *Diplomacy*

Ability to articulate, work together and generally talk one's way into or out of a situation.

5.2.1.5.2.4 *Empathy*

Relative open-mindedness of a character and its ability to feel what others around it feel.

5.2.1.5.2.5 *Honor*

Measurement of the character's willingness to do the right thing regardless of the circumstances.

5.2.1.5.2.6 *Optimism*

Degree to which the character sees a situation as positive (the glass is half full).

5.2.1.5.2.7 *Reason*

Degree of which a character will act according to logic and observed reality instead of tradition and religion.

5.2.1.5.2.8 Spirit

Measure of a character's zest for life and general happiness.

5.2.1.5.2.9 Tolerance

Degree to which the character will tolerate disagreeable actions, ideas and behaviors.

5.2.1.5.3 Character Possessions

All characters are provided with a collection of items that they can use under a variety of circumstances, such as weapons, potions, tools, etc. Accordingly, this modal is used to add, edit and delete all such possessions assigned to a particular hero.

The screenshot shows a modal window titled "Assign Possessions to Rachel". At the top left is a teal "NEW" button. To its right is a dropdown menu showing "1 Set of Thieves Tools (ID:158)". At the top right is a red "DELETE" button. Below this is a table with two columns: "Possession" and "Quantity". The "Possession" column has a dropdown menu showing "Set of Thieves Tools (ID:82)". The "Quantity" column has a text input field containing the number "1". At the bottom center is a blue "UPDATE" button. At the bottom right is a checkbox labeled "(Confirm Delete)".

Basically a form within a form, it allows authors to review, add, edit and delete possessions from a particular character, and utilizes the following two fields:

5.2.1.5.3.1 Possession

Specific possession that the selected character has in inventory.

5.2.1.5.3.2 Quantity

Number of inventory items carried (such as 100 gold pieces).

5.2.1.5.4 Character Traits

Finally, a diversity of character traits are available through the toolset, essentially on-and-off switches that assign a particular trait to a particular character. Accordingly, traits help tell the BrowserQuests™ engine how to handle characters under certain situations (such as combat). In the screenshot provided below for example, the character Rachel has been assigned the "Evader," "Permanent Hero" and "Person" traits.



The following traits are currently configurable within the BrowserQuests™ platform:

5.2.1.5.4.1 Amorphous

Not possessing any real structural form (such as gelatinous cubes, oozes and slimes).

5.2.1.5.4.2 Animal

Creatures that qualify as an animal within the gaming world.

5.2.1.5.4.3 Evader

When in combat, the creature seeks to evade the party and fight from a distance.

5.2.1.5.4.4 Evil

Those with overwhelming evil or utterly selfish motivations.

5.2.1.5.4.5 Flyer

Anything that can float, soar or otherwise fly above the ground.

5.2.1.5.4.6 *Giant*

Generic term for anything giant, such as a giant wasp, giant scorpion or giant human (simply referred to as giant).

5.2.1.5.4.7 *Good*

Those with extremely honorable, self-righteous and altruistic motivations.

5.2.1.5.4.8 *Henchman*

Hired heroes who can be purchased at town guilds and added to a party (limit of two henchmen per party). Henchmen WILL share inventory (unlike temporary heroes that do not).

5.2.1.5.4.9 *Humanoid*

Any of the races that are similar to humans, dwarves, elves and halflings but typically less evolved (less intelligent, less civilized and more warlike).

5.2.1.5.4.10 *Insect*

Otherwise known as "bugs," insects are invertebrates that typically have a hardened exoskeleton, a three-part body (head, thorax and abdomen), several pairs of legs and compound eyes. Many insects are capable of biting or poisoning.

5.2.1.5.4.11 *Invisible*

Those that are impossible to be seen with ordinary vision.

5.2.1.5.4.12 *Magical*

Creatures formed almost solely of magical energy or otherwise developed from magic.

5.2.1.5.4.13 *Permanent Hero*

Character's intended to be a primary hero permanently recruited into the adventuring party (and WILL share their possessions).

5.2.1.5.4.14 *Person*

Humanoids that generally qualify as a person within the gaming world.

5.2.1.5.4.15 *Plant*

Qualifies as a plant (for purposes such as the cleric spell Speak with Plants).

5.2.1.5.4.16 *Reptilian*

Humanoid creatures with scaly skin and other non-human traits.

5.2.1.5.4.17 *Talker*

Capable of communicating during an encounter (generating the CONVERSE option).

5.2.1.5.4.18 *Temporary Hero*

Characters who can be recruited into adventuring parties for short durations but won't stay long (and WILL NOT share their possessions).

5.2.1.5.4.19 *Undead*

Creature is classified as a member of the undead (and hence turnable by clerics for example).

5.2.1.6 Areas Form

Also known as "Encounter Areas," these are individual places within a particular location where the player and her adventuring party will physically reach and interact within. For example, a merchant's shop within a city or village is an encounter area, as is a wooden bridge spanning a gentle river beneath it, or a dusty burial crypt within an underground dungeon. Encounter areas are actually highly detailed so the game master can present those details to the player and referee any and all actions taken within.

Like the Characters Form, the Areas Form also consists of several subforms of information: Exits (which determine how areas are connected to one another), Objects (those permanent things within an area, such as tables, chests, trees and such that cannot be removed from the area but CAN be searched, manipulated and even destroyed) and Object Possessions (items that CAN be found by an adventuring party and removed from a particular area object).

The following is a screenshot taken for the "Shop Entryway" area introduced within the initial quest of the original "The Sorrow of Sisle" campaign by Scott Huelsman.

Areas Form

NEW

The Sorrow of Sisle (ID:1)
▼

DELETE

Tabin Merchant (ID:17)
▼

#1- Shop Entryway (ID:136)
▼

Exits

Objects

Object Possessions

Name

Shop Entryway
▼

Order

1
▼

Area Function

Entrance (ID:248)
▼

Environment

Building (ID:22)
▼

Lighting

Artificial (always lit) (ID:440)
▼

Trap

Select Trap
▼

Primary Possessions

Select Possession Type
▼

Secondary

Select Possession Type
▼

Tertiary

Select Possession Type
▼

Location Map X

3
▼

Location Map Y

2
▼

Auto Mapped? area automatically displays on map? **Auto Reset?** does initial area encounter auto-reset?

Can Camp/Sleep? is camping/sleeping allowed? **Template?** area template?

Beginning Area? does the party begin a campaign within the area?

Description

The floor is made of bleached stone and the entryway large enough to store entire crates of items and supplies.

UPDATE
 (Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 7/29/2020 8:13:56 AM

To create a new area, first select the appropriate campaign from the top dropdown menu in the top center of the form, then select the appropriate location in which the area is found. Finally, click the NEW button in the top left and enter all associated data elements:

5.2.1.6.1 Name (required)

Area name assigned (limit of 32 characters).

5.2.1.6.2 Order

Order in which the area is found within the location (#1-100). A typical location will utilize 15-20 areas altogether or so.

5.2.1.6.3 Area Function

Particular function or purpose assigned to the area. Area functions are primary used to not only generically describe the type of area (such as a bank, barracks or bathroom) but also allow authors to easily assign new objects to a given area (introduced shortly below). A wide diversity of area functions are available within the BrowserQuests™ engine, including the following:

5.2.1.6.4 Environment

Physical environment assigned to the area (such as a city or forest). This property is similar to the Locations Form Environment field, but allows additional specificity (such as encountering a building in the middle of a deep forest).

5.2.1.6.5 Lighting

Type of lighting found within the area. Four options are available: Natural (light during the day and dark at night), Artificial (so the area is ALWAYS lit no matter what time of day or night it is), Naturally Dark (such as the interior of a cave where it's always dark) and Magically Dark (which can only be illuminated by magical light). Naturally, select which option seems best for the encounter area.

5.2.1.6.6 Trap

Particular trap encountered (one trap per area). Traps are randomly tripped by adventuring parties visiting the associated area and not first finding and disarming them. Traps are also managed by BrowserQuests™ administrators, but if you have an idea for a new trap, let us know!

