Federation Of Omnipresent Wxyzaerds (F.O.O.W.)
www.aerdsw.xyz
The president, Simon Edward Jepps, welcomes you to our website, home of the most majestic strategy diceword game in all the galaxy.

Assemble ye good Wizards, for 'tis time.

Ladies & Gentlemen, Boys & Girls, Dogs & Cats, Bears & Dolls... welcome to the truly wonderous realm of **Wxyzaerds**.

Some of you may be familiar with this game, from another time and place, whence once before I unleashed its magical appeal unto an enlightened audience. Yet today is everthemore so special, for behold now as the realm of **Wxyzaerds** herewith evolves unto an evermore exciting and almighty challenge of magic, chaos and spells.
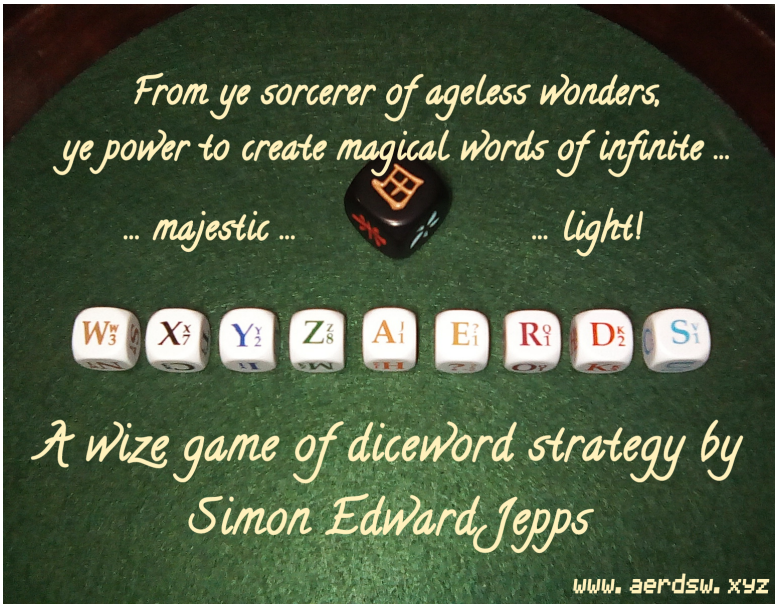
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Introduction

Wxyzaerds is a fantastic word game, played with _two kinds_ of very unique dice.

- **Letter dice**
- **Cobra Paw dice**

There are actually _so many_ different kinds of dice on the market, from 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20, 24, 30, 60 or even 100 sided dice, to divination, tarot or psychic dice, all kinds of creative, abstract, magical or humorous dice... but, most favourably in my book... _letter dice_.

Letter or "word" dice are generally six sided with letters of the alphabet printed on their faces. There are various kinds available, but ones which also display a letter value are harder to find.

From ye sorcerer of ageless wonders, ye power to create magical words of infinite ... ... majestic ... ... light!

A wize game of diceword strategy by Simon Edward Jepps

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I will leave a reference at the end of this article to a few such letter scoring dice, but for **Wxyzaerds** we will be using the nine dice set from the game **Dicewords** by Graham Lipscomb.

For how to get <u>all</u> the **Wxyzaerds** dice, including the *Cobra Paw*, jump to: **Notes, Dice & Shops**.

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How To Play

Traditionally this game can be played by at least one/two players and if you have the time, up to a maximum of six players. However there is no official limit, if you can endure the challenge.

Equipment

- 2 x Dicewords *(9 die set = 18 dice)*
- 1 x Cobra Paw Die *(2 die set = 1 spare)*
- Pen, paper & calculator

Objective

Players attempt to better one or both of their progressive score types, those being running word values or *Cobra Paw* symbol values.

Thus players roll the dice and attempt to form high scoring words from the *Letter Dice*, or alternatively adjust the value of the *Cobra Paw* die to better their pictographical score.

There are TWO forms of *Cobra Paw* bonus points.

