An educational game is shown which encourages learning while providing a novel and unique gaming experience. An array of unusual or unique features are combined in the game, such as the ability to move any game piece along a primary and a secondary game board, variable movement for different game pieces depending upon the characteristics of that game piece, the ability to obtain "equipment" to alter those characteristics, and an ultimate goal based upon the acquisition of a plurality of tokens. Other unusual or unique game playing features are disclosed.
Fig. 12

Port being, part machine, Scribo can play back image of any past event in the universe.

The one who knows all, Cogno combines telepathy and sheer brainpower to be the most intelligent being in the known universe.

Fig. 13

Fig. 14
Fig. 19
Fig. 21
Fig. 23
START

Gravity slingshot! Roll again and double it.

Here you feel full before you eat - take a food converter.

Time goes backwards here - stop to change your diaper.

The wormhole opened! Full speed to the CHALLENGE space.

To help search for your ship, all players in the other universe get 1 piece of gear.

Chaos

You discovered the connection between the universes - stop to write down your theory

Feeling lucky? Roll a 3 and go to any space in the game.

You're totally disoriented - roll again

One piece of gear dissolved! It's gone!

Ask play to your right any level CHAOS question. Take one fuel cell if answer wrong.

SUPER Chaos

Antimatter hit your ship! If you rolled a 3, bring the player to your left here to repair it.

Anti-alien shows you a way out. Escape to "DOUBLE CHAOS" space.

Gamma rays destroyed one of your fuel cells!
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE GAME AND METHOD OF PLAY

CROSS-REFERENCE

This application claims the priority of provisional application Ser. No. 60/551,554 filed Mar. 9, 2004.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to educational games and, more particularly, to an educational science game and method of play thereof which is challenging and entertaining.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Board games and related software-implemented games in which a plurality of players play against opponents are generally known in the art. The players initially choose their game piece or character which is used to track the player's progress through the game. The game pieces or characters are advanced along predetermined paths according to the rules of the game. Often these games are entertaining but not educational or vice versa.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention and method of play provides an educational science game which includes a primary game board or universe and a secondary game board or parallel universe. The object of the game is to lead the player's game piece around the universe and back to the home planet first. The universe and parallel universe each have a plurality of spaces marked on the surface of the board. Each space includes instructions for the player landing on the space to follow. Players may be required to answer science-related questions to obtain game pieces or to advance in the game. Although the present invention is described hereinbelow with reference to game boards and game pieces, it is not limited thereto. It should be understood that the game and method of play may be implemented in software by one skilled in the art for play in a multiplayer environment such as the internet, for example.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of the primary game board.

FIG. 2 is a top plan view of the secondary game board.

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of a planet selector.

FIGS. 4-11 are the front side views of the game piece cards.

FIG. 12 is a back side of a game piece card.

FIG. 13 is a back side of a chaos card.

FIG. 14 is a perspective view of a fuel cell game piece.

FIGS. 15-18 are the front side view of gear-assisted survival game cards.

FIGS. 19-23 are flow diagrams representing a method of playing the game on the primary game board.

FIG. 24 is a flow diagram representing a method of playing the game on the secondary game board.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Game Pieces

Referring to FIG. 1, a primary game board or universe is generally indicated by reference numeral 50. Universe 50 includes a plurality of spaces 52 marked on the surface of universe game board 50. The spaces 52 include a home planet space 54 with a start space 56, a first planet 58, a second planet 60, a third planet 62 and a fourth planet 64. The spaces 52 may include instructions to be followed by any player whose game piece lands on the subject space. Further details regarding the instruction on individual spaces are provided hereinbelow. Connecting spaces 52 are a plurality of paths 66 which may generally be traversed in either direction. Certain paths 68 may only be traversed in the direction shown by the arrowhead.

