

Design Photo Journal for Monstar Combat

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Iteration #1

In this emotion game, the emotion assigned to me is “Amazement”. The definition of amazement is the feeling you have when something surprises you very much. After knowing the emotion, I start to consider what makes me feel amazed when I am playing games. The answer for me is: novel and fun game mechanics. I immediately come up with the idea of creating a game based on monster battles, because monsters could have novel skills, and battles are always exciting and fun.

I name my game “Monstar Combat”. Monstar is derived from “Monster” and “Star”. I create four Monstar cards with different illustration styles. Instead of randomly assigning a Monstar to each player, I believe players should choose Monstars that fit them best. As a result, I created a survey asking about the player’s interests, and the outcome of the survey will decide which Monstar is assigned to the player. Of course, surveys cannot be completely satisfying. I also mention in the rules that if none of the choices in the survey fits for the player, the player can randomly pick one Monstar card to make sure each player has a Monstar for combats.

Then, I need to design the gameplay process. I think skills and HP values are necessary in a combat. As a result, I give each Monstar three attributes: Strength, Speed and Intelligence. Players should throw dice before the combat starts. The value of each attribute is decided by the number on the dice. I also make HP Tokens to directly show the HP for each player. To make the game more fun and flexible, I

create three kinds of cards for players to use: Ability Cards, Equipment Cards and Event Cards. Here's my design for the cards:

Ability Cards:

Physical Attack

1. Bite: Your enemy -1 HP. (Requirement: Strength 2)
2. Kick: You enemy -1 HP. (Requirement: Speed 2)
3. Scratch: Your enemy -2 HP. (Requirement: Strength 3, Speed 2)
4. Throw Stone: Your enemy -2 HP. (Requirement: Strength 2, Speed 2, Intelligence 3)

Magical Attack

1. Air Slash: You enemy -3 HP. (Requirement: Strength 4, Speed 3)
2. Burn Up: Your enemy -3 HP. (Requirement: Strength 3, Intelligence 4)
3. Confusion: Your enemy -2 HP, You +2 HP. (Requirement: Speed 3, Intelligence 4)
4. Purification: You +3 HP (Requirement: Intelligence 4)
5. Mute: Your enemy -1 HP and unable to use any card in the next round
(Requirement: Strength 4, Speed 3, Intelligence 4)
6. Thunderstorm: Your enemy -4 HP, You -1 HP (Requirement: Strength 5, Intelligence 3)

Equipment Cards:

1. Iron Claw (Strength +3, Speed +3)
2. AI Chip (Speed +2, Intelligence +3)
3. Robot Helmet (Strength +2, Speed +1, Intelligence +2)
4. Air Jordan (Speed +3, Intelligence +2)
5. Heavy Armor (Strength +3, Speed -2, Intelligence +2)
6. Concert Ticket (Strength -1, Speed +2, Intelligence +3)

Event Cards:

