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(54) **TILE-BASED BOARD GAME**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

(73) Assignee: **Mattel, Inc.**

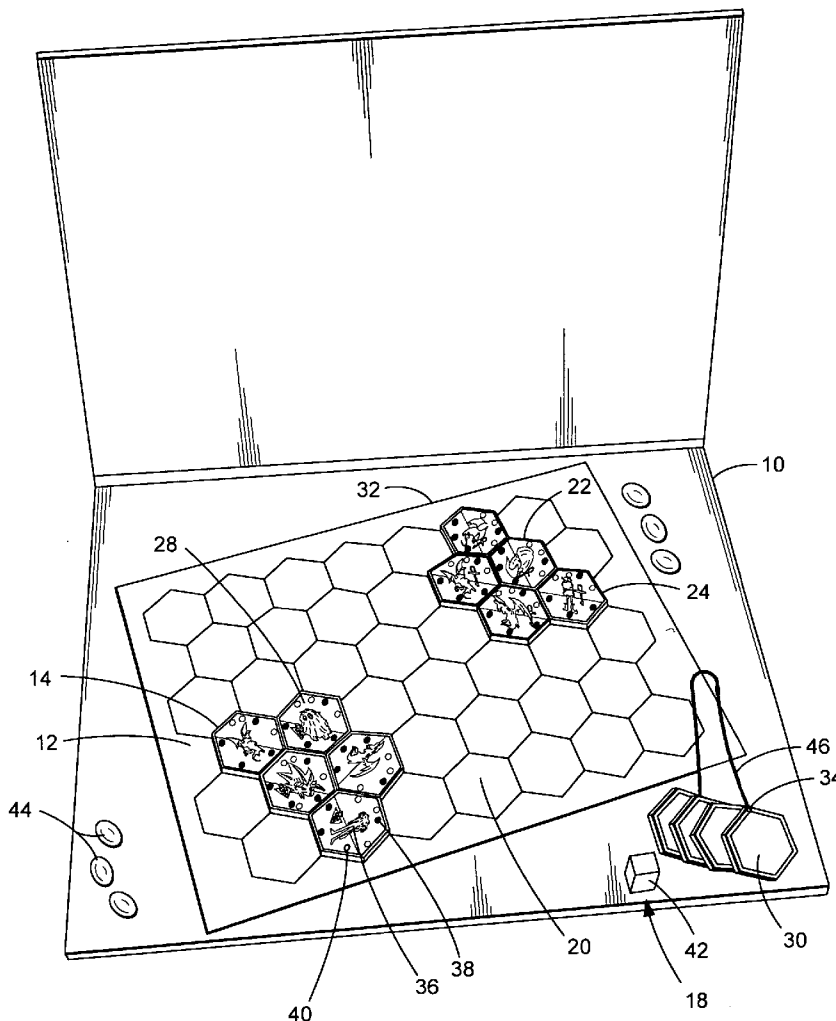
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**Related U.S. Application Data**

(62) Division of application No. 10/286,399, filed on Nov. 1, 2002.

A board game including game pieces and rules for playing a game for a plurality of players, the goal of which is to defeat an opponent through battle of game pieces. The invention provides a board, multiple tile-like pieces, and at least one die. The tile-like pieces are used to block or challenge an opponent through the use of indicia on the outer periphery of each piece. Several levels of play are provided through the use of several game piece sets, which may be obtained independently.



