

## Introduction: Using the Kids' Track

The Kids' Track is a series of 4 lessons, designed to introduce young players to the joys of the Pathfinder Beginner Box. It was originally written for use at Gen Con Indy 2012, and made widely available for use shortly thereafter.

To make the best use of this program, there are a few things that you can take into consideration when planning your sessions:

- These lessons are designed for players from ages 6 to 12. However, the difference in maturity, comprehension, and development for children on either end of that range is significant, and it's best if players of similar ages can be grouped together.
- The lessons are meant for groups of 4 players. Larger groups risk letting the kids disengage and get distracted – even tables of 5 should be avoided if at all possible. Two tables of 3 is a better option than one table of 6.
- The kids are not intended to be left at the table without a parent or guardian. Aside from potential legal issues of responsibility (depending on jurisdiction), there is also the question of getting the group to move in a common direction. Parents can help their kids learn, listen, be attentive, and work together. With tables of less than 4 players, parents can also fill out the party.
- Each of the lessons is designed to be played in two hours or a little less. They are not designed to run one after the other, but rather with some time to break between each lesson. This might be a day, or a week, but keep in mind that children need breaks in order to keep their attention focused.

With all that in mind, just have fun. Fun is infectious, and even if the kids don't learn everything they're supposed to, when you're passionate and entertaining, they'll enjoy themselves – and if that's not a good representation of the Pathfinder experience, I don't know what is.

# Kids' Track 1: The Bare Bones

## *General Notes*

Remember your audience. Keep explanations short and simple; use a vocabulary that's appropriate to the age of your players.

Don't overexplain. This session is about giving the players the skills to play through a combat, not anything else. Skill checks, and even feats, are intended to be beyond the scope right now. If the players ask during the scenario about using a feat or something else, go ahead and let them do it.

Necessary materials: Beginner Box: Ruins, Character sheets, Set of dice for each player.

## *Introductions*

*(5 Minutes)*

Introduce yourself and ask the players to introduce themselves as well. If you have table tents, get the players to place them in front of themselves so that the players can remember each others' names.

## *What Is This Game, Anyway?*

*(5 Minutes)*

Briefly explain the concept behind Pathfinder. Here are the key ideas to hit in your explanation:

- It's a game of make-believe, where you pretend to be a hero
- It takes place in a fantasy world of wizards and dragons, elves and dwarves
- You control your hero by describing what they're doing; if you need to find out if you're successful, you roll a die.
- It is a cooperative game, where all the players work together to beat the bad guys and complete their mission.

## *What's With All These Crazy Dice?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Go through the dice with the players and look at each one, maybe have them put the dice in order by the number of sides from smallest to largest. Emphasize the importance of the d20 – if you want to do something, that's the die you will roll to see if it works.

**Dice Game:** Pair the players up and have them play the following dice game.

Each person chooses one of their dice without letting the opponent know which die it is. Players roll at the same time, and the higher roll wins a point. Players may only roll each die once, so there are seven rolls in the game; the player with the most

points at the end of the game wins.

Once the game is over, have the winners play each other, and the losers play each other, so that each player gets two games.

The point of this game is twofold: the first reason is to break up the discussion a little bit and have them do something more active. The other point is to get them to think about the dice and probability. To that end, encourage them to think about what die they're choosing: if they think their opponent is choosing a "big" die (one with more sides), is it better to choose a big die or a small one? There's little strategy in this game, but you can use it to speak – *briefly* – about probability.

### *Who Do You Want To Be?*

*(5 Minutes)*

Briefly outline the abilities and strengths of the four characters and have the players decide which character they would like to play. Encourage the players to decide among themselves and discuss preferences, but if need be, organize a tie breaker in a fair way – a d20 roll-off or some other option using the dice is the best way.

### *What Can I Do?*

*(20-25 Minutes)*

Look at key parts of the character sheet. For this session, focus on the following portions of the Beginner Box Character Sheets. Ask the players to find the relevant part of the character sheet and answer the question – encourage the parents to help if the players are having trouble with the language on the character sheet

- **Section C:** "How fast does your character move? How many squares on the board?" Show them one of the maps for the Beginner Box Bash: Ruins, so they can see what the squares look like.
- **Section G:** "What is the total of your Initiative?" Explain that initiative helps decide what order your turns go in, and how to roll for initiative.
- **Section G:** "What Weapons do you have?" Explain what the Attack Bonus means and how to resolve an attack; then ask one of the players to summarize what you said.
- **Section H:** "What is your total Armour Class?" Explain what the Armour Class means and how it works; then ask one of the players to summarize what you said.
- **Section F:** "How many hit points do you have?" Explain what hit points are and how they work.
- **Section K:** "What spells do you have?" For spellcasters, explain what each spells do and how to cast them in combat – including the fact that it may not be a good idea to cast a spell if you're next to an enemy.

