

CLASS CRAFT



TEACHER MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Classcraft is a role-playing game designed to be played in classrooms. Each student takes on the role of a character and works to gain special powers. One of the game's main objectives is to boost students' motivation to study and participate in class by adding an entertaining element to their education which helps improve their overall chances at succeeding in school. To make Classcraft playable in class, the teacher must assume the role of Gamemaster and manage the game. As such, the teacher must master several elements of the game.

These tutorials were created to guide teachers who are integrating Classcraft into their classrooms. There are text-based tutorials, and we have also created video tutorials to demonstrate some gameplay elements. These tutorials will help teachers become good Gamemasters, while showing them how to properly introduce their students to Classcraft.

GAME RULES



CHARACTER CLASSES

In Classcraft, each player chooses a character class. Each character class has its own powers that allow players to progress in the game. The three classes are Healer, Mage and Warrior. As the name suggests, Healers perform healing functions in the game. When a team player loses life points, Healers can use different powers to restore life points to that player. Healers may also use these powers on themselves. Mages are the game's energy suppliers, so they provide action points. Mages can use their powers to give other players the action points they need to use their powers. Lastly, Warriors are the game's protectors. When a team player is about to lose life points, Warriors can use protective powers to absorb the damage on behalf of the player, while simultaneously neutralizing part of the damage so that Warriors lose fewer life points. The purpose of having several character classes is to promote teamwork. The most efficient way to progress in the game is as a team, since a lone player cannot have access to all the powers available.

GAME MECHANICS

Classcraft has several game mechanics that make the game both interesting and fun. Firstly, all players have life points (HP). As long as they still have at least one life point left, players can

avoid certain consequences. Players lose life points when they engage in negative behavior. Below is a list of behaviors that can result in losing life points.

BEHAVIOR	HP
Arriving late to class	10
Disturbing the class	5
Arguing with the Gamemaster	10
Being negative, lacking motivation or slacking off in class	20
Incomplete homework	30
Per point below a 60% score on a test	5

Players only have a certain amount of life points, depending on whether they chose to be a Healer, Mage or Warrior.

All players also have action points (AP). Action points allow players to use certain powers. For example, if a Healer wants to use the “Heal 1” power, it will cost them 15 action points. When a player does not have any more action points, they cannot use their powers. As with life points, each player starts with a maximum quantity of action points, and this maximum depends on whether they chose to be a Healer, Mage or Warrior.

In addition to life and action points, players have experience points (XP) as well. Experience points determine a player’s progression in the game. The more experience points a player earns, the further they progress in the game and gain access to more powers. To earn experience points, the player must engage in positive behavior. Here is the list behaviors that earn experience points:

BEHAVIOR	XP
Finding a mistake in the class notes	50
Per point above a 70% score on a test	20
Correctly answering a question in class	60

Helping another student with their classwork	75
Helping another player by using your powers	5 AP
Being positive and hard working in class	100

Experience points are tied to game levels. Gaining levels marks a player's progression in the game, but it is also by leveling up that players' powers become stronger. At the beginning of the game, all players start at Level 1. To level up, players must earn 1,000 experience points at each level. As a player levels up throughout the year, they earn power points. With power points, players can purchase powers. Each game level gives a player 1 power point, and the cost of each power depends on its rank in the "power tree." Powers in the first tier of the power tree cost 1 power point, while those of the second and third tiers cost 2 and 3 points respectively.

The only way to earn life points (HP) is by using powers. All players earn 4 action points (AP) per day, even when there is no class.

POWERS

Powers are one of Classcraft's most important elements. They represent the privileges that a player earns as they progress in the game. Some are cooperative, like the Healer's "Heal" power, which helps other team members. Other powers only benefit the individual player. For example, Healers can gain the "Prayer" power, which gives them access to their notes during a test. Some individual powers have nothing to do with studies but they're still fun, like the Mage's "Teleport" power. This gives the player 2 minutes to leave the classroom to pick up material, get a drink of water and so forth. Powers are the reason students want to play Classcraft.