1. Pictographical tally.
   - Each symbol on the *Cobra Paw* is recorded in tandem with the player's word score. For every FIVE matching symbols a player records throughout the game, he/she is awarded a bonus **45** points. These points are calculated at the END of the game.
2. *Cobra Word* bonus.
   - Each symbol on the *Cobra Paw* has a nominal description, known as a *Cobra Word*. If a player forms the respective name for the given symbol, the player is awarded a bonus **13** points for the hand. These points are calculated immediately.

Cobra Paw tally points only contribute whence counted and totalled at the end of the game. If a player DOES NOT have FIVE matching symbols, then regardless of the symbols accumulated, his tally DOES NOT score.

➢ See the section on *Cobra Paw* to learn more about this die.

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The Fundamentals

We begin play with only NINE letter dice, each from the original nine *Dicewords* set, and of course the grande *Cobra Paw* die.

The starting player is decided by rolling the *Cobra Paw*. This special die has six unique symbols about its six sides. The highest value, a "Red Cross", stands for "**Providence**" and it is this die which determines the starting player. The first player to actually roll the "**Providence**" successfully, starts the game.

The symbols of the 'Cobra Paw' will be explained in more detail shortly.

To begin, each player takes it in turns to roll all NINE dice from one original *Dicewords* set and attempt to create the highest scoring word from the letters dictated by chance.

The *Cobra Paw* is then rolled to establish the turn proper.

The 'Cobra Paw' is both accumulative and immediate, in that aswell as providing a tally bonus, it also dictates various advantages of the current hand. This aspect too, will be clarified shortly.

Each turn a player may create either just one word from all nine letters or, if there are enough dice left over, two or more words.

Thus for example, one word of six letters and another word of the remaining three letters.

All words formed may intersect with one another and indeed multiple words are possible whence more dice are introduced to the pool.

Players score a bonus *"double die"* value if two words intersect each other. The die through which they intersect scores DOUBLE its face value for BOTH words.

➢ See **Scoring** for reference.

Increasing the size of the dice pool is a simple yet wild feature and this too will be explained shortly.

Now, after a player first rolls their dice in any turn, he or she has ONE EXTRA COBRA PAW ROLL available to change the values and permissions of the current hand.

First the player must decide if he or she *wishes* to re-roll the *Cobra Paw*. If the *Cobra Paw* is to be rolled AGAIN then it MUST be re-rolled BEFORE any of the other dice.

The 'Cobra Paw' commands various different advantages of the current hand, such as re-rolling a set number of Letter Dice. For this reason the 'Cobra Paw' must ONLY be re-rolled FIRST, if re-rolled at all.

Each value on the *Cobra Paw* represents THREE different things.

1. The ongoing symbol tally which accumulates to a grand score. Every five matching symbols grants **45** points.
2. The respective **13** point bonus *Cobra Word*.
3. The number of *Letter Dice* permitted to be re-rolled in the active turn, represented by the number of lines in the given symbol.

A player may ONLY re-roll the number of *Letter Dice* dictated by the *Cobra Paw*. Thus whence a player RE-ROLLS the *Cobra Paw* he therefore changes the above THREE conditions.

If a player has ALREADY re-rolled the *Letter Dice* then the *Cobra Paw* may NOT be re-rolled.

This intimate relationship between the *Letter Dice* and the *Cobra Paw* is what creates the most decisive strategies of the game.
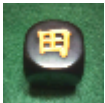
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The Cobra Paw

Here are the symbols found on the *Cobra Paw* and what they represent in the game of **Wxyzaerds**.

