

HIGHFOLK REGION PLAYER HANDOUTS

HANDOUT 1: HIGHFOLK PLAYER PRIMER

THE GREAT FRONTIER

The region of Highfolk clings to the western edge of the Vesve Forest, bordered by the Yatil Mountains and the Kingdom of Furyondy, with the Ververdyva River flowing through its heart. It is a rugged land of free folk who savor prosperity and endure hardship together. Life on the frontier is forged through survival, so communities are often tightly knit. Elves make up the majority, followed by humans, gnomes, and halflings. Other peoples are rare but welcome. Only deep-forest elven clans and northern goblinoids still cling to any semblance of prejudice.

Magic is scarce, ancient, hidden, and often dangerous. The Vesve holds secrets even elves will not name. But there is incredible opportunity here as well for those who seize it.

This is a land where heroic tales begin: where wilderness meets civilization, where unexpected heroes rise, and where the land itself may one day speak their name.

THEMES

The Frontier. The Free Lands of Highfolk remain largely unspoiled. The Vesve (the largest forest in the Flanaess) is filled with ancient, unimpeded growth. The Yatil and Clatspur foothills spill gold into the Ververdyva River, and Highvale's rolling hills offer sweeping, serene views.

But beauty here comes with isolation. Vast wilderness stretches between scattered settlements. Travel is dangerous and slow. Every resource matters. Remote outposts burn like faint lights in the dark. Far-off nations are too busy to care. No one is coming to rescue you.

Independence. The free peoples of Highfolk are used to handling their own problems. They govern loosely and resist strict laws, especially from outsiders. Leaders aren't seen as essential. Communities manage themselves with simple, fair traditions. Most can handle wolves and bandits, but when fell magics stir or eldritch entities awaken, defenders emerge from the Free Peoples, and legends are born.

This spirit of independence has shaped local customs, self-rule, and a strong drive to succeed. Anyone willing to work is welcome, whether they wield a hammer or blade. The people guard their own interests and rarely unite, but when they do, they move with purpose and ferocity.

Progress and the Primeval. The Vesve is among the oldest forests in the Flanaess, and the Yatil Mountains conceal lost temples and deep caverns. Highfolk's settlers are slowly pushing into lands older than memory. Old magic sleeps here; most of it is best left undisturbed.

Yet communities press outward, needing land and resources. Merchants and speculators chase trade goods, defenders seek power to match encroaching evil, and that same evil scours the region for its own gain. Adventurers hunt for glory in the ruins.

It is not a question of if, but when, one of them awakens something that does not wish to be found. When that happens, all of Highfolk may suffer the cost.

IDEALS & IDEOLOGIES

They are called the "Free People" of Highfolk for a reason. Across the region, common values include personal agency, decentralized rule, and a firm rejection of mandates from distant lands or leaders. Unsurprisingly, other beliefs vary between communities, and even from person to person. The following values and philosophies reflect expressions of three themes woven throughout the region.

City vs Country. While the City of Highfolk represents civilization, the region is rural, and country folk resent outside interference. In the Vesve, resistance is absolute. City folk dismiss this intransigence as stubbornness, insisting they only want to share their success.

Individualism vs Collectivism. Some folk take individuality to an extreme, embracing complete personal autonomy. This self-reliance can lead to strain between individual welfare and communal interests, especially with those who see community as an essential unit of measure.

Preservation vs Stewardship vs Dominion. People debate how to live with nature. Should they leave it untouched, coexist with it, or bend it to their needs? Followers of the Old Ways say civilization has gone too far; some of the "Old Faith" fringe believe restoration requires action.

AREAS & COMMUNITIES

The City of Highfolk. Within the region of Highfolk lies the "Free City of Highfolk", a fortified frontier town. Located at a crossroads near the Ververdyva River, it serves as the region's trade and travel hub. Highfolk is a melting pot: some come to sell goods, others to start new lives or chase adventure. A mayor shares power with a spirited town council and a modest town guard.

Highvale. "Highvale" colloquially refers to hills and valleys not controlled by Highfolk nor covered by the Vesve Forest. Dozens of small communities thrive here, each with its own customs, stories, and festivals. Most are self-sufficient or trade-based and fiercely defend their right to govern themselves with minimal rules.

The Vesve. The High Forest is vast, ancient, and untamed. Its inhabitants live by nature's rules, blending into the landscape and remaining highly mobile. Notable exceptions include Flameflower, ruled by a self-styled elven lord; a settlement founded by the legendary Quaal; and the secretive community at the Timeless Tree, which permits no outsiders.

In the north, goblinoids steadily deforest the land. In the east, servants of the demigod Iuz spread death and destruction. Though these threats remain confined to the forest's fringes, their waxing presence has many on edge.

