

Level Up at Your Library: A Campaign for Dungeons & Dragons 5e

New to *Dungeons & Dragons*? Start here!

This campaign is designed to be played with the 5th edition of *Dungeons & Dragons*, lovingly known as “5e.” It’s designed for one to three sessions, depending on how long your D&D group meets for. *D&D* is structured with two types of players: the Dungeon Master or Game Keeper, who is in charge of running the story and world that characters are inhabiting, and Player Characters, who are protagonists of the game. There are a lot of tools for players taking up both roles. Below are some resources to help you get started with *Dungeons & Dragons* at your library!

D&D Beyond features a variety of getting started resources, including videos, character builders, and more! Find them at <https://www.dndbeyond.com/>. You can also check out a short introductory video on the game here: https://youtu.be/ZsPrUwcjxEw?si=I4_RJDOQzYuf7mv9

Wizards of the Coast, which creates the official *Dungeons & Dragons* books, have a basic rules breakdown here:

https://media.wizards.com/2018/dnd/downloads/DnD_BasicRules_2018.pdf

The Gaming Roundtable of ALA offers a lot of tips and tricks about gaming at the library on their blog, but a great starting point is their post about which *D&D* books are essential: <https://games.ala.org/ask-the-hive-mind-which-dungeons-and-dragons-books-are-essential/>

Bookriot frequently adds resources for *Dungeons & Dragons*. This article, “Teens Provide Tips for New *Dungeons and Dragons* Players,” is an especially good read for young people interested in playing *D&D*: <https://bookriot.com/tips-for-new-dungeons-and-dragons-players/>

Gaming news platform **Polygon** offers an introductory source for *D&D*: <https://www.polygon.com/deals/21294556/dnd-how-to-play-dungeons-dragons-5e-guide-spells-dice-character-sheets-dm>

School Library Journal’s **Teen Librarian Toolbox** also has a great introduction to playing *D&D* at the library: <https://teenlibrariantoolbox.com/2019/07/23/so-you-want-to-play-dungeons-and-dragons-in-the-library-the-teen-is-here-to-help-you-with-that/>

And last but not least, check out this video from a Naperville public librarian and LACONI POP on starting *Dungeons & Dragons* programming for adults at your library: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFTM2u4qe6Q>

Read aloud before the adventure starts:

Long ago, the greatest library in generations disappeared into the desert, taking with it a huge variety of riches and treasures. Since then, it has become a rite of passage for many newly minted adventurers to try their hand at finding the library and unlocking its secrets...

But be warned!

*Embarking on this quest poses great risks—from deadly creatures who reside in the desert, to the bandits looking for gold (if not glory), and the fear that if you **do** find your way into the library, you may not be able to find your way out before it sinks back beneath the sand...*

Note: All italic text is meant to be read aloud during the campaign.

Level Up at Your Library is a short campaign, designed for one to three sessions, for five to ten players at levels one to three. While some of the challenges may be above your party's level, with a larger group, that higher challenge rating can help ensure that everyone gets a chance to play.

As with most campaigns, the dungeon keeper should read the adventure ahead of time. Included in this file are maps and puzzles. Some of the puzzles are printables and should be prepped ahead of time—if you're running the game online, you may need to alter some puzzles to fit the needs of your group.

This campaign can be played as a one-off or put into a larger existing campaign.

Story hook:

You may have an existing game that you're slotting this mini arc into, or you may be starting with fresh players. Perhaps the players heard of the library in a tavern, wanting to risk it all for glory and knowledge, or perhaps the players are scholars in their own right, driven by the thrill of the chase (for interesting books!). Either way, the easiest way to start your players on this campaign is in the action, which means starting them in the desert.

We join our heroes newly departed into the deadly waste of the desert. Of course, the going often gets tough, so each of them has been given two weeks rations, a water skin, and a small green amulet.

Speaking of survival checks, this terrain is harsher than what most player characters will be used to. Sunlight is everywhere and so is the risk of sun damage and heatstroke, which manifests as radiant damage. At the start of each day in the desert, have players make a survival check, using the chart below:

Roll	Outcome
DC 1-5	Take 3d4 radiant damage
DC 6-10	Take 2d4 radiant damage
DC 11-15	Take 1d4 radiant damage
DC 16-20	Take no radiant damage

The wind is ever present, disrupted only by thin shrubs and spindly cacti. As sand whips up, you find yourself keeping your eyes shut to avoid it, but it scratches your face raw. The sun feels shockingly close, and you can feel the heat bouncing off you in waves. There are very few towns on the edge of this vast desert, which makes sense, given the conditions, but the largest of these towns is:

MESA BLUFF



The Amulet of Aloe-Vera

Made by alchemists who distill a common desert plant to create a small amulet. This amulet gives you advantage on one (1) survival check in desert conditions.

