



Writer's Guidelines

By the LSJ Team

(Updated February 2008)

www.theshiningjewel.com

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons, Third Edition Core Books, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

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So, you want to write a *Legends of the Shining Jewel* module? It's not as difficult as it sounds. Writing any tournament is a labor of love. Writing for the LSJ campaign presents special challenges because of the tight focus on plot and continuity. But don't panic! Remember, we're here to help you!

THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

Submissions are made in six steps: the **Pitch**, the **Specifics**, the **Rough Draft**, the **Playtest**, the **Revision**, and the **Publication**. Some steps may repeat several times before completion (sort of a Lather-Rinse-Repeat deal). Work on modules involves using Microsoft Word and Excel, and e-mail. If you do not have personal access to these programs, please arrange to work with someone who does.

Every email of your module (or any other submission) should be CC'd to lsj-archives@theshiningjewel.com. This allows a 'safe copy' to be maintained in lsj-archives, in case computer failure or any other disaster causes a loss of your document. As long as 'lsj-archives' has the most recent copy of your work, it will be possible to email your document back to you. It's a small step to take, which provides a LOT of protection. We've all lost at least one document to computer failure. This 'CC' protects against such loss and frustration.

1) The Pitch: This is a brief summary of the adventure you wish to write. The **Pitch** goes to the Plots Coordinator (e-mail lsj-plots@theshiningjewel.com and cc lsj-archives@theshiningjewel.com). Your **Pitch** should be a Word document about 2 pages long and should include the following information:

- ✧ The name of the module, which should also be the document name, and the "blurb" (the information listed as a teaser after the title, which is listed in convention announcements and is read by the judge before the event begins). **Please** avoid titles and blurbs that provide spoiler information about the plot, i.e. anything that needs to be learned in the module itself. The more subtle and vague the title is, the better. The blurb should entice the players, guiding them to choosing the correct character for the event, without giving away what will come next. Also, if certain PC types would be desirable, or forbidden from playing this module, that information should also go in the blurb.
- ✧ Author's name, phone number and e-mail contact information (for multiple authors include all names, phone numbers and e-mails, with one designated as the official Point-of-Contact). Also include a snail mail address for the official Point-of-Contact, so paperwork can be exchanged, when necessary.
- ✧ The number of rounds planned for the adventure (1-round, 2-rounds, or 3-rounds). Multi-round proposals may run an additional page for each additional round. Please use discretion on the length, since the longer the **Pitch** is, the more difficult it will be to understand.
- ✧ If this module will be part of a series, also include the suggested series name, the number of modules it will take to complete the series, and an outline of the full scope

of the series (a broad explanation is fine, with key points explained). Clearly note the title of each module, in order, as you describe the planned plots.

- ✧ What character levels the module will be intended for. Currently, only major meta-plot modules should be for all character levels. Some plots work well for low-level characters, but may seem a strain for high level characters, or vice versa. One would not expect a shop keeper to hire 10th level adventurers to help with a shop lifting problem, or the Lord and Lady of Amthydor to request assistance from 1st or 2nd level adventurers. Currently, most modules should try to address at least 6 to 8 levels (i.e. 3-8 or 5-12), and avoid all-level modules unless the plot is approved as a major turning point in the campaign.
- ✧ The plot in brief, including: background, starting point(s), a point-by-point outline of the key events that occur, and possible resolutions. LSJ modules have a history of presenting multiple endings representing varied degrees of success, with the one that occurs most during a first-run (premiere) event being the campaign result. Please allow for multiple endings, including a possible failure.
- ✧ A list of any LSJ Meta-organizations that may be involved in the adventure, with an eye towards rewards for members that could include advancement potential. Also list any “Named” NPCs that may appear in the adventure. (Note: the list of named NPCs, once finalized, should be mailed to lsj-edit@theshiningjewel.com to add to our NPC Database).
- ✧ If you have a desired premiere date for your adventure, such as a particular convention, please include this information. Please remember, the module development process is not quick, so please send in a **Pitch** at least 4 months before the requested premiere date (at least 6 months before, if this is your first module). The further in advance you begin your submission, the better chance your event has of being ready for the desired premiere date. In other words, stay on schedule or your module may not be ready by the intended premiere date! If you miss the deadline, we’ll have no choice but to pull your module and run it at a later date.
- ✧ If there isn’t a specific premiere date planned for the module, that’s even better. The module will be scheduled to premiere at the next event after your module has successfully been play-tested and is ready for release. Modules with open release dates are greatly appreciated by the event planners, who may not have an author ‘on staff’ to write a premier for their event. Open release date submissions also involve a little less angst, since impending due dates are flexible.