## *Beginner Box Bash: Ruins*

Run the Beginner Box Bash: Ruins scenario. Because skill checks are not part of this session, make the following adaptations to the scenario:

### **Generally**

Because the Class Features and Feats are not covered in this session, the characters don't have easy access to lots of healing or damage potential. This may require a lot of dice fudging to keep the characters alive. Be nice!

### **p. 1**

- Replace the first boxed text with the following:

*You are friends, who are new to the town of Magnimar. Some people know you are looking for work to help pay for your room at the inn. Last night, you received a letter from a woman named Sheila Heidmarch, asking you to meet her for breakfast. The letter also said that she might have a job for you, if you are able.*

*This morning, you met Sheila for breakfast. She is a tall woman with dark hair and a fancy-looking dress. After you finish eating, she looks over your group and says, "I need some help. There is an old, ruined city that has recently been discovered in a forest not far from here. There might be treasure there that I can use. This won't be gold or silver – but will likely be something made of stone and bearing a symbol of the old country. I would like you to work together, search through the ruins to see if you can find anything like this for me. Will you take this job?"*

- After reading this boxed text, have Sheila specifically ask each player if they can work together to complete this job. (The purpose here is to re-emphasize the importance of cooperation.)

### **p. 2**

- Replace the second boxed text with the following:

*After walking through the nearby forest for some time, the trees start to get further apart. Soon, you come across a wide-open clearing in the forest. In the clearing is a road made of smooth white stone, which leads to a ruined building. When it was new, this building must have been huge and impressive – now, only the floor and some of the walls are still standing. In the center of the floor is a stone platform with strange writing carved into it.*

- Ezren knows the runes on the platform are Thassilonian; the others do not.
- Replace the third boxed text with the following:

*When you step close to the platform, the strange writing flashed with bright yellow light. When the light goes away, there is a beautiful woman standing on the platform dressed in old-fashioned robes covered in the same kind of strange writing. Before you can act, the figure opens her mouth and starts to speak.*

*"Servant of the Runelord, welcome to this place. Clearly, you are here for the great*

*gifts that the Runelord can give you. All you need to do is speak your loyalty. I wait for you to do this, so that I may tell Him of your words.*

- If Kyra or Merisial speak to the envoy, they satisfy it. Ezren and Valeros are not able to.

**p. 3**

- Ezren knows the historical significance of the device; the others do not.
- Replace the fourth boxed text with the following:

*As you continue further into the ruins, the sun shines down into the clearing. It reflects off the white stones that make up the ruined city. Leading back into the forest is another white road, and on either side of that road is a row of white pillars, some of which have fallen over.*

- Merisiel is able to act on the surprise round; the others are not.

## Kids' Track 2: Skills and Class Features

### *General Notes*

Remember your audience. Keep explanations short and simple; use a vocabulary that's appropriate to the age of your players.

Necessary materials: Beginner Box Bash: Relics, Character sheets, Set of dice for each player.

### *Introductions*

*(5 Minutes)*

Introduce yourself and ask the players to introduce themselves as well. If you have table tents, get the players to place them in front of themselves so that the players can remember each others' names.

### *What did you learn last time?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Review with the players the different things that they learned about the characters last time they played. The best way to do this is by asking the players questions about each thing. (eg: "How many squares do you move? How do you tell who goes first in a fight?" etc.) In particular, the following elements:

- Movement: **Section C** of the character sheet
- Initiative and Attacks: **Section G** of the character sheet
- Armor Class: **Section H** of the character sheet
- Hit Points: **Section F** of the character sheet
- Spells: **Section K** of the character sheet

### *What's My Character Good At?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Get the players to look at the skills part of the character sheet (**Section D**). Tell them how the list of skills is read (if you can use the skill, then there will be a number in the *total* column at the end.) Emphasize that not everyone is good at everything, but everyone's good at something – this list of skills helps you to see what your character is good at. Reinforce this idea as much as possible -

Go through the list of tasks below, and ask the players to identify which skill they think might be appropriate for it.

- Walking along a balance beam (Acrobatics)

- Climbing over a wall (Climb)
- Identifying some ancient writing on a dungeon wall (Knowledge: History) (or Arcana or Religion, perhaps)
- Convincing someone to help you (Diplomacy)
- Finding a coin you dropped (Perception)
- Sneaking past a goblin (Stealth)
- Identifying a spell that someone else is casting (Spellcraft)
- Taking apart a trap so it can't hurt anyone (Disable Device)
- Trying to trick someone (Bluff)
- Identifying plants in the forest (Knowledge: Nature)
- Trying to tell if someone is tricking you (Sense Motive)

### *What Makes My Character Special?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Look at key parts of the character sheet. For this session, focus on the following portions of the Beginner Box Character Sheets. Ask the players to find the relevant part of the character sheet and answer the question.

