

The Curse of the Whispering Isle

Rulebook

Intro:

Over 50 years ago, the famous pirate, Captain Jake Seagull, and his loyal crew weighed anchor at the Whispering Isle in an effort to bury and protect their treasure they had amassed from multiple successful treasure fleet raids. They took every precaution: they covered their tracks, laid traps, and kept their plans from everyone. Their treasure was buried deep beneath the secrets of the island, but tragedy struck. After burying their treasure, Captain Jake Seagull accidentally set off a diabolical cursed trap, killing his crew and causing his spirit to rip away from his body, dooming him to wander the Whispering Isle for eternity.

In the present day, you learn about this Whispering Isle and the tale of poor Captain Jake Seagull. You gather your fellow treasure seekers and set off on a journey to return his lost spirit to his body and share in the plunder of his treasure.

Game Synopsis:

Captain Jake Seagull knows where his treasure is and what will be necessary to defeat his cursed trap. However, due to his current form, he is unable to speak in eloquent terms. Instead, he gives you clues in the form of puzzles and visions to help you defeat the cursed trap and find the exit of each location.

Using the various actions available to you, traverse the Whispering Isle to find items, lost trinkets and get to the treasure. But, beware! This island fights back!

- Thanks to the cursed trap, Jake's crew have turned into mindless skeleton soldiers and will impede your progress along the way. They run after you if they see you! Don't let them catch you!
- Every grid coordinate on the map is searchable, but not all locations are helpful, and some are even harmful! Watch out for traps!

Initial Game Set-up:

- Shuffle each of the Treasure and Trap decks and place near the game playing area where all players can reach.
- Set out the Curse Tracker and place its counter token on the appropriate space based on the difficulty you are playing:
 - Easy: 0
 - Medium: 3

- Hard: 6
- Dastardly: 9
- Take the “Captain Jake Seagull’s Jolly Roger” Item Card out of the Item Deck and place it to the side for now. Then, shuffle the remaining cards in the Item Deck and place them nearby the other decks.
- Ensure all tokens and figures are near the playing area for easy access when the player playing Captain Jake Seagull sets up the map
- For the player who has decided to be Captain Jake Seagull, they should shuffle the Vision Deck and Lock Deck and place them behind their screen so the other players can’t see.
- Additionally, they should place their surrender flag tokens, reminder tokens, Puzzle Decks, and Narrative Book within reach.
- As a team, decide which game number in the Narrative Book you will be playing. Each game number has different narratives and events to read out when you investigate map coordinates and allow you to change up your game to play something different.
- From here, Captain Jake Seagull can follow the instructions in his section to set up the first map.

Player Actions:

- The goal of the players is to investigate each map to find Puzzle Cards that will help them find the Scenery Card and Exit location of the map. To do this, they have various actions available to them, but can only perform one of them per turn:
 - Move:
 - A player can move up to 2 squares in any orthogonal direction, changing directions as desired. Diagonal movements are not allowed, but you can end up on a square that is diagonal to your original square.
 - A player cannot move through walls or off the edge of the map
 - A player can inhabit the same space as another player or a skeleton
 - It is generally not advisable to inhabit the same square as a skeleton! See **Getting Attacked** in the **Skeletons** section below
 - Investigate:
 - When a player investigates a grid coordinate, Captain Jake will read off the appropriate paragraph from the Narrative Book.
 - All effects from the read paragraph are resolved in order from top to bottom before the next player’s turn
 - If an effect allows a player to draw a card or multiple cards, they draw those cards from the top of the deck.
 - If it is a Trap Card, resolve any effects of the trap before continuing with the next effect from the read paragraph
 - If it is an Item or Treasure Card, the player puts the card in their hand. They can keep these available for other players to see to help with strategizing moves.

- Once the effects have been resolved, place a search token on the square to indicate it has been searched. Once a map square has been investigated, it cannot be investigated again by any player, unless specified otherwise.
- Use Item:
 - If a player is holding an item card in their hand, they may use the item by discarding the card to the item discard pile.
 - All effects of the item should be resolved before the next player's turn.

Captain Jake:

- Captain Jake cannot speak for the entire game. This includes helping players interpret the Vision Cards they play, as well as helping players solve the puzzles they give.
- At the beginning of each map, Captain Jake will do the following actions in order to set up the map:
 - a. Move all tokens and figures on the map off to the side
 - b. Remove the old map from the playing area and replace it with a map from the next set
 - c. Place the player tokens on the start space of the new map
 - d. Draw a Scenery Card and place it in your screen. This is the card the players will collect when they solve the Scenery puzzle and investigate its location
 - e. Draw Lock Cards
 - Assign a random one to the location of the Scenery Card
 - Draw a number of extra Lock Cards as instructed by the map, roll the coordinate dice for each one and secretly assign it to that square
 - If you roll a square that is not compatible, choose the nearest compatible square - your choice if there is a tie (see the map's cheat sheet for compatible squares)
 - For each Lock Card being used on this map randomly select the appropriate Puzzle Cards from the corresponding puzzle decks
 - For each Puzzle Card, roll the coordinate dice and note these locations as places that puzzle cards can be found
 - If you roll a square that is not compatible, choose the nearest compatible square - your choice if there is a tie (see the map's cheat sheet for compatible squares)
 - f. Roll the coordinate dice to place skeletons on the map
 - Each map has a different number of skeletons to place on it as indicated on the map itself
 - A skeleton cannot start on any of the squares orthogonally adjacent to the players' starting square. If this were to happen, re-roll the coordinate dice until you roll a valid starting square.
 - Make sure each skeleton's stats card is available for all players to see
 - g. Roll the direction die for each skeleton to set its initial direction

