

# BEAST MODE: CRAFTING CREATURES

Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) is a game in which the players create an adventure with the help of a lead storyteller, called the Dungeon Master, who directs the gameplay. Dice determine if actions are successful, which adds chance and unpredictability. No adventure is complete without challenges, including encounters with monsters who present obstacles for the players.

Think like a master storyteller and follow the steps below to create a legendary monster. Write your answers for each step on the back of this sheet or on separate paper.

- 1. Type:** Choose a monster type from the list below.
- 2. Looks and traits:** To brainstorm your monster's traits, think of three "monsters" you already know: one from folklore or mythology (like the Cyclops), one from pop culture (like Godzilla), and one from the real world (like the Great White Shark). Take the most interesting physical features, magical talents, or interesting skills from each monster and create a mash-up to make a monster of your own. Include strengths and weaknesses – for example, perhaps your monster has rapid reflexes, but cannot see very well and must rely on its keen sense of smell. Or maybe your monster dwells in the shadows and can be injured if exposed to sunlight. On the back of this sheet, describe what your monster might look like and its unique traits. Then sketch it.
- 3. Motives, actions, and consequences:** Like all characters, monsters have motives, actions, and consequences. Considering the connections between these three elements will help you create a monster that makes sense. Use the questions below to guide you:
  - **Motivation:** What does the monster want and how will he get it?
  - **Actions:** What are the monster's special powers and when and how does it use them? Where does the monster live and what does it eat?
  - **Consequences:** Who does the monster oppose? What if the monster is stopped, or alternately, what if it goes unchallenged?
- 4. Environment:** Now consider where the monster lives. Add details about the monster's ecosystem.
- 5. Backstory:** Brainstorm the monster's backstory. Consider adventures it might have encountered or secrets it might have that have shaped it.
- 6. Monster bio:** Use the information you've compiled to write a descriptive paragraph about your monster. Don't forget to give your monster a name!

## D&D's Monster Types

There are more than 500 monsters in the D&D Monster Manual. Here are just a few:

- **Beasts:** Nonhumanoid creatures that are part of fantasy ecology (ordinary animals, dinosaurs, etc.)
- **Dragons:** Large reptilian creatures of ancient origin and tremendous power – there are both good and evil dragons
- **Fey:** Magical creatures tied to the forces of nature
- **Fiends:** Wicked creatures like demons and devils
- **Monstrosities:** Unnatural creatures made from magical experiments gone awry or curses
- **Oozes:** Gelatinous creatures that rarely have a fixed shape

