

The Court and the Poet: Last Light on the Tarot

A Welcome from the Fool's Guild

Welcome to the final courtyard lesson in the Fool's Guild of Tarot Professionals. As a honorary student of the Guild, we hope that you have enjoyed these weekly lessons and feel that you have a good grounding in the art and science of the tarot.

You may continue to review these lessons over time and give us feedback, questions and open discussion in the Courtyard Forum. As with all lessons, they will withstand review on a regular basis and your feedback is invaluable.

This final lesson looks at a new Spread for you to try and a way in which you can now continue to summarise your learning of each card. For those going onto our intermediate course, you will find new methods of looking at a spread to gain quick insight into the message of the cards, how to advice on timings of an answer, and powerful ways of increasing your confidence as a reader and communicating clearly with a client.

It is hoped that by continuing to learn the tarot with us, you will be able to deepen your appreciation of the subject, apply this knowledge to enhance your practice, and widen your experience of learning about life through tarot to positive effect. Our aim is that after this course of five lessons you are now thoroughly informed, extremely enthused, and looking to develop your tarot with innovation and creativity. We look to truly inspire as well as inform!

At this final Courtyard Lesson, which showcases our innovative style and friendly approach, we'd of course encourage you to sign-up for our intermediate and advanced courses which will take your tarot to whole new levels of insight and practice!

In the meantime, and at any time, you can ask any general questions in our forum, or if you'd like to speak to an Outer Courtyard Supervisor about these lessons, please contact enquiries@tarotprofessionals.com.

The Final Week: Forging the Elements Together.

Now that you've been in the Outer Courtyard for five weeks, you'll have been given a feel of the nature of the Fool's Guild. It is hoped that you've learnt new things and seen how we continually develop new approaches to this most sacred art of divination. At this point we leave you for now – although you are now qualified as a student member, able to use the badge of your rank, and welcome to our fully-mentored intermediate and advanced courses.

Your fellows in the Courtyard are swapping information and contact details, so you decide to join them. You've heard that you'll be given a new spread to go away with, and some homework, but in the meantime you make a learning list:

0. The Four Elements
1. Elements in my Hands
2. Everyday Elements
3. History of Tarot
4. Tarot Deck Choices
5. Consecrating my Deck
6. The Feeling of Intuition
7. The Cards go Walking
8. Emotional Responses to a Card
9. Types of People
10. The Court Cards
11. Tarot Law
12. Tarot Insurance
13. Analysing a Card
14. Layouts
15. Spreads
16. Tarot as a Creative Process
17. Tarot and Kabbalah
18. Tarot and Archetypes
19. Forging the Elements
20. The Judgement (Courtroom) Spread
21. Bringing it Together: Tarot Haiku

Comparing it with the other students, you all realise something incredible. There's the same 22 items on everyone's list. That can't be a coincidence, surely? Maybe the lessons themselves were designed on the very structure of the Major Arcana themselves? That can't be possible, surely? Someone would have noticed at some point! So, you think about Card 1, the Magician – does that fit with “Elements in my Hands”? Or Card 11, Justice – does that fit with “Tarot Law”, or card 20, Judgement – the “Judgement Spread”?!

As you leave the Courtyard, you realise that there are always other layers ...

The Courtroom or Judgement Spread

When you arrive home, after five weeks in the Outer Courtyard, you find two pieces of paper in your satchel. One has another spread you've never seen before, called the "Judgement" or "Court Room" spread, and the other has some homework. You decide to skip the homework for the moment, and go straight to read about a new spread you can use to practice your new knowledge.

COURT ROOM (Judgement) SPREAD

For when you can't make a judgement or want to weigh things up:



This is a nine-card spread based on the positions in a standard court room. You can look at other courtrooms and extend this spread, or add a jury of twelve, perhaps, each with their own characteristic. This would give you an excellent overview of the situation. You could have each of the Jury members – being 12 – representing one of the twelve houses in astrology, so they would all signify together every aspect of the question, from personal issues to career and spiritual issues. As with any spread, you should feel free to adapt and develop the positions to meet your requirements. The aim is to have a range of spreads so that you can be flexible and creative in working with a range of clients.