In approximately the center of FIG. 1, a Black Hole 72 is illustrated which leads to the secondary game board or parallel universe 74 illustrated in FIG. 2. Parallel universe game board 74 includes a plurality of spaces 76 arranged in a moebius strip with two twists to form a one-sided surface as illustrated in two dimensions. A player entering the parallel universe 72 begins at the start space 78. From this space, the player may move in either direction. The spaces 76 on the parallel universe board 74 include instructions to be followed by any player whose game piece lands on the subject space. Further details regarding the instructions on individual spaces are provided hereinbelow.

Referring to FIGS. 4-11, eight different alien game cards of the preferred embodiment are illustrated. The alien depictions or life forms are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to limit the present invention to these depictions. Other game pieces may be used within the scope of the present invention. A small plastic stand (not shown) may be attached to the bottom of the alien cards to hold the cards in a vertical position.

In the preferred embodiment, the alien character illustrated in FIG. 4 is named Cognito. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 5 is named Scribe. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 6 is named Volo. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 7 is named Gemini Twins. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 8 is named Undula. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 9 is named Phonica. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 10 is named Questor. The alien character illustrated in FIG. 11 is named Chrona. On the back of each alien card, as illustrated in FIG. 12, the capabilities of that particular alien is shown by the symbols 80. Each alien breathes either methane or nitrogen, for example, as shown by the molecule symbol 82. Each alien eats food or plants as illustrated by the chicken leg or leaf 84, for example. Each alien survives in either a hot or cold environment 86, for example. Also included on the back of each alien character card is a brief description of the alien (descriptions for Scribe and Cognito are included in FIG. 14) and three holes 88 to hold three fuel cells.

Referring to FIG. 3, a planet generator spinner board is generally indicated by reference numeral 90. Spinner board 90 is used to generate the characteristics of a mystery planet when a player lands on one of the mystery
planets (see FIG. 1). Each time a player lands on one of the mystery planets, the planet generator is used to change the characteristics of that mystery planet. A spinner 92 is pivotally attached to the center of the spinner board 90. Spinner board 90 is divided into nine sections 94. Each section 94 indicates temperature 96, atmosphere 98, and food supply 100 in the same symbols as shown on the back of the alien character card. Also included is an indication of the gravity as MyG 102 or HiG 104. MyG 102 is the alien’s natural gravity on its home planet (My Gravity). HiG 104 is a high gravity on the mystery planet. One of the sections 94 is a “just like home” section 106 which matches the alien’s characteristics. The alien’s characteristics must match the characteristics of the mystery planet for the alien to survive in the mystery planet’s environment.

[0021] Referring to FIGS. 15-18, four different gear cards are illustrated. A food converter card 108 may be used to convert meat to plants or vice versa, for example. An atmospheric converter 110 may be used to convert a methane atmosphere to a nitrogen atmosphere, for example. A thermal inverter card 112 may be used to invert the temperature from hot to cold or visa versa, for example. A gravity deflective card 114 may be used to deflect a HiG atmosphere, for example. Gear cards allow an alien to compensate for incompatability environments. These cards may be used when an alien lands on a mystery planet that does not have the same characteristics needed for the alien to survive. Using these cards, the alien may change the food supply from meat to plants, for example, if it survives on plants and the mystery planet only has meat.

[0022] Referring to FIG. 13, a plurality of question cards 116 are included to be answered by a player landing on any of a plurality of designated spaces (see FIG. 1). The designated spaces are referred to as Chaos spaces. The questions may include true/false questions such as “A: The Sun has no solid surface, so if you had a ship that could survive it, you could fly directly through the middle and come out the other side,” for example. The question may include multiple choice questions such as “If you pitched a baseball while floating in space, your body would: a) fall to pieces; b) start spinning around after you pitched it; c) not move at all; or d) stretch like a piece of spaghetti,” for example. Additionally, “no wrong answer” questions are included such as “If aliens from another planet visited us, would they be friendly to us or not?” for example.

