

Introduction to the Spirit Realm

Psychic Night School is a GM-less roleplaying and drawing game for fans of tarot, astrology, incense, candles, and pretending to be, or actually being, psychic. The game is suitable for two or more players, up to any number, although the run time gets longer with each player added. A standard run takes less than 2 hours, provided you keep the drawing step to half an hour or less.

To play, you'll need:

- A copy of the rules for each player
- A completed character sheet for each player
- Drawing supplies - pen, pencil, eraser - and few sheets of paper
- A pack of cards
- A d100 or percentile dice

Top tip: if you don't have a d100 or percentile dice you can instead take 10 strips of paper and write the numbers 0-9 on them. You can draw them at random from a jar. The first strip drawn will be the first digit, the multiple of 10, the second will complete your number from 1-100. When you draw the 0 twice that signifies 100.

Creating your Psychic

You can play any sort of person you like - any gender, age, race, orientation. The one thing all characters will have in common is that they've decided to take a night school class advertised as *"Introduction to the Spirit Realm with Madame Charlotte-Ann"*.

You might already have a strong idea in mind for the type of person you'd like to portray, or you might be drawing a complete blank. Never fear! The character sheet will guide you through the process and there are no complex calculations or stats to track. There's a blank copy at the end of this document.

On your character sheet you'll find some basics to fill in - name, age, star sign. Then there's a field for your character's "storyline". Here you'll add a key conflict for your character. It may be a big life event like the start or end of a relationship, or it might be some sort of identity crisis. It may even be the thing that brought them to this class. Every character needs some personal drama. This game works best with characters who have secrets to reveal, giving your fellow psychics more to uncover and work with in their readings.

Some ideas for storylines:

- Recently divorced farmer who's always been able to see fairies
- Part-time social media influencer looking for signs of future success
- Quirky outsider with a tragic family history

Once you have your central storyline you should be ready to tackle the great big wheel you see below. This is where we get into detail. We'll use a simplified version of an **astrological chart** to construct a well-rounded backstory for your trainee psychic.

What's an Astrological Chart?

An astrological chart is a map of the sky at a given moment in time - usually a person's time of birth. Charts are circular and divide the sky into twelve sections, or "houses", which govern different aspects of life. It's said that the placement of the planets in these houses on the day a person is born determines their personality and their future.

You'll see that each of the twelve sections on your chart is labelled with an aspect of your psychic's life. Fill in each section with some relevant details of your character's story. You don't need to write a lot, although your classmates may ask you questions about any of these houses later so each segment needs a few juicy details.

Stuck for ideas? Here are some suggestions:

For...	Fill in...
1 st - House of Self	Some more little details about your character. Their hair colour, their favourite food, maybe their strongest personality trait?

2 nd - House of Wealth	What's their proudest possession? How rich are they? Did they grow up wealthy and then fall on hard times? Or is theirs a rags-to-riches story.
3 rd - House of Community	Where do they come from, both literally and spiritually? Are they a geek or a goth? Did they grow up in the mountains or on the coast? What's their hometown?
4 th - House of Family	Who is their family? Chosen families count! What's their grandpa's name? How many kids or pets do they have?
5 th - House of Romance	What's their relationship status? Their orientation? Their crush's first name?
6 th - House of Health	Are they an athlete or do they suffer from ill health? Or both?
7 th - House of Partnership	Are they married? Divorced? Avowedly single? Do they have a business partner they see so often they may as well get married?
8 th - House of Change	What's something big that's happening in their life right now?
9 th - House of Knowledge	What's their specialist subject? Do they have an obscure passion or hobby? Favourite trivia topic?
10 th - House of Career	What's their day job? Is there something else they'd rather be doing? Are they training to do something exciting?
11 th - House of Friendship	Social butterfly or gentle hermit? Perhaps they have one best friend they tell everything to?
12 th - House of Secrets	Something your character has never told anyone before. The skeletons in their closet!

First Day at Psychic Night School

It's time to introduce your character to their classmates. When the session starts everyone should go around and describe their entrance into the classroom. What does your character look like? What are they wearing? Do they make a beeline for the back of the room or stride confidently to the front? Do they sit near others or as far away as possible? Do they strike up a conversation or does everyone sit awkwardly in silence, waiting for the teacher?

Pick someone to read the scene setting text aloud.

Scene setting text

Madame Charlotte-Ann sweeps into the room a few minutes late trailing silk scarves which waft a spicy odour of incense and stale tobacco into the air. She's everything you expected from a Psychic Night School teacher, from her heavily-lined eyes to her sandaled toes. She stops at

the front of the room and turns to eye you all intently, one-by-one, as if she's trying to read your small print.

"The spirits," she announces, "are among us. They follow our every move, hungry for knowledge with which to impress their masters. And who are their masters?"

