

BIONICLE TRADING CARD GAME

GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT

BY BGH PROJECTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BIONICLE Trading Card Game is, as name suggests, a trading card game based on the lore and stories of the BIONICLE Lego intellectual property. The game involves building and battling different BIONICLE cards, and is mainly centered around the combat of this type of card. The target audience for the BIONICLE Trading Card Game is primarily trading card game enthusiasts, as well as those who are familiar with and a fan of the BIONICLE intellectual property from Lego.

The project was originally conceived as a simple graphic design project, to showcase my design skills for a trading card game. It was decided that to create the best quality designs for the project, a fully fleshed out card game based on the cards should be developed, to maximise the amount of context that the designs and the design process of the cards could draw on.

DESIGN INFLUENCES

In order to develop a fundamental understanding of how a modern trading card game plays, several contemporary popular trading card games were researched and analysed. These include the YUGIOH TCG, Magic The Gathering, the One Piece TCG, The Final Fantasy TCG, the Pokemon TCG, and Keyforge.

Main Influences:



Based on this research, and taking into account the BIONICLE subject matter, it was decided that core gameplay of the TCG would be built around defeating your opponents BIONICLES in combat. The flow of the game and layout of the board draws significant influence from the YUGIOH TCG, but the combat aspect of defeating your opponents "character / creature" cards stems from attributes of the other aforementioned TCGs.

The combination of the flow of the YUGIOH TCG with the "character / creature" elimination foundation to combat aims to both enable TCG players to quickly familiarise themselves with how to play the game, whilst also offering a gameplay experience that differentiates itself from the current TCG landscape.

WIN CONDITIONS

There are 3 win conditions available to the player when playing the BIONICLE TCG:

1. Reduce the number of Bionicle cards your opponent has on the field to zero.
 - If, during the course of either opponents turn, all Bionicle cards that they have on the field are defeated, the other player is deemed the winner of the game. This condition cannot be fulfilled on either player's first turn. A player must have built at least one Bionicle card on their side of the field in order to lose to this condition.
2. Your opponent has no cards in their deck to draw in their Draw Phase.
 - If, during a player's draw phase, they are unable to draw a card from their Deck, because their Deck has no cards, that person loses the game. This does not include card effects that negate a Player's ability to draw a card, if there are cards available for them to draw in their Deck.
3. Card Condition.
 - If there is an effect of a card that specifies a winning condition, and that card's effect is successfully performed during the game, then the game is considered over, and the result of the game is in favour of the player in which the card's effect specifies.

CARD TYPES

There are three card types within the Bionicle TCG. These are Bionicle Cards, Artifact Cards, and Effect Cards

BIONICLE CARDS

Bionicle cards are the most fundamental card within the Bionicle TCG, and the battling of the player's Bionicle cards represents the foundation of a game of the Bionicle TCG. Below is an example Bionicle card, with its attributes identified:



1. Name
 - This simply represents the name of the card
2. Type
 - Each card has a type, designated by the name and outline of its description box. There are several types within the game, but the most common types players will come across are:
 - Fire, Water, Air, Ice, Earth, Stone, Titan, Rahi
3. Colour
 - Each card has a designated colour. This colour is important for the effects of certain cards within the game. There are several colours within the game, but the most common colours you will come across are:
 - Red, Blue, Green, White, Black, Brown
 - The colour attribute is excluded from the following Bionicle card types: Titan, Rahi. For these cards, despite card colours may be present around the card, they are immune and unaffected by card effects that affect a described colour.
4. Description / Effect
 - Depending on the card, each Bionicle has either a description, which has no impact on the game, or an effect which can have an effect on the game.
5. Battle Points
 - Battle Points are relevant to the calculation whenever two Bionicles battle each other. The Battle Points represent how much attacking power a Bionicle is using when it attacks.
6. Block Points
 - a. Block Points are relevant to the calculation whenever two Bionicles battle each other. The Block Points represent how much the Bionicle can resist its opponents attacking power.
7. Health Points
 - a. Health Points are relevant to whether or not a Bionicle is considered defeated. When a Bionicle attacks another, if the attacking Bionicle's Battle Points are larger than the Block Points of the Bionicle it is attacking, the difference is subtracted from the Health Points of the Bionicle that was attacked. If a Bionicle has no zero or fewer Health Points at any point in the game, it is considered defeated.
8. Generation
 - a. This represents which generation the card is a part of. This may be relevant to certain card effects.