[0023] Use of the above-described game pieces and boards will be described in more detail hereinbelow.

[0024] Playing a Game

[0025] The object of the educational game of the present invention is to lead a player’s alien game piece (FIGS. 4-11) around the universe game board (FIG. 1) and back to the home planet 54 first, while at the same time learning information related to science, for example. Each player chooses an alien game piece (FIGS. 4-11) and places it on the home planet 54 on the universe game board 50. Each player takes a “Time Machine” card (not shown) which may be used later in the game. The “Time Machine” card, which may only be used once during the game by each player, allows the player to roll a die again or to make another player re-roll the die. A standard six-sided die having three numbers (1, 2, and 3 each twice) may be used in the game to advance an alien game piece. It should be noted that it is possible to play the game where a “player” is actually a team of persons playing the game. As used herein, “player” can mean an individual or a team.

[0026] Referring to FIGS. 1 and 9, preferably the youngest player rolls the die first and moves that many spaces 52 on the universe game board 50 along path 200 or 202 from the start space 56 on the home planet 54. Following path 200, the initial space 204 indicates that the “Engine misfires. Roll again.” A player landing on this space gets to roll the die again. Continuing along this path, the next space encountered is a “Chaos” space 206. If a player lands on a “Chaos” space 206, the player to his or her right draws a Chaos card (FIG. 13) and reads the question to the player who landed on the “Chaos” space 206. Each Chaos card has three levels of questions of increasing difficulty. If the player rolled a 1, the Level 1 question will be asked. If the player rolled a 2, the Level 2 question will be asked. If the player rolled a 3, the Level 3, most difficult question will be asked. If the player answers the question correctly, the player receives one fuel cell (FIG. 14) and rolls again. If the player answers incorrectly, the player’s turn is over and the next player to the player’s left rolls the die. If the player is asked a “No Wrong Answer” question, as long as an answer is given, the player rolls again.

[0027] If a player lands on the next space 208, the player receives a free Atmospheric Converter Card 110 (see FIG. 16). An Atmospheric Converter Card may be used to change the atmosphere on a Mystery Planet to allow a player’s alien to survive. Use of this card is further described below. If a player lands on space 210, the player receives a Gravity Deflector card 114 (FIG. 18). The Gravity Deflector card may be used to change the HiG gravity on a Mystery Planet to MyG as described further below. Space 212 is a “Super Chaos” space. Super Chaos spaces play the same as a Chaos space except that a correctly answered question wins the player a fuel cell (FIG. 14) another roll of the die, plus a free piece of gear (FIGS. 15-18).

[0028] When a player reaches the first Mystery Planet 58, the player stops there even if the roll of the die would have taken the player to spaces past the Mystery Planet 58. The characteristics of the Mystery Planet 58 are determined by spinning the planet generator spinner 92 on the spinner board 90 (FIG. 3). The temperature, atmosphere, food supply and gravity for the planet for this term are as pointed to by the spinner 92. An alien may survive on the Mystery Planet 58 either by natural survival or gear-assisted survival. If the capabilities of the alien (shown on the back of the alien card, FIG. 12, for example) match the atmosphere, food and temperature created by the Planet Generator 90, and “MyG”102 is indicated, the alien survives. If the alien does not match all the planet’s characteristics, a match may still be possible using the right Gear Card (FIGS. 15-18). If the alien cannot survive even with gear, the player’s turn ends. On the next turn, the player rolls the die to leave the planet. If the alien survives naturally or with gear, the player rolls again and leaves the planet.

[0029] A player leaving the first Mystery Planet 58 may follow path 214, 216 or 218. If the player originally traversed path 200, the player must declare that he or she is going to change directions and follow path 214 prior to rolling the die. A player may reverse direction along any of the paths any time during the game as long as it is announced prior to rolling the die.
[0030] If the player had chosen path 202 at the start of the game, the first space encountered is a “Chaos” space 220. If a player lands on Chaos space 220, the player proceeds as described for space 206 hereinabove except that a player correctly answering the question receives two fuel cells instead of one along with another roll of the die.

