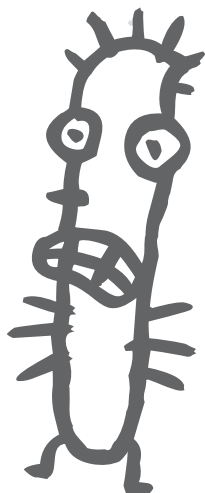




# Curriculum OF CONSPIRACY

**Spring Crescent Middle School**



A sourcebook for the game *Monsters and Other Childish Things*. *Curriculum of Conspiracy* is written by Ross Payton, © 2008. Illustrated by Rob Mansperger, © 2008. *Monsters and Other Childish Things* is © 2008, Benjamin Baugh. The One-Roll Engine is © 2008, Greg Stolze. Published by Arc Dream Publishing. Special thanks to Fred Hicks, man among page designers, and our playtest GMs: Gary “Evilgaz” Bowerbank, Neil Ford and Dan Parke. Visit us on the Web at [www.arcdream.com/monsters](http://www.arcdream.com/monsters).

# Spring Crescent Middle School

*We don't need no education.*

Spring Crescent Middle School is a beacon of light and knowledge in the city. Its students are renowned around the nation for high achievement in scholastics, athletics and civic duty. Families move to the school district so that their children might have a chance to attend this prestigious school. The walls of the front office are lined with photos of its successful alumni, including many famous politicians, businessmen, actors and other prodigies. Everyone in the community endlessly repeats the litany of the school's importance and each student that walks through its doors knows how vital success in the school is to their future lives.

It is a lie.

The administration ruthlessly exploits every system to gain prestige, funding and accolades it does not truly deserve. It manipulates the student body into cooperating and every freshman soon learns that everyone has a scam or an angle. That's how most of Spring Crescent's students and faculty think of the school.

But even this is a lie.

A small cadre of teachers and administrators have for years waged a war against the supernatural. Monsters in particular. Not for altruistic reasons, either. They have turned the school into the perfect trap for kids with monsters and use it to lure them and dominate or destroy them for personal profit and power. Of course, only a few know this, least of all any unwary freshman with a monster who steps inside.

Welcome to middle school.

*Curriculum of Conspiracy* is an adventure and campaign setting for *Monsters and Other Childish Things*, the roleplaying game by Arc Dream Publishing. You need a copy of that game to use this adventure. Find out more at [www.arcdream.com/monsters](http://www.arcdream.com/monsters).



# Theme

*Life sucks. Wear a helmet.*

Hypocrisy, corruption and clique politics all cast a shadow over everything connected to Spring Crescent. Every kid in the school is forced to become an accomplice to the schemes of the faculty, as those who don't quickly face the wrath of the administration.

The cabal uses subtle and supernatural methods to create deniability. Who will believe stories of teachers reading minds with sorcery or binding demons to enforce their rules? Selfish and ambitious students learn how to manipulate the system for their own ends and fall into squabbling with the other cliques. Kids who want to retain their dignity and self-respect must fight a guerrilla war against the adults and most of the student body.

Then there are kids with monsters. Kids with monsters have to deal with a conspiracy all around them that aims to destroy their monster friends and corrupt their souls. The teachers have decades of experience in confusing, betraying and breaking willful adolescents and their monsters.



# The History of SCMC

*History is first period.*

Founded in 1913, Spring Crescent Middle School was once a normal school for normal kids. Its real history begins in 1947 when the school board hired a new principal, Dr. Norman Levitt. Dr. Levitt presented himself as a bold innovator in the field of education, but in reality he was an occultist obsessed with discovering the existence of symbiotic guardian demons—monsters. He saw Spring Crescent as his private laboratory.

## Hans and the Soldier

Few know the details of Dr. Levitt's background. He had an Ivy League education. The earliest records are of his freshman year in college. In truth, Levitt spent his college years experimenting with various secret societies and cults. He also gained access to society's elite as he invited the upper crust to dark rituals and orgies for their decadent pleasure. He was nearly expelled for his activities, but he blackmailed several school officials, who had attended his orgies, into letting him graduate. After graduation, Levitt delved deeper into the occult underground and learned the basics of black magic while touring Europe between the wars.

Levitt might have been content to study dark grimoires had he not encountered a young boy named Hans in the back woods of Bavaria in 1934. Following rumors of a witch-tainted child, Dr. Levitt found Hans living alone in a squalid hut at the edge of a farming village. Curiously, despite the lack of a parent or guardian, the child appeared well fed and content. The doctor questioned the boy for several hours as the child innocently played with an exquisitely hand-carved toy wooden soldier, but ultimately learned nothing. When Dr. Levitt returned to the village to stay the night, the villagers refused to speak of the child, even when offered cash or liquor as incentives.