9. Equip Attribute

- Some Bionicle cards have an optional Equip Attribute. This means that they can be targeted by card effects that describe the Equip Attribute that the Bionicle card has. The different Equip Attributes are the following:
 - Kanohi, Kanoka, Kraana, and Kraata

10. Disassembly Requirements

- Some Bionicle cards have an optional Disassembly Requirements. Cards without this requirement can be simply played to the field during a player's turn, which is called "building" a card. Bionicles with Disassembly Requirements require a certain number of cards, specified by the number next to the name, to be "disassembled" in order to be built, which involves sending the card from the field to the Red Star

ARTIFACT CARDS

Artifact cards are cards that can be equipped to Bionicle cards in order to invoke effects and abilities within the game. They are identified by their silver colour. Below is an example Artifact card, with its attributes identified:



1. Name
 - This simply represents the name of the card
2. Effect
 - This section describes the effect that the card has on the game.
3. Generation
 - This represents which generation the card is a part of. This may be relevant to certain card effects.

EFFECT CARDS

Effect Cards are cards that can be played at several phases during each player's turn which can, as the name implies, provide some kind of effect during the game. They are identified by their purple colour. Below is an example of a normal Effect card, with its attributes identified:



1. Name
 - This simply represents the name of the card
2. Effect
 - This section describes the effect that the card has on the game.
3. Generation
 - This represents which generation the card is a part of. This may be relevant to certain card effects.
4. Type of Effect
 - This label describes the type of effect that the card has on the game. There are three types of Effect Cards:
 - Normal Effect (designated by just 'Effect')
 - This type of Effect cards can only have their effect performed during the phase of the game during which they are played, unless the card states otherwise.
 - React Effect
 - This type of Effect card can have its effect played at any phase of the game, during any player's turn, in accordance with the effect that is described on the game itself
 - Arena Effect
 - This is a special type of Effect card that can be played into the Arena card zone, and have it effect endure for the duration of the game, unless it is destroyed by another card effect

Below are examples of a React Effect card and an Arena Effect Card:



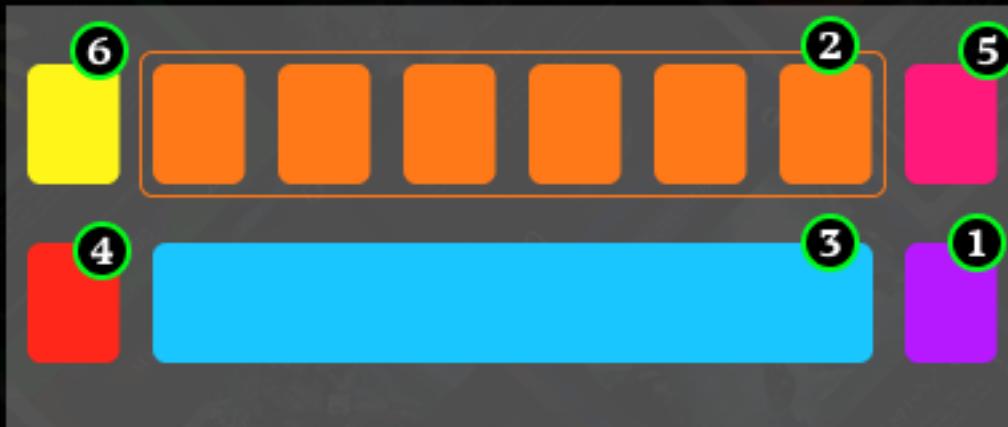
GAME SETUP

To play a game of the Bionicle TCG, each player must provide their own Deck which can contain a maximum of 40 cards. Each player can only have 3 copies of the same card within their Deck. In addition to their Deck, a player can also use a Combiner Deck, of up to 15 cards, which can only consist of Combiner Bionicle Cards.

