

**Storienteer**, from orienteer *verb*

- '(orient oneself) [to a story] find one's position in relation to unfamiliar surroundings.' [1]

The *Proverb Randomizer* is a storienteering resource that supports the creative composition of design scenarios. While proverbs instill a little 'wisdom of the street' [2], randomness can lead to new ideas.

## Proverbs

Proverbs are used in everyday life to sum up a situation, pass judgment or recommend a course of action [3]. They can be heard expressed in sentences, but may also be embodied in stories. Many of Aesop's fables are elaborated proverbs.

Though a scenario may express the right design propositions it may yet be a bland and unengaging read. When a proverb is woven into the fabric of a scenario it has the effect of exposing human characteristics, motivations and beliefs.

## + Randomness

Randomness, along with chance, chaos and unpredictability, all come into play in the creative process.

*'Random phenomena such as serendipity, coincidence, and unconstrained conceptual association [...] are useful, because they provide unexpected ideas that can be fed into a structured creative process.'*  
(Boden 2004:233\*)

## = Proverb Randomizer

The *Proverb Randomizer* has been used successfully in design storytelling, as a provocative agent in composition. It can be used as a starting point for a story plot line, or as a way to flesh-out a story in combination with other storienteering resources or standard scenario-based design approaches.

§ From the four quadrants on the board, choose one of the themes; Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Paul Klee, Marc Zabarovich Chagall, or Katsushika Hokusai.

§ Either; throw two different coloured, three-sided dice\*\* or choose a card at random from one of the Proverb Card sets (download at: storienteer.info).



**Chagall**

- 1. Tall oaks grow from little acorns.
- 2. Fine words butter no parsnips.
- 3. Facts speak louder than words.

**Klee**

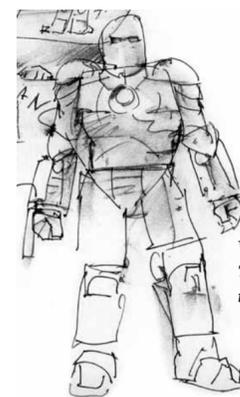
- 1. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.
- 2. Necessity is the mother of invention.
- 3. What the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't grieve over.

**Bruegel**

- 1. Discretion is the better part of valour.
- 2. The end justifies the means.
- 3. The wish is father to the thought.

**Other Proverbs:**

- A leopard cannot change its spots.
- Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.
- A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner.
- Easier said than done.
- Familiarity breeds contempt.
- Out of sight, out of mind.
- Don't judge a book by its cover.
- If you chase two rabbits, you will not catch either one.
- Put all your eggs in one basket.
- Every why has a wherefore.
- Easy come, easy go.
- A good example is the best sermon.
- A stitch in time saves nine.
- A good beginning makes a good end.
- The end justifies the means.
- Necessity is the mother of invention.
- Truth is stranger than fiction.
- First things first.
- The wish is father to the thought.
- What the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't grieve over.



What motivates Tony Stark to build the armored suite?

In the movie, Iron Man (Paramount Pictures, 2008), what events motivate the creation of the armored suite? At some point in the development of the story and script, this question was posed. The writers constructed a plausible course of events around Stark's basic human instinct for survival that are universally recognized in the proverb "Necessity is the mother of invention".

