

The World of Maycly
Courtesy of author Janet Beasley
Hidden Earth Series Volume 1 Maycly the Trilogy
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Title of Session: Fantasy World Building

Creator: Janet Beasley

Curriculum: ADVANCED

Definition: A fantasy world is a newly created world by the fantasy author.

Goals: By the end of the session enthusiasts will be able to identify keys to creating a fantasy world for their story.

Tools:

Wipe off board or flip chart and appropriate markers

A shoe box for each enthusiast with a slit cut in the top lid

Stickers, wrapping paper, markers, tape, scissors

Small scrap pieces of paper

Pens / pencils

Ice Breaker:

- Crafting a World Building Tool Box

- Have enthusiasts decorate their shoe box to resemble their World Building Tool Box using the stickers – wrapping paper – markers – tape – etc., making certain the slit in the lid remains accessible

Activity 1:

*Play VDO from DVD titled: **World Building***

From epic fantasy author, Janet Beasley

“The fantasy genre tends to attract authors with fantastical imaginations. Creativity abounds, and a general rule of thumb is that there are no boundaries. But even though their imaginations are astounding for the most part, these authors have their work cut out for them because in all of the creativity they must adhere to the rules and laws they set forth for their fantasy worlds.

As an epic high fantasy author, I prefer to build my world before I create/draw my map. Creating my world before drawing my map allows me to expand on my map in detail. It also enhances things such as character development as I can go back while I’m writing and tweak my characters to fit their world even more so.

I begin my story not by writing, but rather by building my world, though basic. This process gives me a direction and boosts my creative levels. I then continually build my world as I write. Adding and taking away certain elements so the world becomes fine-tuned to match my story.

Approximately half way through writing the fantasy novels in my series I take a break to create/draw my map because by that point in time, I have a good idea where the story is going to be taking place. I then have the liberty to adjust both my world and map, as I write the second half, to make certain the continuity holds among all three – the three being my world, my map, and my story.

The map and world also open the door to enrich the story, making it seem even more real.

There is so much to writing good fantasy. The craft expands into more than putting words to the paper. The choice of becoming a fantasy author is a courageous and bold move for the creative genius. Be prepared, because it will broaden your fantastical imagination farther than you ever thought possible.”

Activity 2:

Building a fantasy world encompasses many of the elements you will be using in your fantasy story. It is different from creating a fantasy map, as a map normally represents only a small portion of the entire fantasy world, the portion where your story takes place, though in some cases a map can consist of the entire world. Some information in this session may overlap with other sessions – this is because fantasy elements intertwine, and the better the “weaver” the better the story and the “realness” factor.

Write the following bullet points on your wipe off board or flip chart. Discuss with the enthusiasts what they think might fall under each bullet point, then share those that have not been covered.

Hand out the small pieces of scrap paper (several to each enthusiast) and a pen or pencil each. As you discuss each bullet point, have enthusiasts write down one item per piece of scrap paper that they would like to consider for building their worlds, and drop it in their tool box. These will become the tools they will need to build their worlds. The tool boxes will be used later in the session.

- **Characters** Your characters will be greatly affected by your world
 - Traits
 - Features
 - Daily life
 - Language
 - Same
 - Different in different lands
 - Different lands / different styles
 - If using this method, you will have your work cut out for you as the different styles of the different lands may need to communicate
- **Shape of the Fantasy World**
 - Round
 - Square
 - Rectangle
 - Tubular
 - Flat
- **Style**
 - Alternate
 - World within a World
 - Earth in the Future
 - Mystical
 - Enchanted
 - Futuristic (other than earth)
 - Medieval
 - Urban

- Dark
- **Components** When adding your components you will want to consider things such as the size (large or small), shape, number of each, and any magical properties/laws (do the properties work or not, are there specific ones, etc.) of each if applicable
 - Continents
 - Countries
 - Regions
 - Cities
 - Villages
 - Towns
 - Bodies of water
- **Traits** Fantasy worlds as a whole should hold earthly or imagined traits (subtle or major). It is a good idea to incorporate a few earthly traits on every fantasy world to present your readers a few familiar things to keep the story real.
 - Examples
 - Hair – any creature, human or not, can have hair. The hair does not have to look exactly like human hair but should be recognizable as such
 - Eyes – any creature or character will most likely have something that represents eyes (there or not). If your fantasy character/creature has eyes your reader can relate to that trait no matter the number of eyes
 - Flowers – everyone knows what flowers are, but they don't have to look exactly like the flowers on earth
 - Animals – everyone relates to animals. In fantasy, animals are fun to create because the sky's the limit! No matter how you envision, draw, or create your animals, readers will relate to the fact that they are animals.
- **Laws of Your Fantasy World** Your world will most likely have gravity at some level. If your gravity level is extreme perhaps your characters will need to have special clothing while your fantasy creatures may be “built” to handle the immense gravity. If your fantasy world has slight gravity then your characters will need to be adjusted to meet such a law and you may want your creatures to have heavy armor coatings along with their fur coats to hold them down.
- **Laws of Magic** The laws you set in place in your magic must adhere to the laws of the world. For example, if your world is dismal, dark, and misty, and your magic needs bright light to cause it to work you could consider making the fact that bright light only shines for a short time period every so many hundred years. And during that time both good and black magic can be performed.
 - What causes the world to be dismal the remainder of the years – is it always that way, is it because good magic wins and that's the best it gets,

or is it because black magic wins every time but this time good is going to win.