Most LSJ modules are written as single round adventures, where all the encounters of the module can be successfully run in a standard 4-hour slot. Single round adventures allow players the highest level of scheduling variability, and often allow curious observers to become first time players. Single round modules are easiest to place in gaming schedules, and allow players to play with a variety of groups. Multi-round modules are harder to place (some conventions will not schedule multi-round events, and 3 part modules can usually only be scheduled at special events, such as a *Weekend in the Shining Jewel* convention).

More complex plots, where a larger number of situations (encounters) must be resolved in order for the plot to be successfully resolved, may be a ‘series’ of modules or a ‘multi-

round' module. In a series of modules it is possible to define 'pausing points' (rest stops or sub-conclusions), where the action can be reasonably (and logically) suspended, with monetary and experience awards being granted and the players being released then re-marshaled before the next set of encounters (the next module in the series). The encounters in each module in a series are a continuation of a common theme. It is often desirable to play a series of modules in order. This information should be included in the 'blurb'.

A module is multi-round only if, due to the essential close continuity of the many necessary encounters, or due to the complexity of some of the encounters (needing the continuous attention of a group of characters as a unified party), it will be necessary for the judge and all involved players to continue play at the same table for two or more 4 hour slots (with scheduled breaks). In multi-round modules, the situation often imposes a time constraint on the adventurers, with the events of the encounters occurring in a rapid succession, with the characters receiving no opportunities to pause, regroup, or reequip. A module should only be considered multi-round if there is no possible way to develop the plot in 4 hour 'chapters'. If your plot concept seems to be a multi-round event, the plot team will be glad to work with you in determining whether it would be possible to write the event as a series of sequential one round adventures instead.

Currently, we are primarily seeking submissions for one-round events. A number of multi-part story arcs are in development. If you have a really good idea for a 2- or 3-round event (requiring 8 to 12 hours of continuous play), please send it in. There's always room for another really great idea, whatever format it may be.

There are a number of reasons why a **Pitch** may not be approved as submitted. Please don't take this personally. Sometimes the **Pitch** is too similar to another module already in the works, in which case you may be asked if you would like to join your efforts to those of the other author. Sometimes the proposed plot conflicts too greatly with the overall plan of the campaign or with the continuity of the campaign as previously established. Sometimes changes will be suggested before the **Pitch** is approved. A detailed explanation for any suggested modifications of the **Pitch** will come from the Plot Coordinator.

Once a **Pitch** is approved for development, the Plot Coordinator may request a more detailed outline of events for your module. Once that is approved, the Plot Coordinator will hand the process over to the Editor-in-Chief (lsj-edit@theshiningjewel.com), who will assign an editor to guide you through the rest of the writing process.

2) The Specifics: Once your **Pitch** is approved, a schedule will be established for all the submission steps of your adventure. At this point, you will be sent the following:

- a) **LSJ Module Template:** This is the form to be used in building your module. All the formats and fonts are correctly set in this template, which also includes the structure for the module. Write your module by adding your text into this template. Please do not change any of the fonts!

- b) **LSJ Stat Block Guide:** This guide includes the correct format for “monster” stat blocks and “NPC” stat blocks. It also includes information on how to ‘advance’ foes from one APL to the next. (**Note:** This document is still under development and not currently available.)
- c) **LSJ Spelling Primer:** This is a Word document containing the most frequently used names, locations and groups. Open this document in Word, and then select “Tools”, then “Spelling and Grammar”. For each word, which is shown as a misspelling, select “Add to Dictionary”. This step will make Spell Checking your module easier. (**Note:** This document is still under development and not currently available.)
- d) **Module Planning Scheduler:** This Excel Spreadsheet is the master schedule with all the milestones and deadlines for the development of your module. Please look through the steps, and note the submission date for each step.
- e) **Submission Paperwork:** This package contains the agreements with the campaign, including submission and non-disclosure agreements. Please print, sign and return the paperwork quickly, since no further submissions can be made until it’s done (ah yes, the fun of paperwork!). (**Note:** This document is still under development and not currently available.)

The writing of the **Specifics** can be started, while the paperwork is being processed. Please rename the **LSJ Module Template** file to "LSJxx Full Module Name" (using “File”, “Save As”) until the actual sequence number is assigned.

The **Specifics** should be the complete framework of your module, listing the adventure background, judge introduction, player introduction, every encounter, the “monsters” and the rewards. At this point, the module will be in skeleton form, with the template being it’s bare bones. As development continues, the fleshing out process will continue, until the module is a complete, ‘living’ adventure.

