



1-5 30 MIN 7+ AGES



ILLITERATI™

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It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of illiteracy, it was the age of... the Illiterati. The ancients tell of a time when anyone could freely ascend to a mythical building called a "Library" and acquire any book for one's personal literary pleasure. But that all changed when an evil, secret organization called the Illiterati emerged from the shadows and took over the world in the blink of an eye. Their mission: to spread illiteracy. Their means: the destruction of all books. Their motive: because reading is hard and knowledge is power.

And yet, it is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good book must be in want of... more books.

You've been inducted into a legendary order known as the League of Librarians, the guardians of truth and knowledge. You've sworn an oath of literacy, and thus, it is your sacred duty to preserve books for future generations. But the Illiterati will do everything in their power to eviscerate your vowels, confound your consonants, and butcher your books. One wrong move may spell disaster, but we'll see who has the final word.

Semper Lectio Librarians!

OBJECT OF THE GAME

You and your fellow Librarians must work together to save the world from illiteracy by spelling words and binding books, all while surviving the onslaught of the Illiterati. Each player must bind 1 red book and 1 blue book before everyone tackles the "Final Chapter" together.

COMPONENT LIST



Total Letter Tiles x144

Torched Books (Red) x20



Waterlogged Books (Blue) x20



3-Minute Timer x1



Burn Tracker x1



Villain Cards x25



Bags x2

Library Cards x5

Player Chart x1

CHOOSE YOUR DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Illiterati can be played on **Normal**, **Hard**, or **Legendary** mode. We suggest you begin on **Normal** mode.

- DIFFICULTY LEVELS -					
	1-2	2-5	NORMAL	HARD	LEGENDARY
LETTERS PER ROUND			10 7	10 7	10 7
1 LIBRARY LIMIT			3	2	1
2 BURNED LETTERS ALLOWED			3	2	1
3 # OF BOOKS PER PLAYER			2	4	6
4 CLEAR LIBRARY FOR FINAL CHAPTER			No	Yes	Yes

1. The **max number of unused letters** your team can have at the end of each round.
2. The **number of letters your team can burn** before losing.
3. The **number of books each player must bind** before the team tackles the "Final Chapter" together.
4. **Clearing the Library** means using all available letters (i.e. having no unused letters) when binding the Final Chapter.

SETUP

Don't like reading?
That makes two of us!
Scan this to watch a
how-to-play video.



1. **Library Card:** Deal a **Library Card** to each player.
Front: Legend/Book Guide. *Back:* Round Order Guide.

2. **Player Chart:** Set to the side for reference.
Front: Difficulty Levels. *Back:* Letter Count Distribution.

3. **Letter Supply:** Place letters in one bag. The other bag will be used to store discarded letters.

4. **Book Decks:** Deal one **Torched Book** (red) faceup to each player. Keep the decks separated and place them off to the side.

5. **Letters:** a) Deal a starting hand of 5 letters to each player. b) Players will draw more letters at the beginning of each round (see page 4).

6. **Library:** Place 3 letters faceup in the middle of the play area.

7. **Illiterati Villain Play Area:** Place the **Illiterati Villain Deck** facedown next to the **Book Decks**. As **Illiterati Villain** cards are played, place them faceup here. Cards from the same villain are placed on top of each other so that you can still read all previous villain powers.

8. **Burn Tracker:** Place near **Illiterati Villain Deck**. Add pre-drawn letters if playing **Hard** or **Legendary** mode (see *Burn Tracker* on page 5).

9. **Timer:** Place timer within view of all players and begin gameplay.

IMPORTANT - First time playing? Don't worry about working on your book during round 1. Just focus on **surviving** (i.e. using all available letters to form **any** words — even words that aren't related to your book).

OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

If we dig through all these torn pages, we can still salvage some of these books before the Illiterati destroy them.

Illiterati is played simultaneously in real time because in the battle against illiteracy . . . time is of the essence. Each round is composed of 3 phases that will repeat until game end.

1. WORD BUILDING PHASE: Draw letters and spell words.

2. BOOK BINDING PHASE: Burn excess unused letters and turn in any completed books.

3. ILLITERATI ATTACK PHASE: Draw an **Illiterati Villain** and resolve its effects.

VICTORY: Each player must first bind their own books. Then, all players must work together by tackling one epic book together called the **Final Chapter** (see page 6).

DEFEAT: All players lose if too many letters are burned (see chart on page 2) or the **Illiterati Villain Deck** is emptied.

IMPORTANT - You will often have to spell words that are unrelated to your book to survive to the next round. Each round you'll receive more letters, making it easier to complete your book. Letters carry over from round to round.

GAMEPLAY

1. WORD BUILDING PHASE

Most of the books were destroyed by the Illiterati, but we were able to salvage a few pages here and there.

Draw letters and work together to form words.

1. DRAW LETTERS

- Draw letters from the draw bag.
 - 10 letters (1 player) or 7 letters each (2-5 players)
- Later on, if the draw bag runs out, the discard bag becomes the draw bag and vice versa. Repeat as necessary.