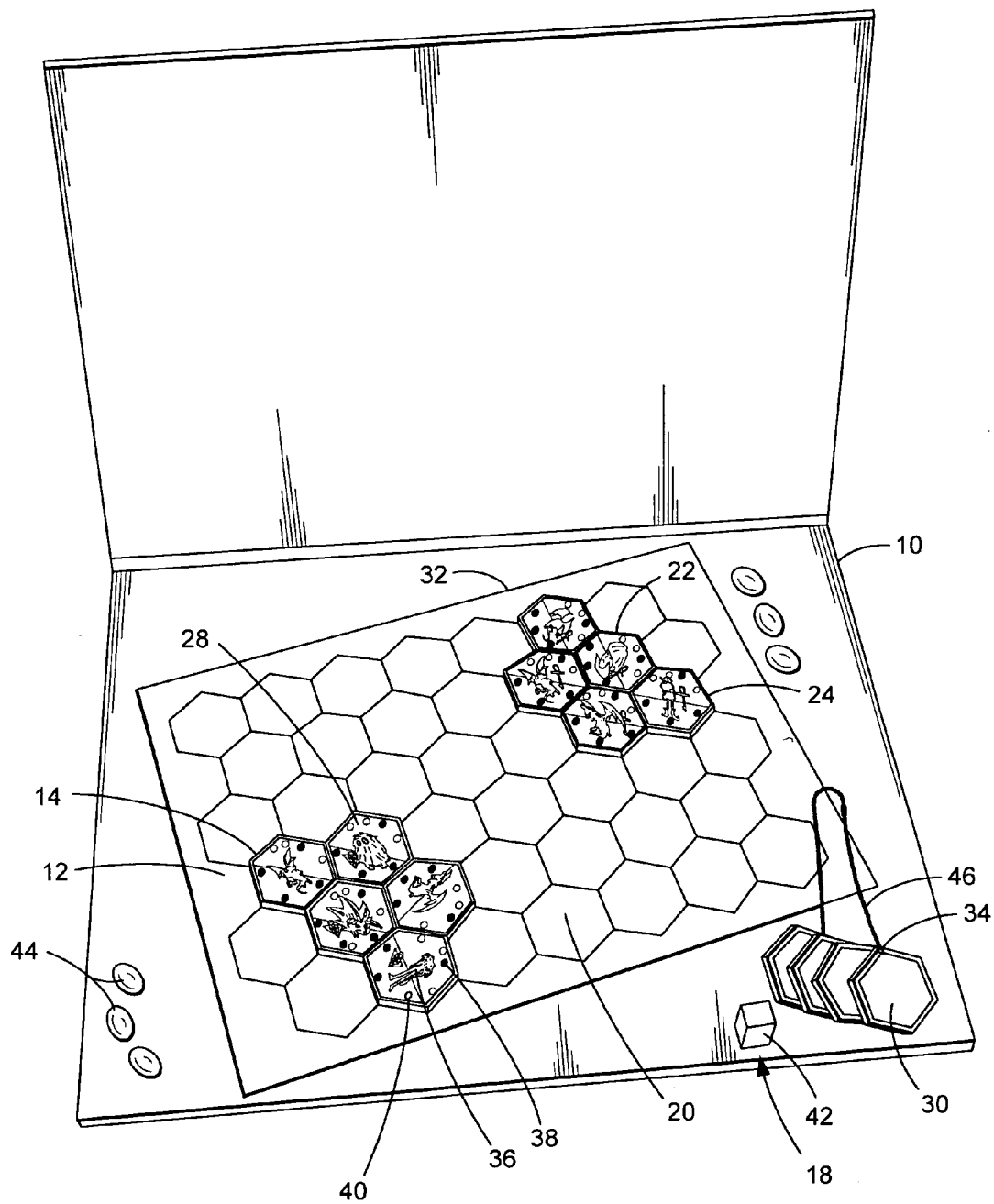


FIG. 1

