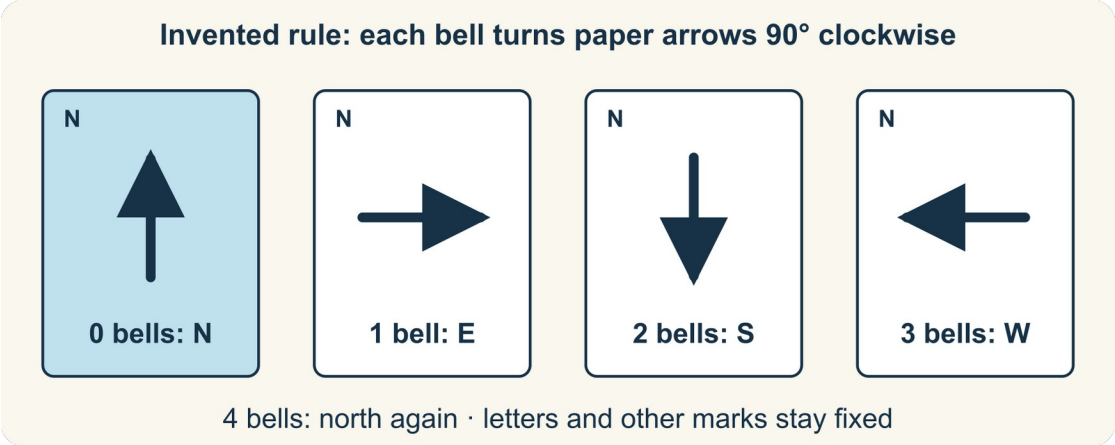
One world rule three consequences

How does an invented rule create connected story possibilities?

Give an invented place one clear rule, then derive consequences that follow from it without adding unexplained powers.

Explore | 15-25 minutes, or one comparison | Paper and a pen or pencil, The supplied model; no purchase, account or internet connection needed

Start here In invented Dotfall, every arrow drawn on paper turns 90° clockwise whenever the town bell rings. Other marks stay still. Begin with an arrow pointing north.



A quarter-turn at each fictional bell

1 Trace the rule exactly

After 1 bell it points east, after 2 south, after 3 west and after 4 north again. The arrow's position on the page does not move; only its direction changes.

2 Derive three consequences

A paper map needs the bell count; a north arrow can point east after one ring; the written word NORTH stays fixed because the rule affects arrows, not other marks.

3 Make a small story problem

An invented character wants to label the route to a flower stall. Write or draw a choice between using an arrow and using a written direction. Show how the rule affects that choice.

4 Check consistency

If a scene has an arrow turn 180° after one bell, either revise that scene or explicitly revise the world rule. Do not silently change the rule whenever the plot needs help.

One rule a cycle and a workaround

Dotfall is original fiction. No real paper changes direction when a bell rings.

• The clockwise cycle is north→east→south→west→north: 4 × 90° = 360°.

• A map arrow's meaning depends on when it was read. A character could track the bell count or choose fixed written directions instead.

• Possible scene: "Miri crossed out the arrow and wrote NORTH. When the bell rang, the word stayed put." This follows the stated exception for other marks.

What this example can show These are consequences of a chosen fictional rule, not a claim that every story needs magic, a fixed plot formula or a surprise ending.

A different way

Rotate a drawn arrow on paper through four labelled directions, or check only the supplied consequences. There is no need to invent a whole world.

If you want to go further

Predict the arrow after 5 and 6 bells, then use the four-step cycle to explain east and south without tracing every ring.

Something to notice

Does this event follow my stated rule, or am I adding a new rule without saying so?

Read or explore more

Horizon topic Worldbuilding

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/worldbuilding/

Horizon topic Plot Consequences

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/plot-consequences/

Horizon topic Revision Editing

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/revision-editing/

NSW Education Standards Authority narrative - glossary

https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/resources/glossary/narrative

NSW Education Standards Authority voice - glossary

https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/resources/glossary/voice