

HARVESTER (SOLUTION)

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The first step is to solve the 40 given clues in the grid, with the provided enumeration blanks as hints. The commonality is that all the clue answers are Magic: The Gathering (MTG) cards. This is clued in the flavortext by the phrase “the gathering”, and by the clues being in grid cells that resemble cards. The cargo manifest of the harvesters also reference the various MTG card types, symbols for mana colors and expansions, which can be found on cards. The table below summarizes the MTG card references in the cargo manifest for each harvester:

Harvester	Clues	Clue reference found on MTG cards
1	Things with flaming ball symbol	Red mana symbol
2	Things with teardrop symbol	Blue mana symbol
3	Things with skull symbol	Black mana symbol
4	Things with tree symbol	Green mana symbol
5	Things that are ancient relics	Artifact type
6	Things with sun symbol	White mana symbol
7	Things that are critters	Creature type
8	Things that could have any type of non-mechanical planes symbol	Expansion set symbols depicting any type of magical planes
9	Things that could have any type of shield symbol	Expansion set symbols depicting any type of shield

So each of the 40 MTG cards can be assessed as to which cargo manifest criteria it meets (or possibly none). Note that cards could have multi-colored mana casting costs or special ability costs, so could satisfy all cargo manifest criteria that apply. Similarly, cards could have multiple card types. Cards also appear in multiple expansion sets, so as indicated in the Harvester 8 and 9 cargo manifests, their criteria are met as long as at least one of a card's possible [expansion set symbol](#) depicts magical planes (Planechase, Planeshift and Planar Chaos expansion sets) or shield (most of the Commander expansion sets and some others) respectively. From the enumeration blanks, a letter can also be extracted for each card name. All these are summarized in the table below:

Clues	Clue answers	Met harvester criteria	Extracted letters
Surf online	BROWSE	2	R
Tempest during strong winds on Arrakis	SANDSTORM	4	M
Being astute in or having strong acumen for something	KEEN SENSE	48	E
Staging area for mountaineers	BASE CAMP	-	M
Fertile area in a desert	OASIS	-	A
Rebuke, scold severely	CASTIGATE	36	I
Divine Proportion	GOLDEN RATIO	24	E
2019 film directed by and starring Steven Morana	BEAST WITHIN	489	S

Clues	Clue answers	Met harvester criteria	Extracted letters
The _____, a 1987 film starring Beau and Lloyd Bridges	WILD PAIR	48	P
Treacherous sinking ground	QUICKSAND	-	N
Holtzman shield is a type of this	FORCEFIELD	5	F
Japanese throwing star	SHURIKEN	5	K
To remove an option from consideration, e.g. in logic puzzles	ELIMINATE	3	L
A drawback or hindrance	LIABILITY	3	L
_____ of Asbru is a Bifröst-like gateway	THE PRISMATIC BRIDGE	12346	T
Mend a sweater	REKNIT	46	T
Possible term for one who mints the criminal land gold currency used by John Wick	UNDERWORLD COINSMITH	3679	D
The dragon constellation	DRACO	578	R
Party's conservative members	OLD GUARD	567	O
Member of an alien race the Kt'kn	FACELESS ONE	79	S
Object found atop a tree in Nagrand	MYSTERIOUS EGG	7	S
Portable cylindrical vault used to hide secret messages	CRYPTEX	5	R
Fraudulent and misleading act	DECEPTION	3	I
To obtain the answer to a puzzle from the solved data	EXTRACT	2	A
Seismic tremor	EARTHQUAKE	19	H
To skewer with a stake	IMPALE	3	I
Ancient desert monuments	PYRAMIDS	5	M
Variant of tic-tac-toe on a 6x6 board	ORDER AND CHAOS	1689	O
Game where one child looks for others	HIDE AND SEEK	136	H
Like clues which are unambiguous and easily understood	CLEAR	6	L
Source of warmth outside tents	CAMPFIRE	59	A
Secret underground passage used for getting away	ESCAPE TUNNEL	-	A
Deny an objection in a courtroom	OVERRULE	26	E
To conflict with itself as a logical proposition, or with another	CONTRADICT	2	R
Grammatical no-no	DOUBLE NEGATIVE	12	G
Baseless answer submission for a puzzle	WILD GUESS	1	U
Sites where sea turtles laid eggs, e.g. along the coasts of Tamil Nadu	NESTING GROUNDS	9	N
Impact depression near Flagstaff	METEOR CRATER	8	C
Process of figuring out a puzzle's answer with only some of its letters	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	1	T
Type of arrays for mechanical chip attachments	BARBED SPIKE	56	B

