

# PUZZLES

## COLORED MARBLES PUZZLE

### THE SETUP

The players are presented with a safe or locked door with a 3x3 grid on the front of it. This door is opened when marbles are placed in a particular order in the slots of the grid. The colors of these marbles are as follows: **Red, Blue, Yellow, Green, Orange, Violet, White, and Black.** There are 8 marbles in total for the 9 slots. Make sure to have these marbles be separate from the lock, hidden away somewhere in your dungeon or in someone's personal belongings.

### INSTRUCTIONS

In order for the players to know the order for these marbles, they must also find the instructions. Have these also be hidden away in a separate location in your adventure so the players will not be able to proceed until they have found all of the pieces. The instructions for the marbles are as follows:

- Orange is below Blue
- Blue is right of White
- Black is right of Green
- Green is right of Violet
- Violet is below Black
- Red is left of Yellow and above White
- Yellow is left of Orange and below Violet
- White is below Green and above Yellow

### SOLUTION

With these instructions there should be only a single possible outcome for success and it is as follows:

Red	Green	Black
Violet	White	Blue
	Yellow	Orange

## THE CHARGED TILES

### THE SETUP

The players find their way into a room with strong pulses of lightning running through the floor. It isn't obvious which tiles are charged by only looking, and stepping on any of these charged tiles deals 2d6 lightning damage (feel free to adjust this up or down depending on your player's levels). In order to cross the room, the players will need to use a charge detecting device which you will need to have your players find somewhere nearby. This device detects how many charged tiles are within 5 feet and displays it via a small dial on the front of the device. The players will need to use this device to navigate across the room and minimize the amount of damage taken.

### THE FLOOR

1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	0
X	3	3	X	2	X	1	0	1	1
3	X	X	2	2	1	2	2	3	X
X	5	3	2	0	1	2	X	X	2
X	4	X	1	1	2	X	4	3	2
3	X	3	1	1	X	2	3	X	3
2	X	3	2	3	2	1	3	X	X
3	3	3	X	X	2	1	3	X	3
X	X	2	2	2	3	X	4	2	1
2	3	2	1	1	3	X	X	2	1
0	1	X	1	1	X	3	2	2	X

### STRATEGY

Make sure your players always start at the top of the puzzle. Just as in combat they can move diagonally (even if it doesn't make perfect sense), but for this puzzle they cannot jump across tiles, for doing so results in the lightning arcing up and shocking them mid jump and then knocking them to the ground. If they try to use this tactic, have them take double the normal damage to discourage them from attempting it again.

The top row represents the area just outside of the charged zone and so it has no electrified spots in it. Using elimination, your players should be able to find a guaranteed path through the room without ever needing to risk being electrocuted. If they do make a wrong guess, they simply get a shock and some information, so there is always a way for them to get a hint if they are stuck at the cost of a few hit points.

**Make sure to draw out this puzzle for your players and continue giving them new numbers as they explore!**

## DOUBLE UP CIPHER

### THE SETUP

---

This is a cipher that extracts only letters that appear side by side from a phrase. You can use this for a number of ciphers, but in this example the puzzle is a door with three levers that each are labeled Open and Closed next to a sealed door. Next to these levers is a message inscribed on the wall and a single button below it. The levers all start in the 'Closed' position. The players must use the clue hidden in the message to determine the correct sequencing of the door. If they guess wrong, punish them in the form of a combat encounter or some other sort of unavoidable damage.

### THE MESSAGE

---

Look closely at these words and connect the discreet mapping.

Scanning these texts, see those that appear together to unlock the door.

You just need to address the problem, or will you be foolish and succumb to failure?

You get but one chance. Select wrong and you die.

### THE CIPHER

---

Using the clue given in the message, the players must look and see those that "appear together." This refers to the duplicate letters that appear next to one another. By extracting these letters they will get the following results:

#### Row 1

ONEP

#### Row 2

NEPO

#### Row 3

EDSLOC

#### Row 4

Nothing

The players can pretty easily unscramble these words to find OPEN, OPEN, CLOSED to represent the first level is open, the second is open, and the third is closed.

## THE BLOOD FOUNTAIN

### THE SETUP

---

This puzzle takes place in a decent sized room or hall that the party needs to cross. On the close side of the room is a fountain filled with blood. It is repulsive and fills the room with the thick smell of iron and the constant gurgling of thick churning liquid. Near the fountain of blood are a few ornate bowls whose interiors are stained red from extended use with the blood.

