# Build-A-World Workshop

By Jenai May

world name/type HIGH HARD **FANTASY** SCI-FI ALT-HISTORY DYSTOPIAN HISTORICAL FUTURISTIC PUNK low soft THE GEOGRAPHY GENERAL FEATURES - Mountains, Seas, Lakes, Rivers, Deserts, Islands, Craters, Canyons... FLORA - Trees, Shrubs, Fungi/Moss, FAUNA - Rodents, Herding Animals, Birds, Seaweed, Fruit, Medicinal, Enchanted... Fish, Reptiles, Magical or Mythical...

CLIMATE AND CLIMATE ZONES – Tropics, Ard	ctic, Temperate, Significant Weather Patterns
IN THE SKIES – Suns, Moons, Cloud Types, Sk	ry Color, Nearby Planets, Comets, Scent of Air
MINERALS – Volcanic, crystals, building	RESOURCES – Corn crops, fuel types,
materials, dyes, medicinal, sands	lumber, dyes, fabric, fibers, paper content

SEASONS & THE YEAR – What are the seasons?	Where do they occur and for how long? How
long is a year? A day? Major seasonal weather	events? How is the year tracked and divided?
LISTING LA	ANDMARKS
SEAS, LANDMASSES, MAJOR BOUNDARIES	CITIES, SETTLEMENTS, KINGDOMS

SHRINES, TEMPLES, MONUMENTS	NATURAL WONDERS, TOURIST SITES
MUNDAN	E PEOPLE STUFF
HISTORIC ERAS – Examples: Ancient, Mediev	val, Renaissance, Enlightenment, Tech Revolution

<b>EVENTS THAT LINGER</b> – Pompeii's eruption,	<b>WARS GONE BY</b> – Examples: Revolutions,
Witch Trials, The Black Death	Civil Wars, World Wars, Emu Wars
<b>SOCIAL/HISTORIC INFLUENCES ON STORY</b> – Co	rruption, Religious Rifts, Discrimination

<b>HIDDEN HISTORY</b> – Prehistory, Unrecorded, Do	estroyed History, Coverups
CONSPIRACIES – The Black Death came	CORRUPTION – The King poisoned his
from space, Pyramids were built by	cousin, the headmaster was bribed for
demonic rats	admission

	dies history? Where are records kept? Is there a
system? What is the oldest record? Who wrote	e it? How old is it? How was it recorded? Can
modern people read it?	
POLITICS FO	OR THE WIN
Choosing a Leader	<b>Divisions of Power</b> – Lords, Serfs, Banks,
Conquer, Royal Lines, Let's Vote, Tyranny	CEOs? Religious and Military elite?
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Government Nuts & Bolts	Political Tensions
Houses? Factions? Schedules? Terms?	Agendas, Checks & Balances, Corrupt?
POLITICAL PURPOSE AND STORY INFLUENCE -	- What does this political system stand for?
What is its influence on the world around it?	

## **GODS AND GHOSTS**

Religions – How many? Which is primary?	<b>The Afterlife –</b> Predominant afterlife belief?
Are there conflicts between them?	Punishment & Reward? Do ghosts roam?
<b>Deities</b> – Is there one God? Multiple? List	<b>Superstitions</b> – What influences luck? Black
those most relevant to the story (flip over	cats? 4-Leaf Clover? Are there days to be
to list more)	wary of?

<b>RELIGIOUS BELIEFS</b> – What is the central message of this religion? How old is this religion?
Written religious texts? What do these texts teach? Is the content restricted to a select few or
widely available to everyone?

church/temple training, a religious school, oral bardic tradition, or secret societies? Who are the leaders? How are they selected? If there is a hierarchy, how is it designed? How do
the leaders? How are they selected? If there is a hierarchy, how is it designed? How do
common people interact with the church/leaders?

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE & STORY IMPACT – What is this religion's influence on society and
politics? How could this religion, its leaders, and practices impact the story and its characters?

## A MAGICAL REALM

Magic Types – Elemental, Blood, Mysteries,	Becoming Magical – Born with magic?
Time, Science (alchemy), Psychic, Space,	Inherited? Non-human? Is it taught and
Light, Dark	learned? Do potions grant it? How? Why?
Ethics – Rules governing how to use magic?	Reputation of Magic – Feared or revered?
<b>Ethics</b> – Rules governing how to use magic? Regulations? Repercussions? Balances?	Reputation of Magic – Feared or revered?  Accepted or shunned? Common or rare?

INNER WORKINGS – What is magic's source? What are its nuts & bolts? Is there a spiritual
component? Magical shapeshifting or invisibility? How does that work? What is magic's
relationship with time?

MAGIC EXAMPLE #1 – Describe an instance of magic that is crucial to character or story
development. Describe the magic and the person or creature that worked it. Why was magic
used? How did they do it? What force(s) drive the magic? How does this magic significantly
affect the character(s) and/or plot?

MAGIC EXAMPLE #2 – Describe an instance of magic-gone-wrong in this world. Why was the	
magic used, and by whom? How did they do it? Why did it go wrong, and how? How does a	
falling out with magic affect characters and/or the environment and setting? Can the magic be	
resolved? How and by whom?	

## **LISTING MAGICAL THISES & THATS**

Sticks and Stones – Natural magical items,	Star Helpers – List celestial influences: stars,
such as rocks, crystals, seeds, woods	constellations, moon phases, comets
<b>Tools</b> – List tools the magical system uses,	Magical in Name – What are wielders of
such as a wand, staff, cauldron, goblets,	magic called and how do they differ?
tarot cards, candles	Witches, wizards, mages, sorcerers

Magical Sites & Temples – List magical	Symbols & Such – List and/or draw sacred
locations such as stone circles, temples,	and magical symbols. Use the back of this
groves, caves	page for extra scribbling space.

From the Bestiary – Dragon, fairy,	The Stuff of Legends – Who was
gryphon Where do they live? Are they	immortalized for their feats of magic?
hunted? Do they play well with others?	When and where? Stories and songs about
Diets? Stories and myths?	them? Are they inspirations or warnings?

## **SCIENCY STUFF**

Remarkable Feats – Most impactful tech in	Origins of Discovery – What influenced
this world? In the story? How did it develop	tech? Alien contact? Wars? Medical
and why?	necessity? Was it sheer luck?
Ye Olde Tech – Obsolete past tech. Is it	Societal Effects – Does the science/tech
missed? What replaced it? Why?	unite people or divide them? How and why?

NOT OF THIS WORLD – What about this tech or science is fictional? How does it differ from
ours? How is it similar? How might it blow our minds? If we received this tech here and now,
what would happen?

## LAB LISTS

Staying in Touch – How people	From Here to There – The latest
communicate. Audio, written, video,	transportation methods. Flying cars,
holograms, social media	spaceships, hoverboards
Home Doodads – Cool gadgets for every	Medical Marvels – How has medicine
room What is their purpose? Who owns	changed? Transporter treatments,
them? Cons?	scanners, bio implants

Gadgets Galore – In schools, offices, at	Entertainment Us! – Movies, books, music,
work Who owns them? Cultural effects?	gaming, sports, events, arenas
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Running it All – What are the energy and fuel sources? Resource scarcity? How are resources	
acquired? Are there batteries? How long do they run? Environmental impact? Fuel efficiency?	

Behind the Curtain – Who are the scientists, inventors, and designers? Historic or artistic	
influence on design or function? Manufacturing process? Employment? Are robots doing it all	