The Highlands. The Yatil Mountains rise to snowy peaks in the southwest, promising treasure and glory alongside great danger. The Clatspurs branch from them, with the Sepia Uplands trailing north. Settlements here are sparse, but rich mineral veins attract miners and prospectors.

HANDOUT 2: HIGHFOLK CHARACTER BACKGROUND WORKSHEET

When creating a player character for the Free Lands of Highfolk in *Legends of Greyhawk*, use these design aids to help connect them to the region. Refer to **Handout 1: Highfolk Player Primer** ([or this web version](#)) when using this sheet. Your answers can be captured below or in the “Background” section of your character sheet. Expand upon them throughout your character’s heroic journey!

THEMES & TRAITS

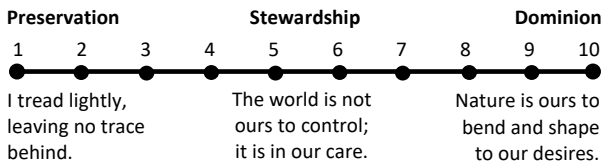
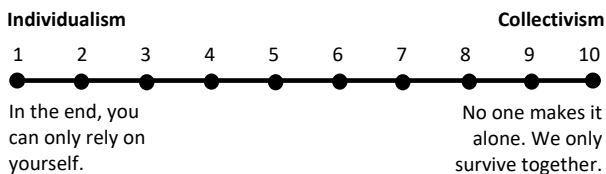
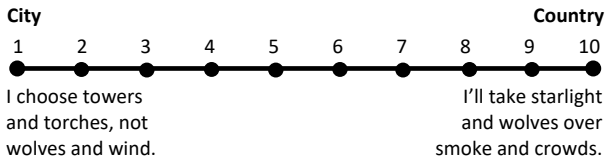
Which “theme” of the Free Lands of Highfolk most informs your character? Circle that theme(s) below.

The Frontier Independence Progress vs Primeval

What inspired your choice? Write 1–2 sentences below that reflect your character and explain your reasoning.

IDEALS & IDEOLOGIES

The three Highfolk themes are expressed in a range of ways, presented below. What position does your character fall on each scale? Rate them from 1 to 10, or roll for it!



Consider what these positions mean for your character. Write 1 to 3 sentences about how these beliefs shape them.

COMMUNITY BONDS

The region of Highfolk is broken down into four areas. Which one does your character hail from?

City of Highfolk Highvale The Vesve The Highlands

What community might your character feel connected to in that area? Describe it, and the nature of the bond.

BACKGROUND

Here are some inspirations for each background in the *Player's Handbook*.

- Acolyte.** Guard of hidden shrines; Host at merchant-temple of Fharlanghn; Secret practitioner of the Old Ways.
- Artisan.** Member of a frontier guild in Highfolk or Highvale; Woodworker; Artisanal geologist in the Highlands.
- Charlatan.** Fake ambassador in Highfolk; River barge swindler; Snake-oil peddler hawking miracle elixirs.
- Criminal.** Emigrant seeking anonymity on the frontier; Black-market trader of Vesvian rarities; Highfolk alleycat.
- Entertainer.** Thespian in the raucous Laborer’s Quarter; Musician to wealthy merchants; Volverdyva troubadour.
- Farmer.** Successful vintner; Subsistence farmer driven to adventure; Tree line logger; “Zero imprint” forager.
- Guard.** Highfolk town guard; Hired mercenary patrolling the trade roads; Deputy in a frontier village.
- Guide.** Relic or ruin hunter in the Vesve; Land-foraging survivalist; Seasoned Volverdyva river navigator.
- Hermit.** Devotee of the Old Ways; Lone farmer in the Highvale hinterlands; Isolated Highlands cave-dweller.
- Merchant.** Ambitious transplant from a larger market; Relics and commodities trader; Frontier salvager.
- Noble.** Scion of an elven clan; Elite on a rite of passage from afar; Gnome with a (dubious) claim to a local mine.
- Sage.** Secret archivist of Yatil lore; Scholar studying the Vesve’s mysteries; Wandering prophet foretelling doom.
- Sailor.** Volverdyva barge crew member; Pirate from far seas looking to hide; Smuggler who knows every hidden bend.
- Scribe.** Overworked Highfolk record-keeper; Arcane copyist preserving spells; Law-coder recording frontier customs.
- Soldier.** Vesve scout trained for silence and shadow; border skirmisher veteran; Oath-bound Order of the Hart squire.
- Wayfarer.** Pilgrim without a fixed home; Collector of tales and old customs; Survivalist who sees the road as sacred.

What background did you select, and what details would you add for your character?

HANDOUT 3: HIGHFOLK THINGS YOU KNOW...

The following knowledge is available to characters visiting the Free Lands of Highfolk. *Characters from the Highfolk region gain access to more information.*

Choose your additional knowledge the first time you receive this handout; if playing the same character in multiple adventures, carry those choices forward without selecting new ones.

