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Fantasy L.A.N.D.

Advancement text version of video

Hey storyteller, it's Alexis from purpleshelfclub.com and welcome to Fantasy L.A.N.D. This is part 2, advancement.

This includes your civilizations, government, economy. We'll take this section by section.

But first, I want to discuss a worry you could be feeling right now. In the advancement portion, we'll be exploring so many aspects of your world.

This can get overwhelming fast. It can also be a fascinating area that leads you down rabbit hole after rabbit hole.

You don't want that because then you'll never finish. Instead, you want to find the balance between not enough and too much detail.

Picture this: you have a map that is muddled, dirty, and even missing pieces. You can't locate where you are or where you want to go. But, as you clean the dirt and find the missing pieces, the map becomes more detailed and legible.

You get to a point where you know where you are, and you can tell how to get to where you're going. You can clean it more and get more detail, but if you go too far, things get super complex and you lose your sense of direction again.

This is what your world building experience is like. You, the master of the pen, will ultimately decide how much detail to add.

Start by deciding what needs detail and what doesn't. For instance, a world with multiple locations and species will need

more detail than a world that takes place in one singular location with one or two species.

I want you to start with the basics of your world, then decide what needs more detail, and what can stay at the basic level. Throughout this stage, flesh out what is plot and character necessary and keep everything else at a basic knowledge level.

First up, civilizations. We're going to figure out how many civilizations you have and what they're called, who they are, where they live, and what they're like.

Ready? Let's begin.

Have you ever played video games like Civilization Revolution, Age of Empires, or Anno?

If not, here's the essence of them. You start as a civilization that you choose, like the Mongols, Egyptians, or Russians. In the game, you advance through the ages and win by gaining cultural, economic, technological, or warfare advantages.

You make decisions strategically to succeed and win the game.

You can treat this section of worldbuilding in much the same way.

In the Trello board, under advancement, you'll see links to the historical eras of our world and a list of several civilizations with resources chock full of information in them.

Just like in those video games I mentioned earlier, start by deciding what civilization(s) will be in your world and in what time period.

You may already know the answer to this, but if not, look through them and decide based on what interests you the most. What seems to fit well with what you know about your story already?

This can be civilizations you want your world to be inspired by, or you can choose an era in our world you feel inspired by, and then a civilization. Or you can mix and match various civilizations to make your own.

For me, my story is in a fictional world, but I'm using the early middle ages of the Polish civilization as my inspiration.

First, I listed out what species I already knew I wanted in my story. These can be real, imagined, or both. Mine were two groups of humans and earth spirits based on the earth, water, life, and air.

Second, I decided which of these species I wanted to build out as a civilization. I chose the 2 groups of humans, and the gnome nature spirits to represent the earth.

Thirdly, I filled out only what I want my readers to know.

Whether your book has one civilization or multiple, you don't need to fill out all the pages with an equal amount of detail. Think of this as choosing your own adventure. What information is vital for your story? That's all you need to figure out. If it helps, think of your civilization as a character. If your civilization was one person, what would they be like?

Let's walk through this process with my story as an example.

Page 1

We'll start with humans. As I said I used early medieval Poland as rough inspiration, so I looked at early Polish culture resources and skimmed through those for anything that stuck out for my story.

For language, I only speak English, so I'm sticking with that rather than say giving them a made-up language. For the life span, I went with 55 years because we didn't live as long back then and I kind of like adding that aspect to my book. Now, for my groups, I wanted to get creative with the names. On my map, the top half has more trees than the bottom half. So, I started looking into words that related to the woods and ended up coming up with the name Sylvans. That's one human civilization. For the other, I wanted the name to be similar because these people used to all be one nation, but now they're two. I decided the other civilization would be surrounded by grasslands. Another term for this is grassveld, so I pulled the Syl from sylvan and combined it with veld from grassveld. Simple as that. You can follow the same process, use your inspiration to come up with names, or even use a generator.

I kept the Age distribution rather vague since I know I might change that later. It may not apply to your story, but I took this as an opportunity to show the generational differences.

The bottom half of this page is where you can get real creative. For where they live and the name of cities, towns, etc. I used a fantasy town generator and looked at names of cities from 12th century Poland. I mixed both together to come up with my names. I then placed these on the map. How many you come up with is up to you, how big your story world is, and where you foresee your characters going. For me, I came up with quite a few names because the idea is that the Sylveld nation of Leidland is kind of the bad side and they are expanding, so they needed more territory than the Sylvan Nation of Dosmorin. As you can see, I did make a note about how people travel in this world and the important landmarks and locations. But I'll be honest and say I didn't put that there until after I'd filled out more of my

advancement profile and learned more about them. Certainly, keep these in mind and remember you can always make changes.

For the gnomes, as you can see, I have some differences, particularly starting at the age and onward. Again, I used resources to help me. Gnomes will live significantly longer than humans, and I came up with 3 differentiated groups organized by where they live. I came up with some village names too just in case I decide to use that in my story. I'm not entirely sure now, but I wanted it there just in case. For the important landmarks, I described what they're living situation looks like based on the type of gnome they are. For example, the underground gnomes live in burrows. I also decided that gnomes have pet companions, which gives them a fast way to travel.

Lastly, to give myself a vague visual of each civilization, I added pictures, which was just a google image search and copying and pasting the image into this document.

Page 2

Next is religion, gender roles, and family roles. Because nature spirits are a key factor in my novel, I went looking at what religions if any relied heavily on nature. And there was! It's called Animism which many tribes believe in, I guess. All I did was put the definition in and put some key pieces of information about in in my religion box. Then I went and looked for gods that had something to do with nature or life or something similar. I ended up finding out about this goddess named Devana-Morana and put a few key facts about her, altering slightly to fit my story.

For gender roles I searched "gender roles + the time period + the civilization which for me was "gender roles in early medieval Poland". I stuck close to what gender roles were like back then, making slight changes between the sylvans and sylvelds to fit the

tone of each civilization. For family member roles I relied heavily on the research I'd already done for gender roles.

For the gnomes, I kept the religion the same and used one article in particular that I found on gnomes to define my gender and family roles. I really only made one or two differences because I just really liked how the article laid things out.

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Alright, the last page that focuses strictly on the civilization. As you can see, I didn't fill out every section. That was on purpose. I don't have an interest exploring politics and it doesn't matter for my story, so I left it blank. Social etiquette, however, will be important and again I relied heavily on the gender roles and etiquette rules from the medieval era.

For the behind the civilization section, I used the lore I'd come up with, the religion I decided on, and what I already know about my story to fill these pieces out.

As you can see with the gnomes, there is less detail, and that's because the humans in the book don't know really a whole lot about the gnomes, so I don't want it to be chock full of detail. I only put in what I might use in my story. Again, I used resources I found to give me ideas. Except for the political groups/affiliations where I decided that while all gnomes work together and sort of act as one, there will be differences between them. Perhaps even in how they structure their community.

Okay, in this section, we've figured out how many civilizations you have and what they're called, who they are, where they live, and what they're like.

In the next section, we're going to explore the government your civilization lives within. But before you move on, I strongly encourage you to fill out the civilization pages of your

advancement profile worksheets and put any important resources relevant from the directory to your storyteller binder or wherever you want to keep your world building materials. If you have any questions or requests, let me know in the chat.

When you're ready, I'll see you in section 2, your world's government.