Going straight through the center of the room is a strip of red-stained floor, turned this way as the results of hundreds and hundreds of bloodied footsteps walking this path.

Whenever a player attempts to walk through the room, small slits open in the wall and poisoned darts spray out in a vicious burst. Each creature in the middle 20 feet of the room must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d6 piercing damage plus an additional poison 2d4 damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save. This trap repeats for each 5 feet a creature travels through the center of the room. (Adjust the DC of the check and the damage as your party reaches higher levels and try to avoid using this trap for very low level parties).

### CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

---

The way the characters can avoid this damage is to coat themselves in the blood before making the crossing. The thick blood stains going through the center of the room is their clue to discovering how to solve this trap. They can use the ornate bowls to pour the blood over themselves, covering at least half of their body to satisfy the conditions to cross. A creature covered in blood that passes through the room is left to cross completely unharmed.

## THE SUBMERGED TEMPLE

This is a fairly niche puzzle that can only work in a submerged dungeon of some sort. It is meant to play to the dangers of being underwater and assumes your players will have the ability to breathe, though they may not be able to communicate verbally! The players will have to solve various puzzles within the pyramid, some of which requiring coordination, to unlock the center of the pyramid and the treasure that it holds. **Note: This puzzle requires at least 4 players to successfully complete, is quite complex, and is potentially lethal!**

### THE SETUP

In the center of this rather large room is a pyramid of solid stone with a base roughly 40 feet across. There is a tunnel on the side of the pyramid facing the players as they enter this room. It is a narrow passageway, roughly 3 feet wide, so this already may invoke some fear of claustrophobia.

There are additional tunnels on the east and west sides of the pyramid as well, but they are sealed up when the puzzle begins.

### CENTRAL PATH

The path goes forward for about fifteen feet before curving ninety degrees and proceeding straight up. The player who enters this tunnel must swim up through this opening into a room that is eight feet on each side. This room contains the following features:

- In the very center of the north wall is a green-outlined spherical recess that looks like it would hold an orb.
- Below the spherical recess is a lever that is in a neutral state.
  - Moving this left or right will open either the western or eastern chamber, closing off the entrances to other chambers when one is opened.
- On both the left and right wall are chains with a large ring-shaped handle at the end.
  - Pulling these will open slots in the left and right chambers, but it is impossible to notice anything from the central chamber. These take a sustained amount of force to hold open, requiring a strength score of at least 10.
  - Pulling both chains at the same time causes two small slots on each side of the central chamber to open, allowing the passage of small items from the central chamber to the left or right chambers and vice versa.

There are buttons in each of the side rooms. If they are pressed at the same time, a green orb will be revealed in the central chamber along with a toxic liquid that floods into the waters. The player must find some way to filter the water they breathe or take 2d6 poison damage (adjust based on player level if needed). This poison persists until the orb is retrieved, but requires success on a DC 13 Strength check to pull it free, the players within incurring additional damage on each failure.

### EASTERN PATH

This path is similar to the central one, continuing forward for roughly fifteen feet before curving ninety degrees into another eight foot cube shaped room. This room contains the following features:

- In the very center of the north wall is a blue-outlined spherical recess that looks like it would hold an orb.
- Just below the spherical recess is a large stone button.
- When the lever in the central chamber is moved to open up either of the other passageways, a second button appears on the south wall.
  - Pressing and holding just one button causes the ceiling in the central chamber to lower. The ceiling reverts to its normal position when the button is let up, but if it is constantly held it will eventually crush whomever is in the central room.
  - Pressing both gives a loud audible click (even in the water), but does not seem to have an effect yet.  
*(Players in both side chambers need to press their buttons to open the orb slot in the central chamber.)*

When the eastern chain in the central chamber is pulled, a slot will open in the eastern wall that contains a red orb. It also frees a large school of piranha. These piranha bite that character for 4d4 piercing damage (adjust based on player level if needed) every round until the orb is retrieved. As soon as the orb is removed, the fish disappear but the pain persists. The player must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the red orb while the attack is occurring, repeating this check each turn as long as the slot remains open.

