GAMING DEVICE, TOY PART USABLE IN GAMING DEVICE, TOY FIGURE INCLUDING TOY PART, GAME PROGRAM, TOY PART USABLE IN COMPUTER EXECUTING GAME PROGRAM, AND TOY FIGURE INCLUDING COMPUTER-USABLE TOY PART

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a gaming device, a toy part usable in the gaming device, a toy figure including the toy part, a game program, a toy part usable in a computer executing the game program, and a toy figure including the computer-usable toy part.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART

As an existing technology, Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2008-021117 describes a configuration that executes an application for determining identification information acquired from a product that is formed from a plurality of recombinant parts and that has the identification information, displaying an image on the basis of the identification information, and using an assembled product image.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Since Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2008-021117 describes a configuration in the form of a display apparatus and a program, a plurality of parts are exchanged and added in the form of displayed images corresponding to actual products. In such a case,

the displayed images are applicable to an application, such as a game application. Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2008-021117 describes limitation in terms of unauthorized use of the images and a process performed when a part cannot be identified during execution of the application. However, Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2008-021117 does not describe a condition, timing, and time-based constraint for exchange and addition of the plurality of parts.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a more complicated relationship between inputting of identification information assigned to a toy part and the game unfold and, thus, make the game more enjoyable.

According to an embodiment of the present invention, a gaming device includes data storage means for storing a plurality of game data, program storage means for storing a game program, program execution means for executing a game by reading the game program from the program storage means and the game data from the data storage means and using the read game program and the read game data, information input means capable of receiving, among at least two toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one of the toy parts, where the data storage means stores, as the plurality of game data, a plurality of character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts, condition determination means for determining whether a first condition is met during the game, and information

input determination means for determining whether the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within a first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met. If the information input determination means determines that the identification information of the toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time, the program execution means reads, from the data storage means, the character data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part.

The gaming device can further include image display means and image display control means. The data storage means can store character image data serving as the character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts. The image display control means can display a main character image on the image display means on the basis of the game data stored in the data storage means. If the information input determination means determines that the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met, the program execution means can read character image data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part and controls the image display control means to combine a character image based on the read character image data with the main

character image into a combined character image and display the combined character image on the image display means.

The program execution means may be capable of using, as the main character image, the character image based on the character image data corresponding to the identification information of the toy part input to the information input means.

The information input means may be capable of receiving, among at least two torso toy parts of a toy figure and at least two arm toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one torso toy part and the identification information of at least one arm toy part. The data storage means can store, as the character image data, torso image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the torso toy parts of the toy figure and arm image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the arm toy parts of the toy figure. The program execution means can read the torso image data and the arm image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure and the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means. The image display control means can combine a torso image based on the read torso image data with an arm image based on the read arm image data into the main character image and display the generated main character image on the image display means. If the information input determination means determines that new identification information of an arm toy

part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met during the game, the program execution means can further read, from the data storage means, the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure. The program execution means can control the image display control means so that the arm image that is combined with the torso image and displayed as the main character image is replaced with the arm image based on the read arm image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

The information input means may be capable of further receiving, among at least two leg toy parts of the toy figure each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one leg toy part. The data storage means can further store, as character image data, leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the leg toy parts of the toy figure. The program execution means can read, from the data storage means, the torso image data, the arm image data, and the leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure, the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure, and the identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means. The image display control means can combine a torso image based on the

read torso image data, an arm image based on the read arm image data, and the leg image based on the read leg image data with one another into the main character image and display the main character image on the image display means. The condition determination means can determine whether a second condition is met during the game. The information input determination means can determine whether new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within a second predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the second condition is met. If the information input determination means determines that new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the second predetermined period of time, the program execution means can further read, from the data storage means, the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure. The program execution means can control the image display control means so that the leg image that is combined with the torso image and the arm image and that is displayed as the main character image is replaced with the leg image based on the read leg image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

According to another embodiment of the present invention, a toy part includes a structure that allows the toy part to be used for the gaming device according to the

embodiment of the present invention.

According to still another embodiment of the present invention, a toy figure includes a torso toy part, an arm toy part, and a leg toy part. The torso toy part, the arm toy part, and the leg toy part are usable as the toy parts for the gaming device according to the embodiment of the present invention.

According to yet still another embodiment of the present invention, a game program includes program code for causing a computer to function as data storage means for storing a plurality of game data, program storage means for storing a game program, program execution means for executing a game by reading the game program from the program storage means and the game data from the data storage means and using the read game program and the read game data, information input means capable of receiving, among at least two toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one of the toy parts, where the data storage means stores, as the plurality of game data, a plurality of character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts, condition determination means for determining whether a first condition is met during the game, and information input determination means for determining whether the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within a first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is

met. If the information input determination means determines that the identification information of the toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time, the program execution means reads, from the data storage means, the character data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part.

The data storage means can store character image data serving as the character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts. The game program can further cause the computer to function as image display means and image display control means. The image display control means can display a main character image on the image display means on the basis of the game data stored in the data storage means. If the information input determination means determines that the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met, the program execution means can read character image data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part and controls the image display control means to combine a character image based on the read character image data with the main character image into a combined character image and display the combined character image on the image display means.

The program execution means may be capable of using, as the main character image, the character image based on the

character image data corresponding to the identification information of the toy part input to the information input means.

The information input means may be capable of receiving, among at least two torso toy parts of a toy figure and at least two arm toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one torso toy part and the identification information of at least one arm toy part. The data storage means can store, as the character image data, torso image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the torso toy parts of the toy figure and arm image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the arm toy parts of the toy figure. The program execution means can read the torso image data and the arm image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure and the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means. The image display control means can combine a torso image based on the read torso image data with an arm image based on the read arm image data into the main character image and display the generated main character image on the image display means. If the information input determination means determines that new identification information of an arm toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met during the game, the program execution

means can further read, from the data storage means, the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure. The program execution means can control the image display control means so that the arm image that is combined with the torso image and displayed as the main character image is replaced with the arm image based on the read arm image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

The information input means may be capable of further receiving, among at least two leg toy parts of the toy figure each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one leg toy part. The data storage means can further store, as character image data, leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the leg toy parts of the toy figure. The program execution means can read, from the data storage means, the torso image data, the arm image data, and the leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure, the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure, and the identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means. The image display control means can combine a torso image based on the read torso image data, an arm image based on the read arm image data, and the leg image based on the read leg image data with one another into the main character image and display the main character image on the image display means.

The condition determination means can determine whether a second condition is met during the game. The information input determination means can determine whether new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within a second predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the second condition is met. If the information input determination means determines that new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the second predetermined period of time, the program execution means can further read, from the data storage means, the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure. The program execution means can control the image display control means so that the leg image that is combined with the torso image and the arm image and is displayed as the main character image is replaced with the leg image based on the read leg image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

According to yet still another embodiment of the present invention, a toy part includes a structure that allows the toy part to be used in the computer that executes the game program according to the embodiment of the present invention.

According to yet still another embodiment of the present invention, a toy figure includes a torso toy part,

an arm toy part, and a leg toy part. The torso toy part, the arm toy part, and the leg toy part are usable as the toy parts in the computer that executes the game program according to the embodiment of the present invention.

According to the present invention, a relationship between inputting of the identification information of a toy part having the identification information assigned thereto and a game unfold can be made more complex and, thus, the game can be made more enjoyable.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a perspective view illustrating the appearance of a gaming device according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the configuration of the gaming device according the exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary operation performed by the gaming device according to a first exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 4A is a front view of an example of a toy figure according to third and fourth exemplary embodiments of the present invention.

Fig. 4B is a schematic front view of the toy figure formed from selectable parts illustrated in Fig. 3B.

Fig. 5 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary operation performed by a gaming device according to the third exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 6 is a flowchart of a process performed by a gaming device before a game starts, according to the fourth exemplary embodiment.

Fig. 7 is a flowchart of a process performed by the gaming device after the game starts, according to the fourth exemplary embodiment.

Fig. 8 illustrates a main game screen of an example of a game played on the gaming device according to the exemplary embodiments of the present invention.

DETAILED DEDESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Gaming devices according to exemplary embodiments of the present invention are described below with reference to the accompanying drawings.

As illustrated in Fig. 1, according to the present exemplary embodiment, a gaming device 10 includes a housing 11, a display screen 15 disposed in the upper front of the housing 11 and serving as image display means 8, a reader 13 disposed in the middle front of the housing 11 and serving as information input means 1, and an operation panel 12 disposed immediately beneath the reader 13. The operation panel 12 includes operation buttons 17 used by a player inputting their operation. The operation buttons 17 are formed from a button 17a, a button 17b, a button 17c, and a button 17d. The gaming device 10 further includes a connection port 19 that allows a mobile information terminal to be connected thereto in order to store the personal information and the game score of the player.