She pauses a little too long. People shuffle in their seats. Someone at the back of the room clears their throat nervously.

"You all," she gestures around the room, palm up, "could be they."

She reaches into her satchel and pulls out a stack of papers. She passes them to the student nearest to her and gestures to pass them around.

"Here are your instructions. Read them carefully. The rest should come naturally, I already sense the mystic energy pouring out of you. Goodbye!"

And with that she sweeps back out, leaving you to your own devices.

The Instructions

The class will follow four steps or stages. First we break the ice, then we test our connection to the spirit realm, then we prepare our cards, and then we perform our readings. Don't forget the RP in RPG. Try to stay in character as much as possible!

Step one: Break the ice

Everyone should take a turn introducing themselves to the group. Tell the class your name, age, star sign, and something interesting about you.

Now that you're all acquainted you can ask each other as many questions as you like. Over the course of this class you'll get to know your fellow psychics through idle chit chat and sneaky mind-reading. The more details you pick up on, the better your final reading will be. You should know, though, that you will be receiving a reading as well as giving one. So if you want to be top of the class it pays to keep the competition guessing. A true psychic cultivates an air of mystery, so make the other students work for the details of your chart!

Step two: Test your Connection

The spirits are fickle. Some days they crowd around, clamouring to aid you in your endeavours, while some days they abandon you entirely. Even the most gifted psychic cannot guarantee their cooperation. We measure the strength of our connection to their realm on a given day in **spirit points**, measured using a simple parlour trick.

Each psychic should be dealt a hand of seven cards. It's okay if these are all from different decks, as long as they're standard playing cards pulled at random with the jokers removed. Over three rounds of play you'll make guesses about the contents of the other psychics' hands. When you make a guess about someone's hand they must tell you honestly whether you guessed correctly. Similarly if someone is guessing about your hand you must tell the truth. No cheating. Also, no repeating the same guess for more points. The spirits shy away from liars and know-it-alls!

Everyone starts with **5 spirit points**. You'll gain extra points for every correct guess you make. The more specific the guess, the more spirit points you stand to win. Like so:

If you guess...	You will gain...
Dominant colour, eg. "red"	3 spirit points
Dominant suit, eg. "diamonds" (tied suits count as dominant)	5 spirit points
Specific numbered card, eg. "five" or "ace"	7 spirit points
Highest or lowest numbered card, eg. "queen" or "two" (aces are low)	9 spirit points
Specific card, eg. "queen of diamonds" or "two of clubs"	11 spirit points

Take turns until everyone has guessed three times. Make a note of your spirit points as they rack up. You'll need these in the next exercise.

Step three: Prepare your reading

Now you have your pool of spirit points, it's time to prepare your reading. Sit in a circle, or write your names around a circle on a piece of paper. You'll each be performing a three-card tarot reading for the psychic to your left, aka your practice "client".

What is tarot?

Tarot cards have been used for hundreds of years by psychics and witches to predict fortunes. A traditional deck has 78 cards. 56 of these are similar to standard playing cards, but with swords, cups, pentacles, and wands as their suits rather than spades, hearts, diamonds, and clubs. These are known as the Minor Arcana. The other 22 cards are referred to as the Major Arcana and feature archetypal characters like The Fool, The Empress, The Lovers, and Death. Every card, whether Minor or Major, has a specific meaning which applies when it appears in a reading.

There are many traditional styles of reading in which the reader lays out cards in different, sometimes quite complex, patterns or "spreads". When it appears in a spread, a tarot card's meaning is altered somewhat by its position in relation to others. In this class we'll be using one of the simpler spreads: a three-card spread in which the first card drawn represents an individual's past, the second their present, and the third their future.

You'll notice you haven't been given any tarot cards. Not to worry. You'll be making your own cards for this reading. One card to represent your client's past, one their present, and one their future. What these cards look like will be determined by your creative skills and by what **arcane symbols** the spirits offer you. You will use your spirit points to bargain with the spirits for arcane symbols to use on your cards.

It costs more to coax a specific symbol from the spirits than it does to take what they offer of their own free will. Look at the arcane symbols listed in the d100 table. It costs 1 spirit point to roll for a symbol at random off this list. Alternatively you can spend 2 points to use a symbol of your choice which doesn't appear on the list.

Once you've paid for a symbol you can use it as many times as you like within the design for one card, but you must pay again to use it on another. So, for example, Zantar pays 1 spirit point, rolls on the d100 table, and receives a fox symbol from the spirits. He can make one card with many foxes on it, but he can't add a fox to another card unless he pays another spirit point.

Your cards can have a background - like a rolling field or crashing waves - but the only items or creatures you can use are those you purchased. Make your cards as elaborate as you like within these limits and remember to give them names.

