

Gamma World Monster Themes

GM Advice: Mutating your D&D Monsters

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The *D&D Dungeon Master's Guide 2* introduced the concept of **monster themes** – groups of statistics that can be used to flavor “stock” monsters to give thematic unity to an encounter.

You can use the concept of monster themes to adapt D&D monsters from various sources – such as the *D&D Essentials Monster Vault* – for use in your *D&D Gamma World* game.

Choose an appropriate theme for the monsters you want to use, and then select one to three powers or traits from the list for that theme.

Here are three themes you can use in your campaign: **cyborg**, **radioactive**, and **alien**.

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CYBORG

For whatever reason, Gamma Terra is cluttered with cyborgs. Not just humans with mechanical parts but countless beasts – many non-intelligent – as well. There are a few cyborg plants out there, and cyborg *robots* even exist. Yeah, nobody else believes that either, but they're out there man!

Skill Modification: +2 bonus to Mechanics and Science checks.

Assimilation

Resistance is futile.

STANDARD ACTIONS

↓ Assimilation ☹️ Encounter

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); level + 3 vs. Will

Hit: The target is dominated by the cyborg (save ends).

Automatic Response System

Many cyborgs have programming that takes over their bodies when they would otherwise be incapacitated.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Automatic Response System ☹️ Encounter

Trigger: The cyborg starts its turn dazed, immobilized, slowed, or stunned.

Effect (No Action): The cyborg ignores one dazed, immobilized, slowed, or stunned effect until the end of its turn.

Dermal Plating

These defensive plates protect the cyborg from damage but have a tendency to get blasted off.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Dermal Plating ☹️ Recharge when first bloodied

Trigger: The cyborg takes damage from an attack.

Effect (No Action): The cyborg gains resist 10 all against the triggering attack.

Groupthink

Cyborgs are often linked up by radio signals that function more like telepathy than like WiFi.

TRAITS

⚙️ Groupthink ☹️ Aura 5

Cyborg allies within the aura do not grant combat advantage.

Laser Beams

Here's what you've always wanted – some laser beams to attach to the heads of some frickin' sharks.

STANDARD ACTIONS

🔫 Laser Beams (laser) ☹️ Recharge ⚡⚡⚡

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); level + 3 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + level laser damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).

Unrelenting

The fleshy bits might die, but the mechanical parts keep the beast going. Sort of like Dick Cheney.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Unrelenting ☹️ Encounter

Trigger: The cyborg drops to 0 hit points.

Effect (No Action): The cyborg does not fall unconscious until the end of its next turn, at which time it dies.

RADIOACTIVE

The nuked-out pits of Gamma Terra spawn many monstrous creatures, most of which glow in some sort of unrealistic color. Choose a color for your radioactive monster, and add a few theme powers!

Skill Modification: +2 bonus to Athletics checks.

Contagious Radioactivity

A radioactive monster might be able to spread its radiation by a bite or using a glowing weapon that conducts radiation. Whatever that means.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

‡ **Contagious Radioactivity** (radiation, poison) ☹ **Encounter**

Trigger: The radioactive monster hits with a melee basic attack.

Effect (No Action): The target takes ongoing 5 radiation and poison damage (save ends).

Mutation Rays

Some radioactive monsters can fire beams of energy that cause bizarre random mutations to appear in their targets.

MINOR ACTIONS

↗ **Mutation Rays** ☹ **Encounter**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); level + 3 vs. Reflex

Hit: The target experiences an Alpha Flux.

Nuclear Resistance

Most radioactive creatures are not only resistant to radiation, but are actually fueled by it.

TRAITS

Nuclear Resistance

The radioactive monster gains resist 15 radiation. Whenever it is hit by an attack that does radiation damage, the radioactive monster gains 5 temporary hit points.

Radioactive Aura

This is the trait that makes your monster glow. Groovy.

TRAITS

⚙ **Radioactive Aura** (radiation) ☹ **Aura 2**

Any creature ending its turn within the aura takes 5 radiation damage. If the radioactive monster is bloodied, a creature ending its turn within the aura is also weakened until the end of its next turn.

