

Tale Weavers: Revise Documentation

Game Rules

Objective

The main objective is to come up with the most convincing or funniest story section, as determined by the Storymaster of the round. The player with the most successful plot cards (tokens) at the end of the game wins.

Materials Needed

- **Character Deck:** Cards providing characters for the story.
- **Setting Deck:** Cards providing locations or environments (Note: These were later suggested for removal).
- **Plot Deck:** Cards used to move the story forward; these are drawn by players.
- **Tokens/Points:** Used by the Storymaster to reward successful plot additions.
- **Optional:** A **sand timer** to enforce a time limit for adding plot cards.

Game Setup

1. **Gather Players:** 3 to 8 players.
2. **Deck Preparation:** Shuffle the **Character, Setting, and Plot decks separately**.
3. **Starting Hands:** Each player draws **five cards** from the **Plot deck**.
4. **Storymaster Role:** Designate one player to be the **Storymaster** for the first round. This role passes clockwise each round.
5. **Score Tracking:** Ensure the Storymaster has a way to keep track of points/tokens.
6. **Place Decks:** Place the Character and Setting decks face-down on the table.

Actions Players Take (The Storymaster's Turn)

1. **Draw Story Elements:** The Storymaster draws:
 - **One card** from the **Character deck**.
 - **One card** from the **Setting deck**.
 - The Storymaster reads these cards aloud. These form the starting prompt for the round's story section.
2. **Story Submission:** All other players look at their 5 Plot cards. Each player selects **one Plot card** from their hand that they think best advances or twists the story based on the current Character and Setting.
3. **The Story:**
 - The Storymaster sets the timer (optional, but encouraged).

- Players read their chosen Plot card aloud, weaving it into the narrative established by the Character/Setting cards.
 - The story should be told in a single, cumulative narrative.
4. **Judging:** The Storymaster, after hearing all submissions, selects the "best" Plot card that either makes the most sense or is the funniest.
 5. **Reward:** The player who submitted the winning card receives a token/point.
 6. **End of Round:** All used Plot cards (including the winner's) are discarded.
 7. **Replenish:** Players draw a new Plot card to bring their hand back up to five cards.
 8. **Pass Role:** The role of Storymaster passes clockwise to the next player.

Endgame

The game continues until a predetermined score is reached or a set number of rounds is played. The player with the most successful plot cards/tokens wins the game.

Details of the Pieces

- **Character Cards:** Define the actors in the story (e.g., "The Grumpy Troll").
- **Setting Cards:** Define the location (e.g., "A Crumbling Lighthouse").
- **Plot Cards:** Provide the actions, objects, or twists (e.g., "A Secret Map," "Tackled a Squirrel").
- **Tokens/Points:** Small physical counters (coins, chips, etc.) used to track successful submissions.
- **Sand Timer (Optional):** Used to impose a time limit on the submission phase, increasing tension and pace.

Date of Playtest: 10/02/2025

Playtime Observed: 6 minutes 25 seconds (first round)

Learning Time: 2 minutes 41 seconds (to learn rules)

1. Player Questions

- Does the story flow from player to player, or is it told individually?
- How do players weave their cards into the story, build on the last or reset each round?
- What happens when the timer runs out and a card hasn't been played?
- Should a specific book be read to determine who goes first?
- How does the game end — tokens, alternate endings, or another system?

2. Learning Curve

- It took 2:41 minutes for players to learn the rules.
- Players commented that the setup was easy.
- The example card in the rules was helpful.

3. Player Interactions

- Players laughed, smiled, and nodded throughout gameplay.
- Conversations about cards applied to characters and settings.
- Debated whether the story should be told cumulatively or individually.

4. Points of Confusion

- Story flow: cumulative vs. sectioned/individual.
- How exactly to “weave” cards into a story.
- The role of settings in character and plot cards.
- Game endings: whether to use tokens or multiple end conditions.

5. Sources of Excitement

- Randomness of card draws (“random is better”).
- The tension created by a sand timer mechanic.
- Room for interpretation and creativity in storytelling.
- Loved leading humor in the narrative.

6. Player Enjoyment

- Making connections between cards and the story.
- Building individual story sections rather than a single collaborative plot.
- Experiencing humorous or unexpected story twists.

7. Sources of Frustration

- The collaborative story felt confusing and less engaging.
- Settings on cards felt restrictive.
- Multiple game-ending options created uncertainty.