Mesa Bluff

Often the last stop for many before heading into the desert, **Mesa Bluff** is a small town mainly inhabited by Brass Dragonborns. The economy is mainly sustained by fresh-faced adventurers who have turned back, too scared to face the desert, but also too scared to return to their homes a failure. Well, and of course, there are riches collected off the dead travelers who have fallen on the path to glory and an infusion of resources that fuel much of Mesa Bluff's population.

The three largest businesses might be a good stopping point for your party. They include:

- The Watering Hole: a touristy inn and pub that caters to new adventurers
- Gary's General Goods: a slightly seedy general store
- Madame Zeroni's: a mysterious psychic shop

The Watering Hole

*When you open the door to the Watering Hole, it lets out a long, rusty whine. For as well frequented as it is, even the best establishments in town are still at the mercy of the desert's wear and tear. Regulars know to go around and enter through the side door, which the barkeep, **Sam**, keeps well oiled. This means that all eyes are on your party as the doors swing open.*

The music, coming from a portly Brass Dragonborn, cuts off.

For a moment, everything is tense, but when they realize you are travelers—tourists, basically—the tension bursts and the various factions go back to their previous conversation as the jaunty tune picks back up. “Morning, fellas,” Sam, the jovial barkeep, calls, “what can I get ya?”

A round of drinks will cost your party a gold coin or a singular drink will run them two coppers. As an establishment, The Watering Hole is relatively bland.

A savvy adventurer may gain information from the townsfolk that there have been two masked bandits—their masks styled after animals—who have been lurking around town, ambushing adventuring parties who seem library-bound. Sam might even remark that he feels sorry for the poor suckers who encounter them.

Gary's General Goods

Come one, come all to Gary's General Goods! It has the greatest selection from here to—well, anywhere else in town. At least most of its goods haven't expired. And the next general store is a good two-day ride away, so you better be willing to pay luxury prices...

Item Name	Price
White candles	1 gp each
1 day's rations	1 gp each
Flute (wood)	5 gp
Amulet of aloe-vera	10 gp each
Paper (one sheet)	2 gp each
Soap	2000 gp each
Tinderbo	10 gp each
Waterskin (prefilled)	43 gp each

(Note: You can absolutely add things to the price list or change up what Gary is offering based on player needs/interest.)

Roleplaying as Gary

The man himself, the disreputable Gary Grooms, is a fast-talker and is used to upselling. If he catches a whiff of inexperience, he'll try to over-charge your party even more than usual. Hagglng (or trying to) is a fast way to get banned. After all, with prices like these, who could imagine going elsewhere? (*wink*)

Madame Zeroni's

Entering Madame Zeroni's shop, based out of her humble home, you are hit with a wall of heavily scented air. It's a lot like being trapped in a store's perfume department. Every nook and cranny is filled with odds and ends, and tiny sparkling lights, almost like Christmas lights, provide a warm but inconsistent brightness.

Before you can sit down at the large round table in the center of the room, the oldest human woman you have ever seen greets you: "Welcome, travelers," she rasps. "How can Madame Zeroni help you today?"

Roleplaying as Madame Zeroni

Old and a little batty, Madame Zeroni is a gifted psychic. She also will insist on being paid (but won't tell you the cost until after the service). She's tricky and deeply smart; she'll play up her age to play off your party's preconceived notions.

Madame Zeroni's Tarot Deck:

The following mechanic is how Madame Zeroni predicts the future. You can either have a physical tarot deck or use a number generator to allow players to select their card. Use your best judgment with this mechanic—if you know Tarot or this style of mechanic doesn't work for your party, feel free to leave out Madame Zeroni's shop from the list of stops players can hit.



Number	Card	Result	Madame Zeroni's Fee
1	The Magician	A warm glow passes through the room, you gain 3 temporary hit points.	1 gp
2	High Priestess	A wave of disapproval flows off the face of the card—take disadvantage on your next skill check.	1 gp
3	The Empress	Lady luck smiles, you suddenly discover a forgotten 20 gp in your pocket.	2 gp
4	The Emperor	The king is a mysterious scholar and gives you a Scroll of Detect Magic.	2 gp
5	The Hierophant	The eyes of the scholar burn into you, giving you advantage on your next 3 intelligence checks.	1 gp
6	The Lovers	You grow uncomfortably aware of your heartbeat as you take 2d4 psychic damage.	1 gp
7	The Chariot	You draw on the glory of past battles, take +1 to your AC on the next encounter.	2 gp
8	Strength	You are hyperaware of where your strengths lack and take -1 AC on your next encounter.	1 gp