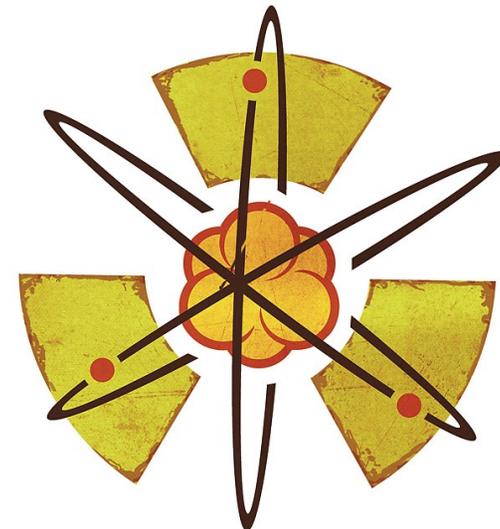
Regenerative Tumors

Benign and malign cancerous growths are found throughout the bodies of most radioactive monsters. While they don't allow full regeneration, they do work to stop the creature from taking going damage.

TRAITS

Regenerative Tumors

The radioactive monster makes saving throws against ongoing damage at the beginning and end of its turn. It gains a +5 bonus on saving throws against ongoing damage.



ALIEN

When we're talking about aliens, we don't mean Mister Spock or ALF here. These are full-on Gigeresque monstrosities that you wouldn't allow in your living room or on the bridge of your starship. The monster's origin changes to "extraterrestrial" (or "extradimensional" if it comes from beyond the stars).

Pick out from one to three of these powers to add onto an existing D&D monster to make it a really creepy alien critter.

Skill Modification: +2 bonus to Acrobatics and Stealth checks.

Acid Blood

Just don't get any of it on you.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

↓ Acid Blood (acid) ☹️ At-Will

Trigger: The alien takes damage from an attack.

Requirement: The alien must be bloodied

Effect (Opportunity Action): One adjacent enemy takes 5 acid damage.

Cranial Consumption

It's not just zombies who want to eat your brains – some aliens do too. They usually have smaller mouths inside their mouths, and they use those for brain eating. The *really scary* alien monsters have *even smaller mouths* inside their smaller mouths inside their mouths!

MINOR ACTIONS

↓ Cranial Consumption (physical) ☹️ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one dazed, stunned, or immobilized creature); level + 3 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d6 + level physical damage and the target is dazed until the end of the alien's next turn. The alien regains 10 hit points.

Implanted Embryo

This one is actually really gross. Sorry! Aliens are just *sick*, man.

STANDARD ACTION

↓ Implanted Embryo (acid, physical) ☹️ Encounter

Attack: Melee 1 (one dazed, stunned, or immobilized creature); level + 3 vs. Fortitude

Hit: The target takes ongoing 15 acid and physical damage (save ends). If the target is reduced to 0 hit points by this damage, an alien appears in its square. The alien has the same statistics as the original alien, but is permanently weakened and has only 1 hit point.

Lashing Tentacles

These are used by the alien beast to reach out and pull its prey closer.

STANDARD ACTION

↓ Lashing Tentacles (physical) ☹️ At-Will

Attack: Melee 5 (one or two creatures); level + 5 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + level physical damage, and the target is pulled to a square adjacent to the alien and is immobilized until the end of the alien's next turn.

Mind of Madness

Many aliens truly are alien in mindset, and that takes some doing in Gamma Terra. Making mental contact with such a creature is a sure way to get overwhelmed.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

↓ Mind of Madness ☹️ At-Will

Trigger: The alien is hit by an attack targeting its Will defense.

Effect (Immediate Reaction): The triggering attacker is dazed (save ends).

Example: Cyborg Ogre

Here's an ogre from the *D&D Essentials Monster Vault* with a few powers from the cyborg theme applied. It could represent some sort of giant mutant with cybernetic implants as a living weapon created by a military experiment – or maybe it really is an ogre from a D&D-like work with cybergear!

In any case, he's got a few useful routines programmed into his thick skull, plus a frickin' laser in the middle of his forehead.

