Exploration and knowledge are at the heart of your journey in the worlds of Labyrinthian, and through them you will find not just wonder and mystery, but strength, even in the darkest of times.

Why Explore?
The urge to explore is innate to us all, at least to some degree. Novelty is exciting, and this urge only grows in worlds so strange and fantastical as the ones your characters find themselves in. While exploration is often its own reward, the knowledge gained is more valuable than you might realize, can certainly more than your characters would realize.

But by getting out there, they will find that as they learn and experience more of their worlds, the more inspired they will be when they need it, and the more they become a part of the world, and not just spectators.

In Labyrinthian, this urge to explore can only come from you, but its benefits will manifest all the same, even if you don't find exploring to be all that exciting of an adventure.

There are four kinds of **Explorable Areas** one can explore: Locations, Labyrinths, Cities, and Regions. Each of these will have a unique level to them called an **Exploration Level**, which is a simultaneous representation of that place's capacity to provide a **Lore Bonus** to the Party, but also what the adventurer has learned and applied since they began exploring there.

Exploration Level (EL):
A place's given Exploration Level, or EL, serves a few different purposes. First, it is a measure of how difficult it is to learn more about the given area you are exploring, and as such when you make different Skill checks involved in exploring, such as **Researching, Inspecting,** or **Searching**, you will be comparing your result to the area's EL. Secondly, it also serves as a Limit for how high your Lore Bonus can climb before it must be expended, or else any new discoveries might be wasted on you.

Over time, as you begin to accumulate a Lore Bonus and use it up, the Exploration Level in an area will start to increase, at a 1:1 Rate with your use of the Lore Bonus. This represents the Party applying the knowledge they have learned, whether it is directly by exploiting the knowledge in its own right, such as **Calling Allies** you discovered to your Party, or most commonly, by simply being **Inspired** in times of need, with the knowledge you've gained fueling your character's creativity and allowing them to overcome greater and greater challenges.

This increase in EL not only increases your capacity to maintain a high Lore Bonus, but is also critical for developing a *permanent* Lore Bonus, which will be highly beneficial for the Regions or Cities you have come to call home, as your collected knowledge will serve as an ever-present shield and guiding light, even in your darkest hour. Every 10th time you have expended your Lore Bonus, for any reason, you will gain a permanent +1.

Lore Bonus (LB):
The Lore Bonus is a measure of accumulated Lore, unique to each kind of explorable area, representing the collective knowledge of your party. This bonus is a positive modifier, such as +5 (indicating fiv Discoveries your party has made about the area), and will have a maximum equal to the Explorable Area's Exploration Level.

The Permanent Lore Bonus (PLB) is a secondary modifier that can be combined with your normal LB, but should be tracked separately, as the PLB does not go away once used.

Explorable Areas:
The four types of Explorable Areas in Labyrinthian represent a fairly wide range of different locations that have significance as places to be explored, and they will help you identify and differentiate between all the possibilities your Party could choose to explore.

Regions:
Regions are the largest kind of Explorable Area, typically covering, as the name implies, entire Regions of land, sea, and even air. These could cover upwards of hundreds of miles across, and could theoretically even encompass entire landmasses at times, but will seldom be large enough to cover entire Continents, which will instead be made up of a great many different regions.

Regions will typically be identifiable by the different sorts of biomes or environments that make up their collective whole. A vast desert for example will be a region, while the great rainforest to its south would be another, and the mountains to their west would be another, and so on.

Within Regions, you will typically find the other types of Explorable Areas nested within them.

Cities:
Cities are not necessarily the second largest kind of Explorable Area, but they are amongst the most prominent and densely packed. A city can often be just as richly dense in lore as the most long forgotten and mysterious secrets in the world, and indeed, it is often because of how constrained and boxed in cities tend to be that they offer so much to explore.

Cities can range in size from tiny villages all the way up to the great merchant cities and capitals of the world, and myth and rumor speak of Cities so large that they could even be considered regions...

