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GAME

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Fig. 1.

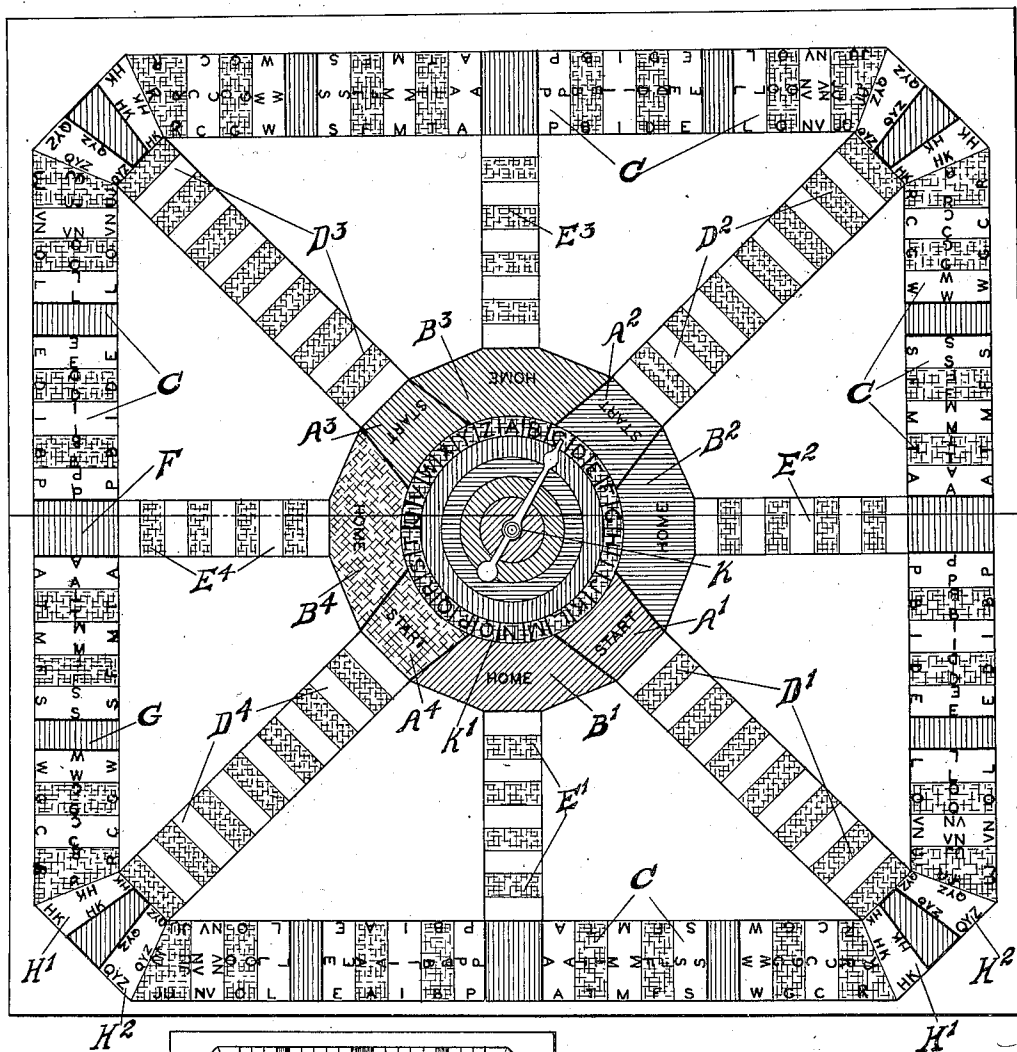


Fig. 2.

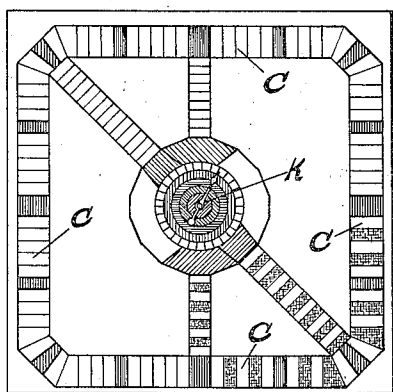
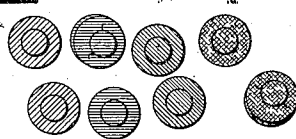


Fig. 3.