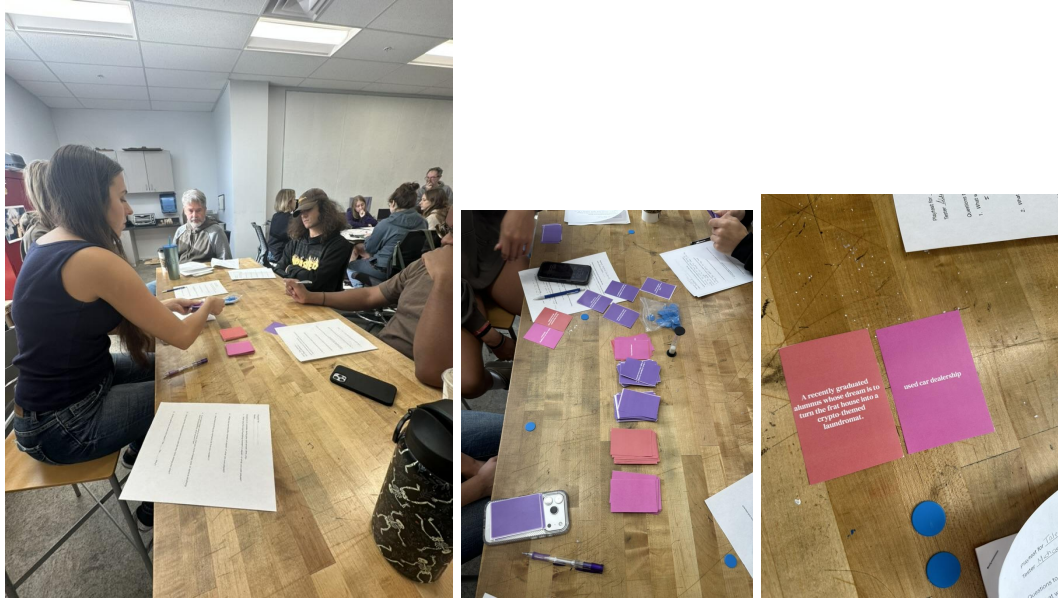
8. Design Adjustments

- Clarify Flow
 - Emphasize that each player tells an individual story, not a cumulative one.
- Simplify End Conditions
 - Establish one clear win condition (ex., first to 5 tokens?).
- Refine Card Design
 - Remove settings from character and plot cards; make prompts more open-ended and funny.
- Timer Rules
 - Require players to place a card before the sand timer ends; if not, they must take the top card.
- Rules Support
 - Keep and expand example cards in the rules to streamline learning.

Any Process Photos –

Element	Original Concept/Rules	Playtest Feedback/Design Adjustments
Story Flow	Cumulative narrative: All players add to a single, continuous story.	Frustration Point: Collaborative story felt confusing and less engaging.
Story Flow Fix	Clarify the flow: Emphasize that each player tells an individual story section based on the prompt, not necessarily a cumulative one.	
Card Design	Cards included Settings (Character, Setting, and Plot decks).	Frustration Point: Settings on cards felt too restrictive and less funny.

Card Design Fix	Remove settings from character and plot cards. Make prompts more open-ended and funny.	
Win Condition	"The player with the most successful plot cards wins."	Confusion Point: Multiple game-ending options created uncertainty.
Win Condition Fix	Simplify End Conditions: Establish one clear win condition (e.g., first player to 5 tokens).	
Timer Mechanic	Timer was optional/used for story telling.	Lesson Learned: Requires players to place a card before the sand timer ends ; if they fail, they must take the top card of the Plot deck as a penalty.
Rules Support	Basic rules and setup.	Design Adjustment: Keep and expand example cards in the rules to streamline learning for new players.



An Overview of Changes Made

The revisions focused on improving player experience by addressing confusion and frustration points identified in playtesting:

1. **Shifted Story Focus:** The emphasis moved from a difficult, complex cumulative story to a series of individual, competitive story contributions driven by the prompt.
2. **Penalty Added for Time:** The sand timer was leveraged to enforce a pace. A penalty (taking the top card of the deck) was added for players who do not submit their Plot card before the timer runs out.
3. **Rulebook Enhancement:** A commitment was made to include expanded example cards in the rulebook to clarify how cards should be woven into the narrative.

An Overview of Changes to Make

Based on the feedback, the following core changes are recommended for the next prototype iteration:

1. **Eliminate Setting Cards:** Officially remove the Setting deck from the game materials and rules, as settings were found to be too restrictive and hampered creativity.
2. **Define a Single Win Condition:** Formally adopt one clear, measurable end condition (e.g., "First player to collect 5 successful plot tokens wins").

3. **Clarify "Weaving":** Provide explicit examples and guidance on "how exactly to weave" cards into the story, ensuring the rules explain the difference between a simple statement and an integrated narrative element.

Your Thoughts and Lessons Learned from Play Testing

The playtest showed that Tale Weavers has a solid foundation based on competitive creativity and humor, but its instructions were overly complicated.

- *Sources of Excitement:* Players loved the randomness of the card draws, which led to unexpected and humorous story twists. The tension created by the sand timer was also cited as a positive factor.
- *Major Lesson Learned (The Story Flow):* The biggest source of frustration was the lack of clarity on the story structure. Players were confused whether they should build a single collaborative plot or individual story sections. The consensus was that building individual, funny story sections was more engaging than trying to force a cohesive, cumulative plot.
- *Card Design Insight:* The Settings on the cards felt restrictive. This suggests the prompts should be as broad as possible to maximize player interpretation and comedic opportunity.
- *Overall Goal:* The game needs to prioritize its strength, competitive humor, and interpretation by simplifying the rules and removing the constraint of a serious, continuous narrative.