MUGGLE STUDIES



If you have never played interactive fiction before, you should read this entire instruction manual. If you're an experienced interactive fiction player, just read *Section 1: About Muggle*. *Studies*.

Be forewarned: even though it is based on J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, *Muggle Studies* contains strong language that some people may not consider appropriate for children.

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Preface to the story

The Wizengamot meets in a courtroom behind a grimy dark door with an immense iron lock. The walls are made of gray stone, dimly lit by torches; benches rise around them, providing seating for hundreds of witches and wizards, though in these declining days the council consists of only fifty.

In the center of the room is the seat of judgment. It is a small and rickety chair weighed down with chains. Today a young woman sits in the chair. The chains hang down to either side of it: the prisoner is not bound.

"Disciplinary hearing on the tenth of September, 1993," says a prosperous-looking man. His lime green bowler hat clashes with his plum-colored robes. "Hearing into offenses committed under the International Statute of Secrecy. Interrogators: Cornelius Oswald Fudge, Minister of Magic; Griselda Marchbanks, Improper Use of Magic Office; Morfin Aloysius Pummell, Muggle Control. Witness for the defense, Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore. Elders, please confirm that you have had sufficient time to review all submitted evidence."

The sound of shuffling parchments fills the room as the Wizengamot opens their files: correspondence between Alice Armstrong and the Hogwarts staff; personal correspondence; the standard brochures each Muggle-born student receives when they learn of their magic.

"All is in order? Good, good.

"Then let us begin the trial."

Further reading

If you enjoy *Muggle Studies*, you may wish to read more fan fiction or play more interactive fiction. These recommendations are intended for new readers and players; if you are an experienced interactive fiction player or fan fiction reader, you certainly don't need help to find the good stuff!

Interactive fiction

I wholeheartedly endorse Andrew Plotkin's *The Dreamhold*, which features magical themes and an advanced tutorial system. You wake up alone and amnesiac in a sorcerer's tower: what do you do? (http://www.eblong.com/zarf/if.html#dreamhold)

Bronze, by Emily Short, is equally magical and equally helpful. Take on the role of Beauty and explore the Beast's castle in this fractured fairy tale. (<u>http://inform-fiction.org/I7Downloads/</u><u>Examples/bronze/</u>)

Blue Lacuna, by Aaron A. Reed, may not be explicitly fan fiction but will surely please anyone who enjoys Myst.; it also represents a third approach to tutorials. (http://www.lacunastory.com/)

Fan fiction

This game was most inspired by Aashby's story *Brave New World*, which also features a Muggle Studies teacher who is all agog to come to Hogwarts. (<u>http://mirrordance.net/aashby/bnw/bnwindex2.html</u>)

An early version of *Muggle Studies* centered around Muggle technologies' superiority to wizarding ones. In this vein, *Harry Potter and the Methods of Rationality* by Less Wrong will please any philosopher. Be warned: some people may find this story disturbing, as it includes morally repugnant acts.¹ (<u>http://www.fanfiction.net/s/5782108/1/</u> Harry_Potter_and_the_Methods_of_Rationality)

Learning to write

If you'd like to learn to write interactive fiction, a good starting place is Playfic (<u>http://</u><u>www.playfic.com</u>): it provides an online development environment and many sample games to explore.

Acknowledgments

Many people contributed to *Muggle Studies*, and without them, the story would be significantly less entertaining and bug-free. Any remaining bugs, klunkers, or moments of less-than-awesome gameplay are, of course, not their fault.

Testing by:

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Muggle Studies uses:

The Inform 7 coding language and development environment (http://inform7.com/); the extensions Small Kindnesses, Smarter Parser & Poor Man's Mistype by Aaron Reed; Menus, Basic Help Menu & Basic Screen Effects by Emily Short; Unicode Interrogation, Quip-Based Conversation & Reactable Quips by Michael Martin; Conditional Undo by Jesse McGrew; Adaptive Hints by Eric Eve; and Default Messages by David Fisher.

