

DIXONARY RULES
as of January 4, 1990

Introduction

These Rules may be amended from time to time, upon the motion or with the consent of RULES MOTHER (Theresa Wilkinson Carey 73167,67) or, in case of her absence or inability to act, RULES POPPA (Anders R. Sterner 74076,404). There will be full discussion of proposed Rules, but the rulemaking process is not democratic and their decision is final. Amendments will be effective only with respect to rounds beginning after a RULES.FIC file containing those amendments has been posted in Library 17 of the TAPCIS forum and its presence announced by the Sysops.

You will note that nearly all of the Rules are procedural, to insure an orderly progress of play and spare the newcomer embarrassment, and carry no penalty other than what follows inevitably from, for instance, posting your definition in public. The substantive rules are very few, and the most important of those is contained in section 6. General philosophy: "the fewer substantive rules, the better."

The purpose of the game is to have fun, not to play lawyer with the rules. These Rules explain the spirit of the game, for those who want to play it and are concerned not with sailing close to the line, but with knowing clearly what that spirit is. If amassing points starts to be of more than secondary importance to you, you need a break. Interpretations of the Rules, in the form of advisory opinions, are available publicly or privately from RULES MOTHER and RULES POPPA.

The Rules

1. DA WINNAH of the last round deals, and cannot play in, the current round.
 - (a) The dealer begins the round by selecting from any accepted dictionary a word the players are not likely to know ("The word"), and posting it publicly here.
 - (b) Excuses for not dealing founded on personal emergency have been accepted.
 - (c) If DA WINNAH fails to announce The New Word within 24 hours, the obligation falls to a new WINNAH selected by application of the tie-breaking rules in section 9 below.
2. When a round is in progress, if any situation arises which is not disposed of by these Rules, the dealer has authority to resolve the question in such manner as seems to him or her equitable.
 - (a) After completion of the round, the dealer shall describe the situation, and his or her ruling on it, and open the matter for discussion.
 - (b) Whether the dealer's ruling or some other is finally adopted by the Rules, the dealer's ruling is law of the case for that specific round.
3. Players then send the dealer their fictitious definitions of The word.
 - (a) As part of posting The word, the dealer also specifies a deadline for submitting definitions to the dealer BY EASYPLEX.
 - (b) The deadline shall be not less than 24 nor more than 36 hours from the time of posting The word, and shall specify the applicable time zone (e.g., EDT).
 - (c) It is advisable to use the same subject line for the Easyplex message as the dealer used for posting The Word. If you are using TAPCIS and have Easyplex active as Forum 1, one way to do that is press "C" instead of "R" and select Easyplex directly for your reply. The subject line and addressee are picked up automatically.

- (d) If you know The word, you may still offer a fictitious definition, although you are both excused and disabled from voting in that round (see section 6). Your fictitious definition must not bear any resemblance to the true definition. In such a case, you should also inform the dealer that you do know The word, so he or she will not wait in vain for your vote.
4. As soon as may be after the submission deadline, the dealer shall post all fictitious definitions received, with the real one, and a repetition of The word.
- (a) Definitions will be edited only sufficiently to achieve general similarity of form.
 - (b) The real definition should stick as closely as reasonably possible to the official wording and format.
 - (c) If the dealer is confronted with two definitions very close to one another, the dealer may in her or his discretion combine them.
 - (1) If one (or any) of those definitions is the true definition of The word, any votes for the combined definition result in a point for the fictitious definition, and two points for the voter, except that the author of the fictitious definition gets no points for voting for the combined definition.
 - (2) If all components of the combined definition were fictitious, any vote for the definition (other than by the authors) gives each author a point.
 - (d) That message shall also set a voting deadline of not less than 24 nor more than 36 hours, again specifying the applicable time zone.
5. Players, whether or not they have submitted definitions, then vote for the definition(s) they think to be the true one.
- (a) VOTES ARE CAST PUBLICLY BY REPLY TO THE MESSAGE POSTING THE DEFINITIONS. The dealer has discretion to ignore any vote not cast in that manner.
 - (b) Each player, whether or not submitting a definition, has two votes.
 - (c) You may offer commentary, honest or misleading or both, explaining the "reasoning" by which you arrived at your votes, without regard to the effect such commentary may have upon any particular submission.
6. IF AT *ANY* TIME BEFORE YOU VOTE YOU COME, BY *ANY* MEANS, TO KNOW THE DEFINITION OF *THE WORD*, YOU ARE DISQUALIFIED FROM VOTING AND FROM OFFERING COMMENTARY. If you have submitted a definition, you should advise the dealer by Easyplex of your disability.
7. You *may* use a dictionary to help you make up fictitious definitions, and to look up words used in the definitions offered.
- (a) You will probably find using the dictionary to be almost useless.
 - (b) By doing so, you take upon yourself the risk of inadvertently disqualifying yourself under Rule 6 above. Suppose, for instance, one of the offered definitions of "padnag" is simply "a morwong." If you look up "morwong" and it says "padnag," you've had it.
8. The round concludes.
- (a) The dealer ends the round on the earlier to occur of:

- (1) the arrival of the deadline for voting, or
 - (2) all those submitting definitions, and not disabled or excused, having voted (or as soon after the second condition has been satisfied as the dealer elects to declare the polls closed).
- (b) Scoring follows:
- (1) You get one point for each vote (other than your own) for your definition, and two points if you happen to vote for the true definition.
 - (2) There is a cumulative rolling 5-round score, as well as an overall cumulative score reaching all the way back to "keckle."
- (c) Upon ending the round, the dealer posts all definitions, their authors, those who voted for them, and the resulting scores.
- (d) The scorekeeper posts the resulting cumulative scores as soon thereafter as may be.
- (e) The dealer also announces DA WINNAH, applying the rules set forth below. A new round begins.
9. Dealing has the effect of a penalty. In the best of all possible worlds you would consistently finish second in each round. Therefore, in case two or more persons get the same highest score in a round:
- (a) DA WINNAH is the person in the tie who has the highest score, not counting points acquired for guessing the right definition; or,
 - (b) If two or more of such persons remain tied for WINNAH after application of the foregoing rule, DA WINNAH is the person in the tie of those surviving after application of the foregoing rule who has the then-highest 5-game rolling score (including the results of that round); or,
 - (c) If two or more of such persons remain tied for WINNAH after application of the foregoing rule, DA WINNAH is the person in the tie of those surviving after application of the foregoing rule then having the highest cumulative score since and including "keckle"; or
 - (d) If that doesn't break the tie, DA WINNAH is the *last* of those still tied to submit that round's fictitious definition to the dealer.
10. Players may join and leave the game at will.
- (a) By leaving, you penalize yourself, because you get points both by creating convincing definitions and by guessing the correct one. More important, you miss some of the fun. If it isn't fun, you won't miss it, and you're not penalizing yourself.
 - (b) Unless disabled from voting by knowing The word (see section 6), or overwhelmed by pressing personal matters, you have a moral obligation to vote (and to cast the full number of votes permitted) if you submit a definition (for otherwise it would be a possible strategy only to submit definitions and never to vote, thereby never giving any other players any votes).
 - (c) You *may* vote even if you have not submitted a definition.