

PSIONIC LEARNING CENTERS

Psionics is a mastery over the self and the mind. By extending this mastery to the environment that surrounds a psion, she can alter reality in ways that most people cannot fathom. But learning does not exist in a vacuum; every psion must learn their art from somewhere. True, there are some gifted enough to be able to teach themselves the discipline and skill to alter the world with their very will. But, more often, this learning comes from an outside source.

This outside source can also come in a variety of ways. Some teachers prefer to take a single student, grooming them from a very young age to become the pupil they wish for, in an apprentice-master style. Others take on multiple students, teaching them in a place of relative safety, specifically designed for learning. These learning centers sometimes serve not only as a focal point for education, but as a center of each student's life as well. Some grow up in these schools learning not only the psionic arts, but also everything a child must learn about the world as she grows.

LEARNING CENTER DESCRIPTIONS

The description of each learning center is presented in a standard format. Each category of information is explained and defined below.

OVERVIEW

Each learning center starts with a brief introduction. Typically, this includes an outline of what sort of subjects are studied at the learning center and what type of facility the learning center is.

GROUNDS

The grounds section describes the physical location and description of the place of learning. Some entries have background information as well, describing events or history from before the school existed or prior locations of the school.

TEACHER

Next, each entry has a section describing either the teacher(s) in highest authority, the founder of the school, or both. This section gives personality and background information, as well as basic statistics; the statistics are kept minimal in order to allow maximum customization.

STUDENTS

The students section of a learning center's entry details the sort of students one is most likely to find attending the school. It also includes any requirements for those wishing to join, as well as reasons for rejection from entering the learning center.

TYPICAL DAY

This section gives a brief overview of what sort of exercises, entertainment, or other activities the typical student would experience on the average day while attending the school.

CHARACTER OPTIONS

The benefits of training at a learning center are described in the character options section, including what powers, feats, or prestige classes the school allows access to. Some GM's may be less restrictive, allowing access to knowledge skills, and other options with minimal teaching. In that case, treat this section as a recommendation for common feats or classes possessed by NPC's from the particular school.

USING THE SCHOOL

This section gives the GM advice on how best to use the individual place of learning and incorporate it into their games.

CASTLE DARTEN

Litha tiptoed down the hall, careful to make as little noise as possible. She was already late and didn't want anyone to see her sneaking into the back of

the room. She paused at the door, trying to see through the opaque blue crystals that composed the walls, but to no avail. Sighing, she carefully pushed open the door and slipped in. The room was empty.

On the desk toward the front of the room where Litha normally sat lay a piece of parchment with spiraling handwriting penned upon it. It said simply, "Sorry you were late, if you can find us you can still join in today's activities." Litha sighed and stepped out of the room; they could be anywhere.

Overview: Castle Darnten is a testament to what can be performed when the different aspects of psionics are used in harmony. A learning center for any type of psionic individual, Castle Darnten is welcoming to all students, so long as they follow the tenets of cooperation that led to the creation of the castle.

Grounds: Set atop a small mountain peak above numerous tiny villages and expansive farmland, the Castle Darnten is a triumph of achievements. Named for the psion who originally proposed the idea, it is the blending of all six disciplines working in accord to create something greater than the single. Telepathic probing delved the best plans from the minds of the most artistic architects, seers located the perfect area upon which to build, shapers and nomads created or obtained the best materials from the world and beyond at the direction of others, and egoist muscle and kineticist energy put it all together.

Standing proud on its perch above the surrounding lands, the gleaming crystal walls of every color can be seen for miles. A single path molded from some azure material snakes its way up the mountainside to the castle's luminous gemstone gates.

Inside is equally impressive. The architecture and materials are otherworldly in their array. More expansive than nearly any other castle, a visitor could spend days wandering the halls and rarely come across the same thing more than once. Great care has obviously been taken with the layout, and though one construction style changes to another, it is seamless so that there is nothing disorderly about it. The entire structure lacks nothing in its impressiveness, and though formed of an opaque, multi-hued crystal, it is stronger than steel.

Teacher: Castle Darnten is not taught or

managed by a single individual. Instead, it is run by a council of sorts. Six members make up the founding circle and at any time, there are three to six managers, called Doyens, running the school. Often, each Doyen will be skilled in a single discipline of psionics and all of the six form a council representing psionics as a whole. This is not always the case, however, if a suitable Doyen is found who overlaps with another's skill that bit of tradition is seen as less important. Currently there are three Doyens, the others not yet replaced after their retirement some years ago. Always on the lookout for suitable replacements for the empty seats, these three run the school with the same zeal as when they started.

One such Doyen is Kassim. Always light-hearted and quick with a smile, Kassim - CG male xeph nomad 9 - was born far from Castle Darnten, deep underground. Suffering from an irrepressible wanderlust, he spent his youth traveling the caves near his home. When he was old enough to live on his own, he left his home and has yet to return. Loving the surface world even more than his cavernous homeland due to the myriad sights and sounds there, Kassim has traveled far and wide, taking in sights from many continents and even jaunting to other planes when the mood strikes him. When approached about a job as a Doyen of Castle Darnten, Kassim didn't hesitate to accept, as he was assured to have ample time to travel, if he chose.

Around the castle, students are most likely to see Kassim on his way somewhere, whether that be another location within the castle or a far-off land. Quick-witted and always happy to engage in conversation, Kassim often invites students to travel with him to distant destinations and unknown adventures. Those that accept are in for the most surprising of "field trips," as Kassim is equally likely to travel virtually anywhere. He often regales his traveling companions with stories of his adventures, though he is equally likely to "forget" students in some remote location, letting them find their own way (though he would never do this in a location dangerous to the students' survival). Later, when he "remembers" to take them home, he often asks, his eyes sparkling, what they did while alone. Disappointment abounds if their stories are uninteresting.