[0038] If a player lands on space 274, the alien contracts the “Antigogrophy Virus” and returns to the Home Planet 54 for treatment (following link F to FIG. 1).

[0039] If a player lands on space 276, all other players with three fuel cells gives the player two of them. Landing on the next space 278 causes all of the player’s gear to be destroyed by Megnetar gamma rays.

[0040] Landing on the final space 280 in the “Time Tunnel” results in a sudden deceleration and a loss of two fuel cells. A player following this path may continue along path 356 to FIG. 23, space 354 described hereinbelow.

[0041] Continuing with the present example from space 262 and following connector E to FIG. 21, the next space 282 requires a visiting player to donate a piece of gear of his or her choice to charity. From space 282, a player may follow path 284 or path 286. If path 284 is followed, the second Mystery Planet 60 is encountered. Survival of the player’s alien on the second Mystery Planet 60 is determined in the same way as described hereinabove for the first Mystery Planet 58. The next space is a Chaos space 298 which is also described hereinabove.

[0042] Landing on space 290 causes the player’s alien to be sucked into a wormhole and into the parallel universe following connector B to FIG. 24 described in detail below. The next space is the Probability Pit #1 space 292. If a player landing on this space rolls a one, the player receives one piece of gear (FIGS. 15-18). The next space is a Super Chaos space 294 described hereinabove.

[0043] If a player lands on space 296, the player goes directly to the fourth Mystery Planet 64, following link H to FIG. 22. However, if there are no other aliens present on the fourth Mystery Planet 64, those aliens go to the third Mystery Planet 62.

[0044] If the player follows path 286, the next space is a Chaos space 298 described hereinabove. Landing on space 300, the player is awarded a piece of survival gear (FIGS. 15-18). Space 300 may also be reached from the Black Hole Observation Station 244 following path 252 (FIG. 20).

[0045] If a player lands on the next space 302, the ship is slowed by gravity waves and the player rolls again. Landing on space 304 sends the player’s alien through a Wormhole along path 306 to space 338 (FIG. 22).

[0046] The next space is a Super Chaos space 308, followed by space 310 where the player is directed to “stop to study an amazing plant that communicates”. Landing on space 312 results in the player receiving a Food Converter card 108, FIG. 15. Path 314 returns the player to space 290.

[0047] Following connector I to FIG. 22, another Black Hole Observation Station 316 is encountered. If the player rolls a one 318, the player’s alien is sucked into the Black Hole 72 along path 320 to the parallel universe 74, unless the player’s alien is invincible. If a two is rolled 322, path 324 is followed to the fourth Mystery Planet 64. Rolling a three 326 sends the player’s alien along path 328 to space 350 in the Space Elevator (FIG. 23) described hereinbelow.
If the player moves past the Black Hole Observation Station 316, the player’s alien encounters the third Mystery Planet 62, and survival is as described for the other Mystery Planets. The third Mystery Planet 62 may also be reached from the Black Hole Observation Station 244 along path 256 (FIG. 20).

Continuing along path 330 to space 332, if a player lands here, the player along with the player to the left goes to the parallel universe 74 following connector B to FIG. 24 described in detail hereinbelow.

Landing on space 334 results in the player to the right joining the newly arrived player. If a player lands on space 336, the player rolls again. If an even number is rolled, the player stays on space 336. If a one is rolled, the player goes to the Challenge space 258 and follows the directions there as described hereinabove (following connector K to FIG. 20).

Space 338 is a Chaos space (described hereinabove) which may also be reached from space 304 following the Wormhole along path 306 (FIG. 21). A player landing on space 340 is sucked into another Wormhole and follows path 342 to a space 346 in the Space Elevator as described in detail hereinbelow (FIG. 23). The next step is the fourth Mystery Planet 64 which may also be reached from space 322 along path 324 or from space 296 (FIG. 21). Survival of the player’s alien on the fourth Mystery Planet 64 is as described hereinabove for the other Mystery Planets.