9	The Hermit	The room dims for a moment; this card works as a Scroll of Dark Vision.	2 gp
10	The Wheel of Fortune	Life is full of many highs and lows! For your next 10 rolls, a 10 or below counts as a Critical Failure and a 11 or above counts as a Critical Success.	5 gp
11	Justice	Power can be found in doing right; take advantage on your next Charisma check.	2 gp
12	The Hanged Man	Death can strike at any time, so you now cannot willingly spare a life—if you fight it, it must be to the death (lasts 3 days).	1 gp
13	Death	Past battles have taught you life and death are two sides of the same coin; this card works as a Scroll of Vampiric Touch.	2 gp
14	Temperance	Forgiveness builds strength, so you cannot willingly kill; if you fight it, it must live (lasts 3 days).	2 gp
15	The Devil	Help can come from the modest places; this card works as a healing potion.	3 gp
16	The Tower	We hold within us the path to our own destruction; you must make up a significant lie per day (lasts 1 week).	1 gp
17	The Star	You look up for a moment and see a future full of joy; this card functions as one Bardic Inspiration.	2 gp
18	The Moon	The moon often blesses her children and offers them great protection—this card acts as a Scroll of Magic Missile.	2 gp
19	The Sun	The sun often curses his children, bringing forth truths they are not yet ready to face—take 2d4 radiant damage.	1 gp
20	Judgment	You have been found lacking; there is a hole in your money pouch, lose 20 gp.	23 gp
21	The World	The room briefly smells like home, this card works as a healing potion.	2 gp

Entering the Desert

Once players are done in Mesa Bluff, they will enter the desert. **At the start of each day, players must make a survival check.**

For a journey like this, prompting players with questions can help move the action along, even if it isn't battle after battle.

A journey through the desert to the last-known location of the library takes three days and two nights. Travel through the desert is as incredibly difficult as it is dull—very little lives out here in the sands, and what does live here are things you don't want to meet. This can be a great chance for some inter-party roleplaying! What are they doing to pass the time?

The desert at night is a completely different beast. The warmth from the landscape disappears with the sun and all you are left with is the light of the stars. Since sand does not hold heat well, how is your party setting up camp?

If someone chooses to set up as a guard on the first night, they will only get a short rest. Is anyone serving as a guard?

Just as your party has drifted off to sleep, there is a slight shift in the sand. It could be the wind, but if there is a guard, have them roll a perception check.

With a DC of 15 or higher, they have time to wake up their teammates. If they roll lower or there is no one assigned to guard duty, the team must wait for the monster to attack first before entering turn order.



The ground beneath you shifts and slides, then with a final shudder, a worm bursts out of the ground 25 feet from your camp. It is large—larger than a bear, closer to a killer whale. Its skin is bulbous and coated in spikes, and the mandibles in front of its yellowed eyes look like row after row of deadly teeth. More of a grub than a full worm, it is ready for a tasty treat—and your party looks like just the snack it's after!

The Purple Wormling					
Large monstrosity, unaligned					
Armor Class: 12 (natural armor) Hit points: 52 (5d10+ 15) Speed: 25 t					
STR 15 (+2)	DEX 8 (-1)	CON 16 (+3)	INT 1 (-5)	WIS 6 (-2)	CHA 2 (-4)
Senses: blindsight 30ft, tremor sense 30ft Challenge: 2 (450 xp)					
Actions: Multiattack. The wormling makes 2 attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger. Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit 7 (1d8+5) piercing damage. If the target is a small or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC13 Dex save or be swallowed by the worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained; it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the wormling and takes 3(1d6) acid damage at the start of each of the wormling's turns. If the wormling takes 10+ damage on a single turn, it must succeed on a DC21 Con save to not throw up. If it dies, the swallowed creature can use 5ft of movement to escape. Tail Stinger. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft on creature. Hit 5(1d4+3) piercing damage and the target must make a DC13 Con save, taking 10(3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.					

Desert Day Two:

Have everyone start day two with a survival check.

This is a fairly uneventful day, full of unending landscape. It's nearly enough to drive someone to retreat.

Again, this is a great chance to let players have some inter-party discussion. But if someone does a perception check and succeeds on a DC15 check, they will notice several burrowing owls, all heading in the same direction they are.

Night passes much the same, and whoever is on guard only gets a short rest, compared to the rest of the party's long rest.



Desert Day Three:

Have everyone start day three with a survival check with Disadvantage.