5.2.1.6.7 Primary/Secondary/Tertiary Possessions

If the area function is a type of shop, these dropdowns determine the primary, secondary or tertiary categories of possessions available for buying and selling. A standard merchant for example will utilize "All" as its primary possessions option (leaving secondary and tertiary alone) since merchants are supposed to make all possessions under 100 gold piece value available for buying and selling.

5.2.1.6.8 Location Map X/Map Y

Determines map columns (0-9) and rows (0-9) that defines the area's location on a 10 x 10 grid.

5.2.1.6.9 Auto Mapped?

Set if the encounter area automatically displays on the associated location map when viewed (otherwise, the area will NOT display on the map until the party actually reaches it).

5.2.1.6.10 Auto Reset?

Set if initial area encounter should reset each time the party returns (typical for simple city encounters). Be careful with this option, as associated areas will reset back to when the party first arrived, making it feel like the party has never encountered the area before.

5.2.1.6.11 Can Camp/Sleep?

Set if the party can rest within the area. Within a city, parties normally rest at a local inn, which they must first pay for. Beyond the cities, parties can only camp in areas deemed appropriate by the quest author, places where a party can reasonably expect not to be found or attacked as they rest.

5.2.1.6.12 Template?

Set if the area should serve as a template for future areas (not yet implemented within the BrowserQuests™ framework).

5.2.1.6.13 Description

Description assigned (limit of 2048 characters). Descriptions should be kept very simple, just a single line of text within the form field (as the text is used within the game itself when a player elects to view a brief description of a particular area on the map, and there is very limited space for the text).

5.2.1.7 *Additional Area Options*

Near the top of the Areas Form are three additional buttons used to configure additional elements of each area: Exits, Objects and Object Possessions. Clicking each of these will, in turn, invoke an associated modal window containing additional parameters to set.

5.2.1.7.1 Area Exits

This modal window allows an author to configure any all entrances and exits to and from the selected encounter area (and hence populating the player's TRAVEL TO NEW AREA dropdown menu, depending on several factors). Typical entrances or exits may include a simple door, a path from one encounter area to another, a stairway up and down, etc. Sometimes, exits may not be immediately available (such as a locked door or hidden/secret door), and sometimes the exit may not even be made known to the player until some other condition occurs. Hence, area exits are quite dependent upon the area itself and the circumstances of the story and authors will need to use some forethought while developing all associated area exits.

Assign Exits to *Shop Entryway*

NEW

Doorway South to Storefront (ID:557)
▼

DELETE

Name

Doorway South to Storefront

Direction

South (ID:301)
▼

Exit Type

Doorway (ID:282)
▼

Destination

Tabin Merchant (ID:17)
▼

Area

#2- Merchant Storefront (ID:137)
▼

Time to Travel

0

Concealed? check if exit is initially hidden but discoverable by the player

GM Concealed? check if exit can ONLY be revealed by the GM

Is One Way Only? check if exit is used once (then automatically disappears)

UPDATE

(Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 7/13/2020 5:51:13 PM

Another form within a form, it allows authors to review, add, edit and delete exits from a particular area. Note that when an exit is created, a RETURNING EXIT is also automatically created. For example, in the screenshot above, when the Doorway South to Storefront exit was originally developed, a corresponding Doorway North to Shop Entryway was also developed within the Merchant Storefront area (so this step wouldn't have to be done separately).

The modal form utilizes the following fields:

5.2.1.7.1.1 *Name (required)*

Arbitrary name assigned to the area exit (limit of 48 characters). To maintain consistency across all author campaigns, please try to name your area exits in the following manner:

<Exit Type> <Direction> to <Destination Area>

Again, area exits can be named anything (as they're not actually displayed to the player in any way) but they're much easier to manage when they're named in a consistent manner.

5.2.1.7.1.2 Direction (required)

Cardinal or vertical direction that the exit leads in. For exits that don't involve a direction (such as a teleporter), choose the "Elsewhere" option.

5.2.1.7.1.3 Exit Type (required)

Type of exit involved (such as a door, road or secret door). A diversity of exit types are available within the toolset—use whichever seems most appropriate for the situation at hand:

5.2.1.7.1.3.1 Blocked Path

The way forward is blocked or restricted in some way, requiring the player to do something before the exit can be used.

5.2.1.7.1.3.2 Doorway

These simple exits do not contain an actual door, and are thus comprised only of a wooden frame surrounding the doorway. Since no door exists, doorways cannot be locked and are easy to pass through.

5.2.1.7.1.3.3 Elevator

A highly-mechanical contraption consisting of various ropes, pulleys and counterweights constructed to transport adventuring parties up and down through various levels of a location.

5.2.1.7.1.3.4 Hallway

A simple hallway leading in some direction.

5.2.1.7.1.3.5 Locked Door

Locked doors either require a skeleton key to open or the successful picking of the lock by a party thief (in areas where the lock can indeed be picked).

5.2.1.7.1.3.6 Locked Gate

Typically leading into a town or city, locked gates are impenetrable and need to be opened from the inside (by a city guard) to gain entry.

5.2.1.7.1.3.7 Open Gate

Typically leading into or out of a town or city, open gates are easily passed through.

5.2.1.7.1.3.8 Password

Highly-magical doors that will NEVER open until a specific "passphrase" is uttered.

5.2.1.7.1.3.9 Path

A simple path that can easily take an adventuring party from one encounter area to another (and back again).

5.2.1.7.1.3.10 Pit

A large hole that leads down to another encounter area below (and not accessible unless someone within the party is carrying a rope).

5.2.1.7.1.3.11 River

A large but typical river that can only be crossed via some sort of surface vessel (such as a boat or raft).

5.2.1.7.1.3.12 Road

A simple and easily-passable road, dug from the surrounding soil and covered with small cobbles, twigs and sand.

5.2.1.7.1.3.13 Rope Ladder

Small collection of long and sturdy ropes that hang from the ceiling above and allow access to the encounter area below.

5.2.1.7.1.3.14 Secret Door

Either camouflaged or constructed to blend into the surrounding environment, secret doors can be very difficult to find and usually lead to very important encounter areas.

5.2.1.7.1.3.15 Stairway

A typical staircase used to connect two levels of a particular location.

5.2.1.7.1.3.16 Teleporter

Highly magical in nature, teleporters serve to relocate heroes to other areas or even other locations.

5.2.1.7.1.3.17 Trail

A simple path through an external environment such as a forest.

5.2.1.7.1.3.18 Tunnel

Typically dug through soil or rock and connecting two underground encounter areas.

5.2.1.7.1.3.19 Unlocked Door

A simple door that is either unlocked or does not possess any locking mechanism, and thus can be easily passed through.

5.2.1.7.1.3.20 Water

Typically used for when a party is swimming in a large body of water.

5.2.1.7.1.4 Destination/Area (required)

Combination of Mairigan continent location and area that the exit leads to. By default, all areas within the current location can be selected, but if necessary an author can choose another location entirely and utilize any areas of the location as well.

5.2.1.7.1.5 Time to Travel

Number of minutes it will take to travel to the destination area. For very short exits (such as through an unlocked door), enter a zero and only a few moments will pass by for the player. For very long exits (such as trekking overland from one city to another), enter a much larger number that equates to hours or even days (for example, a single day's trek overland should utilize about 16 hours, which is equivalent to 960 minutes).

5.2.1.7.1.6 *Concealed?*

Check if the exit is initially concealed to the player but can be found by various player options such as searching the area. For example, an area object (such as a curtain or large tapestry) could conceal a hidden exit beyond, something the player can find simply by searching the curtain or large tapestry.

5.2.1.7.1.7 *GM Concealed?*

Check if the exit is initially concealed and **ONLY** the GM can reveal it later in the story. When this option is selected, no amount of searching within the associated area will reveal the exit—some other specific action by the player elsewhere can only reveal the exit.

5.2.1.7.1.8 *Is One Way Out?*

Check if the exit can only be used once (and then is gone forever). Note that when this option is used, a returning exit is **NOT** automatically created via the form.

5.2.1.7.2 *Area Objects*

This second modal window allows an author to configure the selected area with all manner of “objects” (structural elements that aren't intended to be moved or taken by the party but can still be interacted with in some way). For example, a typical bedchamber may consist of a bed, dresses, footlocker, wash basin, painting on the wall, etc. Each of these objects can be searched by a player, manipulated in some way and even destroyed if desired. Hence, each object within an area will require parameters to be set by the author.