Providence
/ (red) / re-roll 7 letter dice / 13 points /

Formula
/ (orange) / re-roll 6 letter dice / 13 points /

Growth
/ (blue) / re-roll 5 letter dice / 13 points /

Dimension
/ (white) / re-roll 4 letter dice / 13 points /

Element
/ (yellow) / re-roll 3 letter dice / 13 points /

Truth
/ (green) / re-roll 2 letter dice / 13 points /

- **Firstly**, the symbols on the *Cobra Paw* dictate the immediate number of *Letter Dice* allowed to be re-rolled in the current hand, represented by the number of lines in the given symbol.
  - For example the two green horseshoes of *'Truth'* are *two* lines and the four white sides of *'Dimension'* are *four lines*. Only the red symbol *'Providence'*, which theoretically has six lines, counts highest as *seven*.
- **Secondly**, as mentioned each *Cobra Paw* symbol also has a nominal description, known as a *'Cobra Word'*, which if the respective *Cobra Word* is formed, awards a bonus **13** points to the current hand. These points are recorded immediately.
  - *Cobra Words* are NOT *Wizard Words* and may not be used as such. Read the section on **Wizard Words** to understand the differences of each their employments.
- **Thirdly**, for every FIVE occurances of a matching *Cobra Paw* symbol recorded, the respective player is awarded a bonus **45** points at the end of the game. These points are awarded in addition to *Cobra Words*.
  - *Cobra Paw* tally points only contribute whence counted and totalled at the END of the game. If a player DOES NOT have FIVE matching symbols, then regardless of the symbols accumulated, his tally DOES NOT score.

If a player has SIX or MORE matching symbols, ONLY independent groups of FIVE are allowed and NOT multiple overlaps.

If the *Cobra Paw* is to be *re-rolled*, then it MUST be re-rolled BEFORE any *Letter Dice*.

As mentioned, the pictographical value of the Cobra Paw is accumulative over time, but it also dictates the immediate number of Letter Dice allowed to be re-rolled in the current hand. Thus players have the choice of re-rolling the current given number of Letter Dice and keeping the current Cobra Paw value, or re-rolling the Cobra Paw and thence re-rolling a different given number of Letter Dice.

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Wizard Words

The fun now begins.

In **Wxyzaerds** there is a spooky kind of special objective.

The special objective in *Wxyzaerds* is to attempt to form *"Wizard Words"*, these are any kind of word which could be directly attributed to *Wizardry*.

Now note the spelling. Of course all words in **Wxyzaerds** are *Wxyzaerd Words*, but we use the standard spelling of WIZARD for the name of this special bonus feature.

Wizard Words can also be invented, as you would, whereby familiar players, or indeed teams, would each create and hold a mutual **Wxyzaerds Dictionary**.

Any player wise and knowledgeable unto *Wizardry* will be rewarded greatly with bonus points for any *Wizard Words* constructed during the game.

So for example, words like "Magic", "Broom", "Wand", "Witch", "Quidditch", "Sorcery", "Potion", "Spells" or of course the standard spelling of "Wizard". All these kinds of words score BONUS points.

NOTE: **Cobra Words** are NOT *Wizard Words* and these score *separately*, 13 extra points each if the given symbol is formed.

Most *Wizard Words* score DOUBLE, except for 9+ letter words which score TRIPLE and "WXYZAERDS", which also scores TRIPLE, but scores QUADRUPLE if formed with all the original NINE dice.

➢ See the **Wxyzaerds Key** for reference.

Wizard Words initiate TWO items:

1. A bonus *Wizard Word* score to the player. This can be a double, triple or quadruple word score, depending on the *Wizard Word* formed.
2. An extra Letter Die is added to the pool next turn. Thus each and every time a player scores a *Wizard Word*, the size of the shared hand grows by one die.

1. The Wizard Word itself

The primary target *Wizard Word* is "WXYZAERDS" which, if formed with all the original NINE dice, scores QUADRUPLE = a massive **104** points, *+9 letter dice = **113 POINTS***.

The reason "WXYZAERDS" scores so greatly is not merely because it is the name of the game, but because in actual fact, there is only ONE way to form the word "WXYZAERDS" with all the original NINE dice and without using a "**?**" wild die.

Wizard Words employing the "?" wild die *only* score DOUBLE, regardless of their length.

Regardless of how many *more* dice have been entered into the pool, ONLY the original NINE dice spelling of "WXYZAERDS" scores QUADRUPLE. Any other variation with extra dice scores only triple = **78** points, *+9 letter dice = **87 POINTS***.

➢ See the **Wxyzaerds Key** for reference.

Any other *Wizard Words* of *nine or more* letters score TRIPLE.