The sun rises on the third morning to the worst heat you've experienced so far. There is no escaping the sun, there is no shade or shelter to be seen.

A DC10 perception check will give them more Burrowing Owls, and a DC15 will allow them to easily follow the trail of owls. If they roll lower than a 15, they will have to roll successive Investigation Checks to find the owl's path.

As you follow these tiny owls, you begin to see an odd shape in the distance. At first, you think it is a statue, sandy, but pristine. That is, until you hear it release a monstrous roar. In front of you is a sleek lion with large wings. Roll for Initiative!

The Sphinx's Keep:

The stat block for the Gynosphinx can be found on page 282 of the *Monster Manual* or on *D&D Beyond* at <https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16917-gynosphinx>

During the battle, a successful investigation check will reveal that the sphinx is not here randomly, but it is instead standing on a large stone doorway. It will avoid moving from this spot if possible.



The sphinx has no interest in killing or being killed, so after 3 rounds of combat or 50 points of damage, she will stop fighting and ask to make a deal with the party.

If the party stops fighting when the sphinx asks them to, they will get the option to solve her riddle in exchange for entry into the library.

Riddle: *I disappear if you say my name. Who am I?*

Answer: *Silence.*

If they solve the riddle, the sphinx disappears, leaving the door open. The party enters the library...

If you are breaking this campaign into multiple sessions, this is a good stopping point. If not, you can continue below...

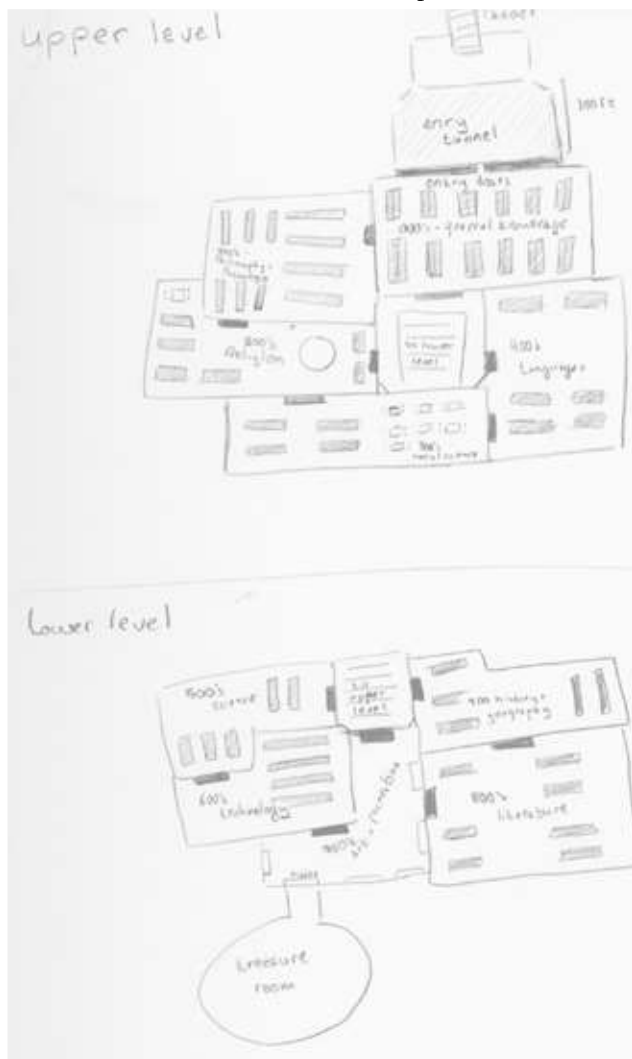
Entering the Library:

*As you open the door into the library, the first thing you notice is how **good** it smells—warm and clean, like freshly printed paper.*

The second thing you notice is how dark this entrance hall is. Perhaps it's because you're entering from the overbearing sun outside, or perhaps it's the lack of windows. Regardless, the effect is unnerving.

From the far end of this dark hallway, you can hear a small amount of noise—you're not sure what yet, but it seems you are not alone...

To travel down this hallway, players can rely on external forms of light or dark vision, otherwise it becomes difficult terrain.



At the end of the hallway, there is a huge set of double doors with a series of symbols carved into it, but they don't seem to be in a language you recognize...

This door isn't locked, and players can just walk through, but it's a fun way to see how they might try to problem-solve.

The 000's, General Knowledge

Upper Level

Connects to:

Main entrance (straight behind)

100's (left)

Stairway to lower level (straight ahead)

You enter a warmly lit room with vaulted ceilings. There is shelf after shelf of books and scrolls and stone tablets, more than enough reading to last even an Elven lifetime. For a moment, you see a large snowy owl in green scholar robes, a satchel of scrolls on his back.