The basic framework for any module (as defined in the Module Template) is: the background, the entry points, the encounters (including how to get from one encounter to another), and the conclusions that define the degree of success or failure the group has achieved during play. Each stage of development will add more detail, or flesh, to this framework, filling in the dialog, specific rule applications and game factors, which the players will encounter as they seek to solve the challenge they face.

All “monsters” to be used in your module should be submitted at the correct ATLS, as defined in the “LSJ Stat Block Guide”. All monsters taken from other works **MUST** be from Open Gaming Content (OGC) sources. No “Product Identity” (PI) material may be used. This includes many WotC-published books and their creations. Please double check any outside sources; to be sure the monsters you are using **are** OGC. OGC material can be identified from the OGL page of any usable product (see the last page of

this document for an example). Your editor will submit your monsters to the Rules Team, who will check the stat blocks and report any concerns. We are currently building a “Monster Library” to assist in this process.

ATLs (Average Table Levels) should be odd-numbered, starting at the lowest level of player character allowed in the module and going to one odd number above the highest character level allowed. The additional high ATL level is for maximum level PCs, who are more powerful than the norm. In modules that start at player character level 2 or higher, also include one additional ATL (which may be even-numbered) that is one below the minimum allowed character level for the module, to present a proper challenge for a minimum-level party of only four PCs, who would normally be rated below the minimum ATL.

For Example: For Character Levels 3 – 8, include ATLs 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

For Character Levels 5 – 10, include ATLs 4, 5, 7, 9, and 11.

Please refer to the **LSJ Stat Block Guide** for information on how to ‘advance’ your chosen ‘monsters’ from one ATL to the next. If you need assistance in “leveling up” your chosen monsters, a member of the Rules Team will be put in contact with you.

Planned rewards (treasure), listed both in the encounters and the summary at the end of the module, should include any treasure that may be recovered from the enemies. While the rewards may be adjusted for game balance, we will try to avoid this when possible. Any special magic items should be fully described, so the Rules Team can check for completeness and rules compliance.

The LSJ Module Format file **must** be used to set up your module, and may be beneficial in writing the **Specifics**. Once your **Specifics** have been submitted, your editor will be submit the “monsters” and “treasure” to the Rules Team, for checking. Please be sure to cc lsj-archives@theshiningjewel.com.

Your editor will stay in close contact with you, via e-mail, AOL/AIM chat or, if necessary, by phone, so you will be able to work together. Your editor will return your **Specifics** to you, with inserted comments (from ‘Insert’, then ‘Comment’) marking any possible problems. It may be necessary to make corrections and resubmit the **Specifics**, if serious concerns are found.

3) The Rough Draft: Once your **Specifics** have been approved and the Rules Team has confirmed the “monster” stat blocks and “treasure”, the details of the module may be written. The **Rough Draft** is a complete version of your module with everything detailed, including: background, judge introduction, all boxed text, and all encounter detail. Rewards should be clearly and completely defined. This **Rough Draft** will eventually be used for **Playtesting**, so please be sure it includes all the information a Judge will need to successfully run the module.

The LSJ Module Format file **must** be used to submit the **Rough Draft**. Specific format issues are discussed later in this document, in TEXT FORMATTING FOR LSJ TOURNAMENTS. **NO** changes should be made to the formats set in the Template. If changes are found, the module may be returned to you, to be resubmitted in the correct format.

The **Rough Draft** will undergo the rigors of editing. Please run a “Spell Check” on your module before each and every submission. Any words underlined in red (by Microsoft Word) may be misspelled. Please correct them before sending the file to your editor. (Please be sure to cc lsj-archives@theshiningjewel.com when submitting the module). Also check any sentences or phrases underlined in green (again by Word); these phrases may be grammatically incorrect. Please be sure they are correct or fix them. Taking these steps, before submitting the draft, will make the process run smoothly, and will lessen the time needed for editing.

At the end of the module, please list the XP for each encounter, broken down by sub-goals, if appropriate. Further information on detailing XP may be found later in this document.

Your editor will keep you updated on the progress being made, and will be returning the module file to you, with editing comments. Your editor will rename the file to “LSJxx Full Module Name – first comments” (or second, or third on later passes), and will insert comments into the text, using the “Insert”, “Comment” function. These comments will appear to the right of the text, and point back to the text your editor is commenting on. Your editor may make spelling and grammar corrections, instead of submitting them to you, in the interest of not having the process bog down.

When responding to your editor’s comments, begin by renaming the file to “LSJxx Full Module Name – first corrections” (or second, or third on later passes), and then address each issue. Please **DO NOT** remove your editor’s comments. (Only your editor should delete the comments.) If you agree with the comments, please change your text to resolve the issue, then add “- Done” to the editor’s comment. If you do not agree, let your editor know, either by adding your own comment to the comment (yes, Word allows ‘comments’ on the text of ‘comments’), or via email. If you add your comments directly to your editor’s comments, please preface your comments with a ‘-’, so it is clear where your editor’s comments end and your comments begin.

