

Transcript from Chat with Everyone

We are putting together a D&D kit.

I'm interested in seeing what others have done for D&D games at libraries and options to explore!

I love playing D&D with our teen club and am hoping to learn more as I am a new DM.

I've played D&D before for fun but am looking to set up a group for our library.

I run a D&D program for our teens here and am interested in learning how to improve it!

I do game and am always looking for more ideas on integrating games. I'm learning to DM and have been designing a librarian-adventurer focused module.

I'm an occasional player, and children, youth, and teen librarian. I'm interested in learning how we can help our active local player base of all ages.

I really needed a choice between Epic Level and Curious Quester.

Epicurian!

Just to my gamer cred it, I'm currently playing a Kobold fighter in an Eberron game. Almost had a total party kill last session if not for a kind DM.

It's hiiiiigh noon!

I run a virtual Dungeons and Dragons group via Discord.

I run 2 bi-weekly RPG programs for the system, and finally have a weekly home game as well. :D

I'm a very avid D&D/ttrpg player. :)

I am considering playing curse of Strahd with my teen club! They will finish the starter set adventure this Summer! I am looking forward to getting into a new adventure.

I run Curse of Strahd!

Wow... 50 years.

It's cool because the game can change based on the card readings, so even if they've played it before it may still be different than when they played.

Colorado State Library: The session is being recorded and will be available along with the slides on the CSL in Session website later today

Running games now, always looking for more tips/suggestions

I have DMed before but am wondering about how to facilitate events in a library setting

Looking for new DM tips to help us run a better club.

We stopped buying core rule books because they were stolen so often.

If we start a group, we would have reference copies.

Has anyone just paid for a subscription to D&D Beyond so the resources are digital?

You can get all the books for free on DNDBeyond!

I'm looking at trying to get a subscription to DnD Beyond for our library so that we can share our Digital Content and sourcebooks.

We have that problem as well. I'd be interested to know if people have used dndbeyond effectively with patron access.

How do you get free books?

The DNDBeyond subscription is great for helping out new players and people who want to just check out what is out there. Without it there's so many things locked behind a pay wall

Just search library free wizards of the coast

<https://geekdad.com/2020/04/wizards-of-the-coast-provides-free-content-to-schools-and-libraries/>

<https://dnd.wizards.com/remote/freematerial>

No, another 1 was rolled!

Nat 1 on the loose!

Dice jail!

Thanks so much for the materials Tylar!

As librarians, we should all have Candlekeep Mysteries (centered around a giant, arcane library) Lauren R: no Tomb of Horrors?

Sorry, this is the link I used mostly to get them. It got us 30 codes for magic the gathering arena and a code for all the materials.

<https://bleedingcool.com/games/wizards-of-the-coast-gives-free-kits-for-librarians-educators/>

It happens to the best of us!

Crying is a free action.

My fellow librarians have discussed running a game of all librarians set in a library. lol Elizabeth Hood: Anything set in Waterdeep has tons of material to build out from. We're playing Dragon Heist now and have been able to extrapolate a lot of one-shots from the side quests in the book, as well

How is dragon heist? What are your plans after it, since it only goes to level 5?

while not perfect and has lots of things to improve (the player sheets for example), dndbeyond's resources are not bad in regards to web accessibility. Running a campaign in it is tricky.

Yeah, we tend to use dndbeyond for leveling up but then play in-person.

This is my second time DMing it, and everyone has enjoyed it a lot! There's not as much combat as most campaigns, so it depends on what your crowd is looking for. But the seasonal villains are great for replay value.

D&D Beyond is good for the shared dice roller, too Kayla Emerson: you can type the roll into google as well, ex: 3d6 will roll 3 six sided dice

After Dragon Heist we'll probably go back to one-shots for a while, while we focus on scaling the program

We are doing a one-shot this July with a guest DM!

Colorado State Library: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2020/11/02/escape-isolated-library-dungeons-dragons/>

I highly recommend starting with one-shots to build up program loyalty! We didn't start doing multi-session campaigns until we knew the same crew was going to keep showing up.

Theatre of the Mind!

I use a document camera and a paper map Tylar Kerstetter: Yes, we are trying to switch over to theatre of the mind! I just am tired of using miniatures and maps.