In addition, the gaming device 10 includes a computer. The gaming device 10 operates hardware, such as a central processing unit (CPU), a storage unit including a read only memory (ROM) and a random access memory (RAM) of the computer, and the reader 13 and the display screen 15 mounted on the housing 11 on the basis of a game program so that the hardware functions as a variety of means of the gaming device of the present invention. In this way, the present invention is achieved.

Fig. 2 is a block diagram of the gaming device according to the present exemplary embodiment. As illustrated in Fig. 2, according to the present exemplary embodiment, the gaming device includes the following functional blocks: the information input means 1, information input determination means 2, program execution means 3, program storage means 4, data storage means 5, condition determination means 6, image display control means 7, and the image display means 8.

The information input means 1 includes the reader 13. The information input means 1 can receive the identification information of a toy part. The information input determination means 2 determines whether at least the identification information of the toy part is input. The program execution means 3 reads a game program from the program storage means 4. In addition, the program execution means 3 reads the game data including necessary character data from the data storage means 5. The image display control means 7 is controlled by the program execution means

3. The image display control means 7 displays the game progress on the display screen 15 serving as the image display means 8. The image display control means 7 further displays an instruction message to the player.

Examples of a toy part used in the gaming device according to the present exemplary embodiment include a card having a picture of, for example, a character printed thereon (so-called a trading card) and a toy figure or a plastic model created as a close replica of, for example, a character. That is, unique identification information can be assigned to such a toy part (e.g., a trading card, a toy figure, or a plastic model). In order to give such identification information to a toy part, a storage medium may be attached to the toy part, and information regarding the toy part including the identification information may be stored in the storage medium. Alternatively, a bar code or a string of alphabetic characters indicating the identification information may be directly printed on the toy part. Still alternatively, in the case of a toy figure or a plastic model, the identification information may be printed on a print medium (e.g., a card) that is supplied together with the toy figure or the plastic model.

Accordingly, the reader 13, which is an example of the information input means 1, can have one of a variety of forms depending on the form of the identification information given to the toy part. If the identification information is indicated by a bar code, it is desirable that the reader 13 be a bar code reader. In contrast, if the

identification information is stored in a non-contact data carrier, such as an RF tag, it is desirable that the reader 13 be a reader for reading the non-contact data carrier. If the identification information is simply indicated by an alphabetic character string, a manual input device, such as a keyboard and a mouse, can be employed instead of the reader 13. Furthermore, if the identification information is stored in a recording medium, a device that reads the identification information from the recording medium via wired connection. If the toy part includes a wireless communication unit (e.g., an infrared communication unit) that can transmit the identification information stored in an embedded recording medium using the wireless communication unit, the reader 13 can be a communication unit that communicates with the wireless communication unit and receives the transmitted identification information. That is, any information input means 1 including a reader that supports the format of the identification information can be employed.

The data storage means 5 stores game data. The game data contains at least character data corresponding to the identification information of each of the toy parts. The character data includes, for example, character image data used for displaying a character image and data indicating the feature, the operating characteristic, and effect of the toy part in a game. The condition determination means 6 determines whether a predetermined condition (according to the present exemplary embodiment, a condition under which

the identification information of a toy part needs to be input, and the character data corresponding to the identification information needs to be read out of the data storage means 5) is met during the execution of the game program.

A first exemplary embodiment of the present invention is described below. According to the first exemplary embodiment, the player watches the game unfold displayed on the image display means 8 and operates the operation buttons 17. In this way, the game controlled by the game program unfolds.

Fig. 3 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary operation performed by the gaming device according to the first exemplary embodiment of the present invention. In step S101, the operation is started. In step S102, the program execution means 3 starts the game using the game data stored in the data storage means 5.

In step S103, the condition determination means 6 determines whether a first condition is met during the game. The first condition can be selected from among a variety of conditions. An example of the first condition is a condition in which an operation of receiving the identification information of a toy part through the information input means 1 and reading the character data corresponding to the identification information is required. That is, the first condition indicates that a player is in trouble during a gameplay (e.g., a strong opponent appears or the body strength of the player decreases). This

determination is made throughout the game.

If, in step S103, the condition determination means 6 determines that the first condition is met, the processing proceeds to step S104, where the game is suspended. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S105, where the information input determination means 2 determines whether the identification information of a toy part has been input through the reader included in the information input means 1. If it is determined that the identification information of a toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S106, where the program execution means 3 reads the character data corresponding to the input identification information from the data storage means 5. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S108.

However, if, in step S105, the information input determination means 2 determines that the identification information of a toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S107, where the information input determination means 2 further determines whether a first predetermined period of time has elapsed. If it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing returns to step S105, where it is determined again whether the identification information of a toy part has been input. That is, a loop of steps S106 and S107 is repeatedly performed until the first predetermined period of time elapses. If, in step S107, it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S108 without

reading new character data.

In step S108, the program execution means 3 resumes the suspended game. In step S109, the gameplay continues. Thereafter, if the character data has been read in step S106, the program execution means 3 continues the game while using the readout character data.

That is, only when the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means 1 within the first predetermined period of time after the first condition is met, the character data corresponding to the input identification information can be used in the subsequent gameplay. Conversely, even when the first condition is met during the game and, therefore, the identification information of the toy part can be input, the identification information needs to be input within the first predetermined period of time. Accordingly, in order to use the character data corresponding to the identification information of a new toy part from a current point in time during the game, the player needs to input the identification information of the toy part through the information input means 1 within the first predetermined period of time. Thus, the game becomes more challenging.

More specifically, let the first condition indicate that a player is in trouble during a game (e.g., a strong opponent appears or the body strength of the player decreases). In addition, something that saves the player from the trouble (e.g., a toy part item such as a weapon or a medicine) is prepared as a toy part having identification

information input during the game. The character data associated with the identification information of the toy part is defined as data that creates an effect that saves the player from the trouble during the game (e.g., data that increases the offensive power of the player or data that recovers the body strength of the player). Then, according to the present exemplary embodiment, when the player is in trouble (e.g., if a strong opponent appears or the body strength of the player decreases) and if the identification information of the toy part that represents the toy part item indicating a weapon or the medicine is timely input through the information input means 1, the character data (the data that increases the offensive power or recovers the body strength of the player) corresponding to the input identification information is read and, therefore, the player is saved from the trouble. However, if the identification information of the toy part is not input within the first predetermined period of time, the trouble continues during the game. Thus, the game becomes more challenging.

A second exemplary embodiment of the present invention is described next. The second exemplary embodiment differs from the first exemplary embodiment in that a player operates a character image displayed on the image display means 8 using the operation buttons 17 so that the game unfolds under the control of a game program. In addition, character image data is used as the character data read on the basis of the input identification information of a toy

part. As used herein, the character image controlled by the player is referred to as a "main character image". According to the present exemplary embodiment, the main character image is generated based on the game data stored in the program storage means 4.

The second exemplary embodiment is also described below with reference to a flowchart illustrated in Fig. 3. In step S101, the processing is started. In step S102, the program execution means 3 starts a game using the game data stored in the data storage means 5. At that time, the image display control means 7 displays a main character image (the image of a character controlled by the player) on the image display means 8 on the basis of the game data under the control of the program execution means 3.

In step S103, the condition determination means 6 determines whether the first condition is met during the game. The first condition can be selected from among a variety of conditions. An example of the first condition is a condition in which an operation of receiving the identification information of a toy part through the information input means 1 and reading the character data corresponding to the identification information is required. That is, the first condition indicates that a player needs to change the main character image representing the character controlled by the player during the game. This determination is made throughout the game.

If, in step S103, the condition determination means 6 determines that the first condition is met, the processing

proceeds to step S104, where the game is suspended. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S105, where the information input determination means 2 determines whether the identification information of a toy part has been input through the reader included in the information input means 1. If it is determined that the identification information of a toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S106, where the program execution means 3 reads the character data corresponding to the input identification information (according to the present exemplary embodiment, the character image data) from the data storage means 5. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S108.

However, if, in step S105, the information input determination means 2 determines that the identification information of a toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S107, where the information input determination means 2 further determines whether a first predetermined period of time has elapsed. If it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing returns to step S105, where it is determined again whether the identification information of a toy part has been input. That is, steps S106 and S107 are looped until the first predetermined period of time elapses. If, in step S107, it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S108 without reading new character image data.