Assign Objects to *Shop Entryway*

NEW Sign (ID:1193) (one) **DELETE**

Object
Sign (ID:131)

Name Sign **Quantity** one (ID:309)

Hidden? check if the area object is initially hidden from the party

Description
The worn sign bids you welcome to the merchant here, the largest general store in Tabin.

UPDATE (Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 7/13/2020 6:16:31 PM

Because creating an entire area's worth of objects from scratch for each area of a location can easily become tedious and time-consuming, a wide collection of area templates have been designed so that appropriate area-based objects can be added to an area with a single button click.

For example, to populate a typical merchant's showroom, click the Assign Objects NEW button, find the "Merchant" option that appears below "Load Entire Collection of Objects Based on Area Function!" and click the CLONE button. This will automatically fill the area with a wide array of objects typically found within a merchant's showroom. Then, go through each object and edit, delete or leave as is, depending upon the circumstances of the area you're designing.

Assign Objects to *Shop Entryway*

NEW **Load Entire Collection of Objects Based on Area Function!**

Merchant (ID:230)

Object

Name
Quantity

Hidden? check if the area object is initially hidden from the party

Description

Complete form above and click UPDATE to add new record!

The modal form utilizes the following fields:

5.2.1.7.2.1 *Object (required)*

Actual object template used. Note that only BrowserQuests™ administrators can create new area object templates within the framework. If there's a new object template you'd like to see added, let us know!

5.2.1.7.2.2 *Name (required)*

Name assigned to the area object (which can overwrite the template's original name but is limited to 48 characters). For example, the standard "Ground" area object template could be renamed to "Stone Floor" if that seems more appropriate to an area author.

5.2.1.7.2.3 *Quantity (required)*

Number of the objects encountered. When a player wishes to learn more about a particular area object, a general quantity description is used (versus an exact number). For example, the area author may elect to assign “dozen or so” to the number of chairs within a tavern, or “several hundred” to the number of rocks found within a typical city park.

5.2.1.7.2.4 *Hidden?*

Checked if the object is initially hidden from the party (and can only be found if the area is searched by the player and her adventuring party).

5.2.1.7.2.5 *Description (required)*

Detail description of the object (maximum of 2048 characters). Again, while each area object template utilizes its own default description, the area author is free to modify that description in whatever way he feels is best for the story at hand.

5.2.1.7.3 *Area Object Possessions*

This third modal window allows an author to assign any number of given possessions (items that a given party hero CAN take from an encounter area) to a specific object within the area. For example, the area author may wish to assign a variety of treasure-related items to a locked treasure chest; if the party can figure-out how to open the chest, the goodies contained within become available.

Assign Object Possessions to *Damaged Ceiling*

NEW Rat's Nest (ID:1101) (one) **DELETE**

1 Bracelet (ID:85)

| Possession | Quantity |
|------------------|----------|
| Bracelet (ID:52) | 1 |

UPDATE (Confirm Delete)

Record Last Updated: 2/1/2020 8:34:41 PM

In the example above, an area object (rat's nest) contains a bracelet, so once the party discovers the rat's nest (which, in this case, is revealed after the party must fight and defeat a small group of rats), a party hero can recover the bracelet.

The modal form utilizes the following pair of fields:

5.2.1.7.3.1 Possession (required)

Specific type of possession assigned to the area object.

5.2.1.7.3.2 Quantity (required)

Number of possessions found within the object.

5.2.1.8 Encounters Form

Finally, encounters are highly-specific events that occur within the various areas of the fantasy world. Each area typically utilizes at least two encounters, the initial encounter (when the area is first entered) and a final encounter (when there is nothing more to do within the area). Many areas consist of more than two encounters and some may utilize a dozen encounters or more (in theory, a single area can have up to 100 encounters, but 3-12 is typically the norm).

All encounters consist of introductory prose that is provided to the player, along with an intended resolution that completes the encounter and allows the next encounter to proceed (typically) in order. Additionally, encounters consist of two subforms: Monsters (that track any potential enemies the party may face during the encounter) and Resolutions (that detail all that occurs within the game once the encounter itself is successfully resolved).

As encounters (and their associated resolutions) directly control the vast majority of the interactivity within the game for the player, authors will need to potentially enter a fair amount of information into the Encounters Form (and spend the vast majority of her time working the form).

Encounters Form

Name **Objective Type** **Order**

Option #1 **Option #2** **Option #3**

Target Check **Ability Check**

Behavior Check **Saving Throw Check**

Carried Possession **Carried Quantity**

Area Object **Area Possession**

Character **Monster**

Effect **Musical Mood** **Depiction**

Objective Text **Quest** **GM Note**

Disregard Locks? **Half Strength?** **Must Fight?**

Description (separate paragraphs with two tilde characters '~~')

Let's begin! Orphaned as a baby to parents you never knew, you were raised here within the human village of Tabin, located in the southwestern corner of the country of Pirapa, itself one of 60 or so countries that comprise the continent of Mairiga of this fantasy world known as Sisalus.~~There are, of course, other continents within the world, but this campaign won't utilize any of them—everything will take place here on the continent of Mairiga. Accordingly, the entire mapping system to the left has been designed around this single continent.

(Confirm Delete)

To create a new encounter, first select the appropriate campaign from the top dropdown menu in the top center of the form, select the appropriate location in which the area is found, then select the specific area itself that the encounter will be assigned to. Finally, click the NEW button in the top left and enter all associated data elements:

5.2.1.8.1 Name

All encounters require a name, and the name should utilize some standard conventions. For example, the very first encounter within an area should be named "Introduction" and the final encounter should be named "Final Resolution". If all RPG authors can follow this convention, it will be much easier for all authors to recognize the first and last encounters within ANY Area. Otherwise, encounter names can be just about anything (but must be kept under 48 characters in length). Naturally, names that briefly describe the encounter (such as "Merchant's Arrival") are more helpful than just something like "Encounter #5."

5.2.1.8.2 Objective Type

The many Objective Types available to BrowserQuests™ authors are as follows!

5.2.1.8.2.1 Ability Check

A popular objective type, use this when the GM should "check" a particular hero ability, such as the player's own hero's Strength or another hero's Wisdom. Checking an ability (as well as behavior) involves rolling a 1d20 (twenty-sided die) and comparing the result against the hero and ability being checked; if the result is equal to or greater than the ability, the roll is a success (otherwise, it's a failure). When selecting this Objective Type option, the BrowserQuests™ system will automatically generate TWO associated resolutions, so you can configure what happens for either the succeeded or failed role.

Note that it's possible to check the entire party as well as an individual hero! When the "All Player Heroes" option is selected within the Encounters Form Target Check dropdown menu, the hero with the best associated ability will be used for the check, potentially enhancing the chances of a successful resolution.

5.2.1.8.2.2 Ability Use (Max in Party)

Causes the party member with the maximum ability (or behavior) to be assigned the associated encounter resolution response. For example, if Rachel in the party has the highest Dexterity of everyone within the party and the Dexterity Ability Check option is also selected, the resulting encounter resolution text will be spoken by Rachel. Hence, this option is useful for when someone of authority within the party needs to comment about something, suggesting to the player what the party may want to do next.

5.2.1.8.2.3 Area Completed

Marks the final encounter within the area, informing the system that encounters can no longer be advanced. Hence, use this Objective Type for each of your area final encounters and, by convention, be sure to set the Encounter Order field to 100 as well.

5.2.1.8.2.4 Auto Advance

A very common option, it signifies that the particular encounter is automatically resolved regardless of what the player does, displaying a "CONTINUE" button to the player in order to proceed to the next encounter. Hence, such encounters are typically used to display ongoing GM information or character/hero dialogue and doesn't allow for any actual interactivity.

5.2.1.8.2.5 *Behavior Check*

Similar to the Ability Check Objective Type above, this option allows a targeted hero in the party to receive a behavior check (such as Honor). And like the Ability Check option, this one also allows the entire party to be selected (so the hero with the BEST associated behavior value is used instead).

