**Worldbuilding Phase 1**

**Question your world in 4 categories:**

1. **Geography & Nature**
2. **Population & Politics**
3. **Culture**
4. **Magic & Technology**

Rather than methodically answering each question in turn, feel free to dip in and jump around. And you may find answering one question sends you down a happy rabbit hole that you don't emerge from for days.

Geography & Nature

**Landscape**

1. Are there forests?
2. Are there tropical areas?
3. Are there grasslands / plains?
4. Describe the night sky.
5. Describe the sky during the day.
6. Are there multiple suns / moons?

**Continents and countries**

1. How are the continents laid out?
2. How are the countries laid out?
3. How much land is temperate, equatorial or polar?

**Climate**

1. What is the climate like?
2. Is the climate consistent or changeable?

**Natural Resources**

1. What natural resources are available in different regions?
2. Which natural resources are scarce?

**Seasons**

1. How many seasons are there?
2. How long are the seasons?
3. What seasons are there? (spring / summer / autumn / winter or dry and wet? Something else?)

**Weather**

1. What is the weather like?
2. Is the weather consistent or changeable?
3. How does the weather affect people’s way of life?

**Animals**

1. Are there any unusual animals?
2. What are the birds like?
3. What are the small animals like?
4. What are the large animals like?
5. What are the reptiles like?
6. What are the insects like?
7. What are the sea creatures like?

**Plants**

1. What are the plants like?
2. Are there many plants or just a few types?

Population & Politics

**Races**

* + 1. Are there non-human sentient species? Describe them.
    2. Did the people evolve on this planet or come from elsewhere?
    3. What is the relationship between the different species?
    4. What is the total population (of the planet / the country / the city, etc.)

**Governance & Economics**

* + 1. What titles / formalities are used?
    2. What is the system of government? Democracy? Dictatorship? Administration? Something else?
    3. Is it a matriarchy or a patriarchy?
    4. Does the leader have special protection (Kingsguard, secret service)?
    5. How long has the system of government been in place?
    6. What calendar is used?
    7. Does the government provide social assistance?
    8. Is there any centralised healthcare?
    9. Is there public transport?
    10. Are there publicly run communications systems?
    11. Do people trust the government?
    12. Do the majority of people approve of or disapprove of the government?
    13. What is the system or taxation?
    14. Does the government spy on its enemies? Its people?

**Socio-economic Classes**

* + 1. Are the people diverse or uniform?
    2. How big is the gap between rich and poor?
    3. Where and when did civilization begin?
    4. Do most people live in rural or urban areas?
    5. Is there a class system? Different levels of citizenship?
    6. Is there slavery?
    7. Is social mobility easy or hard?

**Education**

* + 1. Is there any formal education?
    2. At what age do children start school?
    3. Is education available to all or only certain groups?
    4. Are different groups of people educated separately?
    5. Is there a written language?
    6. Are most people literate or illiterate?
    7. What are schools like?
    8. What are the different types of school for?

**Employment**

* + 1. What is a highly desirable job?
    2. What is a lowly job?
    3. What are some common jobs?
    4. Are there professional guilds / institutes/ etc?
    5. How do you get into a professional guild?
    6. What benefits do you gain from being a member of a guild?

**Agriculture**

* + 1. Are there any domesticated animals?
    2. What are the main crops?
    3. Are crops mostly consumed locally or traded?
    4. Is agriculture mostly local or industrially scaled?

**Trade**

* + 1. What is the monetary system?
    2. Are there multiple currencies?
    3. Is there widespread trade?
    4. What goods and services are traded?

**Conflict**

* + 1. Is there a form of police?
    2. Is there a formal army?
    3. How are wrongdoers tried and punished?
    4. Are criminals common or rare?
    5. Is there a military? What is it like?
    6. Are relations with neighbouring regions friendly or hostile?
    7. Is there any risk of civil war?
    8. Is there widespread conflict?
    9. How long ago was the most recent war?
    10. How damaging was the most recent war?
    11. What was the cause of the most recent war?

Culture

**Family and Friendships**

* + 1. What is a normal family unit?
    2. Do people marry for love or other reasons? What reasons?
    3. Are the genders treated differently?
    4. Who raises the children?

