

# You Should Read *Homestuck*

*A game for two players, one of whom has read Homestuck*

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You Should Read *Homestuck* is a game about the experience of being a fan (or a friend of a fan) of a dense, inaccessible work with a large, rabid fanbase. While the base game is designed around the popular 2009 webcomic *Homestuck*, rules for adapting it to other works are included at the end of this rules document.

Exactly one player should be someone who has read *Homestuck* in real life. In the game, you'll swap roles; the person who has read it will play someone who hasn't, and vice versa. The player who has read it will play the role of someone ("the non-reader") who 1) hasn't read *Homestuck*, 2) but is aware that it exists, 3) and will probably never read it. The player who has not read it plays the role of someone ("the reader") who 1) has read *Homestuck*, 2) wants their friend to read it, 3) and will ignore the fact that their friend does not want to read *Homestuck*.

The game takes the form of a conversation between both of these characters. The reader should begin by announcing that the non-reader should read *Homestuck*. The non-reader might respond by saying "isn't that the comic where \_\_\_\_\_ happens?", "I don't want to read *Homestuck* because it has \_\_\_\_\_," "didn't the fans of *Homestuck* do \_\_\_\_\_?", or any other response that furthers the conversation while expressing disinterest in actually reading it. The reader responds in turn by addressing whatever concern or question the non-reader has while affirming whatever details the non-reader added: "yeah, \_\_\_\_\_ happens because of the \_\_\_\_\_ earlier in the story," "you'd actually like the \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_," or "there were a few fans who did \_\_\_\_\_, but the fandom also did \_\_\_\_\_." This back and forth continues as long as both players feel is appropriate.

Neither player should EVER deny something the other player claims is true about *Homestuck*. For example, if the reader says "my favorite character is Kakarot," it would be inappropriate for the non-reader to point out that Kakarot isn't a name of a character in *Homestuck*; it's now true and canon forevermore that one of the characters in *Homestuck* is named Kakarot, and you're just going to have to live with that. Nor is either player obligated to stick to things they're pretty sure are true about *Homestuck*; it's perfectly alright for either player to claim that the characters in *Homestuck* are all vying for control of the Chaos Emeralds.

Once the conversation feels like it's winding down, both players discuss whether they think the version of *Homestuck* is one that would actually be enticing to a non-reader. If the players come to the consensus that, yes, this would be a fun story to read, then both players have won. However, if one or both players feel that the version of *Homestuck* they've created is bad and not worth reading, both players lose.

This is a game about *Homestuck* because it has perhaps the most ubiquitous combination of being extremely hard to get into and having an overwhelming fandom. However, if both players have or have not read *Homestuck*, you are encouraged to find another work with those same traits that only one of you has experienced. You might play this game as "You Should Watch *Star Trek*," "You Should Play *Blaseball*," "You Should Read *Ulysses*," or "You Should Grow a Sourdough Starter." It's okay if the work you use as the basis for your game only has one of those traits, but it should definitely have at least one of them, as that's the primary source of tension between the players. ■