Within Cities, you are very likely to find different unique Locations and Labyrinths, some of which may be contained within a single building. Where a tavern is unlikely to be such a place, you wouldn't be wrong to suspect that a the Keep of a King is likely teeming with discoveries to uncover.

Labyrinths:
While often associated with the great towers and dungeons that dot the land, Labyrinths are more than that, being vast yet self-contained areas that share only one common purpose or design. While towers and dungeons are the typical example, so too are great forests, canyons, valleys, and all manner of different natural phenomena that span a wide expanse and yet seem to contain everything in them like a cage.

It is not uncommon to find Locations or even Cities within Labyrinths, but typically labyrinths are quite wild, if not by nature then certainly by design, and as such they will be much less likely to hold much of a population that isn't beastly or monstrous.

Locations:
Locations are simply any self-contained structure that covers a very small area of land. These can be buildings, glades in a forest, or even old ruins. But they can also be places that, while not self-contained, only extend out over a short area, such as old battlefields or boneyards.

While Locations can often be the entrances to Labyrinths, Locations will almost never have a unique Explorable Area within them, unless by some magical mechanization the fabric of reality has been bent to that purpose.

Discoveries:
To accumulate Lore, and thus a Lore Bonus, in any of these places, your party must uncover Discoveries. These may range from the seemingly innocuous and peculiar quirks of the world to profound historical insights and events. Not everything you see is a Discovery; the floor is still a floor, even in strange dimensions or foreign lands. You'll usually know them when you find them, as they will be rather curious things that stick out like a sore thumb, and barring that, your World Keeper will let you know if something you have stumbled upon is worth noting.

Some discoveries can be as plain as a curious bit of road you stumble upon in the woods. Others might be grand and awe inspiring, the very hand of a god perhaps. And others still may be the more obvious; dusty tombs of forgotten lore, strange tablets and writings...even learning about the dangers you face, the Vulnerabilities, the likes and dislikes, of monsters and beasts, may prove a substantive Discovery.

Finding Discoveries:
Often you won't have to try to make a discovery; sometimes a wizard might just fall out of the sky, for some reason. While these fortuitous moments will still benefit the wayward adventurer, fate isn't the only means of seeking discovery. By taking on **Exploration Tasks** like **Research, Inspection, or Searching** while out and about, or simply in the course of doing other things as you travel, you will find discoveries lurking in many different corners, and all you need to do is seek them out, pull on the thread of curiosity, and you may find yourself promptly rewarded.

Exploration Tasks: Regardless of area you are exploring or intend to explore, Exploration Tasks all follow a similar structure. You choose a relevant skill, describe how you apply it, and make a Skill Check against the area's Exploration Level (EL). Each Task will take a certain amount of time within the timescale they are taken in, and depending on what you choose to do you may be able to make multiple attempts within one time period, or may only be able to make one attempt. Each Task will cover the time they can take.

Rewards: Your Skill Check results offer various outcomes based on the EL:

If your result is within 5 of the EL, you make a Discovery, but a Complication may arise.
If your result matches or exceeds the EL, you make a Discovery.
Exceeding the EL by 10 or more yields additional Discoveries.
A Nat20 results in two Discoveries, along with bonuses for exceeding the EL by 10+.

When making these Skill Checks, as they are essentially a form of **Improvised Action**, it is vital that no matter the Skill you choose to use that you are relating how you are using it, and why it should result in some sort of Discovery.

Many times, this will be plainly obvious. Of course if one uses *Striking* to hack away the vines covering up the door to a mine, it should lead to the discovery of said mine. But often times you might find yourself stretched thin if how you're thinking to use the Skill just isn't panning out, and in these times it is wise to either swap to another Skill that might be more straightforward, or think up a different way to use the Skill you chose. You have many options in this regard, and even if you have a +0 to a particular skill, if it makes sense to use it over any other option, it is still worth it to give it a shot.

The following **Exploration Tasks** should provide some guidance in how you might use your Skills to your advantage.