"Oh!" he says before leaping into the air.

Have everyone roll a Dex save, with a DC-13, as a barrage of arrows rain from the ceiling, hitting any party members for 1d6+2 on a failed save.

Where there was one owl, now there are two, the snowy owl from before and a large barn owl in the green of a ranger, a short bow aimed on your party.



The party will have to justify to Aur and Zeed, keepers of the library, why you should be allowed to explore the library and try for treasure.

Name: Aur					
Race: Aarakocra—resembles a large snowy owl Class: Monk Background: Sage The scroll keeper of the great library					
HP 83	AC 17		+3 Proficiency Bonus		35ft walk-ing speed
STR +1 (12)	DEX +2 (15)	CON -1 (8)	INT +2 (15)	WIS +3 (17)	CHA 0 (10)



Name: Zeed					
Race: Aarakocra—resembles a large barn owl Class: Ranger Background: Folk Hero Security for the great library					
HP 60		AC 16		+3 Pro-ficiency Bonus	25ft walk-ing speed
STR +2 (14)	DEX +4 (18)	CON +2 (14)	INT 0 (11)	WIS +1 (13)	CHA -1 (8)

Aur can explain that he and Zeed have watched over the library for centuries and will watch over it for centuries more, sustained by the power of the library itself. If the adventurers can find their way through the library to the treasure room, they can take one of the chests they find there, as well as taking the riches within that chest.

But be warned, appearances can be deceiving. Should you find the chests, know that not all gifts are good ones. Red could be devilish, as could be blue. Yellow is not always safe to choose. But think of this:

*The color to stop can sometimes mean go,
The color of sunshine most often is sweet,
And the color of wine-dark can lead to deceit.*

Aur's riddle should hint to not select the blue chest, but the party might not remember the riddle by the time they get to the treasure room. You can always have them use a history check to try and remember it, but that's your judgment call to make.

The library is filled with owl pages—these were the burrowing owls who your party saw before, now clothed in green and brown scholar robes. They can assist with hints but should not give away the whole puzzle.

Zeed will also warn that they think they may have had a break-in recently, but not break *out*, so the party should be careful.

At any time, the party can read/refer to a library book; have them roll a straight d20 to gauge if the book is relevant to the task at hand.

The 100's, Philosophy & Psychology

Upper Level

Connects to:

- 000's (right)
- 200's (straight ahead)

When you enter the 100's, you notice there are special shelves lined with jars upon jars of preserved brains, all labeled with tiny notes. There are no obvious doors in this room, almost like they've sunk into the walls.



Players are approached by a small owl page named Eek. *"Hello travelers, I am happy to assist you in finding the exit, but only if you'll assist me with my research!"*

If players choose to not participate in Eek's research, they can either return to the 100's or complete a DC20 investigation check to find the door. Eek's research takes the form of a personality test, which you can find below:

Quiz: How Are Your Vibes?

1. Pick a chocolate:
 - a. White chocolate
 - b. Dark chocolate
 - c. Milk chocolate
 - d. I don't like chocolate

2. Dogs: How do you feel about them?
 - a. They're fine!
 - b. Love them!
 - c. Not my thing, but happy for other people!
 - d. No way! Yuck!
3. What do you do if the toilet paper roll is empty at home?
 - a. I leave it and put a new roll on top of it.
 - b. I replace it with a new one.
 - c. I use a different bathroom.
 - d. I don't use toilet paper.
4. Which fantasy celebrity would you consensually smooch?
 - a. Fantasy Danny DeVito
 - b. Fantasy Keanu Reeves
 - c. Fantasy Harry Styles
 - d. Fantasy Garfield the Cat
5. Pick a word:
 - a. Baby
 - b. October
 - c. Magic
 - d. Rancid

Mostly As—You're pretty chill!

Mostly Bs—SUPER chill, your vibes are immaculate.

Mostly Cs—You're on thin ice.

Mostly Ds—The vibes are off. Vile!

As long as most of the party doesn't get a majority of Ds, Eek will lead them to the hidden door. If they do get mostly Ds, they'll have to succeed on a DC20 Investigation check.

The 200's, Religion

Upper Level

Connects to:

100's (straight back)

300's (straight ahead)

Stairway to lower level (right)

Upon entering the 200's, your eyes can't help but stray to the elaborately carved fountain in the center of the room. The fountain features a statue of a gnome holding a scroll, the base of which features a stone reading: "This library is dedicated to Oghma, Lord of Knowledge and Binder of what is Known. Sacrifices left in his name are justly rewarded."

