Hey All. I’m looking for some ideas of board gaming mechanics for a game I’m designing.

\*\*About the Game\*\*

A friend of mine wants to make a board game for her classroom so we’re talking about middle school to high school aged players. Though my experience in designer board games is still relatively low I’m the go-to guy with this sort of thing so I agreed to try my hand at the designing side of board gaming. Given the age group of the audience I’m trying to develop something a bit more complex than Candy Land or Chutes and Ladders. But given the environment and subject I’m not trying to design the next Dominion or Agricola. I just want to create something with mechanics just strong enough that will make it compelling and not just a chore to play.

The game is going to be an adaption of a game in a book [Harriet’s Daughter](<http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/664911826>). In the book the kids play a game they call “Underground Railroad” based off the actual Underground railroad. After school half of the kids play slaves and guides and try to escape from the home base to “Freedom”. Opposing them are the other kids who play Slave Hunters and dogs who try to figure out which of the day’s three routes were taken as the path to freedom, hunt them down and then tag them out. The other important mechanics are the safe houses and free passes. The kids use each others homes as hiding places. The free passes represented traveling papers slaves would have. The slave characters who had them were untaggable.

\*\*What I Have\*\*

There are some elements that are more important than others. Chief among this was the map. As a means to instigate conversation it was very important that the map of toronto be a central part of the game. I have a rough idea of what I think could work with the map [here](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BwVsonljkPwdNkFIMWdfcEV2N1k/edit?usp=sharing). I have a few ideas on how I want the players to play but I want the game to be relatively easy as compared against the big boys of co-optitude board games.

[GIMP Map File](<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BwVsonljkPwdVTJDcXJLaF82T2c/edit?usp=sharing>)

\*\*What I Need Help With\*\*

I have an idea of how the human players could work but what I need to bring it all together are mechanics and since this is just a simple project I think it would be fastest to just adapt mechanics from other games. I just don’t have a large library of games played to call upon mentally.

- Slave Hunters/Dogs: at the moment the Slave Hunters don’t have a role in the game and considering their importance to the game I’ve given it some thought. My initial thoughts were to move them along a path. Like the monsters in \*Arkham Horror\* or the bosses in \*Defenders of the Realm\*.

- Free Passes and base mechanics: I first thought of looking towards the racing genre of board games as this is essentially a race to “Freedom” but I’m leaning towards a more traditional board game setup. A race would be more complicated to map out. So what I would like to do is have the players fulfill a requirement and THEN race to the goal. My thought has been to have the players collect “Free Passes” in some manner. Perhaps one from each region (or maybe one from 3 regions or something like that) and THEN be allowed to race for the goal. This would incentivize using the entire map.

[Project Files](<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0BwVsonljkPwdMGNUcHlNN2cxU0E&usp=sharing>) - mostly a summary of ideas the majority of which I’ll likely just throw out in the efforts to simplify the game.

[Gimp Version of Map](<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BwVsonljkPwdVTJDcXJLaF82T2c/edit?usp=sharing>)