In step S108, the program execution means 3 resumes the

suspended game. In step S109, the gameplay continues. Thereafter, if the character image data has been read in step S106, the program execution means 3 continues the game while using the readout character image data. More specifically, the program execution means 3 controls the image display means 8 so that the character image based on the character image data read in step S106 is combined with the main character image controlled by the player into a combined character image, and the combined image is displayed on the image display means 8.

More specifically, let the first condition be a condition in which the main character image representing a character controlled by the player can be changed. In addition, as a toy part having the identification information input during the game, something (e.g., a weapon or an enhanced part) that changes the character controlled by the player (i.e., the character based on the main character image) is prepared. The character data corresponding to the identification information of the toy part is defined as character image data used for displaying a character image representing the weapon or the enhanced part. Then, according to the present exemplary embodiment, when the character controlled by the player (the character based on the main character image) can be changed during the game and if the identification information of the toy part representing the weapon or the enhanced part is timely input through the information input means 1, the character image data (the data of the character image representing the

weapon or the enhanced part) corresponding to the input identification information can be read. By combining the character image data with the main character image, the image of the character controlled by the player can be changed to a combined character image in which the main character image has the weapon or the enhanced image attached thereto. However, if the identification information of the toy part cannot be timely input within the first predetermined period of time, the character controlled by the player remains unchanged and, therefore, the character continues to be displayed as the main character image.

A third exemplary embodiment is described next. Like the second exemplary embodiment, according to the third exemplary embodiment, a player controls a character image (a main character image) displayed on the image display means 8 using the operation buttons 17 and, thus, the game unfolds under the control of a game program. However, the third exemplary embodiment differs from the second exemplary embodiment in that the main character image is based on character image data corresponding to the identification information of a toy part input from the information input means 1. That is, according to the present exemplary embodiment, as the game unfolds under the control of a game program, the character image corresponding to the toy part having the input identification information is displayed on the image display means 8, and the player controls the character image (the main character image) using the

operation buttons 17.

A toy figure assembled from the toy parts according to the present exemplary embodiment is described first. Fig. 4A is a front view of an example of a toy figure according to the present exemplary embodiment. Fig. 4B is a front view of selectable parts of a schematic toy figure.

A toy figure 30 that is made to look like a character and that is formed by assembling toy parts according to the present exemplary embodiment is illustrated in Fig. 4A. The toy figure 30 includes a torso toy part 31 having a head coupled thereto, two arm toy parts 33 and 35, and a leg toy part 37. At least two types having different appearances and different identification information items are prepared for each of the torso toy part 31, the arm toy parts 33 and 35, and the leg toy part 37. The user can create a favorite toy figure 30 by assembling the selected torso toy part 31, arm toy parts 33 and 35, and leg toy part 37.

Another example of the toy figure is described next with reference to Fig. 4B. A toy figure 40 includes a torso toy part 41. One of two types of right arm toy parts 43a and 43b and one of two types of left arm toy parts 45a and 45b can be removably attached to the torso toy part 41. In addition, one of three types of leg toy parts 47a, 47b, and 47c can be removably attached to the torso toy part 41. The user can select one of the right arm toy parts, one of the left arm toy parts, and one of the leg toy parts and combines the selected toy parts with the torso toy part 41 into a desired toy figure 40. In addition, if a joint of

the torso toy part 41 for the right arm toy parts 43a and 43b and the left arm toy parts 45a and 45b and a joint of the torso toy part 41 for the leg toy parts 47a, 47b, and 47c are made to be the same as the joints of the torso toy part 31 of the toy figure 30, the arm toy parts and the leg arm toy parts of the toy figure 30 and the toy figure 40 can be freely exchanged between the toy figure 30 and the toy figure 40. Accordingly, a variety of combinations of the toy parts are available for the user. As a result, the user can freely generate a variety of toy figures.

Each of the toy parts 31, 33, 35, 37, 41, 43a, 43b, 45a, 45b, 47a, 47b, and 47c illustrated in Figs. 4A and 4B has unique identification information assigned thereto, as described above. According to the present exemplary embodiment, the identification information is stored in a non-contact data carrier (an RF tag of an RFID system (hereinafter simply referred to as an "RF tag")) attached to each of the toy parts 31, 33, 35, 37, 41, 43a, 43b, 45a, 45b, 47a, 47b, and 47c. Therefore, according to the present exemplary embodiment, the reader 13 included in the information input means 1 can read the identification information stored in the RF tag attached to a toy part.

The data storage means 5 stores the character data corresponding to the identification information assigned to each of the arm toy parts 43a, 43b, 45a, and 45b, the leg toy parts 47a, 47b, and 47c, and the torso toy parts 31, 41a, 41b, and 41c. Examples of the character data include character image data used for displaying the character image

corresponding to the toy part and the feature, the operating characteristic, and the effect during the game. In addition, according to the present exemplary embodiment, the character image displayed on the basis of the character image data represents the appearance of the toy part having the identification information corresponding to the character image data.

Fig. 5 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary operation performed by the third exemplary embodiment. In step S201, the processing is started. In step S202, the information input determination means 2 determines whether the reader included in the information input means 1 has read the identification information of each of the toy parts of the toy figure, that is, whether the identification information of the toy parts has been input. If the identification information of the toy parts has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S205, where the program execution means 3 determines whether a predetermined period of time has elapsed. If, in step S205, it is determined that the predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S202 again, where it is determined whether the identification information of the toy parts has been input. That is, it is repeatedly determined whether the identification information of the toy parts has been input until the predetermined period of time has elapsed.

If, in step S202, it is determined that the identification information of the toy parts has been input,

the processing proceeds to step S203, where the information input determination means 2 further determines whether the input identification information is valid. If it is determined that the input identification information is not valid, the processing proceeds to step S205, where the program execution means 3 determines whether the predetermined period of time has elapsed.

However, if it is determined that the input identification information is valid, the processing proceeds to step S204, where the program execution means 3 reads, from the data storage means 5, the game data including the character data (including the character image data) corresponding to the identification information read from the RF tag attached to each of the toy parts of the toy figure using the reader. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S205, where it is determined whether the predetermined period of time has elapsed. That is, a loop of steps S202, S203, S204, and S205 is repeated until the predetermined period of time has elapsed. In this way, the character data corresponding to the input identification information is repeatedly read.

If, in step S205, it is determined that the predetermined period of time has elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S206, where the program execution means 3 determines whether the identification information of any one of the torso, both the arms, and the leg is invalid or has not been input. If, in step S206, the program execution means 3 determines that all of the identification

information items regarding the torso, both the arms, and the leg are valid and have been input, the processing proceeds to step S208, where the program execution means 3 generates a character (having an image based on the main character image) to be controlled by the player on the basis of the character data already read by the program execution means 3. Thereafter, the program execution means 3 starts the game. However, if, in step S206, the program execution means 3 determines that the identification information regarding any one of the torso, both the arms, and the leg is valid or has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S207, where the program execution means 3 reads the data of a deficient character prestored in the data storage means 5 for each of the torso part, both the arm parts, and the leg part that has invalid identification information or that has non-input identification information (i.e., a deficient part). Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S208. In this case, in step S208, the program execution means 3 generates a character (having an image based on the main character image) to be controlled by the player using the character data read in step S204 and the deficient-character data read in step S207. Subsequently, the program execution means 3 starts the game.

The generation of the main character image representing the character to be controlled by the player is described in more detail below. For example, the player selects the torso toy part 41 as the torso, the right arm toy part 43b as the right arm, the left arm toy part 45a as the left arm,

and the leg toy part 47c as the leg and combines the selected toy parts into a toy figure. In step S202, the identification information items for the torso toy part 41, the right arm toy part 43b, the left arm toy part 45a, and the leg toy part 47c are input. In step S204, the character data corresponding to the identification information items and the character image data for the character data are read. A main character image is generated by combining the character images based on the read data. Since the character images based on the read data represent the torso toy part 41, the right arm toy part 43b, the left arm toy part 45a, and the leg toy part 47c, the main character image generated by combining these images represents the appearance of the toy figure generated by the player. That is, according to the present exemplary embodiment, the player can use the character image representing the appearance of the toy figure generated by the player as the main character image that the player can control.

In step S209, the condition determination means 6 determines whether the first condition is met during the game. The first condition can be selected from among a variety of conditions. An example of the first condition is a condition in which an operation of receiving the identification information of a toy part through the information input means 1 and reading the character data corresponding to the identification information is required. That is, the first condition indicates that the player is in trouble during a gameplay (e.g., the arm or the leg of the

main character is destroyed during the game). This determination is made throughout the execution of the game program.

