

Rulebook



**HERE
LIES**



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OVERVIEW

Here Lies is a cooperative mystery-solving game for 2–5 players. Each game session will involve one ‘case’ to be solved by the players concerning the deceased ‘Subject’ through clues, deduction, questions, and creativity.

One player will be the **Lead Investigator**, who will set up and know the entirety of the case, including the answers (represented by underlined words in the case text). Other players, known as **Investigators**, will spend precious Time tokens to use cards that reveal case information. The Investigators will have many chances to discuss possible solutions, while the Lead Investigator attempts to guide them toward correct guesses.

At the end of the game, the Investigators make one final pitch, which is scored by the Lead Investigator when the whole case is read aloud.

While a two-player game is possible, note that the challenge is significantly higher.

COMPONENTS

- 1 Rulebook
- 1 Campaign Book
- 5 Character Decks (11 cards each)
- 16 Category Mini Clue Cards
- 10 Ally Mini Clue Cards
- 10 All-Blank Mini Clue Cards
- 6 Large Information Cards
- 1 Body Diagram Playmat
- 2 Dry-Erase Markers
- 18 Guess Tokens
- 9 Time Tokens



All cards are dry-erase safe, but the canvas mat is not!



GAME SET-UP

Choose a Lead Investigator. The remaining players are simply Investigators. (The Lead Investigator role is challenging. Experienced or brave players should take this role when possible).

Only the Lead Investigator should look at the Campaign Book.

Place the playmat in the middle of the play area.

Each Investigator chooses a character, taking the Character card and the ten Inquiry cards with the matching icon. Place the Character card in front of you (ability-down) and shuffle the cards to form your individual draw decks (do not worry about cards being face-up or face-down). Place the deck underneath your Character card.

Each Investigator then draws cards from their deck based on player count.

Note that some cases require or prohibit certain characters from being used.

Two Investigators = 6 cards each
Three Investigators = 4 cards each
Four Investigators = 3 cards each

If you only have one Investigator playing, they will use two Investigator decks, drawing six cards from each deck.

Your hand of cards is not private and can be placed face up for all players to see. Note that both sides of the card may be important. This is a cooperative game, and you will be able to play cards from any player's hand in any order.

The Lead Investigator also takes a Character and their matching Inquiry cards. They place the Character card next to them with their ability face-up and ready to use, but the Inquiry cards for this Character will not be used during this case. They can be returned to the game box along with any unused Character decks.

If you have any Allies, keep them near their associated Character cards.

Place the Category cards, Key Evidence cards, unused mini cards near the play area. All unused mini cards double as clue cards.

Each case will have different setup requirements. Follow the general instructions for the case setup in the next section, and any case-specific setup from the case itself in the Campaign Book.

Players may use scrap paper to take notes while playing, or write on the Note Information cards.

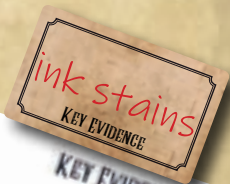
Once the basics are set up, the Lead Investigator should read the main rules to help teach the game, if needed. This will explain the basic flow of the game, which they will facilitate.

They can read the case intro in italics out loud to the whole group, **along with any bold special rules.**

The Investigators should familiarize themselves with the Inquiry cards they have drawn.

The first two pages of the case book is laid out with labels to help you understand it.





The goal is for the Investigators to guess the 'answers' to the Case, represented by the underlined words in the Case story. Only guessing these correctly (or closely) will result in a higher score.



CASE SET-UP

Here Lies can be played as a campaign game, where you work your way through the Campaign Book solving the cases in order and earning permanent Allies as upgrades. **The first three cases are simpler tutorial cases, to help teach you terms and the flow of the game.** If this is your first time playing, consider playing the tutorial cases first.

If you are returning to the game, you may choose the case you left off on, or you can choose any case to play out-of-order.

If you are looking for more or unusual cases to play, go to the *Here Lies* page on dvc.games

Case Difficulty:
Blue (Easy)
Green
Yellow
Orange
Red (Very Hard)
Purple (Unusual)

The Lead Investigator looks at the information listed on the current case, then writes the case's name and year on the Information card, and places it in the Information area (by the mat). Next, they set up the case's Category cards around the play mat, with the first Category going by the numeral I, the second by the II, and so on. The unused Categories are turned over to use as blank Clue cards. They also place the indicated amount of Time tokens available in the first round, and announce how many rounds will be played.

The Lead Investigator **silently reads** the case story, then reads the intro aloud, along with any additional rules.

You now begin to play, working through three phases for each round.

There is a play aide on the inside of the box lid. Also, there is a QR code in the case book that the Lead Investigator can scan to access an FAQ for the game rules, as well as support for every Inquiry card. Any Investigator may use these resources.

DISCOVER PHASE

During this phase, the Lead Investigator chooses **one** of the pieces of Key Evidence listed in the case for the current round. They write it on a Key Evidence card and place it in the Key Evidence area.