For the cover, a photograph by Daniela Vladimirova, "Creative Juggling." You can find her other photographs at her Flickr profile (<u>http://www.flickr.com/photos/danielavladimirova/</u>).

A quotation from Percy Bysshe Shelley's "The Witch of Atlas" for the broadside on Alice's wall, suggested by Elfwreck.

Molly Sauter's handwriting, standing in for Minerva McGonagall.

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About the author

Flourish Klink was born, learned to read, learned to write, and learned to use the Internet, in that order. She has been active in the *Harry Potter* fandom since 1998; currently, she is serving as Minister of Magic for Ascendio 2012, a fan symposium presented by HPEF, Inc.

Her day jobs are lecturing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and serving as Chief Participation Officer for The Alchemists Transmedia Storytelling Co. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her partner, Nick. You may contact her at <u>flourish@blotts.org</u>.

Copyright information

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2 About interactive fiction

An overview: what is interactive fiction?

Interactive fiction is a type of video game (or, if you're feeling high-falutin', a type of literary narrative) with a text-only interface.² You play the main character, and you control their actions and what choices they make by typing commands. Each typed command progresses the story, taking into account what you've caused the main character to do.

Some interactive fiction—including *Muggle Studies*—features puzzles. Puzzles can be as simple as "find the correct key for this door," or as complex as... well, let's just say they can be extremely complex. If you can't get someplace you want to be, it's probably a puzzle. Try to figure it out!

The first interactive fiction game was written circa 1975: *Adventure*, by Will Crowther. By 1979, interactive fiction was being published commercially. The most famous publishers were Adventure International and Infocom. By 1986, however, interactive fiction was no longer particularly commercially viable. Since the early 1990s, interactive fiction has primarily been written by hobbyists.

As you may have guessed, interactive fiction is cousin to *Choose Your Own Adventure*_ novels, graphical adventure games, visual novels, MUDs & MOOs, and hypertext fiction in general. One distinguishing characteristic of interactive fiction is the parser—the bit of code that interprets your typed natural-language commands in a way that a computer can understand. In order to distinguish interactive fiction from other types of fiction that happen to be interactive, some people use the term "parser-based interactive fiction."

Two common languages used to write interactive fiction are TADS and Inform 7; other systems for interactive fiction piggyback on existing programming languages. (For instance, the Curveship system is based in Python.) Stories made in systems such as Undum, ChoiceScript, and Ren'Py are not usually considered to be interactive fiction, as they do not use a parser.

Starting & stopping

Modern interactive fiction can be played in one of two ways: online, or via an interpreter. If you play a game online, you don't have to download anything—but you can save your game once, at most. On the other hand, playing a game via an interpreter requires you to download both a game file *and* a program to run it, which is a little more complex. For your trouble, you'll gain the ability to save multiple games and create transcripts of your play.

Interpreters

There are a variety of different file types for interactive fiction, but the most common in use today are "Z-code" (with extensions like . z3, . z5 or . z8) and "Glulx" (with the .ulx extension). *Muggle Studies* is a Glulx file. If you are reading this, you already have the correct file and can begin playing *Muggle Studies*—just as soon as you've downloaded an interpreter.

You can find a variety of interpreters listed on the Interactive Fiction Wiki (<u>http://</u><u>www.ifwiki.org/index.php/Interpreter</u>), or you can try Gargoyle (<u>http://code.google.com/p/garglk/</u><u>downloads/list</u>).

Now that you've downloaded and installed your interpreter, open the game file using the interpreter program, hit 'play,' and you should be ready to go!

Saving and restoring

As you are playing, you will probably want to SAVE your progress regularly. In order to do so, type SAVE at the prompt (>) and press return or enter. You should be able to save the game to whatever folder you choose.