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GAME

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3 Claims. (Cl. 273-134)

This invention relates to games, and has for its principal object to provide a game which will develop the abilities of the players to recall words, quickly, and to spell them correctly while tending to stimulate the interest of the players in such work and in the enlargement of their knowledge of words.

Another object of the invention is to provide a game which depends only partly on chance and mostly on the mental ability and intelligence of the players, the element of chance entering into the game only sufficiently to serve as a handicap tending to equalize the differences in mental abilities of the players.

With the above and other objects in view which will be obvious from the description hereinafter, the invention consists in the features, details and combinations hereinafter more fully described and pointed out in the claims.

In the drawing,—

Fig. 1 is an elevation of a game board embodying the invention, on which board the game may be played by two, three or four players.

Fig. 2 is a diagrammatic illustration of a game board suitable for use by two players only.

Fig. 3 is a diagrammatic illustration of playing pieces such as colored disks, to be used with either of the game boards shown in Figs. 1 and 2.

The game of the present invention comprises a game board having tracks, playing pieces, such as disks, to be moved along the tracks, and a chance device for selecting one letter of the alphabet from a plurality of different letters.

An important feature of the invention is that the length of movement of a piece over a track is determined by the number of letters in a word, the player being free to select the word which determines the extent of the movement, subject to certain limitations. For example, in starting the game, the player who is the first to play uses a chance device to select by chance a letter of the alphabet, and, this being determined, the player must then mentally select some word which begins with the letter of the alphabet selected by the chance device. Thus, notwithstanding the fact that chance determines the initial letter of the word to be selected, the player has a number of words from which to select, and as it is possible for the player to choose a word having a larger or a smaller number of letters, the extent of the movement of the player's piece over the track is not determined by the chance device, but depends upon the player's own intelligence and knowledge of words.

The tracks are divided into spaces, and the

player is entitled to move his piece over as many spaces as there are letters in the word which he has selected. Furthermore, some of the spaces are provided with indicia representing letters of an alphabet, the letters represented by the indicia being different for the different spaces. If the play of the piece terminates in a space whose indicia represents the same letter of the alphabet as the final letter of the selected word which determined the length of movement of the piece in reaching the said space, the player is free at times to continue his play which he does by mentally selecting a word whose initial letter is the same as the final letter of the previous word, that is, the same as the letter determined by the indicia of the space on which the previous play terminated. Hence, in this case again chance does not enter into the play then to be made. The details of the game will be given in connection with the description of the apparatus employed, one form of which will now be described.

Referring to Fig. 1, the game board there illustrated has four starting fields marked A<sup>1</sup>, A<sup>2</sup>, A<sup>3</sup>, A<sup>4</sup>, respectively, and, alternating therewith, four finishing or home fields designated as B<sup>1</sup>, B<sup>2</sup>, B<sup>3</sup>, B<sup>4</sup>, these eight fields, in the example illustrated being fitted together so that their outer boundaries form an approximate circle, the space within which may, for purposes of reference hereafter, be designated as a central terminal space, though it may not be in the center of the game board.

Surrounding the central terminal space is a playing track which, as it is used by all the players, may be termed the common main playing track. This track is indicated generally by the reference letter C. Each starting field and each home field is connected to the main playing track by its individual track, the individual starting tracks being designated by the reference letters D<sup>1</sup>, D<sup>2</sup>, D<sup>3</sup>, D<sup>4</sup>, Fig. 1, and the individual home tracks by the letters E<sup>1</sup>, E<sup>2</sup>, E<sup>3</sup>, E<sup>4</sup>.

The starting field and the home field for each player may be colored alike, but different from the corresponding fields of another player, in order to avoid confusion. All the tracks are subdivided into spaces, and for ease in counting these spaces are alternately of different colors. While the colors used may be as desired, those employed in the preferred embodiment of the invention shown in Fig. 1 are white (as indicated by the absence of any hatching), yellow and red, as indicated by cross-hatching in accordance with the color chart on page 55 of the Rules of Practice of the United States Patent Office. The

coloring of the respective starting and home fields may also be as indicated by the conventional cross-hatching designated by said color chart. It will be noted that on the common playing track more than two colors are used, for example in Fig. 1, the alternate spaces are white and the intermediate spaces are mostly yellow, but sometimes red.

