

March 12, 1968

C. G. SANTORA
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY GAME

3,372,935

Filed Feb. 12, 1965

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

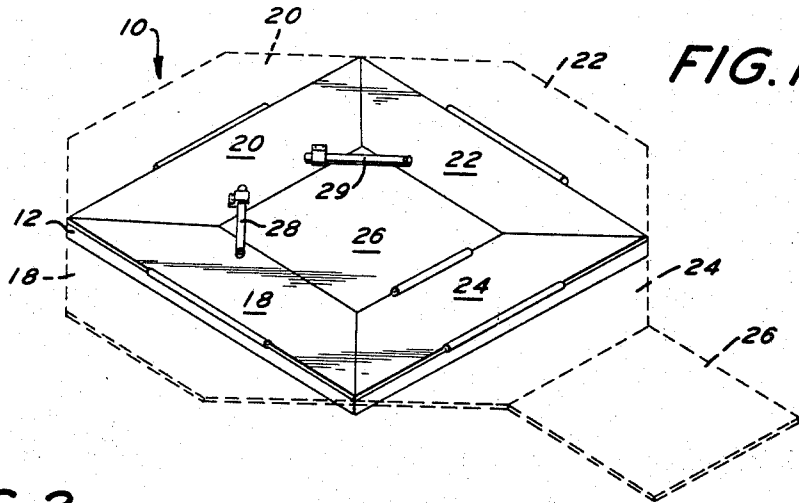
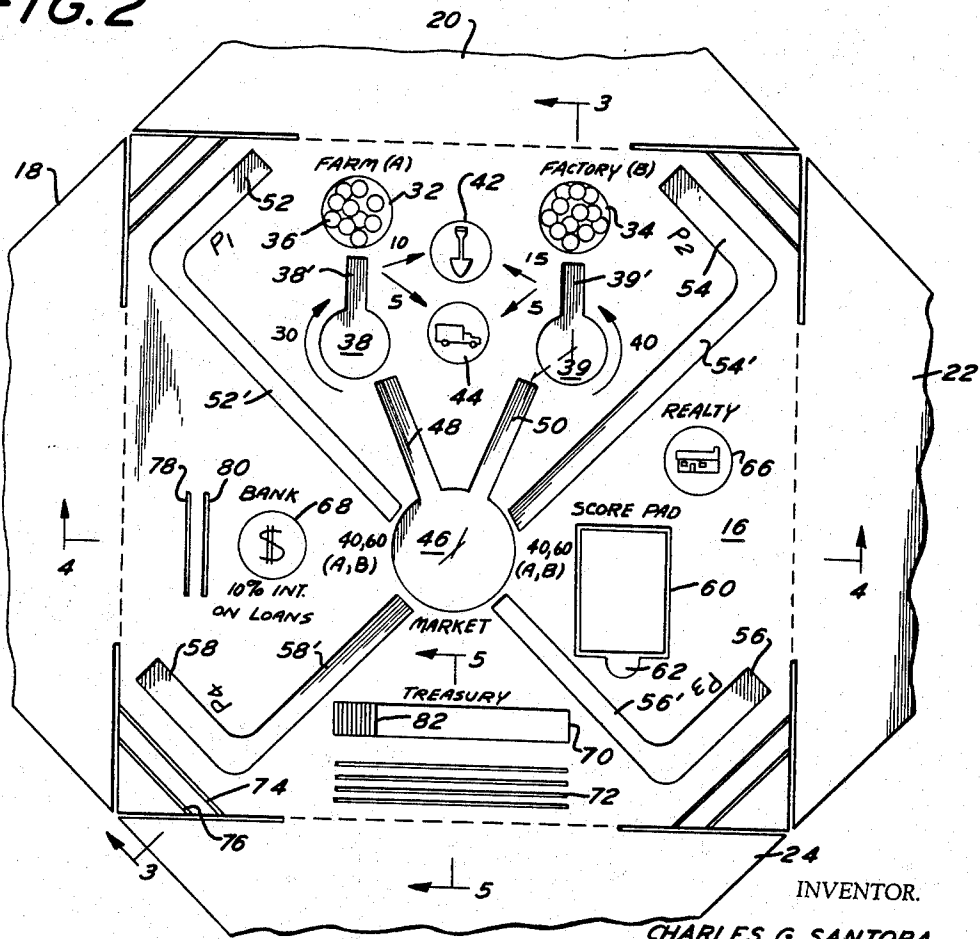