Anytime you want to return to a saved position, type RESTORE at the prompt (>) and press return or enter. Find your saved game in the folder where you put it, and you can continue the story from your saved position. You may need to type LOOK for a description of where you are.

Quitting and restarting

If you would like to start over from the beginning, you can type RESTART at the prompt and hit return or enter. If you would like to stop entirely, but not quit your interpreter, you may type QUIT at the prompt and hit return or enter. Remember to save before you restart or quit!



Playing interactive fiction

In *Muggle Studies* and other works of interactive fiction, you type commands in (simplified) English each time you see the prompt (>). A "command" usually means a simple imperative sentence.

When you have finished typing a command, hit enter or return. The game will then respond, telling you whether your command is possible and what happened as a result.

To move around, type the direction you want to go: NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST, NORTHEAST, NORTHWEST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTHWEST, UP, and DOWN. These directions can be abbreviated: N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW, U, and D.

Basic sentences

You can form lots of different kinds of sentences. Here are some example sentences, using objects and characters that don't actually appear in *Muggle Studies*:

```
>GO DOWN
>NE
>EXAMINE THE OLD BIRTH CERTIFICATE
>READ THE OBITUARIES
>TAKE THE GARDEN STAKE
>TALK TO JACOB
>PUT THE GARDEN STAKE IN THE BOX OF VERVAIN
>GET THE GARDEN STAKE
>ATTACK EDWARD WITH THE GARDEN STAKE
```

You can use multiple objects with some verbs if you separate them by the word AND or by a comma. For instance:

>TAKE THE HOLY WATER AND THE SWORD >DROP THE INVITATION TO THE PROM, THE APPLE AND THE PROMISE RING >PUT THE GARLIC AND THE BLOOD IN THE BOTTLE

Complex sentences

You can include several commands on one line if you separate them by the word THEN or a period. Each command will be handled in order, as though you had typed them individually at separate prompts. For instance, you could type all of this at once, before pressing return or enter:

>UNLOCK THE DOOR WITH THE KEY. GO NORTH THEN SHUT THE DOOR.

Words like IT and ALL can be very useful, although ALL is not available in *Muggle Studies*. For example:

>LOOK AT THE CROSS NECKLACE. TAKE IT. PUT IT ON. >TAKE ALL >PUT ALL IN THE BACKPACK >GIVE ALL BUT THE PROMISE RING TO JACOB >EXAMINE MOTORCYCLE THEN GET ON IT. START IT.

In interactive fiction, the parser (the part of the program that figures out what you mean) will try to guess your meaning when you give incomplete information. It will print its guess in parentheses after your command. For example:

>ATTACK EDWARD
(with the garden stake)
While he is distracted, you stab Edward through the heart. "Bella?" he asks
plaintively, as he begins to disintegrate. You begin to regret your hasty action.

The parser figured out that the only thing you were carrying that would sensibly be used to attack a vampire was a garden stake. So, it filled in WITH THE GARDEN STAKE for you. If your command is ambiguous and the parser *can't*. figure it out, it will ask you to clarify. You can clarify simply by supplying the missing information at the next prompt. For example:

>KISS THE BOY
Which boy do you mean, Edward or Jacob?

>EDWARD

Jacob looks heartbroken as you step into Edward's arms and kiss him passionately.

Talking to characters

Different works of interactive fiction allow you to interact with characters in different ways. Some do not allow you to speak with people; others allow you to ASK and TELL characters about different topics; others also allow you to GIVE characters items that you carry. In *Muggle Studies*, you only have the option to TALK T0 people you encounter. When you do this, your character will make an appropriate greeting, and a menu of numbered choices will come up, allowing you to select the general sense of what you'd like to say.

```
>TALK TO JACOB
"What's going on, Jacob?" you ask. "I think I'm in love with your daughter," he
replies.
[1] That's disgusting. You're a pedophile!
[2] That's romantic. Destined to be together!
[3] But I thought you were in love with me...?
```

There also might be an option to exit the conversation—something like [4] NEVER MIND—but that will not always be provided. To select a conversational option, type a number and press enter or return. You will speak, the other participant in the conversation will respond, and you will see a menu to continue the conversation, thus:

>1
"Oh my God, Jacob," you say, "what is wrong with you? She's, like, two days old!" He
looks embarrassed and mumbles something unintelligible about souls reaching out to
one another across time.
[1] Well, if you can't help it I guess it's OK.

