Scrabblepunk

A "one-page rpg"
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for the JabbleScram event
hosted by The Papercut Arcade

lo•gos (ˈloʊ gɒs, -goʊs, ˈlɒg ɒs)
n.
1. (in Greek philosophy) the rational principle that governs and develops the universe.
2. (in Christian theology) the divine word or reason incarnate in Jesus Christ. John 1:1–14.

The world of Scrabblepunk is just like our real world, controlled by shadowy corporations, three-letter or four-letter government agencies, and even more nefarious conspiracies and cults. They each exert control and influence over our lives. How do they do this? By controlling and keeping hidden the *Logoi*, the words of power. They control the computers in which we work, the systems on which we rely, and even the languages with which we think. But there are those who resist, those who operate outside the rules and systems of these monolithic organizations. You are one of those who resist. You have managed to unlock some of the *Logoi* for yourself. Your goal is to take on one of these forces using the skills and knowledge you have gained from eking out your existence, by scrabbling for survival in the shadows of the monolithic forces that rule the world.

And just as the corps and government forces use letters and words to dominate, Scrabblepunks (as they're known on the street) fight back with *Logos* of their own.

General Setup

Step One: This game will use all the tiles, the board, and (optionally) the tile holders from a standard Scrabble board game. You will also want a way to record your character's stats and name and *logos.* Some kind of character sheet and a pencil. Or a text file on your computer.

TILE HIERARCHY (SIDE BAR)
During Tests, we reference the Tier of tiles. The list below outlines on which Tier each letter tile falls.

- *Tier One (1 point)*: **E** ×12, **A** ×9, **I** ×9, **O** ×8, **N** ×6, **R** ×6, **T** ×6, **L** ×4, **S** ×4, **U** ×4
- *Tier Two (2 points)*: **D** ×4, **G** ×3
- *Tier Three (3 points)*: **B** ×2, **C** ×2, **M** ×2, **P** ×2
- *Tier Four (4 points)*: **F** ×2, **H** ×2, **V** ×2, **W** ×2, **Y** ×2
- *Tier Five (5 points)*: **K** ×1
- *Tier Eight (8 points)*: **J** ×1, **X** ×1

- *Tier Ten (10 points)*: **Q** ×1, **Z** ×1

Tierless Wild Tiles: 2 blank tiles (0 points)

Player Setup

CharGen Step One: Role & Concept

Choose what type of role and concept your Scrabblepunk will typically fill for your team. This can be almost anything, but generally speaking people choose some variant of these four, typifying the types of tests they're good at, but also how their power tends to manifest.

Physards (body hackers, hulks, physical adepts, neos, etc.) overwhelmingly focus their *logos* on their bodies, making them stronger, tougher, more agile. Name a body part, and a Physard can likely augment it. Once per scene, a Physard can shout their *logos* to alter their physical form. Make a Logos Test to determine the scale to which they can alter their form.

Mentats (brainiacs, psionicists, mentalists, geniuses etc.) are the best at using their *logos* to augment their minds, unlocking mental capabilities and fortitude beyond that which is possible in a normal human. Once per scene, a Mentat can recite their *logos* three times to perform an amazing mental feat. Make a Logos Test to determine the scale of success of their mental feat.

Logomaniacs (word hacker, sigilist, the voice) are obsessed in some way over their power over *logos*. All Scrabblepunks have some degree of control over *logos.* Once per scene, a Logomaniac can speak their *logos* forward and backwards to change reality by altering or adding a word on the board. Make a Logos Test to determine the scale of success of their alteration. Their scale of success determines the total point value in tiles they may draw to place on the board.

Facers (firebrands, fixers, leaders) excel at using their *Logos* on other people. Once per scene, a Facer can whisper their *logos* to sway one or more people's opinion on something or someone. Make a Logos Test to determine the scale of success of this manipulation.

Brightburn Rule (optional)
If a character has already used their *logos* in a scene, they may choose to discard their **highest** stat tile and take one of one Tier lower in order to reuse their *logos* one more time during the scene.

Step Two: Assign Stat Tiles

You have access to one (1) tile from each of the first four Tiers of letters (see the SIDEBAR: TILE HIERARCHY above). Assign one to each Stat. The higher the Tier the better.