When the game starts, players do not have all the power points they need. They must level up to earn power points (PP) and purchase more powers. Once a power has been purchased, it belongs to the player for good, but using it means spending action points (AP). In order to help

you understand the powers, here is a list of powers that a player may posses, depending on the character class they have chosen:



MAGE POWER TREE

MAX HP: 30 / MAX AP: 50

POWER	TIER (PP)	ACTION POINTS	DESCRIPTION	PRE-REQUISITE POWERS
Mana Transfer	1	35	All of the team members, except Mages, gain 7 AP	
Teleport	1	5	The Mage can leave the classroom for up to 2 minutes	
Invisibility	1	10	The Mage can be late for class (maximum 2 minutes)	
Mana Shield	2	3 x Damage	The Mage can transfer damage to his AP at a cost of 3 AP per HP prevented	Mana Transfer
Cheat Death	2	15	A dead teammate (other than the Mage) can reroll the death dice, but must accept the new outcome	Teleport
Time Warp	2	35	The Mage gains an extra 8 minutes to beat an exam	Teleport and Invisibility
Fountain of Mana	3	40	A teammate, who isn't a Mage, replenishes all of his AP	Mana Shield
Clairvoyance	3	40	All of the team members get a hint on an exam question	Cheat Death and Mana Shield
Mage Circle	3	80 (40 x 2)	When two Mages use this power at the same time, all of the team members gain an extra 8 minutes to beat an exam	Time Warp



WARRIOR POWER TREE

MAX HP: 80 / MAX AP: 30

POWER	TIER (PP)	ACTION POINTS	DESCRIPTION	PRE-REQUISITE POWERS
Protect 1	1	10	The Warrior can take up to 10 damage instead of his teammate, receiving only 80% of the initial damage	
First Aid	1	10	The Warrior gains 1 HP/level, for a maximum of 5 HP	
Hunting	1	5	The Warrior can eat in class	
Protect 2	2	15	The Warrior can take up to 20 damage instead of his teammate, receiving only 65% of the initial damage	Protect 1
Ambush	2	20	The Warrior can hand in an assignment one day later	Protect 1 and First Aid
Counter Attack	2	20	The Warrior gets a hint on an exam question	Hunting
Protect 3	3	20	The Warrior can take up to 30 damage instead of his teammate, receiving only 50% of the initial damage	Protect 2
Frontal Assault	3	60 (30 x 2)	When two Warriors use this power at the same time, all of the team members can hand in an assignment one day later	Counter Attack
Secret Weapon	3	25	During an exam, the Warrior can use a cheat sheet provided by the Gamemaster	Ambush and Counter Attack



HEALER POWER TREE

MAX HP: 50 / MAX AP: 35

POWER	TIER (PP)	ACTION POINTS	DESCRIPTION	PRE-REQUISITE POWERS
Heal 1	1	15	A teammate gains 10 HP	
Sainthood	1	5	The Healer can open or close a window	
Ardent Faith	1	10	During an exam, the Healer can ask the Gamemaster if his answer to a question is right	
Heal 2	2	20	A teammate gains 20 HP	Heal 1
Favor of the Gods	2	20	The Healer can listen to his iPod during classwork	Sainthood
Revive	2	25	When a teammate (not including the Healer) falls to 0 HP, he avoids all penalties and comes back to life with 1 HP	Ardent Faith
Heal 3	3	20	A teammate gains 30 HP	Heal 2
Healing Circle	3	30	All of the team members gain 15 HP	Heal 2
Prayer	3	30	During an exam, the healer has access to his notes	Revive & Favor of the Gods



DEATH

When a player loses all their life points, they die and must roll the death dice. The death dice contains 6 consequences that the player is forced to roll for and receive. Here are the 6 consequences of the death dice:

- Nothing
- Saturday-morning detention
- Copying a text (usually 5 pages long)
- 10 minutes docked off the next test
- 5 minutes docked off the next test
- Hand in the next paper 1 day earlier than the deadline

If they have the right power and choose to use it, a team member can save another player who has no life points. If no one saves a player with no life points, the player must roll the death dice. Once this is done, the player is returned to life, but with only 1 life point. Plus, all their team members lose 10 life points, and if one of the team members dies as a result of this penalty, the rest of the team loses an additional 10 life points, and so on. The only good news here is that the same person can't die twice as a result of the same original death. The purpose of this consequence is to encourage players to help each other so that no one will die.

HERO PACT

The Hero Pact represents a player's commitment to play Classcraft until a given course ends. A student cannot play Classcraft unless the pact is signed, and they cannot stop playing once the pact is signed. In signing the Hero Pact, the player recognizes the authority of the Gamemaster and cannot contest the latter's decisions. Players must also accept any changes the Gamemaster might make to the game rules, even if they are not happy with them. To get the most out of Classcraft, players are encouraged to sign the Hero Pact when a game starts at the beginning of the course. However, they can still sign it anytime during the term.