All other *Wizard Words* of *less than nine* letters score DOUBLE.

IMPORTANT: Only the *Wizard Word letter totals* are doubled. The extra points for the number of dice used are not doubled, but added to the double/triple word score afterwards.

Note: When making "WXYZAERDS" only the plural scores triple/quadruple points, for it is a *nine* letter word, whereas the singular without the "S" is an *eight* letter word and thus only scores double = **50** points, *+8 letter dice = **58 POINTS***.

2. Adding more dice to the pool

Increasing the size of the dice pool is a simple yet wild feature.

Whenever a player forms a *Wizard Word*, an extra die is automatically added to the pool by the next player, on the next turn.

This die must be chosen at random.

Thus each and every time a player scores a *Wizard Word*, the size of the shared hand grows by one die, allowing for greater words and even greater combinations.

Herewith is a good reason to brush up on your *Wizard Word* vocabulary and learn about the **Wxyzaerds Dictionary**.

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AlphaBeta Sequences

Another scoring hand is the *Alphabetical Sequence*. These are dice which follow alphabetically unto each other. For example, "HIJKLM".

Whence creating a word, any dice left over which form an *AlphaBeta* may score ONE point each. Their default point values are ignored.

AlphaBetas and *Words* score as independent formations. Whilst the two kinds may *"junction"*, they may NOT be "matrixed". In other words, players may create a *Word* AND an *AlphaBeta*, OR even just an *AlphaBeta*, however a "matrix" of BOTH within a single formation does NOT score extra points.

For example, the word "STUMP" which contains an *AlphaBeta*, only scores as a WORD. This is because the *Word* takes precedence over the *AlphaBeta*. However, if only the first part "STU" were formed, then these three letters would score an *AlphaBeta* of **3** points.

As mentioned, *AlphaBetas* may 'junction' with *Words*, however the intersecting die ONLY scores its regular respective value for the *Word* or *AlphaBeta*.

Remember each die in an *AlphaBeta* scores **1** point and so a six letter *AlphaBeta* would score **6** points.

The golden target word "WXYZAERDS" also contains an *AlphaBeta*. Whilst not valid whence part of the actual *Word*, this particular "WXYZ" *AlphaBeta* scores DOUBLE whence standing alone. Thus, **8** points.

Only a NINE (or more) letter *AlphaBeta* scores TRIPLE... and thus **27+** points.

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The "?" Die

The *question mark die* can be employed as a "wild card", or rather a *Wild Die*. That is to say the **"?"** may substitute any letter of the alphabet to help form a *Word*, or an *AlphaBeta*.

However, as is shown on the *Dicewords* **"?"** die face, this character subtracts **-2** points from the positive total word score.

If an *AlphaBeta* is formed, then the **"?"** is merely discounted as **null**.

If the *Word* formed is a *Wizard Word*, then the **"?"** value is DOUBLED. For example, even if the grande "WXYZAERDS" is formed utilising the **"?"**, then because *any Wizard Words* utilising a **"?"** score *only double* points, the **"?"** is likewise *doubled* to *subtract* **-4** points.

If the **"?"** value forms a 'junction' between two intersecting *regular Words*, then **-2** points are deducted from each regular *Word*. Otherwise if one or both are a *Wizard Word*, then the respective deduction is likewise *doubled* to *subtract* **-4** points from the *Wizard Word*, whilst **-2** points is deducted from the regular *Word*.

Remember, if an *AlphaBeta* is formed, then the **"?"** is merely discounted as **null** for the *AlphaBeta*, regardless of any intersection with a *Word*.

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Scoring

Whence completing each hand, the player must write his or her score down on the sheet, FOLLOWED by the *Cobra Paw* symbol given in that hand.

The *Cobra Paw* symbol can either be actually drawn as is, or it can be notated by its respective initial letter. For example, *"P"* for **Providence**.

Players score points by totalling the values of letters AND the number of letters in the created word(s).

Unlike in *Dicewords*, where players multiply their word score by the number of letters in the word, in **Wxyzaerds** players merely count the number of letters and add that number to the totalling face values.

