Good source for puzzles
Posted by philip - 2006/03/27 09:27

I have been searching for a good source for puzzles that are useable in a D&D game. I purchased two brain teaser books which have some useable puzzles though there are only five or six basic styles repeated over and over in the books. Does anyone have a good resource for D&D puzzles? Do you have a cool puzzle you created for your game that you would like to share?

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by jkratzer - 2006/03/27 11:44

Philip;

A friend of mine came up with one I call 8 Queens At Peace; idea is a chess board with 8 queens on it. Now, set them up so they can't attack anyone.
There's only ONE solution, supposedly; if I can get him to write it down or draw it, I'll pass it on. He may ahve found it in one of the published D&D scenario books, though, in which case, we can't publish it as his.

See ya!

Jim

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by weaverjk - 2006/03/28 07:44

That queen scenario is also one of the 7th Guest puzzles.

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by jkratzer - 2006/03/29 08:16

That queen scenario is also one of the 7th Guest puzzles.
Well, I guess that puts Joe out of the running for a published puzzle!
I wasn't sure where he got it anyway.

See ya!

Jim

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by philip - 2006/03/29 09:36

What is 7th Guest?

jkratzer alot of puzzles, especially ones using an ancient game like chess, are very old. Chances are they just reprinted some puzzle from two hundred years ago.

It struck me that most of the members of this board should be DM's considering that that is the target market for dwarven forge products. I am surprised that no one has a source for puzzles. I make them up from time to time but making a good, fun and challenging puzzle can be difficult.

Here is one from some past module I wrote that I will share. Perhaps you could follow suit...

This one is really a trap room but its solution is the answer to vague riddle. I will try to remember some more over the next few days.

The party walks down a long flight of stairs to find a thirty foot long hallway ending in a thirty foot square room. The ceiling of the hallway is a geometric honeycomb of worked stone. Through the arched entrance to the room they can see that the room is bare save an ornate archway between which is a shimmering opaque silver field of magical energy across from the entrance on the opposite wall. The surface of the archway is covered with runes that say in common, "The pious man looks to the heavens. The fool sees naught but stars." The first person that crosses the arched entrance to the room activates a magical trigger to a mechanical trap. Above the honeycombed hallway is enough sand to completely fill the room and hallway and it begins to spill through to quickly block off the hallway. Anyone close to the stairs would be able to escape to the stairs. Anyone more than halfway down the hall would have to dive for the room or risk being burried alive by the rush of sand. Most if not all of the party finds itself trapped in this room with the magic portal. Attempting to dig out through the sand will most likely frustrate the party as the sand seems to be endless. Searching the walls and floors turns up nothing and they soon find themselves facing the silver portal, the vague riddle and starvation. The silver portal disintegrates anything that touches its surface. The answer to the riddle is pretty straight forward. There is a secret niche in the ceiling that has a reset lever for the sand. The ceiling is thirty feet up so a fly or the like would be necessary in order to search the ceiling. Now technically the party could shovel sand for a couple of days into the portal and eventually get out but in the three partys that have been through this module two have died in the portal and one solved the riddle. None of the three tried to dig for very long. The portal represents a much easier way out (pun intended). Obviously this room only presents a challenge to characters unable to teleport, passwall, dimention door, word of recall etc... Though you could have the walls coated in Gorgons blood to prevent magical passage from the room.

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by Ghenghis Ska - 2006/03/29 12:28

The only one i can remember now is a rip off from something... (points to how potins out where i got it from)
Twin Guardians of Horus

you are walking down a path that comes to two portals, between the two portals is a pair of guardians

You can ask only one question it can be to either guard, one guard will only tell truth, the other will only lie
One portal leads out, the other to death (disintigration).

Will post the answer later.
Which portal do you take.

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by RabidFox* - 2006/03/29 17:42

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What is 7th Guest?
It is an older computer game, back when they first started implanting live action film into computer games.
Michael Dorn of Cmd. Worf of Star Trek fame was in the game.

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by Ghenghis Ska - 2006/03/29 17:59

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Come on Michael Dorn will always be Officer Jebediah Turner first...

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Good source for puzzles
Posted by philip - 2006/03/31 08:42

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The Death Arch

"Just ahead you see a black stone building formed from huge basalt blocks that resembles a massive skull with a jagged crown. Set in the crown where one might expect gemstones are large brass braziers emitting yellow flames that rise five feet into the air. The skulls mouth is open and inside can be seen a golden archway set with ten large glowing rubies surrounded by concentric circles of runes. Through the archway is a medium sized room where a golden chest sits atop a stone altar." (Anyone attempting to pass through the archway will be struck with an ancient death spell, Fortitude DC20 or die. Even if they save they will be thrown back fifty feet and take 6d6 damage. Each time a death spell is activated a ruby will stop glowing for one hour. A dispel magic DC29 will turn off the archway for one hour. The archway can be disabled permanently if it is damaged but the rubies will explode for 10d6 per active ruby effecting a twenty foot radius from the door. A search check performed on the arch DC 25 will reveal that something is not right about the runes. A Knowledge:Arcana, DC 25, will reveal that there are extra runes that do not belong in the ancient spells. {RBBAA RDCBAAA} The letters can be rearanged to spell ABBRA CADABRA which, of course, is the command word for disabling the archway for one hour. Gorgons blood has been mixed into the mortar used to build the building. This prevents magical transference into or out of the building. The only way in is to walk through the arch.)

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Good source for puzzles

Posted by jackattack - 2006/03/31 21:38

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In NeverWinter Nights, some doors could only be opened by placing an item in a nearby chest, corresponding to a riddle. If the answer to the riddle was "a sword", for example, you would place the ancient sword in the box and the door would open.

A nice way to play with your parties' heads is to give them treasure, then take it away by making it the key to going further into the dungeon. Weapons, magic items, precious stones, whatever. To make it more difficult, the objects might be more metaphorical than literal -- the riddle's answer might be "an eye", and they have to give up a fist-size ruby called "The Eye of Hardan".

When I was a kid, a DM had a room with a chessboard floor, in which we could only move along paths determined by our class -- fighters moved like knights, clerics like bishops, thieves like pawns, and magic-users like rooks.

Put your party in a room with photo-realistic paintings on the walls -- trompe l'oeil, "fool the eye". Put placques on the wall or on the frames, with titles that don't QUITE match the paintings. Have items missing from the paintings available in the room. If a player reaches for a painting with an item, he can place the item in the painting. So when the party realizes that "Still Life with Mug" doesn't actually have a mug, they should pick up the mug on the table and put it in the painting. (Once they've established that they can reach into the paintings, they might also be able to pull things out.) When all of the paintings match their titles, they have solved the puzzle.

Hang a bunch of tapestries on a wall, depicting in-game historical events. The tapestries have to be rearranged so that they are in proper chronological order.

Have a room with a single painting in it. The painting shows the room it is hanging in, with the door leading further into the adventure open, PLUS one other discrepancy. When the second discrepancy has been resolved (by moving a chair, or opening a curtain, or closing a cabinet) to match the painting, the door will open.

The party enters a room with a statue of a knight, with a slot in its clenched fist where a weapon should go. Once a worthy weapon has been placed in its hand (a sword but not a dagger, or a magic sword instead of a normal sword), the statue comes to life. When the party has defeated it, the statue shatters, leaving the weapon and a key (or other treasure) in the debris.

When all else fails, rip off old books or movies. Piers Anthony's Xanth books usually have a few riddles or challenges in them. In a movie called "Goonies", playing the sheet music on the pipe organ opened the door, but a wrong note dropped a piece of the floor. And on and on...

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