Following connector M to FIG. 23, a Chaos space 344 is next encountered and a Chaos question is given to the player as described hereinabove. If a player lands on space 346, the player must roll the die. If the player rolls a one, the player’s alien goes to the parallel universe 74 (FIG. 2). Landing on the next space 348 results in the player rolling the die again. The next space 350 requires the player to “stop for a systems check.” Space 352 is a Chaos space followed by space 354. If a player rolls a two while on space 354, the player’s alien trades places with the player’s alien to his or her right. From space 354, a player may follow path 356 to space 280 (FIG. 20) or path 358 to the Refueling Station 360. The game ends when the first alien with three fuel cells reaches the Refueling Station 360 and successfully rolls for fuel back to the Home Planet 54.

If a player has fewer than three fuel cells, the player must get more fuel cells by rolling the die and moving back away from the Refueling Station 360 to a Chaos space and correctly answering a Chaos question.

If a player has three or more fuel cells when they reach the Refueling Station 360, the player rolls the die to fill up the fuel cells. Each fuel cell holds two tons of fuel, so exactly six tons of fuel is needed for the trip to the Home Planet 54. The player rolls the die until the sum of the rolls equals exactly six. If the sum exceeds six, such as seven or eight, the player’s turn is over and the player has to wait until the next turn to start again to try to roll exactly six. As soon as a player rolls exactly six from the Refueling station 360, the player returns to the Home Planet 54 and wins the game.

Referring to FIGS. 2 and 24, the parallel universe board 74 is illustrated. When a player enters the parallel universe 74 from the universe board 50, the player’s alien is placed on the start space 78. From the start space 78 the player may move in either direction on the player’s next turn. Following the path to the left the first space encountered is the Gravity Slingshot space 370. A player landing on this space rolls again.

A player landing on the next space 372 “feels full before you eat” and loses a Food Converter card 108 (FIG. 15). At the next space 374 “Time goes backwards here—stop to change your diaper,” and the player’s turn is over.

Landing in the next space 376 propels the player’s alien from the parallel universe 74 through a Wormhole to the Challenge space 258 (FIG. 20), on the universe board 50. If a player lands on the next space 378 all players in the other universe 59 receive a piece of gear (FIGS. 15-18). The next space is a Chaos space 380 which operates the same as the Chaos space on the universe board 50 described hereinabove.

A player landing on space 382 has “discovered the connection between the universes” and must “stop to write down your theory” which ends his or her turn. If a player lands on the next space 384, by rolling a three the player may go to any space in the game in either the universe 50 or parallel universe 74.

Continuing in the present direction, if a player lands on the next space 386, gamma rays destroy one of the player’s fuel cells. On the next space 388, an “Anti-alien shows you the way out. Escape to the Double-Chaos space.” The player follows the P connector to the Double Chaos space 270 (FIG. 20) in the universe 50.

If a player lands on the next space 390, anti-matter hits the alien’s ship. If the player rolls a three, the player to the left comes to this space 390 from anywhere in the game to repair the ship.

The next space 392 is a Super Chaos space. If a player lands on the next space 394, the player asks the player to his or her right any Chaos question. If the player to the right answers correctly, the answering player takes one of the questioning player’s fuel cells. If a player lands on the next space 396, a piece of the player’s gear dissolves and is taken away. The final space 398 in the parallel universe 74 before reaching the start space 78 and starting over allows the player to roll again.

Thus, the game has unique features which combine to provide players with fun and education. For instance, the planet generator 90 allows the board’s mystery planets to change characteristics every time a player lands thereon, each alien game piece has different physical characteristics and to survive they must match the planet’s characteristics, the gear cards allow an alien to compensate for incompatible environments, the parallel universe board 74 provides another board to and from which players travel and players may strategically more forward or backward at any time.