Card Positions:

1. Defendant - The card here shows the 'safe' assumptions of your situation, what is most likely to happen if you do little or nothing at all.
2. Friendly Jury Member - the card in this position signifies the positive and optimistic aspects of the case in question.
3. Negative Jury Member - as above, only depicts the aspects you'd rather not look at or ignore.
4. Neutral Jury Member - as above, the card here shows a 'logical' 'most likely' viewpoint of the situation.
5. Witness - The card here is crucial - it shows what you might not have even thought about in regard of making the decision or judgement.
6. Prosecutor - This position highlights criticisms of your case, shows weak points that need to be addressed.
7. Recorder - This position highlights and summarises everything that has led up to the situation that has a bearing on the matter.
8. Case for the Defence - This card highlights useful resources that will come into play if you make the decision or judgement to act.
9. Judge - The summary card.

When you perform your first reading with this spread, please consider sharing it if possible on the Courtyard Forum so students can see how you have developed since starting the course! We can also answer any questions you might have and assist your interpretation!

All that remains now is one item of homework ...

Summarising with Haiku

Your homework – to gain the authorized usage of the Tarosophy Student™ logo, is very simple. It is also designed to assist you to summarise everything you've learnt and work towards creating your own unique view of your tarot cards. You are asked to create a single *haiku* – Japanese 3-line poem – for a tarot card of your choice from any deck. This must be posted to the appropriate Thread on the Courtyard Forum or sent to Tarot Professionals.

This is also a fun way to create new insight into your tarot deck or learn a new deck! It will also unconsciously improve your ability to summarise lots of information, which is a useful life-skill in any context!



Japanese Haiku are a familiar form of poetry usually adhering to the convention of 17-syllables, broken down into 3 lines of 5 – 7 – 5 syllables. The famous Haiku poet, Basho, wrote this:

No one travels

Along this way but I,

This autumn evening.

This is 5-7-5 in Japanese, of course, not in the English translation! In the English, it has 4-6-5 syllables. Simply count the sounds of the words to count the syllables.

This – is – a – syl-a-bul (6 syllables)

I can-not count how ma-nee syl-a-buls this sen-tence has (14 syllables)

I wish I had learnt this at school (8 syllables)

Terr-i-bul (3 syllables)

And so forth! Usually students revert to counting on their fingers as they make the sound-shapes whilst speaking under their breath. Fun in a group!

The important observations from Haiku for their use as a means of discovering tarot are - interestingly enough - the exact opposite of the metaphor rich, embedded language we use elsewhere in studying Tarot.

- No usage of Metaphor, only verifiable sense observations
- Usually refer to a Season, often coded to an object, i.e. Moon = Harvest-Time
- Sparse and Specific – well-formed – answers Who, What and When?
- Double-image, connected by an implicit, unspecified, unconscious link

To create your Haiku, just follow three simple steps, one for each line.

First line (5 syllables) – make a statement of fact about the card image

Second line (7 syllables) – extend that image by adding more observation

Third line (5 syllables) – conclude with a point about the whole image

Here's some examples from students who had only just discovered Tarot:

Hanged Man

Upside Down is I
Bound tight. Sacrifice in sight
Earthed by own values.

6 of Wands

All eyes are forward
Alone I lead my future
Look round for friendship.

The World

No music but dance
All life is still in movement
Heaven is waiting.

Reaching the Point of Spirit

Well done! You have completed the outer courtyard lessons and mastered the basic elements of tarot! Congratulations on all five points of the pentagram:



You can now progress – come forth to the flag of fire and take a bow! You are presented with the badge of a Tarosophy Student; a mark signifying the seed of your learning and the ongoing journey ahead.

From all the members of Tarot Professionals, you are truly welcome as a newly qualified Tarosophy Student! We look forward to your further development.