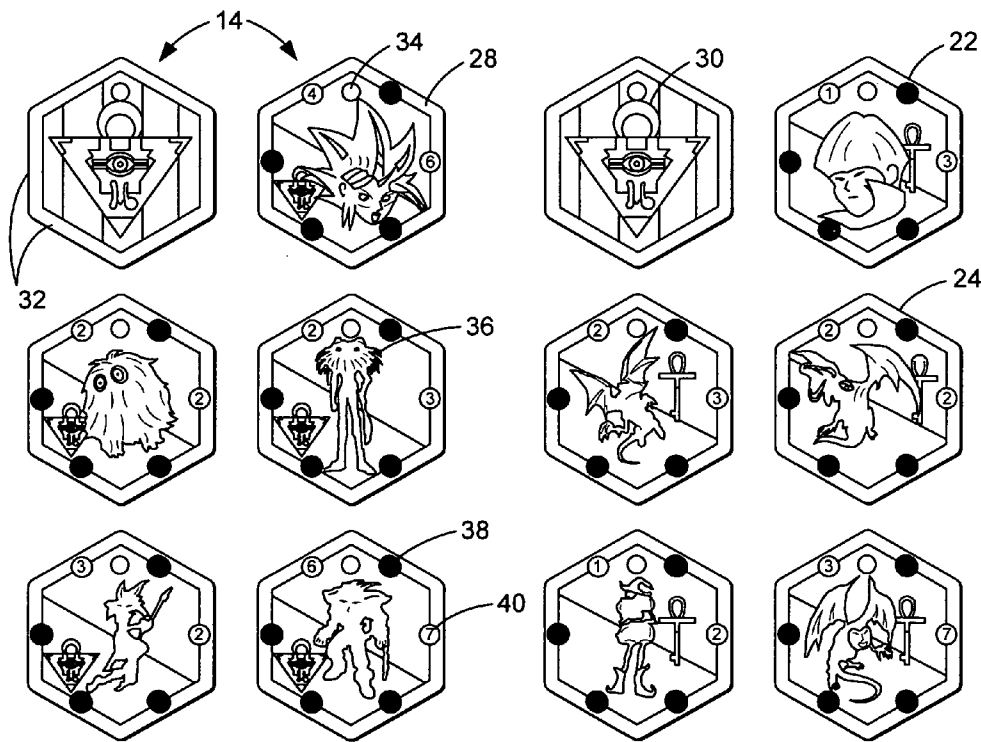
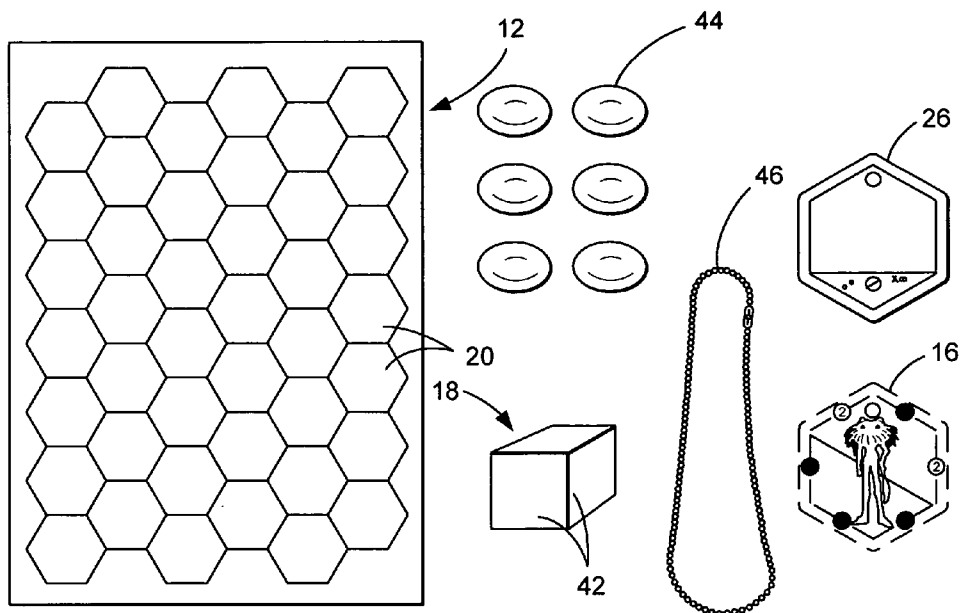