I want to point out that Discord works great alongside the Avrae bot and it connects to dndbeyond. And if you want a super simple virtual tabletop for combat, etc., use Owlbear Rodeo.

I've been playing with blind players so that had really made us go into the theater of the mind approach Davin Dearth: that's how most people played when I started 30 years ago Kayla Emerson: <https://maximumfun.org/podcasts/adventure-zone/>

GREAT hilarious pod

We've been using R20 for our games, with Discord for the voice chat as it tends to connect better.

I use Fantasy Grounds for my personal game.

note... Roll20 is accessible in terms of free. That says nothing about the disability access Kayla Emerson: Vorpall Board is a newer way to play games locally and distanced, even at the same time <https://www.vorpallboard.com/>

did she roll a 1 again?

the die rolls eventually average out

I think she's cast blink.

I believe there is a die roll every 30 seconds?

Getting the 1s out of the way

Anyone ever play a warlock before? I am thinking of playing a genie warlock in a campaign! Also, any advice on teaching our teens how to balance their teams with respect to classes?

I love warlocks!

I'm playing a kobold warlock now!

I have played a warlock! :D A rogue named Zedd ;) Kim Cox: I'm wondering if anybody with minimal experience playing D&D has successfully become a DM? I've played a few times but always felt overwhelmed with the rolling, but I love storytelling.

My Warlock is more Cthulhu style.

I always tell my team to make sure they have someone to hit things, someone to heal things, and someone to unlock things. Once they've got those three, they can build out however they want!

I have played a Archefey Warlock as well as a few I created as a DM. They are fun to play and gives a cool story hook with your connection to your patron.

D&D is just glorified storytelling. If you can do that you can do D&D.

I have a very fun mad human warlock who may have an obscure elder god patron or maybe she's just really delusional and somehow gained sorcerer powers.

I didn't play much D&D before I started DMing - because none of my friends wanted to, haha. You can do it!

How do you feel about the limited spell slots (Like 4 total) does it feel limiting or does it go ok?

I have played DnD for probably around 8years. I made the leap to DM some games for my friends about 2 years ago, and I find it to be so much fun! You get to play so many characters within one game! :D The storytelling and the rolling with anything your players throw at you would be the main skills I would say to keep in mind

I think I played one campaign before I started DMing

The relatively young game Trash Heroes (also on twitch) has Q&A and the DM is really great about talking about the challenges of DMing. Warning, the game can be a little dark or raunchy humor at times: <https://www.youtube.com/user/weregeekcomic>

I played in middle school. . . took a 10 year break or so. . . then became a dm for my library. It has been a learning experience.

To the social media group

If the players are new they're not going to know what to expect anyway. Just fake it till you make it. :D

It does feel a bit limiting, honestly, but my DM has given me cool items that help balance that out. I also took Tome of the Mind (I think that's the name?) that gives me 3 more cantrips from other classes Kim Cox: What tools do you recommend for getting started with learning rules, helping others select spells, build characters, leveling, etc?

The official DM screen is really helpful if you're not comfortable with all the fiddly bits - they're all written on the back!

I try to think of it as being given the opportunity for more roleplay antics vs tons of spells Matt Roach:
Check out Matt Colville's YouTube page it's is an excellent resource for new DMs

If you want to learn, I recommend playing or listening/watching others play. It gets you familiar with the rules as they actually happen.

Parties don't have to be "balanced." As a DM, you can make healing potions cheaper for a group with no clerics, or lower DCs for checks such as lockpicking, investigation, persuasion for groups that don't have someone proficient in different areas. Let the participants play the types of characters that will be fun for them.

I started DMing at 11 and had no experience at all! It's a great learning experience and you will get the hang of rolling as you go, I think. Tools like DND Beyond can be really helpful in taking care of the technical side of things so you can focus on storytelling

DMG CH3

Try building a few characters yourself! It'll help you help your players do it later

Player handbook is best for basic rules and gameplay. The DM handbook is a lot about setting and everything

*Would you recommend pre-written adventures over homebrew adventures to start out?

I frequently throw up a big scary, but will downgrade it a bit so that it's more manageable.

