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(54) **Game played in a darkened room**

(57) Game apparatus for a game played in a darkened room includes a playing surface (104) defining playing features and a lighting source (102) positioned

to illuminate the playing surface and configured to provide multiple lighting modes. The appearance of the playing features change in response to changing lighting modes.

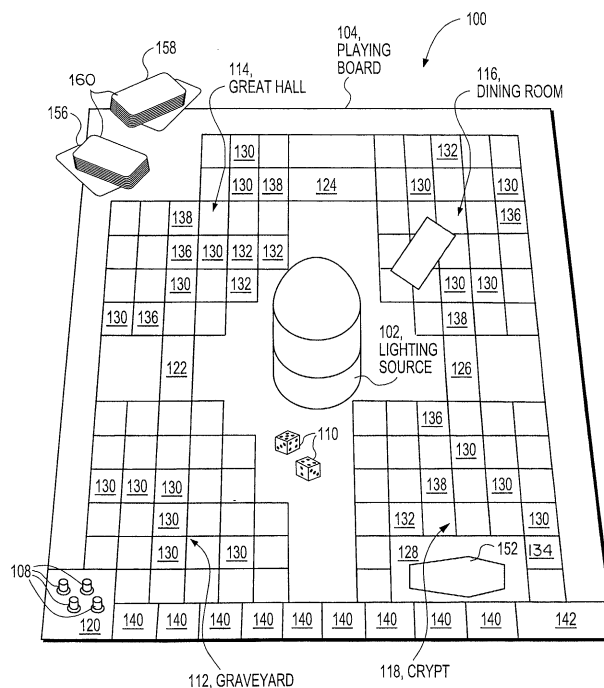


Fig. 1

Description

[0001] The invention relates to an apparatus and procedure for a game that can be played in a darkened room.

[0002] Board games that use cards, dice and tokens are well known.

[0003] In one general aspect, apparatus for a game that can be played in a darkened room includes a lighting source and a playing surface defining playing features. The lighting source is positioned to illuminate the playing surface and is configured to provide multiple lighting modes. The appearance of the playing features change in response to changing lighting modes.

[0004] Implementations may include one or more of the following features. The playing features may include words, symbols, or images. The words, symbols, or images may be printed in more than one color and the lighting modes may provide light of different colors or wavelengths. Changes in the light color or wavelength may result in changes in the appearance of the words, symbols, or images. The lighting source may include several colored lights. The wavelength (i.e., the color) of light emitted by the lighting source may be changed by manipulating a switch. The lighting source also may include a colored lens having more than one color. The wavelength of light emitted from the lighting source may be controlled in other ways.

[0005] The lighting source may be configured to change wavelengths between those corresponding to blue and orange, between those corresponding to blue and red, or between other wavelengths in the visible spectrum. The lighting colors may be selected based upon opposing wavelengths in the visible spectrum represented on a "color wheel." The lighting colors also may change between wavelengths in bands other than the visible waveband.

[0006] In another implementation, the changing lighting modes that cause changes in the appearances of the playing features include changes in the luminous intensity of the lighting source in comparison to background or ambient lighting conditions. In this implementation, the changes in the appearance of the playing features occur as a result of the selected wavelength emitted from the lighting source becoming the more dominant wavelength as the luminous intensity increases. In a further implementation, the playing cards include features having appearances that may change in response to the changing lighting modes.

[0007] In another general aspect, playing a game in a darkened room includes providing a playing surface defining playing features, positioning a lighting source to illuminate the playing surface and configured to provide multiple lighting modes, and changing the lighting mode of the lighting source to change the appearance of the playing features. Implementations may include one or more of the features noted above.

[0008] The described implementations introduce the

dimension of playing a board game in the dark, in dimly lit conditions, or in an environment where the wavelength (i.e., the color), of the light shining on the playing board is controlled. An element of challenge is introduced by having a game board and playing tokens that can have more than one appearance. Thus, unexpected events, such as dangerous creatures and pitfalls, may suddenly appear without warning from what would otherwise appear to be a safe area of the game board as a result of the changing lighting modes. The apparatus is designed with its own lighting source for illuminating and changing the appearance of the components of the game by changing lighting modes.

[0009] Other features and advantages will be apparent from the description, the drawings, and the claims.

[0010] An example of game apparatus according to the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a game that can be played in a darkened room;

Figs. 2-6 are perspective views of game playing tokens;

Figs. 7 and 8 are flow charts of procedures for playing the game that can be played in a darkened room of Fig. 1;

Fig. 9 is a flow chart of a procedure for battling a monster in the game of Fig. 1;

Figs. 10-12 are flow charts of procedures for winning the game that can be played in a darkened room of Fig. 1; and,

Fig. 13 is a diagram of a color wheel.

[0011] Like reference symbols in the various drawings indicate like elements.

[0012] Referring to Fig. 1, a game that can be played in a darkened room 100 includes a lighting source 102, a playing board 104, playing cards 106, tokens 108, and dice 110. The lighting source 102 can be switched between providing red light and providing blue light, with red representing "daylight" and blue representing "night".

[0013] Some of the components of the game, including the playing board 104, playing cards 106, tokens 108, and dice 110 may be transformed depending on the color of the lighting source 102. This transformation is accomplished by printing words, symbols and images on the components using different colors. For example, if the light is blue, blue words, symbols, or images are not visible and if the light is red, red words, symbols, or images are not visible.

[0014] In one implementation, the playing board 104 is divided into playing squares and has four main rooms: the graveyard 112; the great Hall 114; the dining room 116; and the crypt 118. In another implementation, the playing board may be divided into a greater or lesser number of playing areas having different names. For example, additional playing areas may include the moors

or the bog. The playing squares may include words, symbols, or images. The playing board 104 may include a starting space 120, a great hall entrance space 122, a dining room entrance space 124, and a crypt entrance space 126. A vampire coffin 128 may appear in a space provided in the crypt 118. A skull 130 may be visible on several of the playing spaces.

[0015] The words, symbols, or images on the playing spaces may change depending upon whether the lighting source is set to represent day or night. For example, traps 132 and pit traps 134 may appear on the playing spaces depending on whether day or night is represented. A secret passage 136, 138 also may appear depending on whether day or night is represented. The playing board includes a ship lane 140 having numbered squares from 10 to 1 that lead to a ship arrival playing space 142.

[0016] Referring to Figs. 2A-2D, each of the rooms 112, 114, 116, 118 has a matching set of cardboard tokens: graveyard tokens 144, great hall tokens 146, dining room tokens 148, and, crypt tokens 150. The design on the back of each token corresponds to the design of the floor of the room in which the token belongs. For example, the graveyard tokens 144 have a tombstone, the great hall tokens 146 have a pillar, the dining room tokens 148 have a table, and the crypt tokens 150 have a coffin 126. The coffin space 128 is covered by a large coffin token 152. Each skull 130 is covered by a playing token 144, 146, 148, 150 that corresponds to the respective room 112, 114, 116, 118.

[0017] Referring also to Fig. 3, a ship token 154 is placed on one of the playing spaces in the ship lane 140. The ship token 154 is placed farther away from the ship arrival playing space 142 depending upon the number of players. For example for a four player game, the ship token 154 is placed on the number 10. For a three player game, the ship token 154 is placed on the number 9. For a two player game, the ship token is placed on the number 8.

[0018] Referring again to Fig. 1, the playing cards 106 include a red deck 156 and a blue deck 158. For a four player game, all the cards 156, 158 are used. For less than four players, fewer cards 156, 158 are used depending upon the number of players.

[0019] Referring to Fig. 4A-4D, each player selects a vampire hunter pawn 160. The vampire hunter pawns 160 are distinct characters that include Jack Hunter 162, Victoria Pierce 164, Gillian Viara 166, and Schick Stubble 168. In another implementation, the game may include other vampire hunters with different names and distinct characters.