In the embodiment shown in the drawing there are 16 red spaces, four of them being wider than the others, one of these wider spaces being indicated at F and one of the narrower spaces at G, Fig. 1. These spaces may be termed safety spaces, for reasons that will appear hereinafter, the narrower ones being referred to hereinafter as single safety spaces and the wider ones as double safety spaces, for purposes of identification.

Those spaces of the common main track C which are located between the safety spaces are provided with indicia associating them with letters of an alphabet. In the example shown in Fig. 1, the alphabet chosen is one of 25 letters corresponding to letters of the English alphabet with the letter X omitted. All the letters of the chosen alphabet are contained in the lettered spaces between one double safety space and the next one, so that in game board such as shown in Fig. 1, the letters of the chosen alphabet appear four times. However, the consecutive lettered spaces do not contain the letters of the alphabet in consecutive order. That is, they may be said to be disarranged.

Since there are 25 letters in the chosen alphabet and only 20 lettered spaces between any two double spaces, some of the lettered spaces are provided with two different letters of the alphabet and one with three different letters. See the spaces marked H<sup>1</sup> which have two letters and the space H<sup>2</sup> which has three letters.

In addition to a game board there is provided a set of pieces for each player. Where four persons are playing each will have three pieces colored alike, it being advantageous to have them of the same color as that of the starting field to be used by the respective player. Where two or three persons are playing, each will have a set of four pieces. In order that the game apparatus may be used by two, three or four persons it must be provided with at least 15 pieces constituting three sets of four each and one set of three.

While any suitable chance device may be provided it has been found that a so-called spinner, that is an indicator, pointer or hand mounted on a pivot at the center of a circular series of letters of an alphabet, is preferable. In the present instance the alphabet is the complete English alphabet of 26 letters. While this spinner may be separate from the game board, in the present example it is mounted on the central terminal space, as shown. A spinner so mounted is shown at K, Figs. 1 and 2, and the circular series of letters at K<sup>1</sup>.

With the particular embodiment of the apparatus illustrated the game may be played as follows, it being assumed that only two players are playing, who may be designated as players Nos. 1 and 2.

The players select their respective four pieces of the same color as that of the starting fields which they are to use. For example, No. 1 picks the purple pieces and No. 2 the green pieces. The order in which the players are to begin may be determined in any suitable way, either by

agreement, or by a chance device, or after the first game, by rule of the game that the player who wins one game may start first in the succeeding game. If the order is to be determined by chance, the spinner may be used as the chance device, the players spinning the indicator in turn and the one getting the letter nearest the beginning of the alphabet starting first. We will assume that No. 1 player is the first to play. This player puts his four purple pieces on the purple starting field A<sup>1</sup>. Then he spins the spinner to determine by chance the initial letter of some word to be selected by him. For purposes of illustration, let us assume the spinner stops at the letter S. It is now incumbent on this player to select, within some agreed on fixed time, for example, one minute, a word in the English language beginning with S. Also the rules of the game may provide that the first word must have a certain minimum of letters, for example 10. With the board illustrated, which has 14 spaces in its starting tracks a word of less than 14 letters lands the piece finally on the starting track near the common main track C, but if the player can think of a word of say 15 letters or more he can get onto the main track and even along the same with the first play. As there are many words in the English language beginning with S and having 10 letters or more the player has a wide choice. Assume that the player thinks of the word "supernatural", which has 12 letters. He must announce the word, and then spell it aloud as he moves his first piece outward from his starting field A<sup>1</sup> along the spaces of his starting track D<sup>1</sup> stopping at the twelfth space. This terminates the play.

Then player No. 2 places his four green pieces on his starting field A<sup>2</sup> and spins the spinner to determine by chance the initial letter of the word which he must select. Let us assume that the spinner stops at the letter L. Player No. 2 then selects and announces a word beginning with L; for example, the word "lithographically" and, while spelling the word aloud moves his first piece a space for each letter of the word chosen. As this word has 16 letters the piece passes outward along the starting track D<sup>2</sup>, leaving the track through the space marked QYZ at the end of the said starting track, finally landing at the space marked UJ.

This terminates the play.

Now player No. 1 proceeds as before, spinning the spinner to determine the initial letter, announcing a word with that initial letter and then moving his first piece from the starting track D<sup>1</sup> onto and along the common main track C, passing through the space H<sup>2</sup>, Fig. 1, which is marked QYZ, and thence along the main track counter-clockwise. This terminates his play.