- Skeletons cannot start facing a direction that would put the players inside their line of sight. If this would happen, rotate that skeleton **CLOCKWISE 90 DEGREES** until it is facing a valid direction
 - h. Draw all necessary Lock cards for the map and set them in the Lock section of your screen
 - One Lock card should be designated for the Exit of the map and another should be designated for the Scenery Card of the map
 - If this is the first map (the Beach), you must take the Ship puzzle set (1 card) for the Exit Lock
 - i. Search through the game box for the Puzzle Cards that correspond to the symbol of the Lock cards you have selected and add them to the slots in your screen beside the Lock section.
 - j. Discard your current hand of Vision Cards and draw a new hand of 5.
- At the beginning of every other round, Captain Jake will survey their available Vision cards to attempt to help the players. These cards are very abstract in nature, but Captain Jake will want to choose one to give to the players to point to a location that will help them find puzzle cards or item cards. Captain Jake has 3 actions available to them:
 - a. Captain Jake can give one of his Vision Cards to the players. Once they have given a Vision Card to the players, they draw back up so they have a hand of 4 cards again.
 - b. Instead of giving a Vision Card to the players, Captain Jake may discard a card from his hand and replace it to draw back up to 4 cards.
 - c. If Captain Jake does not like their entire hand of Vision Cards, they may fly a surrender flag to discard their hand and draw a new hand of 4 cards.
 - Doing this action will still allow Captain Jake to perform either action A or action B above
 - Be warned, though! Captain Jake can only do this a number of times as indicated by the difficulty you are playing on:
 - Easy: Twice per map
 - Medium: Four times
 - Hard: Two times
 - Dastardly: Never
- If there is a card Captain Jake gives to the players that has a Narrative Number in the top right corner of the card, they must read that Narrative number before giving the card to the players, as well as before reading any other Narrative that he may still need to read.
- Once the players have solved the riddle of a card that has a Narrative Number, Captain Jake will read the Unlocked Narrative for that card (if it has any).

Skeletons:

Movement:

- Skeletons are mindless creatures (for the most part) and move erratically. Captain Jake Seagull will control the random movement of each skeleton on the skeletons' turns.
- Captain Jake will roll the direction die and then move the skeleton in that direction a number of squares equal to that skeleton's speed.
 - Note: Peg-leg skeletons cannot move and rotate on the same turn. Captain Jake is encouraged to use the token to indicate whether the skeleton moved or rotated on its previous turn to help him remember
- If a skeleton would ever hit a wall when they still have movement, they turn **CLOCKWISE 90 DEGREES** until they have a direction with which they can move forward.

Vision:

- Each skeleton has its own vision area as indicated by the diagram on their card. Under normal circumstances, all skeletons can see the square directly in front of them, as well as each square to the left and right of the square directly in front of them.
- Regardless of any effects on it, a skeleton can always see its own square.
- Skeletons cannot see through walls (see diagram for examples)
- If a player character ever ends up in a skeleton's vision area, the skeleton will immediately take the shortest path possible with its remaining movement to make it to the player's square
 - Additionally, if a skeleton starts its turn with one or more players inside its line of sight, the skeleton will no longer move randomly. Instead, it will move and rotate as needed along the shortest path to keep the player in their line of sight and eventually make it to their square.
 - If along the way, another player ends up in their line of sight and has a **shorter** path to reach them, the skeleton will change targets.
- If multiple players end up in a skeleton's line of sight simultaneously, the skeleton will always attempt to move to the player who is closest to the skeleton. If there is a tie in that regard, a random player is chosen to move and/or rotate towards. We suggest rolling the direction die or one of the coordinate dies to decide this.

Getting Attacked:

- If a skeleton ends up in the space you occupy, you must spend your next turn killing the skeleton.
- If on your turn, you end up in the same space as a skeleton, you forfeit the rest of your turn and must spend your next turn killing the skeleton. The skeleton will not move on its turn.
- The skeletons themselves are very weak and easy to defeat but killing one imparts a piece of its curse upon you.

- When you kill a skeleton on your turn, remove the skeleton token from the map and increment your team's curse counter on the tracker by 1. See **The Curse Tracker** for more information about its effects on the game.
- Note: some rare item cards may let you kill a skeleton when they are not on your square. In this case, you do not draw from the Curse Deck.

The Curse Tracker:

- Receiving a curse from a skeleton imparts a little piece of the curse that is afflicting them. This curse may not affect your gameplay for the main portion of the game, but it may affect your endgame success with the trap and Captain Jake Seagull's treasure.
- If the counter on the Curse Tracker gets too high and reaches Curse #10 on the tracker, your entire team becomes affected by the curse and is doomed to walk the Whispering Isle like the rest of the skeletons here. Your game is over.
- As long as your Curse Tracker has not reached this point, you always have a chance at freeing Captain Jake Seagull from the curse and recovering his treasure.

Exiting A Map:

- If a player uses their Investigation action on the map location where the exit is located (which Captain Jake can verify when they read the appropriate paragraph), that player has the option of exiting the map on the same turn.
 - Some exits require a puzzle to be solved in order to open the exit. In this case, if that puzzle has not been solved or completed, the player finding the exit cannot exit the map.
- When any player exits a map, all players exit the map as well.
- Players keep any items cards they have as well as any ongoing effects from any traps they encountered.
- If the players found the Scenery Card on the map, they keep this, as it will be needed to defeat the Curse Trap at the end of the game.
- Any puzzle cards the players have are to be discarded. They will not help them on any future map.
- At this point, Captain Jake can start the process of starting a new map.