Internet Application

The game can be adapted for implementation into software or the Internet. By adapting the above described concepts, players would build complex alien life forms, care for them and send them out into a virtual universe to encounter challenges, survive and to interact with other players’ aliens (or life forms). Thus, as used in this specification and in the claims, which follow, the terms “universe/parallel universe,” “board,” and “game board” refer not only to a physical game board, but to a computerized virtual game board as well.
Players could build one or many aliens. They would choose a species and register a unique name for each. They would design each alien’s specifications, e.g., its body parts, size, skeleton type, general biology, food and digestive system, type of movement and locomotion and its natural environment. Virtually any physical characteristic of the alien could be selected.

Body parts that could be chosen include legs, arms, eyes, ears, head, skin, feet, hands, nose/smell, touch, brain type/size, heat and lungs, among others. Players could choose to give the alien a skeletal structure or not, assign a desired height, weight, build and bone density, choose whether the alien will walk upright, on “all fours” or even on “all eights” as well as the joint types (ball & joint, lever, piston, etc.). Each alien’s general biology design would involve choices as to whether the alien breathes air, is aquatic or an amphibian. Also, its strength, speed, body temperature, gender and intelligence could be chosen.

Players would use their aliens to explore, and evaluate different worlds to understand how the alien’s capabilities perform in each environment. The aliens could accomplish missions on worlds, encountering different atmospheres, gravities, terrain and dangers. Players could use their aliens to challenge other aliens to test each alien’s capabilities. Players could group with other players’ aliens to accomplish a task or mission. Players and their aliens could react to surprises, such as performing systems repair, react to natural disasters (e.g., comet hit), or other space phenomenon (e.g., black holes). Players could share information about their alien’s via specification sharing. A custom trading card could be designed and printed for each alien.

Additionally, players would provide their aliens with any necessary medical attention. For instance, each alien would have to be fed and medical attention administered as needed for injury or effects of hostile environments. In medical emergencies, an alien could be put into suspended animation while a player determines how to help the alien or transport the alien back to its home planet.

The aliens could evolve over generations. Each trait could be given a weighted emphasis and a reproductive cycle assigned. Then, with random mutations pre-programmed, the aliens would evolve.

It is to be understood that while certain forms of this invention have been illustrated and described, it is not limited thereto.

What is claimed is:

1. A board game for play by a plurality of players comprising:
   a primary game board having a plurality of game spaces connected along one or more contiguous paths;
   a secondary game board disjointed from said primary game board, also having a plurality of game spaces connected along one or more contiguous paths;
   a plurality of game pieces, each belonging to a particular player, designed to move along the contiguous paths of either the primary or secondary game board; and
   one or more transition mechanisms in the game, said transition mechanism moving a game piece from the primary game board to the secondary game board or vice versa.

2. The board game of claim 1, further comprising tokens that are available for players to collect, and wherein the object of the game is to collect a set number of said tokens and to subsequently go to a specified game space.

3. The board game of claim 2, wherein said tokens are acquired by first landing on any game space designated for such purpose, and subsequently answering a question correctly.

4. The board game of claim 3, further comprising a random number generator activated by player that fixes the number of game spaces which the game piece of that player will move on that turn, and wherein said questions are printed on cards, each card having a plurality of questions of varying difficulty and the difficulty level of the question used is determined by the most recent result of the random number generator.

5. The board game of claim 2, wherein after the set number of tokens have been collected and a player reaches the specified game space with his/her game piece, the player cannot win until passing a final test facilitated by a random number generator.

6. The board game of claim 5, wherein said final test consists of a mathematical formula based on the results of successively activating a random number generator.