After the first round, the Discover phase is also when players may discard any cards they don't want to keep and draw back up to their hand limit. The Lead Investigator also resets the time tokens.

At the start of the second round only, after revealing Key Evidence, the Lead Investigator also uses their unique Character ability.

When these steps are complete, proceed to the Inquiry Phase.

All discarded cards return to the bottom of their respective Inquiry decks. They may even be drawn again!

INQUIRY PHASE

During this phase, Investigators use their Inquiry cards to reveal clues about the case and discuss possible solutions, while the Lead Investigator finds ways to provide as much help as they can by giving honest and truthful information in response to the chosen Inquiry cards.

This is the core of the game, as the Inquiry cards will provide opportunities for the Lead Investigator to give more and more information to help Investigators make better and more informed guesses. Building on, connecting, and categorizing the clues are all part of this goal.

To that end, while the Lead Investigator must respond to Inquiry cards as written, **the Investigators may move around cards and make notes on them as they desire.**

As the Lead Investigator you are trying to win with the Investigators. Be as helpful and direct as you can be.

During this phase, the Investigators can choose any Inquiry card from any player's hand to play. There is no set turn order during this phase. It is highly recommended that you talk about the cards, their potential benefits, and the time they cost. **Only choose a card to play if there is a general agreement.**

Once you have chosen a card, follow the prompts to complete the card, which may involve writing on the back of the card, moving things around, adding words using the blank mini clue cards, or some other manner of providing information. The Inquiry card may remain on the mat, or it is otherwise returned to the bottom of its deck.

Once the card is resolved, as long as there are still time tokens remaining for the round, another card is chosen. If no card is available to play for the remaining time tokens, they are forfeit.

When no more time tokens remain, proceed to the Case Check phase.

If a card does not specify how a word is added to the mat, use an unused mini card.

Character's
Icon

Card Cost



Players are encouraged to talk out loud about the case, as the Lead Investigator will be listening for correct answers to the Category cards.

bottom half of the drawing before showing it to you.
You place it.

Inquiry card

IMPORTANT

At no point can the Lead Investigator write or draw a picture of an underlined word in the case story unless the Inquiry card says otherwise. This includes 'close-enough' situations, generic examples, and synonyms.

Example: 'Horse' is underlined, so the Lead Investigator cannot write/draw a horse, or a known horse character name/likeness. They CAN, however, write/draw: hay, saddle, apple, barn, gallop, ride, metal shoe, mane, etc. or a famous person or place associated with horses.

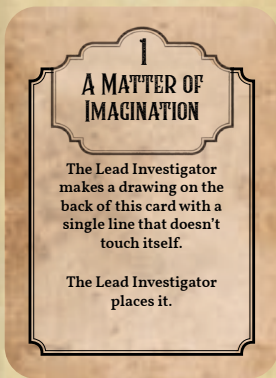
The purpose of this rule is to give the Investigators something to solve. Use your best judgment about what would infringe on giving away an underlined word without permission.



Character icons

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

The Investigators discuss out loud that they have not made much progress on the Category of 'Location'. Rather than speculate too far, they use a cheap Inquiry card to get some traction: Sahle's A Matter of Imagination. While it doesn't ask for them to choose a Category, their discussion gives the Lead Investigator some guidance as to what they need.



The Lead Investigator knows that the important, underlined word for Location is castle. They cannot draw a castle directly, but they could allude to it. So they draw a crown as best as they can with a single line that does not touch itself. It is not a very good drawing, but it provides a clue. The Investigators place it by 'Location', thinking *tha tis* likely what it relates to.

A time token is removed to pay the cost, and gameplay continues.

ADVICE

Inquiry cards come in many styles. Some reveal parts of underlined words, while others request drawings. They may have you arrange information or add words on mini cards. They may even ask the Lead Investigator to ‘invent’ new information that is not directly in the story.

Note that the provided playmat and cards are designed to help with understanding the case. While a clue may be placed somewhere at one point during play, Investigators may move it elsewhere, such as to a different Category, if it would help their thinking. The small Clue cards come in versions with and without arrows, which may be helpful for showing general or very specific information. Whenever you place a card, take care to position it in a way that communicates the most valuable information to your fellow players.

Many Inquiry cards stay in play after use, but others may not- they return to the bottom of their Inquiry decks as normal.

DISCUSSION

This game is meant to be **played out loud with active conversation and debate** of the clues. This is critical and useful to playing Here Lies. The Lead Investigator will listen attentively and **'rate' the players at the end of each round**, based on how close they've come to identifying the correct answer. This rating is based on the Investigators' discussion, so speak up!

The Lead Investigator is mostly silent throughout play, but they can provide context or repeat information. This can include clarifying how a card is used, or helping players remember something they have or have not discussed or said before.

The Lead Investigator may also silence conversation at any time and request that an Inquiry card be played.

If the Investigators, at any time, happen to say all the correct answers out loud in a row, end the game immediately with a perfect score.