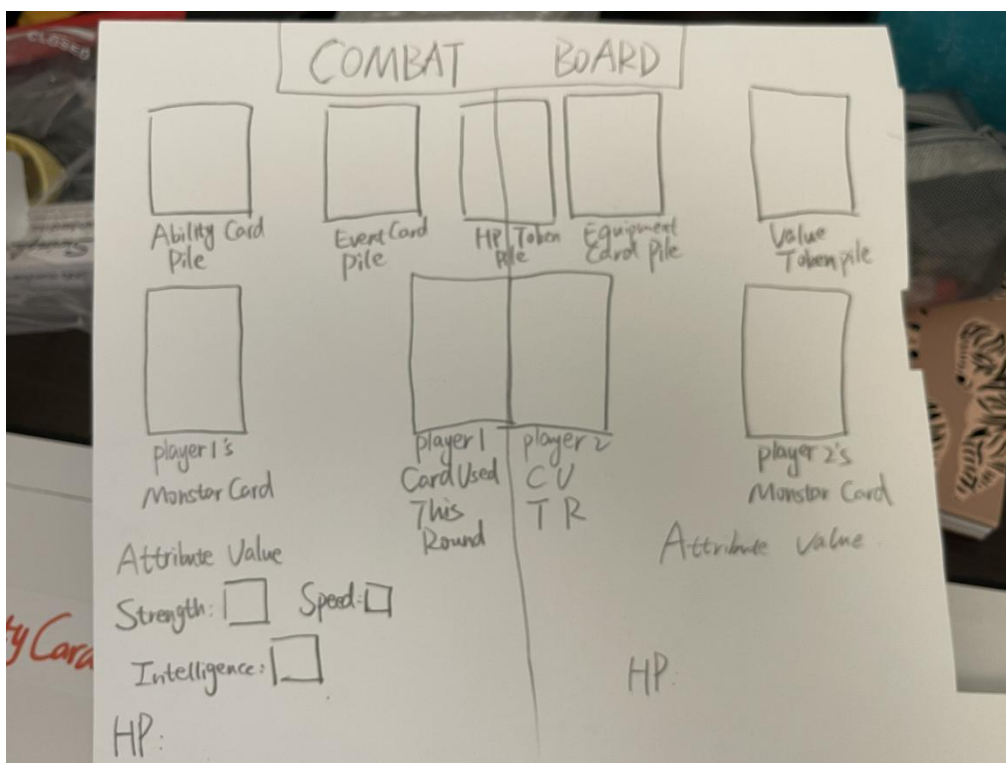
1. Learn Kung Fu from a Master: Your enemy -4 HP (Requirement: Strength 6, Intelligence 4)
2. Join the Vampire Organization: Your enemy -3 HP, You +3 HP (Requirement: Speed 4, Intelligence 5)
3. Blessed by Spirits: You +2 HP and can use 2 Ability Cards in the next round (Requirement: Strength 5, Speed 5)
4. Bitten by a Magic Spider: You -3 HP, but your enemy can't use any card in the next 2 rounds (Requirement: Speed 5, Intelligence 6)
5. Find Pirate Treasure: You can use any Ability Card or Event Card regardless of the value requirement in the next round (Requirement: Strength 5, Speed 4, Intelligence 4)
6. Make friends with the Alchemist: Your enemy -2 HP each round in the following 3 rounds (Requirement: Strength 4, Speed 4, Intelligence 6)

Ability Cards and Event Cards are all used for attack, but Event Cards have higher requirement of Attribute Values. Equipment Cards could strengthen the Monstar by changing Attribute Values. However, to ensure the fairness of the game, some Equipment Cards may also reduce certain Attribute Values if they significantly improve other Attribute Values.