Any sacrifice put in the fountain rewards the player with 1d6 healing. A particularly generous sacrifice will get 3d6 healing.

Trying to sacrifice a library book will result in a scolding from an owl page, and trying to sacrifice an owl page will result in the player taking 6d6 psychic damage.

There is nothing blocking the players' exit from this room.

The 300's, Social Sciences

Upper Level

Connects to:

200's (straight behind)

400's (straight ahead)

The Social Sciences seem to have the most owl pages looking for items, each of them part of a pod or two or three owls.

The doors to leave are all locked, even the door they came through.

Two pages approach your party, each holding a key. The owl in green introduces themselves as Eeep and explains that one of them always lies and the other always tells the truth.

The owl in brown introduces themselves as Cheep and explains that only one key will allow the party to move on to a different room. They also explain that you can only ask one question.

What does the party ask? Answer: Eeep tells the truth and Cheep always lies. In fact, they're lying right now! Both keys unlock the doors!



The 400's, Language

Upper Level

Connects to:

300's (straight behind)

Stairway to lower level (left)

A strange feeling washes over you. While the room seems standard—bookshelves and maps line the walls—you feel odd. You open your mouth only to realize you can only speak and think in a language other than Common.

Pass out slips of paper with different languages written on them. Unless a player has been given Common, none of the owl pages can understand them.

Every player should also be given a few puzzle pieces. (You can use the image shown, cut into pieces, or you can create your own physical puzzle.) The players will have to assemble the puzzle without an in-game common language.

Solving the puzzle opens the doors. The doors are locked tightly, and it requires a DC Strength Check to try and force them open instead.

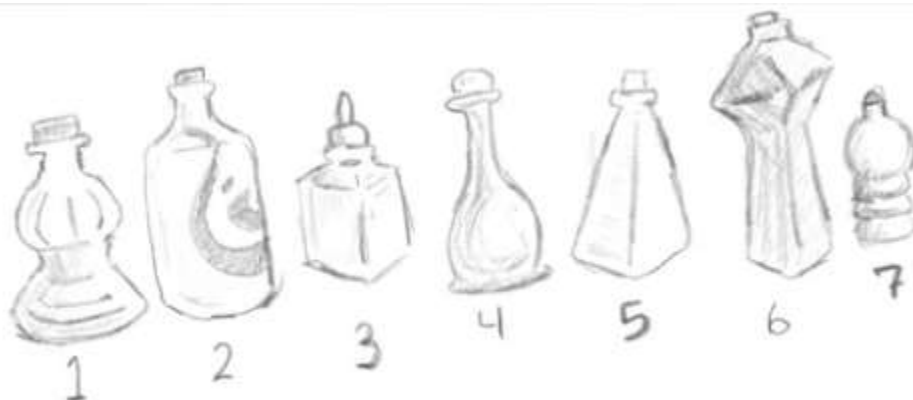
Not only does opening the door let them into the next area, but it also gives everyone back their usual languages.

Lower Level**Connects to:**

Stairway to upper level (straight behind)

600's (straight ahead)

You cannot see any doors in this room, though there are books stacked haphazardly on the shelves. You also see, like something out of a children's book you read once, a wooden table with bottles sitting on it. There's a scroll sitting in front of the bottles.



The scroll reads: Before you are seven potions, each with a story to tell. Some will do you dirty and some will serve you well. Think it through:

One and Three and Five are twins not in shape but in spirit.

The last in the row will send you back home.

The even bottles might be safe but that doesn't mean they are always a perfect fit.

Potions in square bottles will probably cut your adventure short.

The center might just be the ticket.

The solutions are below:

Bottle 1	Bottle 2	Bottle 3	Bottle 4	Bottle 5	Bottle 6	Bottle 7
Poison	Wine	Poison	Forward	Poison	Wine	Back

Any bottle labeled poison causes the player to take $2d4+3$ poison damage.

Any bottle labeled wine has no effect.

The bottle labeled forward will cause the doors to open.

The bottle labeled back will send them back to the 000's.

The 600's, Technology**Lower Level****Connects to:**

500's (straight behind)

700's (straight ahead)

There is the sweetest tang of Fantasy Mountain Dew over the stink of engine grease as you walk into the Technology section, which is how you know this is where engineers hang out.

You see a group of owls working on a large machine, frantically scribbling notes and making adjustments. With a scream, one of them says "The fire is spreading! We need to fix this extinguisher now!"

There is a fire spreading through this room, catching on books and licking along wooden shelves. You can help the owls, or you can push on ahead. What do you do?