5.2.1.8.2.6 *Behavior Use (Max in Party)*

Similar to the Ability Use (Max in Party) Objective Type above, this option causes the party member with the maximum behavior score to be assigned the associated encounter resolution response. For example, it could be used to determine the most honorable hero within the party and have that character return some dialogue to the game player.

5.2.1.8.2.7 *Bribe/Give Money*

Indicates that a bribe must be paid (or money given) by a selected party hero in order to resolve the encounter. To make this work, a value (equal to an appropriate number of copper pieces) must be entered into the Encounters Form Objective Text field as well. For example, a city shrine may require that the party pay 25 copper pieces to enter; the value "25" would therefore be entered into the Objective Text field (and nothing more would occur within the encounter area until the bribe/fee is paid).

5.2.1.8.2.8 *Buy/Sell Possessions*

Requires that at least one possession must be purchased or sold within the current area for the encounter to be resolved. This encounter type is typically used within a shop of some kind where the owner won't do or say anything specific until the player has first purchased or sold something.

5.2.1.8.2.9 *Choose Option*

Another popular Objective Type option, it allows the player to select from one of up to three specific options offered during the encounter (with each option receiving its own unique resolution). Through use of this type, authors can introduce significant interactivity into the story, allowing the player to make a specific choice and then assigning associated consequences to that choice. To keep your story lively and your players entertained, utilize the Choose Option objective type as much as you can!

5.2.1.8.2.10 *Converse*

Rather straightforward, a conversation must be had between the party and those beings encountered in order to resolve the encounter. Note that the Converse objective type is typically used only once per area (if additional dialogue is required, use the Auto Completed option to automatically step through those additional encounters).

5.2.1.8.2.11 *Create New Hero (don't use!)*

This objective type is only used at the very beginning of the game to allow new players to create a hero for themselves. *Hence, authors should NEVER use this option!*

5.2.1.8.2.12 *D20 Check*

Allows a selected party hero to roll a random 1d20 die and compare that against a number determined by the author (entered into the Encounters Form Objective Text field) to determine failure or success. For example, the encounter objective type could be used to determine whether the player hero, in attempting to strike at a target within the encounter area, actually hits that target or not. Hence, D20 checks are a great way to simulate dice-rolling by the GM and introduce some variability into a story.

5.2.1.8.2.13 Defeat Encountered

The default “combat” option, it signifies that all encountered creatures (both any antagonistic characters as well as attacking monsters) must be defeated in order to continue. Note that defeat doesn't always mean reducing all encountered combatant hit points to zero; encountered creatures can also be bullied or simply talked-down into surrendering (which also meets the objective type). Note that when this option is selected, the Encounters Form Character dropdown menu is used to assign a character combatant and the Encounter Monsters modal form populated with appropriate monsters to defeat.

5.2.1.8.2.14 Destroy Object

A particular area object must be destroyed to resolve the encounter. Accordingly, the Encounters Form Area Object dropdown must be set to a particular object—and that object actually destroyed by the player's party—in order to resolve the encounter.

5.2.1.8.2.15 Heal Party

With this Objective Type, the entire adventuring party is automatically healed of all their wounds. This option is standard fare within a church or shrine, typically utilized after the party has paid for such services. Alternatively, use the objective type after a difficult battle when the party would automatically be healed by nearby friendly clerics.

5.2.1.8.2.16 Hero Check

Checks to see if a particular hero has joined the adventuring party. The Encounters Form Character dropdown menu must be set to the hero being checked; if that hero is indeed a member of the adventuring party, the encounter will be successfully resolved (otherwise, it is failed). The objective type is thus useful when a potential member of the party should deliver a particular line of dialogue but that character may not currently be a member of the adventuring party.

5.2.1.8.2.17 Illusion Check

This Objective Type waits for the player to click the corresponding CONCENTRATE response button, which allows the party to see any illusions within the encounter area for what they actually are (and therefore automatically resolve the area). Hence, illusion checks don't utilize any variability within the game, but they can certainly be followed-up by an encounter that DOES offer variability (such as an Ability, Behavior, D20 or Saving Throw check).

5.2.1.8.2.18 Leave Area

Automatically sets the encounter as resolved as soon as the party leaves the current area. When this option is selected, appropriate encounter resolution text is provided to the player upon arrival at the destination encounter area.

5.2.1.8.2.19 Lose Hero

When this objective type is selected (and a particular character selected from the Encounters Form Character dropdown menu), that hero will automatically be removed from the player's adventuring party. For characters with the TEMPORARY HERO trait, the hero will be permanently deleted, as temporary heroes are only intended to be added a single time to the player's party. If the character has been assigned the PERMANENT HERO trait, however, all associated statistics regarding the hero will remain, as the hero

will likely rejoin the party at some point. Similarly, if the character was assigned the HENCHMAN trait, the hero will be removed but can always be re-added again by visiting another town-based guild.

5.2.1.8.2.20 Manage Party (don't use!)

Halts game play and waits for the player to manage his adventuring party (choosing a new campaign, deleting hired NPCs and even starting the current campaign from scratch). *This objective type exists for administrative purposes only and should not be used by authors.*

5.2.1.8.2.21 Manipulate Object

Indicates that a particular area object within the encounter must be manipulated by the party in order to resolve the encounter. Accordingly, the appropriate object to be manipulated must be set from the Encounters Form Area Object dropdown menu.

5.2.1.8.2.22 Offer Possession

When this objective type is selected, the player must offer the exact possession (and associated quantity) to those encountered. If possessed, the item/quantity will be removed from the associated hero but then the encounter will be successfully resolved. Naturally, the Encounters Form Carried Possession and Carried Quantity dropdowns must be appropriately set for this option to work. This objective type is useful for when a particular quest item must be recovered from some external place and brought back to the appropriate area.

5.2.1.8.2.23 Pass Time

With this objective type, a specific number of game minutes passes by and then the encounter is automatically resolved (the number of minutes specified via the Encounters Form Objective Text). Hence, it's a way to make a certain amount of time pass by, such as the player hero being rendered unconscious.

5.2.1.8.2.24 Quest Completed

Resolves the current encounter if a particular quest has already been completed. For this option to work, the Encounters Form Quest dropdown must be set to the specific quest to be tested.

5.2.1.8.2.25 Recruit Character

Allows a particular character (set via the Encounters Form Characters dropdown menu) to be recruited into the adventuring party. Naturally, encounter authors will want to be careful with this option and only use it when they are sure the associated character won't already exist within the party (and that the maximum of six permanent heroes and two henchman hasn't already been reached).

5.2.1.8.2.26 Rejoin Hero

Similar to the Recruit Character option above, it allows a (permanent) hero who previously left the party to rejoin. Again, the Encounters Form Character dropdown must be set to the character about to rejoin the adventuring party.

5.2.1.8.2.27 Saving Throw Check

Requires that a particular hero within the adventuring party attempt to make a given saving throw. Within the Encounters Form, the Target Check dropdown must be set to a particular hero and the Saving Throw Check dropdown must be set to the appropriate saving throw. If the check is successful, so too is the

encounter resolution (otherwise, it is failed). Note that heroes must roll a 1d20 and receive a value that is equal to or higher than the associated saving throw value in order to succeed with the check.

5.2.1.8.2.28 Search Area

Perhaps the most popular objective type, this option requires that the party formally search the current encounter area in order to resolve it. If possible, try not to use this option too often, so players aren't constantly searching every new area they encounter simply out of habit.

5.2.1.8.2.29 Search Object

Similarly, requires that a specific area object be searched by the party in order to resolve the encounter. For this to work, an appropriate Encounters Form Area Object must be selected as well. Note that while area objects are meant to be searched only once, if the player has already searched a particular object before and then needs to do so again in order to resolve the current encounter, the process will still work.

5.2.1.8.2.30 Select Campaign (don't use!)

Another resolution type that is only used once per campaign and not intended for encounter authors to separately use!

5.2.1.8.2.31 Start Campaign (don't use!)

Yet another resolution type that is used only once per campaign and not intended for authors to assign.