Loving all of the support I see here! Thanks for jumping in and sharing thoughts and ideas!

How to make your own DM screen program idea?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNEIkhIB_y4

I suggest starting with a pre-built story before going with homebrew!

In the PHB (Player's Handbook) you should read each class there since it gives an overview and each of the magic classes have their own rules for spells and casting

We have to fit games into small timeslots, and it is HARD to figure out what kinds of things make up a good game

Yeah, premade. Let someone else do the heavy lifting for you starting out.

Sometimes scaling a one-shot to be the right length for a program is halfway homebrew anyway!

Anyone have a favorite premade adventure for new DMs?

Sights, sounds and smells

For home games try Cantrip Candles to add smells to your games! It really sets the mood.

Lost mine of phandelver is a good place to start in 5e Lauren R: adventure-wise

My players started with Lost Mine of Phandelver! It's a great intro

Dragon Heist was good for a full set of first-time players and a DM who was coming out of a 5-year break!

We actually ran that one first! We are looking for a new adventure come August

Side-topic anecdote: We're running a Choose Your Own Adventure book club for grades 3-6 this summer. I marketed it as a gateway drug for D&D. Every time the group gets to a choice, they roll dice to make a decision. We have a waiting list.

Just be ready to do a little massaging to adapt it for library-length sessions

I also like the updated Sunless Citadel in Tales From the Yawning Portal Jessie Caldwell: We did Sunless citadel, as well

I want to try that one!

Had a game once where a door with a DC of 8 took 15 rolls for us to open because we had such a run of rolls

What books did you get for this? I am interested in more programs like yours.

I created this Discord server for people who are here right now. If you'd like to join, feel free: <https://discord.gg/eh7MqfRgu2>

That would be awesome!

If anyone knows of a pre-written one-shot that can actually be completed in two hours, I would LOVE a recommendation. I keep having to scale upside quests or write from scratch.

I'm a real, total novice, and all of this seems really overwhelming.

Same, that would be great!

Eh, I'm cool with it. But novices are the best. The more the merrier. I think most librarians like explaining things to people.

In thinking about a library group for this, it would be nice for doing testing of one's DM skills or any adventures we write. we could provide feedback relevant to library work and be relatively safe space

It looks overwhelming, but it really isn't! There are a lot of really great pre-built stories you can try running that give you all the game beats and details to make a fun game

Yes, and don't be afraid to start simple. Get a starter set and go through it alongside the players.

There's CYOA website that has a 9 book cycle. <https://www.cyoa.com/pages/bookclub>

What size tables do folks typically manage? 5-6 players? More? Less?

It makes me feel better to remember that the game is only as complicated as you make it! If you only want to play with the basic rules and character types, it can be pretty straightforward.

Roll20 has some free modules already in the software the comes with maps, tokens, character sheets, etc.

It can be as simple or as complicated as you'd like, really! Honestly, at it's core, just look at it as a group of people sitting together and collaboratively writing a story. :)

I never go over 5 players. 3-4 is ideal, IMO

Also drivethrurpg.com

We paid for our copies (ordering directly from CYOA) and chose 4 RA Montgomery titles because my eighties kid husband says his(?) were the best books.

Honestly, I saw CYOA and thought it meant something different. . . glad for this!

<https://laconm.libcal.com/calendar/events?t=g&q=choose%20your%20own%20adventure&cid=14947&cal=14947&inc=0>

Yes, currently due to the pandemic, you can have 5 games of 12 players. From what I understand, this won't last forever, though!

Colorado State Library: Keep the resources coming! :)

I played with 10 players when I ran my first group. It was tough, but they were just so appreciative that they were able to play they were all super patient.

We are currently playing with 5-7 players. . . It is a little rough, but it is working.

4-5 players is really the sweet spot.

I really just didn't want to turn anyone away, as I was the only able/willing DM and it was my program. lol. 4-5 is the best. It gives everyone equal time to shine.

But we want to be available to more people and get higher stats, but that doesn't really work with these games.