[2] Never touch my daughter again![3] Shun him.

The conversation will go on until either you or the other character ends it.

Sample transcript and map

This section of transcript is not from *Muggle Studies*, but it will give you a good general idea of how interactive fiction works. There are some differences between this transcript and *Muggle Studies*— notably, in *Muggle Studies* it is impossible to die. The transcript contains some simple puzzles and their solutions. The player's commands appear in capital letters after each prompt (>). The map represents the terrain in the sample transcript as you might have drawn it.

```
>WAIT
Time passes...
   You hear your father's car pull up in the driveway. He'll want his dinner soon.
>I 00K
Your Room
   Pink walls covered in posters make your bedroom feel childish. It hasn't changed
since you were ten. The door is on the north wall. A window is on the south wall.
   You can see a desk here, on which is a copy of Wuthering Heights, a computer, and
a jewelry box (closed).
>EXAMINE WINDOW
The window is closed and unlocked. It is raining. A tree just outside looks like it
could be climbable, if you needed to make a nocturnal escape.
>OPEN THE JEWELRY BOX
It's locked.
>EXAMINE BOOK
(the copy of Wuthering Heights)
   As you examine the book, it falls open to a page in Chapter 9.
   You read: "If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be;
and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn into a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it." Edward's favorite passage.
   A key is in the copy of Wuthering Heights.
>TAKE THE KEY
Taken.
>EXAMINE IT
The key is small and gold.
>TURN ON COMPUTER
The computer boots up. Your browser pops up automatically.
```

>LOOK UP VAMPIRES ON COMPUTER You type 'vampires' into Google and discover that vampires have low body temperatures. They dislike crosses and garlic. They cannot enter houses without an invitation. Your father, downstairs, calls, "When do you think we'll eat dinner?" >UNLOCK JEWELRY BOX WITH KEY The jewelry box is now unlocked. >OPEN THE JEWELRY BOX Opening the jewelry box reveals a cross necklace and a promise ring. >EXAMINE NECKLACE A simple cross you received for your confirmation. >FXAMTNF RTGN I don't know the word "rign." >00PS RING A promise ring that Edward gave you, before he became so creepy and controlling. Your father calls, "Dinner, Bella? Sometime?" >TAKE NECKLACE AND RING Taken. >INVENTORY You are carrying a cross necklace and a promise ring. >NORTH Hallwav Empty but for an ancient family photo. Your room is south, the bathroom is east, and the living room is down the stairs. >EXAMINE PHOTO You, Charlie, and Renée in happier times. >DOWN Living Room Like every other living room in America. Your father, Charlie, is watching the game. The front door is north, the kitchen is south, and the hallway is upstairs. "Dinner?" your father asks. "I had a really long day. Oh, I saw that Edward kid. He said he'd drop by tonight around dinner time." >TALK TO CHARLIE "I'll take care of it. I meant to have it ready by now, but I was distracted." 'Distracted by the possibility that my boyfriend is a vampire,' you think, but don't say. "Thanks, Bella. I'm really glad you moved back up to Forks. Nice to have homecooked meals," he says, and goes back to watching the game. >SOUTH Kitchen A well-stocked kitchen, complete with stove. On the stove is a pot of water and an empty pot. On the counter are a recipe, a bottle of Ragu, some spaghetti, and a head of garlic. >EXAMINE What do you want to examine? >RECIPE A old yellowed recipe card, written in Renée's handwriting. You read: Put the spaghetti in boiling water. Put Ragu into a separate pot. If desired, add a head of garlic. Heat gently. Wait for the spaghetti to be done and the Raqu to be warm, et voila. Note: Charlie doesn't like garlic.