The *Cobra Paw* symbols are accumulated over time and tallied to a calculation at the end of the game, whereby every match of FIVE identical symbols awards a **45** point bonus.

Cobra Paw symbols ONLY score individually if the player successfully forms the symbol's *Cobra Word* (the face value's nominal description) during the active hand. Regardless of the *Cobra Word* formed, all

Cobra Words score an extra **13** points. These points are recorded immediately.

Players score a bonus *"double die"* value if two words intersect each other. The die through which they intersect scores DOUBLE its face value for BOTH words.

If the intersecting word is a *Wizard Word*, then the intersecting die is *first doubled independently*, then *added to the total Wizard Word* and then the total *Wizard Word* itself is *doubled/tripled/quadrupled* accordingly.

Wizard Words are any kind of word which could be directly attributed to *Wizardry* and these score DOUBLE, except for 9+ letter words which score TRIPLE and "WXYZAERDS", which also scores TRIPLE, but scores QUADRUPLE if formed with all the original NINE dice.

≽ See the **Wxyzaerds Key** for reference.

Wizard Words employing the "**?**" wild die *only* score DOUBLE, regardless of their length.

The "?" Die deducts **-2** points from any regular *Word*, **-4** points from a *Wizard Word* and scores **null** if used in an *AlphaBeta*.

Whence creating a word, any dice left over which form an ***AlphaBeta*** may score ONE point each. Their default point values are ignored. Only a NINE (or more) letter *AlphaBeta* scores TRIPLE and thus **27+** points.

Each turn players then add their completed word score and *Cobra Paw* symbol to their running total/tally.

- After *27 HANDS* each have been played, whichever player has the highest score is declared the WINNER of the game.

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Wxyzaerds Dictionary

Aside from a standard dictionary of your own native language, players may find it prudent to create their own mutual *Wxyzaerds Dictionary*.

This would be a list of all *invented* and of course regular *Wizard Words* agreed upon by familiar players which they each feel may be permitted in the game.

The *Wxyzaerds Dictionary* is also essential for recording the *Wxyzaerds Key*, the combination required to ensure all the original NINE dice are employed at the start of any game and for determining the relevant *Wizard Word* bonus, for the grande word "WXYZAERDS".

Players could thus create any *wizardish* or bizzarish words they like, increasing the linguistic and strategic scope of the game.

A definition for each word created is in fairness recommended, although not an official requirement.

Personally I like the word "BROOMSTIX", not only for its quirky individuality, but because the ten or eleven letter standard spelling cannot be used with only nine dice.

So for this reason I recommend a *Wxyzaerds Dictionary*.

NOTE: *Cobra Words* are NOT *Wizard Words* and may not be used as such. Read the section on *Wizard Words* to understand the differences of their employment.

Wxyzaerds Key

The ***Wxyzaerds Key*** is the combination required to ensure all the original NINE *Dicewords* dice are employed at the start of any game.

This *key* is also *vital* for determining the relevant *Wizard Word* bonus, for the grande word "WXYZAERDS".

Whilst players may wish to employ only the original NINE dice and NOT increase the number of dice throughout the game, it is assumed that most people playing this game would want more depth and intellectual creativity, from the extra dice.

Yet whence two sets of nine dice are mixed together, it is inevitable one will forget which dice form the original nine.

It is important to know which nine dice are the original dice because these particular dice have been designed by the manufacturer to provide the most equally alphabeticized distribution in order to help you form the most words possible.

Whilst players are welcome to start any game however they like, thus with any of the EIGHTEEN collective dice, here is the **Wxyzaerds Key** required to reset the original nine dice inventory.

There is only ONE way to form the word "WXYZAERDS" with the original NINE dice and <u>without</u> using a "**?**" wild die.

This is as follows.

- **W** = Brown
- **X** = Black
- **Y** = Dark Blue
- **Z** = Green
- **A** = Orange
- **E** = Yellow (?)
- **R** = Purple
- **D** = Red
- **S** = Light Blue

<u>Note:</u> An easy way to remember is that the yellow *Wild(?)/Vowel* die MUST be used for the **E**, or all others will fail. Also and in tandem with *Yellow*, the colour *Brown* likewise has a **W** in its spelling. So remembering these two dice will help you with the *Wxyzaerds Key*.