[0020] Referring to Figs. 5A-5E, monster tokens 170 include zombies 172, servant vampires 174, werewolves 176, wolves 178, and Lord Mortis - the master vampire 180. In another implementation, the game includes additional or other types of monsters. For example, the game may include monsters such as goblins, trolls, mummies, dragons, witches, or warlocks.

[0021] Zombies 172 never come out during daylight play conditions. During daylight, the zombie tokens transform into harmless tombstones. The transformation occurs by having an image of a zombie printed in red and an image of a tombstone printed in blue. They cannot attack or be attacked in daylight. At night, the Zombies 172 climb out of their graves, and attack unsuspecting hunters. Rolling a "Hit" on the battle dice destroys the zombie 172. If the hunter 160 loses a battle to a zombie 172, the player's token 160 is knocked back to start until their next turn. If the Zombie 172 loses, it is removed from the board. Zombies 172 are only found in the graveyard.

[0022] Servant vampires 174 generally only come out at night. In daylight they transform into mist, and can neither attack, nor be attacked. The transformation occurs by printing a vampire image in red and mist in blue. The vampires 174 can be defeated through normal dice combat. In advanced play, the hunter 160 will need to possess a stake token to defeat a vampire 174. If the hunter 160 loses a battle to a vampire 174, that player gets sent back to the beginning of that room until their next turn. Vampires 174 can be found in any of the rooms 112, 114, 116, 118.

[0023] Werewolves 176 only appear at night. In the daylight, they revert to being innocent humans, and can neither attack, nor can they be attacked. The transformation from werewolf to human form occurs by printing a werewolf image in red and a person's image printed in blue. In advanced play, werewolves 176 can be defeated only if the hunter 160 has a sword. If the hunter 160 loses, the player's token 160 is knocked back to the last doorway until the beginning of that player's next turn. If the werewolf 176 loses, the curse of the werewolf is broken. The werewolf 176 token is removed from the board, and the innocent human who was trapped in the body of the wolf goes free and unharmed.

[0024] Wolves 178 appear and fight equally well during day or night conditions. In advanced play, wolves 178 can be defeated in combat only if the hunter 160 has a sword. If the hunter 160 loses, the player's token 160 is knocked back to the last doorway until that player's next turn. If the wolf 178 loses, it is removed from the board.

[0025] Lord Mortis, the master vampire 180, appears in the crypt room 118. Because the windows in the crypt are boarded up, Mortis 180 and any other vampires 174 found in this room can remain active during daylight. Being a very powerful vampire, Mortis 180 is not destroyed by just one attack with a stake. To destroy the master vampire 180, he must be successfully attacked three times with three weapons. Referring to Figs. 6A-6C, these weapons 182 include a stake 184, a sword 186, and garlic 188.

[0026] Referring to Fig. 7, the game 100 is set up according to a procedure 300. The procedure includes unfolding the game board (step 302), confirming operation of the lighting source (step 304), and positioning the

lighting source to illuminate the game board (step 306). Next, the tokens are divided into four piles (separated for each room) and are placed face down on a skull space in the rooms in which they belong (step 308). The large coffin token is then placed face down on its corresponding space in the crypt (step 310) and the ship token is placed on the blue ship path (step 312). The cards then are separated into two decks, the red deck and the blue deck (step 314), a number of cards are selected to use in the game based on the number of players (step 316), the red deck is placed on top of the blue deck and the entire stack is placed face down on the designated space on the game board (step 318). Each player is provided with a vampire hunter pawn (step 320), each player is given a garlic token (step 322), and a player is selected to go first (step 324).

[0027] Referring to Fig. 8, playing the game begins according to a procedure 400. Initially, the lighting source is activated to day or night (step 402). The top card is turned over and placed face up next to the deck (step 404), and the lighting source is changed to either night or day as indicated by the card (step 406). Then, if the card indicates a ship symbol, the vampire's ship is advanced by one space (step 408).

[0028] The procedure 400 further includes resolving any issues if a hunter is standing on an activated pit trap (step 410). In that event, the hunter is immediately moved to the door space 122, 126 or the start space 120 at the beginning of the room containing the pit trap. The player then continues on his or her next turn.

[0029] The playing procedure 400 further includes having the player roll the move die (step 412). The player may choose to leave the hunter pawn in its current location or may move the vampire hunter token up to the full number indicated on the die (step 414).

[0030] When moving a player, several rules apply. For example, players may move over other players, but may not end a move on the same space with another player, unless the players are on a door space at the beginning of a room 114, 116, 118. A player may never move onto or over a token that is face-down. A player may move over a face-up token, if that token shows a weapon, a gravestone, a villager, or mist (non-threatening items). However, the player may not end a move on such a space. A player may never move over a face-up token, if that token shows a threatening item, such as a zombie, wolf, coffin, or vampire.

[0031] A player may never move over an activated pit trap. However, the player may choose to end a move on a pit trap, immediately sending the player's token back to the door at the beginning of that room. A player may move over a secret passage space, and may end a turn on one. If at any point during a move, a player lands on an active secret passage space, that player may instantly move his or her pawn to the other active secret passage space in that same room, and may then go on to finish his or her turn.

[0032] Having completed a move, if the hunter is

standing next to one or more face-down tokens the player must turn over all of those tokens. Tokens may reveal essential weapons, encounters with monsters, or encounters with harmless items. Encounter tokens are anything that is not a weapon, including gravestones, villagers, clouds of mist, coffins, zombies, werewolves, vampires, or the master vampire. If the token is not a monster (i.e., it is a gravestone, a villager, a cloud of mist, or a coffin) the token temporarily can be ignored.

[0033] Referring to Fig. 9, monsters are fought according to a battle procedure 500. The battle procedure 500 includes determining if the token adjacent to the hunter appears as a monster (zombie, werewolf, vampire, or the master vampire) (step 502), rolling the battle die (step 504), and determining if the hunter wins the battle (step 506).

[0034] To defeat any monster (except the master vampire), the player must roll a "hit" on the die. If the player rolls a hit the hunter wins the battle and the monster token is removed from the board (step 508). If the player rolls a vampire skull the monster wins and the hunter is sent back to the door at the beginning of that room (step 510). The door for the graveyard is the start space.

[0035] In more advanced play, the battle procedure 500 may include requiring the hunter to possess a particular weapon to win a battle against a monster. For example, when battling a servant vampire the hunter must have a stake and then the player must roll a hit to defeat the servant vampire. The hunter needs to possess a sword and then to roll a hit to defeat any wolf or werewolf.

[0036] As the hunters proceed around the rooms, they will eventually make their way into the crypt. The crypt room is where the master vampire lies in his coffin. The players are informed that since the windows in this room are boarded up, and no sunlight can get in, the servant vampires can remain active even during daylight hours. Players in the crypt room must make it past the last few monsters to make it to the raised stone area where the master lies.

[0037] Referring to Fig. 10, a game ends according to a procedure 600. The procedure 600 includes having the hunter approach the raised stone area next to the coffin (step 602), determining if the ship has arrived (step 604) and defeating the master vampire (step 606). If the Vampire's ship arrives before any of the vampire hunters have reached one of the spaces bordering the master vampire's coffin token, then the master vampire is able to successfully make his way to his ship and escape (step 608). If this happens, the master vampire wins the game and all of the vampire hunters lose.

[0038] If a player makes it to a space adjacent to the large coffin token before the ship has rescued the vampire, then the master vampire will not be able to make his escape, and all players have a chance to defeat the master vampire. At this point in the game, all players have an opportunity to win the game.

[0039] Referring to Fig. 11, winning the game 606 includes turning the lighting source to blue to represent night (step 610), turning over the large coffin token to see the master vampire (step 612), and battling the master vampire three times with garlic, a stake, and with a sword 614. A player wins the game and the master vampire is defeated after successfully battling the master vampire with all three items.