Cyborg Ogre	Level 6 Brute
Large terrestrial humanoid (giant, cyborg)	XP 250
HP 90; Bloodied 45	Initiative +5
AC 18; Fortitude 20; Reflex 17; Will 16	Perception +3
Speed 8	
Traits	
○ Groupthink • Aura 5	
Cyborg allies within the aura do not grant combat advantage.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ Greatclub (physical, weapon) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 2 (one creature); +11 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 2d10 + 6 physical damage.	
↘ Rock (physical, weapon) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Ranged 10 (one creature); +11 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 2d6 + 5 physical damage.	
↘ Laser Beams (laser) • Recharge	
<i>Attack:</i> Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. Reflex	
<i>Hit:</i> 1d10 + 6 laser damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
⊕ Grand Slam (physical, weapon) • Encounter	
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 2 (one creature); +11 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 4d10 + 4 physical damage, and the cyborg pushes the target up to 2 squares and knocks it prone.	
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and the target falls prone.	
Triggered Actions	
Automatic Response System • Encounter	
<i>Trigger:</i> The cyborg starts its turn dazed, immobilized, slowed, or stunned.	
<i>Effect (No Action):</i> The cyborg ignores one dazed, immobilized, slowed, or stunned effect until the end of its turn.	
Skills Mechanics +2, Science +2	
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 14 (+5) Wis 11 (+3)
Con 20 (+8)	Int 4 (+0) Cha 6 (+1)

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Example: Radioactive Bloodseeker Drake

A radioactive bloodseeker drake can represent any sort of mutated, glowing hunting lizard – maybe an irradiated velociraptor?

Radioactive Bloodseeker Drake	Level 4 Soldier
Medium terrestrial beast (reptile)	XP 175
HP 53; Bloodied 27	Initiative +7
AC 20; Fortitude 16; Reflex 17; Will 16	Perception +7
Speed 6	
Traits	
○ Radioactive Aura (radiation) • Aura 2	
Any creature ending its turn within the aura takes 5 radiation damage. If the drake is bloodied, a creature ending its turn within the aura is also weakened until the end of its next turn.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ Bite (physical) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 1d10 + 5 physical damage, or 1d10 + 10 against a bloodied target.	
Triggered Actions	
⊕ Blood Frenzy (physical) • At-Will	
<i>Trigger:</i> A bloodied enemy adjacent to the drake shifts.	
<i>Effect (Opportunity Action):</i> The drake uses <i>bite</i> against the triggering enemy.	
Contagious Radioactivity (poison, radiation) • Encounter	
<i>Trigger:</i> The drake hits with a <i>bite</i> attack.	
<i>Effect (No Action):</i> The target takes ongoing 5 radiation and poison damage (save ends).	
Skills Athletics +5	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 17 (+5) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 2 (–2) Cha 13 (+3)

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Example: Alien Carrion Crawler

Carrion crawlers are already creepy to begin with, being aberrant beasts. Let's make one that's really horrific.

Ewww... not only does it paralyze you with tentacles and have corrosive bodily fluids, it also uses you to reproduce. This would, of course, make for a great Gamma World encounter in some deserted scientific base.

Alien Carrion Crawler Scuttler		Level 5 Skirmisher
Large extraterrestrial beast		XP 200
HP 63; Bloodied 32		Initiative +5
AC 19; Fortitude 18; Reflex 16; Will 17		Perception +3
Speed 8, climb 8 (spider climb)		Darkvision
Standard Actions		
⊕ Bite (physical) • At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d8 + 4 physical damage, or 3d8 + 4 against a stunned target.		
Tentacles • At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 2 (one creature); +8 vs. Fortitude; or +10 vs. Fortitude against a prone target.		
<i>Hit:</i> The target is stunned (save ends). The carrion crawler shifts up to its speed, pulling the target with it.		
⊕ Implanted Embryo (acid, physical) • Encounter		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one dazed, immobilized, or stunned creature); +8 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> The target takes ongoing 15 acid and physical damage (save ends). If the target is reduced to 0 hit points by this damage, a carrion crawler appears in its square. The new carrion crawler has the same statistics as the original, but is permanently weakened and has only 1 hit point.		
Move Actions		
⊕ Unsettling Scuttle • At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The carrion crawler shifts up to its speed. It can move through enemy spaces and climb during the shift. Each time the carrion crawler enters an enemy space for the first time during this movement, it makes the following attack against the enemy.		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 0; +8 vs. Reflex		
<i>Hit:</i> The target falls prone.		
Triggered Actions		
Acid Blood (acid) • At-Will		
<i>Requirements:</i> The carrion crawler must be bloodied.		
<i>Trigger:</i> The carrion crawler takes damage from an attack.		
<i>Effect (Opportunity):</i> One adjacent enemy takes 5 acid damage.		
Skills Acrobatics +5, Stealth +5		
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 13 (+3)	Wis 12 (+3)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 2 (-2)	Cha 14 (+4)

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