

DRAGON BATTLE



Player's Manual

*Original artwork in public domain by David Lewis Johnson and Luigi Castellani
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PLAYER'S MANUAL

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The Story / Background

Once, long ago in the mythic past, the world was populated by the myriad beings: tall and graceful elves, short and hairy dwarves, shy and resourceful goblins, along with gnomes and satyrs and centaurs; the birds of the skies and the beasts of the wilds; demons and great serpents and thunderbirds; Gods of heaven and Gods of hell. A world vibrant with magic and mystery that shimmers tantalizingly at the edges of our consciousness.

In those distant times dragons were as dangerous as they were bountiful. A terrible Dragon King emerged and terrorized the world with bloodthirsty cruelty and boundless greed. He taught dragon kind to delight in the taste of the myriad beings. Kingdoms and villages became regularly attacked. Sacred temples and pilgrimage sites destroyed. Everywhere was chaos.

Angered by the cries of sadness across the world, the Sky Father, Lord of All Beings, called out for a Champion to defeat the dreaded Dragon King.

Many have heard the call, and many have become a meal for dragon kind.

Will YOU be the Champion of Legend who will defeat the Dragon King?

How the game works / RPG Mechanics

Dragon Battle presents potential Champions with a loop of increasingly difficult dragons, culminating in the cruel Dragon King himself.

After each battle, Champions are healed and given an opportunity to make a purchase in the marketplace before the next battle begins. There's only one purchase opportunity, so it's important to be strategic and choose wisely to maximize your time.



The role playing game mechanics are based on years of design philosophy/discussions with my brother as we complained about the limitations of the genre and how the game experience could be improved.

The result is a super-crunchy combat system. All non-magical weapons and armor have their own hit points. Spells and skills gain power as they level up. Additionally, the experience point system is based on failure. Experience points are gained whenever the player fails a roll, and skills level up organically during gameplay based on player's actions. This creates a more realistic and challenging gameplay experience.

See screenshots on the next page from the game code showing the core combat loop, a breakdown of the fight command and drill-down of one of the level-up code snippets.

Dragon Battle - Player's Manual

▼ **combat loop** Loop Forever

▼ **Actor: Invoke Script**
Executes the scripts attached to Actor
status bar

▼ **Variable: Set To 'False'**
8 BIT whatTakesDmg? 1 = weapon, 2 = helm, 3 =

▼ **Actor: Invoke Script**
Executes the scripts attached to Actor
Riddles Taunts Spells

► **setting focus mult if = 0** If Variable Compare With Value

► **weather check** If Variable Compare With Variable

► **if player not asleep** If Variable Compare With Value

► **if monster run out of hp, trigger ending** If Variable Compare With Value

► **mon attack // sleep // magic barrier** If Variable Compare With Value

▼ **Actor: Hide**
Self (core attack loop)

Add Event

▼ **if player not asleep** If Variable Compare With Value
8 BIT playerAsleep
Equal To 0

► **drink healing potion if super-low hits** If Variable Compare With Value

► **Text: Display Menu**

▼ **fight** If Variable Compare With Value
8 BIT Local 0
Equal To 1

► **Variable: Set To 'False'**

► **d100 roll** Variable: Math Functions

► **setting base attack level** Variable: Math Functions

► **focus multiplier modifier** If Variable Compare With Value

► **bonuses for Elf Sword, Karate Skill, Magic Spear** If Variable Compare With Value

► **monAsleep check** If Variable Compare With Value

► **if hit, menuCounter4 = true** If Variable Is 'False'

► **weapons take damage** If Variable Compare With Value

► **skill level up - weapon or karate** If Variable Compare With Value

Add Event

▼ **skill level up - weapon or karate** If Variable Compare With Value
8 BIT weaponEquip
Greater Than 0

▼ **weapon training check** If Variable Compare With Value
8 BIT weaponSkill
Greater Than 0

▼ **weapon training level up** If Variable Compare With Value
8 BIT currExp
Greater Than Or Equal To 10

▼ **Text: Display Dialogue**
Your weapon skill has increased.
Add Avatar

▼ **Variable: Increment By 1**
8 BIT weaponSkill

▼ **Variable: Math Functions**
8 BIT currExp
Subtract Value
10

An additional change is the UI shift away from number-tracking, and towards narrative. While you can see certain skill levels (spell levels, for example) and watch your Focus Multiplier grow, numbers have otherwise been removed from the game so gameplay is focussed instead on the narrative unfolding and the player's emotional feelings. As an example, the player's HITS are displayed during combat but no numbers are seen. Decisions are made not based on what percentage roll you think you'll get, but instead based on how you feel in the situation.

