

# 24 | PANTHEON: MAJOR HISTORICAL FIGURES SUMMARIZED INTO SMALL & FUN TO PLAY CARDS FOR CHILDREN

**Benoit Le Callennec, Amin Kasimov, Thomas Le Callennec**

personal project, Lausanne, Switzerland

Contact: [benoit.lecallennec@gmail.com](mailto:benoit.lecallennec@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

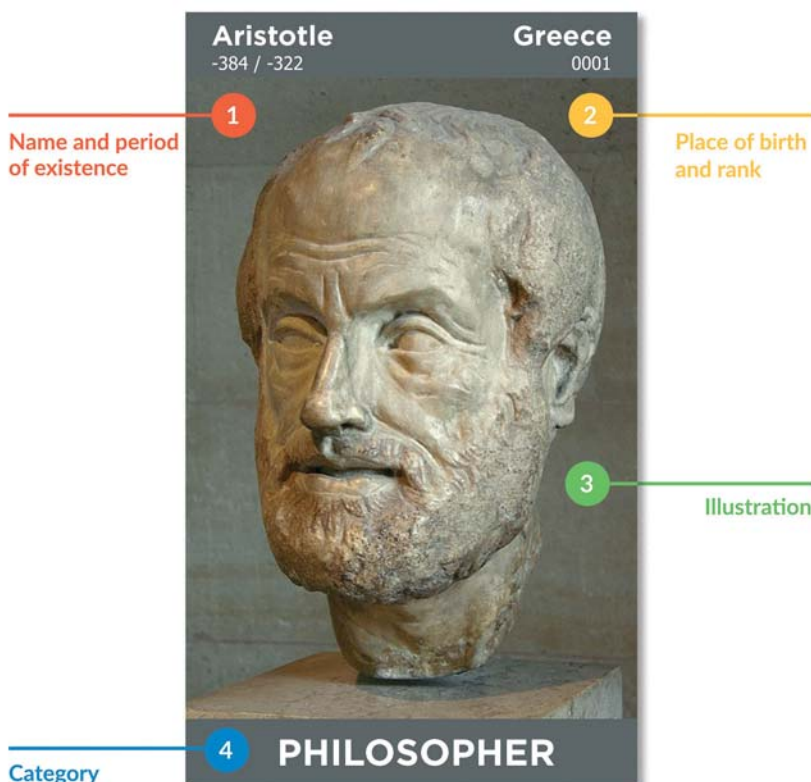
We present PANTHEON: a game summarizing major historical figures biography into small, fun and tangible playing cards. The objective is twofold:

1. Keeping children away from screens by offering a fun card game.
2. Stimulating their curiosity by letting them read short biographies of important historical figures with a major impact (good or bad).

## KEYWORDS

Collectible card game; Historical figures; Education.

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Aristote est un philosophe grec de l'Antiquité. Il est l'élève de Platon et est influencé par Socrate.

Selon lui, la science peut être théorique, pratique ou productive.

Il écrit l'Organon : un ensemble de traités dans lesquels la logique est détaillée et présentée comme un outil pour faire avancer la science.

Il est considéré comme le premier à pratiquer les sciences naturelles.

Il découvre que les dauphins ne sont pas des poissons, mais des mammifères.

Il établit une description détaillée de la ruche qui restera inchangée pendant plus de 2'000 ans.

Il est le maître d'Alexandre le Grand, fils de Philippe II de Macédoine, qui est son ami.

Il fonde une école philosophique qui s'appelle le Lycée.

Selon lui, les êtres naturels sont constitués de 5 éléments : la Terre, l'Eau, l'Air, le Feu et l'Éther.

Il démontre que la Terre est ronde.

Simplified bio

## CONTEXT

As parents, one of our responsibilities is to limit how much screen time our children get every day. Unfortunately, however focused we are, they will spend too much time online (i.e. games, cartoons, etc.).

Nevertheless, recommendations are clear: no screen time before 2 and 1-hour maximum up to 5 [1].

Our role as parents is to provide our children with high-quality media, which is not an easy task. Therefore, the more we distract our kids from screens, the better it is.

Popular card games such as Pokémon may have partly solved this issue. Indeed, they drag our kids into games where they have to use tangible objects (i.e. cards).

Games with a physical aspect tend to stimulate imagination and encourage collective play. However, the educational value of playing Pokémon is somewhat limited. Knowing Pikachu's attacks will most probably have a small impact on our kids' day-to-day lives as they grow up.

On a more personal note, my younger child started to ask a lot of questions around 6 years old. While I could easily answer them at the beginning, I quickly had to notice my own lack of knowledge on many subjects ranging from greek philosophers to scientists and writers.

For that reason, I decided to proactively read Wikipedia pages on people he might be interested in. I would then be prepared to tell him about the story of Alan Turing, Socrates or Eratosthenes and explain when and how they deeply changed Humanity.

But getting up to date on different historical figures takes a tremendous amount of time because the information on Wikipedia is extremely dense and factual.

## PROPOSED SOLUTION

PANTHEON is a card game based on major historical figures with an important impact on the course of Humanity (both positive or negative). On the front side of the card, we display factual information about the figure, and on the back side, we describe the character's life in few relevant points.

1. Just after the illustration, the focal point becomes the **name** of the character. The name is followed by the character's **period of existence**.
2. Next to the name is the **country or region** from which the character originates and the **figure's ranking** according to MIT Pantheon's people ranking [3].
3. The front side of the card is represented by an illustration depicting the character.
4. At the bottom of the front side, there is the category in which the character is most famously known for.
5. On the back side, we describe the character's life and accomplishments in few points in a simple and accessible language. The different details range from the most important one to the least important one such as anecdotes.

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Finally, one important aspect was to draw as many connections between characters as possible (Aristotle with Alexander the Great or Avicenna and Galien, etc.).

Based on this concept, we devised the first game called "Guess Who".

First, each player chooses a predetermined number of characters. Then, at each turn, one player gives one hint to the other; if the opponent correctly guesses who the character is based on the hint he was given, he scores 1 point.



After correctly guessing the character, the player must correctly insert the card between the other cards on the table according to their birth date. The player gets 1 additional point if the card is correctly positioned chronologically with respect to the other cards.

It is important to note that our intention is not to enforce any set of rules. In particular, we encourage people to experiment and test what works best for them. Similarly as what happened with Pokémon, we hope that people will proactively invent their own game with their own set of rules.

## RELEVANT INNOVATION

Up to our knowledge, this is the first time such a volume of relevant information (i.e. Aristotle's Wikipedia page) is filtered and summarized into accessible playing cards.

Limiting the space available for the characters' mini-biography forces us to only keep what's truly essential about them.

As De Saint-Exupéry said: "Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away." [4]; and this is especially true for a card game designed for children where being clear and concise is extremely important.

## PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS

Up to now, 4 decks of 30 cards (as depicted in the Figure below) have been produced:

Each card is 70mm x 121mm (Tarot format). Our goal is to quickly reach 50 characters and examine early traction with children.

Several games have been tested so far, and we clearly understood from different trials that game duration is a major factor that we must take into account.

"Guess Who" for example should be limited to 6 characters in order to avoid exceeding younger kids' attention span. It is interesting to note that this game seems to attract adults as well.



## CONCLUSION

A Pokémon-like card game focused on historical characters with a major impact on Humanity could be a good solution to reduce screen time for children in a fun way while helping them learn live facts about major historical figures. Such a game is also highly-scalable as new characters and topics can be added.

## PERSPECTIVES & NEEDS

The main need is to focus on the content and to extend the deck with more characters. We will also test new designs to maximize kids' attention span.

## REFERENCES

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