Culture Wars

(or: Battle for the Petri Dish)

German edition of the American game: „Gro – Battle for the Petri Dish"

Culture Wars is an abstract game of germ warfare for 2 players. Each player controls the growth and expansion of a strain of bacterium within the confines of a Petri dish. Your goal is to become the dominant strain, proving your virulence to the lab tech studying your behavior and to the world at large.

EQUIPMENT

Germs
The 16 white and 16 black tokens represent germs.
Germs come in 3 sizes: small, medium, and large.
One token represents a small germ,
2 tokens stacked together represent a medium germ, and
4 tokens stacked together represent a large germ.
There are no 3 token germs and no germs larger than 4 tokens.

The Petri Dish
The board represents the Petri dish with the culture-medium for the germs, where the battle is fought.
There are some places in the culture-medium, where nutritive substances are accumulated. These places are called **foodpoints** and shown as a cross on the culture-medium.
There are also four **prime areas** shown by six adjacent yellow crosses.
In the game the germs occupy the different foodpoints (blue and yellow crosses) and try to get the most prime areas in the Petri dish.
Every foodpoint may contain only 1 germ.
But this one germ can have any size.

The Illustrations & Example sheet
The Illustrations side of the Illustrations & Example sheet shows how to count adjacent Liberties and how germs move, grow, and divide. Refer to the Illustrations while you read the rules and use them as a reference while you play the game.

The Example side of the sheet shows the first 5 moves of a typical game of Culture Wars.

HOW TO PLAY

Choose who will play the white germs and who will play the black germs. White moves first, then players take turns.

The game begins with an empty Petri dish.
On your 1st turn, you must place 1 small germ in the Petri dish. On each subsequent turn, 1 of your germs may do 1 of the following: **move, grow,** or **divide**. Players continue to take turns until one player wins or a draw is declared.

Game Summary
1. Begin with an empty Petri dish
2. White places 1 small germ into the dish
3. Black places 1 small germ into the dish
4. White may move, grow, or divide 1 germ
5. Black may move, grow, or divide 1 germ
6. Repeat 4 and 5 until someone wins or a draw is declared

The First Turn
White goes first by placing 1 small germ on any foodpoint in the dish. Then Black places 1 small germ on any other foodpoint in the dish.
White and Black each keep their 15 remaining germs next to them in their reserves.
The first turn is the only time you place a token directly onto a foodpoint in the dish. From now on, you may only move tokens from your reserves to the dish when a germ already in the dish grows (See Growth below).

Liberties
A **liberty** is an open (unoccupied) foodpoint orthogonally adjacent to a germ. Open foodpoints diagonally adjacent do not count as liberties.
Points occupied by your own germs block liberties and you can not trace liberties through your own germs.
A germ's movement, growth, and division are restricted by the number of liberties available to it. (See the Counting Liberties illustration on the sheet.)

Annotation: There is also a X-elastic in the Petri dish. This is not used in the game. You need it only to close the Petri dish after you have played the game.

Movement

A germ may move to an open foodpoint orthogonally or diagonally adjacent to it.

After moving, a **small** germ must have 1 or more liberties or the move is illegal.

Likewise, a **medium** germ must have 2 or more liberties and a **large** germ must have 3 or more liberties.

(See the Move illustrations on the sheet.)

> *Note:* Diagonal moves between points in the "corners" of the dish are legal.

Growth

Small and medium germs may double in size.

To double the size of a **small** germ, take 1 token from your reserves and stack it on top of the small germ, creating a medium germ (2 tokens).

If you do not have enough tokens in your reserves, your germ may not grow.

Before growing, a small germ must have 2 or more adjacent liberties.

To double a **medium** germ, take 2 tokens from your reserves and stack them on top of the medium germ, creating a large germ (4 tokens).

If you do not have enough tokens in your reserves, your germ may not grow.

Before growing, a medium germ must have 3 liberties.

(See the Grow illustrations on the sheet.)

A medium germ may only grow into a large, 4 token germ, never into a 3 token germ.

Large germs may not grow.

Division

Medium and large germs may divide.

Division is really just a special type of move.

A **medium** germ (2 tokens) divides by moving a small germ (1 token) to liberties immediately adjacent or diagonal to it while leaving a small germ (1 token) behind.

The moving small germ must have 1 or more liberties after moving.

Before dividing, a medium germ must have 2 or more liberties.

A **large** germ (4 tokens) divides by moving a medium germ (2 tokens) to an open foodpoint orthogonally or diagonally adjacent to it while leaving a medium germ (2 tokens) behind.

The moving medium germ must have 2 or more adjacent liberties after moving.

Before dividing, a medium germ must have 3 or more liberties.

(See the Divide illustrations on the sheet).

Large germs may divide only into 2 medium germs, never into a 1 and a 3 token germ.

(See the Move illustrations on the sheet).

Small germs may not divide.

Death

All germs must have at least 1 liberty to live. The size of the germ does not matter.

A small, medium, or large germ needs only 1 liberty to live.

A germ of any size is removed only when it has zero liberties left.

If you move 1 of your germs to a foodpoint that leaves another germ with no liberties, the non-moving germ is killed and returned to its owner's reserves. Tokens from killed germs may be brought back into play when another germ grows (see Growth on page 1).

> *Note:* A move is legal if there are sufficient adjacent Liberties <u>after</u> the move is complete. When you count the number of liberties you need to move a germ, you can count any liberties you create by killing another germ. For example, you can move a small germ onto a foodpoint without any liberties if you kill one of the adjacents germs with the move, thus creating a new liberty for your small moving germ.

You may move a germ to a foodpoint that would kill 1 or more of your own germs.

However, only non-moving germs may be eliminated. The moving germ must always end its move with sufficient liberties.

> *Note:* A move can kill only non-moving germs. The moving germ cannot kill itself because a germ can only move if it will have enough liberties after moving.

ENDING THE GAME

Winning

You win when your germs are the sole occupants of 3 of the 4 prime areas. You are the sole occupant of an prime area if your germs occupy 1 or more points in the area and there are no opposing germs on any points in the area.

Draws

If the same pattern of germs in the dish recurs 3 times, with the same player to move each time, the moving player may call the game a draw.

You may pass instead of doing anything on your turn. However, if both players pass one right after the other, the game ends in a draw.