The game is very text-heavy and can feel like reading a long book. This is intentional. During play testing early on, I noticed the battle was unfolding like a dragon combat description from the epic myth Beowulf. This is exactly how the gameplay experience should feel! The player steps into the world of ancient myth and legend. On your journey to defeat the Dragon King, a narrative will unfold that you will be entwined with.

Like the story of how I defeated the Dragon King with just a knife! It was an epic battle and we were both low on hits. Suddenly my sword shattered, and a sinking feeling in my gut told me that I was not going to survive the battle. In order to win I would have to max out my focus, meaning 4 turns of patiently enduring enemy attacks. Magically I survived, and my final knife thrust ended the Dragon King's reign. My fist shot up in the air in celebration, an epic conclusion to an epic journey.

The focus on narrative and simplicity of the game design means that a lot has been stripped away. The graphic style is intentionally very simple. The complexity of the seemingly simple RPG battle loop setup means that inventory checks, etc, had to be built out as menu options, creating a great deal more complexity and code. When you approach the game on its own terms, the gameplay experience is immersive and challenges you to use your memory.

Battle Options

Fight

An attack against your enemy using whatever weapon you have equipped. If you are bare-handed and don't have any Karate skill, you will take damage from your punch!

Focus

The Focus Multiplier multiplies your chances for a successful action and can increase total damage. If you want to be more effective at attacks and spellcasting, be sure to increase your Focus!

Item

A variety of items can be used during combat, including drinking heal potions and using wands.



Spell

Choose from a list of known spells. If you know more than 9 spells, you can choose from a spell book menu. If you don't know any spells, this option will have you focus instead.

Outwit

Outwitting opponents is a good way to end combat peacefully. Against dragons, if your Riddle Skill is high enough you can engage in a battle of wits. Defeating dragons at riddles is a great way to learn spells!

Pray

Prayer is used for a variety of reasons. You can pray for mercy from your opponent, which seldom works against dragons (but sometimes does). You can pray for strength and protection from a higher power, which gives a Prayer bonus (up to a max of +10) that protects you in combat. If you are ever blessed by a fan, their blessing is the equivalent of a Max Prayer Bonus. Sometimes a higher power will respond to your prayer and cast a protective barrier around you.

Run!!

If all else fails and you are determined not to be the next meal of your dragon opponent, you can always attempt to Run. Focus Multipliers will help here. Though cowardly, sometimes it is better to run and try again another day.

Classes

Serf

A basic fighter who specializes in attack. Starts with a powerful weapon from either the Elves, Dwarves or Goblins.

Knight

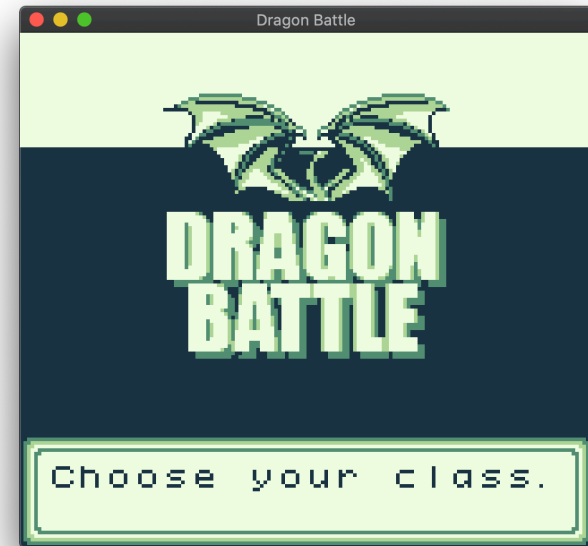
A fighter with strong defense. Starts with a piece of magic armor.