5.2.1.8.2.32 Suspend Hero

Temporarily removes the appropriate hero from the adventuring party (per the Encounters Form Character dropdown). Suspended heroes are intended to return, and so all of their current party-based data elements remain during their suspension from the party.

5.2.1.8.2.33 Take Possession

This objective type resolves the current encounter when the player directs any party hero to take a particular possession from an area object, including the floor (per the Encounters Form Area Possession dropdown). For example, a specific possession may be identified within the area so that, when taken, a poison gas sprays out to potentially devastate the party.

5.2.1.8.2.34 Teleport

Immediately reassigns the adventuring party to another selected location and area (as per the Encounter Resolutions Modal Form Resolve Area Location, Resolve Area and Resolve Area Encounter dropdowns). While teleports are normally magical in nature, they can also be used to simply reassign the party to another location and area (as if they've been captured and taken somewhere, for example).

5.2.1.8.2.35 Unlock Object

This objective type waits for a party hero to unlock a specific object within the current encounter area (as indicated by the Encounters Form Area Object dropdown). Unlocking an object typically makes associated area object possessions appear but can have other effects as well.

5.2.1.8.2.36 Use Possession

Successfully resolves the current encounter when any hero within the party is asked to use a particular possession (as determined by the Encounters Form Carried Possession dropdown). For example, the

player hero may be carrying a powerful artifact that, when used, will disintegrate an otherwise-unbeatable monster within the current encounter area.

5.2.1.8.2.37 Wait for Next Module

Indicates to the player that the current encounter is the last of the current module, and that the player will no longer be able to proceed within the campaign until the next module is released. Note that once the next module is developed, finalized and released, this particular objective type should be replaced with the “Area Completed” type (and the encounter description changed so that it’s no longer referencing any sort of blockage due to the coming of the new module).

5.2.1.8.2.38 Wait for Outside Resolution

A relatively rare but incredibly-important objective type, it signals to the BrowserQuests™ engine that the next encounter cannot commence until some other action is taken first elsewhere within the game. For example, a conversation within a particular area can only proceed so far; once the party talks to someone else, that original conversation will then be allowed to continue. Utilize the Wait for Outside Resolution objective type anywhere where the party must do something else before the original area sequence can be allowed to continue.

5.2.1.8.3 Order

Again, encounters generally occur in order, from lowest value to highest. By convention, assign the value “10” to your first “Introduction” encounter and the last value “100” to your “Final Resolution” encounter. Within the values of 10 and 100, assign a multiple of ten for your areas with less than ten encounters, multiples of five for areas with 11-20 encounters and so forth. By using order values that consist of multiple numbers, you’ll have some room for additional encounters you may need to add later after playtesting your areas and discovering that you need additional content (otherwise, you’ll have to reorder all of your encounters to make room for any new ones).

For example, here is the numbering used for the very first encounter within the Tabin Merchant Shop Entryway for the original “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign by Scott Huelsman:

- #10 – Introduction
- #20 – A Lonely Childhood
- #30 – Merchant Entrance
- #40 – Initial Resolution
- #50 – Quest Not Yet Complete
- #60 – Wait for Module #2
- #100 – Final Resolution

5.2.1.8.4 Options #1-#3

When the “Choose Options” Objective Type is selected, the text assigned to each potential option must be entered into the three associated form fields. Up to 32 characters can be entered into each field. *By convention, use Title Case for each word (so the option “Select the green button” should be entered as “Select The Green Button”).*

5.2.1.8.5 Target Check

When an ability, behavior or saving throw check is selected as the objective type, an associated target must also be selected (WHO, exactly, is the focus of the check). The player hero is always the first potential option, "All Player Heroes" is the second option (for when the best ability, behavior or saving throw value amongst the entire party should be used) and then all characters associated with the particular campaign is listed (so a particular hero within the party can be checked as well).

5.2.1.8.6 Ability/Behavior/Saving Throw Check

Indicates which ability (such as Strength), behavior (such as Reason) or saving throw (such as Spells) should be checked. Note that these are all mutually exclusive—only one option (associated with the objective type selected) will work.

5.2.1.8.7 Carried Possession & Quantity

When the Offer Possession or Take Possession objective type is chosen by the encounter author, the Carried Possessions and Carried Quantity indicate which possession (and how many of that possession) is required to resolve the associated encounter.

5.2.1.8.8 Area Object & Possession

For the various area object and area object possession-related objective types, the Area Object and Area Possession dropdowns reference which area objects and/or possessions must be interacted with to resolve the current encounter.

5.2.1.8.9 Character or Monster

References the particular character (hero) or monster that must be interacted with to resolve the associated encounter.

5.2.1.8.9.1 Effect

Identifies the specific effect that occurs during the encounter. For example, if the encounter were to suddenly become extremely bright, the BLINDING LIGHT effect would be set for the encounter.

5.2.1.8.10 Musical Mood

Determines the general type of music to play during the encounter. Roughly two-dozen options are provided, from wondrous and heroic to conversation and journey to intimidating and even monstrous. Background music clips can only be added by a BrowserQuests™ administrator, but feel free to suggest new clips if you're interested!

5.2.1.8.11 Depiction

Determines which specific graphic image to display. Like the music, character graphic depictions can only be added to the platform by a BrowserQuests™ administrator (but we're always open to generating new image assets upon request).

5.2.1.8.12 Objective Text

For the Bribe/Give Money, D20 Check, Pass Time and Password objective types, the Objective Text field records the exact text that must be used (in the case of a password) or the integer values involved with a D20 Check (a 1d20 roll equal to or exceeding resulting in success), the Pass Time objective (value equal to

the number of minutes that automatically passes by) and the Bribe/Give Money objective type (number of copper pieces that must be spent in order to meet the objective).

5.2.1.8.13 Quest

When the Quest Completed objective type is selected, indicates which specific quest (if completed) will automatically resolve the encounter.

5.2.1.8.14 GM Note

Allows the encounter author to automatically display a gamemaster (GM) note to the player. A variety of notes are available within the system, but only a BrowserQuests™ administrator can create a new note.

5.2.1.8.15 Disregard Locks?

When checked, any thieves within the party will NOT be able to pick any locks within the encounter area, automatically failing their attempt every time they try. An author will want to utilize the checkbox when there are locked doors or objects within the area that the author doesn't want opened prematurely (according to the story at the moment).

5.2.1.8.16 Half Strength?

When checked, all encountered monsters will be reduced to just half their normal hit points. This option can be used by an author to give an adventuring party a fighting chance against a normally-superior foe (or otherwise "wound" that foe for story-based purposes).

5.2.1.8.17 Must Fight?

When checked, the party cannot avoid combat and must fight all characters and monsters within the current encounter. If the party faces combatants within the encounter and the box is NOT checked, then two additional combat options will be provided, INTIMIDATE (which attempts to bully encountered beings into surrender) and STAND DOWN (which attempts to convince the enemy to stand down and avoid bloodshed through tact and diplomacy).

5.2.1.8.18 Description (required)

Perhaps the most important element of the form, the text entered is the actual prose displayed to the player by the game master at the beginning of the encounter. Such prose should be kept to just a few paragraphs so it doesn't get too long to read for the player.

Two text-based "shortcuts" can also be entered into the description field. First, any time the text "<Hero>" is entered, that text will be automatically replaced by the player hero's name (allowing the GM to refer directly to the player within the prose). Second, any time two tilde characters are entered (such as ~~), the prose will break into separate paragraphs, allowing the prose to be more easily read.

Finally, simple HTML can also be added to the prose, such as bold tags (""), italics (""), bulleted lists (""), etc. Try not to use too much exceptional markup in the prose, but the potential is there when it's needed.

5.2.1.9 Additional Encounter Options

Near the top of the Encounters Form are two additional buttons used to configure additional elements of each encounter: Monsters and Resolutions. Clicking each of these will, in turn, invoke an associated modal window containing additional parameters to set.

5.2.1.9.1 Monsters

This first modal window allows an author to assign any number of monsters to the selected encounter— simply use the NEW, UPDATE and DELETE buttons to review, add, edit and delete monsters from an encounter. Note that only a BrowserQuests™ administrator can add new monsters to the game engine (but if there's a new monster from the Basic Fantasy RPG system you'd like to see added to BrowserQuests,™ just let us know and we'll get on that promptly!).