The sooner changes and responses are returned to your editor (and cc’d to lsj-archives@theshiningjewel.com); the sooner the process can advance. Please keep your editor apprised of the progress you’re making in correcting any problems. Good communication helps prevent misunderstandings.

Encounter Structure

Each encounter should begin with a short description for the judge of what will occur in the encounter. Once the stage has been set, the Boxed Text should begin. After the

Boxed Text, include any information the Judge will need to resolve the encounter. If the encounter includes a combat, the Stat Blocks, by ATL, should follow. For combats, also include any combat techniques and strategies that could assist the Judge in running the encounter. The final part of the encounter should be information on which encounters may come next.

Dialog and Descriptive Boxed Text

Boxed text is a module's exposition (elaboration of plot elements), which the judge will either directly read or paraphrase. It is the key information at the start of an encounter that sets the stage for the encounter's action. It also gives essential clues to what is going on, planting hints to the module's solution. While boxed text is essential, care must be taken to keep it from becoming excessive. The fun is in playing the game, not listening to the judge reading. Boxed text is made up of Dialog and Description.

Dialog is what an NPC says. While it may be affected by dialect, it must still be clear. It may be entertaining to have an NPC speak in a less than perfect style, but players must be able to understand what the NPC is saying and recognize the significant points and clues. Express dialect by word choice, instead of by phonetic spelling, which is often difficult to decipher, and thus may slow down play. Your editor will not make changes to quoted character speech, since any inconsistencies may be intended dialog, but may comment on changes which will make the information imparted clearer.

Most Boxed Text is not dialog, but description and action supplied to move the module along. Descriptive Boxed Text must be grammatically correct. It is important that such descriptions be consistent. When writing descriptions, please check any prior modules that may contain descriptions of the same objects, places or people. Be careful to keep descriptions on topic. Meandering prose may obscure the important imparted information. Good paragraph structure and tight writing style will keep players interested in what is happening.

Try not to use excessive amounts of Boxed Text at one time. If you find a track of Boxed Text is running long, try cutting out about 20% of the words in that section. You should be able to shorten the text without losing any meaning (and save the GM's voice when he has to read it to the players).

Judge Information

Information the Judge will need to run the encounter should be written outside of Boxed Text. This should include the attitude and demeanor of any NPCs involved in the encounter, and any knowledge the NPCs may be able to share. Include any information that will allow the judge to 'free form' role-play interactions between the characters and NPCs. Also include time factors, such as when others may enter or exit the scene. Provide all the information the judge may need to run the encounter successfully.

Include contingencies, in case the players start exploring outside the frame of the module, including hints on how to guide the players back to the correct course.

Next Encounter

If the module is in matrix format, where the party may not be visiting each Encounter in order, please include information on which encounters may occur next. For example, if there are three encounters which the characters may go to after the current encounter, list each possible route, and which Encounter would be next, by both number and title. Include information to assist the judge in interpreting the course of action, if the choice may not be totally clear.

Maps

LSJ currently uses Dungeon Crafter (a freeware program) to draw most maps. If you do not have the software to produce such a map, please include a hand drawn map and your editor will have the map translated. If you have another program that can draw good grid maps, feel free to use it, but supply files in a common format (like jpg) for ease of use by the staff.

At minimum, the Judge will need a map of the appropriate combat encounter areas. Occasionally, it is helpful to supply a map for the players, with significant locations NOT being indicated on it (these are reserved for the GM map if necessary). Consider if a player map may speed up module play.

Player Handouts

Player Handouts can be fun. They can also expedite play, by not forcing the players to write down long passages read by the Judge. Consider where handouts might fit in the module, and supply them as seems appropriate. Possible handout uses include (but is not limited to): newspaper clippings, notes from involved NPCs, signs, diaries, letters, puzzles, maps, rules summaries of important matters for the encounters or module (i.e. underwater combat rules or travel times), and long sections of vital boxed text. Your editor will be able to help you create and format any handouts.

Gamemaster (GM) Handouts

GM Handouts can be even more fun than Player Handouts, since they contain all the secrets the players want to know. Where appropriate, have separate maps for the GM showing any detail the players should not know (like the secret lair of the Evil Bad Guys). Otherwise, the suggestions for Player Handouts also apply here.

Treasure

As a standard practice, every LSJ player should walk away from the table with at least one “certed” reward. This does not have to be a valuable or magical item; interesting and

rare non-magical items also make good “certed” treasure. An award to be given to each participant may also be included. Many modules include the recognition or appreciation of those who asked the party to take on the mission. Enmity of those who were foiled by the characters may also go to each character.