If they stay and help, they learn that two masked bandits shot a flaming arrow into the room on their way to the 700's. The owls also offer the party five gold pieces each as a reward for helping with the fire.

The 700's, Art & Recreation

Lower Level

Connects to:

- 600's (straight behind)
- 800's (right)
- (Hidden) treasure room (straight ahead)
- Stairs to upper level (right and back)

Entering Arts & Recreation, there is violin music surrounding you coming from seemingly nowhere. This room has very few books but has a variety of overstuffed armchairs and beautiful paintings on the walls, each in its own golden frame.

You can see the door to the next room, but why not stay and view some of the art?

Paintings:

- An image of a lion draped across the shoulders of a human woman in white while a man in a tweed suit takes notes in the background, entitled “My Apologies to Clives Staples.”
- Twin images of a dwarven with an enigmatic smile and taking a bite of an apple, then showing the worm inside; the plaque beneath says it’s “Untitled Worm Art by DaVinci but This Time He’s a Worm.”
- An image of a small boat on a large ocean, the vague outline of a sea monster can be seen beneath. The title seems to be “Honey, I’m Home!”
- An image of a young woman peering into a passage behind a portrait of a young woman peering into a passage behind a portrait of a young woman—you get it. This one is called “Investigation Check.”
- Finally, there is an image of Aur and Zeed, the library guardians, on their wedding day. In Aur’s arms is a small owlet with an odd ridge of feathers on her face. It is simply entitled “Family Portrait.”

If an adventurer succeeds on a DC13 investigation check, they can find a small seam in the “Investigation Check” painting and can swing open the portrait to reveal a secret room.

The Treasure Room

Lower Level

Connects to:

- 700's (straight behind)

The painting swings open to reveal a narrow passage that quickly widens out into a round room. Before you sit three treasure chests, one yellow, one red, and one blue.

Yellow:

- 1 potion of giant strength
- 3 healing potions
- 50 feet of hempen rope
- 2000 gold pieces



- A statue worth 1000 gold
- A ring worth 600 gold

Red:

- 1 scroll of speak to animals
- 2 healing potions
- 3000 gold pieces
- 1 diamond

Blue:

- The blue chest is a mimic. If your party chooses this one, have them roll Initiative.

The stat block for Mimics can be found on page 220 of the *Monster Manual* or on *D&D Beyond* at <https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16957-mimic>.

Should the party attempt to take more than one chest, a pressure plate moves, and the walls begin to close in on them. Everyone must succeed on a DC15 to take half damage as the tunnel closes in on them, or 10d6 bludgeoning damage.

A DC12 Investigation check will reveal a kill switch, but all chests will drop into a hidden trap door if activated, although the walls will stop closing in.

A DC sleight of hand will allow you to cause a mechanical failure so they can escape with one chest, but the other two will drop through the trap door.

When the party leaves this room, skip ahead to the section called “Big Bad.”

The 800's, Literature**Lower Level****Connects to:**

- 700's (straight behind)
- 900's (right)

As you enter the literature department, you spot busts of unfamiliar authors and poets and playwrights, which make you wish you had paid more attention in Common class. So distracted are you by trying to identify these writers, you don't realize the floor has turned from stone to wood and that you are on a raised wooden platform.



The players are on a stage, a variety of owl pages are sitting in the audience, and an owl in a bowtie introduces them: “Next, in our slam poetry competition... uh... these adventurers!”

At least one party must roll a DC13 or perform an impromptu slam poem for the doors to become accessible.

The 900's, History & Geography**Lower Level****Connects to:**

- 800's (straight behind)
- Stairway to upper level (left)

This room has the largest variety of shelves and types of materials, maps and star charts and scrolls, but it smells thickly of dust. There is only one tired looking owl page working. He looks

Articles

up and your group, “Ah, adventurers,” he gestures to a table where three tablets sit, “your puzzle is there.”

These puzzles are based on cyphers. You can use the zines below or put the clues into a format that works best for you and your group.