If, in step S209, the condition determination means 6 determines that the first condition is met, the processing proceeds to step S210, where the game is suspended. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S211, where the information input determination means 2 determines whether the identification information of a toy part has been input through the reader included in the information input means 1. If it is determined that the identification information of a toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S212, where the program execution means 3 reads the character data (including the character image data) corresponding to the input identification information from the data storage means 5. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S214.

However, if, in step S211, the information input determination means 2 determines that the identification information of a toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S213, where the information input determination means 2 further determines whether a first predetermined period of time has elapsed. If it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing returns to step S211, where it is determined again whether the identification information of a toy part has been input. That is, a loop of steps S211 and S213 is repeatedly performed until the first

predetermined period of time elapses. If, in step S213, it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S214 without reading new character data.

In step S214, the program execution means 3 resumes the suspended game. In step S215, the gameplay continues. Thereafter, if new character data has been read in step S212, the program execution means 3 continues the game while using the readout character data. That is, the program execution means 3 combines the main character image with the character image based on the character image data included in the new readout character data into a combined character image. Thereafter, the program execution means 3 controls the image display control means 7 so that the image display control means 7 displays the combined character image on the image display means 8. From the point in time, the player controls the character represented by the character image.

That is, only if the identification information of a toy part is input through the information input means 1 within the first predetermined period of time after the first condition is met, the character data (including the character image data) corresponding to the input identification information can be used in the subsequent gameplay. Conversely, even when the first condition is met and, therefore, the identification information of the toy part can be input, the identification information needs to be input within the first predetermined period of time. Thus, since the player is required to input the

identification information of the toy part within the first predetermined period of time through the information input means 1, the game becomes more challenging.

More specifically, let the first condition be a condition in which the right arm of the character (having the main character image) controlled by the player is destroyed during the game. In addition, the right arm toy part 35 and the right arm toy part 43a are prepared, and the identification information of the right arm toy part 35 and/or the right arm toy part 43a is to be input during the game. The character image data corresponding to the identification information items regarding these toy parts are used to display the character images of the right arm toy part 35 and the right arm toy part 43a. According to the present exemplary embodiment, when the right arm of the character controlled by the player is destroyed during the game and if the player can timely input the identification information of one of the right arm toy part 35 and the right arm toy part 43a within the first predetermined period of time through the information input means 1, the character image data corresponding to the input identification information (i.e., the data of the character image representing the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a) is read out. Thus, the character image representing the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a is combined with the main character image, and a combined character image is generated. From that point in time, the player can control, as the character, the combined

character image having the right arm image replaced by the character image representing the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a. However, if the player fails to input the identification information of the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a within the first predetermined period of time, the player needs to continuously play the game with the main character image having the destroyed right arm.

A fourth exemplary embodiment which is a modification of the third exemplary embodiment is described next. Like the third exemplary embodiment, according to the fourth exemplary embodiment, the torso toy parts 31 and 41 illustrated in Fig. 3 are prepared for the torso. The arm toy parts 43a, 43b, 45a, and 45b illustrated in Fig. 3 are prepared for the arms. The leg toy parts 37, 47a, 47b, and 47c are prepared for the leg part. The player can select appropriate ones from among these toy parts to generate a desired toy figure. In addition, the program storage means 4 stores, as character image data included in the character data corresponding to the identification information regarding these toy parts, the torso image data, the arm image data, and the leg image data used for displaying the torso image, the arm images, and the leg image representing the appearances of these toy parts.

Fig. 6 is a flowchart of a process performed before a game starts, according to the fourth exemplary embodiment. Fig. 7 is a flowchart of a process performed after the game starts, according to the fourth exemplary embodiment.

Description is made first with reference to Fig. 6. In step S401, the processing starts. In step S402, the information input determination means 2 determines whether the reader included in the information input means 1 has read the identification information from an RF tag attached to a torso toy part of the toy figure, that is, whether the identification information of a torso toy part has been input. If the identification information of a torso toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S404, where the program execution means 3 determines whether the predetermined period of time has elapsed. If, in step S404, the program execution means 3 determines that the predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S402 again, where it is determined whether the identification information of a torso toy part has been input. That is, it is repeatedly determined whether the identification information of a torso toy part has been input until the predetermined period of time has elapsed.

However, if, in step S402, it is determined that the identification information of a torso toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S403, where the program execution means 3 reads, from the data storage means 5, the torso image data corresponding to the identification information read from the RF tag attached to the torso toy part of the toy figure by the reader. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S405. Note that if, in step S404, it is determined that the predetermined period of time has elapsed, it is also determined that the identification

information of a torso toy part has not been input and, therefore, the processing proceeds to step S405.

In step S405, the information input determination means 2 determines whether the reader included in the information input means 1 has read the identification information from the RF tag attached to an arm toy part of the toy figure, that is, whether the identification information of an arm toy part has been input. If the identification information of an arm toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S407, where the program execution means 3 determines whether the predetermined period of time has elapsed. If, in step S407, the program execution means 3 determines that the predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S405 again, where it is determined whether the identification information of an arm toy part has been input. That is, it is repeatedly determined whether the identification information of an arm toy part has been input until the predetermined period of time elapses.

However, if, in step S405, it is determined that the identification information of an arm toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S406, where the program execution means 3 reads, from the data storage means 5, the arm image data corresponding to the identification information read from the RF tag attached to the arm toy part of the toy figure by the reader. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S408. Note that if, in step S407, it is determined that the predetermined period of time

has elapsed, it is also determined that the identification information of an arm toy part has not been input and, therefore, the processing proceeds to step S408.

In step S408, the information input determination means 2 determines whether the reader included in the information input means 1 has read the identification information from the RF tag attached to a leg toy part of the toy figure, that is, whether the identification information of a leg toy part has been input. If the identification information of a leg toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S410, where the program execution means 3 determines whether the predetermined period of time has elapsed. If, in step S410, the program execution means 3 determines that the predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S408 again, where it is determined whether the identification information of a leg toy part has been input. That is, it is repeatedly determined whether the identification information of a leg toy part has been input until the predetermined period of time elapses.

However, if, in step S408, it is determined that the identification information of a leg toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S409, where the program execution means 3 reads, from the data storage means 5, the leg image data corresponding to the identification information read from the RF tag attached to the leg toy part of the toy figure by the reader. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S411. Note that if, in step

S410, it is determined that the predetermined period of time has elapsed, it is also determined that the identification information of a leg toy part has not been input and, therefore, the processing proceeds to step S411.

In step S411, the program execution means 3 determines whether any one of the identification information items regarding the torso, the arm, and the leg has not been input. If, in step S411, the program execution means 3 determines that all of the identification information items regarding the torso, the arm, and the leg have been input, the processing proceeds to step S412, where the program execution means 3 generates a main character image representing the character controlled by the player by combining the torso image based on the torso image data read in step S403, the arm image based on the arm image data read in step S406, and the leg image based on the leg image data read in step S409 together.

However, if, in step S411, the program execution means 3 determines that the identification information regarding any one of the torso, both the arms, and the leg has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S413, where the program execution means 3 reads, from the data storage means 5, deficient-part image data for a part for which the identification information has not been input (a deficient part). The deficient-part image data are prestored in the data storage means 5 for the torso part, both the arm parts, and the leg part. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S412. In this case, in step S412, the program

execution means 3 generates a main character image representing the character controlled by the player by combining the image based on the image data corresponding to the input identification information with the deficient-part image based on the deficient-part image data. After the main character image is generated in step S412, the processing proceeds to step S414. In step S414, the program execution means 3 controls the image display control means 7 so that the main character image generated as the character controlled by the player in step S412 is displayed on the image display means 8. Subsequently, the program execution means 3 starts the game.

The generation of the main character image representing the character controlled by the player is described in more detail below with reference to an example. For example, the player selects the torso toy part 41 as the torso, the right arm toy part 43b as the right arm, the left arm toy part 45a as the left arm, and the leg toy part 47c as the leg and combines the selected toy parts into a toy figure. In step S402, the identification information of the torso toy part 41 is input. In step S403, the torso image data is read on the basis of the identification information input in step S403. The torso image displayed using the readout torso image data represents the appearance of the torso toy part 41. Subsequently, in step S405, the identification information items regarding the right arm toy part 43b and the left arm toy part 45a are input. In step S406, the arm image data are read on the basis of the input identification

information items. The arm images displayed using the readout arm image data represent the appearances of the right arm toy part 43b and the left arm toy part 45a. Finally, in step S408, the identification information of the leg toy part 47c is input. In step S409, the leg image data is read on the basis of the input identification information. The leg image displayed using the readout leg image data represents the appearance of the leg toy part 47c. A main character image representing the character controlled by the player is generated by combining the torso image based on the readout torso image data, the arm images based on the readout arm image data, and the leg image based on the readout leg image data. Accordingly, the main character image is generated by combining the torso image representing the torso toy part 41, the arm images representing the right arm toy part 43b and the left arm toy part 45a, and the leg image representing the leg toy part 47c. Consequently, the main character image represents the appearance of the toy figure generated by the player (i.e., the toy figure having a torso formed from the torso toy part 41, the right arm formed from the right arm toy part 43b, the left arm formed from the left arm toy part 45a, and the leg formed from the leg toy part 47c). That is, according to the present exemplary embodiment, the player can use the character image representing the appearance of the toy figure generated by the player as the main character image of the character that the player controls.