Magical awards should not be overwhelmingly powerful regardless of the PC levels. Use the guidelines for treasure by experience level listed in the *Core Rulebook II* as a starting point. The LSJ Rules team will screen all treasure rewards for game balance and appropriateness. There may be changes made to your recommended treasures before publication.

Also note whether treasure acquired from NPC opponents within the city of Amthydor can be kept by PCs. Players often assume that the Diamond Legion will confiscate such items, and sometimes they are correct.

4) Playtest: Once your **Rough Draft** has been reviewed and approved by your editor (which may require repetitive editing steps) and the Rules Team, it will be **Playtested** by LSJ Staff members under the direction of the Plot Coordinator. This **Playtest** may occur at a convention, game day, or home game where sufficient LSJ staff is in attendance, or it may be done online.

The author is free to arrange a **Playtest** of his or her own. It is **strongly** suggested that someone other than the author be the Judge for that game, with the Author observing and taking notes while not interfering with the play or assisting the judge unless absolutely necessary. This is done to see what will happen when someone who is NOT intimately familiar with your module has to run it and deal with troubleshooting. As the author, you know the story inside and out, and can often respond to the players from memory rather than from the written module. Information that is in the author’s head, but not in the module text, can be a serious problem. Everything the Judge needs to run the event must be spelled out in black-and-white in the module. This procedure increases the likelihood any problems will be pinpointed and resolved before a second **Playtest** occurs.

At the conclusion of the **Playtest**, all players, the judge, and the author (if present) should discuss the adventure in detail. Notes on all observations should be returned to your editor for review. These notes will be used as a basis for revising the module to produce a **Final Draft**, which will (most likely) become the published version of the tournament.

Additional playtesting may occur if your editor feels there is a need to check the module for further issues.

5) Revision: During **Playtest**, problems requiring repair may become evident, or additional information needed for the event to be played successfully may be exposed. Your editor will work with you to arrange the necessary revisions and changes, possibly through multiple passes. Additional **Playtests** may be arranged to check the integration of the changes.

6) Publication: Voila! The module is DONE and ready to be distributed to the eager masses of players (and con coordinators). Unless we find more fixes later . . .

Afterwards: Once your module is complete, and released . . . it's time to start working on your NEXT submission. Feel free to submit more **Pitches**.

As you can see, module development and publication is not a linear process. The same steps may need to be done repeatedly, as the module is prepared for publication. Be patient, persistent, and be ready to do a lot of editing and rewriting. Soon you may see your name under the *Legends of the Shining Jewel* banner!

Any additional questions should be directed to The Plots Team at:
lsj-plots@theshiningjewel.com.

ADVICE FOR CONSTRUCTING THE EVENT

LSJ tournaments tend to run like the old Endless Quest (or Pick-Your-Path) adventure books. Most avenues should be anticipated, in the event the players wander down a different path. The traditional module format is the Location Matrix Model, where PCs have to travel to different locations to get information and solve the problem posed in the module. This is not always the case. Occasionally a more traditional linear format may be used, as long as it is written in such a way that the players are not actively aware of the linearity. In reality, modules don't really offer many choices (otherwise the adventure would never reach its conclusion), but instead make it appear that the PCs are determining their own destiny. The "illusion" of choice is sometimes necessary in lieu of actual choice. Try to avoid plot structures that make the characters feel like "fish being pulled along on a hook" from one encounter to the next. Offering a few choices (or the illusion of choices) for the PCs to choose from during the course of the adventure is necessary to avoid the feeling of being pushed along by "Boxed Text."

Examples of choices to offer the PCs:

- ✧ A fork in the road. Which way will the players go? What will they encounter at each branch? Will this cause them to succeed or fail at their mission? The players should feel there is a real consequence for the choice made which will affect the outcome of the module (even if it doesn't). Always allow for the possibility that the party may backtrack, to take "the road not taken". Be sure to define what happens if the party returns to the decision point. Will the same NPCs be there? Will the situation still be the same? Is it even possible to return and take the other fork? Unless there is a real reason to **NOT** allow return and re-choosing, please be sure to allow for the possibility the party will be here again and go the opposite way.
- ✧ An opportunity to ally with conflicting factions within the city. Multiple NPCs may offer to hire the PCs for the same mission. The PC's choice: who to give the Widget to, once it is retrieved. This choice may be based upon loyalty, offer of reward, or the

whim of the moment. Wise LSJ players will consider their choices carefully, particularly if they belong to one or more of the city's Meta-organizations. Be sure to define what happens if the party tries to 'double deal', or promise their services to two competing interests. In some cases, it may be possible, but in others, trying to be paid by two different groups should have some negative consequence.