Mage

A decently-powerful mage. Starts with either FIRE or ICE spell, along with MIND spell and strong Riddle Skill.

Ryukyu

A fighter specially trained in Karate. Does not use weapons. Starts with INVIS spell and moderate Riddle Skill.



Marketplace

Weapons

- knife - 5 gold
- spear - 10 gold
- sword - 25 gold
- battle axe - 45 gold

Armor

- tunic - 2 gold
- chain mail - 25 gold
- plate armor - 50 gold

Shields

- wood - 2 gold
- iron - 15 gold

Helms

- leather - 2 gold
- iron - 10 gold

Magic Shoppe

RIDDLE SKILL,
ANIMAL, MIND,
CTRL, INVIS, SLEEP
Level up

- gems - 5 for 10 gold
- scroll - random - 10 gold
- wand - LIT - 75 gold
- feather - 5 for 3 gold

Elves

CURE MIND HEAL
ANIMAL CTRL LIT
spells level up
- sword - 50 gold
- chain - 75 gold
- lit wand - 50 gold

Dwarves

INVIS MIND ICE
spells level up.
- helm - 50 gold
- shield - 75 gold
- plate - 150 gold
- ice wand - 50 gold

Goblins

SLEEP HEAL CURE
FIRE SERPENT
spells level up.
- spear - 50 gold
- tonic - 50 gold
- fire wand - 50 gold

*order of operations in the code —>
make your choice wisely!*

▼ Text: Display Dialogue

You have

GOLD: \$gold

GEMS: \$gems

Add Avatar

► **elf caravan** If Variable Compare With

► **dwarf caravan** If Variable Compare V

► **goblin caravan** If Variable Compare V

► **if wiz or ryukyu, magic shoppe** If

► **weapon shop** If Variable Compare W

► **if no shield, shield?** If Variable Com

► **if no armor, armor?** If Variable Com

► **if no helm, helm?** If Variable Compar

▼ Actor: Invoke Script

Executes the scripts attached to Act

Actor 1

Spells / Wands / Riddles

Wands

Wands always cast a spell. The strength of the wand depends on the number of charges. With each use, the wand loses a charge and spell power decreases. There are three wand types (FIRE, ICE, LIT).