An exemplary process performed after the game starts

according to the fourth exemplary embodiment is described next with reference to a flowchart illustrated in Fig. 7. After the game starts, the processing proceeds to step S415, where the condition determination means 6 determines whether the first condition is met during the game. According to the present exemplary embodiment, the first condition is set to a condition in which an operation of receiving the identification information of an arm toy part through the information input means 1 and reading the arm image data corresponding to the identification information is required. That is, the first condition indicates that a player is in trouble during a gameplay (e.g., the arm is destroyed or damaged during the game, and replacement of the arm is necessary). This determination is made throughout the execution of the game program.

If, in step S415, the condition determination means 6 determines that the first condition is met, the processing proceeds to step S416, where the game is suspended. Thereafter, the processing proceeds to step S417, where the information input determination means 2 determines whether the identification information of an arm toy part has been input via the reader included in the information input means 1. If it is determined that the identification information of an arm toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S418, where the program execution means 3 reads, from the data storage means 5, the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S419.

In step S419, the program execution means 3 controls the image display control means 7 so that the arm image of the main character image (the destroyed arm image if the first condition indicates destruction of an arm) is replaced by the arm image based on the arm image data read in step S418 and is displayed on the image display means 8. That is, the program execution means 3 controls the image display control means 7 so that the arm image based on the readout arm image data is combined with the torso image and the leg image that form the main character image to generate a combined character image and, thereafter, the combined character image is displayed on the image display means 8 as an image representing the character controlled by the player. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S420, where the suspended game is resumed. After the game is resumed, the processing proceeds to step S421, where the gameplay continues.

However, if, in step S417, the information input determination means 2 determines that the identification information of an arm toy part has not been input, the processing proceeds to step S422, where the information input determination means 2 further determines whether a first predetermined period of time has elapsed. If it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing returns to step S417, where it is determined again whether the identification information of an arm toy part has been input. That is, a loop of steps S417 and S422 is repeatedly performed until the first

predetermined period of time elapses. If, in step S422, it is determined that the first predetermined period of time has elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S420 without reading new arm image data. In step S420, the suspended game is resumed. After the game is resumed, the processing proceeds to step S421, where the gameplay continues.

That is, only when the identification information of an arm toy part is input to the information input means 1 within the first predetermined period of time after the first condition is met, the arm image data based on the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information can be combined with the main character image to generate a combined character image representing the character that the player can subsequently control. Conversely, even when the first condition is met during the game and, therefore, the identification information of an arm toy part can be input, the identification information needs to be input within the first predetermined period of time. Accordingly, the player is required to input the identification information of an arm toy part via the information input means 1 within the first predetermined period of time. Thus, the game becomes more challenging.

More specifically, let the first condition indicate that the right arm of the character represented by the main character image and controlled by the player is destroyed during a game. In addition, the right arm toy part 35 and the right arm toy part 43a having the identification information items to be input during the game are prepared.

The arm image data corresponding to the identification information items regarding the toy parts are used to display the arm images representing the right arm toy part 35 and the right arm toy part 43a. Assume that the right arm image of the main character image that represents the character controlled by the player is formed on the basis of the arm image data corresponding to the identification information of the right arm toy part 43b. When the right arm is destroyed during the game and if the player can timely input the identification information of the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a via the information input means 1 within the first predetermined period of time, the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information (i.e., the data of the arm image representing the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a) can be read. Thus, the arm image representing the right arm toy part 43b can be replaced by the arm image representing the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a. In this way, the replaced arm image is combined with the torso image of the main character image, and a combined character image is generated. From that point in time, the player can use, as a character that the player can control, the combined character image having the right arm replaced with the character image representing the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a. However, if the player fails to input the identification information of the right arm toy part 35 or the right arm toy part 43a within the first predetermined period of time,

the player needs to continuously play the game with the main character image having the destroyed right arm.

Referring back to the flowchart illustrated in Fig. 7, the process performed when the condition determination means 6, in step S415, determines that the first condition is not met is described next. In such a case, the processing proceeds to step S423, where the condition determination means 6 determines whether a second condition is met during the game. According to the present exemplary embodiment, the second condition is defined as a condition in which the identification information of a leg toy part needs to be input through the information input means 1 and the leg image data corresponding to the identification information needs to be read, that is, a condition in which the leg part is destroyed or damaged during the game and, thus, replacement of the leg part is required.

If, in step S423, the condition determination means 6 determines that the second condition is met, the processing proceeds to step S424, where the game is suspended. However, if, in step S423, the condition determination means 6 determines that the second condition is not met, the processing returns to step S415, where the condition determination means 6 determines whether the first condition is met. That is, throughout the game, it is determined whether the first condition or the second condition is met.

After the game is suspended in step S424, the processing proceeds to step S425, where the information input determination means 2 determines whether the

identification information of a leg toy part has been input through the reader included in the information input means 1. If the information input determination means 2 determines that the identification information of a leg toy part has been input, the processing proceeds to step S426, where the program execution means 3 reads the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information from the data storage means 5. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S427.

In step S427, the program execution means 3 controls the image display control means 7 so that the leg image of the main character image (the destroyed leg image if the second condition indicates destruction of a leg) is replaced by the leg image based on the leg image data read in step S426 and is displayed on the image display means 8. That is, the program execution means 3 controls the image display control means 7 so that the leg image based on the readout leg image data is combined with the torso image and the arm images that form the main character image to generate a combined character image and, thereafter, the combined character image is displayed on the image display means 8. Subsequently, the processing proceeds to step S420, where the suspended game is resumed. After the game is resumed, the processing proceeds to step S421, where the gameplay continues.

However, if, in step S425, the information input determination means 2 determines that the identification information of a leg toy part has not been input, the

processing proceeds to step S428, where the information input determination means 2 further determines whether a second predetermined period of time has elapsed. If it is determined that the second predetermined period of time has not elapsed, the processing returns to step S425, where it is determined again whether the identification information of a leg toy part has been input. That is, a loop of steps S425 and S428 is repeatedly performed until the second predetermined period of time elapses. If, in step S428, it is determined that the second predetermined period of time has elapsed, the processing proceeds to step S420 without reading new leg image data. In step S420, the suspended game is resumed. After the game is resumed, the processing proceeds to step S421, where the gameplay continues.

That is, only when the identification information of a leg toy part is input to the information input means 1 within the second predetermined period of time after the second condition is met, the leg image based on the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information can be combined with the main character image to generate a combined character image representing the character that the player can subsequently control. Conversely, even when the second condition is met during the game and, therefore, the identification information of a leg toy part can be input, the identification information needs to be input within the second predetermined period of time. Accordingly, the player is required to input the identification information of a leg toy part through the

information input means 1 within the second predetermined period of time. Thus, the game becomes more challenging.

More specifically, let the second condition be a condition in which the leg of the character represented by the main character image and controlled by the player is destroyed during a game. In addition, the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, and the leg toy part 47b having the identification information items to be input during the game are prepared. The leg image data corresponding to the identification information items regarding the toy parts are used to display the leg images representing the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, and the leg toy part 47b. Assume that the leg image of the main character image that represents the character controlled by the player is formed on the basis of the leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the leg toy part 47c. When the leg is destroyed during the game and if the player can timely input the identification information of any one of the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, and the leg toy part 47b through the information input means 1 within the second predetermined period of time, the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information (i.e., the data of the leg image representing the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, or the leg toy part 47b) can be read. Thus, the leg image representing the leg toy part 47c can be replaced by the leg image representing one of the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, and the leg toy part 47b. Thus, the replaced leg image is combined with the torso

image of the main character image, and a combined character image is generated. From that point in time, the player can use, as a character that the player can control, the combined character image having the leg image replaced with the character image representing one of the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, and the leg toy part 47b. However, if the player fails to input the identification information of one of the leg toy part 37, the leg toy part 47a, and the leg toy part 47b within the second predetermined period of time, the player needs to continuously play the game with the main character image having the destroyed leg.

