

Body of Argument Statement notes:

*Body of
Argument
Dice*

the Burning Wheel

Duel of Wits

Action Descriptions

Avoid the Topic

Tests: Will plus skill ForKs

Defends Against: All maneuvers except Dismiss

Special Requirements: The speaking player must veer off topic, even to the point of sounding desperate or ridiculous.

Effects: Scripting the Avoid the Topic action allows the player to defend himself against most attacks. Test the character's Will; successes are subtracted from his opponent's Point. Obfuscate or Incite. Avoid automatically beats Feint and Rebuttal; it does not work against Dismiss.

Dismiss

Tests: Dueling Skill

Defends Against: Nothing **Countered by:** Rebuttal

Special Requirements: This maneuver is used for the cataclysmic and undeniable conclusion of an argument. If a character fails to win the duel via his Dismiss action, he must hesitate for his next volley. Either cross off the next action, or skip the first volley of the coming exchange.

Effects: Scripting a Dismiss adds +2D to the dueling skill as the character loudly declares that his opponent knows absolutely nothing about the topic at hand and, furthermore, he's a fool and a dullard and shouldn't be listened to any further! Dismiss successes that are not Rebutted are subtracted directly from the body of argument.

Feint

Tests: Dueling Skill

Counters: Rebuttal **Defends Against:** Obfuscate

Special Requirements: Feint only works against Rebuttal or Obfuscate. If scripted against a Rebuttal, the Feinting player may speak first, offering his dummy point. Once his opponent's Rebuttal is in progress, he may interrupt and state his real point.

Effects: Using a Feint, the speaker leads his opponent on into a trap. He lures him to think he is discussing one point, until his hidden barb is revealed. Feints automatically counter Rebuttals—no defense is allowed, nor is the riposte. No roll is necessary. This is an automatic effect of the Feint. The Feinting character is then allowed to make a Point against the defender. Test the appropriate skill.

If scripted against a Point, Dismiss or Incite, the Feinting player gets no attack or riposte; against an Avoid, the defender escapes unharmed. Scripted against Obfuscate, the Feinter's skill is tested *twice*. Successes are added together from both rolls for the versus test.

Incite

Tests: Ugly Truth, Intimidation, Falsehood or Command

Counters: Nothing **Defends Against:** Nothing

Special Requirements: The speaking player must pronounce an outright insult to his opponent.

Effects: With an acid tongue and biting wit, a character may attempt to distract or dismay his opponent. Test the skill versus an obstacle equal to the victim's Will. Success causes the victim to make a Steel test. If the victim hesitates, he misses his *next* action. However, if the Incite fails, the margin of failure is added as advantage dice to the *opponent's* next test.

Obfuscate

Tests: Soothing Platitudes, Oratory, Rhetoric, Falsehood, Ugly Truth

Counters: Everything, but Feint **Defends Against:** All except Feint

Special Requirements: The player attempting to Obfuscate must present some non sequitur or bizarre, unrelated point in an attempt to confuse or distract his opponent. Obfuscate is spoken while your opponent is speaking.

Effects: This action forces a versus test between the two characters' appropriate argument skills. If the Obfuscator wins, the victim of this tactic loses his *current* action.

If the Obfuscator *exceeds* his obstacle, his opponent is +1 Ob to his *next* action. If the Obfuscator loses the versus test, his opponent gains +1D to his next action.

Huh? Obfuscate is similar to Incite, but instead it tests skill vs skill. If the Obfuscator wins, he's given his opponent pause for a moment. Note that this maneuver *can* stop a Dismiss action.

Point

Tests: Dueling Skill

Counters: Feint, Obfuscate, Incite **Countered by:** Rebuttal, Avoid the Topic

Effects: This is the main attack of the verbal duelist. Testing his dueling skill, Point successes are subtracted from the opponent's body of argument. This is the way to win debates! Successes from Avoid and the defense half of Rebut knock off Point successes.

Rebuttal

Tests: Dueling Skill

Counters: Point, Dismiss **Countered by:** Feint

Special Requirements: The player first lets his opponent make a Point (or Dismissal). He then refutes the arguments made while making a fresh attack.

Effects: The Rebutting player divides his character's skill between defending his point and attacking his opponent's. Before any dice are rolled, choose how many dice of skill will be used to defend and how many will be used to riposte. The player must put at least one die in each pool. Successes on the defense roll are subtracted from the opponent's Point or Dismiss successes. Successes on the attacking half of a Rebuttal act as a Point.