FIG. 2

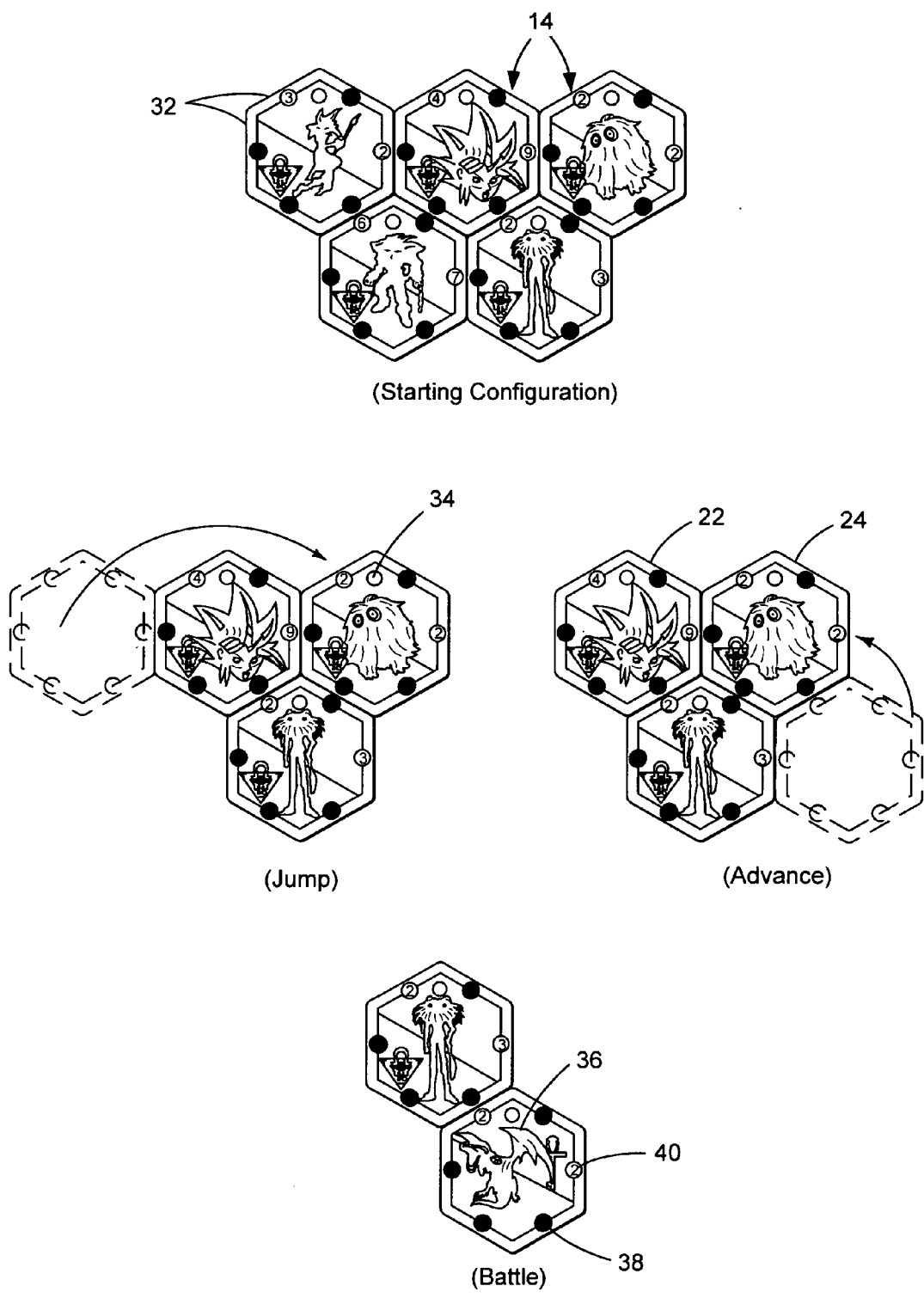


FIG. 3

## TILE-BASED BOARD GAME

### CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/286,399, filed Nov. 1, 2002 and entitled "Tile-Based Board Games", which application is based upon and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to the following U.S. provisional patent application, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety for all purposes: Ser. No. 60/340,030, entitled "Tile-Based Board Game," filed Nov. 1, 2001.

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to board games. More specifically, the present invention related to rules and apparatus for playing a board game for multiple players wherein the object of the game is for players to battle one another using tile-like game pieces and dice.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Examples of board games using tile-like game pieces and/or battle-based games are disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,703,713, 4,200,293, 4,411,433, 4,674,753, 4,676,510, 5,150,908, 5,570,887, 5,607,159, 5,791,652, 5,803,461, 5,810,666, 6,070,871, 6,170,825, 6,257,576, and 6,305,688, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference in their entirety for all purposes. Another example of a tile-based game is dominoes, in all its many forms.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] The present invention provides rules and apparatus for playing a board game. This board game uses tile-like game pieces that may be arranged in a side-by-side relationship. Numerical printed indicia or other indicators on the face of the tile, and preferably along the outer periphery of a face of the tile, may be used for comparison against similar indicators on adjacent tiles. Preferably, one or more dice are used to determine which of the indicators is to be compared to an adjacent indicator.

[0005] In the preferred embodiment, the indicia used in the game are based on the characters, items, and monsters appearing in the Yu-Gi-Oh!<sup>TM</sup> television program.

[0006] The advantages of the present invention will be understood more readily after consideration of the drawings and the Detailed Description.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] **FIG. 1** depicts one embodiment of a game board and components suitable for use with the game of the present invention.

[0008] **FIG. 2** depicts one embodiment of various game components suitable for use with the game of the present invention.

[0009] **FIG. 3** depicts four possible layouts of tiles of one embodiment of the game of the present invention.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0010] Game **10** typically includes a game board or mat **12**, a plurality of moveable pieces, typically in the form of tiles **14**, chasers **16**, and a die **18**.

[0011] Game board **12** is divided on one side into pre-defined spaces, namely geometric spaces **20** which are typically hexagons. The back of game board **12** may feature pictures and symbols for all tiles **14** in a periodic-style chart.

[0012] Referring to **FIG. 1**, the preferred moveable tiles **14** are also hexagonal in shape so that they fit approximately within at least some of the spaces **20** of game board **12**. Tiles **14** include character tiles **22**, monster tiles **24**, and trap tiles **26**. Character tiles **22** represent a player's power. When a character tile **22** is defeated, that player loses game **10**. Monster tiles **24** are used to attack opposing character tiles **22** and monster tiles **24** or to defend a player's character tiles **22**. Trap tiles **26** add effects that aid a player or hinder a player's opponent.