An example of a game executed by the gaming device according to the present invention is described next. In order to play the game, a player operates the operation buttons 17 and sends an instruction to a character that is displayed as a main character image on the image display control means 7 (the display screen 15) and that is controlled by the player. The player's character fights against his or her opponent character controlled by the program execution means 3 on the basis of a game program.

Fig. 8 illustrates a main game screen displayed on the image display means 8 during the game.

A player's character 801 is displayed in the form of the main character image on the left side of the main game screen. In addition, an opponent character 802 controlled by the program execution means 3 on the basis of a game program is displayed on the right side of the main game screen.

Furthermore, a player's physical strength gauge 803 indicating the physical strength of the player's character 801 and an opponent's physical strength gauge 804 indicating the physical strength of the opponent character 802 are displayed on the top of the screen. The player's physical strength gauge 803 decreases (gets shorter) each time the player's character 801 is attacked by the opponent character 802. If the player's physical strength gauge 803 disappears from the main game screen, the player loses the game. In contrast, the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 decreases (gets shorter) each time an attack thrown by the player's character 801 is successful. If the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 disappears from the main game screen, the player wins the game. That is, in this game, the player operates the operation buttons 17 and sends instructions to the player's character 801 so that the player's character 801 attacks the opponent character 802 or moves to dodge an attack from the opponent character 802. In this way, the player attempts to clear the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 from the main game screen before the player's physical strength gauge 803 disappears to win the game.

The instructions sent to the player's character 801 from the player are described in more detail next. The player can send, to the player's character 801, the following three instructions: "attack", "move", and "counter". By pressing the button 17a, the button 17b, and the button 17c of the operation buttons 17, "attack", "move",

and "counter" instructions can be sent to the player's character 801, respectively. Note that as illustrated in Fig. 8, the main game screen includes an attack icon 805, a move icon 806, and a counter icon 807 are displayed so as to overlap the main character image representing the player's character 801. The positional relationship among these icons is the same as that among the button 17a, the button 17b, and the button 17c. Accordingly, while viewing the display screen 15, the player can easily press one of the buttons 17 corresponding to a desired icon.

Note that a diamond displayed in the lower left section of the main game screen serves as the player's special weapon gauge 811. The player's special weapon gauge 811 is partitioned into four sections: an upper left section, a lower left section, a lower right section, and an upper right section. Each time input of an instruction performed by the player fails (described in more detail below), the program execution means 3 sequentially lights up each of the sections, from an upper left section to the upper right section via the lower left section and the lower right section. In Fig. 8, the upper left section, the lower left section, and the lower right section of the player's special weapon gauge 811 have been already lit. If the next input of the instruction performed by the player fails, then the upper right section is lit. When all of the sections of the player's special weapon gauge 811 are lit and if the player presses the button 17d, the player can send, to the player's character 801, an instruction that causes the player's

character 801 to use the special weapon. That is, if failure of input of an instruction repeats, the player is possibly in trouble. In such a case, the player's character 801 can use the special weapon. By using the special weapon, the player's character 801 can turn the tables on the opponent character 802. Note that the opponent character 802 has an opponent special weapon gauge 812 that is similar to the player's special weapon gauge 811. The opponent special weapon gauge 812 is displayed in the lower right section of the main game screen. Like the player's special weapon gauge 811, each time input of an instruction to the opponent character 802 performed by the program execution means 3 fails (described in more detail below), the program execution means 3 sequentially lights up each of the sections. If all of the sections are lit, the program execution means 3 can select a special weapon in addition to "attack", "move", "counter" instructions. Accordingly, fail of an instruction to the opponent character 802 indicates success of an instruction from the player. Thus, the player puts the opponent character 802 into a difficult position during the game. However, at that time, the opponent character 802 may use a special weapon. Consequently, the opponent character 802 might turn the tables on the player's character 801. In this way, the game becomes more challenging. Note that in Fig. 8, all of the sections of the opponent special weapon gauge 812 are lit. At that time, the program execution means 3 can select the special weapon in addition to "attack", "move", "counter" instructions as

an instruction sent to the opponent character 802.

The usage of the "attack", "move", and "counter" instructions during the game is described in more detail next. The "attack" instruction causes the player's character 801 to attack the opponent character 802. If the attack is successful, the player can reduce the opponent's physical strength gauge 804. The "move" instruction causes the player's character 801 to move so that the distance of the player's character 801 from the opponent character 802 is set to a distance well suited for attacking. If the movement is successful, the distance of the player's character 801 from the opponent character 802 can be set to a distance well suited for attacking. The "counter" instruction causes the player's character 801 to counterattack the opponent character 802. If the counterattacking is successful, the player's character 801 can dodge the attack from the opponent character 802. Thus, a decrease in the player's physical strength gauge 803 can be prevented. In addition, since the player's character 801 attacks the opponent character 802, the player can decrease the opponent's physical strength gauge 804.

After understanding such an effect of inputting of each of the instructions, the player presses one of the button 17a, the button 17b, and the button 17c in a moment when the player is allowed to send an instruction to the player's character 801 during the game. In this way, the player sends one of the attack instruction, the move instruction, and the counter instruction. At that time, similarly, the

program execution means 3 sends one of the attack instruction, the move instruction, and the counter instruction to the opponent character 802 on the basis of the game program. Success or failure of the inputting of an instruction sent from the player is determined by comparing the instruction sent from the player to the player's character 801 with the instruction sent from the program execution means 3 to the opponent character 802.

That is, the attack instruction, the move instruction, and the counter instruction have a nontransitive (rock-paper-scissors) relationship (i.e., "attack" beats "move", "move" beats "counter", and "counter" beats "attack"). The program execution means 3 determines which one of the instruction sent from the player and the instruction sent to the opponent character 802 is superior to the other on the basis of the nontransitive relationship. In this way, the program execution means 3 determines success or failure of inputting of the instruction sent from the player.

More specifically, for example, in a moment when the player is allowed to input an instruction to the player's character 801 during the game, the player presses the button 17a and instructs the player's character 801 to carry out an attack. At that time, if the program execution means 3 sends a "move" instruction to the opponent character 802, the program execution means 3 determines that the inputting of the "attack" instruction performed by the player succeeds, since, according to the nontransitive relationship, "attack" beats "move". Thus, the program execution means 3 decreases

the opponent's physical strength gauge 804. However, if the program execution means 3 sends a "counter" instruction to the opponent character 802, the program execution means 3 determines that the inputting of the "attack" instruction performed by the player fails, since, according to the nontransitive relationship, "counter" beats "attack". In addition, the program execution means 3 determines that the "counter" instruction sent to the opponent character 802 succeeds and, therefore, the program execution means 3 decreases the player's physical strength gauge 803. Note that at that time, as described above, the program execution means 3 additionally lights up one of the sections of the player's special weapon gauge 811 displayed in the main game screen. In addition, if an "attack" instruction is also sent from the program execution means 3 to the opponent character 802, the game is tied. In such a case, the program execution means 3 increments a "tie count" by one.

Alternatively, for example, the player presses the button 17b and sends a "move" instruction to the player's character 801. At that time, if the program execution means 3 sends a "counter" instruction to the opponent character 802, the program execution means 3 determines that the inputting of the "move" instruction performed by the player succeeds, since, according to the nontransitive relationship, "move" beats "counter". Thus, the program execution means 3 sets the distance between the opponent character 802 and the player's character 801 to a distance that is well suited for an attack carried out by the player's character 801.

However, if the program execution means 3 sends an "attack" instruction to the opponent character 802, the program execution means 3 determines that the inputting of the "move" instruction performed by the player fails, since, according to the nontransitive relationship, "attack" beats "move". In addition, the program execution means 3 determines that the "attack" instruction sent to the opponent character 802 succeeds and, therefore, the program execution means 3 decreases the player's physical strength gauge 803. Note that at that time, as described above, the program execution means 3 additionally lights up one of the sections of the player's special weapon gauge 811 displayed in the main game screen since the inputting of the "move" instruction performed by the player fails. In addition, if a "move" instruction is also sent from the program execution means 3 to the opponent character 802, the game is tied. In such a case, the program execution means 3 increments the "tie count" by one.

