

Six Spells: Monster-Making

By Derek Holland & the Skirmisher Game Development Group

The idea of magic users creating or changing life is a very old one. Here are six spells that relate to studying, altering, and creating creatures. Unlike most spells, the GM needs to customize most of these for the setting they are to be used in and there are no suggestions on how extensive some of them should be in their effectiveness. Some GMs may allow Mutation I, for example, to provide a -1 bonus to armor class and others may allow -2 or even -4. It may help the GM who is considering allowing player characters access to these spells to have the players do the grunt work in writing charts with potential mutations and creations. Note that the following spells are formatted so as to be compatible with any games using the sorts of basic fantasy role-playing game rules developed starting in the 1970s. They can be used as-is with games like Goblinoid Games' Labyrinth Lord and Mutant Future and can be easily modified and expanded for use with successor systems like OGL or other games altogether.

Bloodline

Level: 1 **Duration:** instant **Range:** touch

With a touch, the caster gains knowledge of a creature's ancestry. Useful for standard breeding techniques, it also assists in making mutants. Bloodline can be used on people and royalty and nobility use it to prove their family lines.

Imbue Life I

Level: 7 **Duration:** instant **Range:** touch

The caster can create life from non-living materials. Only creatures without magical powers can be created with this spell. The result is free-willed and can be no more intelligent than a dog. It can be mutated, however. The spell takes one year to cast and costs 50,000 gold pieces, plus 1,000 per trait (e.g., flight, poison, infravision). The GM may want to add to the cost of these monster(s) if they have an unusually low armor class, high hit dice, or extreme movement rate.

It can be cost-effective to make more than one creature at a time. If more than four are being made, reduce the price by 10% and, if more than 10 are being made, reduce the price by 25%.

Imbue Life II

Level: 9 **Duration:** instant **Range:** touch

The ultimate spell for making monsters, transfiguration II allows the caster to create just about anything. The result is free-willed and may or may not be intelligent. The spell takes 10 years to cast and costs 500,000 gold pieces, plus 1,000 per non-magical trait; 10,000 (times the spell level) for magical powers; and 50,000 for human level intelligence. The GM may want to add to the cost of the monster(s) with an unusually low armor class, high hit dice, or extreme movement rate.

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Mutation I

Level: 5 **Duration:** instant **Range:** touch

Mutation I allows the caster to alter a creature permanently. Only non-magical traits can be granted. Mutation I can be cast on a creature multiple times, potentially making the resulting mutant very different from the stock.

This complex spell takes one month to cast and costs 1,000 gold pieces.

GMs may want to limit the type of creatures that can be affected by this spell or allow multiple spells that can only affect one kind or type. It could also be limited to features drawn from the creature's ancestry if the GM uses evolution in his or her setting.

Mutation II

Level: 8 **Duration:** instant **Range:** touch

Mutation II allows the caster to grant any non-magical trait or magical power up to 4th level to a creature he touches. Mutation II can be cast on a creature multiple times, potentially making the resulting mutant very different from the stock.

This spell takes six months to cast and costs 5,000 gp, plus an additional 500 for every spell level.

GMs may want to limit the type of creatures that can be affected by this spell or allow multiple spells that can only affect one kind or type.

Remove Mutation

Level: 4 **Duration:** instant **Range:** touch

Any creature that is affected by this spell must save versus spells or lose one trait or magical power. If a caster uses this on one of his own creatures, all the selected traits and powers can be removed at once and there is no save.

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Skirmisher Publishing LLC

499 Mystic Parkway
Spring Branch, TX 78070

Email: d20@skirmisher.com

Website: <http://www.skirmisher.com>

d-Infinity Online: <http://www.d-Infinity.net>

Artist: William T. Thrasher

Editor/Layout & Design: Michael O. Varhola



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