### WESTERN PATH

This path is similar to the central path, continuing forward for roughly fifteen feet before curving ninety degrees into another eight foot cube shaped room. This room contains the following features:

- In the very center of the north wall is a red-outlined spherical recess that looks like it would hold an orb.
- On either side of the spherical recess is a hole roughly six inches wide and one foot deep. There are buttons at the end of each of these holes.
  - If the door to this room is closed, razors behind spiraling within the two holes, slicing the hands of any creature pressing the buttons. This deals 2d12 slashing damage (adjust based on player level if needed).
  - If the red orb has been placed into its slot, these blades do not activate.
  - When both buttons are pressed, they produce a loud audible click.

When the western chain in the central chamber is pulled, a slot will open in the ceiling of the room containing a blue orb. As long as the slot is open, the player in that room is electrocuted for 2d6 lightning damage per turn. The creature in the room must make a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check when the slot is opened to notice the slot and the orb within, repeating this check each turn as long as the slot remains open.

## THE SOLUTION

In order to open the pathway to the inner sanctum of the pyramid, three three colored orbs all must be placed into their appropriate slots. The steps to unlocking this sanctum are as follows (though the order can be switched up a bit):

- Two players swim into the central chamber and moves the lever to allow players to enter each of the side chambers.
- The players in the central chamber pull the chains one at a time and the players in the side rooms must retrieve their orbs.
- The players in the central chamber pull both chains at the same time, opening slots to allow the orbs to be passed through. They must then pass the orbs to the opposite chambers so they can be placed into their correctly colored slots.
- With the orbs in place, the lever must be moved to reveal both buttons in the eastern chamber. The players in the side chambers must then press ALL four buttons simultaneously to unlock the green orb in the central chamber.
- The final orb is placed into its slot. Afterwards, the north side of each of these rooms open up and converge to a single pathway that leads to the inner sanctum where there is an item your players need to continue through the dungeon!

## RIDDLES

First a flash and then a roar  
The gods enraged, who knows what for?  
Splintered children, grasping for land  
A random occurrence, or something planned?  
Boats sent to the depths, trees scorched and ruined  
Beware of the skies, when a great storm is brewing.

### Lightning

A splash of blood and a kiss of spring,  
Make a heart melt with just this one thing.  
An aroma so sweet, but a base that stings,  
A symbol of love, a precursor to rings.

### A Rose

**This one is quite simple, but if you want to have some fun and rap a riddle to your players you can do so.**

The life ender, its design slender, silencer for the offender.  
For murder ideal, annealed steel but easy to conceal.  
A tool for the fool whose intentions are cruel.  
In poison it is dipped, flesh ripped, blood dripped, life stripped.  
You see, it's a weapon for thee, but additionally, a key for me.

### A Dagger

## CUBIC CODE

This is a simple code that is around the outsides of a sealed cube. I suggest breaking up the pieces of the code into their own sections and handing them out so the players have to do a bit of work putting them together. This is quite an easy puzzle and should be solvable quickly for most groups.

### THE SETUP

The players find a cube with three faces containing letters arranged in 3x3 grids. On the sides opposite those letters the cube has a similar grid with the slot either flat or raised. A raised slot is identified with an **O** and a flat slot is identified with an **X**. To solve the riddle, the players must match the raised slots with the letters in the corresponding slot on the opposite side. The same is true for the flat slots. When the players have done this, they will have to order them correctly and provide the answer.

#### Front

E	N	Y
T	D	H
O	I	E

#### Back

O	X	O
X	O	X
O	X	O

#### Left

W	T	I
H	E	T
H	K	I

#### Right

X	O	X
O	O	X
X	O	X

#### Top

S	C	U
B	S	L
E	I	E

#### Bottom

X	X	X
X	O	O
X	O	O

### THE SOLUTION

"Within this cube the key does lie" is the phrase that is hidden on the cube. When the phrase is spoken allowed, the cube twists open and reveals a key that is stored inside.

## LOGICAL NUMBERS #2

### THE SETUP

The players are presented with a device or a door that is protected by a 10 digit combination lock. The instructions to solve said lock can either be scattered in individual pieces throughout the area or all written out on a single piece of paper. I personally prefer to spread such the clues for something like this across multiple guards in the area and to hand the players physical pieces of paper that they must assemble to solve the final riddle, but any method is fine. The players must use the set of clues given below to find the unique solution for the lock.