Still alternatively, for example, the player presses the button 17c and sends a "counter" instruction to the player's character 801. At that time, if the program execution means 3 sends an "attack" instruction to the opponent character 802, the program execution means 3 determines that the inputting of the "counter" instruction performed by the player succeeds, since, according to the nontransitive relationship, "counter" beats "attack". Thus, the attack thrown by the opponent character 802 is dodged, and the program execution means 3 decreases the opponent's

physical strength gauge 804. However, if the program execution means 3 sends a "move" instruction to the opponent character 802, the program execution means 3 determines that the inputting of the "counter" instruction performed by the player fails, since, according to the nontransitive relationship, "move" beats "counter". In addition, the program execution means 3 determines that the "move" instruction sent to the opponent character 802 succeeds and, therefore, the program execution means 3 sets distance between the opponent character 802 and the player's character 801 to a distance that is well suited for the attack against the opponent character 802. Note that at that time, as described above, the program execution means 3 additionally lights up one of the sections of the player's special weapon gauge 811 displayed in the main game screen since the inputting of the "counter" instruction performed by the player fails. In addition, if a "counter" instruction is also sent from the program execution means 3 to the opponent character 802, the game is tied. In such a case, the program execution means 3 increments the "tie count" by one.

Every time inputting of an instruction to the player's character 801 is available during the game, the player understands the case where the inputting of an instruction succeeds or fails and inputs any one of the instructions using one of the operation buttons 17 so that a decrease in the player's physical strength gauge 803 is avoided and the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 is decreased. In

this way, the game unfolds.

The case in which the player inputs a special weapon to the player's character 801 as an instruction is described next. The special weapon instruction can be input by pressing the button 17d when all of the sections of the player's special weapon gauge 811 are lit. When the special weapon instruction is input, the program execution means 3 displays, in the display screen 15, an image representing the player's character 801 that is using a special weapon. In addition, the program execution means 3 displays an image representing the opponent character 802 having one of a destroyed right arm, a destroyed left arm, and a destroyed leg. At that time, the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 is significantly decreased, as compared with the case in which an attack or a counter instruction succeeds.

In contrast, the case in which the program execution means 3 inputs a special weapon to the opponent character 802 as an instruction is described next. At that time, the program execution means 3 displays, in the display screen 15, an image representing the opponent character 802 that is using a special weapon. In addition, the program execution means 3 displays an image representing the player's character 801 having one of a destroyed right arm, a destroyed left arm, and a destroyed leg. At that time, the player's physical strength gauge 803 is significantly decreased, as compared with the case in which an attack or counter instruction succeeds.

The case in which the tie count reaches a predetermined

value during the game is described next. If it is determined that the tie count reaches a predetermined value during the game, the program execution means 3 executes a time trial game regarding the operation buttons 17. In the time trial game, the player is required to push one of the operation buttons 17 within a predetermined period of time. If the player can push one of the operation buttons 17 within the predetermined period of time, it is determined that the player succeeds. However, if the player cannot push one of the operation buttons 17 within the predetermined period of time, it is determined that the player fails. That is, the program execution means 3 determines whether any one of the operation buttons 17 is pushed by the player within the predetermined period of time after start of the time trial game. If the player can push one of the operation buttons 17 within the predetermined period of time, the program execution means 3 determines that the player succeeds and, therefore, displays, on the display screen 15, an image representing the opponent character 802 having one of a destroyed right arm, a destroyed left arm, and a destroyed leg. In addition, the program execution means 3 significantly decreases the opponent's physical strength gauge 804, as compared with the case in which an attack or counter instruction succeeds. However, if the program execution means 3 determines that none of the operation buttons 17 is pushed within the predetermined period of time, the program execution means 3 determines that the player fails and, therefore, displays,

on the display screen 15, an image representing the player's character 801 having one of a destroyed right arm, a destroyed left arm, and a destroyed leg. In addition, the program execution means 3 significantly decreases the player's physical strength gauge 803, as compared with the case in which an attack or counter instruction succeeds.

If, as a result of inputting of instructions during the game, the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 disappears before the player's physical strength gauge 803 disappears, the player wins the game. Thus, the game continues. However, if the player's physical strength gauge 803 disappears before the opponent's physical strength gauge 804 disappears, the player loses the game. Thus, the game is over.

A relationship between the above-described game and the gaming device according to the above-described exemplary embodiment of the present invention is described next. For simplicity, description is made with reference to the game played in the fourth exemplary embodiment among the games played in the gaming devices according to the above-described exemplary embodiments.

The main character image representing the player's character 801 is generated through steps S401 to S412 illustrated in Fig. 6. That is, the toy figure generated by the player is formed from a torso toy part, an arm toy part, and a leg toy part. The main character image is formed by combining the torso image based on the torso image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso

toy part, the arm image based on the arm image data corresponding to the identification information of the arm toy part, and the leg image based on the leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the leg toy part, and the main character image represents the appearance of the toy figure generated by the player.

In the game, the first condition according to the fourth exemplary embodiment is a condition in which the right arm or the left arm of the player's character 801 represented by the main character image is destroyed due to the special weapon of the opponent character 802 or fail of the time trial game that is executed when the tie count reaches the predetermined value. In addition, the second condition according to the fourth exemplary embodiment is a condition in which the leg of the player's character 801 represented by the main character image is destroyed due to a special weapon of the opponent character 802 or fail of the time trial game that is executed when the tie count reaches the predetermined value.

More specifically, if, during the game, the right arm or the left arm of the player's character 801 represented by the main character image is destroyed (i.e., if the condition determination means 6 determines that the first condition is met), the program execution means 3 displays, on the display screen 15, a message to prompt the player to input the identification information of an arm toy part through the reader 13 (the information input means 1). At that time, the program execution means 3 may further display

the elapsed time in terms of the first predetermined period of time on the display screen 15. If the condition determination means 6 determines that the identification information of an arm toy part is input through the reader 13 before the first predetermined period of time elapses (if the determination is "Y" in step S417 of Fig. 7), the program execution means 3 reads the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information (step S418 in Fig. 7). Thereafter, the program execution means 3 replaces the destroyed arm image of the main character image with the arm image based on the read arm image data. Thus, the program execution means 3 combines the arm image based on the read arm image data with the other portions (the torso image and the leg image) of the main character image into a combined character image. The combined character image is displayed as the player's character 801 (step S419 in Fig. 7). That is, in the display, the destroyed arm of the player's character 801 is replaced with a new arm. However, if the first predetermined period of time elapses before the identification information of the arm toy part is input through the reader 13 (if the determination is "Y" in step S422 of Fig. 7), the player's character 801 is displayed using the main character image having a destroyed right arm or left arm afterward. That is, in the display, the arm of the player's character 801 is destroyed, and replacement of the arm with a new arm fails.

The case in which the leg of the player's character 801 represented by the main character image is destroyed during

the game (i.e., the condition determination means 6 determines that the second condition is met) is described next. In such a case, the program execution means 3 instructs the display screen 15 to display a message to prompt the player to input the identification information of a leg toy part through the reader 13 (the information input means 1). At that time, the program execution means 3 may further display the elapsed time in terms of the second predetermined period of time on the display screen 15. If the condition determination means 6 determines that the identification information of the leg toy part is input through the reader 13 before the second predetermined period of time elapses (if the determination is "Y" in step S425 of Fig. 7), the program execution means 3 reads the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information (step S426 in Fig. 7). Thereafter, the program execution means 3 replaces the destroyed leg image of the main character image with the leg image based on the read leg image data. Thus, the program execution means 3 combines the leg image based on the read leg image data with the other portions (the torso image and the arm images) of the main character image into a combined character image. The combined character image is displayed as the player's character 801 (step S427 in Fig. 7). That is, in the display, the destroyed leg of the player's character 801 is replaced with a new leg. However, if the second predetermined period of time elapses before the identification information of the leg toy part is input via

the reader 13 (if the determination is "Y" in step S428 of Fig. 7), the player's character 801 is displayed using the main character image having a destroyed leg afterward. That is, in the display, the leg of the player's character 801 is destroyed, and replacement of the leg with a new leg fails.

When the player's character 801 is displayed using the main character image having a destroyed leg, a right arm, or a left arm, the player's character 801 may be set in a disadvantageous situation during the game. For example, when the right arm is destroyed, inputting of an "attack" instruction may be inhibited. In addition, when the leg is destroyed, inputting of a "move" instruction may be inhibited. When the left arm is destroyed, inputting of a "counter" instruction may be inhibited. Under such control, if the player cannot input the identification information of an arm toy part within the first predetermined period of time or the identification information of a leg toy part within the second predetermined period of time although the first condition or the second condition is met, the player is set in a significantly disadvantageous situation in the subsequent gameplay. Thus, the player can experience more challenging gameplay. In addition, the player is encouraged to purchase a large number of arm toy parts and leg toy parts.