The screenshot shows a modal window titled "Assign Monsters to Encounter Rat Combat". At the top left is a teal "NEW" button. To its right is a dropdown menu showing "3 Normal Rat (ID:42)". At the top right is a red "DELETE" button. Below this is a table with two columns: "Monster" and "Number Encountered". The "Monster" column has a dropdown menu showing "Normal Rat (ID:39)". The "Number Encountered" column has a dropdown menu showing "3". Below the table is an "Attitude" dropdown menu showing "Antagonistic (ID:35)". At the bottom center is a blue "UPDATE" button. To its right is a checkbox labeled "(Confirm Delete)". At the bottom of the modal, it says "Record Last Updated: 7/24/2020 8:22:41 AM".

The modal form utilizes the following fields:

5.2.1.9.1.1 Monster (required)

Specific monster type encountered.

5.2.1.9.1.2 Number Encountered (required)

Exact number of monsters involved in the encounter.

5.2.1.9.1.3 Attitude (required)

Specific attitude category assigned to the encountered monsters (for those encounters where the monsters may not automatically attack the adventuring party).

5.2.1.9.2 Resolutions

This second modal window is one of the most complicated of all the authoring tools, as it deals with the results or consequences of a player's chosen action. In the screenshot below for example, the three rats depicted in the Monsters encounter above have been dealt with and associated game parameters set.

Assign Resolution to Encounter #15 - *Rat Combat*

Default Encounter Resolution ▼

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Reveal Exit Location Select Location ▼ | Reveal Exit Area Select Area Exit ▼ | Reveal Exit Type Select Exit Type ▼ |
| Resolve Area Location Select Location ▼ | Resolve Area Select Area ▼ | Resolve Area Encounter Select Area Encounter ▼ |
| Encounter Jump Select Encounter Jump ▼ | XP Awarded 0 | Gold Awarded 0 |
| Target (effect or possession) Select Target ▼ | Effect Applied to Target Select Effect ▼ | |
| Possession Select Possession ▼ | Quantity Awarded 0 | |
| Object Revealed Select Area Object ▼ | Treasure Type Select Treasure Type ▼ | |

Resolution Treasure? **Trap Disarmed?**

Resolution

You take care of the rats, leaving their small nest open to discovery.

Quest

Select Quest ▼ **Quest Complete?**

Resolution Quest Log

UPDATE

While the form certainly looks complicated, most of the fields are never used for most encounter resolutions (and so the form is typically easy to complete). The modal form utilizes the following fields:

5.2.1.9.2.1 Resolution Selection Dropdown

At the very top of the modal window is a dropdown menu containing all possible resolutions for the selected encounter. For most encounter objective types, only one resolution will be available (and labeled “Default Encounter Resolution”). For encounter objective types that require some sort of check (such as an ability, behavior, saving throw or D20 check), TWO resolution options will be available, one for the “success” result and one for the “failure” result. Finally, when the “Choose Option” objective type is selected, a corresponding resolution option will be provided for each encounter option used (up to three). Be sure to review and configure ALL resolution options!

5.2.1.9.2.2 Location/Exit/Type Revealed

Location, area exit and exit type revealed to the party. Use the combination of these three dropdowns to change a particular exit type anywhere within the Mairigan continent. For example, the party may encounter a locked door they're not supposed to get past until they talk to an NPC in another area. Once they talk to the NPC, select the appropriate area exit location, area and specific exit to “unlock” the door so when the party returns, the door is unlocked and can easily be passed through.

5.2.1.9.2.3 Resolve Area/Encounter

External encounter area resolved by the current encounter. Similar to the Location/Exit/Type Revealed dropdown controls, this set will allow parties to get past a previous encounter objective type set to “Wait for Outside Resolution.” For example, the party may converse with an NPC and reach a point where they must perform some other action before the NPC will continue the conversation; in the encounter where that action is performed, use these controls to advance the original encounter past the “Wait for Outside Resolution” so when the party returns to that area, the next encounter is automatically provided.

5.2.1.9.2.4 Encounter Jump

While the vast majority of encounters within an area proceed in order, it's possible to “jump” out of order. For example, utilization of an encounter jump is helpful when providing multiple options that each require their own unique resolutions (and it would otherwise be impossible to separate the two resolutions in a strictly linear fashion). When utilizing the jump, simply select the encounter that should follow the associated resolution (which means that, often, you'll need to enter ALL of your encounters for a given area first, then go back to the specific resolution and select the appropriate encounter for the jump).

5.2.1.9.2.5 Experience/Gold Awarded

Experience points and/or gold awarded to all party heroes as a result of the resolution. Note that experience or gold provided is split across all heroes; if 100 experience points are to be awarded to a party of two, each would get 50.

5.2.1.9.2.6 Target (effect or possession)

Target associated with an effect or quantity of possessions to be awarded. For example, if a magical sword is to be provided as a result of the resolution, the recipient would be designated through this dropdown.

5.2.1.9.2.7 Effect Applied to Target

Specific effect applied to target. For example, if the encounter resolution should result in a particular hero (or even the entire party) being charmed, the Charm Person option would be selected for this menu.

5.2.1.9.2.8 Possession/Quantity Awarded

Possession and quantity actually awarded to the targeted hero.

5.2.1.9.2.9 Object Revealed

Area object revealed to the party as a consequence of the resolution.

5.2.1.9.2.10 Treasure Type

Type of treasure revealed to party (not yet implemented).

5.2.1.9.2.11 Resolution Treasure?

Check if treasure type is awarded (not yet implemented).

5.2.1.9.2.12 Trap Disarmed?

Check if the trap assigned to the current area should be automatically disarmed. This is useful sometimes for when the party has accomplished something very important within the area and you wouldn't want them to then stumble upon a hidden trap.

5.2.1.9.2.13 Resolution (required)

Text provided by the GM once the encounter is resolved. Note that as players interact with the GM, the first thing they always read is the RESOLUTION to the last encounter and then the full text of the CURRENT resolution. So, the entire text presented to the player within each encounter actually comes from (normally) two separate sources.

5.2.1.9.2.14 Quest/Resolution Quest Log

Text displayed within the party's associated quest log (if appropriate). Each encounter resolution can potentially write a single entry into a particular quest log; to do that, select the appropriate quest from the dropdown menu and enter the text that should be written into the log.

5.2.1.9.2.15 Quest Complete?

When checked, the selected quest will be marked as complete and will no longer appear within the player's quest log as an active quest (the player will need to select the "Completed Quests" option in order to find the associated log).

6 TIPS AND TRICKS

Like many complicated systems, the BrowserQuests™ framework is greater than the sum of its parts; as an author, you can learn the basics, but there are also a large number of subtle things to know that can't be learned merely by studying the information introduced above. Accordingly, this chapter is devoted to those tips, tricks and other things that an author should know in order to efficiently as well as successfully develop BrowserQuests™ content.

(And as you develop, if you come across a potential tip or trick that you think other authors should know about, contact us here at BrowserQuests™ and let us know!)

6.1 AREAS

Tips and tricks regarding the encounter area development and maintenance process.

6.2 CHARACTERS

Tips and tricks regarding the character development and maintenance process.

6.3 ENCOUNTERS

Tips and tricks regarding the encounter development and maintenance process.

6.4 LOCATIONS

Tips and tricks regarding the location development and maintenance process.

6.5 LORE

Tips and tricks regarding the lore development and maintenance process.

6.6 PARTIES AND HEROES

Tips and tricks regarding how to best manage campaign-based parties and heroes.

6.7 QUESTS

Tips and tricks regarding the quest development and maintenance process.

7 SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

While the BrowserQuests™ toolset allows authors to configure critical quest-based elements such as characters, locations, areas and encounters (as well as the quests themselves), a tremendous amount of supplement data and information exists within the game as well, elements used in a variety of ways to augment or complete the game in some way. Such data is maintained by the BrowserQuests™ administrators, but new supplemental information is added to the framework all the time, so ask if there's something more you'd like to see from these various data elements below!

7.1 ABILITIES

Tracks the primary abilities for all game characters and heroes. Assigned values are typically 3-18.