After his first piece has arrived on the common main track, a player may, in his turn, either continue to play the piece around the main track, or most advantageously start his second piece, and after it has arrived on the main track may in his turn, start his third piece and so on until finally all four pieces of each player are on the main track. The advantage to a player in getting all of his pieces onto the main track is that after this occurs he may be able to obtain what is termed a "bonus". This occurs if a play in accordance with a selected word lands a piece on the common main track on a space which is associated with a letter of the alphabet identical with the last letter of the word used in making

such play. This will be explained more fully hereinafter.

Returning now to the game in progress, player No. 2 may move either the first piece he played, which at the end of his first play landed on the space marked UJ, or he may bring his second piece into play and proceed in substantially the same way as previously described, that is to say, spinning the spinner to determine the initial letter of a word, announcing a word selected by him, and playing it down the starting track, and, if it has more than 14 letters landing it on the common main track.

If, however, player No. 2 decides to play his first piece further along on the common main track instead of bringing into play his second piece, a different method of determining the initial letter of the word to be selected is employed, namely, it is no longer selected by chance, but must be a word commencing with the same letter of the alphabet as is associated with the space on which the piece stands, or where such space is associated with more than one letter of the alphabet, the player has the choice of using either or any of the letters as the initial of the word to be chosen. For example, as the first piece of player No. 2 rests on a space marked UJ, he may select a word beginning with U; for example, the word "utility", or a word beginning with J; for example, the word "junction", and make the movement counterclockwise along the common main track for as many spaces as there are letters in the word he selects. It is to be noted that while the rules of the game limit the first play along the starting track to words of more than 10 letters, there need be no such limitation as to plays along the common main track, or at most a limitation to words of four letters. From the above it will be understood that each play along the common main track, of a piece which was resting on a space associated with a letter of the alphabet, must be made by selecting a word beginning with the same letter as that of the space, or where the space is associated with more than one letter, then the word may begin with any one of said letters.

When the player has all his pieces on the common main track he is thereafter entitled to earn a bonus as hereinbefore referred to. For example, suppose, with all his pieces on the main track, player No. 1 has one piece resting on the space marked with the letter P, Fig. 1, and, in his turn, decides to play this piece. He must select a word beginning with the letter P. Suppose he selects the word "pastes". As this has six letters he must move six spaces, which lands his piece on a space associated with the letter S. As this is the same as the last letter of the word he selected, namely, "pastes" the player has earned the bonus, that is he is entitled to make the next play in the game. He may make this next play, by moving any one of his four pieces.

If in the course of play a player lands his piece on a safety space he, thereafter, when playing in turn, must use the chance device to determine the initial letter of the word to be selected for advancing the said piece from the said safety space, because such safety space is not associated with any letter of the alphabet.

A bonus may be earned if a player, in his turn, makes a play which lands his piece on a lettered space already occupied by one of the pieces belonging to an adversary, the bonus consisting as before of the right to make the next play in the

game. Furthermore, the adversary is penalized, being set back. That is, the adversary must move his piece backward along the main track as many spaces as the piece of the previous player had advanced.

For example, if player No. 1 had a piece at the right hand portion of the main track on the space marked S, and player No. 2, in his turn, had advanced his own piece from, say space marked P to said space S, then player No. 1 must move his piece, which was on space S, back to space P, while player No. 2 has the right to select another word beginning with the letter S, and then advance his piece from the space having the letter S, counterclockwise, along the main track, or may play one of his other pieces if he prefers.

If, however, a player in advancing a piece lands on a lettered space already occupied by another one of his own pieces, he is penalized, in that he loses his play and must return his last advanced piece to the space from which he started the play. The above described bonuses and penalties relate only to plays where the piece played lands on a lettered space.

Where a piece when played lands on a safety space already occupied by the piece of an adversary, the player loses his play and must return his piece to the space from which he started the play, the piece which occupied the safety space remaining there. If a piece be set back as hereinbefore explained and lands on a safety space already occupied, then it must be moved backward one space more. If by this additional move of one space the piece lands on a lettered space already occupied by another piece, even his own, the said other piece must be moved backward as many spaces as the prior piece was moved backward. Any backward movement of a piece which in turn causes the backward movement of a second piece may result in the said second piece causing the backward movement of a third piece, and so on even if the penalizing action passes backward entirely around the common playing track and finally results in a backward movement of that piece which by its movement forward caused the catastrophe.

While only one piece may remain in safety on a single safety space, two pieces belonging to the same player may remain in safety on a double safety space.