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Wxyzaerds Teams & CallCodes

Here is a light hearted accompaniment to the game.

Whence many players decide to create a **Wxyzaerds** <u>Team</u> and therefore partake in competitions against other *Wxyzaerds Teams*, it is a tradition of this sport that each team create its own <u>*CallCode*</u>.

The team *CallCode* is not a function of actual gameplay, but is a recreational means employed whence in public to locate and identify the existence of other *Wxyzaerds Teams*, or players.

Players create and choose together a unique **Wizard Word** to represent their own team. This word is mostly kept a secret, although would be learnt by other teams over time and thence perhaps changed as it becomes commonly known.

This word is mostly only announced whence calling it in public, but different teams may of course convey it differently.

For example, you are walking through a park and decide to shout out your team's *CallCode*, which is "SPORKENCHIME". You then wait to hear if any other teams are nearby.

If a member of YOUR team is nearby, he or she will respond with the secret response code. This is a SECOND unique *Wizard Word* shared amongst your team.

If a member of an OPPONENT team is nearby, he or she will respond with their own team's *CallCode*, but only if they, firstly wish their presence to be known, and but secondly, actually understand why some strange person is shouting bizarre words out loud in the first place.

Once a response has been made, players might decide to meet for a friendly match or, merely pass the time shouting *CallCodes* back and forth until eventually, someone walks into a dancing tree.

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Notes, Dice & Shops

Of course, any dice with letters on their faces may be used for this game, however if they do not also feature a numerical value then players will have to decide an alternative method of scoring.

Here are two method concepts.

- Include an alphabet reference on the score sheet, taken from either *Dicewords* or perhaps *Scrabble*. Or apply your own invented values.
- Include TWO standard numeric six sided dice of different colours. Whence rolled, their different colours would determine the values of vowels and consonants.

Remember the objective of **Wxyzaerds** is to achieve *Wizard Words*, so effectively the actual values assigned to individual letters does not have to follow a particular method, although the *Dicewords* standard is a fundamental highlight of the game.

There are many letter styled dice available in the world if you search around, but for now I will leave a few references below.

➢ **Dicewords Official Website**
➢ **BGG ~ Dicewords**
➢ **BGG ~ Scrabble Dice**
➢ **BGG ~ Word Yahtzee**

The large **Cobra Paw** die originates from the actual "tile grabbing" game of that name.

➢ **BGG ~ Cobra Paw**

The official game of **Cobra Paw**, which is very different to **Wxyzaerds**, features two such dice and this game can be purchased in many places, including book shops.

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Thine Victorious Spell

I bought *Dicewords* many years ago because I wanted a portable kind of *Scrabble* game. Yet the dice lay dormant eventually, partly due to my ever increasing escapades in other games designs, but also because I couldn't quite settle with its limitations of play.

This is not to suggest *Dicewords* is boring, of course not, but for me personally I wanted more from a game of words than just "words"... I wanted *strategical prowess*, I wanted adventurous *magical* words... I wanted *spells*.

And so, after many years of other recreational investigations, uncountable Chess Variant studies and even more kinds of crazy dice collections, I finally returned to my beloved *Letter Dice*.

Aye, the game of **Wxyzaerds** seems only natural now I have finally determined its true character and thence revealed it unto you. But perhaps, like they say, *"a wand chooses his magician",* perhaps only *Time* chooses his *Wxyzaerd*.

So gather ye Dice of scrumptious magic and Books of *Wizard Words*... it's time to command the energy of nine and cast our good spells unto the fabric of time.

For evil thus here beware, art now good Wxyzaerds everywhere.

Thank you for reading and God bless.

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Contact F.O.O.W.

If you would like to get in touch with the **Federation Of Omnipresent Wxyzaerds**, please use the following credentials.

wxyzaerds@outlook.com

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Dragons reside here...

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