FIG. 1

FIG. 2



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FIG. 3

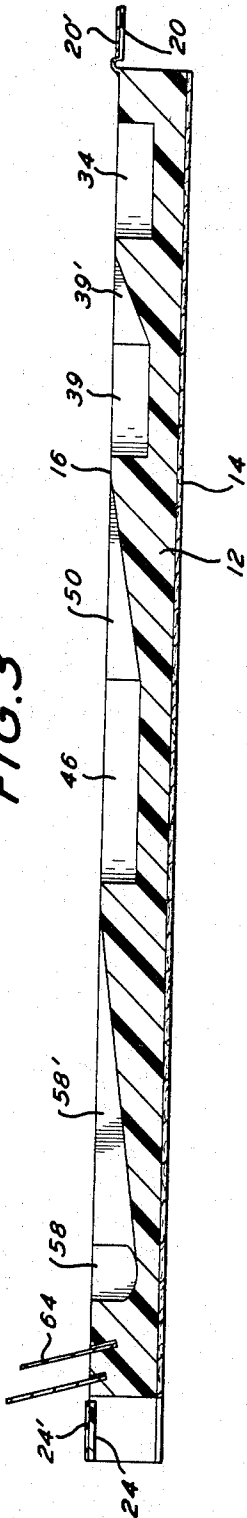


FIG. 4

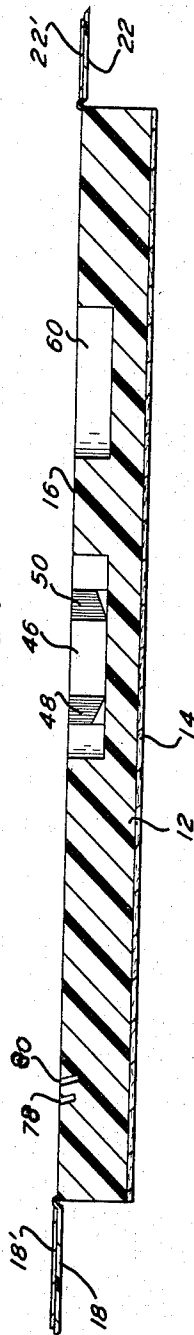


FIG. 5

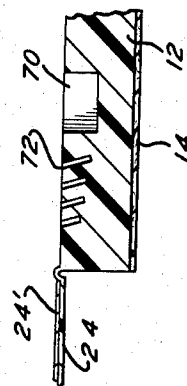


FIG. 6



FIG. 8

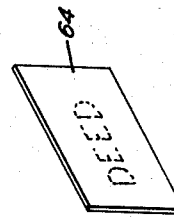


FIG. 7



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ECONOMIC ACTIVITY GAME
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Filed Feb. 12, 1965, Ser. No. 432,261
7 Claims. (Cl. 273-130)

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A game of skill which is a simplified representation of the economic system where economic activities are obtained by bid and assets are acquired by economic transactions in series play comprising a game board having a centrally disposed receptacle representing the market. A plurality of player positions are spaced equally around the periphery of the board. The winner of the game is the player having acquired the most points corresponding to assets in a prestipulated number of cycles. The board has player receptacles thereon at each player position. Chutes slope down from the centrally disposed receptacle toward the player receptacles so that assets may be delivered from the market to each player receptacle. Storage receptacles for farm and factory units are supplied on the game board. At least one slot is provided adjacent each player receptacle in which activity cards may be placed. Transfer receptacles are provided adjacent the market receptacle. There are chutes which slope down from points adjacent the farm and factory receptacles to the transfer receptacles. Gravity displaceable game pieces which are used to represent assets are adapted to be disposed in the farm and factory receptacles and are visually distinguishable.

This invention relates to a game, and more particularly to a game of skill which reflects the progress of the players in the accumulation of basic economic assets.

The game of the present invention is a simplified representation of the economic system. The economic system is divided into its simulated components of farm, indicative of livestock and crop production, factory, indicative of production and manufacturing, realty, indicative of real estate and property, labor, transportation, bank, indicative of financial arrangements, and treasury. The game is designed to appeal to players having an education at least comparable to that of the seventh or eighth grade of primary school. No dice or wheels are provided or utilized in the game of the present invention. The game of the present invention may have from two to four players. Although allowing for unlimited skill toward optimum play, the game is nevertheless quite easily learned and can be a source of entertainment and education. Thus, the game of the present invention assists in developing a better understanding of the basic economic structure in which we live and the inherent factors affecting the same.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a novel game.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a novel game involving skill, entertainment and education.

It is an other object of the present invention to provide a game associated with the inherent factors of our basic economic structure.

Other objects will appear hereinafter.

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For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there is shown in the drawings a form which is presently preferred; it being understood, however, that this invention is not limited to the precise arrangements and instrumentalities shown.

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the game of the present invention in its storage disposition.

FIGURE 2 is a partial plan view of the game of the present invention in its open disposition.

FIGURE 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3-3 in FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 4 is a sectional view taken along the line 4-4 in FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 5 is a sectional view taken along the line 5-5 in FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 6 is a perspective view of a chip.

FIGURE 7 is a plan view of a movable member used in playing the game.