THINGS YOU KNOW

These are common facts your character would likely know simply by arriving in or living within the City of Highfolk or by spending a brief time in Highvale. *Characters from the Highfolk region also know the information found in the Handout 1: Highfolk Player Primer (or this web version).*

On the Border. Highfolk stands at the boundary between civilization and wilderness. To travelers from other lands, many settlements here might not seem particularly “civilized.”

Four Areas. The region is divided into four parts: 1) The City of Highfolk and its surrounding environs; 2) The Highvale, a rural region shaped like an “L” through the region; 3) The vast Vesve Forest; and 4) The Highlands, which include the Yatil Mountains, Clatspur Mountains, and Sepia Uplands.

Visitors Are Welcome... The Free Folk welcome all who enter these lands, asking few questions. It doesn’t matter who you were before; only who you choose to be here.

... Encroachers Are Not. No nation formally rules this area. Each community, whether the Free City of Highfolk or the smallest thorp, governs its own affairs.

Bootstrap Spirit. Anyone can pick up a shovel, a plow, a sword, or a staff in these lands. As long as you don’t cause trouble for the community, you’re free to take your shot.

Community Over Species. Elves make up the majority of the population, but many other peoples live and work among them without concern. Survival on the frontier leaves no room for petty divisions.

THINGS YOU MAY KNOW

Pick two facts from the list below that your character knows. These represent a deeper familiarity or time spent in the region. *Characters from the Highfolk region can pick one additional fact.*

Urban Aspirations. The Free City of Highfolk was, until relatively recently, known as the Free Town of Highfolk. Interested parties who want the city to stand alongside Greyhawk, Chendl, and Dyvers sponsored a census to support this bold new claim.

Massive, Dangerous Wilderness. The Vesve is larger than many nations. (It is a forest the size of Colorado, or just shy of all the British Isles.) It is not a typical forest and not safe to simply wander in.

Secretive Sylvan Elves. While the “high” elves of Highfolk and Highvale mingle freely with others, the isolated “wild” elves of the Vesve dwell apart, roving the forest and keeping to themselves.

Old Language. Ancient words are still used here. “Olven” means “elven” in Flan. Highvale is also called the Fairdells,

and the Volverdyva the Quagflow. Faded druidic runes mark places of ancient lore and hidden secrets.

Mysterious Ruins. Deep in the Vesve lie overgrown druid sites, ruined refuges of mages, and even stranger relics. Not to be outdone, the Highlands hold forgotten temples and lost caverns of their own.

Verbeeg Hill. At the border of Highvale and the Highlands lies this den of prospectors, adventurers, gamblers, and those who prey on them.

Flameflower: A First. A relatively new (by elven standards) permanent settlement has taken root in the Vesve, at the sacred site known as Flameflower. Its founder, Kashafen of Clan Shandarath, has caused quite a stir.

Highfolk’s Watch. The city’s town guard, the Watch, consider it their duty to patrol nearby settlements such as the riverside Lily’s Crossing. Some in Highvale fear this could be a sign of encroachment.

Strange Seasons. Lately, the seasons in Highfolk have fallen out of rhythm with the calendar. This is most noticeable in the Vesve, where leaves refuse to change color or fall, and animals do not hibernate.

Northern Invaders. Two factions have recently staked claims in the northern Vesve, an area now called the “disrupted lands.” Goblinoids are carving out their own domain, while the armies of Iuz raze and raid. It remains unclear whether they are working together.

THINGS YOU PROBABLY DON’T KNOW

Pick one fact from the list below that your character knows. Characters from the Highfolk region can pick an additional fact.

The Old Ways. An informal network of practitioners and believers is actively plotting to bring Highfolk back to a time when nature ruled. While many simply wish for a simple and free life in nature, some take this belief to an extreme.

Dwellings in the Deep Forest. There are more than just elves that dwell deep in the Vesve. Rangers protect the forest (and visitors); a mysterious closed commune dwells as “the Timeless Tree”; and rumors speak of “beastfolk” and strange forest spirits.

Fabled Lost Serpents. Legends speak of dragons in Highfolk’s past, including titanic battles. But there has not been a sighting of one in the region in many years.

Old Beyond Comprehension. The Vesve is very, very old—even to elves. Some things about it are almost too alien for small mortals to understand.

Dreams and Whispers. Druids, mystics, and priests have been experiencing strange dreams and faint whispers as of late. Some ask for help. Some carry dark tidings. Some seem to do both.

Lost Ruins in the Wild. The Vesve holds vestiges from prior civilizations, rumored to be filled with fabulous treasures—as well as fell magicks. Not to be outdone, the Yatil Mountains jealously guard lost and forgotten sites full of history and secrets. There is glory in finding their fabled relics—but some things are best left unfound.