**Social Rules**

* + 1. What is a gesture of respect (bowing, saluting)?
    2. What is considered a rude gesture?
    3. How do they curse? Gods? Body parts?
    4. What topics of conversation are controversial?
    5. Which topics of conversation are safe?
    6. What constitutes a social faux pas?
    7. Do people live in happiness or fear?
    8. Does the culture value strength or compassion more highly?
    9. Does the culture value wealth or generosity more highly?

**Food**

* + 1. What does a feast look like?
    2. What does a basic pauper’s meal look like?
    3. Do people mostly eat meat, fish or vegetables?
    4. Do people eat plain or heavily flavoured food?
    5. Do people eat together or separately?
    6. Do people eat in small or large groups?
    7. What utensils do people use to eat?
    8. Are there many restaurants? Who goes to them?
    9. Are there street food sellers?
    10. What do people drink?
    11. Is the water generally clean enough to drink?
    12. Are some foods poisonous to certain people?
    13. What are the tables like? Shape? High or low?

**Art**

* + 1. What forms of art are there?
    2. Do people value art?
    3. Can everyone afford art, or only the wealthy?
    4. What subjects does art concern itself with?

**Religion**

* + 1. Do people believe in one God, many or none?
    2. Is there more than one religion?
    3. Do people make sacrifices to Gods?
    4. Do an elite control religion or is it accessible to all?
    5. What are temples like?
    6. What are the common superstitions?

**Languages**

* + 1. What languages do people speak?
    2. Do most people speak more than one language?
    3. Is there a common language for trade?

**Architecture**

* + 1. What are the cities like, if any?
    2. What are the houses like?
    3. Is architecture indulgent or functional?

**Clothing / Fashion**

* + 1. What do people wear?
    2. What is in fashion this year?
    3. What was in fashion last year?

**Entertainment, Celebrations and Festivals**

* + 1. Is there theatre? Is it common or reserved for the wealthy?
    2. What’s the most popular form of entertainment?
    3. What are the major festivals?
    4. Describe a wedding.
    5. Describe a funeral.
    6. What are special celebratory foods?
    7. What sort of clothes do people wear on special occasions?

Magic & Technology

**Forms of magic**

* + 1. How is magic summoned / channelled?
    2. What does it allow people to do?
    3. Are there different forms of magic?
    4. Do you need to use certain words?
    5. Do you need to use certain physical tools, such as wands or amulets?
    6. How does it feel to the wielder to use magic?
    7. Can it be used to make physical changes to the world? (i.e. relocate a wooden spoon or a mountain)
    8. Can it be used to affect people’s minds? (Such as memories, beliefs and desires)
    9. Do you have to practice in order to get better at it?
    10. Are there any magical creatures? Describe them.

**Magic users**

* + 1. Who is able to and who is allowed to use magic?
    2. Is magic inherited, gifted, obtained or learned?
    3. Is it something people are either born with or without?
    4. Or is it something anyone can develop, given the right support and training?
    5. Do some people have their powers suppressed / banned?
    6. Do different people have different kinds of magic?
    7. What are magic users called?
    8. Can you tell a magic user by looking at them, because of some physical feature or clothing?
    9. Is there a hierarchy of magic users?

**Origins / source**

* + 1. Is it like a force of nature - always there?
    2. Or was it gifted to people by a god?
    3. Does it all depend on a particular lake or rock?
    4. Do people know where it came from?

**Limitations**

* + 1. Can magic be stolen?
    2. Can it run out?
    3. Why would one magic user be more powerful than another?

**Costs and Dangers**

* + 1. Is it tiring to use?
    2. Does it slowly turn your heart black?
    3. Do you need to use a limited resource to channel it?
    4. Can it be used for evil?
    5. Can it be used for selfish or evil purposes?
    6. Can the user be harmed by wielding it?

**Culture of Magic**

* + 1. How do people feel about magic? Is it feared or revered?
    2. Are there any artificial restrictions placed on magic use by society?
    3. Are there different magical factions or societies?
    4. Is it inclusive or exclusive?
    5. Are there any important historical events relating to magic?
    6. Is magic secret or out in the open?
    7. Are there any magical festivals or other cultural hallmarks?

**Science and Technology**

* + 1. Are the laws of nature / physics different to earth? Elaborate.
    2. What is the level of technology (stone age, hi tech)?
    3. Is technology use restricted?