[0040] Referring to Fig. 12, a procedure for battling the master vampire 614 includes declaring a weapon (i. e. garlic, sword, stake) for the hunter to attack the master vampire (step 616), rolling the battle die (step 618), and determining if the die roll is a hit (step 620). If a hit is rolled, the master vampire is wounded and the weapon is placed on the master vampire's chest (step 622) to show that the master vampire has been successfully attacked with that item.

[0041] The game continues if all three weapons have not wounded the master vampire (step 626). The next item is selected to attack with, by declaring a weapon (step 616). If in any of the attacks against the master vampire a player rolls a skull, the hunter loses the battle and is thrown back to the door at the beginning of crypt room (step 624). However, any previously successful battles won against the master vampire remain in effect.

[0042] The player that makes a successful attack with the third weapon wins the game (step 528). The lighting source is switched to red. This symbolizes opening the windows in the crypt and letting the sunlight shine in. The combined attacks of the garlic, the stake, the sword, and the sunlight act to destroy the vampire. As the switch is thrown to red, the master is turned from a vampire into a skeleton. The winner of the game now places the hunter at the top of the light tower, standing high in the top turret.

[0043] It will be understood that various modifications may be made. For example, referring to Fig. 13, the lighting source used to transform the game components can be based upon opposing color combinations that are represented on a color wheel such as yellow-purple, red-green, and orange-blue. Alternatively, color masking may be used whereby a colored word, symbol, or image seems to disappear by bathing the surrounding area with a projected light of the same or a similar color. The transformation of game components may occur in a brightly lit environment so long as the wavelength of the light shining on the playing board is carefully controlled. Moreover, the lighting source may use changes in light wavelength in the invisible spectrum, flashing lights, or strobe lights. Additionally, incorporating a phosphorescent substance on certain game components may assist illumination.

Claims

1. Game apparatus for a game that can be played in a darkened room, the game comprising:

a playing surface (104) defining playing features; and
a lighting source (102) positioned to illuminate the playing surface (104) and configured to provide multiple lighting modes,

wherein appearances of the playing features change in response to changing lighting modes.

2. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the playing features include words, symbols, or images.
3. Apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the words, symbols, or images are printed in more than one color and the lighting modes provide light of different colors.
4. Apparatus according to claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the words, symbols, or images include a phosphorescent substance.
5. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the lighting source (102) comprises more than one colored light that emit different colors of light.
6. Apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the lighting source comprises a switch and emits different colors of light in response to manipulation of the switch.
7. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the lighting source comprises a colored lens.
8. Apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the colored lens includes more than one color.
9. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the lighting colors change between colors in the visible spectrum.
10. Apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the lighting colors change from blue to orange.
11. Apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the lighting colors change from blue to red.
12. Apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the changing lighting modes that change the appearance of the playing features include changes between wavelengths in bands other than the visible waveband.
13. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the changing lighting modes that change the appearance of the playing features include a change in a luminous intensity of the lighting source

at a particular wavelength in comparison to background or ambient lighting conditions.

14. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, further comprising playing cards defining card features wherein appearances of the card features change in response to the changing lighting modes.

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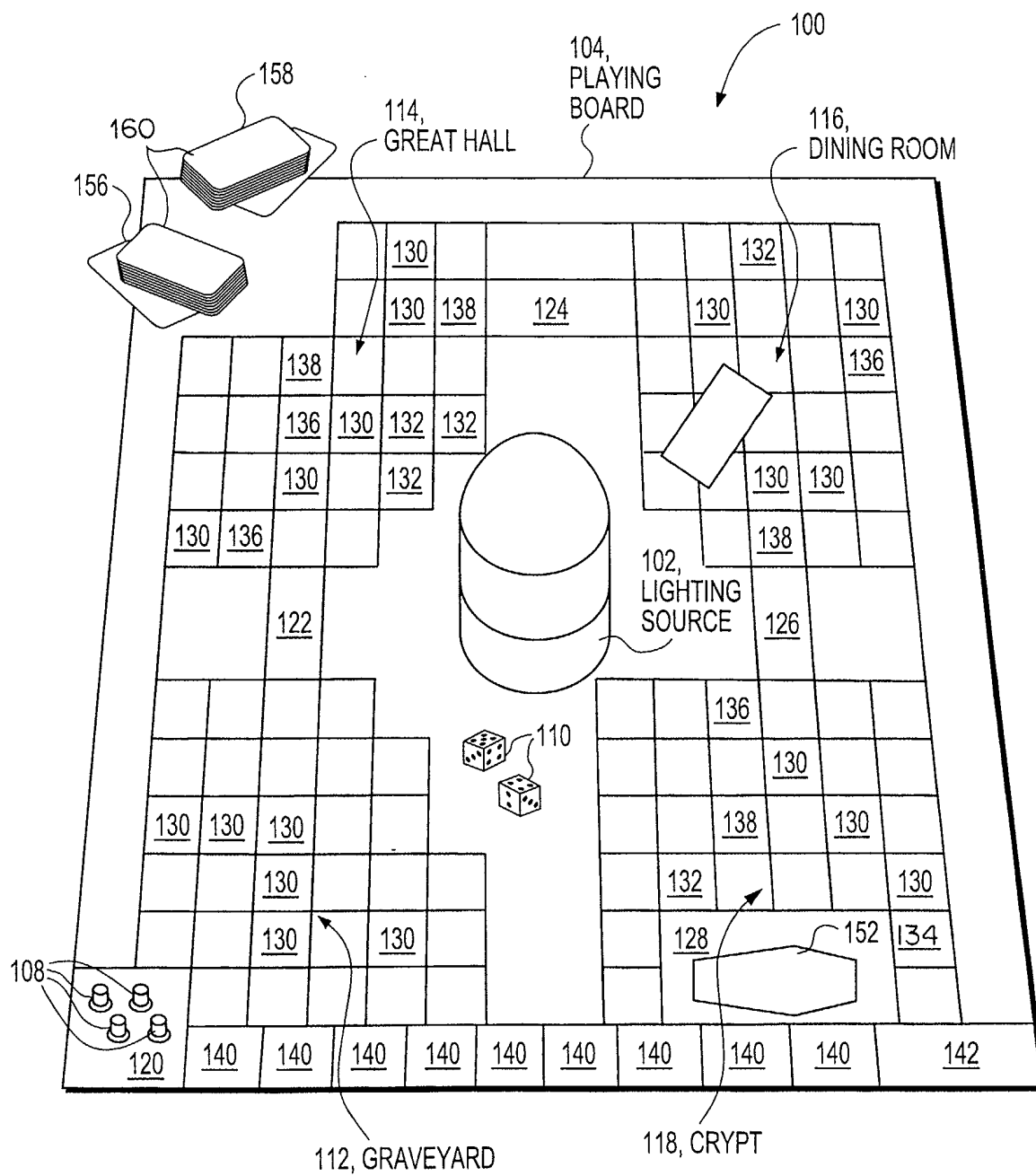