2. FORM WORDS

- You have 2 goals in this phase:
 - First and foremost, **SURVIVE**. Do this by using all your team's letters without exceeding the **Library Limit**. You will need to form words unrelated to your book's objective.
 - Work towards the objective on the **left side** of your book. (Ignore the Final Chapter for now.)
- When ready, start the 3-minute timer and form words using your letters (see *Valid Words* on page 6).

IMPORTANT - You can break up your words at any time to form new words and/or give away letters.

- Players can freely move letters and even entire words amongst one another.
- You may not take or touch another player's letters without their consent.
- Anyone can store and use letters in the **Library**.
- At the end of the Book Binding Phase, each player cannot have more than 8 words.

THE LIBRARY

- The **Library** is a **communal area** where leftover letters can be stored and freely accessed for future use.
- Letters in the **Library** do not belong to any player and are **immune** to all Illiterati attacks unless otherwise stated.
- The **Library Limit** is the maximum number of unused letters the team can have at the end of each round.



Leftover letters go in Library

2. BOOK BINDING PHASE

If against all odds, we actually manage to bind a book, just imagine what we could learn.

Burn and salvage unused letters. Bind completed books.

1. VERIFY WORDS

- Once time is up, **verify that each player's words are "valid"** (see Valid Words on page 6).
- If there are any invalid words, unused letters, or misspelled words, move them into the **Library**.
- If you exceed the **Library Limit**, then you have been caught by the Illiterati and must do the following:

2. BURN AND SALVAGE LETTERS (if applicable)

- Burn:** Flip over all the letters in the **Library**. Randomly select 1 letter and place it on the **Burn Tracker**. This letter is now permanently removed from the game. *If you fill up the Burn Tracker, you lose the game.*
- Salvage:** Flip the remaining letters in the **Library** faceup. Save letters equal to the **Library Limit** (e.g. up to 3 in Normal Mode). Discard the rest.
- Additionally, if any player has more than 8 words, they must do the following:
 - Discard down to 8 words.
 - Burn 1 letter from the discarded letters.



- In order to bind *Mammal Menagerie* (above), you need to spell "animals" using *at least 8 letters*. **You can spell as many words as needed.** Additionally, this book requires that at least 3 of your letters be .
 - If there's debate over whether a word counts, all players vote and simple majority wins. If there's a tie, the word is deemed invalid.
- Flip over your completed book. Great job!
- Now draw a different-colored book than the one you just finished.
- If you finish binding all your books before your teammates do, you no longer draw books. However, you can still draw letters and help them with their books.
- Once everyone has bound all their individual books, move on to the **Final Chapter** in an attempt to win the game (see page 6).

BURN TRACKER

Place burned letters on the tracker. When the raven is covered, you lose.

- NORMAL:** Start game with no slots filled.
- HARD:** Draw 1 random letter and fill slot 1.
- LEGENDARY:** Draw 2 random letters and fill slots 1 and 2.



3. BIND BOOKS (if applicable)

- If any letters were burned this round, no one may bind books this round. **(All for one or none for all!)**
- In order to bind a book, you must form words that meet your book's requirements. Turn in the required words by placing them into the discard bag. Keep any remaining words you may have.

3. ILLITERATI ATTACK PHASE

The Illiterati are relentless in their assault upon the forces of literacy. We need to move fast because the longer our operation takes, the stronger the Illiterati become.

Draw an **Illiterati Villain** and survive its attack.

- DRAW AN ILLITERATI VILLAIN:** Place it in the **Illiterati Villain Play Area** and resolve its effect.

2. **CHAIN ATTACK:** If the same villain has already attacked, stack the new one on top of the previous ones. This triggers all of that villain's previous powers from the most recent to the oldest.



Trigger powers from top to bottom

- 1
Newest matching Villain cards go to the top of the stack



The round is now finished. All leftover letters and words carry over into the next round. Repeat the 3 phases until all players bind the required number of books.

THE FINAL CHAPTER

There's one last book we need to bind, and it's going to be more dangerous than anything we've faced. It all comes down to this.

Once each player has bound all of their books, the team must bind one last book together called . . . the **Final Chapter**. Gameplay continues as before (i.e. repeating the 3 phases as needed) with 2 notable exceptions:



She was the reddest vowel they had ever seen, which caused all the other plain consonants in the Alphabet Village to punctuate her.

1. Draw 1 book **as a team** from a Book Deck of your choice. Read the **Final Chapter (right side) aloud**.
2. Each player must complete the **Final Chapter** as if it were their own book. In order to win the game, all players must bind the **Final Chapter during the same round**. If even **one** player is unable to complete it, then no one can turn in the book that round. (i.e. **Everyone** must wait until the next round to try again.)

VALID WORDS

A word or not a word? That is the question.

Use the following rules to determine whether a word is valid:

RULE #1: Words must be found in an agreed-upon dictionary.

RULE #2: Words must be at least 3 letters long.

RULE #3: You cannot use proper nouns, acronyms, prefixes, suffixes, contractions, or words that require a hyphen.

RULE #4: YOU MAY BREAK RULES #1-3 if you are spelling words that match your book's objective.