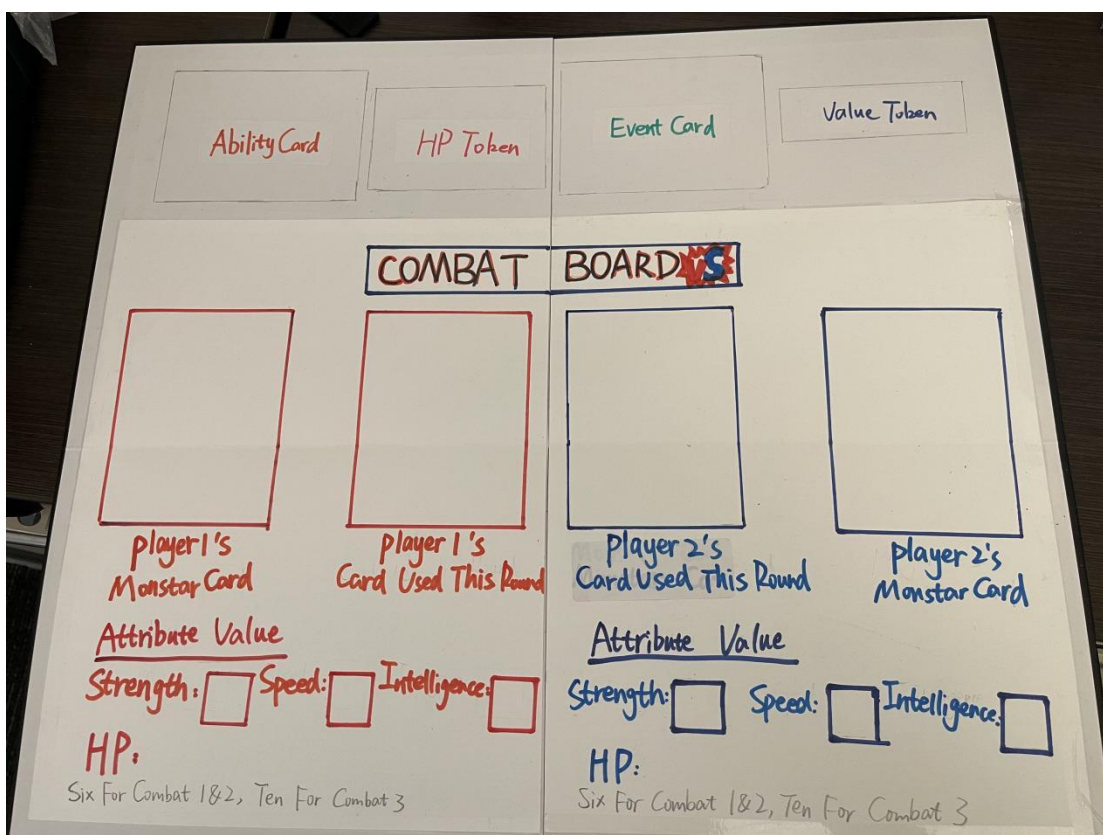
For the Combat part, I design three combats, and each combat has slightly different mechanics. Equipment Cards are added into Combat 2, and Upgraded Monstar Cards and Event Cards are added into Combat 3. Upgraded Monstar Cards are the evolutionary state of Elementary Monstar Cards, and they also have different appearances. I think players often feel excited if they experience evolution (which is common in Pokemon), and the gradually more complicated mechanics also bring more joy to the gameplay process.

For the Combat Board, I write clearly about the function of each area, so players do not need to go over the rules again in the Set Up process. I also put a diagram of a board after Set Up in my rules.

Additionally, I think a physical game could bring better experience for players, so I make everything in this game by hand. I spend more than 10 hours making the game.