<p>Q = R P = O O = P N = O M = N</p>	<p>M = V U = V T = U S = T R = S</p>	<p>W = Z Y = Z X = Y V = X</p>	<p>A Z B Y C X D W E V F U G T H S I R J Q K P L O M N</p>
<p>G = H H = I I = J J = K K = L L = M</p>	<p>A = B B = C C = D D = E E = F F = G</p>	<p>A History of Codes vol. 1</p>	
<p>U → 21 T → 20 S → 19 R → 18 Q → 17 P → 16</p>	<p>V → 22 W → 23 X → 24 Y → 25 Z → 26</p>	<p>Example 1 16. 5. 1. 4. Read</p>	<p>Example 2 2. 16. 15. 11. Book</p>
<p>I → 9 O → 10 H → 11 L → 12 M → 13 N → 14 5 → 15</p>	<p>A → 1 B → 2 C → 3 D → 4 E → 5 F → 6 G → 7 H → 8</p>	<p>MAPS + Hand plans volume 2</p>	
<p>U. 3 A History Library The Great</p>	<p>9. 2. 2. 4. 1. 4. 9. 6. 4. 1. 2. 6. 5. 1. 26. 16. 22. 1.</p>	<p>In the history of the Library</p>	<p>often they used 2 cyphers together...</p>
<p>fin.</p>		<p>21. 9. 6. 1. 17. 16. 19. 21. 19. 2. 10. 21. 20. ?</p>	

It translates to “Have you checked the portraits?” which should prompt them back to the 700’s.

BIG BAD BOSS BATTLE

Once the adventurers find the treasure and exit back to the gallery, they are immediately faced with a hulking figure in black and red wearing a Rabbit mask. Next to him is a similarly dressed small figure in a Cat mask. The larger figure has a huge, blood-stained greataxe, but the small figure alarms you as she runs at you with her short sword, moving at a speed you would have never thought possible.



Everyone will have to roll for Initiative.

Rabbit and Cat will fight to the death, rather than accept defeat. After the first round, Aur and Zeed should insert themselves at the end of the turn to assist the players.

Name: Rabbit					
Race: Half Orc Class: Barbarian Rabbit is a career criminal who picked up Cat as a sidekick the last time he attempted to break into the library.					
AC 16		Hit points: 124		Speed 40ft	
STR +5 (20)	DEX +2 (14)	CON +4 (18)	INT 0 (10)	WIS -1 (8)	CHA +1 (12)
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +7 Damage Resistances All, except Psychic Senses Passive Perception 17					
Reckless. The Barbarian has advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls, and attack rolls against him have advantage. Feral Instinct. The Barbarian has advantage on initiative checks and can act on his turn even if he is surprised. Relentless Rage. When the Barbarian drops to 0 HP, it can make a DC-10 CON save. On a success, he drops to 1 HP instead. Each time he uses this feature, the DC increases by 5. Bear Attunement. Hostile creatures within 5 feet of the Barbarian have a disadvantage on attack rolls against targets other than in.					
Actions Multiattack. The Barbarian makes two attacks with his greataxe. If he reduces a creature to 0 HP with one of these attacks, it may make a third greataxe attack. Greataxe, +2. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, one target. Hit 28 (1d12+21) slashing damage. On a critical hit, he does 21 additional slashing damage.					

Name: Cat, formerly Squawk		
Race: Aarakocra Class: Rogue Cat is new to the life of crime. Angry with her dads about being shut up in a library, Cat jumped at the first chance she could to explore the world. She wasn't really expecting Rabbit to drag her back to the great library to try and rob it.		
AC 15	Hit points: 48	Speed 30ft
Skills Stealth +10, Perception +7 Senses Passive Perception 17 Languages Common		
<u>Actions</u> Sneak Attack. The rogue makes a weapon attack. If the attack has advantage or targets a creature within 5 feet of her allies, it deals an additional 10 (3d6) damage. This can be used to make opportunity attacks. Shortbow. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, one target. Hit: 7(1d6+4) piercing. Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit on one target. Hit: 7(1d6+4) piecing.		
<u>Bonus Actions</u> Cunning Action. The rogue dashes, disengages, or hides.		
<u>Reactions</u> Uncanny Dodge. When a creature the rogue can see hits her with an attack, she can halve the attack's damage. Skirmisher. When a hostile creature ends their movement within 5ft of her, she can move up to half her speed without provoking an opportunity attack.		

If the robbers seem to be losing, Cat will try to outright stab Aur or Zeed, yelling one last barb about how mad she is at her fathers. At this point, Zeed will stop fighting, but Aur will not.

Once they are defeated, Zeed will remove Cat's mask. There, the ridge of odd feathers above one eye is visible, making it clear she is the child from the portrait.

Zeed or Aur will explain that Cat, though they knew her as Squawk, was their daughter and a promising young archivist. But she always dreamed of a bigger life, so she jumped at any chance to leave the library, especially with the promise of fame and fortune. And when she left, she left a silence that no noise could break.

Perhaps knowing her fate will give her family the right space to grieve, and perhaps her story will be that of the library itself, an entity built on tradition, that thrives on change.

As a reward, each adventurer will get 100 GP for saving the library.

As they turn to leave, they watch the sand kick up, burying the library once again, leaving its secrets and its mysteries for the next generation of adventurers to find.