Although the present invention has been described in several exemplary embodiments, a myriad of changes, variations, alterations, transformations, and modifications may be suggested to one skilled in the art, and it is

intended that the present invention encompass such changes, variations, alterations, transformations, and modifications as fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims. For example, in the third and fourth exemplary embodiments, when the program execution means 3 stores the log of the identification information input during the game and if identification information input to the information input means 1 is the same as the one already input during the game (i.e., the one stored in the log or the one used to generate the main character image), the information input determination means 2 may determine that the identification information is not input or may determine that the inputting fails. In this way, the player is encouraged to purchase a large number of toy parts in order to input a large number of the identification information items during a game. Alternatively, if the identification information input through the information input means 1 during the game is the same as the one already input during the game (i.e., the one stored in the log or the one used to generate the main character image), the program execution means 3 may perform some process on the character image data read using the input identification information or may read totally different character image data. Still alternatively, in the character data including the character image data, the data other than the character image data (e.g., effect data that determines the effect appearing in the game) may be processed (e.g., the effect may be doubled) although the same character image data is used. Yet still alternatively,

by causing the player to re-enter the identification information that has been already input at least once during the game (i.e., the one stored in the log or the one used to generate the current main character image), it may be concurrently determined whether the action in the game succeeds. For example, in the game illustrated in Fig. 8, if inputting of the identification information of the right arm toy part succeeds although it has been determined that inputting of an "attack" instruction sent from the player fails, the determination may be changed so that the inputting of an "attack" instruction sent from the player succeeds. While the above exemplary embodiments have been described with reference to a toy figure formed from toy parts each having the identification information, only some of the toy parts of the toy figure may have the identification information.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A gaming device comprising:

data storage means for storing a plurality of game data;

program storage means for storing a game program;

program execution means for executing a game by reading the game program from the program storage means and the game data from the data storage means and using the read game program and the read game data;

information input means capable of receiving, among at least two toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one of the toy parts, the data storage means storing, as the plurality of game data, a plurality of character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts;

condition determination means for determining whether a first condition is met during the game; and

information input determination means for determining whether the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within a first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met;

wherein if the information input determination means determines that the identification information of the toy part is input to the information input means within the

first predetermined period of time, the program execution means reads, from the data storage means, the character data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part.

2. The gaming device according to Claim 1, further comprising:

image display means; and

image display control means;

wherein the data storage means stores character image data serving as the character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts, and wherein the image display control means displays a main character image on the image display means on the basis of the game data stored in the data storage means, and wherein if the information input determination means determines that the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met, the program execution means reads character image data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part and controls the image display control means to combine a character image based on the read character image data with the main character image into a combined character image and display the combined character image on the image display means.

3. The gaming device according to Claim 2, wherein the program execution means is capable of using, as the main character image, the character image based on the character image data corresponding to the identification information of the toy part input to the information input means.

4. The gaming device according to Claim 3, wherein the information input means is capable of receiving, among at least two torso toy parts of a toy figure and at least two arm toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one torso toy part and the identification information of at least one arm toy part, and wherein the data storage means stores, as the character image data, torso image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the torso toy parts of the toy figure and arm image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the arm toy parts of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means reads the torso image data and the arm image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure and the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means, and wherein the image display control means combines a torso image based on the read torso image data with an arm image based on the read arm image data into the main character image and displays the generated main character image on the image display means, and wherein if the information input determination means

determines that new identification information of an arm toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met during the game, the program execution means further reads, from the data storage means, the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means controls the image display control means so that the arm image that is combined with the torso image and displayed as the main character image is replaced with the arm image based on the read arm image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

5. The gaming device according to Claim 4, wherein the information input means is capable of further receiving, among at least two leg toy parts of the toy figure each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one leg toy part, and wherein the data storage means further stores, as character image data, leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the leg toy parts of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means reads, from the data storage means, the torso image data, the arm image data, and the leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure, the

identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure, and the identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means, and wherein the image display control means combines a torso image based on the read torso image data, an arm image based on the read arm image data, and the leg image based on the read leg image data with one another into the main character image and displays the main character image on the image display means, and wherein the condition determination means determines whether a second condition is met during the game, and wherein the information input determination means determines whether new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within a second predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the second condition is met, and wherein if the information input determination means determines that new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the second predetermined period of time, the program execution means further reads, from the data storage means, the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means controls the image display control means so that the leg image that is combined with the torso image and the arm image and that is displayed as the main character image is replaced with the leg image based on the read leg image data to generate the combined character image and the

combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

6. A toy part comprising:

a structure that allows the toy part to be used for the gaming device according to any one of Claims 1 to 5.

7. A toy figure comprising:

a torso toy part;

an arm toy part; and

a leg toy part;

wherein the torso toy part, the arm toy part, and the leg toy part are usable as the toy parts for the gaming device according to one of Claims 4 and 5.

8. A game program comprising:

program code for causing a computer to function as data storage means for storing a plurality of game data, program storage means for storing a game program, program execution means for executing a game by reading the game program from the program storage means and the game data from the data storage means and using the read game program and the read game data, information input means capable of receiving, among at least two toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one of the toy parts, where the data storage means stores, as the plurality of game data, a plurality of character data each corresponding to the identification

information of one of the toy parts, condition determination means for determining whether a first condition is met during the game, and information input determination means for determining whether the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within a first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met;

wherein if the information input determination means determines that the identification information of the toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time, the program execution means reads, from the data storage means, the character data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part.

9. The game program according to Claim 8, wherein the data storage means stores character image data serving as the character data each corresponding to the identification information of one of the toy parts, and wherein the program code further causes the computer to function as image display means and image display control means for displaying a main character image on the image display means on the basis of the game data stored in the data storage means, and wherein if the information input determination means determines that the identification information of a toy part is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition

determination means determines that the first condition is met, the program execution means reads character image data corresponding to the input identification information of the toy part and controls the image display control means to combine a character image based on the read character image data with the main character image into a combined character image and display the combined character image on the image display means.

10. The game program according to Claim 9, wherein the program execution means is capable of using, as the main character image, the character image based on the character image data corresponding to the identification information of the toy part input to the information input means.

11. The game program according to Claim 10, wherein the information input means is capable of receiving, among at least two torso toy parts of a toy figure and at least two arm toy parts each having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one torso toy part and the identification information of at least one arm toy part, and wherein the data storage means stores, as the character image data, torso image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the torso toy parts of the toy figure and arm image data corresponding to the identification information of each of the arm toy parts of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means reads the torso image data and the arm image data

corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure and the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means, and wherein the image display control means combines a torso image based on the read torso image data with an arm image based on the read arm image data into the main character image and displays the generated main character image on the image display means, and wherein if the information input determination means determines that new identification information of an arm toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the first predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the first condition is met during the game, the program execution means further reads, from the data storage means, the arm image data corresponding to the input identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means controls the image display control means so that the arm image that is combined with the torso image and displayed as the main character image is replaced with the arm image based on the read arm image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

12. The game program according to Claim 11, wherein the information input means is capable of further receiving, among at least two leg toy parts of the toy figure each

having unique identification information, the identification information of at least one leg toy part, and wherein the data storage means further stores, as character image data, leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the leg toy parts of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means reads, from the data storage means, the torso image data, the arm image data, and the leg image data corresponding to the identification information of the torso toy part of the toy figure, the identification information of the arm toy part of the toy figure, and the identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure input to the information input means, and wherein the image display control means combines a torso image based on the read torso image data, an arm image based on the read arm image data, and the leg image based on the read leg image data with one another into the main character image and displays the main character image on the image display means, and wherein the condition determination means determines whether a second condition is met during the game, and wherein the information input determination means determines whether new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within a second predetermined period of time after the condition determination means determines that the second condition is met, and wherein if the information input determination means determines that new identification information of a leg toy part of the toy figure is input to the information input means within the second predetermined

period of time, the program execution means further reads, from the data storage means, the leg image data corresponding to the input identification information of the leg toy part of the toy figure, and wherein the program execution means controls the image display control means so that the leg image that is combined with the torso image and the arm image and that is displayed as the main character image is replaced with the leg image based on the read leg image data to generate the combined character image and the combined character image is displayed on the image display means.

13. A toy part comprising:

a structure that allows the toy part to be used for the computer that executes the game program according to any one of Claims 8 to 12.

14. A toy figure comprising:

a torso toy part;

an arm toy part; and

a leg toy part;

wherein the torso toy part, the arm toy part, and the leg toy part are usable as the toy parts for the computer that executes the game program according to one of Claims 11 and 12.