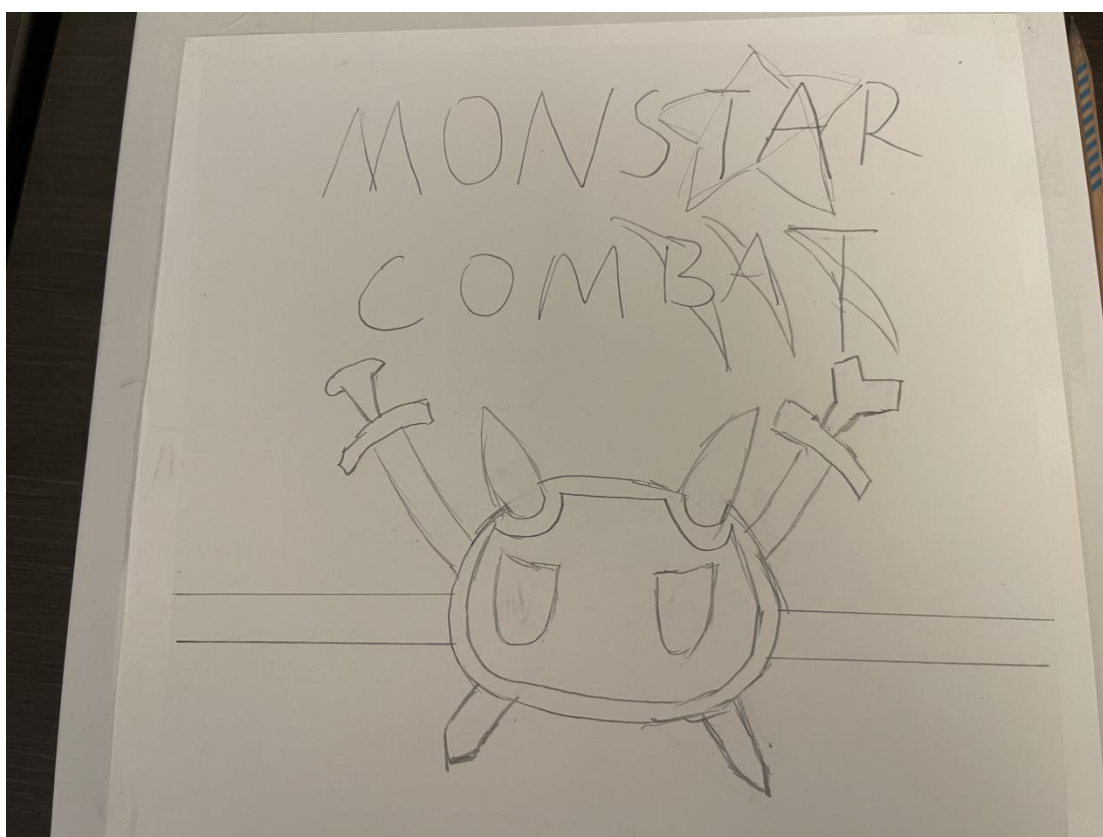
Draft of Combat Board



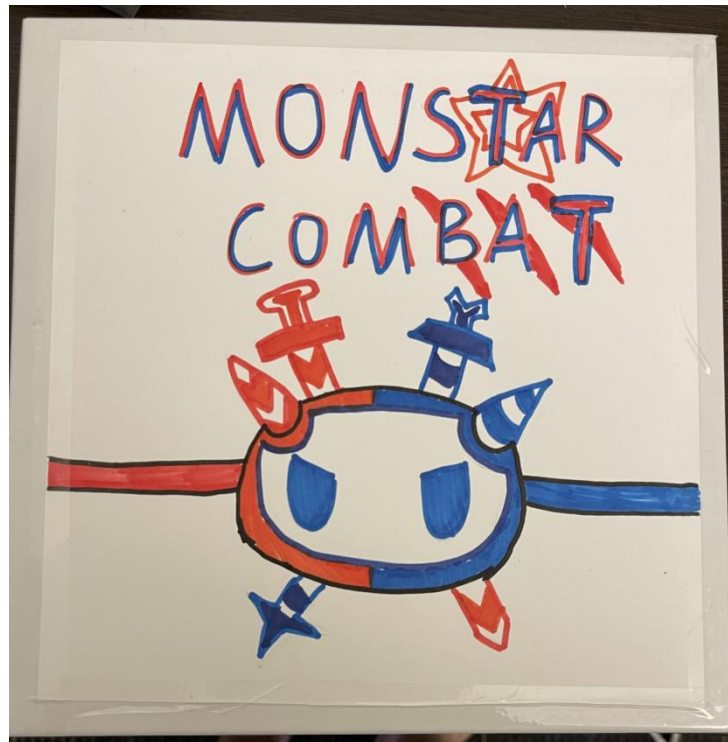
Combat Board



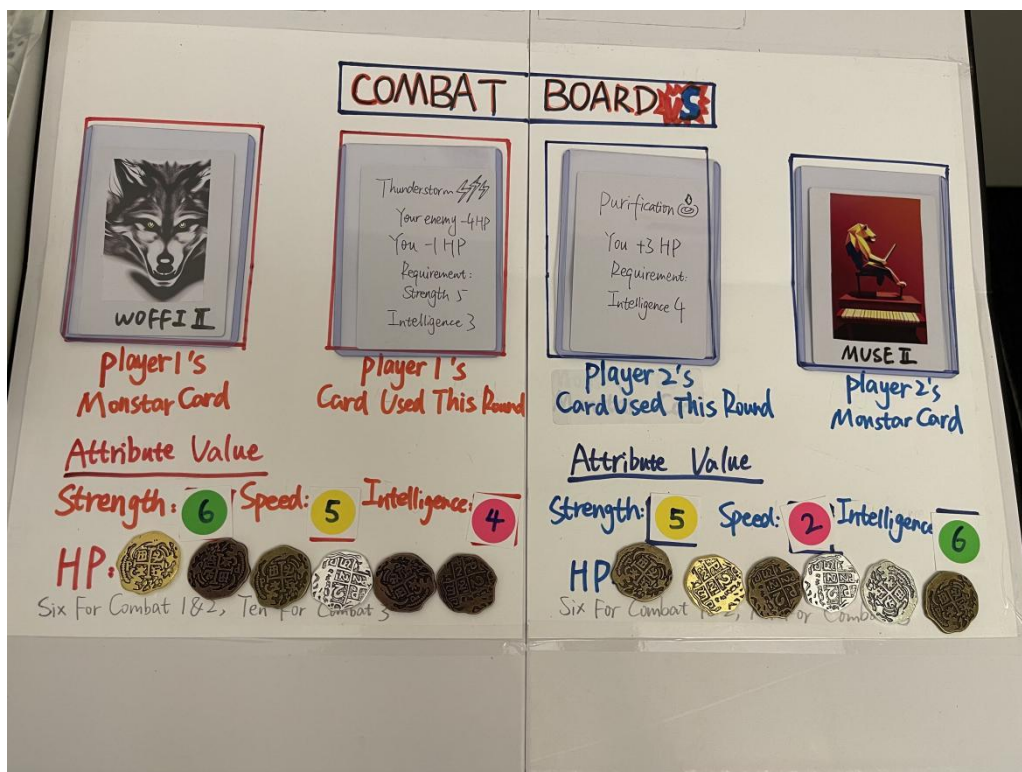
Content



Draft of Box Cover



Box Cover



Example of a Combat

Iteration #2

I conducted 4 playtests for iteration #2 and received lots of positive feedback from my playtesters. They really like the design of the cards and the development of complexity as the Combat goes on. Based on their suggestions, I have made some improvements to the game:

First, I redesign the dice. Many of the Ability Cards require Attribute Values of 2 or higher. However, the initial dice may bring a very low value such as 1. This could lead to the embarrassing situation that no cards could be used in Combat 1. Also, even though Equipment Cards could help increase Attribute Values, the differences between players' Attribute Values could still be large, making the game too unfair. As a result, I redesign the dice and change the numbers to "233445". The new dice reduces the differences between players' Attribute Values and avoids the injustice due to back luck. Now players are able to use most of the Ability Cards (Physical Attack) in Combat 1.



New Dice

Second, I revise some unclear language in the game rules, such as replacing “besides” with “in addition to”. I also add some restrictions for the balance of the game, including “HP values could never be larger than the maximum value”. I also move the Event Cards from Combat 3 to Combat 2 because players think Event Cards make the game much more fun and hope them to appear earlier.