- ✧ Where to seek information. Many times a module begins with the players being tasked with a problem to resolve. The first step is usually to collect information on what is happening, or who may be causing the problem. Several sources may be available for the research. While each source may actually have the exact same information to share, the tone and method of imparting that information should be colored by the nature and motives of the source. Wise LSJ players will not need to visit ALL the possible sources before putting the information to use. That being the case, it is better to assign XP awards for getting the information, rather than for visiting specific locations to get it.

Often the use the background information on Amthydoran Organizations, NPCs, and Locations enable the author to better set the scene and to encourage greater involvement by the party. The most current form of the LSJ background guides, which apply to the work appearing in your module, will be made available to you for this purpose. NOTE: this information must remain confidential as per the NDA, since many campaign secrets are revealed in these documents, and should never be used as In-Character information by any PCs. In most cases, only the specific Guides, or sections of Guides, which apply to your module situation will be sent. For example: The Meta-Organizations Guide will only be sent if Meta-Organizations are appearing in your module. In some cases, only the parts of the guide that apply to your work will be sent. This is to keep the secrets of Amthydor as mysterious as possible, and to keep your enjoyment in playing other modules from being unduly compromised.

Try not to present the most powerful members of Amthydoran society in your writing. Appearances by the heads of Noble Houses, Lord Monarch Raphe Torestyn and High Lady Alissa, for example, should be very rare. The Nobles are an important part of Amthydoran society but, if overused, they will lose their impact. If you do choose to have Lord Monarch Raphe Torestyn or another very powerful member of Amthydoran society appear in your module, it must be approved by the Plots Team and the Coordinators, who may suggest replacing the desired NPC with a lower ranking figurehead.

The LSJ staff may request elements of other ongoing plots be placed in your writing, to tighten continuity. If your plot seems to fit well into an existing ongoing plotline, you may be contacted and asked if your ideas can be added to that story arc. If you plan to insert a random combat encounter, we may suggest something that ties into another plot.

Whenever possible, we request the author make all editorial changes and additions. The Editorial staff reserves the right to make any changes necessary for purposes of correct spelling and grammar, and more extensive alterations and additions, if proven necessary.

Every effort will be made to have authors do their own editing, so the module remains largely their own work.

Experience Point Awards: Experience points are now awarded by ATL, rather than having a single award for all ATLs. The following chart lists the maximum XP for each ATL included in the module.

ATL 1	500 xp
ATL 3	700 xp
ATL 5	900 xp
ATL 7	1,100 xp
ATL 9	1,300 xp
ATL 11	1,500 xp
ATL 13	1,700 xp
ATL 15	1,900 xp
ATL 17	2,100 xp

Example: A module for PCs of levels 1-6 would have a maximum XP of 500 for ATL 1, 700 for ATL3 and 900 for ATL 5. Of that amount, between 50 and 100 XP should be for roleplaying.

The remainder of the XP awards for each ATL should be broken down to cover the different goals and actions in the encounters. Start by assigning the XP to completion or resolution of each encounter where there is a potential for success. For combats, full points should be rewarded for ‘resolving’ the matter, whether it’s by destroying the ‘monsters’ or by finding a way to otherwise resolve or even avoid the combat. Allow a lesser award for less than satisfactory resolutions of the encounter. It is also possible to give lesser XP awards for partial success of goals.

To increase XP as ATL increases, focus on only the encounters where the difficulty varies by ATL (such as combats and traps). Roleplaying-based XP should remain consistent across ATLs. The following table (as found in the Module Template) should be used to listing XP, and is an example of how XP may be advanced by ATL.

	ATL 3	ATL 5	ATL 7	ATL 9	ATL 11
Encounter 1					
Goal 1 - combat	X	1.5 X	2 X	2.5 X	3 X
Goal 2 – skill based	Y	1.25 Y	1.5 Y	1.75 Y	2 Y
Encounter 2					
Goal 1 – non-combat	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
Encounter 3					
Goal 1	Etc.				
Goal 2					
Ending A – total success	T				
Ending B – partial success	.6 T				
Ending C - failure	.3 T				
Role Playing (usually 50 – 100 XP)	Same	For	All	ATL	Levels
Maximum XP (from prior table)	700	900	1,100	1,300	1,500

TEXT FORMATTING FOR LSJ TOURNAMENTS

We have experimented with different methods of formatting over the last few years. The following guidelines are the current standard. Please adhere to them. If you feel you must change the format in some way, please contact your editor to discuss the change first.