[0013] Tiles **14** have an upper face **28** and a relief-sculpted back **30**. Tiles **14** are shaped to define a plurality of pre-defined flat sides **32** defining an outer periphery that surround upper face **28**. At least one of tiles **14** typically includes a hole **34** for receiving a string-like holder. Upper face **28** has a label printed with plural indicia divided into identifiable groups of indicia, which are placed adjacent to each of sides **32** so that an indicia is associated with each of the sides **32**. These indicia may show a character **36**, a color **38**, and an indicator **40**, which are used to indicate the type of tile **14** and the relative power of that tile **14**. Indicator **40** may be a number and may be printed over a background of color **38**. The combination of these indicia forms strike values that determine the outcome of a battle when a player attacks opposing tiles **14**, as will be discussed in the description of dueling.

[0014] One embodiment of the game will include ten hexagonal tiles **14**, one of which has indicia representing a certain character, such as "Yugi," and another of which has indicia representing a certain character, such as "Seto." The eight other tiles **14** may include indicia representing various monsters, as shown in **FIG. 2**. Other number of tiles **14** may also be used.

[0015] Die **18** is shaped to define a plurality of predefined faces, which are printed with separate indicia on at least two of the faces. Each of these indicia is associated with at least one of the identifiable groups of indicia shown on upper face **28** of tiles **14**. Die **18** is typically used to match indicia on die **18** to that of moveable tiles **14**. Indicia on die **18** may differ by color **38** or numeric indicator **40**, which typically match those on upper face **28**.

[0016] Game **10** would also typically include a rule book, which is typically 4"×5", flat glass marbles referred to as star gems **44**, and ball chains **46** for passing through hole **34**. Chains **46** are typically eight inches in length, although other embodiments may be available.

[0017] Tiles **14** may contain several features that encourage players to collect different combinations of tiles **14** and eventually the entire issue. Alliances are formed by tiles **14** that belong together in terms of a story (i.e., Yugi and his monsters) and can draw additional powers from each other. Chasers **16** are indicated by a special foil label, these tiles will be character tiles **22** and more powerful monster tiles **24** that will be available in extremely limited numbers. Each separate issue of tiles **14** may also have a different relief-sculpted back **30**. The first series might have a millennium puzzle on its back **30**, with the following issues having the

rest of the millennium objects. Each tile **14** also typically has a small hole **34** that allows kids to link them together on a small chain **46** so they can be easily carried or displayed.

[0018] Most labels on upper face **28** of tiles **14** are five color; chasers **16** are five color on foil. All character and monster tiles may be of the same color, such as gold. Traps may be of a different color, such as silver. Tiles should have a little weight, and sound like coins when dropped on a table. All tiles may have a label showing the character/monster, their attack values listed on each side **32**, and their alliances.

[0019] The following table lists a possible set of material and dimensions.

	Qty.	Material	Size	Color
<u>Purchased Part</u>				
1 Die	1	HIS	5/8 × 5/8	White
2 Ball chain w/ fastener	2	metal	8" length	Silver
3 Flat Marbles	6	Glass	.5" × .187"	Black Metallic
<u>Molded Parts</u>				
1 Hexes	10	Zamak	.75"R × .125"	Gold
<u>Printed Material</u>				
1 Play Mat	1	Glossy paper	10" × 14"	5 Color-Printing, 2 Sided
2 Rule Book	1	Glossy Paper	4" × 5" (closed) 10 pgs	5 Color-Printing, 2 Sided
3 Labels	10	Mylar	1.125" × 1.28"	5 Color-Printing
<u>Paint/Spray Op</u>				
1 Die Tampo print	6		.375" × .375"	Black

[0020] The present invention is a game played by at least two players. The rules of the game are described in the following paragraphs.

[0021] The game may be sold in a Starter pack as shown in FIG. 1, which allows players to become acquainted with the game and teaches the two basic levels of the game. The entire three-level game is not available until players buy a Booster pack that may include spells and traps not available in the starter pack.

[0022] The object of the game is to reach and beat an opponent's character tile **22** with a monster tile **24**.

[0023] Basic game play begins by players flipping a token to see who picks first, and then the winner picking a character tile **22**. Players line up all monster tiles **24**, face-down and in a random order, and pick one at a time until each player has at least four monsters.

[0024] Players place their character tiles **22** at the marked locations on game board **12** and place their monster tiles **24** face-up in a circle around their character tile **22**.

[0025] The player who picked last goes first. Monster tiles **24** may either advance one space **20** per turn or may jump one or more of their own pieces to move more quickly, as long as the move is to an unoccupied space, as shown in FIG. 3. Jumping requires that monster tile **24** is touching

another tile **14** under that player's control. Pieces must always touch at least one other tile **14**. Any tile **14** left on its own is removed from the board.