Fig. 1

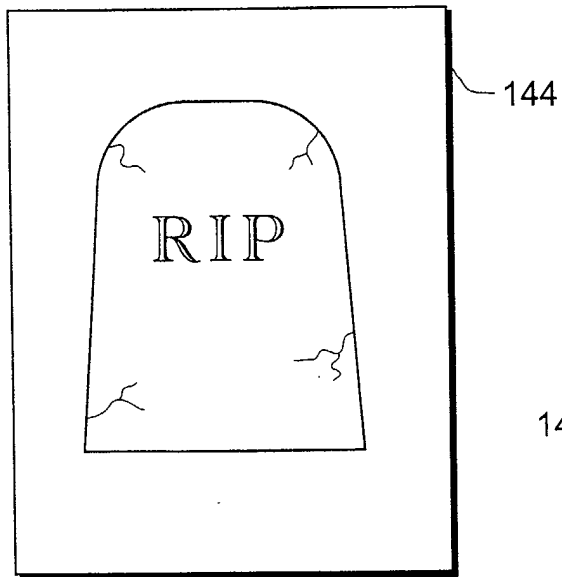


Fig. 2a

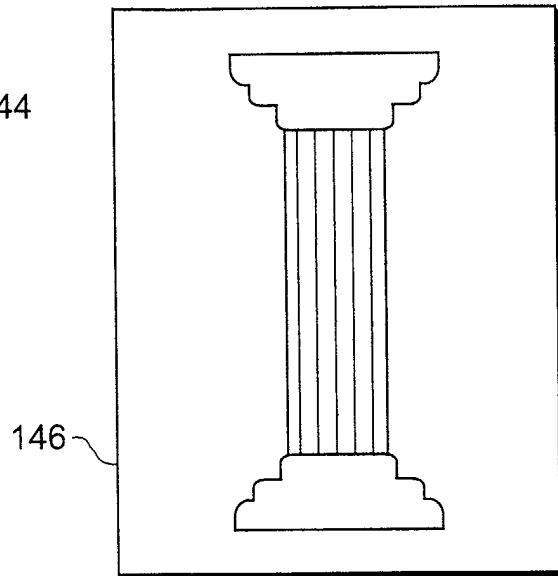


Fig. 2b

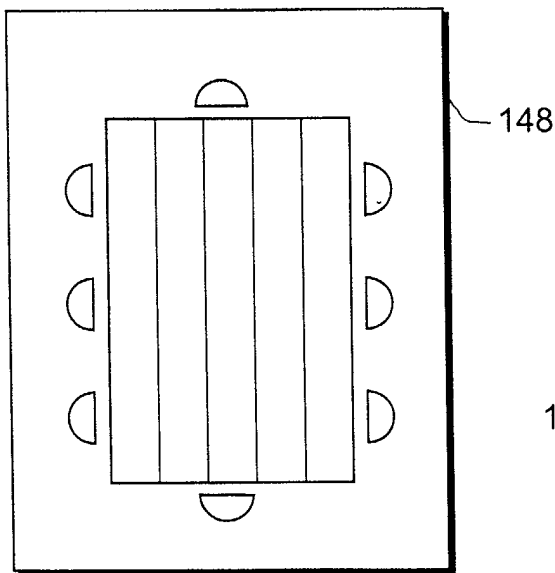


Fig. 2c

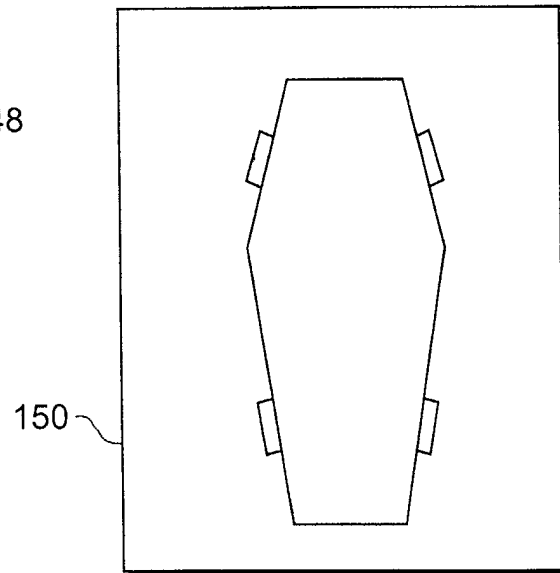


Fig. 2d

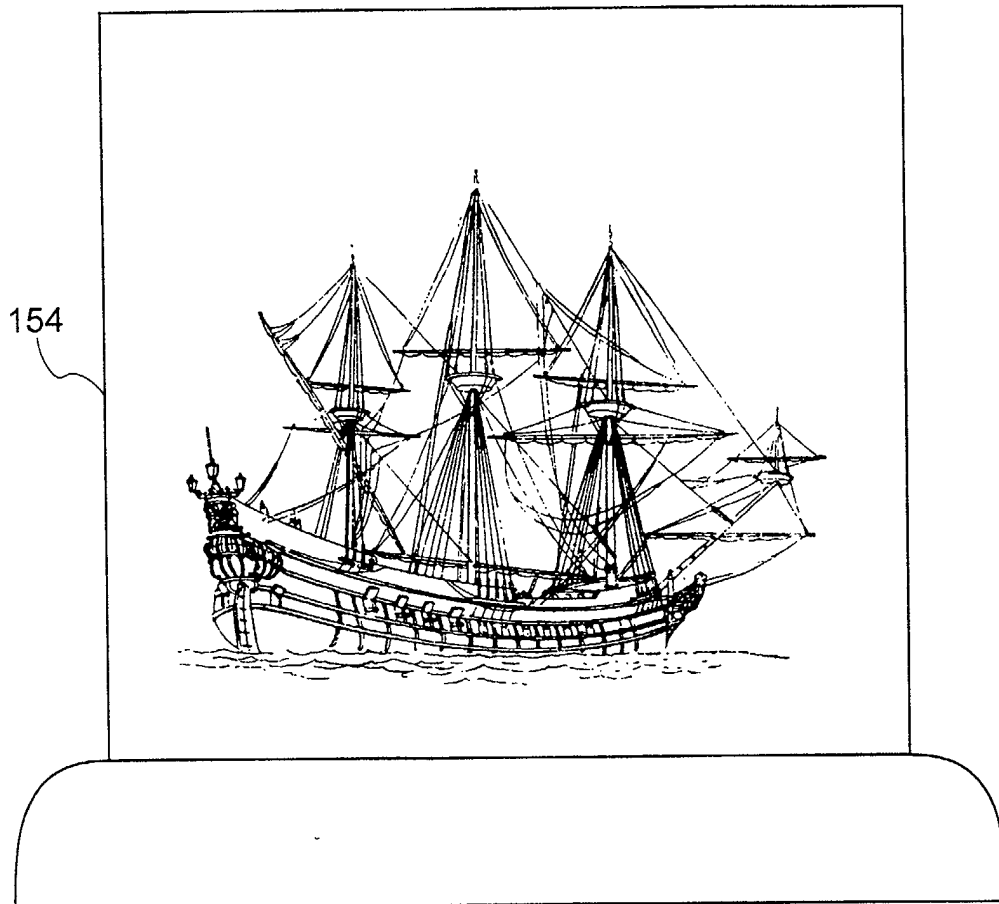
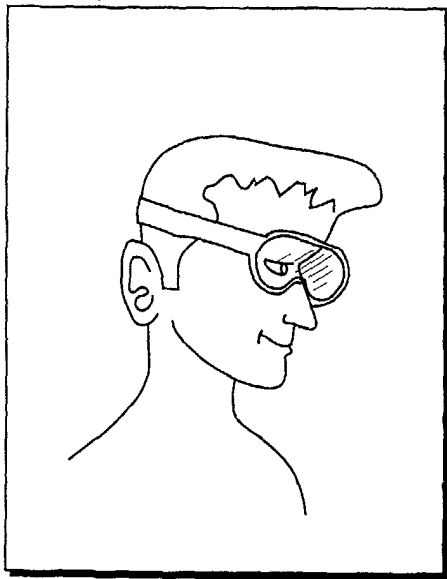