- ✧ Standard text is Times New Roman 11 Point.
- ✧ Headers are Centered, other text is Justified.
- ✧ **Standard Headers are Arial 14 point Bold Underlined.** Sometimes this may be changed to 13 or 12 point for longer encounter headers, to make them fit on one line, at your discretion.
- ✧ Do NOT indent paragraphs. Instead, use a line break between paragraphs. This better breaks up the text, so GMs have an easier time (hopefully) finding needed passages.
- ✧ Use a Page Break before starting Stat Blocks for an encounter. Use Column Breaks between ATLs, unless the Stat Blocks for two consecutive ATLs are short enough that both can fit in a single column.
- ✧ Use a Page Break to start every **Player Handout** or **GM Handout** page.

- ✧ The **Critical Event Summary**, **Roster of Heroes**, and **Open Game License** must remain the last three pages at the end of the module, in that exact order. All other pages, including all handouts, should come before these final three items.
- ✧ “Boxed text”, information to be read verbatim by the judge, will be enclosed in a box, Boldfaced and Italicized. The box can be drawn by selecting “Outside Border” on the table format toolbar, while the text to be outlined is selected.

This is what boxed text should look like in a module.

- ✧ A template for Boxed Text is included in the "Module Template". Your boxed text can be typed into the existing template box, with any text spoken by a NPC in quotation marks.

“I am saying this text to the PCs,” said the important NPC.

- ✧ For "Question and Answer" text (things the PCs might ask an NPC, with appropriate responses), use the right-arrow bullet points (like the ones used here) then use the "Decrease Indent" button on the toolbar to shift it to the left. The questions should be Bold and highlighted yellow, with answers following in boxed text format. An example follows. An example of this is also included in the “Module Template”, which can be cut and pasted to any place “Question and Answer” text will be placed in your module.

➤ **What question will the PCs ask?**

“This is the answer the NPC is giving.”

- ✧ Stat Blocks: Put a simple black line border around each ATL number (i.e. ATL 1) with all stats below it NOT in a border. In front of each monster/NPC name, put the “dagger” † to make it easier to pick out the start of each creature's listing. The “dagger” † is included in the template. Both the “dagger” and a sample ‘bordered ATL’ appear in the **LSJ Module Template** document, as part of the sample “Monster format” and “NPC format” examples.
- ✧ All treasure items should list the standard info found on the bottom of the certs (Rarity, Legality, Value, etc) and standard d20 rules information, using the format provided in the “Treasure Summary” section of the template. Make sure all item values are correct, especially for homebrewed items. If you need assistance figuring this out, the Rules Team will be glad to assist.
- ✧ Please make sure to include a **Critical Event Summary**, to be collected at the premiere of the event, so the results of the module can affect the overall campaign. List any event in the module which may be drawn upon in future modules, including reactions of any Named NPCs and any important widgets which may end up in an NPC’s hands.

- ✧ In the OGL (the final page of the template), Section 15, make sure the new module title and author are listed at the end. Also list the complete OGC/d20 source information of any creations (monsters, treasures, etc) used in the module which were created by other OGC publishers. Any questions about how to set up the OGL should be addressed to Andrew Hauptman at lsj-coord@theshiningjewel.com. Speaking of which...

USE OF d20 PRODUCT RULES AND THE OPEN GAME LICENSE

One advantage of writing for a d20 product like LSJ is the use of any existing d20 products, as long as they are Open Game Content (OGC). The legal notes and Open Game License (OGL) in any given d20 product will tell you if there is OGC that can be used by others. In fact, authors are free to modify that content, to expand or improve it. The LSJ Staff has often done this, with careful consideration and review by the LSJ Rules Team.

To date, the only Wizards of the Coast (WotC) product, beyond the three core rulebooks, to include OGC is the *Unearthed Arcana 3.5* rulebook. LSJ makes use of a number of class variant rules from that book. If you don't have a copy of that product, the same material is posted on www.d20srd.org. All of the Open Content material from the three core rulebooks (and a few other rules from other WotC books) are covered in the Standard Rules Document (SRD), which can be found on and downloaded from WotC's official d20 website, www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=d20. Content from any core rulebook that is NOT in the SRD is CLOSED CONTENT, or Product Identity, and cannot be used by anyone other than the publisher (WotC).

Among the "closed content" rules are the character generation rules and the names and stats for monsters which are considered "intellectual property" of WotC. We cannot reprint those names here, but using Pig Latin we can refer to them as: eholderbay, isplacerdlay eastbay, authgay, ithyankigay, ithzeraigay, indmay layerfay, laadsay, mberuay ulkhay, and uanyay-itay. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES can anything that is either Closed Content or Intellectual Property of another company be used in any LSJ product, *period*. In many cases, a generic version of the IP monsters can be found (in fact, there is an e-publication devoted to that, ask Andrew about it). A little searching can lead to amazing discoveries!

