Narrator's Guide
The Campaign

A campaign is a saga of the character's lives. The most important thing to a saga, and thus to a campaign, is the drama and emotion involved as it unfolds. The point of role-playing is to experience the drama and excitement inherent in the lives of heroes (or villains). What creates the drama and excitement is usually an item, person, or belief the characters feel strongly about. To inspire the characters (and the players) to achieve role-playing greatness, there must be something worth fighting for. The inspiration that motivates the characters must be moving enough that they care about what is going on. It must capture their imagination, and excite them.

The Characters

The players should be allowed to create whatever kind of character they want within the rules. At the same time, you may want to give them clues about what sort of campaign you are planning to run. For instance, if your players are going to spend a lot of time crawling through dungeons, it may be best to let them know, lest you end up with three druids and two rangers. If you are running a campaign that you feel requires specific characters, you may even think about making characters yourself. This is very extreme though as players like to play characters they create. As always, if you feel that a rule is too cumbersome or stifling, then go ahead and throw it out. As the players make their characters, you can give them suggestions about what they might want to create, and advise them as to what spells, weapons, or backgrounds they may choose.

Once the players have created their characters it is a good idea for you to look them over. A dwarven character who has a battleaxe etched with ancient dwarven runes on it could provide an interesting adventure for the characters to experience. Are there a majority of spell casters, or are there mostly fighters and thieves? Or if a character chooses to be of noble birth, both his allies and enemies can play a part in your campaign. In short, the characters themselves can provide ideas for your campaigns.

The Setting

The setting is the portion of the campaign that will probably take the majority of your time to create. The size of the setting can vary greatly. It can be a valley completely separated from the rest of the world by a great wall, or it can be an entire continent complete with various nations, races, and rulers. Most importantly the setting should be a place that the players can believe in. It must come alive before them and inspire their creativity. Create an aura around your setting that makes the hair on the players' necks stand up straight when they hear the name of a villainous NPC, or their heart race when a beautiful maiden enters the chamber.

There are several things that should go into a setting such as geography, culture, history, and points of interest.

Geography -Drawing a map is the easiest way to start developing the geography of campaign. It does not have to be perfect, but should contain all the important roads, cities, mountain ranges, valleys, forests, and any other odd geographical features your imagination can create. Think about the implications of individual features. For instance, a dry lakebed would be the perfect place for a tribe of orcs to settle. Large flat ground makes excellent grazing and farming land. Streams and rivers are generally dotted with towns and cities. You do not need to draw every little village and town on the map. In fact, you will find that as your campaign progresses, you will make some changes. When creating the map, do not feel that you need to mark down everything; give yourself room to create and expand later on.

Culture- The people who inhabit a fantasy world are not drones or robots. They should be thought of as real live humans (or elves, dwarves, etc.) with real life concerns. Farmers will be concerned with the year's crop, merchants with the price of goods, and marshals with keeping the peace. They might not have the time or the inclination to listen to a group of troublesome adventurers talk about their escapades. Perhaps the region has a particular religious system with its own ethics and taboos. Maybe they cannot speak on the fourth day of the week. If there are several races living together, how do they get along? Do humans and elves fight? Do gnomes and halflings intermarry? If the region is small, will the characters be looked on as outsiders or as welcomed guests? These and more are all things you will need to consider when creating the setting.

History- Every place has a history. When creating a campaign setting, you must also make up a history for it. Were there any former heroes active in the region? How did the local lords come to power? Are there any eerie legends or haunted mansions around? Are there places people just don't go, or are there places that people go often? Why? A setting with a rich history can provide a great deal of raw material for creating adventures. Old legends, family heirlooms, a secret fountain of youth are all examples of basic building blocks for a adventure that can come from the setting's history.

Points of Interest- Points of interest include towns, cities, forests, caves, wizard's towers, etc. When making the map, draw out the locations of cities and lakes, but also add lonely towers with no names, caves marked "Danger Here," and deep