Fig. 3



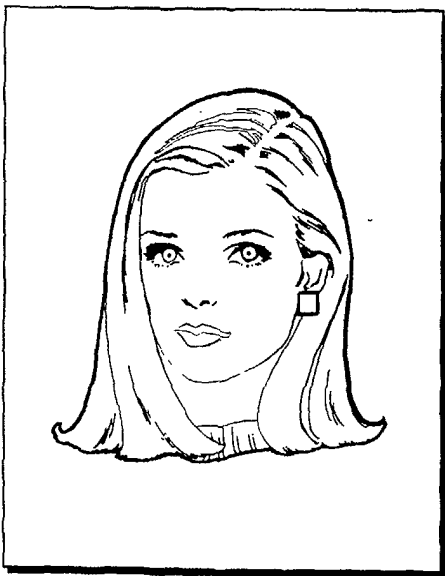
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Fig. 4a



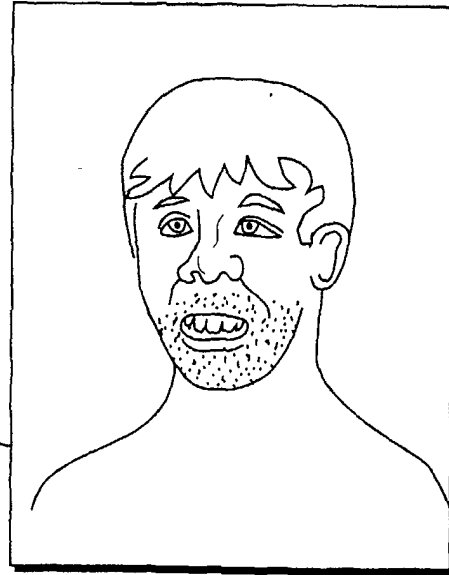
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Fig. 4b