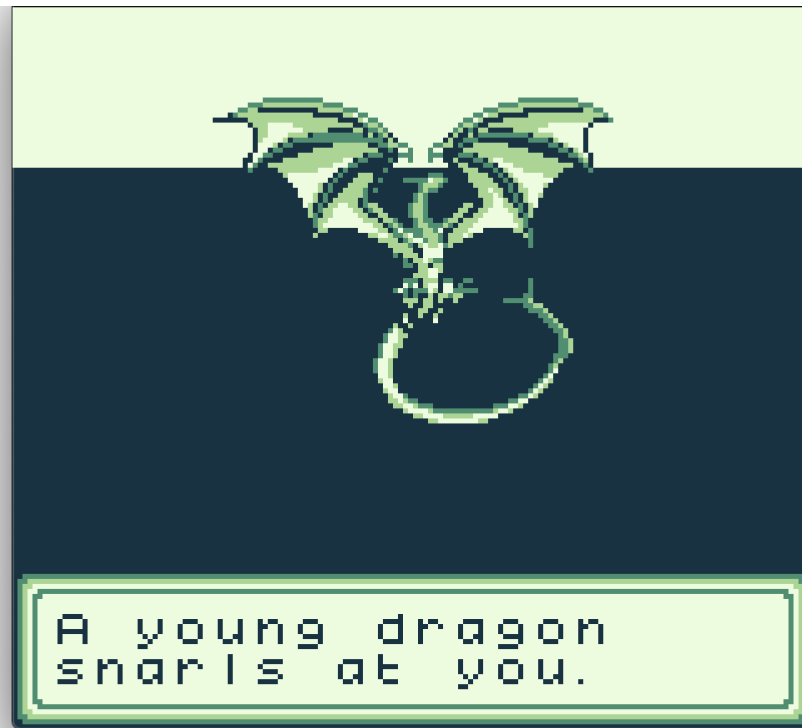
Spells

- FIRE - shoots a ball of fire at your opponent.
- ICE - shoots shards of ice spears at your opponent.
- LIT - calls down a bolt of lightning from the skies.
- CTRL - adjusts the weather, either increasing or decreasing severity.
- SERPENT - using a gem, this spell summons a dragon to fight alongside you!
- ANIMAL - using a feather, this spell summons a mighty cave bear to fight alongside you!
- SLEEP - puts your opponent to sleep.
- INVIS - makes you invisible.
- MIND - during combat, this creates a magic barrier that shields you from harm.
- CURE - cures poison, especially the dreaded dragon bite.
- HEAL - heals your body from injuries. the more powerful the spell level, the more health that is restored.

Riddles

As everyone knows, the only thing dragons enjoy more than pillaging villages and feasting on helpless victims is playing riddle games. Powerful wizards have been known to seek out dragons and defeat them at riddles to learn new spells and skills.

Dragons will only play riddles with players with high enough Riddle Skill, so keep leveling up! Don't give up!



YOUNG DRAGON

Spells: SLEEP, ICE

Teaches: SLEEP, ICE, FIRE



EARTH DRAGON

Spells: Sleep, Ice Blast,
Lightning, CTRL Weather
Teaches: Summon Animal,
Summon Serpent

FIRE DRAGON

Spells: [none]
Teaches: Fire Ball,
Summon Serpent

ICE DRAGON

Spells: [none]
Teaches: ICE



SEA DRAGON

Spells: Lightning, CTRL Weather, Heal

Teaches: Lightning, CTRL Weather



UNDEAD BONE DRAGON

Spells: Zombie Sleep

Teaches: [nothing]



IRON DRAGON

Spells: [none]

Teaches: MIND



DEMON SPAWN

Spells: Sleep, Heal

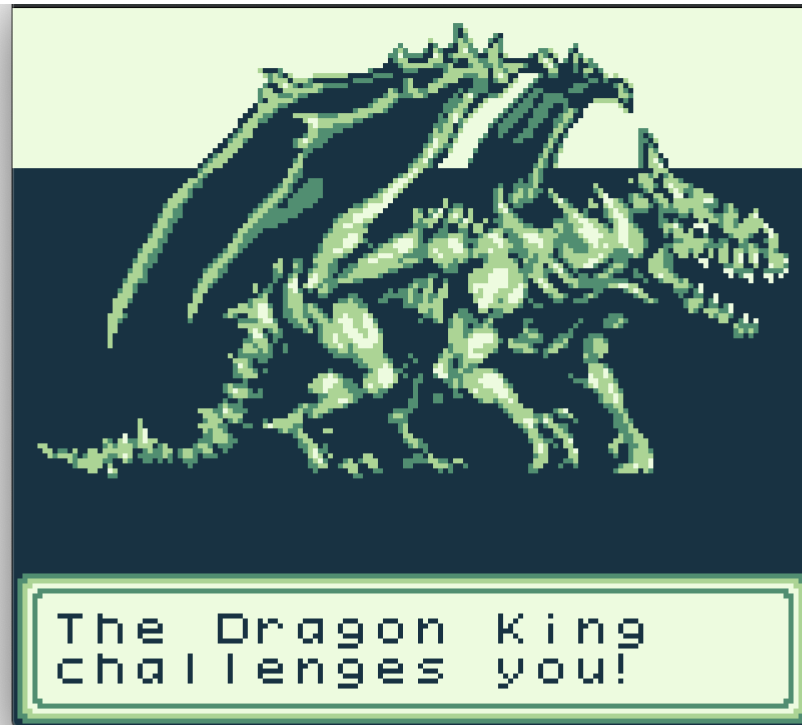
Teaches: Sleep, Invisibility



FEATHERED SERPENT

Spells: Sleep, Heal, Lightning, CTRL Weather

Teaches: ????



DRAGON KING

Spells: Sleep, Heal, Lightning, CTRL Weather

Teaches: ????

*Will YOU be the
Champion of Legend
who defeats the
Dragon King?*

DragonBattle.io

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Built in GBStudio (gbstudio.dev)