Each harvester traverses the spice field from one cell to the next, gathering the cards/ letters that satisfy its cargo manifest criteria. The letters gathered in order spell the first half of various MTG creature cards that are also harvesters. The paths showing the letters gathered by each harvester from cards satisfying their criteria are shown in the following grid diagrams.

Harvester 1 – THOUGHT

			R 2	M 4	E 48	M			
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 2 – GREATER

			R 2	M 4	E 48	M			
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 3 – ILLITHID

			R 2	M 4	E 48	M			
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 4 – TEMPEST

			R 2	M 4	E 48	M			
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 5 – BARKFORM

				R 2	M 4	E 48	M		
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 6 – BLOODTITHE

				R 2	M 4	E 48	M		
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 7 – DROSS

				R 2	M 4	E 48	M		
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 8 – CORPSE

				R 2	M 4	E 48	M		
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

Harvester 9 – ASHNOD’S

				R 2	M 4	E 48	M		
	A	I 36	E 24	S 489	P 48	N	F 5	K 5	
L 3	L 3	T 12346	T 46	D 3679	R 578	O 567	S 79	S 7	R 5
I 3	A 2	H 136	I 3	M 5	O 1689	H 19	L 6	A 59	A
	E 26	R 2	G 12	U 1	N 9	C 8	T 1	B 56	

There are 4 unused cards, whose letters in grid order spell MANA. This clues using the total mana costs of the identified harvesters as indices into their names for the final extraction. The table below summarizes the extracted identities of the harvesters, their total mana costs, and the extracted letters.

Harvester	Extracted identities	Mana costs	Total mana costs	Extracted letters
1	THOUGHT HARVESTER	3U	4	U
2	ILLITHID HARVESTER	2BBB	5	T
3	GREATER HARVESTER	4U	5	T
4	TEMPEST HARVESTER	1U	2	E
5	BARKFORM HARVESTER	3	3	R
6	BLOODTITHE HARVESTER	BR	2	L
7	DROSS HARVESTER	1BB	3	O
8	CORPSE HARVESTER	3BB	5	S
9	ASHNOD’S HARVESTER	2	2	S

The extracted letters in harvester order spell the answer clue phrase – UTTER LOSS. This clues the final answer for this puzzle **ROUT**, which is also thematically the name of another MTG card.

Constructor's notes:

The Harvester unit is a good thematic reference to Magic: The Gathering, a well-known trading/collectible card game, which has a wealth of material for a hunt puzzle. Notwithstanding its popularity, for an SGPH puzzle, it was important that the puzzle did not require technical knowledge such as the rules, which could be complicated to those unfamiliar and take time to read up. So this puzzle was constructed to only use what is shown on the cards, which could be looked up on online MTG card databases like [Scryfall](#) or [Gatherer](#). I also tried to incorporate cards with common names, or those that are thematic to Dune or puzzle solving, to try to mask the initial aha that these are all MTG cards. The use/reuse of an extraction grid that thematically represents a spice field traversed by different harvesters was fitting, although it was very challenging to optimize/minimize the size of the grid (i.e. number of unique cards needed), so as to reduce the number of clues that need to be solved and cards to be looked up.