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Fig. 4c



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Fig. 4d

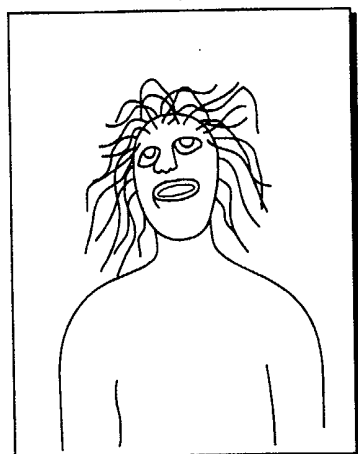


Fig. 5a

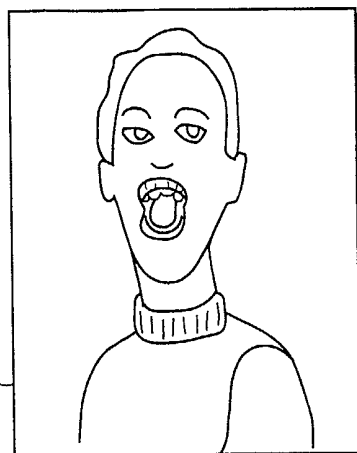


Fig. 5b

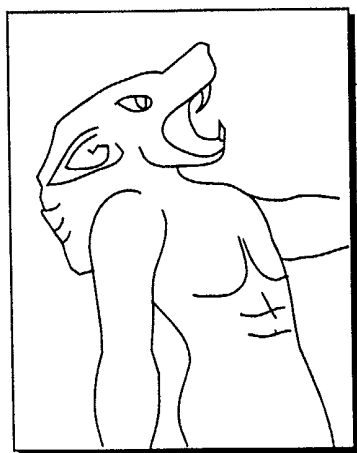


Fig. 5c



Fig. 5d

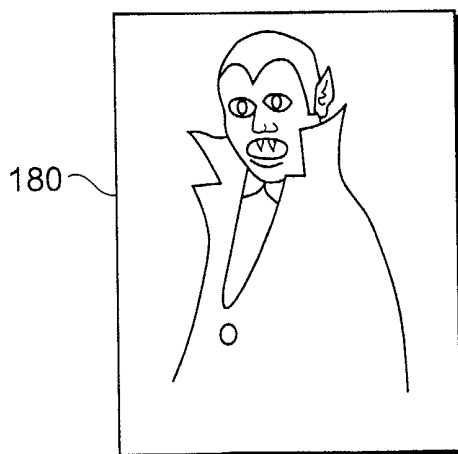


Fig. 5e

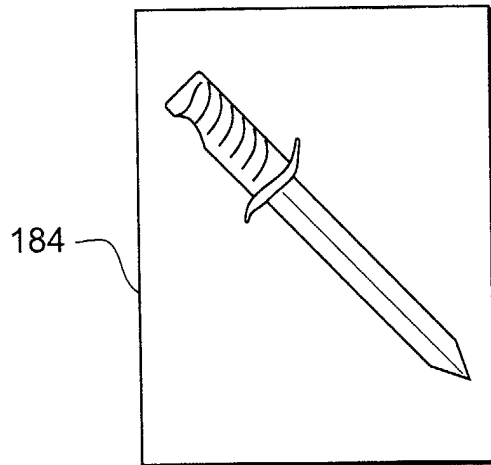


Fig. 6a

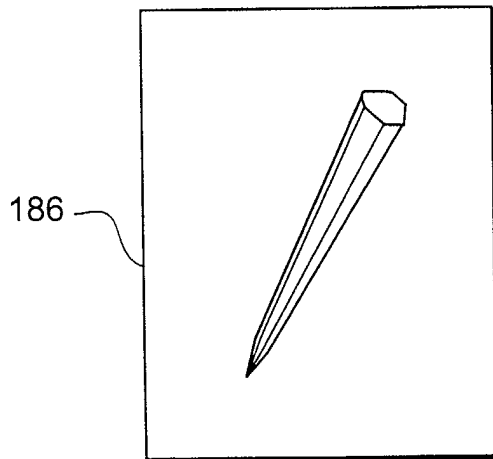


Fig. 6b

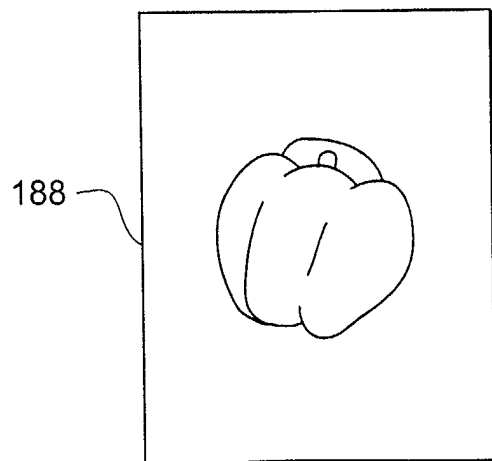


Fig. 6c

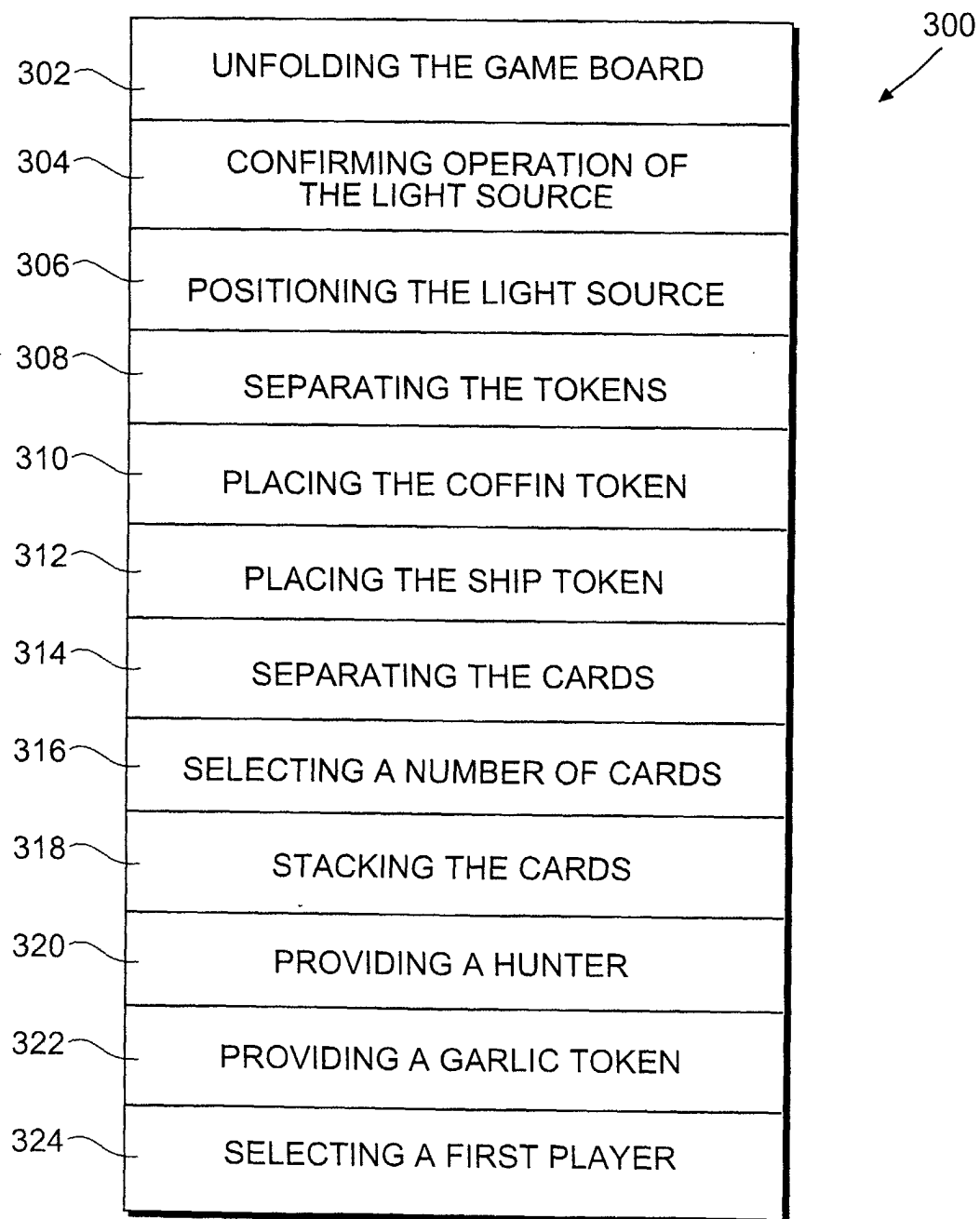


Fig. 7

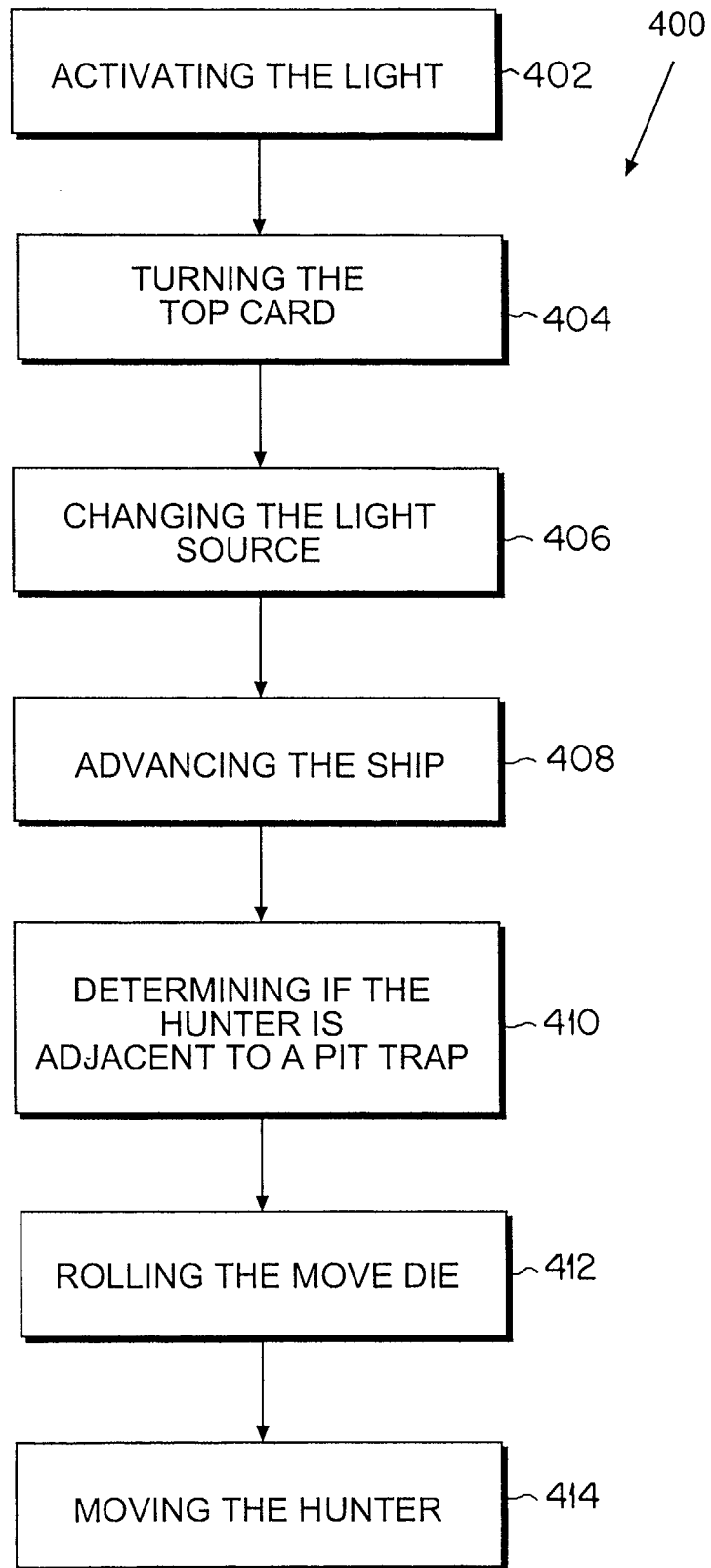