Any Open Game Content used must have the original source quoted in Section 15 of the Open Game License, which is the final page of each event. It's really that simple!

The LSJ rules supplements pull a number of new races, feats, spells, and other rules from various d20 sources that contain Open Game Content. Please consider using them when writing an LSJ event, as they not only expand the rules options given to the NPCs (including elan psions and evil paladins), but also help reinforce the unique flavor of the Legions of the Shining Jewel campaign.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF AMTHYDOR, LSJ'S HOME CITY

The LSJ City Primer is currently being edited. A draft copy will be provided, upon request. There is a rich history developed for the city of Amthydor. The following is a very brief review, highlighting a few major points to bear in mind.

This is a lawful city with very loyal citizens. While they are not truly xenophobic, they do tend to favor other citizens over outsiders. This trait has been gradually lessening with a large (and necessary) influx of immigrants to rebuild the city's population (see the next paragraph for the reason). Citizens bear a magical circle tattoo upon the inner wrist of each arm. Native citizens carry green circles, naturalized citizens red circles, and anyone stripped of their citizenship (usually due to severe crimes committed) bear the dreaded mark of black circles. An unintended by-product of this magical tattooing is that clothing styles tend to emphasize shorter cuffs on shirts than would be found elsewhere in the Free Lands.

A few years ago, an enemy of the city (a lich wizard) unleashed an undead army which he had built hidden in the tunnels beneath Amthydor. The resultant slaughter, known as "The Culling," decimated the city. At least half the overall population was killed (or worse, converted to undead), with a higher percentage of the city's soldiers, heroes, and clergy being slain. The undead were pressed back and contained in the razed Poor District, and only recently finally vanquished. This does not mean that we will never see undead in Amthydor again...just that they will not be an ever-present threat like before.

Movement into certain districts is restricted for ordinary citizens (and foreign visitors), requiring a valid permit for entry to those areas of the city. Such passes may be acquired from the Diamond Legion or other high-ranking city officials. The current restricted districts include: the Castle District, the Diamond District, the Embassy District, the Nobles District, the Poor District, and the Tomb District.

NOTE: An exception to the above paragraph is if there is a PC noble at the table. PC nobles (the player must have a valid LSJ certificate to play a noble) may enter the Nobles District freely, though not the other restricted districts. The PC noble may bring other, non-noble PCs with them, on the condition that the PC noble is responsible for the behavior and conduct of his/her companions.

POWERFUL PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN AMTHYDOR

Amthydor is host to a number of powers, businesses and organizations (and mega-organizations). A brief listing of the most prominent names and functions follows below:

- ✧ The Lord Monarch: Hereditary ruler of the city. The current Lord Monarch is Lord Rafe Torestyn of House Torestyn.
- ✧ The Diamond Legion: Both police force and militia for the city of Amthydor.

- ✧ The Noble Houses: The nobility of Amthydor hold a major place in the power structure. There are almost 20 houses, each focusing on a different business or trade. The power struggles between rival houses are the stuff of legend.
- ✧ The Noble Guardsmen: Stalwart guardians devoted to the security of one of the Noble Houses of Amthydor.
- ✧ The League of Thaumaturgical Studies: The arcane guild of the city, responsible for training of mages and ongoing study and research. There are two major denominations, one for “prepared” arcane casters (wizards) and another for “spontaneous” arcane casters (sorcerers and, to a lesser extent, bards).
- ✧ The Greyson Institute: The renowned bardic college of Amthydor.
- ✧ The Sividia Academy: The arcane school of Amthydor.
- ✧ The Society of Providers and Entertainers: One part bard’s guild, one part charity house for the city’s poor.
- ✧ The Gilded Cage: A legalized house of prostitution, though more in keeping with the classic “geisha” concept than the Western idea. All members, male and female, are trained in the arts, conversation on a variety of topics, knowledge, and skilled at information-gathering.
- ✧ The Quorum of Faith: The organized religious authority of the city. A portion of the 30-deity pantheon is legally represented in the city of Amthydor. Some religions boast large temples, while others make do with a small shrine.
- ✧ The Fraternity of Venturers: A guild for adventuring types in and around the city.

Note: The metaorgs (meta-organizations) as a whole are to be portrayed in a positive light. If you're unsure of how members of a specific metaorg would deal with a situation, please email the contact for that metaorg and get their advice. The metaorg contacts can also provide a “stock” NPC from the metaorg for use in the module.

That’s about it! Please contact us with any further questions!

and . . .

May the Jewel always shine for you!

The LSJ Staff

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