EVENTS

Different kinds of events occur at the beginning of each class. Some are beneficial, like the “Healing” event, which gives each player 5 life points. Others are unfortunate, like the “Feeble” event, where everyone loses twice as many life points during the period. There are also events that occur outside the actual game. For example, the “Thirst of the Healers” event lets Healers leave the classroom to go drink water. Some events are just funny, like the “Chant of the Master”, which forces the Gamemaster to sing a song chosen by the player who has the least experience points. The events make the game more fun and keep the players

interested. There are an equal number of beneficial and unfortunate events, and everyone has to live with the consequences, even the Gamemaster.

STARTING THE GAME

Now that you're familiar with Classcraft, you are ready to introduce it to your students and start the game. It is extremely important to take the time to properly explain the game so that students will know what to expect. You shouldn't save this for the last 10 minutes of class, for example. Ideally, you would take about 15 minutes to introduce the game in one class, then take a full period at the next class to describe Classcraft in more detail. This will give students the opportunity to fully grasp the game and its impact on the classroom dynamic, and to carefully consider whether or not they want to play. Here's how we suggest going about it.

Class 1 - Introduce the Game (15 min)

- Explain the game
- Explain the game's consequences
- Explain character classes
- Hand out of the Hero Pact for students to sign

Class 2 - Begin the Game (60 min)

- Create teams
- Choose team names
- Choose character classes
- Choose a first power
- Get each player's email address

INTRODUCING CLASSCRAFT

To make sure students understand the game, we recommend providing them with the game rules. These are available on classcraft.com and can be printed out. Print one document per student so each can consult the list of available powers. Hand out the game rules at the beginning of class, then talk to your students about Classcraft.

When explaining Classcraft, you should also show students the game to give them a sense of gameplay elements (life points, experience points, events, etc.).

Once you've wrapped up your brief introduction, encourage students to sign the Hero Pact right away so they can play the game. Remind students that playing the game is not mandatory. There are no repercussions to not playing Classcraft, other than being left out. Just the same, we recommend getting students to sign the Hero Pact as early on in the term as possible, ideally during the first class. Remind students that once the pact is signed, they cannot stop playing the game, but if they do not sign it right away, they can still start playing later on in the term.

CREATING TEAMS

Following the introduction to Classcraft, you can start the game during the next class. Before you begin, you must create the teams. Teamwork is so important in Classcraft because students succeed when they collaborate towards a common goal. So players have an incentive to work well together, either by using cooperative powers or by preventing a team member from dying.

- **Team size:** Our research shows that teams of 5 to 7 people are ideal. Teams with fewer than 5 people make the game too difficult, and players tend to die too often. Teams with more than 7 people make the game too easy, and players are rarely at risk of dying so they aren't sufficiently challenged.
- **Balanced teams:** It is very important to make sure all teams are as balanced as possible. A stronger team will have stronger powers, while a weaker team will probably die more often. As Gamemaster, you are in the best position to create balanced teams. To do this, we recommend ranking your students according to their grades. Spread out those with higher grades equally among teams, and do the same for students with mid-level to lower grades. This will group together a healthy spectrum of students and put each team on equal footing.

BEGIN THE GAME

- **Meet and greet:** Once you've created the teams, give them a chance to group together so they can start strategizing. This first brainstorming session will also influence which character class and first power each team member chooses.
- **Choose a team name:** During this brainstorm, each team must choose its name. It creates a sense of belonging, and it also gives them a clearly identifiable game handle. If a team wants to monitor its progress in the game, it will be easier to do with a unique name they chose rather than a default setting like "Team #1." Ask all teams to choose a name by the end of the class.
- **Choose character classes:** Now that team members know each other, it's time for each player to choose the character class they'll play with for the duration of the game. It's important to choose the character class now because it will help team members strategize, and also because each character class is complementary. Choosing a character class before joining a team has disadvantages, especially if a disproportionate number of team members chose the same class. Each team should contain all of the character classes so they can access all of the available powers in the game. Give students enough time to weigh this decision and map out good gameplay tactics. Ideally, they will have chosen their character classes by the end of the period, allowing you to input the information into the game as soon as possible.
- **Choose a first power:** Players must choose the first power they want to start the game with at Level 1. They can choose their first power based on personal preference, or to benefit the team's overall strategy. Because all character classes have access to a cooperative power at Level 1, we recommend they choose it as a first power to make it easier to gain more experience points as the game progresses.
- **Get each player's email address:** Make sure you get each player's email address. Once you have them, input them into the game. The Classcraft team will then contact the players to give them online access to the game.

By the end of class, players should have decided on a team name, a character class and a first power. Once you've gotten all the emails, input each player's information into the game. By next class, you'll be playing Classcraft.

FINAL REQUIREMENTS

You're almost ready to play Classcraft. Here are the last things you need to plan out before you start.