- Why does the light appear only every so many hundred years – is it because other worlds block your world's sun, is it because the orbiting patterns of your sun and moon are so slow the moon eclipses your sun and your world is in the shadows most of the time, or is it because your world's terrain disappears beneath the surface for a period of time
- **Trade** Does your fantasy world have actual currency of some kind, or does your fantasy world operate on a barter/trade basis? You will want to decide if trade and purchasing can be done with the same currency and/or items globally or if there needs to be a conversion.

You will want to consider if your fantasy world's purchases or barter system(s) will include transactions:

- Globally
- Regionally
- Statewide
- Town or Village
- **Resources** The resources your fantasy world provides will prove to be a major necessity. For example, if you are going to be building weaponry, fortresses, castles, etc. you're most likely going need bricks, mud, metal, stones, staffs, arrows, etc. Think of it like this, it's going to seem unrealistic to your readers if your characters are building with wood and none is present anywhere on your fantasy world.
- **Modern or Archaic** Either style is fine, though modern is normally thought of in the futuristic realms of fantasy
 - **Examples:**
 - You can't use a gas powered machine if you do not have fuel on your world
 - You can't use electric tools if your world does not offer electricity
 - If you have chosen the archaic world style, you can't have characters walking into a room and popping a cup of coffee into a microwave
 - Can you mix the two styles? Absolutely, but you will need to remember which "props" are which, and be sure to establish your "fuel," "technology," and "electric" options on your fantasy world.
- **Back Story** Like your characters, your world has a back story. You may not know what that back story is when you are first developing your fantasy world, but in time you will begin to think of things that need to go into your story. For example it may be crucial to know how your world came into being or was created, how it has changed since the dawn of its time, or was possibly inhabited by another race that is now extinct.

- **Describing Your Fantasy World** You will need to describe your world all throughout your story. This can be done using exposition using narrative or dialogue. Be careful not to over do it in the narrative. Too much detail at one time can slow your story and your readers could lose interest.

Activity 3:

Developing a believable fantasy world is crucial. Continuity of your fantasy world must be followed to maintain the realness of your world.

Have enthusiasts open their World Building Tool Boxes and pull out all of the things they have considered for their world. Have them discuss what can stay, what needs to go, or any changes that would need to be made to carry the continuity.

Have enthusiasts fill out the name of their world on the line next to Fantasy World Of _____ on their handouts.

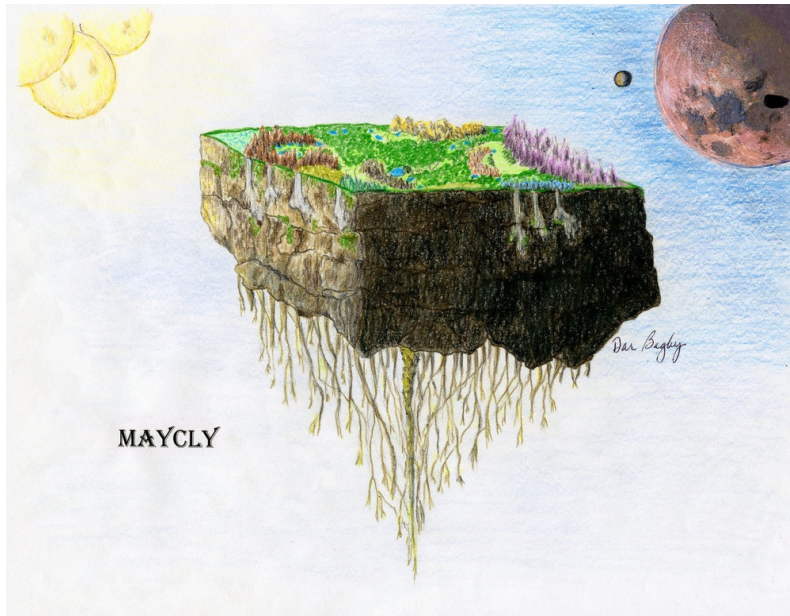
Have enthusiasts list below Fantasy World Of _____ on their handouts the things they definitely want to use in building their world. It's a good idea to have them specifically mark the pieces of paper of the things they want to keep.

Encourage them to keep all items (using or not) in their World Building Tool Box, as they may want to refer to them from time to time. Enthusiasts may come across something they didn't think they needed at the onset, but now they do.

Discussion: Discuss these questions while enthusiasts are creating their Fantasy Worlds and building their lists

Why did you choose the shape you did of your fantasy world?

Did you create a new free standing world, or did you create an



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- **Laws of Your Fantasy World**
- **Laws of Magic**
- **Trade**
- **Resources**
- **Modern or Archaic**
- **Back Story**
- **Describing Your Fantasy World**

Developing a believable world is crucial. Continuity of your fantasy world must be followed to maintain the “realness” of your world.

My world:

- Use the space below to list the items from your World Building Tool Box that you want to use to create your world
- Mark each piece of paper so you know you have included it on the list
- Keep all of your ideas in your World Building Tool Box in case you need to refer to one you did not originally think you needed

The Fantasy World of _____