### THE CLUES

The number is 10 digits in total, all unique. The middle two digits sum to 10 and are both even.

The first five digits sum to 20.

Four appears before zero. The number created by the first two digits plus the number created by the last two digits equals the number created by the middle two digits.

The number of days in an ordinary year is included without interruption.

### CLARIFICATION NOTES

The fifth clue is a bit tricky. If you or your players are confused, it simply means that 17 (the first two digits) plus 65 (the last two digits) equals 82 (the center two digits).

The final clue can also be difficult if you are playing in a world that does not use a 365 day calendar. In that case, you can simply change the clue to be "the number 6 has a 3 directly on its left and a 5 directly on its right."

### THE ANSWER

1740829365

# STATUE AND KEY

## THE SETUP

---

The players enter the room with a statue standing with its chest puffed out and hands on its hips. At the base of the statue are the words "*Do As I Do*". The room is locked with a mechanism that cannot be picked or opened by any ordinary means. In order to open this door, the players must complete the challenges set forth by the statue by matching its movement, even though some of the actions are quite violent and deadly. There is a small circle outlined on the floor ten feet in front of the statue that marks where the creature that is going to perform these actions must stand.

## MIMICRY

---

### THE FIRST ACTION

The first action the players must mimic is simply standing up with hands on hips with a puffed out chest. They must be facing the statue during all of these actions for them to register.

### THE SECOND ACTION

Once this action is completed, the statue bends down and punches the floor with enough force that some of the marble that it is crafted from shatters and falls to the ground in a cloud of dust. After this punch, the statue remains crouched with its fist partially embedded in the floor. The mimicking creature must also punch the floor hard enough that they take 1d6 bludgeoning damage and remained crouched as blood drips from their knuckles.

### THE THIRD ACTION

The statue rises to a standing position once again. It reaches down to its waist and pulls out a sword. It twists and stabs the sword violently to the right and retracts it with lightning speed. The sword now has a tip that is stained red. The statue takes the sword in both hands and plants it into the floor and awaits the player to mimic the action. For this to work, the player must take a weapon (not necessarily a sword), and strike another member of the party to coat the weapon in blood, then plant it against the floor as the statue is doing. This must be a full force swing and deals full weapon damage to the creature being struck.

### THE FINAL ACTION

When this action is also mimicked, the statue gives a nod of approval. It drops the blade and allows it to shatter against the floor and pulls out a dagger. It runs the dagger along its own hand, spilling a substance on to the floor that is indistinguishable from blood. It then tosses the dagger to the mimicking creature and reaches into its wound it has opened in its hand and withdraws a marble key.

When the mimicking player looks down at their own hand they will see that there is now a dark spot beneath the surface of their flesh – this is the true key. They must use the dagger given to them by the statue to cut open their hand and withdraw the key. As the player is making the cuts and slowly pulling out the key, describe in detail the gruesomeness of the situation and the great pain they feel. Have five instances of 1d4 piercing damage occur during the withdrawal process, spaced out between your descriptions as the key is slowly being pulled free.

## THE DEED IS DONE

---

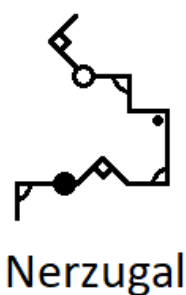
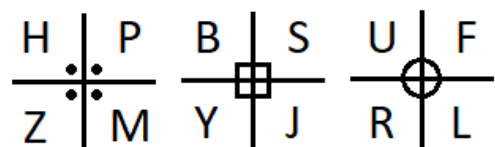
Once the key is freed from the creature's hand, the statue returns to its normal state and goes perfectly still – as you would expect of a statue. The players can use that key to open the locked door and proceed.

# ANGULAR LANGUAGE

## THE SETUP

Your players find strange symbols scattered across the dungeon or hideout they have infiltrated. Without knowledge of what these symbols mean, it is impossible to decode. The cipher for this symbolic language can either be hidden away in a chest somewhere the players will stumble upon in their journey or folded up in the pocket of a powerful enemy they defeat. It also does not need to all be found at once, and giving your players the solution piece by piece may lead to some entertainment as they try to figure out the answer with incomplete information.

## THE LANGUAGE



Using this template you can create any number of hidden messages for your players to decipher!