

Channel A

The Anime Pitch Card Game
Alpha Prototype Version (Revision 3)
By Ewen Cluney (©2012)

About

If you could make an anime series, what would it be about?

In this randomly creative party game you're part of Channel A's struggle to come up with an anime series that will be the next big hit. You know what general premise the network wants, and it's up to you to stitch together a title from random words and pitch a series to win over the fans.

Specs

of Players: 3-6

Playing Time: 30-90 Minutes

Materials: 200 Title Cards, 80 Premise Cards, 40 Voting Cards, Rules

Recommended for anime fans of ages 12+

Printing

Just like Cards Against Humanity (<http://cardsagainsthumanity.com/>), the simplest way to get a deck made is to go to Staples or another print shop and have them print from this PDF on heavy cardstock (80 pound or heavier) and cut them out. On the other hand I was able to just run lighter cardstock through my laser printer at home and cut the cards out by hand, so there's that. If you want a box to keep the cards in, you can get one at places like The Container Store or Tap Plastics.

Credits

Designed by Ewen Cluney

Playtesters: Andrew Bodenhammer, Michael Bom, Chris Camareno, Dave Empey, Elton Sanchez, Aaron Smith, Dave Taue.

If you try the game out and have any feedback, send it my way and I'll add you to this list!

How to Play

Getting Started

Separately shuffle the decks of Title Cards and Premise Cards. Pick someone to be the first Producer. Whoever's been watching anime the longest (heavily edited stuff like *Robotech* doesn't count) gets to be the Producer first. Or you can use a less contrived method, like having each player draw a Title Card and letting whoever's card comes first alphabetically go first.

You play the game in a series of rounds. Each round one player is the Producer, who if you care about the "story" of this card game is someone who needs to pick an anime series for the station to buy. In each successive round the person clockwise from the prior Producer becomes the new Producer.

1. The Premise

The Producer draws 5 Premise Cards, picks any 2 he or she likes, and discards the rest. He or she then reads the two selected Premise to the other players.

2. Draw Cards

Each player draws cards from the Title Deck until they have a hand of 10. If it's the first round, draw an initial hand of 10. In later rounds draw enough to replenish your hand to 10. The Producer must discard his or her entire hand of Title Cards and draw 10 more.

If you don't like your full hand you can discard it and draw a new hand of 10 Title Cards, but only once per round.

3. Make Titles

The players each assemble a set of up to 4 Title Cards to form the title of an original anime that fits the Producer's premise cards. You can add simple articles ("a," "the," "of," etc.) and change singular words into plural or vice versa, but otherwise you have to use what's on the cards.

4. Pitches

The players take turns giving brief pitches as to what the series with that titles they've created are about, which needs to fit the premise. If you want to make it quick and easy, keep the pitches to a couple sentences, just enough to explain your idea. If you have buckets of time to kill, you can take as long as you want making an elaborate pitch.

5. Voting

Each player gets a number of Voting Cards equal to the number of players. One of their Voting Cards should have an ○, and all of the others should have ×s. * (So for example if you have 4 players total, each player should have one ○ card and 2 × cards.) Give the ○ card to whoever you think did the best pitch, and give the X cards to everyone else, all face-down.

Whoever has the most ○ cards wins the round. If there's a tie, play rock-paper-scissors (or rock paper scissors spock lizard or whatever) to break the tie. The winner gets a Point, and keeps a Premise Card to represent the Point. Discard the remaining Premise Card and all of the Title Cards the players used for titles.

6. New Round/End Game

If everyone's still feeling like playing, the next person clockwise from the old Producer becomes the new Producer, and you do a new round starting from Step 1. If you're tired of playing, stop. If you care about winning, whoever has the most Points at the end is the winner.

* In Japan a circle (maru) means "yes" or "correct" and an × (batsu) means "no" or "wrong."

Tips

- Try to put your Voting Cards on top of the ones other players have already placed, so they're easier to gather together and count.
- This game should fine work whether you play it with deeply involved anime fans or just people who like making fun of anime weirdness, or anything in between. If you don't know what something is you could ask, but it's usually funnier to just make something up and run with it.
- If you're having trouble coming up with a suitable title using the cards you have, try coming at the premise from a different angle, the weirder the better.
- There are several Title Cards with things like A, Z, R, Plus, etc. usually used as a suffix for a subsequent season of an existing anime title. If you use one of these, feel free to pretend there was a season or two before and you're pitching a continuation. Also, the series creators usually think of the letter as standing for something.
- You don't have to use the full four Title Cards all the time. Short titles can be really effective, especially if you go for something serious and poignant.
- The Title Cards make it possible to recreate actual anime titles, sometimes even by accident. What effect this has depends *entirely* on the Producer.
- Consider setting up a recorder to capture the nifty ideas this game can produce. If you want to be really ambitious, turn it into an Actual Play podcast or a replay.
- In anime, pretty much anything can be about cute girls fighting stuff. That makes a good fallback if you can't think of anything else.

Variants

Anime by Committee

There is no Producer; draw two random Premise Cards each round. If most of the group thinks the two Premise Cards constitute a dud, discard those and draw more.

Token Voting

Get a supply of some kind of tokens, such as poker chips, glass beads, pennies, etc. At the end of a round, each player gets one token, and after a 3 count gives it to one other player whose pitch they liked. Players keep their tokens, and whoever has the most at the end is the winner.