Third, some players think Upgraded Monstar Cards are not very useful, as they expect exciting things to happen when Monstars experience evolution. As a result, I decide to make some cards unique to each Monstar. I add 8 Evolution Cards with special mechanics for every Monstar, and allow each player to choose one Evolution Card and upgrade a part of the Monstar. Here’s my design for the Evolution Cards:

Evolution Cards:

Woffi:

1. Upgrade Woffi’s Claw: Strength Requirements for all the cards you take -1
2. Upgrade Woffi’s Teeth: You can use two Ability Cards (Physical Attack) at the same time in any round, but only for once

Cyberdragon:

1. Upgrade Cyberdragon’s Wings: Speed Requirements for all cards you take -1
2. Upgrade Cyberdragon’s Eyesight: You can take 4 Ability Cards first. You can see the content of the top 4 cards. If you don’t want a card among them, you may replace it with the next card under the 4 cards

Muse:

1.Upgrade Muse's Music Knowledge: Intelligence Requirements for all cards you take -1

2.Upgrade Muse's Piano: You can use two Ability Cards (Magical Attack) at the same time in any round, but only for once and you cannot use any cards in the next round

Shadowy:

1.Upgrade Shadowy's Cloak: Speed Requirements for all the cards you take -1

2.Upgrade Shadowy's Shadow: In any round, after your opponent uses a card, you can take this card and use it for the next round, but only for once

Iteration #3

I had three playtests for this Iteration. Most of the major problems have been solved, but some details still need to be changed.