Four Stats
Body (represents your ability to avoid physically getting hurt beyond all recovery)
Mind (represents your ability to avoid being mentally exhausted beyond measure)
Logos (represents your ability to avoid fucking up your part of the job beyond all recognition)
Name (represents your ability to avoid losing face/honor/cred beyond redemption)

Example: Kay is choosing their character's stats. They are envisioning making an elite word hacker with a good rep on the street. They choose to put an F (4 points) in Logos, and a P (3 points) in Name (PsiCl1), D (2 points) in Mind, and a measly E (1 point) in Body).

Once your tiles have been assigned and recorded on your character sheet, return the tiles to the bag.

Step Three: Name and Logos

Next, choose a cool name. Something that represents who your character is and their role. Then, come up with your word of power, your *logos.* The word you must say each time you make a Logos Test.

The Rules

Threshold Tests

All threshold tests are carried out by pulling a tile from the bag and adding the value of the pulled tile to the value of the tile assigned to your stat. If the combined value is equal to or greater than the Task Threshold, then you succeed at the test. If the combined value is less than the Task Threshold, then you fail the test.

Task Difficulty	Task Threshold
Simple:	3
Focused:	4
Challenging:	5
Extreme:	6
Daunting:	7
Impossible:	8

Blank Tiles: If you draw a Blank Tile, you critically fail at your Test in some spectacular way. [insert: example]

Matching Tiles: If you draw the **exact matching** tile that you currently have in the stat that is being tested, you luck out in some unexpected way. Note, you still must check to see if you succeed at the test or failed.

Physical Tests

Physical Tests are tests to your Body Tile
Draw a tile and compare to your Body Tile. If you fail the test, substitute your Body Tile for one of the next lower Tier. If your Body Tile is ever at Tier 0, you must retire a battered and broken veteran of the streets.

Mental Tests

Draw a tile and compare to your Mind Tile. If you fail the test, substitute your Mind Tile for one of the next lower Tier. If your Mind Tile is ever at Tier 0, you go insane or slip into a coma.

Logos Tests

Draw a tile and compare to your Logos Tile. If you fail the test, substitute your Logos Tile for one of the next lower Tier. If your Logos Tile is ever at Tier 0, you lose all power over the *Logoi*. You forget your *logos.* You are a shell of your former self.

Name Tests

Draw a tile and compare to your Name Tile. If you fail the test, substitute your Logos Tiles for one of the next lower Tier. If your Name Tile is ever at Tier 0, your reputation is irreparably harmed and you are driven into exile.

Initiative Tests

Each player and the SM draws a Tile. Order of play is in alphabetical order of the Initiative Tiles. Ties are broken by comparing current Logos stats.

ScrabbleMaster (SM) Setup

The Board is an abstraction of the ongoing struggle or path that the player's characters are on.

The goal they seek is to be found and won/defeated at the star in the center of the board.

Get the help of your players to determine who these factions are.

Step One: Build Your Factions
Pull the following tiles: K,J,X,Q,Z

Your Contagonist uses the letter K tile, plus two or three more available tiles from the bag.

Your Antagonists use the J and X tile respectively, along with up to four more available tiles from the bag each.

Your Big Bad must include either the Q or the Z plus up to 5 available tiles from the bag.

Step Two: Place the Factions

The first three rings on the board are controlled/populated by Contagonist factions and NPCs. Place them somewhere on the board, within the first three rings. A Contagonist is an antagonistic character who will get in the protagonist's way, try to lead him astray, and just generally cause conflict and tension. He differs from the antagonist in that he isn't necessarily directly opposed to the protagonist.

The next two rings are for your Antags factions. An antagonist in literature is usually a character or a group of characters that oppose the story's main character, who is known as the protagonist.

The last two rings are for your Big Bad alone.

Examples:
Contagonist: KITT (Total Value: 8)
Antags: JASE, XPAC (11 and 15)
Big Bad: QWESTA, or ZUBANI (18 or 17)

Divide the total value of their tiles points into Test Thresholds. This is the approximate amount (+/- a point) that the player's must defeat in Test Thresholds to move from their current ring to the next ring. So using the example above, Three Rings of 8, Two of 11 and 15, and Two of 18 or 17.

Place them on the board in their appropriate rings, face down. As the players enter a different zone, flip the encountered Faction face up.

Describe the encounter with each faction or faction's proxies. If something is especially pivotal to an encounter, feel free to add the element to the board by spelling it out in tiles. (ie. there's a crowd of people in the way, add CROWD somewhere in the ring). The player's must deal with each thing separately, but don't add the points of these elements to what is needed (unless you want to be especially mean) [insert: optional rule]

Let the player's determine how they tackle each ring, they will gradually get more difficult at things progress.

Use this to come up with the narrative.

[insert: character sheet]