**Tips**

**Definition:** There are no rules in this section. Instead I have compiled some guidelines I follow to keep a story running smoothly whether I’m storytelling or playing. Experienced role-players should feel free to skip this section entirely. Novices should not take anything here to be gospel.

**Recap:** It is practically unthinkable to me that any group doesn’t do this but it is important enough that it needs to be listed. At the beginning of every session have the players—not the storyteller—give a short synopsis of what happened last session. This is a good way to get things started for the night.

**Yes, and…:** When a group is roleplaying well they are making up a story as a group. You might even call it improvisational group storytelling. The first rule of improvisational comedy—“Yes, and…”—also applies to roleplaying. Try to go somewhere with what the other group member’s do rather than shutting them down. This applies doubly for the storyteller. Remember you aren’t against the players. Try to imagine how what they are trying to do can work rather than thinking of reasons it won’t.

**Adapt:** Most roleplaying groups are going to have a varied cast of characters. As a storyteller, it is your job to make sure that your story includes stuff for each of your players to interact with. THIS IS BADLY PUT. PAUSE. The storyteller has the most power of any single person at the table to influence the story. It is therefore their responsibility to make sure all of the players can have fun. Usually this means putting things in your world that they can interact with.

**Walking isn’t gameplay:** One of my mantras for game and story design is “walking isn’t gameplay”. What this means is that long, repetitive, and monotonous tasks or in this case scenes do not belong in a story. These scenes add realism but they are simply boring. Conveniently the storyteller has the power to this the fast-forward button.

**Relevant scenes:** One way to make sure that each scene is relevant to the story and fun for the players is to make sure that each includes a petitioner and a granter. At their most basic a petitioner wants something and a granter has something they can give.

**Keep it rolling:** To keep things from stalling and becoming boring switch scenes whenever someone doesn’t know what to do. This includes the storyteller. If there is no scene to switch to because the party isn’t split you’re out of luck I guess. In combat limit turns to a minute. If a player goes much over this skip their turn. In conversations involving the entire group just have things start happening if nothing already is.

**Down time:** Long rests that last more than one a night are what I would define as down time. Typically I would say if the party has hit downtime then the story and at the very least the arc should be over. Maybe this can vary based on the story but this is my initial thought.

**No repeats:** Both for the storyteller and the players I would say avoiding taking the same action twice is wise. It keeps things from getting stale. Minor variations aren’t enough either. Fighting bandits, then bandits, then bandits with a mage still just feels like more bandits because that’s what it is. Bandits then, unicorns, then a dragon, then the police.

DON’T BE A LONER

DON’T ARGUE WITH THE ST

JUST ROLL THE DICE

MAKE A MAP. (DO PREP)