Research:
To Research, you must either have a source of knowledge to draw from, or you must be within a City. Every attempt will take at least 1 minute up to 10 minutes, and occasionally, if a given source of knowledge requires additional steps to learn from, you may end up taking longer than 10 minutes.

Before setting out to a far off area, it is wise to try and gather as much information as you can about where it is you're going. By doing so, you can accumulate a Lore Bonus in the area's you intend to explore before you've arrived, which will prove beneficial and allow you to explore it even more efficiently. However, one should take heed, as you will only be able to accumulate only so much about a given place, as you will not be able to increase the Exploration Level of your destination until you've adventured there.

The obvious of course is to find a map or someone who can provide directions, but there are many different kinds of people out there, with skills and knowledge that might still prove valuable even if they can't tell or show you the way. And still, you might also find yourself studying forgotten tomes of lore from past adventurers, or you might find yourself hearing out the Rumors and Myths from strange beggars or drunken bar flies.

Researching typically requires you to be in a City of some sort, as that is where you will find the most readily accessible bits of Lore, but anywhere you might find a source of knowledge would count as well. If in the course of exploring a Wizard's tower you find their library, it might be wise if you can to mine it for all you can, even just for its own sake if you have no particular destination in mind.

Likewise, you might also come across things like journals or even carvings describing ancient histories; these could also prove valuable as sources of knowledge. Time spent with these sources can be well worth it, especially in far off places, but they do have the potential to take up a lot of time to learn

from, and may take multiple attempts or steps in order to gain. For example, a runestone might be covered up by rocks, and so will need a successful Mining check to break through, but then that runestone may also require a Linguistics check in order to understand it. Both of these checks, including the final Research check itself, with whatever skill one feels is appropriate, will all be considered as part of the same Research attempt.

Inspecting and Searching
Unlike *Researching*, Inspecting and Searching will only generate Discoveries related to the Explorable Area they are taken in. Inspecting takes place during Delves, whereas Searching takes place during Expeditions.

Inspecting
While Delving, Inspecting will take at least 1 minute, up to 10 minutes. Occasionally, if a given Discovery requires multiple steps, you may have to make multiple attempts and/or take more than 10 minutes to uncover them.

Inspecting should be very familiar if you have ever played a tabletop roleplaying game before. While Delving, you will examine your environment and look for different things to learn. Often times you'll be doing this to simply progress further into the place you're exploring, often not looking specifically for anything to learn, but other times you'll find it worthwhile to spend some extra time looking around. You never know what you might find, and finding a barely hidden secret door is just as much a Discovery as an ancient prophecy of dragons and blades carved into a stone wall.

However, unlike the other two Exploration Tasks, Inspecting comes with risk, and depending on where you are, you may even find yourself hitting a limit to what you can find, even with successful inspections.

Every Inspection attempt, even with magical concealment, may occasionally give rise to complications in your adventures. These may not always be very consequential, but it is good to keep in mind that sometimes it will be the wiser decision to move on rather than to linger.

But even if you're the brave sort and wish to linger anyway, the nature of the places you Delve into means there is a limit to what you could possibly learn. As a general rule of thumb, the smaller the area or room you explore, the less there really will be to learn. As such, larger chambers will be more worthwhile to spend time on, but even they will have their limits.

When your party has reached this limit, your World Keeper will let you know so that you can move on.

Searching
When Searching, attempts will take at least 30 minutes, upwards of 2 Hours. This is only possible during Exploration; you will not be able to Search while Traveling. The total area covered while searching will be within a 6 Mile wide area, though you should not think of it as though you have meticulously covered the totality of that area. Your Searching attempt will effectively correspond to a much smaller amount of movement focused on finding something, and as such will generally not cover the entire area.

Searching is effectively a larger scale version of Inspecting, taking place in the greater wilderness rather than in labyrinths or dungeons. As such, the kinds of things you'll find will have a greater variety to them, and you will likely find it easier to use your Skills to explore. Another benefit of Searching is that your party doesn't need to commit themselves to just Searching; other party members that will benefit from tasks such as Foraging or Prospecting will find it very efficient to use this time while one or two others focus on Searching the area.