Freestyle Pitches

Don't bother with the Premise cards. The players just make up whatever they want with their Title Cards, and the Producer picks whichever he or she likes best.

Freestyle Producer

Instead of drawing cards, the Producer simply picks to Premise Card type elements for the pitches to be about.

Reverse Channel

The Producer makes a title, and the other players draw Premise Cards and try to give a pitch that fits the title from that.

Other Media

So what if instead of anime you're pitching other stuff?

- **A+ Computer Entertainment:** You're pitching video games for ACE, an eccentric Japanese video game development house.
- **A Magazine:** You're pitching manga to go into a manga magazine. You might go as far as to agree on what kind of magazine it is: shoujo, shounen, seinen, josei, etc.
- **A-Soft:** Pretend you're pitching adult visual novels for a company called A-Soft. This works basically the same as for anime, except that every title needs to have a male protagonist and several female characters he can hook up with (or vice versa if it's an otome game).

Title Scramble

Don't use Premise Cards; draw 4 cards, arrange them into a title, and make a pitch about whatever you want.

Solitaire/Writing Exercise

If you don't have any friends (around at the moment), you can mess around with this game by yourself. Draw 2 Premise Cards, draw a hand of Title Cards, and make a title. Rather than saying your pitch out loud, write it down or post it online.

Social Media Challenge

Post the contents of 2 Premise Cards and 10 Title Cards somewhere online, and challenge your followers/fellow posters/whatever to come up with a title and pitch.

Games in a Blender

Here are some other games you can combine with *Channel A* to make some kind of freakish hybrid.

Apples to Animes/Anime Against Humanity/etc.

Mix in white cards from *Cards Against Humanity* or any cards from *Apples to Apples* in with the Premise Cards. This will get really, really weird. You can do this with cards from *Once Upon a Time* or *The Big Idea* too for that matter.

And then Story Cubes/Story Dice

Do a round of Anime by Committee, with the aim of coming up with one single pitch that's the most popular with the group. Then use Rory's Story Cubes (possibly with Daniel Solis' Story Dice) to tell a cooperative story based on the winning anime series pitch.

The Big Anime

Take the rules of the old edition of *The Big Idea* (<http://www.cheapass.com/article4>) and play that, but use *Channel A*'s Title Cards and pitch anime series instead of inventions.

Alien Babes <small>PREMISE</small>	Alien Invasion <small>PREMISE</small>	American Cartoon Remake <small>PREMISE</small>	Art Club <small>PREMISE</small>
Bishounen <small>PREMISE</small>	Blazing Spirit <small>PREMISE</small>	Bloodsport <small>PREMISE</small>	Boys Love <small>PREMISE</small>
Business <small>PREMISE</small>	Catgirls <small>PREMISE</small>	Chinese Fantasy <small>PREMISE</small>	Classical Music <small>PREMISE</small>
Colorful World of Magic <small>PREMISE</small>	Coming of Age <small>PREMISE</small>	Conspiracy <small>PREMISE</small>	Cooking <small>PREMISE</small>
Cross-Dressing <small>PREMISE</small>	Cthulhu Mythos <small>PREMISE</small>	Cute Schoolgirls <small>PREMISE</small>	Cyberpunk Dystopia <small>PREMISE</small>

Death Reapers (Shinigami) PREMISE	Delinquents PREMISE	Desert PREMISE	Dolls PREMISE
Drama PREMISE	Ecological PREMISE	Educational PREMISE	England PREMISE
Fairy Tales PREMISE	Fanservice PREMISE	Fantasy Adventure PREMISE	Feudal Japan PREMISE
Fighting Tournament PREMISE	Gambling PREMISE	Gender Swap PREMISE	Giant Robots Fighting PREMISE
Grotesque Aliens PREMISE	Gun Action PREMISE	Harem PREMISE	Heartwarming PREMISE

School Romance <small>PREMISE</small>	Science Fiction Epic <small>PREMISE</small>	Sekai-kei <small>PREMISE</small>	Sentai <small>PREMISE</small>
Slapstick <small>PREMISE</small>	Slice of Life <small>PREMISE</small>	Space War <small>PREMISE</small>	Sports <small>PREMISE</small>
Spy Thriller <small>PREMISE</small>	Steampunk <small>PREMISE</small>	Street Culture <small>PREMISE</small>	Supernatural Battles <small>PREMISE</small>
Surreal <small>PREMISE</small>	Time Travel <small>PREMISE</small>	Urban Fantasy <small>PREMISE</small>	Vampires <small>PREMISE</small>
Versailles <small>PREMISE</small>	Video Games <small>PREMISE</small>	Wrestling <small>PREMISE</small>	Yuri <small>PREMISE</small>

009 <small>TITLE</small>	120% <small>TITLE</small>	2nd Stage <small>TITLE</small>	A <small>TITLE</small>
A Certain Scientific <small>TITLE</small>	Academy <small>TITLE</small>	Ah! <small>TITLE</small>	Air <small>TITLE</small>
Akihabara <small>TITLE</small>	Alien <small>TITLE</small>	Angel <small>TITLE</small>	Angelic <small>TITLE</small>
Area <small>TITLE</small>	Baby <small>TITLE</small>	Battler <small>TITLE</small>	Bible <small>TITLE</small>
Blood <small>TITLE</small>	Blue <small>TITLE</small>	Boy <small>TITLE</small>	Brave <small>TITLE</small>