[0026] During each turn a player must either move his or her character tile **22** or monster tile **24**. If a player is unable to move either then that player loses game **10**.

[0027] When any two opposing pieces land in face-to-face contact, the move ends and a duel begins. The player who moved a tile **14** into contact is the attacker. In the basic form of the game dueling begins with the attacker. Each player chooses one of the groups of indicia on his or her tile **14** by rolling die **18**. The player then matches that indicia, typically color **38**, to one of the identifiable groups of indicia on tile **14**, such as the colored strike value on their tile **14**, as shown by indicator **40**. The values are compared and the highest number wins. If the values are the same then players re-roll until the tie is broken and one player is a winner. Losing monster tiles **24** are removed from game board **12** and placed in that player's discard pile. If a character tile **22** is defeated then game **10** ends, regardless of remaining monster tiles **24**. Dueling becomes more complicated in the intermediate and advanced games and involves more strategy, as character tiles **22** and trap tiles **26** add further variables to the existing format.

[0028] If an attacking monster tile **24** ever comes into contact with two or more opposing tiles **14** at the same time, the attacking monster tile **24** must battle all enemy tiles **14** it touches. The attacking player is allowed to choose the order of attacks. If the attacker comes into contact with a character tile **22** and monster tile **24** at the same time, the attacking player need only defeat the character tile **22** in order to win the game.

[0029] Play continues until one player breaks through his or her opponent's defenses and defeats the opposing player's character tile **22**, thereby winning the game.

[0030] In one embodiment of the beginner game, every character tile **22** receives an automatic bonus of two, which is added to the rolled strike value during duels.

[0031] The Collector's Game is intended to be a more advanced version of the Beginner's Game, trap tiles **26** are therefore added to the game components to add new levels of strategy. When playing the more advanced version, players no longer begin the game by drawing character tiles **22** and monster tiles **24**. Instead each player brings his or her own tiles **14**. Each player must have one character tile **22** and the same number of monster tiles **24** and trap tiles **26** as his or her opponent. Typically, players may not have more than two identical monster tiles **24** or trap tiles **26**. The trap tiles **26** are placed face-down in front of the respective player although players may look at their own traps throughout the game.

[0032] The glass beads **44** included in the game are referred to as star gems. Star gems **44** are used to trigger play of trap tiles **26**. Players gain star gems **44** by winning duels. Every time a player defeats an opposing monster tile **24**, the winning player typically takes one star gem **44** from a bank of star gems. The collected star gems **44** are placed in a pile behind that players' row of trap tiles **26**, which is referred to as the trigger pool. Gems **44** in a players' trigger pool are then used to trigger traps, most of which cost 1, 2, or 3 star gems **44**. There is no limit to the number of gems **44** that can

be used in a game. If more are needed, players may supplement the game with additional objects, such as pennies.

[0033] The series of dots in the lower left corner of trap tiles **26** is the number of gems **44** a player must spend to trigger the trap. The indicators **40** in the lower right corner describe the power of trap tile **26** and its function. The background color of trap tile **26** identifies the type of trap and the duration of its effect. For example, a yellow background on a trap tiles' label indicates that it is a flash trap. This type of trap typically lasts only during the turn it is triggered and is placed in a discard pile at the end of the turn. A flash trap can be triggered at any time, regardless of whose turn it is. Another embodiment is that of a blue background to indicate a binding trap. The affect of this trap is typically permanent and remains in play until the end of the game, or until it is destroyed. A player may only play a binding trap during his or her turn. To trigger a trap, a player flips over the trap tile **26** and pays the appropriate number of star gems **44** from his or her trigger pool to the bank. Players may trigger as many traps as desired, provided that player has enough star gems **44**.

[0034] If multiple traps are triggered in one turn, they take effect one after another. The traps should be resolved in that same order, as some traps may undo the effect of those played before them. Once star gems are spent to trigger a trap they may not be recovered, even if an opponent cancels the trap with another trap. Any permanent trap that a player places may be used by that player in jumping or forming of a pod. Whenever a trap has been used or destroyed, it is placed in a discard pile.

[0035] One embodiment of the game includes numerous types of trap tiles **26**, as follows.

[0036] **DISARM**—A flash trap that requires 1 star gem. Destroys one triggered trap tile, canceling its effect. Place the destroyed tile in discard.

[0037] **MYSTIC BARRIER**—A binding trap that requires 1 star gem. Place this tile on any empty space in the Arena as a permanent wall. Mystic Barrier is considered a friendly tile to the player who triggered it. That player's tiles may jump over the Barrier. Opposing tiles will have to go around it.

