Nov. 5, 1940. J. P. McCARTHY 2,220,455

AMUSEMENT DEVICE

Filed July 29, 1938

Fig. 1.

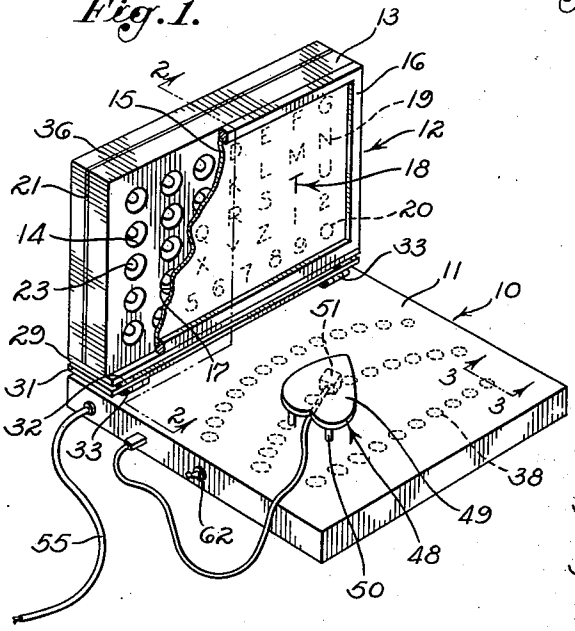


Fig. 2.

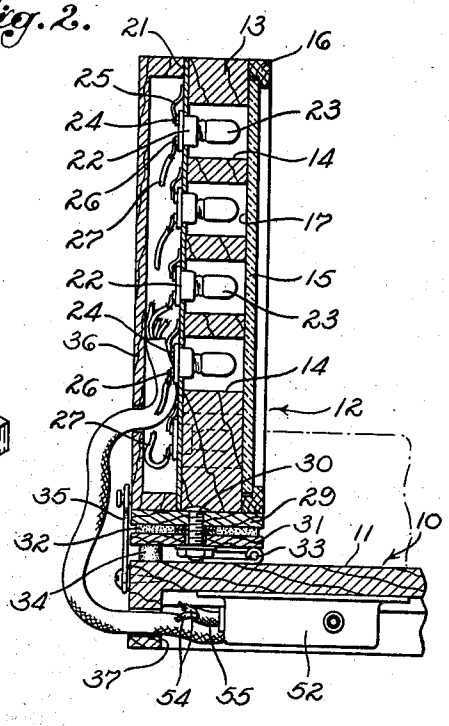


Fig. 3.

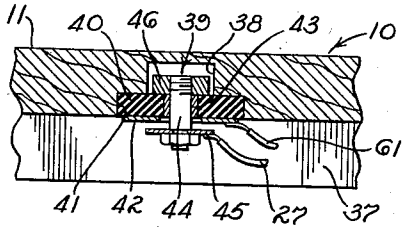


Fig. 4.

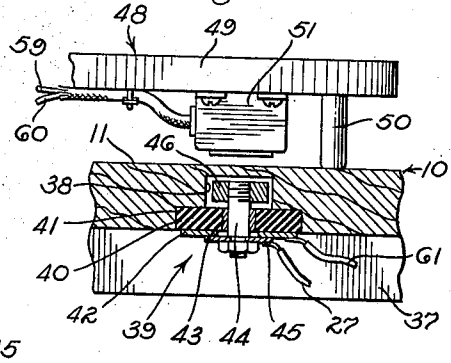
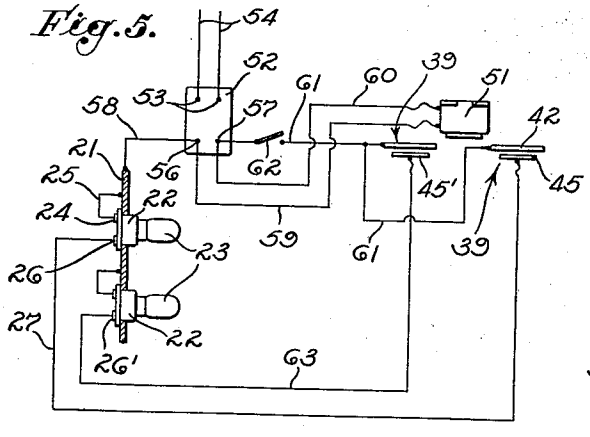


Fig. 5.