Well, Renée never was a cook. >EXAMINE STOVE The stove has two burners. The pot of water is on the left burner. The empty pot is on the right burner. A dial reading 'left burner' is turned off. A dial reading 'right burner' is turned off. Both dials have settings of 'off,' 'low' and 'high.' >TURN LEFT BURNER TO HIGH (the dial reading 'left burner') The left burner heats up. >POUR RAGU INTO POT Which pot do you mean, the pot of water or the empty pot? >EMPTY POT (first opening the bottle of Ragu) You pour the Ragu into the empty pot. >L00K Kitchen A well-stocked kitchen, complete with stove. On the stove are a pot of water and a pot of Ragu. On the counter are a recipe, an empty bottle, some spaghetti, and a head of garlic. The living room is to the north. >PUT HEAD OF GARLIC INTO POT OF RAGU You put the head of garlic into the pot of Ragu. It's more important for your father to be protected from Edward than it is for him to like his dinner. >TURN RIGHT BURNER TO HIGH The right burner heats up. The pot of water is now boiling. >PUT SPAGHETTI INTO POT OF WATER You put the spaghetti into the pot of water. >WAIT Time passes... "Something smells garlicky," your father yells from the other room. >WAIT Time passes... FAMILY PHOTO The spaghetti is done. BATHROOM HALLWAY The Ragu is beginning to turn brown and stick to the bottom of the pot. >TURN RIGHT BURNER TO LOW The right burner cools a little. BOOK YOUR The Ragu is ruined: it's black COMPUTER and beginning to smell bad. ROOM HEWELRY BOX 4 Apparently 'heat gently' does not mean 'heat on high.' LIVING ROOM "That really doesn't smell so good, Bells," your father yells from the other room. >NORTH STOVE KITCHEN POTS Living Room Like every other living room in GARLIC SPAGHETTI America. Your father, Charlie, is watching the game. The front door RAGU is north, the kitchen is south, and the hallway is upstairs.

>TALK TO CHARLIE "I think I ruined dinner," you say. "Well, it smelled like garlic anyway," he says. "I'll call for a pizza." The doorbell rings. >OPEN FRONT DOOR Edward is standing on the stoop. "May I come in?" he asks. >TELL EDWARD NO You begin to say 'no,' but Charlie talks over you. "Of course," he says. "Do you want some pizza? We were just ordering dinner." "No thank you," Edward says, as he enters. >TALK TO EDWARD "Um, hi," you say. "Hi," Edward says. "Hey, why aren't you wearing your ring?" >WEAR PROMISE RING Worn. "That's better," Edward says. "I like it when you show the world you're mine." Your father harrumphs. >WEAR CROSS NECKLACE Worn. "I don't like that necklace," Edward says. "I think you should take it off." >UP Hallwav Empty but for an ancient family photo. Your room is south, the bathroom is east, and the living room is down the stairs. Edward follows you. "Give me a kiss," he suggests. >SOUTH Your Room Pink walls covered in posters make your bedroom feel childish. It hasn't changed since you were ten. The door is on the north wall. A window is on the south wall. You can see a desk here, on which is a copy of Wuthering Heights, a computer, and a jewelry box (open). Edward follows you. "I love Wuthering Heights," he says. "Maybe you could read to me." >OPEN WINDOW You open the window. >DOWN You try to climb down the tree outside your window, but Edward grabs you. "Are you trying to get away from me?" he asks. "As if you could outrun me! As if you could fight me off!" The last thing you feel is his fingers, cold around your neck, and his icy lips crushed to yours...