Volley 1

Duel of Wits Actions

- Avoid the Topic
- Dismiss
- Feint
- Incite
- Obfuscate
- Point
- Rebuttal
- Incant Spell
- Sing Spell Song
- Pray

Notes on what to say

Hesitation

- Stand and Drool
- Fall to your knees
(and beg for mercy)
- Swoon

Volley 2

Duel of Wits Actions

- Avoid the Topic
- Dismiss
- Feint
- Incite
- Obfuscate
- Point
- Rebuttal
- Incant Spell
- Sing Spell Song
- Pray

Notes on what to say

Hesitation

- Stand and Drool
- Fall to your knees
(and beg for mercy)
- Swoon

Volley 3

Duel of Wits Actions

- Avoid the Topic
- Dismiss
- Feint
- Incite
- Obfuscate
- Point
- Rebuttal
- Incant Spell
- Sing Spell Song
- Pray

Notes on what to say

Hesitation

- Stand and Drool
- Fall to your knees
(and beg for mercy)
- Swoon

Duel of Wits Move vs Move results	Avoid the Topic Tests: Will plus skill FoRKs	Dismiss Test: Dueling Skill +2D	Feint Tests: Dueling Skill	Incite Tests: Ugly Truth, Intimidation, Falsehood, or Command	Obfuscate Tests: Soothing Platitudes, Oratory, Rhetoric, Falsehood, Ugly Truth	Point Tests: Dueling Skill	Rebuttal Tests: Dueling Skill
Avoid the Topic Tests: Will plus skill FoRKs	No roll necessary. Neither opponent's BoA is affected	Dismiss bypasses Avoid	Avoid beats Feint, neither BoA is affected	Avoid successes are subtracted from Incite successes	Avoid successes are subtracted from Obfuscate successes	Avoid successes are subtracted from Point successes	Avoid beats Rebuttal, neither BoA is affected
Dismiss Test: Dueling Skill +2D	Dismiss bypasses Avoid	Both Dismisses are tested and have their full effects	Dismiss beats Feint; Dismiss is tested as usual with full effects. Feint has no effect	Dismiss and Incite are tested independently and have their full effects	Test for Obfuscate first. If successful, Dismiss is blocked. If unsuccessful, roll for Dismiss	Dismiss and Point are tested as usual with full effects	Rebut defense-half successes are subtracted from Dismiss successes
Feint Tests: Dueling Skill	Avoid beats Feint, neither BoA is affected	Dismiss beats Feint; Dismiss is tested as usual with full effects but Feint has no effect	Neither Feint succeeds; neither BoA is affected	Incite beats Feint. Test Incite as normal. Feint is not tested	Obfuscate works as normal except Feinter may test skill twice for defense	Point beats Feint. Test Point as Normal. Feint is not tested.	Feint beats Rebuttal; Feint becomes an uncontested Point. Do not roll for Rebuttal
Incite Tests: Ugly Truth, Intimidation, Falsehood, or Command	Avoid successes are subtracted from Incite successes	Dismiss and Incite are tested separately and have their full effects	Incite beats Feint. Test Incite as normal. Feint is not tested	Both Incites are tested as usual with full effects	Test for Obfuscate first. If successful, Incite is blocked. If unsuccessful, test for Incite as normal	Incite and Point are tested separately each with its full effects	Incite beats Rebuttal. Test Incite, Rebuttal is not tested.
Obfuscate Tests: Soothing Platitudes, Oratory, Rhetoric, Falsehood, Ugly Truth	Avoid successes are subtracted from Obfuscate successes	Test for Obfuscate first. If successful, Dismiss is blocked. If unsuccessful, roll for Dismiss	Obfuscate works as normal except Feinter may test skill twice for defense	Test for Obfuscate first. If successful, Incite is Blocked. If unsuccessful, test for Incite as normal	Make a versus test between the two Obfuscators, the winner gains the bonus. Loser is penalized.	Test Obfuscate first. If successful, it blocks Point. If unsuccessful, test Point as normal.	Rebuttal is ineffective and is not tested; Obfuscate is tested as usual with full effects
Point Tests: Dueling Skill	Avoid successes are subtracted from Point successes	Dismiss and Point are tested as usual with full effects	Point beats Feint. Point is tested as normal. Feint is not tested.	Incite and Point are both tested independently	Test for Obfuscate first. If successful, Point is blocked. If unsuccessful, test for Point as normal	Both Points are tested as usual	Rebuttal defense successes are subtracted from Point successes; Rebuttal offense acts as a Point
Rebuttal Tests: Dueling Skill	Avoid beats Rebuttal, neither BoA is affected	Dismiss and Rebuttal are tested as usual with Rebut defense successes being subtracted from Dismiss successes	Feint beats Rebuttal; Feint becomes an uncontested Point. Do not roll for Rebuttal	Incite beats Rebuttal. Test Incite, Rebuttal is not tested.	Rebuttal is ineffective and is not tested; Obfuscate is tested as usual with full effects	Rebuttal defense successes are subtracted from Point successes; Rebuttal offense acts as a Point	Rebuttal has no effect against Rebuttal. Roleplay the conversation. No dice are rolled.

Dueling Skills: Oratory, Rhetoric, Persuasion, Suasion, Preaching, Interrogation, Stentorious Debate or Haggling (where appropriate)

Appropriate FoRKs: Etiquette, Falsehood, Ugly Truth, Soothing Platitudes, Conspicuous, Command and Intimidation. Note that FoRKs must be roleplayed into your main maneuver, otherwise no benefit is gained.

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Special Thanks to Chris McNeilly for building the table on this page.