- **Access to the game:** You can't play Classcraft unless your classroom has a computer with the game installed. Without access to the game, keeping track of points and managing events becomes too complicated. Your classroom computer must also have an Internet connection. Ideally, use a laptop so you can bring it with you as needed.
- **A class projector:** A projector allows the students to see the game's interface. This lets them monitor their progress and think of point-boosting strategies.
- **A student forum:** The game rules indicate that players can win experience points when they help other classmates with their school work. Because it's difficult for teachers to know when players help other people outside the classroom, we've found that a good solution is to create a forum where students can ask questions about the work they have to do. Players will be motivated to respond, and if they provide correct answers, they can earn experience points. A forum is not mandatory, but it makes it easier to keep track of students helping each other. It also helps those students who tend to have difficulties in class. An upcoming version of Classcraft will integrate this kind of forum into the gaming platform.
- **A class seating plan:** It could be helpful to create a class seating plan that works around the teams you created so that members are seated near one another. Our research has shown that the game works fine without this kind of seating plan, but it still makes it easier for team members to communicate with each other.

- **Computers and mobile devices:** If school policy permits, it can be helpful to give students access to computers or mobile devices during class. They'll be able to monitor the game, their characters and their team members, and use their powers. This will give you fewer things to manage during class, and it means less game-related downtime during the period.

CLASSCRAFT DURING CLASS

You are now ready to play Classcraft during class. To make sure everything runs smoothly, follow these steps:

- **Launch the game:** As soon as class begins, start the game and turn on the projector so players can monitor their game progress. Some of them may want to use one of their powers immediately, so be ready to manage their tasks in the game.
- **Launch an event:** Once the game is open, the first thing to do is to launch an event. The game engine randomly chooses events that have either beneficial or adverse effects on the players, and even the Gamemaster. It's important to launch each event at the beginning of class because some of them last the entire period.
- **Start teaching:** Having launched the event, you can now begin teaching as you normally would. But remember that this is your class on Classcraft! So if a player does something that warrants punishment, you have to go into the game to dock off those points. The same applies when a player gains experience points or uses powers. It'll be easier to remember if you leave the game open the whole time. Always keep the game rules handy in case you need to know how many points to give out or dock off. Try to be as consistent and fair as possible when doling out points. As Gamemaster, you set an example for your students by remaining impartial.

Here is a brief reminder of when to give out points or take them away.

- Do a roll call at the beginning of class to single out the latecomers. Then go into the game and dock off life points from those who were tardy.
- During a lecture, ask questions to encourage class participation. Reward those who answer correctly by giving them experience points.
- If certain players disturb the class, go into the game and dock off their life points.
- When assigning exercises, observe the players to see which ones are working. At the end of class, reward those who worked hard with experience points, and punish those who didn't by docking off their life points.
- Make sure to check whether players finished their homework by the deadline you gave them. Reward those who completed their assignments with experience points, and punish those who didn't by docking off their life points.

The game engine automatically tallies experience and life points, making your job easier. You can always change the number of experience or life points to give or take away. So instead of losing 5 points for class disturbance, you can change it to 3 or 10; whatever seems to work best for your students.

Most importantly, remember that Classcraft is a game. It's a chance to have fun with your students.

TIPS AND TRICKS

- **You are the Gamemaster.** What you say goes, and you always have the last word when it comes to life and experience points. If players complain that too many life points were taken away or that too few experience points were given out, you don't have to listen. The game rules even stipulate that players who argue with the Gamemaster too much can stand to lose 10 life points.
- **The Hero Pact gives you permission to change the game rules at any time.** Some players may exploit a game feature, like arriving late on purpose so that a Healer

uses their healing power to earn experience points. If something like this happens, you can change the number of life or experience points allotted to certain situations.

- **Never postpone inputting data into the game.** If a player needs to lose life points, enter it as soon as possible. Otherwise, you might forget it and data might pile up, giving you a heavier workload down the road.
- **Playing Classcraft requires consistency and fairness.** This will seem easy until you launch the event that forces everyone in class, yourself included, to last through the whole period without using an electronic device. Even if events like these seem like a curse, you have to go along with it, or Classcraft won't work. Part of the game's objective is to get everyone on board with positive, productive behavior. If the Gamemaster can't hack it, it won't seem fair to the students, and they'll lose the drive to keep playing. So it's best for you to just grin and bear it. Besides, these kinds of events don't occur often.
- As a teacher and Gamemaster, you may end up playing Classcraft with the same group of students, but in more than one class. If this happens, you may have to adjust certain game features so that Classcraft is as effective in each class. For example, perhaps you want to increase the level-up score from 1,000 XP to 1,750. (Our research shows that 1,750 is easier to attain than 2,000, since the latter means players are twice as likely to die.) Or perhaps you want your players to gain 6 action points per day instead of 4, so they'll have more chances to use their powers. You may also want to keep the maximum number of life and action points for each class to keep the students challenged.
- **You may end up playing Classcraft with more than one group of students.** That means certain groups might have strategic challenges that others don't. Plus, the random events affect the gameplay, so one group may have gotten a bad string of events, while another group lucked out. If this happens, you may have to adjust the point system to even things out between the groups.

