

Chapter Five

Writing Source

Material

The trend these days among gamers is they want source material. Adventures are good for one run, but good source material can be the foundation of an excellent and rich campaign, and it can help spice up an existing campaign.

What Is Source Material?

Many of our sourcebooks and supplements fit the description of source material — anything that helps fill in the gaps and details the *Star Wars* galaxy. Unlike adventures, source material doesn't require a plot, although exciting characters and settings are much more important. Source material can be picked up by gamemasters and players and used in their own campaigns.

Some examples of *Star Wars* sourcebooks include *The Heir to the Empire Sourcebook*, *Rebel Alliance Sourcebook*, the numerous *Galaxy Guides*, and the General Cracken books. Articles featuring source material on new planets, ships, or campaign ideas can also be used in the *Star Wars Adventure Journal*.

Be Organized

Since source material isn't usually held together with a plot like a story or adventure, organization is very important. Begin with a brief overview of what you're writing about — avoid phrases that state "this supplement/article will talk about the Ison Corridor and the many interesting worlds found there." Be direct. Tell readers something useful right away — "The Ison

Corridor is a little-known trading route in the Outer Rim Territories, home to numerous smugglers and the infamous gangster Greasy Boab."

Be Logical

Source material must all fit together in a logical way. Remember, although the *Star Wars* universe is a fictional universe, it does operate along many laws of reality. Characters must have reasonable motivations, planets must have believable climates and terrain, governments, cities and starports must all fit together logically. And in many cases when writers are describing new systems or characters, everything is inter-related.

Be Original

Original themes are cool. Stay away from *Star Wars* clichés (ice and desert planets, Hutt crimelords, smugglers with Wookiee copilots ...), and don't do something that's an obvious swipe from someone else's stories (ringworlds, federations, space stations near wormholes ...). Your readers want new, exciting and original source material to work into their games. Give them plenty of ways to use your source material — adventure ideas, new gamemaster characters with stats, new planets to explore, new ships to play with, small sidebars detailing other aspects of your subject. Look at what's been done in West End's *Star Wars* products and you'll see the wide range of subjects and presentations that source material covers.