SCRABBLENAUTS

An evil **Wizard** (*57 points including the Triple Word Score*) has sucked you and your friends into a word game! How do you get back to the real world? With words, of course.

Scrabblenauts is a tabletop roleplaying game for 3 or more players, inspired the Nintendo DS game **Scribblenauts** and by word games like **Scrabble** or **Words With Friends**.

One of you will take on the role of the **Game Master (GM)**, while the others will be the "**players**".

You will need a **Scrabble** board and tiles.

Character Creation

All the players will roleplay a group of friends sucked into a word game. Now they're trying to get back to their normal, mundane lives.

Think about who you want to play. You could each play your real-world selves, or you could play some fictional characters that you invent. Discuss how the characters know each other. If you're playing fictional characters, get creative: play the members of a church youth group, or the residents of a cancer ward. Maybe you're all members of Alcoholics Anonymous who were playing a word game while waiting for the meeting to begin. Try to build off each others ideas.

Once you have some basic ideas for the group, decide what your specific character is like. Write three adjectives about your character. Negative ones or positive ones will work. You may actually get more mileage from your flaws than you would from your strength.

Write a sentence about a positive relationship you have with one other PC. Then write a sentence about a negative, troublesome or problematic relationship with a PC (the same or different).

Take five letters from the bag of **Scrabble** tiles to start.

Gaining letters

You have five or more details about your character: three traits and two or more relationships. Each time someone brings these details into play, they get to draw a tile and add it to their hand.

When the GM brings your details into play, you get to draw tiles. But be warned! The GM will try to use your traits against you in the worst way possible. They'll propose how your detail puts you in trouble or endangers everyone. At that point you can accept their proposal, draw a tile and have that danger occur. Or you can refuse and discard a tile of your own.

If you ever need to draw a tile and none are left, the board gets cleared, all remaining tiles return to the bag and then you draw.
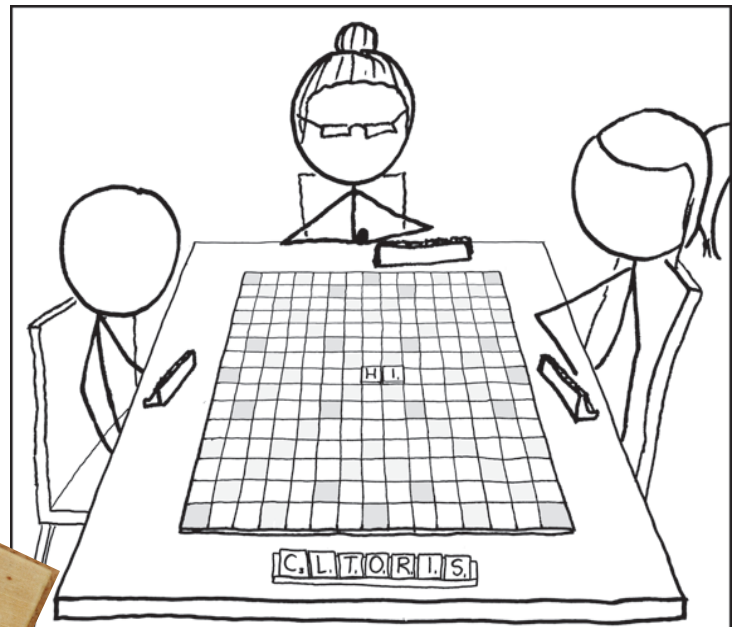
THIS ALWAYS HAPPENS TO ME IN FAMILY SCRABBLE GAMES.

Gameplay

Things in the wordgame don't work like they do in the real world. You have to work your way through this verbal universe while playing by its rules. You can walk from place to place, but otherwise your personal abilities won't accomplish much. If you want to overcome any obstacles, then you'll need to play a word from your hand of tiles.

Playing words

To accomplish anything in the game, you have to play a word from your hand. Choose a word you can make out of your tiles, explain how it will overcome the obstacle you're facing, then play the word on the Scrabble board.

The first player must play on the center square of the board, and then thereafter the plays must build off of existing words to build new words.

When you play a word, the item described appears near your character. If the word is an animal, it will briefly follow your command and then revert to its normal behavior. If the item is an inanimate object, then it sticks around until you use it to successfully overcome an obstacle.

Figure out the value of your word as you would in **Scrabble**: total up the value of each letter played, including bonuses for Double Letter, Triple Letter, Double Word and Triple Word scores. If the point value is higher than the obstacle and your narration explains how it can help, then you overcome the obstacle. If not, then you fail (but any inanimate object words stick around).

If the word you wrote isn't immediately used up or destroyed, then you may want to write it down and note its point value. You may later find an obstacle it would be useful for. Or in the case of animals and killer robots, you may need its value for when it turns on its master and becomes an obstacle to overcome.

Cooperation

You're working with your friends here. It will probably help a lot to suggest words or courses of action to them. Plan what your word will be so that your friend can build off of it to reach that Triple Word Score.

If your friend needs a specific letter and you have it, you can share your letters. But this has a price: you have to discard another tile of higher value in order to give your tile away.

Stage One

The Wizard escaped into his **Tall Tower** (*12 points*). How can you get into the tower to find him and hopefully find a way back to your life? The tower is guard by a **Vicious Goblin** (*21 points*). There's a **Locked Door** (*18 points*) keeping you out. How will you get in? Once you get in, how will you defeat the Wizard?

Gamemastering

Your job as Game Master has several parts.

You play the world and NPCs

When the PCs enter a new environment, you describe the details and say what is there. If they encounter an inhabitant (*either friendly or malevolent*), then you speak and act as that character.

You evaluate a player's proposal

Be prepared for the players to propose some silly, off the wall ideas. Accept anything that could work according to common sense or cartoon logic. The real threshold of difficulty is beating the point value, not passing a plausibility test. Only reject really lame or uncreative word uses that stretch credibility too far.

You present obstacles

Don't worry about solutions, just problems or obstacles. The players will come up with their own solutions. Obstacles take the form of an adjective and a noun. Figure out what the word's point value would be if you made it out of Scrabble tiles. You don't have a hand of tiles and you don't play on the Scrabble board (*so no Triple Word Scores for anything except the Wizard himself*). Try to pick words that are simple words to make easy obstacles as well as complicated vocabulary words to make tough obstacles. You want the game session to have a variety of ups and downs: if the party has had too many challenges that were tough on them, make with the grammar school words. If they've been steamrolling over your obstacles, then start breaking out your thesaurus and pulling out the big guns.

You bring the PCs flaws into play

You come up with ways that the narrative details will hinder or create complications for the players. Do this in a way that makes the story more interesting, not just to hose the players for choosing easily pick flaws. Make sure you spread the damage around, too, so that everyone's problems come into play.