7. The board game of claim 6, wherein said mathematical formula is kept running cumulative sum of the results of said activations, where if the running cumulative sum ever equals a pre-designated number the player wins, but if the running cumulative sum ever exceeds such pre-designated number the player’s turn ends and said final test must be attempted on a subsequent turn with the running cumulative sum reset to zero.

8. That board game of claim 1, further comprising a voucher for each player and a random number generator activated by player that fixes the number of game spaces the game piece of that player will move on that turn, and wherein each player starts the game with his/her voucher, which may be used by the player one time to void any one result of said random number generator—regardless of whether it is the turn of that player or another player—thus forcing the reactivation of said random number generator.

9. A board game for play by a plurality of players comprising:
   one or more game boards, each game board having a plurality of game spaces connected along one or more contiguous paths;
   a plurality of game pieces, each belonging to a particular player, designed to move along said contiguous paths, each game piece having certain innate characteristics associated therewith that are unique to that game piece;
   a plurality of characteristic-altering pieces which may be acquired by a player to alter one or more of the innate characteristics of his/her game piece; and
   wherein the rules for movement of said game pieces along said contiguous paths are based at least in part upon the characteristics of said game pieces, whether innate or altered.
10. The board game of claim 9, further comprising one or more game spaces designated for habitability testing based on the characteristics, whether innate or altered, of any game piece landing on said designated game space; wherein habitability for said designated game space is conducted by randomly generating the characteristics of the designated game space and comparing the same to the innate or altered characteristics of the game piece landing thereon; and wherein a reward is given to the player whose game piece passes said habitability testing.

11. The board game of claim 10, wherein said reward for passing habitability testing is the ability to take another turn.

12. The board game of claim 10, further comprising a device to randomly generate the characteristics of said designated game space, and wherein the potential exists on said device to randomly determine that habitability testing is passed regardless of the characteristics of the game piece.

13. The board game of claim 9, wherein said characteristic-altering pieces are acquired by first landing on any of a plurality of game space designated for such purpose, one or more spaces designating a particular characteristic-altering piece and one or more spaces designating a characteristic-altering piece of the player's choice.

14. The board game of claim 13, wherein one or more designated spaces for acquiring characteristic-altering pieces require the player to correctly answer a question after landing on said space before a characteristic-altering piece can be acquired.

15. The board game of claim 13, wherein one or more designated spaces for acquiring characteristic-altering pieces allow a player to acquire such characteristic-altering piece based on the outcome of a random number generator activated after the player lands on said space.

16. The board game of claim 13, further comprising one or more designated spaces, which if a player lands thereon, every other player receives one or more characteristic-altering pieces.

17. The board game of claim 13, further comprising one or more designated spaces, which if a player lands thereon, he/she/they lose one or more characteristic-altering pieces.

18. A board game for play by a plurality of players comprising:
one or more game boards, each game board having a plurality of game spaces connected along one or more contiguous paths;
a plurality of game pieces, each belonging to a particular player, designed to move along said contiguous paths;
a random number generator activated by player that fixes the number of game spaces the game piece of that player will move on that turn; and
wherein a player has the option of moving his/her/their game piece along a path in a direction opposite that which he/she/they moved in the preceding turn by declaring such an intent prior to activating said random number generator.

19. The board game of claim 18, wherein a plurality of contiguous paths are interconnected in a manner to form one or more junctions, and a player passing a junction on a given turn may proceed away from the junction along any of said contiguous paths.

20. The board game of claim 19, wherein a player passing a junction may not proceed away from the junction along the contiguous path from which he/she/they entered the junction, unless the player's turn started on the junction and that player declared an intent to move his/her/their game piece in the opposite direction prior to activating said random number generator.

21. The board game of claim 18, further comprising one or more passageways disposed on game board, having an originating space and a destination space, that have the potential to move a player's game piece to the destination space when he/she/they land on the originating space.

22. The board game of claim 21, wherein the determination of whether a game piece moves to the destination space of a passageway for one or more passageways is based on the result of the most recent activation of said random number generator.