A week of careful study of the boy yielded nothing, but Levitt could sense he was onto something. Reasoning that forcing the boy to act would bring about the best results, he used magic to wither the crops of the village. Soon rumors began to fly. With a few more curses, and suggestions from Levitt, the villagers formed a mob to lynch the boy for allying himself with the devil. Dr. Levitt accompanied the mob, eager to see what Hans would do to protect himself.

# Gamemaster Tips

*The rules are there for a reason!*

When running a game based in Spring Crescent Middle School, keep these ideas in mind.

## **1. The Conspiracy is experienced in dealing with monsters and their kids.**

Players might think that their monsters give them an unbeatable trump card, that no one will expect their supernatural powers. However, the Conspiracy has seen many monsters over the years and defeated most of them. They will react to the players intelligently, using their resources in the most advantageous way possible. Blatant use of monsters in public, especially acts of violence and vandalism result in a swift yet secret response. The wards of Spring Crescent protect the building from mystical attacks, so players can't devastate the school on a whim. Characters who act publicly will draw undue attention to themselves.

## **2. The Conspiracy prefers to isolate students by attacking their relationships.**

Once they have identified a kid with a monster, the Conspiracy focuses on isolating the kid from everyone else. They diligently study the kid and will drive a wedge between the kid and his or her friends. They only use force when the kid has no other potential allies or if the kid attacks first.

## **3. The Conspiracy is relentless.**

Once the Conspiracy targets a kid, they will not let go. They are obsessed with enslaving monsters and any potential quarry is too valuable to let go. At any given time, the Conspiracy will attempt to sabotage at least one relationship of every kid they know has a monster. The exact plan will depend on the cabal involved.

## **4. The Conspiracy depends on secrecy to survive.**

Like all secret organizations, the Conspiracy cannot stand the light of exposure. While most adults won't believe in the supernatural aspects of the Conspiracy, there is plenty of evidence to dismantle them any way. Secret rituals, books of occult knowledge and other documents are necessary for the Conspiracy to conduct business, but if they were taken to the proper authorities it would mean the end of the Conspiracy.

Legitimate authorities or media figures who are shown Conspiracy documents (and convinced of their source) will interpret them as proof of a secret Satanic cult that abuses the students of Spring Crescent. Even a single letter or video of a ceremony shown to the right person will start an investigation.

Of course, this requires that the kids acquires the evidence and shows it to someone untouched by the Conspiracy. Then, the kids must protect the investigators if they want to see the Conspiracy stopped. The wizards will not take an investigation lightly and will do everything in their power to derail the investigators, including bribery, seduction or even murder.

### 5. Finding a kid with a monster is not easy.

Over 1,000 kids attend Spring Crescent. Of those, perhaps a dozen or fewer kids have monsters. Further compounding the search are the numerous troublemakers, goths, emos, and other malcontents. The Conspiracy wastes time investigating these ordinary kids and suppressing dissension and individuality. Even a kid who doesn't bother to hide the presence of his monster may be hard to detect, as the mystic wards do not always work. Finally, the Conspiracy has only a few dozen members at most and only a handful are devoted to searching for monsters at any given time.

Lately, the Conspiracy tends to set up traps that attract kids with monsters and observing who reacts to them.

### 6. The Conspiracy identifying a kid with a monster is a major turning point in the campaign.

Once the players are known to the Conspiracy, they should definitely know the stakes are raised. Cabalists will conduct surveillance on them, their relationships fall under attack and paranoia should soon set in. Unless the players are absolutely careless, only let the Conspiracy discover their identity when it is time to begin the final phase of the campaign.

The players should feel like they are under siege and that they need to smash the Conspiracy before the Conspiracy identifies them and it is too late. Emphasize that the adults the kids are supposed to trust are in fact waging war upon them and seeking to destroy everything that is precious to them.

### 7. Build tension as the campaign develops.

The opening sessions of the campaign should feel light and carefree, as the kids revel in the power of their monster friends. However, each session should raise the stakes at least a little bit. Remember, tension is anticipated action.

Hint at the dark clouds around the school. Have the players learn about the mysterious Big Fire of 1962. Let an NPC kid with a monster disappear halfway through the campaign, only to turn up in the psych ward of the local hospital, the monster gone. Punctuate a session with an intense encounter with a Gidim like Edward when the players least expect it. Have teachers like Mr. Forster give veiled threats.

This is a horror game and it requires a steady ratcheting of suspense.