- a. For example, if you need to spell "movies, TV shows, and theater productions" in order to bind *Fandom of the Soap Opera*, you may break rules #1-3 in order to spell things such as "A Bug's Life" or "CSI Miami."

IMPORTANT - You may look up words in the dictionary while playing, but you cannot stop the timer to do so.

REDRAW RULE

When life gives you LMNS...



Once per round, during the **Word Building Phase**, your team may **discard up to 7 letters** in order to **draw an equal number** of new letters. However, in order to do so, you must also draw an **extra Illiterati Villain** at the end of the Illiterati Attack Phase and resolve it. This extra villain **does not** trigger chain attacks.

Note: Do not pause the timer when trading in letters.

LETTERS AND SYMBOLS

A cloud by any other name... would spell defeat.

Most letters have  (symbols) on them.

Each  represents a different narrative element, like adventure or drama. In order to successfully bind a book, you must not only form particular words, but in many cases, you must also make sure you have the correct .

SYMBOL TYPES

These  represent four different literary elements in a story.



HEART
(Drama)



SWORD
(Conflict)



CLOUD
(Tragedy)




COMPASS
(Adventure)

LETTER TYPES




STANDARD LETTERS (48)

Does not have any .




SYMBOL LETTERS (88)

22 of each .




WILD LETTERS (5)

Can be any  at any time, including during an Illiterati attack.



WILD BLANKS (3)

Can be any letter and any  at any time, including during an Illiterati attack (unless changing the letter makes the word invalid).

PANDEMONIUM POWERS

We just received word that Professor Absalom Faust has a new trick up his sleeve.

Tired of word games that take themselves too seriously? Looking for something that will add both chaos and comedy?

Then try the optional challenge of Pandemonium Powers!

Whenever an Illiterati Villain **chain attacks for the first time**, their **Pandemonium Power** is triggered. This applies only to the upcoming round.



PROFESSOR ABSALOM FAUST:
THE GLORIOUS LEADER

Tower of Babble

All Players must only speak in accents (the more outrageous the better).



FIORA IRONCLAD:
THE WELDER

Too Hot to Handle

Choose 1 player. They cannot use their hands this round.



MINERVA FANTINE:
THE HEADMISTRESS

Cat Got Your Tongue?

All players must whisper.



PERSEPHONE VILE & FURBERUS:
THE TERRIBLE TWOSOME

The Fast and the Furriest

Each player must use their non-dominant hand. **OR** Each player can't use their thumbs.



BASTILLE MALVADO:
THE CORSAIR

An Eye for an "I"

If you do not have 2 I's, you must cover 1 of your eyes with 1 of your hands.

SOLO MODE

Oftentimes the best librarians are those that have spent ample time alone.

Illiterati isn't just a great cooperative game, but it's also a great solo game! The only difference is that you draw 10 letters each round instead of 7.

JUNIOR MODE

A junior sized journey for our little librarians.

Recommended for younger readers. Junior mode is played with the following modifications:

1. Remove the 3-minute timer.
2. Illiterati do not chain attack.
3. Players win once all players have completed 2 books. (i.e. no **Final Chapter**)

LIBRARIAN VS LIBRARIAN (PVP MODE)

Sometimes the best way to hone one's skills is to practice against the very best.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Be the first team to bind 5 books.

SETUP

1. Divide players (6 max) into equal teams (1v1, 2v2, 1v1v1, etc.)
2. Deal a starting hand of 5 letters to each player.
3. Each team has its own **Library**. Deal 3 letters faceup for each **Library**.
4. Place 3 red books in the middle. All teams are working to bind the same books.

WORD BUILDING PHASE

5. Each player draws 7 letters (10 letters for single player teams) and starts forming words. The same 3-minute timer applies.
6. **Early Finish Bonus:** A team may choose to finish its Word Building Phase early by loudly declaring "Illiterati!" The first team to do this immediately draws 3 random **Bonus Letters** from the bag and decides which ones to keep (up to 3). This team **can no longer touch their letters this round.** Other teams finish the round as normal. **Bonus Letters** must be put off to the side until the next round and are unaffected by the upcoming Illiterati attack.

BOOK BINDING PHASE

7. Verify words are valid. Burn and salvage unused letters as usual. Teams no longer lose by burning too many letters. However, remember that you **cannot** bind a book if you burned a letter earlier that round.
8. **Your team may bind multiple books in the same round;** however, your team can only bind each book once. If multiple teams bind the same book in the same round, then each team scores. Keep score on a separate sheet of paper.
9. Once a book is bound, remove it and replace it with a different colored book.

IMPORTANT - When binding books, the opposing teams get to judge whether your words are valid! Majority rules. In the event of a tie, the word in question is deemed invalid.

ILLITERATI ATTACK PHASE

10. Draw an **Illiterati Villain** and attack all teams individually. Illiterati villains **do not chain attack.**

END OF GAME

11. When any team completes 5 or more books, the game ends. The team with the most books wins. If there's a tie, the team with fewer burned letters wins. If there's still a tie, the team with more leftover letters wins. For a longer game, you can play up to 7 books.



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