Players may also provide other items to use during the game to help with keeping track of calculations and tallies. These can include a pen/pencil and notepad, a calculator, a set of counters, or whatever they both agree upon. Keeping track of the Health Points of each Bionicle in play mentally can be difficult, so players are encouraged to use whatever means they can to keep a record of this.

Before a game of the Bionicle TCG can begin, both players must decide who plays first. Once this has been decided, both players must arrange their Deck(s) accordingly, and draw 6 cards each. A player at the beginning of the game is allowed to reshuffle the cards they have drawn back into their deck and draw a new set of 6 cards, if they do not draw any Bionicle cards. They must show the player that none of their 6 cards are Bionicle cards before they do so.

Both players must arrange their Deck(s) and conform to the following layout for the duration of the game:



1. Deck Area
 - This is where the player's main Deck is placed.
2. Bionicle Card Area
 - This is where a player builds their Bionicle cards. A maximum of 6 Bionicle cards may be played in the Bionicle Card Area. If an Artifact card is equipped to a Bionicle, it is placed underneath the Bionicle card, where the Bionicle card is placed in the Bionicle Card Area, with the name of the Artifact card visible to both players.
3. Effect Card Area
 - This is where a player plays their Effect cards. Any number of active Effect cards can be placed in the Effect Card Area, but the cards must be visible to each player.
4. Red Star
 - This is where a player places cards that are to be discarded, have been defeated in the Combat Phase, have been destroyed, have completed their effect, or are specified to go otherwise.
5. Combiner Deck Area
 - If a player chooses to play with a Combiner Deck, this is where it is placed.
6. Arena Card Area
 - If a player plays an Arena card during their turn, they must place the card in this area, making sure that the card is visible to both players.

GAMEPLAY

Gameplay in the Bionicle TCG involves each player taking turns playing cards until any of the aforementioned win conditions is met. Each player's turn is broken down into a sequence of phases. This sequence is followed every time, and no phase can be skipped or repeated, until a card's effect allows it. The game is considered over if a win condition is met during any phase of a player's turn; the player's turn does not have to finish for the game to be considered over. The following is a breakdown of the phases of each turn of a game of the Bionicle TCG.

DRAW PHASE

This phase represents the start of a player's turn. In this phase, the player may draw one card from their Deck. If the player is unable to draw a card from their Deck, due to it having no cards to play, they lose the game.

STANDBY PHASE

This phase is a special phase, and does not involve the player whose turn it is playing any cards. This phase exists as a phase in between the player's Draw Phase and Rally Phase, and is when any card effects that specify the Standby Phase would be performed.

RALLY PHASE

This phase represents where a player would prepare for the Combat phase. During this phase, the player may play any number of Effect or Artifact cards within their hand, or within the effects of any card currently in play. The player is also allowed to perform one of the following build types; Normal Build, Combiner Build, or Assemble Build. In addition to this, the player can perform any number of Special Builds as are available to them through the effects of the cards in play. The player is able to play any of the aforementioned cards in any order which they choose.

COMBAT PHASE

This phase is where a player can attack their opponent's Bionicles with their own. For every Bionicle the player has, they must declare to their opponent which Bionicle they are choosing to attack with, and which of their opponent's Bionicles they are attacking. The opponent is then allowed an opportunity to activate any of their card effects. Following this, if the player's attacks are successful, the damage to the opponent's Bionicle's Health Points is calculated.

Each Bionicle is only allowed to attack one of their opponent's Bionicles during the Combat Phase, unless a card effect overrules this. A player can choose not to attack with any of their Bionicle cards during this phase. If, during the player's Combat Phase, their opponent does not have any more Bionicle cards on their side of the field, and it is not either player's first turn, the game is over and the player whose turn it is is declared the winner.

AFTERMATH PHASE

During this phase, the player is allowed to play or activate the effects of any Effect or Artifact cards at their disposal, within the descriptions of said cards. They cannot activate the effect of a card that they activated in the Rally Phase, unless the card's effect specifies this. A player is not allowed to attack with any Bionicle card's on their side of the field during this phase.

END PHASE

This phase is a special phase, and does not involve the player whose turn it is playing any cards. This phase exists as a phase in between the current player's Aftermath Phase and the next player's Draw Phase, and is when any card effects that specify the End Phase would be performed.