Directed Exploring
Something to note with each of the Exploration tasks is that if you are seeking out something specific that you have heard rumor of or otherwise learned of, such as a hidden room or location, you can use these tasks to search for them directly. However, in doing so you will forgo the chance to stumble onto other kinds of discoveries; you must achieve a clear success on your Skill check (either equal to or greater than the EL for the area). Failing to do so will not net you any benefits and will cost you the time spent, but if you should roll a Nat20 on your check, you will still receive two Discoveries, with one being the room or location you sought.

Other Means of Discovery
One is not required to spend their time exploring directly to still benefit from learning about the world around them. Indeed, life has a way of making learning about the world around us something we can't really avoid, especially when we're out and about. Discoveries will sometimes manifest as simple consequences of engaging in other kinds of activities. For example, those who seek out war and combat will often accumulate Discoveries by Analyzing their foes. Learning vulnerabilities or weaknesses in your enemies will often count as Discoveries, and sometimes encountering new, never before heard of kinds of enemies will also count as Discoveries in of themselves.

Meanwhile, those who simply like to Quest for glory or fame will also regularly uncover Discoveries in the course of their journeys, especially the more dire and epic their Quests become.

Oracles
Other times, however, those who are out and about doing certain Travel Tasks such as *Foraging, Prospecting,* or even *Pathfinding,* will find themselves encountering very peculiar circumstances in the course of looking for other things. These circumstances, these strange twists of fate, are called **Oracles**, and they are noticeably interspersed within the results for these Travel Tasks.

These special results are your chance to truly define your own adventure as you choose whether or not to pursue them, ignore them, or even use them as an excuse find some other distraction as you explore the world.

When you encounter an Oracle result, you have a few choices in how to proceed.

The first and most simplest choice, if you either don't wish to fall off the path or simply don't want to take up time, is to either ignore the Oracle outright, or to simply mention your own interpretation of how it resolved when you report back to your party the results of your task. This is, after all, ultimately your adventure, and you have the full agency to pursue these distractions at your leisure.

Your second, choice however, is to engage with them.

Engaging with Fate

When you receive an Oracle, you will be provided with the rewards you sought (assuming you rolled well enough anyway), but will also be given a prompt. This prompt will provide you some sort of inciting incident, something that causes your character to stop in their tracks essentially, and then the prompt will urge you to act on this incident, immediately.

For example, consider the following Oracle you might encounter while *Foraging*:

"They are coming...Run!"

There are many ways you can interpret this Oracle, and often it will work best if you can interpret within the context of what you were doing. As this was received while Foraging, perhaps you went out looking for some Honey.

If you're inclined to take your first option when receiving this Oracle, you might simply report back to your Party that you found your honey, but you had a bit of a scare as the bees suddenly returned quite angry, but you managed to shake them off.

But if you're inclined to take the second option, you can go farther. Perhaps what showed up was not the bees, but a very hungry family of bears, and now you're running for your life to the relative safety of your party.

When you do this, you are essentially inviting your other player's and your World Keeper to keep building off of this new scenario. They, like you initially, have the same kinds of options available to them, and might choose to simply treat the situation as an impetus to move along, or, they might choose to add on to it.

Perhaps one of your friends went Prospecting instead, and their Oracle lead them into a cave. And as they report back to the Party, after hearing your story, they report that they found themselves a new friend in a den he found in the cave, and they point out the recognizable snout of a bear cub peaking out of their pack.

Your World Keeper at this point will generally be obliged to follow through on the consequences of these circumstances. Now the Bear Family arrives, and the Mother Bear is not going to be particularly happy when she smells her other cub in the hands of your friend.

From here, this could spawn a combat situation if that is how your Party chooses to handle it, and given the circumstances, you most likely wouldn't make any sort of Discovery as a result of this.