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2,220,455

AMUSEMENT DEVICE

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7 Claims. (Cl. 273—161)

This invention relates to an amusement device, and more particularly to a device of the type widely known as an "Ouija" board. In the usual devices of this type known in the art, the board is provided with letters, numerals, and other indicia plainly visible on the upper surface thereof, and a planchette is provided for random movement over the board. The usual method of operation of such devices is for one or more participants to place the fingers of a hand or hands on the planchette to move it over the board, the planchette periodically stopping at various letters, numerals, and other indicia on the board to indicate words and other signs to the participants. The primary disadvantage of such prior art devices is that the cooperation between the planchette and the indicia on the board is plainly visible to the participants, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to secure true random movement of the planchette over the board. It is therefore a primary object of this invention to provide a device of this general type in which the letters, numerals, or other indicia are placed at a point remote from the operating zone of the planchette so that no immediate cooperation is apparent therebetween to the participants, and including means for selectively designating the letters, numerals, or indicia in response to movement of the planchette over the board.

It is a further object of my invention to provide a playing board having neither letters, numerals, nor indicia thereon, and a planchette movable over said board, and also including an indicator board separate from the playing board having numerals, letters, and indicia thereon adapted to be illuminated in response to movement of the planchette over the board.

It is a further object of the invention to provide such a device in which the indicator board is placed at a point remote from the operating zone of the planchette.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a device as described in the preceding paragraphs, in which the indicator board is pivoted relative to the playing board, and it is also an object to provide such a board in which the indicator board is hinged to the playing board so as to permit the device to be folded into a compact parcel.

Another object of my invention is to provide a device of the character set forth hereinabove, in which magnetic means are provided to operate electrical switches adapted to energize separate lighting circuits in response to movement of a planchette over the playing board.

Other objects and advantages of my invention will be apparent from the following specification and the drawing, which is merely for the purpose of illustration, and in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of my invention, partly broken away to show the internal construction of the indicator panel.

Fig. 2 is a sectional elevational view taken on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1, showing one of the switches in open position.

Fig. 4 is a sectional view similar to Fig. 3, showing one of the switches in closed position and the planchette thereover.

Fig. 5 is a wiring diagram of a representative portion of the electrical circuit of my device.

Referring to Fig. 1 of the drawing, I show a board 10 having a plain upper surface 11 to which is connected an indicating means 12. As shown in Fig. 2, the indicating means 12 has a panel 13 formed of wood or other suitable material, provided with bores 14 therethrough. The front of the panel 13 is covered by a translucent plate 15, formed of glass or other suitable material, which is held in place relative to the panel 13 by a molding 16 secured thereto. Formed on, or secured relative to, the translucent plate 15 on the back 17 thereof are indicia 18, preferably consisting of letters 19 and numerals 20. It will be understood, however, that any other desired indicia may be substituted therefor or added thereto without departing from the spirit of my invention. It is to be noted that each of the indicia 18 registers with one of the bores 14 in the panel 13, and that the indicia are normally invisible from the front of the panel.

Secured to the back of the panel 13 is a plate member 21 preferably formed of an electrical conducting substance such as copper or brass, which has mounted thereon a plurality of lamp sockets 22 each of which extends into one of the bores 14 and contains a lamp 23 therein. Each of the lamp sockets 22 has one electrical terminal 24 connected by means of a wire 25 to the plate member 21, and has another terminal 26 connected by a wire 27 as described hereinafter. Secured to the bottom of the panel 13 is a base member 29 pivoted by means of a pivot pin 30 to a sub-base member 31, the base member and the sub-base member being spaced apart by anti-friction means such as felt pads 32. The sub-base member 31 is hinged by means of hinges 33 to the upper surface 11 of the board 10, and a stop 34 is provided on the board 10 to position

the indicating means 12 substantially normal to the board, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. A latch 35, of any type well known in the art, is provided between the board 10 and a rear cover 36 suitably secured to the plate member 21 to cover the back thereof.