After a piece has passed along the common playing track from its connection with its starting track to the connection of its home track with the main track, it then passes over the home track to the home field. When all the pieces of any player have reached the home field the game is terminated and the player who is the first to return all his pieces to the home field is the winner. The rules may provide that in moving from the common main track to the home field a piece must never come to rest on any of the spaces of the home track, but must be moved over all the spaces of the home track at one play. That is, a player whose piece is on the common main track ready to enter the home field must select a word having a number of letters exactly sufficient to carry his piece to the home field. Such a rule makes the game somewhat more difficult and need not be employed except with skilled players.

The game as described above may be modified in various ways according to the skill and education of the players. One modification which increases somewhat the element of chance, but still leaves the game dependant largely on the intelligence of the players and their knowledge of

words, consists in using the spinner to determine by chance the initial letter of the word to be chosen for making a play from a lettered space, except, however, for making a play constituting a bonus, as has been explained hereinbefore, which bonus comes either from a play where the last letter of the word is the same as that of the lettered space on which the piece lands, or from a play where the piece played lands on a lettered space already occupied by the piece of an adversary. This is called capturing the adversary's piece. The captured piece is sent back, as heretofore explained, while the player making the capture is entitled to make the next play in the game, but must select a word whose initial letter is the same as the letter associated with the space on which the capture is made.

A further modification which particularly brings out the skill of the players consists in providing a rule that the amount of set back of any captured piece is determined not by the word selected in making the play which brought about the capture, but by the new word selected by the capturing player for making his new play in advance. Thus this player is free to select a long word or a short word and thereby can determine the number of spaces the captured piece is to be set back. When this form of game is played, the rules should provide that if the set back piece lands on any lettered space already occupied by another piece, the said other piece shall also be set back the same number of spaces as the first piece captured was set back, and so on backward around the common main playing track.

In the description of the game as first given hereinbefore it was pointed out that until a player has brought all his pieces onto the main track he could not earn a bonus by landing a piece on a lettered space having the same letter as the final letter of the word selected for making such play. This may be changed to allow the said bonus to be earned at any time a piece lands on a lettered track having the same letter as the last letter of the selected word determining such play, irrespective of whether the player has more pieces on the main track or not.

It is to be noted that the game board may be hinged to fold along a center line, as indicated in Fig. 1, this line not passing through the center of the spinner K but above the same, as shown.

In Fig. 2 is illustrated a game board, which need not be specifically described since it is the same as that shown in Fig. 1 except that as it is intended for use by two players, only, it has only two starting fields, only two home fields, and only two starting tracks and home tracks.

The manner of playing the game on it will be

clear from the description hereinbefore of the game.

In Fig. 3 is illustrated diagrammatically the general type of colored pieces which may be used with the game.

What is claimed is:

1. An educational game comprising a game board provided with a central terminal space consisting of an individual starting field and a separate individual home field for each player, a common main track surrounding the central terminal space, a plurality of individual tracks, one for each starting field and each home field, respectively, each of said individual tracks leading from its respective field to the common main track, all of the tracks being divided into spaces, the spaces of the main track constituting a plurality of sets of playing spaces, each set having a series of spaces carrying indicia indicating different letters of an alphabet in disarranged order, said game also comprising a plurality of sets of movable pieces, one set for each player, and a chance device for selecting one letter of the alphabet from a plurality of different letters.

2. An educational game device comprising a game board provided with a central terminal space consisting of an individual starting field and a separate individual home field for each player, a common main track surrounding the central terminal space, a plurality of individual tracks, one for each starting field and home field, respectively, each of said individual tracks leading from its respective field to the common main track, all of the tracks being sub-divided to form small spaces, the spaces of the main track constituting a plurality of sets of playing spaces, each set having a series of spaces carrying indicia indicating different letters of the alphabet in disarranged order, said game device also comprising a plurality of sets of movable pieces, one set for each player.

3. An educational game device comprising a game board provided with a central terminal space consisting of an individual starting field and a separate individual home field for each player, a common main track surrounding the central terminal space, a plurality of individual tracks, one for each starting field and home field, respectively, each of said individual tracks leading from its respective field to the common main track, all of the tracks being sub-divided to form small spaces, the spaces of the main track constituting a plurality of sets of playing spaces, each set having a series of spaces carrying indicia indicating different letters of the alphabet in disarranged order.

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