7.1.1 Charisma

Ability to influence or lead people. Those with high Charisma are well-liked or well respected.

7.1.2 Constitution

A combination of general health and vitality.

7.1.3 Dexterity

Measure of quickness, balance and aptitude with tools.

7.1.4 Intelligence

Ability to learn and apply knowledge.

7.1.5 Strength

Measure of a character's raw physical power.

7.1.6 Wisdom

Combination of intuition, willpower and common sense.

7.2 AREA FUNCTIONS

Many RPG areas are assigned a specific purpose, such as a bank that allows players to make deposits or retrieve funds, a hotel where the party can rest and heal for the evening, or a tavern where rumors can be had. When visiting such areas, players can invoke their assigned functionality (depending upon the encounter's status) and utilize the area in a variety of ways. Area functions also allow authors to quickly assign related objects to a given area, so they don't have to be assigned individually one by one. Specific area functions include:

7.2.1 Alchemist

Alchemists specialize in the purchase and sale of potions and are found in most civilized locations within the world.

7.2.2 Antechamber

A small room containing a desk or chair leading to a larger room.

7.2.3 Backstreets

Typically a shady or disreputable location, the backstreets are where more expensive or magical items are often bought and sold.

7.2.4 Bank

The bank is where a party leader can save, withdraw and borrow platinum from (up to 10 platinum coins per level).

7.2.5 Barracks

A large living quarters for local guards, full of bunks, chests and the like.

7.2.6 Bathroom

A very small place used to attend to one's personal hygiene.

7.2.7 Bedroom

A place where intelligent creatures sleep, containing a bed and dresser.

7.2.8 Cartographer

The cartographer deals with the buying and selling of maps, ranging from specific locations (such as city or dungeon) to the world of Sisalus itself.

7.2.9 Casino

Often found in the more seedy or disreputable part of town, the casino is where the party can go to gamble its hard-won gold.

7.2.10 Cave

A natural underground hollow in the earth, typically cold, wet and infested.

7.2.11 Cell

A small prison cell used to confine captured prisoners.

7.2.12 City Gate

Typically built in a strategic location, the city gate is the primary means of entering or leaving the city.

7.2.13 City Library

The library is a place of general knowledge and insight (and typically where a rumor or two can be learned).

7.2.14 City Temple

Places of quiet and self-reflection, temples are typically manned by local clerics who provide healing, curing and even resurrection services to those in need.

7.2.15 Conference Room

A gathering place to plan, scheme and otherwise conference.

7.2.16 Crypt

A place used to bury the dead (containing coffins, skeletons and such).

7.2.17 Deep Forest

Located within the deepest and darkest of forests, the air is cold and the way is fraught with danger.

7.2.18 Dining Hall

A very large, open chamber dedicated to feasts and other important gatherings.

7.2.19 Empty Room

A “seemingly” empty room, its purpose unknown and undetermined.

7.2.20 Entrance

The actual entrance to the dungeon, such as a cave, stairway or tunnel.

7.2.21 Fighter's Guild

The place where player heroes can recruit fighter and fighter-magic user heroes into their party.

7.2.22 Garbage Room

A place the denizens of a location use to discard all sorts of trash, garbage and other (often biological) wastes.

7.2.23 Hall

A very large room typically containing tables, chairs and paintings.

7.2.24 Hallway

Typically a long and narrow room connecting two (or more) larger rooms.

7.2.25 Hostel

Ranging from elegance to run-down, hostels can provide a relatively safe place for adventuring parties to rest and recover.

7.2.26 Jeweler

Always well-guarded and protected, the jeweler is where gems and jewelry can be bought and sold.

7.2.27 Kitchen

A large pantry containing a wide variety of foodstuffs and cooking utensils.

7.2.28 Lair

The living area of a particular creature.

7.2.29 Library

A fairly small chamber containing books, scrolls, parchments and such.

7.2.30 Merchant

Offering a little something for everyone, merchants sell nearly everything within the RPG of 100 gold piece value or less.

7.2.31 Message Board

Large message board containing a variety of announcements, rules and advertisements.

7.2.32 Monastery

A place devoted to the spiritual development of its denizens.

7.2.33 Open Marsh

Characterized by saturated earth, dangerous insects and slow passage.

7.2.34 Open Prairie

Simple outdoor wilderness area containing tall grasses, abundant vegetation and few trees.

7.2.35 Palace Room

The seat of power relative to a local political organization (and always guarded!).

7.2.36 Passage

An underground tunnel connecting two (or more) larger caves together.

7.2.37 Power Tower

Typically the seat of governmental power or authority for a particular country, power towers are tall, magically-reinforced structures that are almost impossible to break into.

7.2.38 Raft

A modest wooden raft constructed of perhaps a dozen long and sturdy timbers held together by strong rope.

7.2.39 River

A relatively large stream of water cutting through the surrounding countryside.

7.2.40 Road

A simple road that cuts through the surrounding countryside.

7.2.41 Ruins

The crumbling ruins of some long-forgotten city, dungeon or other location, its features lost to the ravages of time.

7.2.42 Scribe

Almost always the home of a retired cleric or magic-user, scribes deal in the creation, buying and selling of magical scrolls.

7.2.43 Seminary

Typically located in a secluded area of town, the Seminary is where clerics for hire can be recruited by a player hero into an adventuring party.

7.2.44 Shoreline

The lands immediately adjacent to a river cutting through the countryside.

7.2.45 Shrine

A smaller temple typically dedicated to a lesser god or local nature spirit.

7.2.46 Small Village

A collection of small buildings developed within the immediate area, a loose networking of simple paths connecting them.

7.2.47 Smithy

Typically surrounded by smoke and smelling like sulfur, smithies are where armor and weapons are created, bought and sold.

7.2.48 Stairway

A point of connection between an upper and lower level of a location.

7.2.49 Storage Chamber

A large, open place used to store and protect everyday items.

7.2.50 Tavern

Quite common and typically the favorite hang-out of adventurers and townspeople alike, the tavern offers food, beverages, rumors and (normally) enjoyable times.

7.2.51 Temple

A large gathering place to worship or otherwise give praise to a higher being.

7.2.52 Theater

A place to unwind and perhaps hear a random rumor.

7.2.53 Thieves' Guild

Often difficult to find, the thieves' guild is where a player hero can go to recruit a new thief into an adventuring party.

7.2.54 Torture Chamber

A grisly collection of tools and machines used to torment people.

7.2.55 Town Hall

Typically located in the heart of a city, the town hall is a general meeting and events place and is often good for a random rumor or two.

7.2.56 Treasure Room

A guarded place containing all kinds of valuable possessions.

7.2.57 Trophy Room

Contains various trophies but not normally of significant value.

7.2.58 Warehouse

A large building developed to store all kinds of resources, typically in bulk.

7.2.59 Well

Provides cool drinking water on demand.

7.2.60 Whirlpool

An underground body of water capable of drowning those who fall in.

7.2.61 Wizard's Guild

Mystical and typically well-defended, the wizard's guild is where player heroes can recruit new wizards into their adventuring party.

7.2.62 Wooded Area

Large open area dominated by trees but clear enough to allow easy passage through.

7.2.63 Workshop

A chamber containing various tools and machines to work and manufacture with.

7.3 BEHAVIORS

Similar to character abilities, the behaviors measure nine important personality-based traits for each character: Altruism, Curiosity, Diplomacy, Empathy, Honor, Optimism, Reason, Spirit and Tolerance. These values also range from 0-25 (but 3-18 are considered the norm). The following form fields are used:

7.3.1 Altruism

Willingness of a character to give of himself, whether physically, materialistically or spiritually.

7.3.2 Curiosity

Measure of a character's natural desire for knowledge and universal understanding.

7.3.3 Diplomacy

Ability to articulate, work together and generally talk one's way into or out of a situation.

7.3.4 Empathy

Relative open-mindedness of a character and its ability to feel what others around it feel.

7.3.5 Honor

Measurement of the character's willingness to do the right thing regardless of the circumstances.

7.3.6 Optimism

Degree to which the character sees a situation as positive (the glass is half full).

7.3.7 Reason

Degree of which a character will act according to logic and observed reality instead of tradition and religion.

