

HUNTSMAN'S HOMEBREW'S PLAYTEST: BARDIC COLLEGES

THIS IS PLAYTEST MATERIAL

The material in this article is presented for playtesting and to spark your imagination. These game mechanics are in draft form, usable in your campaign but not refined by full game design and editing.

The character options you read here might be more or less powerful than options in the official game. If a design survives playtesting, I adjust its power to the desirable level before official publication. This means an option could be more or less powerful in its final form.

COLLEGE OF DANCE

Bards of the College of Dance are free spirits who express themselves through motion. Even when they are not performing, their body language is extravagant, incorporating a myriad of gestures and expressions.

In combat, these Bards use their complete control of their bodies to distract their enemies. Just as they mesmerize an audience from a stage, they capture the attention of others with their striking dance.

COLLEGE OF DANCE FEATURES

Bard Level	Features
3rd	Beguiling Movement
6th	Partnered Dance
14th	Seductive Mastery

BEGUILING MOVEMENT

Starting when you take this College at third level, you learn to move in ways that distract those who would attack you. As a bonus action on your turn, you may expend a Bardic Inspiration die to begin to dance. When you do so, you roll the die and increase your AC by the result. your AC remains changed for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier.

While dancing, you may still move and take actions as normal, as you incorporate your actions into your natural motion.

PARTNERED DANCE

Starting at sixth level, you learn to further enthrall creatures with your visual performance. As an action while you are dancing using your *Beguiling Dance* feature, you may choose one creature you can see within 30 feet of you.

That creature subtracts your Bardic Inspiration die from their spell save DC and attack rolls against creatures other than you until this start of your next turn.

SEDUCTIVE MASTERY

Upon reaching fourteenth level, you have mastered the art of capturing a creature's mind with the movement of your body. You gain proficiency in the Performance skill if you did not already have it. You then double any bonuses you gain when making a Charisma (Performance) check.

In addition, whenever a creature within thirty feet of you makes a Wisdom saving throw to avoid being charmed by, you can choose to give them disadvantage on that saving throw (no action required).

Finally, while you are dancing using your *Beguiling Dance* feature, you are immune to the Charmed and Frightened conditions.

COLLEGE OF THE HERO

It is said that not all who wander are lost. In kind, not all who inspire create. Not every pursuit of the life of a Bard is an artist, pursuing the arts of brush, oration, or song. Not every bardic performance is an innocent display for entertainment.

The College of the Hero is composed of those, witting and unwitting, who choose to shoulder the burdens of the world, rallying other would-be legends in the face of incredible — impossible — odds. Though more common Bards might disagree, these uncommon individuals are Bards of the highest order.

COLLEGE OF THE HERO FEATURES

Bard Level	Features
3rd	Bulwark
6th	Combat Prowess
14th	Heroic Sacrifice

BULWARK

Starting when you take this College at third level, your mere presence can steel others' nerves and strengthen their resolve in combat. You gain proficiency with three martial weapons of your choice, and can use a martial weapon that you are proficient with as a spellcasting focus.

In addition, a creature that has a Bardic Inspiration die from you may expend that die as a reaction when they take damage, reducing the damage taken by the number rolled.

COMBAT PROWESS

Starting at sixth level, you may attack twice, instead of once, when you take the attack action on your turn.

In addition, you may forego one of your attacks to command a friendly creature to attack. Choose a creature that has a Bardic Inspiration die from you. That creature may immediately use its reaction to make a weapon attack against a creature of your choice, adding the number rolled on the Bardic Inspiration die to both the attack and damage rolls.

HEROIC SACRIFICE

Starting at fourteenth level, you are as effective an inspiration as a martyr as you are when you are standing tall. Whenever you are reduced to zero hit points by a hostile creature, you can grant every creature of your choice within thirty feet of you who can see or hear you a d8. These d8s are identical in function to Bardic Inspiration dice, but do not count against your total uses of Bardic Inspiration.

You can grant one of these d8s to a creature that already has a Bardic Inspiration die, but that creature cannot use both dice on the same roll.

Any d8s that have not been used when you regain one or more hit points are immediately lost.

Once you have used this feature, you may not do so again until you roll initiative again, or until you finish a short or long rest.

COLLEGE OF THE WORDSMITH

College of the Wordsmith Bards are those masterful storytellers who weave a world so engaging that it feels that it could really be there. These bards count authors, poets, dungeon masters, and many adventurers among their ranks.

Those College of the Wordsmith Bards that take up adventuring put the reality of their words to use on the battlefield, and what sounds in the taverns like a possibility is spun into the very fabric of reality.

COLLEGE OF THE WORDSMITH FEATURES

Bard Level Features

3rd	Bonus Proficiencies, Imagined Reality
6th	Authorial Description
14th	Grandiose Description

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

As a wordsmith, your mastery of language and its use is unparalleled. When you join the College of the Wordsmith at third level, and again at sixth, ninth, twelfth, fifteenth, and eighteenth levels, you gain proficiency in one language of your choice. You can read, write, and speak the chosen languages fluently.

In addition, you gain training in the deception skill (gaining expertise if already trained).

In addition, all Illusion spells count as Bard spells for you.

Finally, you gain proficiency with Calligrapher's Supplies (gaining expertise if already trained).

IMAGINED REALITY

Also at third level, you learn to charge your words with a combination of conjuration and evocation, bringing your descriptions to life. As a bonus action, you may spend a use of bardic inspiration to temporarily infuse substance into one non-living object that is part of an illusion currently being cast or controlled by you. This lasts for a number of rounds equal to the result of the bardic inspiration die, or until you dispel it as a bonus action.

This substance causes creatures that can see the illusion to treat it as a real object, instead of as a projection. In addition, you can cause the illusion to gain one of the following effects:

Gravitas. The illusion grabs creatures' attention and pulls them in. Each creature of your choice that can see the illusion must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC or be charmed by the illusion for the duration.

Harm. The illusion can do damage. This could be an illusory weapon becoming possible to wield, illusory glass cutting those who walk over it, or similar effects. Damage done by this trait is equal to your bardic inspiration die.

Solidity. The illusion becomes solid enough to support a medium creature's weight or block movement through a medium space.

AUTHORIAL DESCRIPTION

At 6th level, you gain greater power over the fundamentals of magical language. You may learn any two conjuration spells. These do not count against your spells known.

In addition, your Imagined Reality feature may be used to temporarily conjure living creatures. Any creature thus created may only be natural beasts that have a challenge rating less than or equal to the level of the spell slot used for the origin illusion. Creatures you conjure in this way persist and obey your commands for a number of rounds equal to a roll of your bardic inspiration die.

GRANDIOSE DESCRIPTION

At 14th level, you begin to manifest more permanent effects in addition to your temporary ones. Once per short rest, you may make any one aspect of an illusion you control real permanently, at your DM's discretion.

The portion of the Illusion that you can make permanent in this way must be large or smaller. At 18th level, this size requirement increases to huge.

In addition, you may now use your Imagined Reality to conjure Constructs, Monstrosities, and Elementals, and creatures you conjure in this way persist for twice as long.