Look deeper

You may want to reserve some spirit points for their other purpose: gathering information on your fellow psychics by reading their mind.

During the Preparation and Reading steps you should be chatting in-character with your fellow psychics, trying to learn as much as you can about them. Sometimes you'll hit upon some interesting information about your client, something that they want to keep hidden. In these situations you can spend 1 spirit point to **look deeper**, using your psychic powers to pick up more information from their thoughts.

When you do read deeper, you name the house you want to interrogate on the other psychic's chart and that player will offer up some of the information they have written there. If someone reads deeper into your character, you don't have to tell them everything! Just a snippet, a brief psychic transmission - you're all new to this, after all.

For example, Steve is curious about whether May has siblings, but finds that she doesn't want to answer questions about that when he asks directly. He thinks there might be a mystery there and says: "I want to read deeper and interrogate May's Family house." May will answer with some of the relevant information from her character sheet, although she doesn't have to read the full contents of her Family house. For instance, May has a twin sister that she doesn't get along with. She might choose to reveal to Steve that she has a twin, but she doesn't have to go into details about their fight.

If someone reads deeper into your character and you don't have the information they're looking for written down, feel free to make something up. Improvisation is part of the fun!

Step four: Perform your reading

Once all of the psychics have prepared their cards the readings can begin. A psychic may volunteer to go first, or you can go in alphabetical name-order. The reader - the psychic whose turn it is - lays out their cards for their client one-by-one: the past, then the present, then the future. They explain each card's meaning in as much mystic detail as they can muster as they reveal.

The client can ask questions of their reader as the reading progresses, although they should avoid interrupting them mid-description. The reader may also choose to pause the reading at any point to spend some of their remaining spirit points on interrogating the client's birth chart for hints.

Tips for reading: keep it vague at first, watch your clients reactions, expand when they seem most interested. When you reveal a card, give its name and describe several potential interpretations of it. If you're intuitive you might pick up on which interpretation resonates with the client by watching closely or listening carefully to their questions. Follow your instincts and expand when you think you have them hooked. Use what you know about them!

Scoring

Once the reading is complete and the client has no more questions, the scoring begins. All the reader's psychic classmates rate them from 0-3 in three categories: **Cards**, **Performance**, and **Accuracy**. It's the client's job to gather the scores from the other psychics. You should use

private messages or folded slips of paper to keep the scores secret. No psychic vendettas forming here, please!

The client's scores carry the most weight, so they should multiply their scores in each category by 3 before adding those collected from the other players to reach the final totals in the three categories. These three totals are presented to the reader at the end of the session and act as their report card for this class.

Cool Down

After communing with the spirit realm you may be exhausted or you may be thrilled and energised. Either way, you should take some time at the end of class to talk with your fellow players. Some things you might discuss before you part ways:

- What stories did you uncover?
- What stories did you miss?
- What interested you about each others' characters?
- What details about your character did you wish you'd had more time to explore?
- Who was spookily accurate?
- Who gave a really convincing performance?
- Which was your favourite card?

Arcane Symbols d100 Table

1	Angel	35	Goblet	69	Poison
2	Apple	36	Gold	70	Prince
3	Axe	37	Grapes	71	Princess
4	Bee	38	Grim Reaper	72	Queen
5	Book	39	Hawk	73	Rat
6	Bow and arrow	40	Helmet	74	Raven
7	Bread	41	Hermit	75	Rabbit
8	Butterfly	42	Honey	76	Rose
9	Canon	43	Horse	77	Saturn
10	Castle	44	Hourglass	78	Shark
11	Cat	45	House	79	Sheep
12	Clown	46	Hydra	80	Shepherd
13	Coal	47	Ice	81	Silver
14	Coin	48	Jupiter	82	Snake
15	Comet	49	Kettle	83	Soldier
16	Cow	50	King	84	Spoon
17	Compass	51	Knight	85	Spider
18	Crone	52	Leprechaun	86	Star
19	Crow	53	Lightning	87	Stone
20	Crown	54	Lily	88	Storm
21	Dagger	55	Lion	89	Strawberry
22	Daisy	56	Mars	90	Sun
23	Diamond	57	Medusa	91	Sword
24	Dog	58	Mercury	92	Temple
25	Dolphin	59	Mermaid	93	Tiger
26	Dragon	60	Moon	94	Unicorn
27	Dragonfly	61	Mother	95	Vampire
28	Eagle	62	Neptune	96	Venus
29	Earth	63	Owl	97	Water
30	Fairy	64	Paper	98	Wine
31	Fox	65	Peach	99	Witch
32	Fire	66	Pegasus	100	Wolf
33	Gauntlet	67	Pig		
34	Ghost	68	Pluto		

Psychic Night School

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Character Name (Pronouns)

Age

Star Sign

Player Name (Pronouns)

Storyline:

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