[0038] **SYMBIOSIS**—A flash trap that requires 1 star gem. Place this tile on top of any monster you wish to target—for the remainder of that turn, the targeted monster may use the greatest Strike Value of any friendly monster with which it is in face-to-face contact.

[0039] **SUN DAGGER**—A flash trap that requires 1 star gem. Place this tile on top of any monster you wish to target—for the remainder of that turn, add 3 to the targeted monster's Strike Value.

[0040] **POWER TRAP**—A flash trap that requires 1 star gem. When triggered, steal one Star Gem from your opponent's Trigger Pool and place it in your pool.

[0041] **SOUL CLAMP**—A binding trap that requires 2 star gems. Place this tile on top of the monster you wish to target—for the remainder of the game or until the trap is disarmed, the targeted monster cannot move, attack or be attacked. It becomes a friendly wall to the player who

triggered Soul Clamp. That player can jump over the Clamped monster. The opposing player must go around it.

[0042] **GENESIS**—A binding trap that requires 2 star gems. Return any monster from your discard pile to the Arena. The returned tile must be placed within 2 spaces of its character tile and may be **DIVINE CHAIN**—A binding trap that requires 2 star gems. Place this tile on top of the monster you wish to target—for the next 3 turns the targeted monster cannot move or attack. It may defend itself if attacked, but loses its Element Bonus and Pod Bonus, if applicable.

[0043] **SANDSTORM**—A flash trap that requires 2 star gems. Destroys all of your opponent's triggered trap tiles. Place the destroyed tiles in discard.

[0044] **EARTH FIST**—A flash trap that requires 2 star gems. Place this tile on top of the monster tile you wish to target—for the remainder of that turn, add 7 to the targeted monster's Strike Value.

[0045] **NOVA BURST**—A binding trap that requires 3 star gems. Place this tile beneath the monster tile you wish to target—for the remainder of the game or until the trap is disarmed, add 3 to the targeted monster's Strike Value.

[0046] **ZOMBIFY**—A flash trap that requires 3 star gems. Place this tile on top of any opposing monster you wish to target—for the remainder of the turn you control the targeted monster. It becomes a friendly monster to the player who cast Zombify.

[0047] The turn sequence of the Collector's Game mirrors that of the Beginner Game, except for additional dueling steps. Once both players have rolled die **18** to determine their strike values, both players add an element bonus to their strike values, which is identified by a second indicia from the group of indicia on tiles **14**, and may additionally include a pod bonus based on tile **14** proximity.

[0048] In one embodiment, the different background colors **38** of every monster tile **24** represent elements, such as green for earth, blue for water, yellow for wind, red for fire, purple for darkness, and white for light. A monster obtains additional power from its element to increase its strike value. Character tiles **22** determine the amount of the additional power. During a duel, the color **38** of the monster's element is matched to the same-colored number **40** on its character tile **22**, that value is then added to the strike value.

[0049] Whenever two or more tiles **14** under the control of the same player are placed in face-to-face contact with each other, they form a pod. When dueling, any tile **14** in a pod gains an additional one point to its strike value, regardless of how many tiles **14** make up the pod or how many times the pod has attacked or been attacked.

[0050] Although character tiles **22** may be used to form a pod, they do not receive a pod bonus themselves since character tiles **22** receive a character strike bonus instead. The number found on the upper face **28** of the tile is the character strike bonus, which is added to that character's strike value during a duel.

[0051] It is believed that the disclosure set forth above encompasses multiple distinct inventions with independent utility. While each of these inventions has been disclosed in its preferred form, the specific embodiments thereof as

disclosed and illustrated herein are not to be considered in a limiting sense as numerous variations are possible. The subject matter of the inventions includes all novel and non-obvious combinations and subcombinations of the various elements, features, functions and/or properties disclosed herein. Similarly, where the claims recite “a” or “a first” element or the equivalent thereof, such claims should be understood to include incorporation of one or more such elements, neither requiring nor excluding two or more such elements.

[0052] Inventions embodied in various combinations and subcombinations of features, functions, elements, and/or properties may be claimed through presentation of new claims in a related application. Such new claims, whether they are directed to a different invention or directed to the same invention, whether different, broader, narrower or equal in scope to the original claims, are also regarded as included within the subject matter of the inventions of the present disclosure.