However, perhaps common sense prevailed and your friend promptly returned the cub, and your Party left as fast as possible once the Bears seemed to back off.

Perhaps, though, you all decide that common sense is stupid, and you decide to go explore that Bear Den some more. Where your friend simply returns to his Prospecting, you decide to use your extensive Animal Handling skill to Inspect the cave. You don't find anything of note about the bears themselves, but amongst a pile of bones, perhaps with your high roll you find yourself an old amulet, bearing the crest of a long lost city...the exact same city you heard rumor of just days before, and had set out into the wilderness to find.

But before you can ponder this new Discovery, the Father Bear has just returned to the Den, and he smells his cubs on you...

Note for the Funny People

Oracles provide a very powerful storytelling medium, and one that is arguably rather unique in the kind of game that Labyrinthian is. While you are given a great deal of leeway in what you introduce, one should be wary of doing things simply because one thinks they're hilarious.

After all, one may indeed find it hilarious to find their character chased down by a hungry dragon. But they might not find it so funny when said dragon shows up and carves a meal out of their friends.

Ultimately, your World Keeper will have the power to deny things if they go too far, or indeed become abusive, and likewise will have the power to turn your funny ideas against you if you're not wise about them. While you may be wise enough to not spring dragons on your friends, trying to use Oracles to twist the gameworld for your personal gain is also most unwise. You might indeed find a giant chest of gold out in the woods...but good luck curing that Ancient Curse.

Using the Lore Bonus

Finally, after making some discoveries, you will have generated a Lore Bonus for the area you have been exploring, and now comes the time to make use of it, if one wishes.

Inspiration

Inspiration is the basic use for the Lore Bonus, and will be a trusty tool in your adventures, as your collected knowledge inspires you

Whenever you make any kind of Skill or Talent Check (either before or after the roll), you may call for Inspiration. Upon doing so, you may add your Party's Lore Bonus for the area to your roll, and then you will deduct -1 from the Lore Bonus.

Advanced Abilities

In addition to Inspiration, there a number of different abilities your Party can utilize by spending their Lore Bonus. Some of these abilities will be tied specifically to the Explorable Areas themselves, and as such won't be usable anywhere else. Often times, these abilities will actually have to be discovered in their own right.

However, the below options are generic abilities your Party will be able to call upon more or less anywhere, though note this can vary. Your World Keeper will verify if any are not going to be available, and will also clarify if any others will be immediately available to you.

Calling Allies:
If the Party has made Allies during their adventures, this ability when invoked will allow the Party to call upon a number of their allies equal to 1d10 per LB spent.

Once they have done so, they will fight for the Party until they have either perished or otherwise been driven off by the Party's enemies, or until dismissed. Note however that if the Allies are betrayed by the party or otherwise abused, this will have impacts on the Party's Reputation, and they may become hostile to the Party.

Crafting and Gathering Events:
When invoked by a player taking a Crafting or Gathering Travel Task, they will spend 1 LB, and will initiate a special Bout relating to their particular task. Upon completing this Bout, they will be rewarded with a one-time chance to either utilize or gather a unique Crafting Component.

These unique components will be specific to the area they come from and will not be able to be found elsewhere, but note that one does not always need to invoke a Crafting event in order to utilize these components. Unless otherwise specified, they can be used in normal Crafting.

But if one does choose to initiate a Crafting Event, they will receive a bonus to both their Crafting Budget and their Skill Check equal to the item's Rarity Bonus, which will be noted in its description.

Taking A Risk: This ability when invoked by a player (or the party collectively), will allow them to spend any number of points out of the Party's LB pool. With each point spent, the Encounter they are engaged with will become significantly harder, but in exchange the rewards for successfully overcoming the Encounter will be increased. This can often result in increased loot (either from enemies slain or by stumbling onto hidden treasures), but can also lead to more Discoveries.

Well Prepared: This ability when invoked by a player will allow them to spend 1 point of the LB to add 1d6 to any Saving Throw they or another party member makes. This may be invoked after the saving throw has been made.