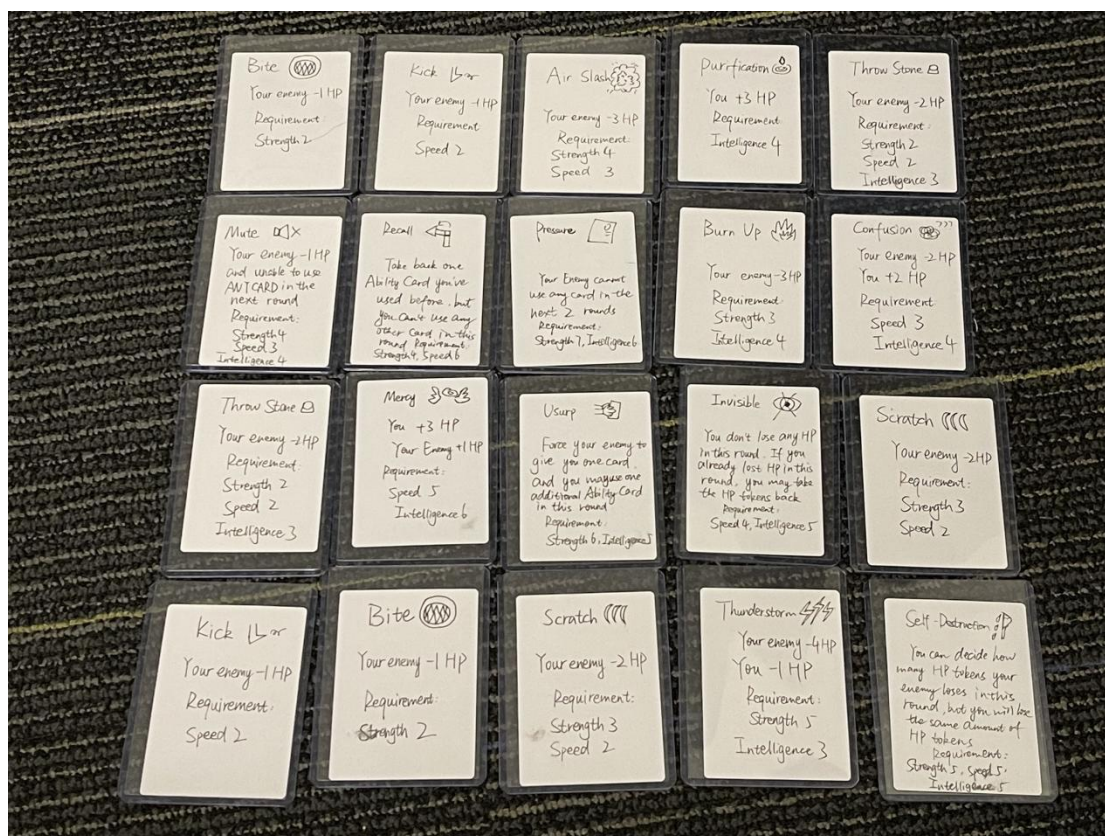
The largest issue with this version of the game is the number of Ability Cards. Because the total number of Ability Cards is 14, and players take 4 Ability Cards in each round, there are not enough Ability Cards for players to take in the final round. Also, Ability Cards (Magical Attack) are too few. One of Muse's Evolution Cards allows the player to use two magical attack cards in one round, but one of my players does not even have the chance to use this skill. As a result, I add 6 Ability Cards (Magical Attack), so the total number of Ability Cards becomes 20, which is divisible by 4. These new cards are also more complicated and bring more fun for the game.