Fig. 8

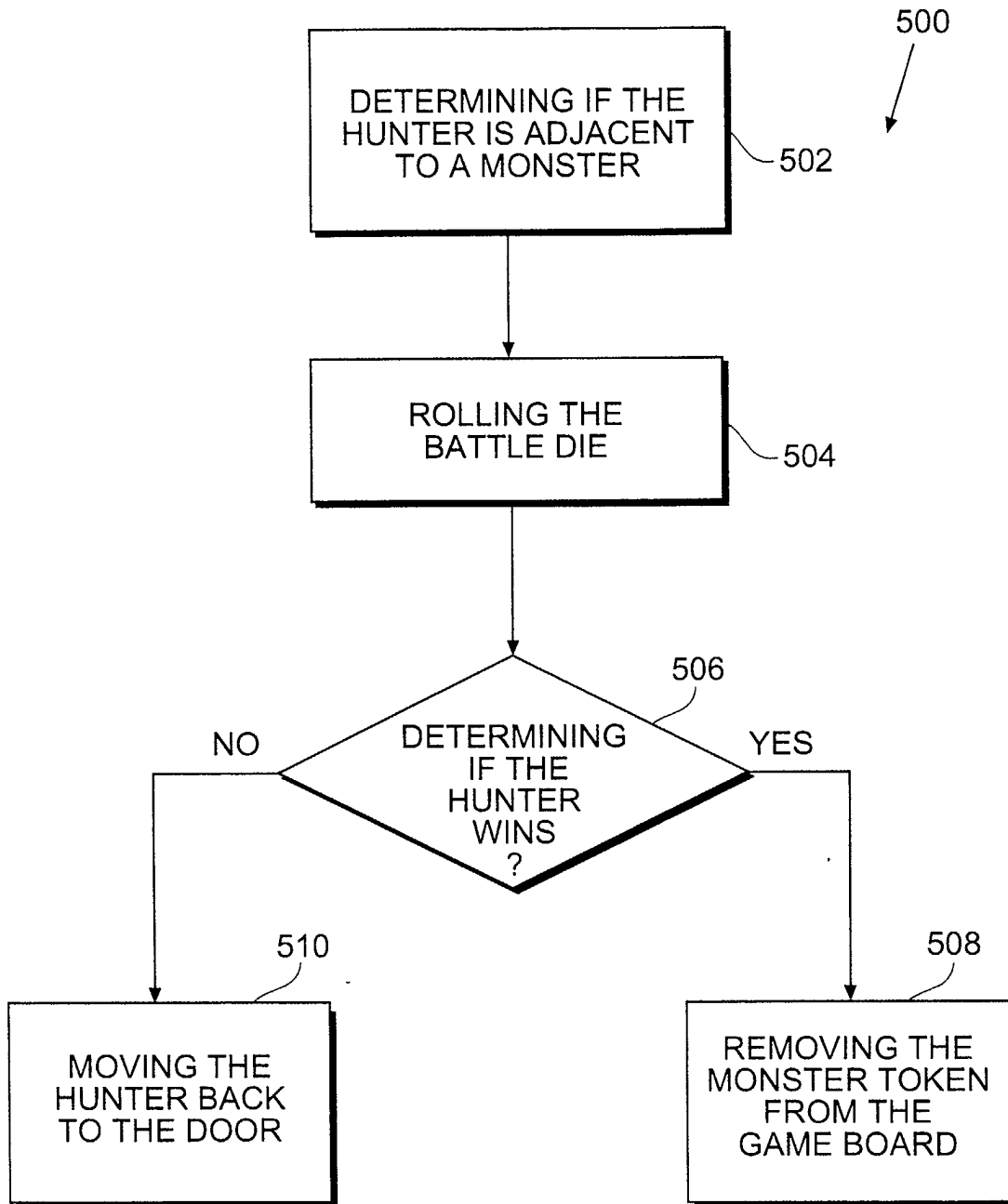


Fig. 9

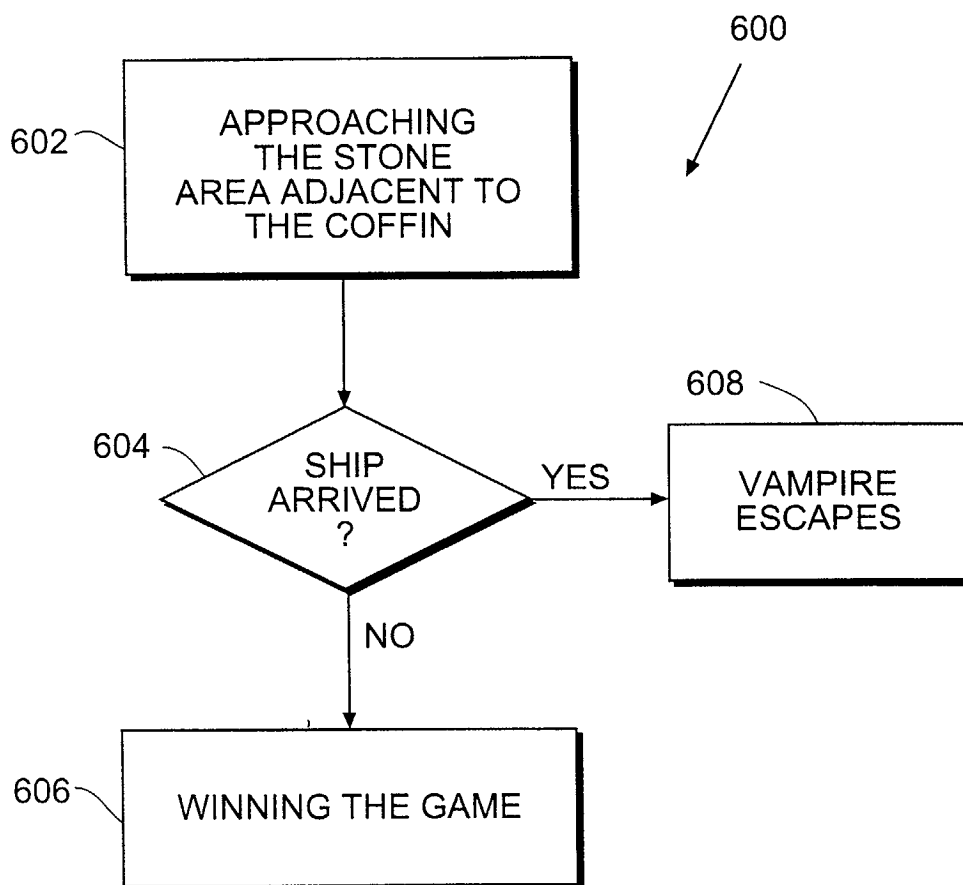


Fig. 10

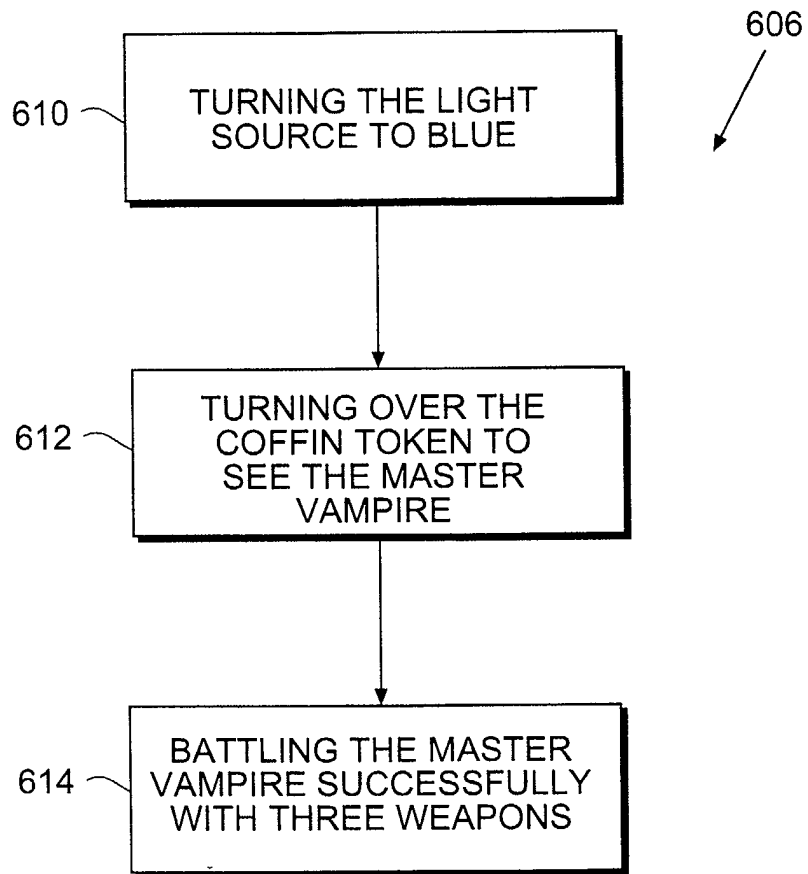
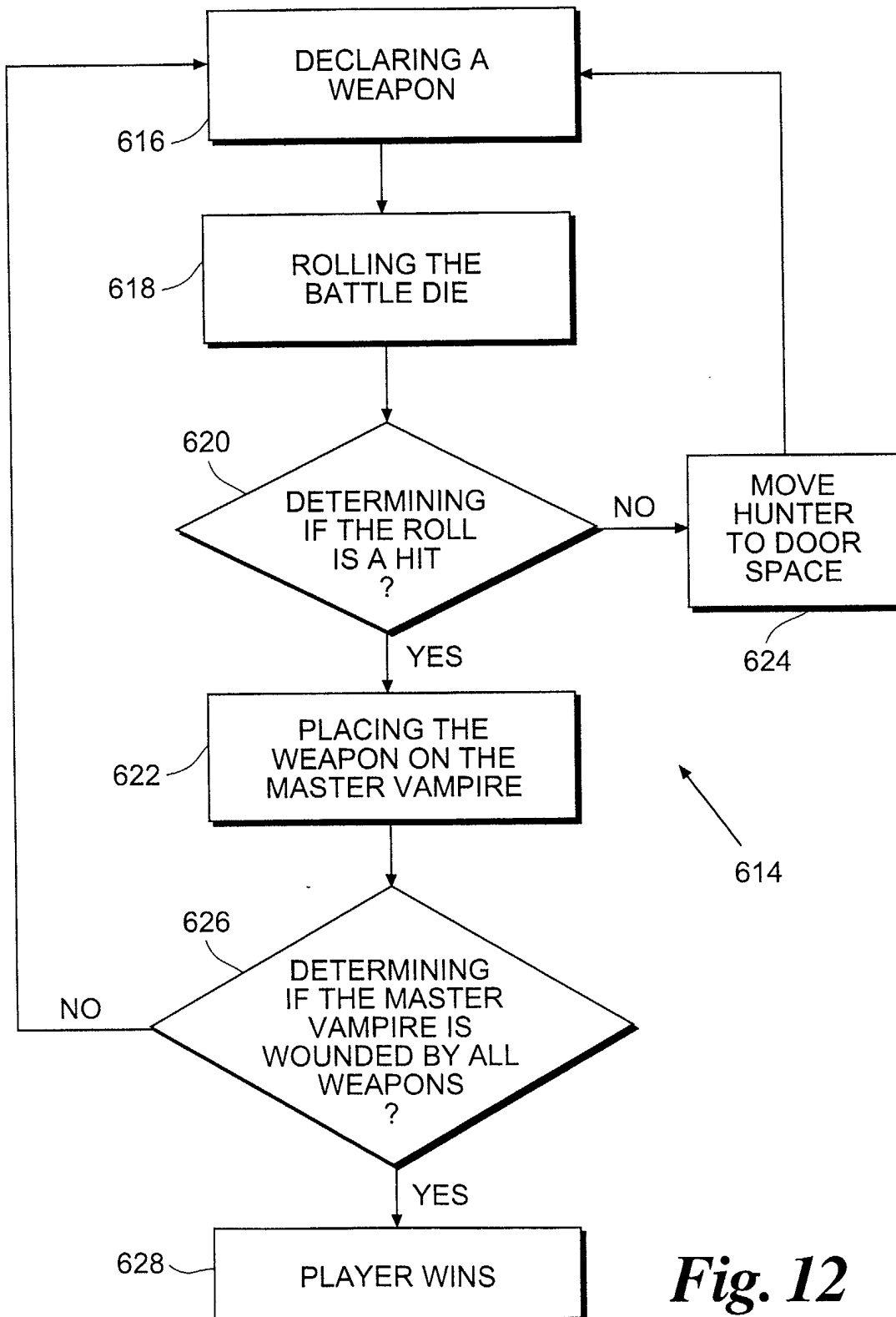


Fig. 11



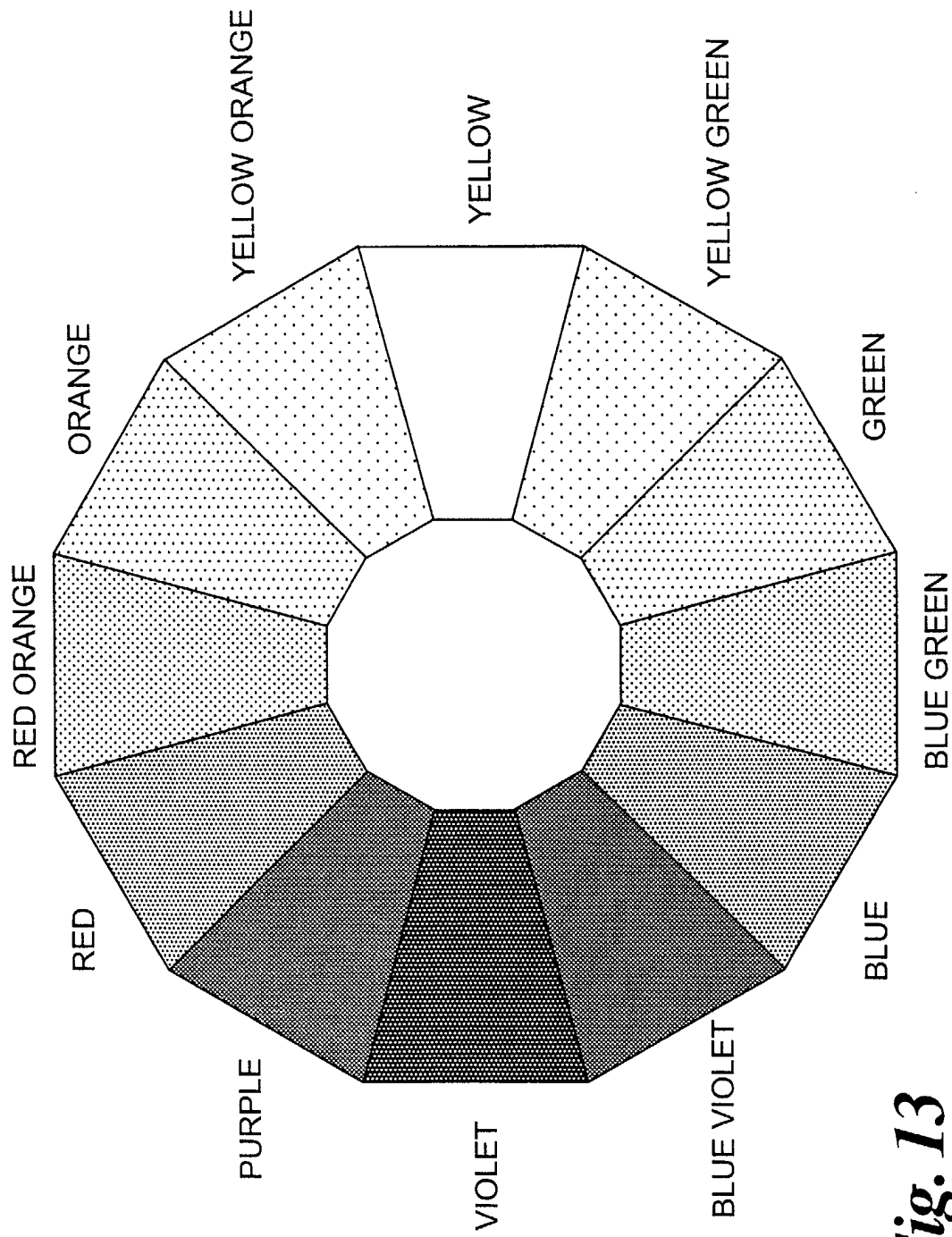


Fig. 13



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 02 25 6262

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X	US 5 314 188 A (MASON HENRY ET AL) 24 May 1994 (1994-05-24) * column 1, line 21 - line 24 * * column 2, line 12 - line 36 * * column 4, line 3 - line 18; figures * ---	1-3,5-7, 14	A63F3/00
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A	US 6 120 026 A (ALLEN GREGORY D ET AL) 19 September 2000 (2000-09-19) * column 17, line 18 - column 18, line 65; figures * ---	4	
A	US 6 213 467 B1 (ANDREWS PATRICIA L) 10 April 2001 (2001-04-10) * the whole document * -----	1	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			A63F
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
MUNICH		22 January 2003	Lucas, P
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 02 25 6262

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22-01-2003

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