As shown in Fig. 2, the board 10 is provided with a recessed opening 37 on the under side thereof, and a plurality of bores 38 are formed upwardly in the board, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4. Each one of the bores 38 is provided with switch means 39 comprising a plate 40 pressed into or otherwise secured in a counterbore 41, having secured to its lower face an electrical contact plate 42. The plate 40 is provided with a central bushing 43 adapted to journal a pin 44 to the lower end of which is fixed an electrical contact 45 and to the upper end of which is secured a magnetic plate 46 formed of iron or other magnetic material.

A planchette 48 is provided, having a top plate member 49 and leg elements 50 on which the planchette is adapted to be moved over the upper surface 11 of the board 10. Suitably secured to the under surface of the top plate member 49 of the planchette 48 is a magnetic means 51 which is preferably in the form of an electromagnet of a type well known in the art, although it will be understood that any type of magnetic means may be substituted therefor without departing from the invention.

An electrical transformer 52 is preferably provided in the recessed opening 37 connected to the lower surface of the board 10, of a type well known in the art, and has high potential terminals 53 to which are connected wires 54 enclosed in a cable 55 which leads to any suitable source of electrical energy (not shown). The transformer 52 is also provided with low potential terminals 56 and 57, the terminal 56 being connected by a wire 58 to the plate member 21. The terminal 56 is also connected by a wire 59 to one terminal of the magnetic means 51. The other low potential terminal 57 of the transformer 52 is connected to the other terminal of the magnetic means 51 by a wire 60 and is connected by a wire 61 having a switch 62 in the line thereof to each of the electrical contact plates 42. It will thus be understood that one terminal of each lamp socket 22 is connected through a wire 25 to the panel 21 which is in turn connected to one low potential terminal 56 of the transformer means 52. The other terminals 26 and 26' of the lamp sockets 22 are connected through wires 27 and 63, respectively, to the electrical contacts 45 and 45' of each of the switch means 39.

In operation, each of the switch means 39 is normally in open position, as shown in Fig. 3, in which the lamp circuit connected thereto is open and the lamp is dark, at which time the indicia 18 are not visible from the front of the indicating means 12. By closing the switch 62, each of the switch means 39 is connected into the corresponding lamp circuit, and the device is ready for operation. The planchette 48 may then be moved at random over the upper surface 11 of the board 10, and when the magnetic means 51 thereof is positioned directly above any one of the bores 38 and the switch means 39 therein, the magnetic means 51 will exert an attractive magnetic force on the magnetic plate 46, causing the magnetic plate 46 to move upwardly in the bore 38, carrying with it the pin 44 and electrical contact 45 until the electrical contact 45 engages the electrical contact plate 42, at which time the electrical circuit will be completed from the transformer 52 through the wire 61, the electrical contact plate 42, the contact 45, and the wire 27, through the lamp 23, the wire 25, the plate member 21, and the wire 58, back to the other terminal 56 of the transformer 52, at which time the lamp connected to that particular switch will be energized to illuminate the corresponding indicia 18 on the transverse plate 15 to render it visible from the front of the plate. As soon as the planchette 48 is moved so as to move the magnetic means 51 out of registry with the particular switch means 39, the magnetic field between the magnetic means 51 and the magnetic plate 46 will be decreased in strength to such an extent that the magnetic plate 46, the pin 44, and the electrical contact 45 will move downwardly by gravity so as to break the contact between the contact 45 and the contact plate 42, and the particular lamp connected to the switch means 39 which has just been opened will be de-energized, and the indicia opposite thereto will again become invisible from the front of the indicating means 12. It will thus be understood that by moving the planchette 48 over the surface 11 of the board 10, the indicia 18 will successively become visible and invisible from the front of the indicating means 12, depending upon the position of the planchette on the board 10. Thus, by movement of the planchette 48 over the surface of the board 10, successive illumination of the various indicia 18 may be made to spell out words, messages, or give other signs to the operators of the planchette. It will also be noted that the upper surface 11 of the board 10 constitutes a zone in which the planchette 48 is moved, and that the indicating means 12 is remote from this zone so that there will be no apparent cooperation between the movement of the planchette and the indicia 18.