YOU HAVE DIED

It's too bad you weren't more effective at repelling Edward, once you decided he wasn't the guy for you. Or maybe you could've stopped your father from inviting him in? Or perhaps you could have chosen a different path altogether... Better luck next time. Would you like to TRY AGAIN, or perhaps RESTORE a saved game?

Special commands

There are some commands that will make your life much easier, which you might not otherwise think to try.

ABOUT - Gives information about the game. Sometimes synonymous with HELP.

AGAIN - This will repeat your previous input. For example, typing PET DOG then typing AGAIN would make the dog very happy. You can abbreviate AGAIN to G.

BRIEF - This command will cause the game to fully describe a location only the first time you enter it. You can always get a full description of your location with the command LOOK.

HELP - Brings up a menu of helpful hints. Sometimes synonymous with ABOUT.

INVENTORY - The game will list what you are carrying or wearing. It may be abbreviated to I.

LOOK - This will give you a full description of your location. You can abbreviate it to L.



00PS - If you mistype a word, you can correct yourself at the next prompt by typing 00PS and the correct word. For example, if you typed PUT VERAVIN IN THE COFFEE and were told "I don't know the word 'veravin,'" you could type 00PS VERVAIN rather than retyping the whole sentence.

QUIT - This lets you stop playing without leaving your interpreter. If you want to keep your place, make sure you SAVE before quitting.

RESTART - This stops the story and starts it over from the beginning.

RESTORE - Allows you to return to a previously saved position.

SAVE - This saves your current position in the story. You can then return to it using the RESTORE command.

SCRIPT - This command tells your computer to begin making a transcript of the story; it will ask you to save it to a folder and thereafter will keep that file updated with your moves. It is *not*, the same thing as a save file.

SUPERBRIEF - Causes the game to display only the name of a place you've entered, even if you've never been there before.

VERBOSE - This command will cause the game to display the most extensive level of description for every room you enter, automatically.

VERSION - Provides the release number and full information about your copy of *Muggle Studies*. If you need to report a bug, please include this information.

WAIT - This causes time in the story to pass, without the main character doing anything. For example, if you set some water on the hob, you might WAIT for the pot to boil. You can abbreviate WAIT to Z.

Tips for novices

- 1. Draw a map. It should include each location and the connections to adjoining locations. Remember all 10 possible directions.
- 2. EXAMINE every noun you come across, whether it's in a room description or listed elsewhere.
- 3. TAKE everything that isn't nailed down. Most objects you find will be important at some point. There's an old joke that every interactive fiction protagonist is a kleptomaniac: it may be silly, but it's true.
- 4. Read the story carefully as you can, because small details can provide important clues.
- 5. Try whatever actions come to mind. The worst thing that can happen is that the parser doesn't understand them; in the best case, you might discover a solution to a puzzle.
- 6. You can often complete puzzles in any order. If you're getting frustrated with a puzzle, move on to explore more of the map and find another puzzle.
- 7. There are many ways to word a command. If you try multiple phrasings and multiple synonyms and the parser still doesn't understand it, you're probably barking up the wrong tree.

You just started up a game and now you're staring at <i>text</i> and a <i>blinking cursor</i> and you <i>don't know what to do</i> ! Don't panic kids— Crazy Uncle Zarf is here to help you get started	These commands are EXAMINE it TAKE it DROP it OPEN it PUT it IN something PUT it ON something When in doubt, et	PUSH it PULL it TURN it FEEL it	Does the game intro suggest ABOUT, INFO, HELP? Try them first! NW NE W V E
You are standing in an open fiel with a boarded front door. The			SW SE Also: Up, Down, IN, and OUT
You can try all sorts of commands on the things you see. Try the commands that make sense! Doors are for opening; buttons are for pushing;	You could also try: EAT <i>it</i> DRINK <i>it</i> FILL <i>it</i>	CLIMB it WAVE it WEAR it	What if I only want to type one or two letters?"

A Flowligh & Blott production. http://www.blotts.org/mugglestudies