- **Section F:** “What Class Features do you have?” Explain that class features are what make your character class special. Make certain to go over the class features that must be explicitly used in order to have an effect. (Channel Energy and Rebuke Death; Sneak Attack; Arcane Bond, Hand of the Apprentice)
- **Section I:** “What Feats do you have?” Explain that feats allow your character to be better than average at certain things. Make sure that the players know that most feats’ effects are built into the character sheet, and make certain to go over the feats that must be explicitly used to have an effect. (Power Attack)

### *Beginner Box Bash: Relics*

Run the Beginner Box: Relics scenario. Make the following adaptations to the scenario.

#### **Generally**

Refer to Aroden as “The Old God” for simplicity’s sake.

#### **p. 2**

- Replace the first boxed text with the following:

*You and your friends have been working together to do some odd jobs in the city of Magnimar. A few days ago, a letter arrived from the town of Sandpoint, where a man named Eberius thinks you might be able to help him. You travelled to Sandpoint to meet with him, and now you are having dinner with him in the back room of the Rusty Dragon Inn.*

*"I hear you folks can work together," he says. "That's good. I need a job done, and I think you can help me. A friend of mine has a piece of treasure hidden somewhere on his family's property – it's a silver rod with jewels all over it that is symbolic of the Old God. I need you to find it. This map will help you to find your way to the room where I think the treasure is hidden." He hands you a crumpled piece of paper.*

*"There may be one small problem," he continues. "A gang called the Bloody Knuckles is also looking for the treasure. They're trouble. You might run into them, but it's very important that we recover the treasure, and they don't. Be careful."*

- Replace the second boxed text with the following:

*You find a large stone room, lit by torches that glow with magic light. In the middle of the room, the floor is missing. Instead, there are a number of pillars whose tops are at the same level as the floor. In the center of each pillar is a magical letter. On the other side of the room is a small stone platform with two thrones. On the wall behind the left throne is a carved picture of a king signing a scroll. On the wall behind the right throne is a carving of a thief.*



## Kids' Track 3: Personalities

### *General Notes*

Remember your audience. Keep explanations short and simple; use a vocabulary that's appropriate to the age of your players.

Necessary materials: Beginner Box: Tomes, Character sheets, "Description Cards", small rewards (dice, wrapped candy, etc.)

### *Introductions*

*(5 Minutes)*

Introduce yourself and ask the players to introduce themselves as well. If you have table tents, get the players to place them in front of themselves so that the players can remember each others' names.

### *What did you learn last time?*

*(20-25 Minutes)*

Review with the players the different things that they learned about the characters last time they played. The best way to do this is by asking the players questions about each thing. (eg: "How many squares do you move? How do you tell who goes first in a fight?" etc.) In particular, the following elements:

- Movement: **Section C** of the character sheet
- Hit Points: **Section F** of the character sheet
- Class Features: **Section F** of the character sheet
- Initiative and Attacks: **Section G** of the character sheet
- Armor Class: **Section H** of the character sheet
- Feats: **Section I** of the character sheet
- Spells: **Section K** of the character sheet

### *What kind of Person is your Character?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Remind the players that Pathfinder is about make-believe; it's about pretending to be someone you are not. Sometimes, it's fun to pretend to be brave, or scared, or selfish, or nice, or anything else that might be different from you in real life.

Pass out a deck of Description Cards. Ask each player to choose three cards - two to describe themselves, and one that is the opposite of their real personality. Try to ensure multiple cards of the same description are in the deck to avoid

disagreements at the table. You can also have them choose one card at a time, taking turns, or rolling dice to see who chooses first to make it fair.

These cards will be used during the scenario to represent their character's personality. Ask each player to show their three cards and explain why they chose them. Below is a list of adjectives that could serve to make the deck of cards:

Selfish, Generous, Nice, Rude, Sassy, Helpful, Thoughtful, Good Listener, Supportive, Loud, Quiet, Energetic, Lazy, Cheerful, Sulky, Bossy, Excited.

### *Beginner Box Bash: Tomes*

Run the Beginner Box Bash: Tomes scenario. Make the following adaptations to the scenario.

#### **Generally**

To incentivize role-playing, remind the players to put their adjective cards on the table, next to their character sheet. Their goal is to play these cards as they go through the scenario.

To play a card, their character has to act in a way that matches the description on the card. They must declare that they are doing so. "My card says I'm Selfish, so I'm going to pick up that gold without telling anyone else about it." In situations where they have to roll to see if they can be successful, like in the above example, their success or failure doesn't matter - the intent is enough to play the card.

Reward the players every time they play a card before the end of the scenario.

The mimic in this scenario has the potential to be very dangerous to players who think directly - that is, to people who charge into combat and just hit at it over and over again. Don't be afraid to make some tactical suggestions or fudge dice rolls to improve the players' chances of survival.

