

What a concept! You Make The Card - Step 13

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So now we get into (what I think is) the **fun** part of making a **Magic** card: the creative elements! Now that all those pesky game-play concerns are over with, we can finally start looking at the *important* things!

Now that you've decided what the creature type of Mr. Babycakes is (He's an Elemental! Full results at the end!), this is the first step in converting that into actual card art. To do that, we need a *card concept*. But wait, you may ask, what exactly *is* a card concept? It's somewhat more complex than most of the other things you'll be dealing with in You Make the Card, but it's not too complicated, and it is important, so here's what you need to know:

A card concept basically tells the artist what the card is, giving him or her enough information to create the card art. Now, in the past, these were very specific, especially during the *Weatherlight* Saga, in order to convey key plot points and to keep characters consistent. Since we here at Creative Text are trying to reduce the connection between story and card set, and the central figure of this card's art will obviously be Mr. Babycakes, and because we want to give the artist as much creative freedom as possible, your concept will need to be pretty general.

Perhaps the best way to explain what we need from you is to tell you what a concept should and shouldn't do.

A GOOD CONCEPT SHOULD:

- Convey just enough information about the creature to get a proper depiction.
- Be free of unnecessary detail that the artist could create on his/her own.
- Give the artist a general idea of how the card's abilities work. If it's a direct damage spell, is it fire, lava, or lightning? If it's a creature that regenerates, how is that generally reflected in its physical form? For example, a red Wizard who taps to deal one damage to a creature or player might have a concept that reads, "a red Wizard who has the ability to spit balls of plasma." In fact, remember that not all **Magic** artists know the first thing about the game. You'll need to be clear and avoid jargon.
- Be simple. Generally, we've found that the fewer people and things you require with your concept, the better the art is. That's because, with a creature card, the artist has only one thing to focus on and make impressive: the creature being depicted.

- Be appropriate to the game in general. While you may like really disgusting art, there are others who don't. Be sure to keep some amount of taste.

A GOOD CONCEPT SHOULD **NOT**:

- Micromanage the artist. That means no camera angles, no specific description that forces the artist into certain corners (the Wizard has red hair, a goatee, a red cloak with purple polka dots, etc. etc.), no description of action or location. In the red Wizard example above, we just say that the wizard *can* spit balls of plasma. We leave the decision of whether or not to depict this up to the artist. Which details are necessary, and which are micromanagement? Use your own best judgment. If it's not needed to express what the card is and what it does, don't include it. For example, if you were concepting Crush of Wurms, it's very important to the concept to have three wurms in the art, because that's what the card produces. Requesting that they all be eating centaurs, though, is unnecessary detail.
- Violate the "flavor" of the card or the color it's in. If you're trying to concept a blue card, you shouldn't have it use fire as a weapon.
- Bend over backwards to work in every aspect of the card's abilities. If you focus too much on trying to visually depict each aspect of the card, you're going to come up with an unfocused mess. Decide what the most important things about the card are, and concentrate on those. Let the artist do the rest.
- Be too long. Since the artists may not know the game as well as you do, and since their schedules are usually very full, they don't have the time or knowledge to go through a complex or detailed concept.

The last point is especially important, because we're going to limit your card concept to *twenty-five words or less*. You only get one entry, so make it count! Let your imagination run wild, and good luck!

In Closing...

Perhaps you need some guidance on what to do. If you look at past [Magic Arcana "Sketches"](#) that show the evolution of art, you can see some samples of past card concepts. However, most are more detailed than what we need from you. Here are some concepts that we could've used for *Judgmentcards*:

- Balthor the Defiled: This is a zombified version of the character Balthor, from the style guide. He commands black creatures instead of barbarians now.
- Elephant Guide: This green spell manifests itself as a ghostly elephant that empowers a warrior.
- Scalpelexis: This is a weird flying beast that can drain the knowledge from a hapless victim. Let your imagination go wild.

The deadline is midnight Wednesday morning (June 12). We will select 5-10 of the best ones and put them to a vote! Remember: one entry per person and no more than 25 words!

Register [HERE](#) - Submit [HERE](#)

Results of the Creature Type Voting

The numbers for the first part of the vote are significantly lower than other votes, probably due to the server problems we were experiencing during that time. Those problems have since been alleviated.

Mr. Babycakes Creature Type Vote

Type	First Vote		Run-Off	
Elemental	277	19%	910	40%
Spike	240	16%	701	31%
Fungus	222	15%	686	30%
Elf	182	12%	--	--
Ooze	127	9%	--	--
Druid	118	8%	--	--
Plant	84	6%	--	--
Dryad	80	5%	--	--
Wizard	65	4%	--	--
Troll	38	3%	--	--
Beast	34	2%	--	--
Insect	14	1%	--	--
Total	1481	100%	2297	100%