

Worlds

w i t h o u t

Harmony

Catch and Release

A Pokemon: Black and White Quick-Start World
for Worlds Without Harmony
by Max Hervieux

When Pokemon Black and White released in 2010, they asked a question: is the capture and battling of Pokemon unethical? This question isn't new: PETA has railed against Pokemon for pretty much the franchise's whole existence for this reason. While their position is unreasonably didactic and silly, Black and White still tried to confront the issue. To catch, or not to catch? This Quick-Start explores the question in a more intricate, less one-sided way.

This question makes it a good story to model with Worlds Without Harmony's Liberty and Order Tension.

This Quick-Start is for 3 Players. Familiarity with Pokemon is not absolutely necessary to play, but at least a cursory familiarity will add a lot to the game.

Using This Quick-Start World

Quick-Starts such as this one provide a World in which to play a session of *Worlds Without Harmony*. The players should go through *The Legend*, as in a normal session, but many of the first steps have already been chosen. The Tension has already been decided, and the Factions have already been described, so just fill in Faction cards with the information on the following pages.

The Tension

This Quick-Start World uses the Liberty and Order Tension, and players should use that Tension's list of Tones and Special Rules.

Take a thicker piece of string or twine, about a foot long. At each end, run the twine through the hole in an index card. Write *Natural* on one card and *Industrial* on the other, so you have the Poles tied to each other by a length of twine. This is called *The Cord*, and represents the spectrum of positions between the two Poles.

The Factions

Over the next five pages are the Factions. Write all the information onto index cards with a hole in one end, and tie them to the Cord with green thread at the indicated position.

Faction: Castelia City

Description

In the wake of Team Plasma's rhetoric of radical freedom for Pokemon, Castelia City took the hint from faraway Ryme City and banned Pokeballs and Pokemon battling for anyone staying in the city. The transition was remarkably peaceful, and Castelia City stands as a bastion of harmony between Pokemon and humanity.

Physical Detail

All Castelians have their Pokemon right at their side.

Cultural Detail

Castelians are content with their situation, and are not seeking to spread their way of life to other cities.

Position on the Cord

Castelia City should be tied at the far end of the Cord, closest to the Liberty pole.

Faction: The Ability Lab

Description

Located just offshore of Castelia City, the Ability Lab experiments on Pokemon subjects. Subjects all consent to the work, but some of the experiments are quite taxing.

Physical Detail

Ability Lab staff wear lab coats.

Cultural Detail

Most researchers do not use their own Pokemon as volunteers, to avoid clouding the results with bias.

Position on the Cord

The Ability Lab are the second-most Liberty Faction. They are more Order than Castelia City, but are more Liberty than N's Following.

Faction: N's Following

Description

N was the idealistic figurehead propped up by the fascistic elements of Team Plasma. Having learned of their plans, N has broken off and travels the land with his disciples, evangelizing the complete separation of Pokemon and humanity for the good of all Pokemon.

Physical Detail

N's followers all have green hair, just like their leader.

Cultural Detail

In accordance with their beliefs, none of N's Following have Pokemon of their own.

Position on the Cord

N's Following is the Faction in the center. The League is more Order than the Ability Lab, but more Liberty than Team Plasma.

Faction: Team Plasma

Description

Team Plasma believes that Pokemon and humans must be separated, and would do so by force or theft if necessary. Without Pokemon, they pursue political domination with themselves at the top.

Physical Detail

The members of Team Plasma wear chain-mail hoods to signal their allegiance.

Cultural Detail

Personal power is valued about all else, with Pokemon separation/"liberation" viewed as the quickest avenue to power over others.

Position on the Cord

Team Plasma is the second-most Order Faction. They are more Order than N's Following, but are more Liberty than Silph Co.

Faction: Silph Co.

Description

A Kanto-based multinational corporation, Silph Co, is the sole manufacturer and wholesaler of Pokeballs (among other things) within Unova. As such, they seek to restore the status quo, which places a constant reliance on them and their products, providing a stable and lucrative revenue stream.

Physical Detail

Business suits and other professional wear.

Cultural Detail

Silph's agents have been authorized to do whatever it takes to keep pokemon battles frequent and popular in the region.

Position on the Cord

Silph Co should be tied at the far end of the Cord, closest to the Order pole.

The Conflicts

Tie red strings between each of the three following pairs of Factions.

Castelia City and Silph Co.

The largest city in Unova, Castelia City's banning of pokeballs and battling effectively pushed Silph Co. out of the city entirely. Silph's agents have infiltrated Castelia to try and regain their place.

The Ability Lab and N's Following

N's Following considers the Ability Lab's work to be exploitation, but also has been loudly spreading rumors that they've been secretly experimenting on non-volunteer captive Pokemon as well.

The Ability Lab and Silph Co.

Silph Co. would lose a lot of business if the Ability Lab proved to be more effective at research than their own way of doing things, and the open competition between the two has been in the newspapers recently.

The Overthrow

Team Plasma attempted to hack the Pokemon Box system and release the entire region's Pokemon forcibly, but were thwarted by quick action from the authorities. Exposed as criminals, they've been ostracized and lost their credibility when N left. There is a red string tied between them and each other faction. Everyone is in conflict with them, and they're hanging on by a thread.

Who Would The Liminals Be?

When playing this Quick-Start World, players should create their own Liminals and explore this World and its tensions their own way. This Quick-Start makes a few changes from the games, and the characters from the games would be too absolute in their thinking to make for interesting Liminals. Instead, here are a few ideas.

Alicia

Originating in Team Plasma, Alicia had bought into the Team quite extensively. However, once she witnessed the bond between a trainer and their Pokemon during the Team's failed takeover, she's turned around on the Team and is biding her time to find the right time and way to get out.

Tina

Originating in Castelia City, Tina has been feeling alienated from her Pokemon recently. Back in the old days, they'd do a couple battles together and it would bring them closer. Tina wants to explore alternatives to the Castelian model to help restore her bond with her beloved Pokemon.

Parker

Originating in Silph Co., Parker is an agent undercover in Castelia City, and has been running an underground Pokemon Battle ring (where he sells Silph-branded medicine for patching up hurt Pokemon). His conscience has gotten the better of him though, and he's been avoiding his employer's calls.