#### **p. 2**

*You and your friends are in Sandpoint, relaxing after a hard day's work at the Rusty Dragon Inn. Suddenly, the door opens, and Sheila Heidmarch comes in. She's one of the people who has given you work in the past, and she heads straight for your table.*

*"Hello, friends," she says. "I'm sorry to bother you while you eat, but I have an important job that just can't wait.*

*"A friend of mine has agreed to give me a book that she has been keeping for quite some time. In return, I'm sending her some money to help her out of a problem she's got.*

*"I need you to take this money to Professor Linna at the Academy of Magic in the city of Korvosa, and let her know that I sent you. When you give her the money, she should give you a book called the Codex. Once you have it, bring it back here to Sandpoint. Be careful! Some of the other professors don't want Linna to give the book away - but it's*

*hers, and she can do whatever she wants with it. Just to be safe, don't talk about the book to any of the other teachers."*

*Sheila gives you a small pouch of gems and gold, a map to Korvosa. Then, she stands up, nods at you, and leaves the inn.*

- Replace the second boxed text with the following:

*This classroom used to be neat and tidy. The lights are magical torches, there are organized bookshelves around the room, and the floors are smooth and clean. However, there is a mess on the floor that makes it look like there was a fight here recently. Books have been pulled off some of the shelves, papers are scattered over the floor, and near the front of the classroom is a woman lying on the floor. The woman is old, dressed in a dark professor's robe. A black cat is on the woman's chest, licking her face and meowing, trying to wake her up.*

## Kids' Track 4: Role-Playing

### *General Notes*

Remember your audience. Keep explanations short and simple; use a vocabulary that's appropriate to the age of your players.

Necessary materials: Beginner Box: Terrors, Character sheets.

### *Introductions*

*(5 Minutes)*

Introduce yourself and ask the players to introduce themselves as well. If you have table tents, get the players to place them in front of themselves so that the players can remember each others' names.

### *What did you learn last time?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Review with the players the different things that they learned about the characters last time they played. In this session, the questions should be much briefer and more open-ended. "What is your character good at? What is s/he not so good at?" For reference, these are the sections of the character sheet that have been emphasized over the first three sessions:

- Movement: **Section C** of the character sheet
- Hit Points: **Section F** of the character sheet
- Class Features: **Section F** of the character sheet
- Initiative and Attacks: **Section G** of the character sheet
- Armor Class: **Section H** of the character sheet
- Feats: **Section I** of the character sheet
- Spells: **Section K** of the character sheet

### *Introduce Your Character*

*(10-15 Minutes)*

Describe a scene where the characters are meeting a new person for the first time. This should be someone they are interacting with, but not trying to get something from - maybe it's a city guard at the gates who needs to know who they are before letting them in; maybe it's a guildmaster who's meeting them for the first time, or something of that nature. Have the NPC introduce themselves in character - try to portray certain personality traits as best as you can.

Ask the players what kind of person they think the NPC is. Ask them why they think that - specifically asking them, for example "Did he say he was greedy? Then how do you know?"

Give each player a few minutes to think about what kind of person their character is. Are you loud or quiet? Are you brave or timid? Are you boastful or modest? Then have them think about the kinds of things they might say on meeting new people.

If the players have trouble thinking about what the characters might say to each other, you can have an extra deck of "Description Cards" (see Kids' Track 3 for details) to give the some ideas.

Then, one at a time, have the players introduce themselves, *in character* to each other. Once one is finished, ask the other players to describe the other character.

### *Beginner Box Bash: Terrors*

Run the Beginner Box Bash: Terrors scenario. Make the following adaptations to the scenario.

#### **p. 2**

- Replace the first boxed text with the following:

*While relaxing in Sandpoint's market, you notice Sheila Heidmarch having a conversation with a strange person holding a golden compass. When she finishes, she sees you and waves at you to come over and see her.*

*"I'm glad to see you, my friends. There is trouble in the small town of Galduria, not far from here. The town has a school for strange magics, and three days ago some thugs attacked one of the teachers – but the thugs have gone missing! Also, people say that weird things are happening in the graveyard. They say there are monsters and strange lights at night. I think all of this is connected, but I need to know for sure. I want you to go to Galduria and find out what's going on. Be careful."*

*She pulls a small bag of gold out of her purse and hands it to you. "This should be enough money to get you to Galduria and back. Find out what you can, and let me know as soon as you can."*

#### **p. 3**

- Replace the second boxed text with the following:

*This small stone building is mostly dark except for a small candle on top of a stone coffin in the middle of the room. There is a row of pillars on either side of the coffin, and six statues against the walls of the room. The candle's flame makes it look like the shadows in the room are moving on the walls. The room smells like wet mud.*

