

## TIMEFRAMES

Prototype by Michael Elliott

*Timeframes* is all about telling a story with your friends over social media. One player takes on the role of the **Storyteller** by creating a post that describes the premise of the story and the rules of the game, and other people can participate by posting comments. The game ends once a certain condition determined by the **Storyteller** is met.

There are several ways to play this game, based on the social media platform you choose to use, and how you want to tell a story.

### Freeform Timeline

Recommended Social media Platforms:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Discord
- Slack
- Instagram

This is a game where all the players will have the freedom to detail major events in a fictional world. The Storyteller posts the rules as well as a **Start Date** and an **End Date** that will encompass the major events of the fictional world. Each player may contribute to the story by posting a date and then a description of what happened during that time.

The storyteller defines the scope and units of the timeline. You could start in the middle of an established civilization and end with their fall, the beginning of some sort of major event and the end of it's completion, or the creation of an entire world and when it's progenitors die. You could even define your timeframe by a few days or even minutes. A private detective has only a few days to solve the mystery, or a short scene between two combatants that will last only a few moments.

Unless you specify a format, ie- years, months, days, etc. players will often delineate time during their posts. One player may give their post a specific year, month and day, while others will simply post the number of the year with their description. When using the Freeform Timeline mode feel free to define what units of time each post should use. Players will usually take your lead and use the same measurement of time as the start end end points.

For a short game you will want to pick a start and end date that are separated by only a few moments of time, like a few years, months, or days. For a longer game you can have a start date and end date separated by hundreds or thousands of years. A sufficiently long timeframe could conceivably never end!

A Freeform Timeline style game is completed when there are no more available dates.

### **Freeform Progression Timeline**

Recommended Social media Platforms:

- Facebook
- Discord
- Slack
- Instagram

In this mode all the players describe major events in a fictional world. The Storyteller begins with a post about the game, the rules, and the **Start Date** and **End Date** as normal. However, whenever a player makes a post, the time of that post must come after the previous post. For example, if the previous post was in the year 1656, the next post must be at least 1 year after that time.

Players may skip ahead in time as long as they want, which means this mode of play is best suited for longer time frames (multiple centuries and millennia might be best if you're measuring time with years).

A game using the Freeform Progression Timeline is completed when you reach the End Date.

### **Random Incremental Timeline**

Recommended Social media Platforms:

- Facebook
- Discord
- Slack
- Instagram

This game mode is similar to Freeform Progression Timeline except each player uses some sort of on-hand randomizer to determine how far they progress the timeline. This could be a dice with any number of sides, so a player can roll the dice and add that number to the year of the previous post and describe what happens. This could also be something like a deck of cards, where the player draws a card and add the numerical value of that card to the previous posts' year.

A Random Incremental Timeline game ends when the End Date is reached.

## Freeform Resources

Recommended Social media Platforms:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Discord
- Slack
- Instagram

Instead of telling a story through moments in time, you could do so by tracking a dwindling or growing resource. In this mode you'll begin with a starting amount of resources and will end when this resource reaches a certain amount. Perhaps you are telling the story of human beings surviving in a mass exodus from Earth, starting with a fixed population, and ending when you reach a population of zero. Or maybe your game takes place before this exodus, and your resource is people being added to the exodus ship.

A Freeform Resources game ends when you reach the ending amount of resources.

## Random Incremental Resources

Recommended Social media Platforms:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Discord
- Slack
- Instagram

This game mode is similar to a Random Incremental Timeline, except you keep track of resources rather than time. Each player uses dice or playing cards to increase or decrease the amount of resources you're keeping track of, depending on the story. Each player adds or subtracts to the resource amount of the previous post using the value of the die rolled or the card drawn.

## Mix it Up!

There are several ways to play *Timeframes* and it's up to you to figure out what sort of stories you want to tell with your friends and how to tell them. You can mix the game modes up to create something new. Maybe you want each post to advance time and dwindling resources, or have a timeline that keeps track of specific dates or even specific times.