7.3.8 Spirit

Measure of a character's zest for life and general happiness.

7.3.9 Tolerance

Degree to which the character will tolerate disagreeable actions, ideas and behaviors.

7.4 ENVIRONMENTS

Each location can be assigned a specific environment, one that can affect the local temperature, weather, time to trek (minutes required to pass through the area), etc. Such environments are generally associated with outdoor adventures, and include:

- **Building** – Interior of a city building
- **Cavern** – Deep, dark underground places, caves are naturally cooler and wetter
- **City** – Urban areas that consists of streets, buildings and lots of people.
- **Deathzone** – Smaller outdoor places that have become poisonous to living creatures
- **Desert** – An extremely hot, dry and dusty biome of very limited vegetation
- **Dungeon** – Typically underground constructions that are normally infested by antagonistic creatures (but offer some sort of reward to those brave enough to enter)
- **Forest** – Typically a large biome completely dominated by trees and undergrowth
- **Hills** – Rolling and twisting hills, normally adjacent to surrounding mountains
- **Jungles** – Hot, steamy places of dense tropical growth and exotic creatures
- **Marsh** – Characterized by saturated earth, dangerous insects and slow passage
- **Mineshaft** – Dug deep into the earth typically to extract ore, mineshafts are hot, stifling places
- **Mountains** – High peaks and jagged terrain that is snow-covered and dangerous
- **Ocean** – Large bodies of open water that cannot be swam across and are very dangerous
- **Plains** – Simple outdoor wilderness area containing tall grasses and few trees
- **Scrubs** – Thick grasses, brambles, bushes, boulders and other natural obstacles
- **Shoreline** – Typically strewn with sand, breaking rocks and low vegetation
- **Tundra** – Biomes that experience perpetual cold and snow and are quite barren

7.5 LANGUAGES

The following languages are identified within the BQ RPG (“Common” is default that all sentient humanoid creatures can speak):

- **Dwarvish**
- **Elvish**
- **Goblin**
- **Halfling**
- **Orc**

7.6 LISTS

A wide variety of lists are used within the RPG to populate various dropdown menus and assign appropriate categories to data. A particular list can contain dozens or even hundreds of individual list elements, each list possessing a name, three separate contexts, effects checkbox and description. The following “list of lists” has been compiled for use within the BrowserQuests™ system:

- **Abilities.** Tracks the primary abilities for all game characters and heroes
- **Afflictions.** Tracks the various maladies (and benefits) that can temporarily affect a creature
- **Age Groups.** Tracks the various age groups used by the marketing element of the RPG

- **Area Functions** – Introduced above, assigns specific functions to encounter areas
- **Attack Types.** Tracks the various ways a monster can attack a particular hero within the party
- **Attitudes.** Tracks the five general creature attitudes within the RPG
- **Attributes.** Tracks the various character and hero attributes used throughout the game
- **Behaviors** – Tracks the various behaviors used for all game characters and heroes
- **Depiction Types.** Manages the graphic depiction types used within the game
- **Dice.** Tracks the different types of virtual dice used throughout the game (such as a d10).
- **Directions** – Includes the eight cardinal exit directions (north, southwest, etc.) plus up and down
- **Encounter Resolution Types** - Manages the different types of encounter resolutions available
- **Environments** – Physical biomes that can affect the local temperature, weather, encounters, etc.
- **Exit Types** – Manages the various types of encounter area exits in use throughout the RPG
- **Genders.** Tracks the various genders used for all game characters, heroes and players/ads.
- **Hobbies.** Tracks the various hobby choices used by the marketing element of the RPG.
- **Lighting Types** – Specifies how encounter areas are lit (such as “magically dark”)
- **Musical Moods.** Tracks the various musical moods used to determine background music
- **Objective Types** – Manages the various ways to resolve an encounter
- **Party Effects** - Allows party-based parameters to be manipulated via the game's effects system
- **Party Status** – Determines the current game “mode” (such as “Free to Roam”)
- **Possession Types.** Tracks the different types of possessions used within the game
- **Quantities** – Describes the relative number of objects found within a particular encounter area
- **Quest Statuses.** Existing status of particular quests (active and completed)
- **Saving Throw Categories.** Tracks the five primary saving throw categories used in the RPG
- **Special Ability Types.** Tracks the different types of special abilities used within the game
- **Spell Context Types** – Internal programming codes used to determine the context of a spell
- **Status Elements** – Tracks the general status elements associated with a hero
- **Targets.** Tracks the various targets a particular possession or situation may focus on (such as self)
- **Time of Day Units** – Tracks the various times of day used (such as 'wee morn' and 'sunset')
- **Time Units** - Distinct units of time that can be passed by the player
- **Traits** – Particular states of being that many creatures share, such as being good, humanoid, etc.
- **Weapon Edge Types** – Determines the type of edge a weapon has (edge, blunt, pointed, etc.)

7.7 MUSICAL MOODS

If an author wishes to play background music during an encounter (and most encounters SHOULD utilize background music), a general mood can be assigned to the encounter:

- **Argumentative** – Presented during a challenging or antagonistic conversation or situation
- **Combative** – Appropriate for combative or other highly-aggressive encounters
- **Confident** – Presented during times of approval or confidence
- **Conversation** – Presented during times of simple (non-emotional) conversation
- **Difficulty** – Presented with challenging or unfortunate situations
- **Dramatic** – Presented during times of genuine drama
- **Eszwinn's Theme** – Specific clip(s) played for the Eszwinn party hero (“The Sorrow of Sislá”)

- **Failure** – Presented during times of loss or failure
- **Finale** – Presented at the end of a series of encounters or situations
- **Heroic** – Presented during glorious and heroic situations
- **Hopeful** – Presented during times of optimism and hope
- **Inner Circle Theme** – Music clips that represent the Inner Circle (“The Sorrow of Sisle”)
- **Innocence** – Presented during encounters of simplicity and innocence
- **Intimidating** – Presented during a dangerous or otherwise intimidating situation
- **Intriguing** – Presented during interesting encounters or situations
- **Jolly** – Presented during times of jolly or even frivolous activities
- **Journey** – Presented when the adventuring party is trekking to a distant destination
- **Kartha's Theme** – Primary music associated with the Kartha hero (“The Sorrow of Sisle”)
- **Monstrous** – Presented when dealing with horrific or otherwise monstrous creatures
- **Mysterious** – Presented during strange and mysterious situations
- **Mythical** – Presented in the context of a legendary or lore-related element
- **Peaceful** – Light, airy, gentle background music for when the party is safe and secure
- **Revelation** – Presented during times of extreme encounters or revelations
- **Sad** – Presented during sad or lonely situations
- **Sandaria's Theme** – Music associated with the antagonist Sandaria (“The Sorrow of Sisle”)
- **Senyors' Theme** – Music associated with the Senyors hero (“The Sorrow of Sisle”)
- **Sneaky** – Presented during times of distrust or creatures being sneaky
- **Suspicious** – Presented during times of suspicion and mistrust
- **Tension** – Presented during times of raw tension
- **Theme** – Associated with the original campaign (“The Sorrow of Sisle”)
- **Wondrous** – Presented during times of sheer beauty and wonder

7.8 TARGETS

Within the various encounters and resolutions of the RPG, the author can elect to select the TARGET of a given ability check, behavior check, D20 roll, effect, etc. Target possibilities exist as follows:

- **Self** – Affects only the hero, character or monster responsible for the effect
- **Player Hero** – The player's specific hero is targeted
- **Selected Ally** – The player specifically chooses which hero within the party to target
- **Random Ally** – A random hero within the party is targeted
- **Entire Party** – The entire adventuring party is targeted
- **Selected Combatant** – A specific character or monster encountered is targeted
- **Random Combatant** – A random character or monster encountered is targeted
- **Combatant Types** – Involves each type or group of combatant within the encounter area
- **All Combatants** – Every character and monster encountered is targeted
- **Selected Object** – A specific object within the encounter area is targeted
- **Selected Locked Object** – A specific locked object within the current encounter area is targeted
- **Selected Locked Exit** – A specific locked exit within the current encounter area is targeted
- **Entire Area** – The entire encounter area is targeted