As an example of improv, in our last game, we managed to skip two encounters because one player came up with a brilliant distraction that enabled us to just head directly to the main encounter (where we almost all died but the DM was nice)

In Matthew Mercer's first book - the Tal'Dorei Campaign guide - there are tips for making combat quicker

Better to offer more smaller games, than 1 bigger game

That's what I'm trying to balance

Especially with younger players, they get distracted quickly when they aren't getting to actively participate

The ideal scenario would be to build players into dms and all share the space, so when it's d&d time there is the librarian dm and then the patron dms all running at the same time.

I just saw a program posting from a librarian in my system with 25 spots available. *head exploded*

If you need help balancing encounters and don't want to pay for DNDBeyond, this is a great resource:
<https://kobold.club/fight/#/encounter-builder>

Not always the best, because the volunteers aren't always reliable. It's important to be flexible.

Once you've been playing with a group of teens for long enough, a player might emerge who's interested in/capable of DMing a spinoff group!

I am thinking about running a genie warlock with a psuedodragon familiar. . . What is everyone's favorite class?

It would be great to redo this webinar with full audio :-D

I love rogues, I'll play a rogue at every opportunity

Ohh, favorite class, Monk. I loved them since 3.5 when they were really underpowered. lol

The Monsters Know What They're Doing: Combat Tactics for Dungeon Masters by Keith Ammann

How do you run rogues and sneak attacks? I just have no idea how to run them on the DM side?

I've only played a Druid and a Bard so far, but I'm enjoying the Druid

Tylar, do you want to have a rogue NPC?

Or just the rule in general?

I need to catch up on d20 daves to bad

The rules in general. . . So if a player chooses it.

basically, if the player can argue that a baddie is distracted, either by a sudden attack, hiding scenery, or another party member w/in 5 feet also attacking it, the rouge can claim sneak attack and get the extra die damage

Ah, simple in 5e. They can do sneak attack one time on their turn, and only if they have advantage on the attack or they're attacking someone in melee combat with someone else.

Roll for Shoes is a very easy game to run for any setting. You just need d6's and you make your skills as you go. It's one of those one-sheet game systems Jessie Caldwell: I thought you seemed familiar! I remember that training in May.

My players don't really like to do rogues, but my approach is that if they want to use a special ability of any kind, they have to learn how it works and remember to use it. also works for bardic inspiration, ki points for monks, etc Jessie Caldwell: Guidance! High fives for everyone!

TTRPG Safety Toolkit <https://i.4pcdn.org/tg/1583202183294.pdf>

I am still learning. We have a monk in our campaign and it took me a bit to learn their gameplay.

Any comments on or experience dealing with the sometimes very sexist aspects of rpg culture?

There were not rules against table talk

It definitely took me multiple sessions before I figured out monks

Keith Ammann has a couple of follow up books as well:

Live to Tell the Tale (for players) and MOAR Monsters Know What They're Doing

I do filter our games a bit. No tavern wenches, etc.

Would love to stay in touch with this lovely group of boundless resources!

Once again Emily's contact info - libem@littletongov.com thelibrarybard@gmail.com

How do you keep teens on task when it is not their turn? We get dice thrown everywhere.

Encourage them to consider what's happening and plan what they want to do on their turn, or what they want to find out as their character Awnali Mills: The first time I ever saw people play (in middle school), it was in the library, and only boys were allowed to play. Behind closed doors, so the girls couldn't even see.

I try to bring in some humor/overacting when it seems like I'm losing some players - just doing whatever I can to make it interesting to listen, as well as play Effie Casciotta: I recommend having a chat with your players before starting a game. My group had a rule called a 'pause' where if anything made them feel uncomfortable they could call pause and we would address the problem immediately Colorado State Library: I like that pause idea Elizabeth Hood: @awnali that is WILD Lindsay Baechler: I also think it's important to run a "Session 0" to lay out the ground rules, and address any potential triggers from your kids/patrons so that you won't bring those aspects into the game.

Session Zero is CRUCIAL yes!!

Yes, setting out expectations from the get-go is important.

I second session zero!

And make it clear that it's still the library, and you're still the library employee.

#CritterHug for Emily :)

Feel free to get on the discord! The link lasts forever! And I'll get to that email list too.

<https://discord.gg/eh7MqfRgu2>

ALA Games and Gaming Round table - <https://www.ala.org/rt/gamert>

Colorado State Library: Thanks all!