CASE CHECK PHASE

If players have any temporary or permanent Allies, **they may use one for free** at the start of each Case Check phase. Each Ally may only be used once per game. Players will start with none.

During play the Lead Investigator will listen to the other players talk about the case, listening for 'correct' answers to the Category cards (represented by the underlined words). **Note that 'correct' can be 'close enough'** such as synonyms or only discovering the underlined words instead of the whole story segment. The Lead Investigator will then place tokens on the Category cards based on what the Investigators have said so far in all rounds of play:



Green Check Token - If the correct answer has been said at any time, even once. Synonyms and 'close' count!



Yellow Close Token - If players are headed in the right direction.



Red Wrong Token - If players haven't said anything for this category, or have only said incorrect answers.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

The second round has ended, as there are no more Time tokens. The players don't have any Allies to use, so the Lead Investigator waits and allows them to talk for another minute to finish their current conversation.

IDENTITY

The job, title, or reputation of the deceased Subject.

e.g. sailor, thief, priest, hermit, captain, criminal, father



The Investigators had previously mentioned 'music writer' in the first round, so the Lead Investigator leaves the green token in place, even though they haven't discussed it since (and the actual underlined answer is composer, but music writer feels correct enough for Identity).

LOCATION

A place, vehicle, or building of importance.

e.g. bank, train, jungle, bathroom, monastery, rooftop



They had also discussed locations like 'mansion', 'house', and 'study'. With the underlined answer being castle, it feels like they are getting somewhere but not quite, so they receive a yellow token.

PURPOSE

The central motive or desire of the deceased Subject.

e.g. greed, fame, love, hunger, revenge, proof, forgiveness



Nothing said so far comes close to the Purpose, so it continues to get a red token.

ROUND & GAME END

Unless this is the last round for the case, proceed back to the Discover Phase.

After the last round, a 'final pitch' is made. One Investigator gives a single theory of the case and what happened to the Subject (giving only a single guess for each Category answer).

To score, the Lead Investigator updates the guess tokens **based on the final pitch only**. Then the Investigators score 2 points for each green check token and 1 point for each yellow close token. If the final pitch is given with flair and style (like Sherlock Holmes), the Investigators gain an additional bonus point.

Then the story is read out loud for all players.

A score of 10 is the minimum for a 'true win' (across six Categories in a non-tutorial case).

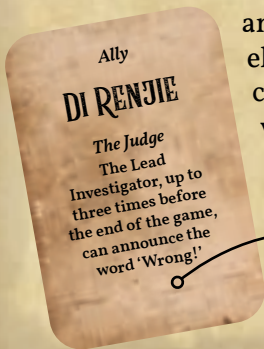
Remember, if the players say all the correct answers in a row at any point during play, the game ends immediately with a perfect score of 12 (or less in tutorial cases).

ALLIES

If players score 11 or more points, **gain a permanent Ally** matching the symbol for the Lead Investigator's Character, if available. This card is kept with the Character and is available in all future cases when players choose to use that Character in any capacity.

If players score less than 8, choose a random ungained Ally (if available) and 'bookmark' the next case in the Campaign Book with it. This Ally is a temporary Ally, and is only available for the next case played.

Allies are meant to be a campaign reward, and to provide some new elements of play in later cases. They aren't needed to win, but certainly help.



Character's
Icon

Ally card

GLOSSARY

Add: Write down a word or words as noted by using your choice of arrowed or arrowless mini clue cards. You can split the words between different cards unless the Inquiry card says otherwise.

Ally: A special bonus ability card that is usually gained through playing multiple cases. They cannot be gained in Cases 001 or 002.

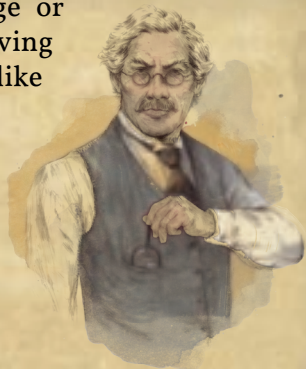
Answer: An important part of the story, with a word or phrase underlined, that players are trying to discover. Note that to win, players only need to find the answer, not the whole sentence of the case story. 'Close enough' and synonyms count!

Body Diagram: The center of the playmat marked with a skeleton.

Category: One of the portions of the Case story, represented by a card that describes the type of underlined word in that category.

Draw: Create an image or symbol, but not involving written language like letters or numbers.

Invent: A call to the Lead Investigator to be creative and make up information they think would be helpful, even if it isn't directly in the story text.



Key Evidence: Special clues that are pre-written in a case. One is chosen to reveal each round, or they can be revealed by certain cards.

Move: Taking an existing component, such as a card, and moving it somewhere else on or near the game mat.

Numeral: The numbers one through six are represented next to the Category cards. They are used as a shorthand way to reference those Categories. The numerals for each Category should not change while playing.

Place: Putting a component on or near a specific area of the mat. It can be moved later.

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