The indicating means 12 may be pivoted on the pivot pin 30 so as to assume any desired degree of angularity relative to the surface of the playing board 10, and the indicating means may be folded on the hinges 33 so as to lie flush with the board 10 to make a convenient sized package for transportation or storage when the device is not in use.

Although I have shown and described a preferred embodiment of my device, it will be understood that certain parts thereof are the equivalents of other parts that may be substituted therefor without departing from the invention, and accordingly I wish to be afforded the full scope of the following claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board having a plurality of stations, the upper surface of the board being free of any indication of the locations of said stations; a planchette freely movable over said board across said stations; remotely situated indicating means having indicia thereon representing said stations; electrical means for indicating said indicia; and means for operating said electrical means in response to positioning of said planchette at said stations.

2. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board having a plurality of stations, the upper

surface of the board being free of any indication of the locations of said stations; a planchette freely movable over said board across said stations; indicating means, including a translucent plate member having indicia on the back thereof representing said stations, said indicia normally being invisible from the front of said plate member; and means for illuminating said indicia in response to positioning of said planchette at said stations so as to render said indicia visible from the front of said plate member.

3. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board having a plurality of stations, the upper surface of the board being free of any indication of the locations of said stations; a planchette freely movable over said board across said stations; indicating means having electrically illuminated indicia thereon representing said stations; a switch means at each of said stations for controlling the illumination of the corresponding electrically illuminated indicia; and magnetic means associated with said planchette for actuating said switch means in response to positioning of said planchette at said stations.

4. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board; a planchette freely movable over said board; indicating means, including a plate member having a plurality of indicia thereon, and a lamp adapted to illuminate each of said indicia; a plurality of electric switches beneath the upper surface of said board at control stations on the board corresponding to said indicia, each of said switches being electrically connected to one of said lamps, the upper surface of said board being free of any indications of the locations of said stations; and means for actuating said switches in response to positioning of said planchette at the corresponding stations, so as to illuminate said indicia.

5. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board; a planchette freely movable over said board; indicating means, including a plate member having a plurality of indicia thereon, and a lamp adapted to illuminate each of said indicia; a plurality of normally open electric switches beneath the upper surface of said board at control stations on the board corresponding to said indicia, each of said switches being electrically connected to one of said lamps, the upper surface of said board being free of any indications of the locations of said stations; and magnetic means associated with said planchette for closing said switches in response to positioning of said planchette at the corresponding stations, so as to illuminate said indicia.

6. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board; a planchette freely movable over said board; an indicating panel, including a translucent plate member having a plurality of indicia on the back thereof, said indicia normally being invisible from the front of said plate member, and a lamp adapted to illuminate each of said indicia; a plurality of switches associated with said board at stations on the board corresponding to said indicia, each of said switches being electrically connected to one of said lamps; and a magnet on said planchette for magnetically actuating said switches in response to positioning of said planchette over the corresponding stations, so as to illuminate said indicia.

7. In a Ouija board device designed for avoiding distraction or mental bias on the part of operators thereof by movement of parts of the device relative to indicia, the combination of: a board having a plurality of stations, the upper surface of the board being free of any indication of the locations of said stations; a planchette freely movable over the upper surface of said board across said stations; remotely situated indicating means having a plurality of indicia thereon representing said stations; and means for indicating said indicia in response to positioning of said planchette over said stations.

JOHN P. McCARTHY.