What is claimed is:

1. A set of game components, comprising:
  - a plurality of movable pieces, each piece having indicia in at least two identifiable groups of indicia including selection indicia and value indicia indicating a numerical value, wherein:
    - each movable piece has at least two different selection indicia and a corresponding number of value indicia, and
    - each of the selection indicia of each movable piece identifiably corresponds to a value indicia of the piece; and
    - a selection device adapted to designate one of the selection indicia of a given movable piece.
2. The set of game components of claim 1, further comprising a playing surface marked with predefined spaces, wherein each movable piece is configured to fit approximately within at least some of the spaces.
3. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein at least some of the movable pieces include a hole through the piece.
4. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each selection indicia is a color.
5. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each value indicia is a number.
6. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each of the selection indicia on the plurality of movable pieces appears on the selection device.
7. The set of game components of claim 6, wherein the selection device is a die with a plurality of faces, each face including selection indicia such that each of the selection indicia of the plurality of movable pieces is represented on at least one face of the die.
8. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each movable piece includes player alignment indicia.
9. The set of game components of claim 8, wherein the player alignment indicia is represented by one or more graphic images.
10. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each movable piece includes character indicia indicating a character represented by the piece.

11. The set of game components of claim 10, wherein the character indicia of each movable piece identifies the character represented on the piece as one of at least two mutually exclusive character types.

12. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein the plurality of movable pieces further comprises at least two outcome-determinative pieces, each outcome-determinative piece having indicia to distinguish the outcome-determinative piece from the remainder of the plurality of movable pieces.

13. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each movable piece is shaped to define a plurality of predefined flat sides surrounding an upper face, and wherein the indicia of each piece appears on the upper face.

14. The set of game components of claim 1, wherein each of the selection indicia and corresponding value indicia of each movable piece collectively correspond to one of the plurality of predefined flat sides of the piece.

15. A method of simulated battle using the set of game components of claim 1, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) selecting a first movable piece and a second movable piece;
- (b) using the selection device to designate one of the selection indicia of each of the first and second movable pieces;
- (c) comparing the value indicia corresponding to the designated selection indicia of the first piece with the value indicia corresponding to the designated selection indicia of the second piece; and
- (d) identifying a winner of the battle based on the compared value indicia.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein step (c) further comprises using the selection device a first time to designate one of the selection indicia of the first piece and using the selection device a second time to designate one of the selection indicia of the second piece.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein step (d) further comprises either identifying a winner of the battle if the compared value indicia of either of the first and second piece is greater than the compared value indicia of the other of the first and second piece, or repeating steps (a) through (c) if the compared value indicia of the first piece is equal to the compared value indicia of the second piece.

18. The set of game components of claim 1, further including a plurality of effect pieces, each of the effect pieces having indicia in at least two identifiable groups of indicia including activation indicia indicating a numerical value and effect indicia indicating an effect of the effect piece.

19. The set of game components of claim 18 further including at least one activation token, wherein the activation indicia of each effect piece is a number.

20. A method of game play using the set of game components of claim 19, the method comprising:

- (a) selecting a first movable piece and a second movable piece;
- (b) using the selection device to designate one of the selection indicia of each of the first and second movable pieces;
- (c) comparing the value indicia corresponding to the designated selection indicia of the first piece with the



value indicia corresponding to the designated selection indicia of the second piece;

- (d) awarding a predetermined number of activation tokens to a player based on the compared value indicia;
- (e) allowing a player to select an effect piece;
- (f) if a player selects an effect piece, resolving the effect of the effect piece when the player has been awarded at least the number of activation tokens corresponding to the activation indicia of the effect piece.

**21.** The set of game components of claim 18, wherein the effect pieces are configured to be similarly sized and shaped to the movable pieces, and wherein each effect pieces further includes identification indicia distinguishing the effect piece from the plurality of movable pieces.

**22.** A tile for use in a board game, the tile comprising:

a plurality of predefined sides surrounding an upper face, the upper face having indicia in at least two identifiable groups of indicia including selection indicia and value indicia;

wherein the upper face has at least two different selection indicia and a corresponding number of value indicia, wherein each of the selection indicia corresponds to a value indicia, and wherein each of the selection indicia and corresponding value indicia collectively correspond to one of the plurality of predefined flat sides of the tile.

**23.** The tile of claim 22 wherein the selection indicia includes a color.

**24.** The tile of claim 22 wherein the value indicia includes a number.

**25.** The tile of claim 22 wherein the tile includes a hole through the tile, wherein the hole passes through the upper face.

**26.** A set of game components, comprising:

a plurality of movable pieces, each piece including at least two sets of indicia, each set of indicia further including a combination of a selection indicia and a value indicia indicating a numerical value; and

a selection device adapted to designate one of the selection indicia of a given movable piece;

wherein each set of indicia on a movable piece is different from each other set of indicia on the movable piece.

**27.** The set of game components of claim 26, wherein each selection indicia is a color.

**28.** The set of game components of claim 26, wherein each value indicia is a number.

**29.** The set of game components of claim 29, wherein each of the selection indicia on the plurality of movable pieces appears on the selection device

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