Ability Cards added in this version of the game:

1. Invisible: You don't lose any HP in this round. If you already lost HP in this round, you can take the HP tokens back (Requirement: Speed 4, Intelligence 5)
2. Usurp: Force your enemy to give you one card, and you may use one additional Ability Card in this round (Requirement: Strength 6, Intelligence 5)
3. Self-Destruction: You can decide how many HP tokens your enemy loses in this round, but you will lose the same amount of HP tokens (Requirement: Strength 5, Speed 5, Intelligence 5)
4. Mercy: You +3 HP, Your enemy +1 HP (Requirement: Speed 5, Intelligence 6)
5. Pressure: Your enemy cannot use any card in the next 2 rounds (Requirement: Strength 7, Intelligence 6)
6. Recall: Take back one Ability Card you have used before, but you can't use any other card in this round (Requirement: Strength 4, Speed 6)

In addition to that, I also make minor changes to the rules, such as moving the diagram of the setup process to the front. As there are so many cards, some players are confused by the number of cards they should take in each round, so I also write a reminder in the rules to tell them how many cards they should take.

My final design looks like this:



Ability Cards



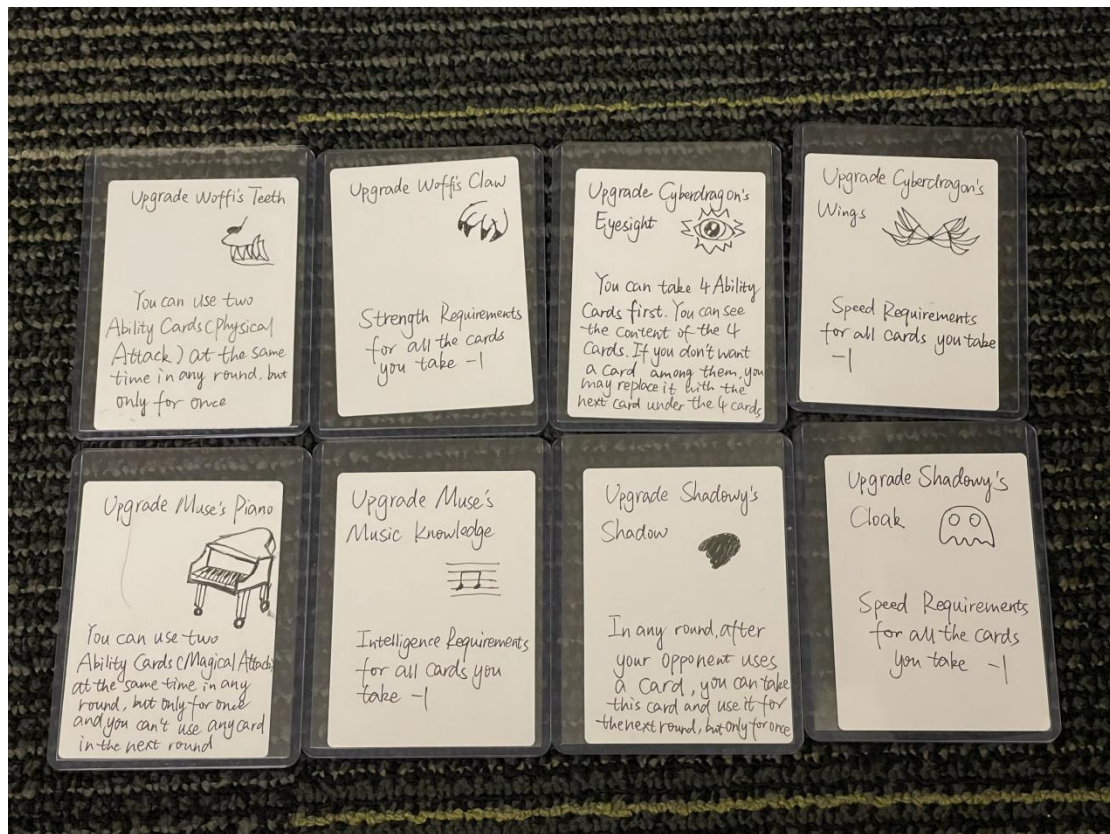
Equipment Cards



Event Cards



Monstar Cards



Evolution Cards

Contribution:

This is an individual project. Everything is made by myself.