- When it comes to grading, it causes more damage and deaths if you hand out several grades at the same time. Our research shows that doing this makes the game more challenging and entertaining. That said, do it sparingly. Too many deaths can cause some uneven gameplay, which you want to avoid.
- If you decide to create a student forum where students can ask questions about school work, players will use it to earn experience points. To keep the situation under control, you will have to intervene regularly to make sure students are not being led astray by well-meaning classmates. Respond to the student that answered correctly and let them know that their experience points will be input into the game. When a student answers incorrectly, inform them on the forum and tell them they will not gain any experience points. In the case of partially correct answers, you can reward a student with half the points you would normally give, but remember to tell them they're also half-wrong. If nobody answers a given question on the forum, answer it immediately, because it's more important for students to learn something than it is for them to earn experience points.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do the power trees work for each character class? What do the arrows mean?

A: The power tree for each character class is divided into three parts. The powers in the first tier cost 1 power point; the powers in the second and third tiers cost 2 and 3 power points respectively. The arrows connect certain powers to others. These arrows mean you can only access certain powers after you've purchased other powers first. For example, in the Healer's power tree, you need to have acquired the "Heal 1" power before you can access "Heal 2." Because an arrow connects the two, you will need 3 power points to purchase "Heal 2." That's 1 point for "Heal 1" and 2 points for "Heal 2." In another example, one arrow connects the "Prayer" power to the "Revive" power, and another to the "Favor of the gods" power. This means that you must purchase these two before

having access to the “Prayer” power, for a total of 9 power points to purchase the “Prayer” power.

Do the maximum amount of life and action points increase when players level up?

A: No, because if players had access to more life and action points by leveling up, the game would become too easy since the risk of dying would go down considerably. Earning new powers and more power points are the real rewards of leveling up, as they help the player to be successful in their studies.

Is there an end to Classcraft? Can players finish the game?

A: Yes and no. In theory, the game ends when a player gains all the powers available to their character class. However, players must reach Level 18 to gain all those powers, making Level 18 the “end of the game,” so to speak. That’s why Level 18 often becomes famous among players. Still, even if a player reaches Level 18, the Hero Pact forces them to continue playing until the course is over. So in practice, Classcraft ends when the course does.

How quickly should players earn experience points? Is it normal for many players to reach Level 18?

A: On average, we’ve seen that players tend to earn about 1 ½ levels’ worth of experience per month. Over the duration of an average course, this is about 1000 to 1500 experience points per month. Naturally, these results can vary. For example, after only two months, some players may be at level 2 while others are already at level 4. It can also depend on your evaluation system and when you deliver grades. If you hand out evaluations and grades irregularly, players will earn experience points at an irregular rate. By the end of most courses, we’ve observed that the majority of players end up somewhere between levels 10 and 13.

That’s why few players, or none, reach Level 18. The only way to finish Classcraft is through complete determination and absolute participation. Only a few players ever

commit to that level of involvement and studying. So in a class of 30 players, only 1 or 2 are likely to reach Level 18. Because it's so difficult to finish the game, we strongly recommend that Gamemasters reward winners with something like a cake or sweets.

How often does death occur in the game?

A: Not all players die, while some never die at all, and others die more than once. Plus, dying doesn't necessarily mean that players have to roll the death dice. Several players can die and be saved by "Revive" or "Protect." Still, it's good for some deaths to occur during the course of the game, because it keeps players challenged. There has to be some risk involved to incentivize the students who don't participate as much. So if the game has gone on for several months and no one has died, make your point system stricter.

What powers save players from the death dice?

A: When a player dies and must roll the death dice, only 2 powers can save them: the Healer's "Revive" power and the Warrior's "Protect" powers. If a team member uses one of these 2 powers, the player will avoid the death dice.

The Healer's "Heal" power cannot rescue a player from the death dice. The "Heal" power can only be used after a player has rolled the death dice or after they been saved by "Revive" or "Protect." The Mage's "Cheat Death" also won't save a player from the death dice, but it allows the player to roll the dice a second time so they might suffer a lesser consequence.