FIGURE 8 is a perspective view of a card used in playing the game.

Referring to the drawing in detail, wherein like numerals indicate like elements, there is shown in FIGURE 1 a game in its storage disposition and designated generally as 10.

The game 10 includes a game board 12 having a layer of felt or similar material 14 on its lowermost surface. The game board 12 may be made from a variety of materials which are inexpensive and lightweight, such as cardboard or balsa wood, and preferably, as illustrated from a polymeric plastic material such as polyethylene. As illustrated, the game board 12 is solid. If desired, the game board 12 may be hollow with the layer 14 constituting a bottom wall opposite to the upper playing surface 16.

The game board 12 is provided with a cover comprising a plurality of panels 18, 20, 22 and 24. Each of the panels is hinged to a side of the game board 12 and is in the form of a truncated triangle. One of the panels, such as panel 24, is provided with a panel 26 of rectangular configuration. In the closed solid line disposition of the panels, they conceal the entirety of surface 16. In the open disposition of the panels, they assume the positions illustrated in phantom in FIGURE 1 and partially illustrated in FIGURE 2.

To retain the panels in their closed disposition overlying surface 16, a latch member 28 is provided pivotably connected to panel 18 and adapted to cooperate with a latch on panel 20. It will be noted that latch member 28 extends across a portion of panel 26. A similar latch member 29 is provided pivotably connected to panel 22 and adapted to cooperate with a latch on panel 20.

The game board 12 is provided with storage receptacles 32 and 34 which are adapted to receive and store movable members 36. Members 36 are preferably round marbles. The members 36 adapted to be received within receptacle 32 may be appropriately marked with the letter A and the members to be utilized with receptacle 34 may be marked B. Preferably, the members to be utilized respectively with the receptacles 32 and 34 may be of different colors.

The game board 12 is provided with a transfer receptacle 38 related to receptacle 32 and a transfer receptacle 39 related to receptacle 34. Receptacle 38 is provided with a sloped chute 38' which slopes down toward the receptacle 38. Receptacle 39 is provided with a chute 39'

which slopes down toward receptacle 39 as shown more clearly in FIGURE 3. Indicia 42 representative of labor is applied to the surface 16 between receptacles 32 and 34. Indicia 44 indicative of transportation is applied to surface 16 between receptacles 38 and 39. Game related indicia such as indicia 42 and 44 may be applied by use of paint, decals, etc.

A dispensing receptacle 46 is provided on the game board 12 generally centrally located thereon. Receptacle 46 is provided with a sloped chute 48 extending generally toward receptacle 38 and a sloped chute 50 extending generally toward receptacle 39. Chutes 48 and 50 slope down toward receptacle 46 (note chute 50 in FIGURE 3).

As illustrated, the game 10 is adapted to be played with a maximum of four players. The positions of the players are designated on the game board 12 by the indicia P₁, P₂, P₃ and P₄. These indicia are positioned generally at the corners of the game board 12.

The game board 12 is provided with player receptacles 52, 54, 56 and 58 adjacent the corners thereof. Receptacles 52, 54, 56 and 58 are provided with the sloped chutes 52', 54', 56' and 58', respectively. The chutes extend toward the receptacle 46 and slope downward from the receptacle 46 toward the player receptacles (note in particular, chute 58' in FIGURE 3).

The game board 12 is provided with a receptacle 60 having a sloped finger chute 62. Receptacle 60 is adapted to have disposed therein a score pad and a plurality of cards 64 simulating deeds, as well as slips of paper indicative of bank deposits. The chute 62 facilitates the ease with which access may be had to the elements disposed within receptacle 60. Indicia 66 representative of realty and indicia 68 representative of a bank are applied to the surface 16.

A receptacle 70 is provided in the game board 12 between chutes 56' and 58'. Receptacle 70 is a treasury receptacle for receiving and storing chips 82 having indicia thereon indicative of a dollar value.

A plurality of parallel slots 72 are provided in the game board 12 between the receptacle 70 and panel 24. As shown more clearly in FIGURE 5, the depth of the slots 72 becomes progressively smaller in a direction away from receptacle 70 and toward panel 24. A pair of parallel slots 74 and 76 are provided adjacent each of the player positions P₁, P₂, P₃ and P₄. The slot 74 is deeper than the slot 76. Preferably, the slots 74 and 76 are disposed at a slight angle with respect to the plane of surface 16. Slots 78 and 80 are provided in the board 12 adjacent to the indicia 68.

Complete sets of instructions for playing the game are preferably pasted to the upper surfaces of the panels 18-24 so as to be visible in the open disposition thereof. The instruction sheets are designated by primed numerals on the respective panels. For example, the instruction sheet on panel 18 is designated 18' as shown more clearly at the lefthand end of FIGURE 4. Preferably, the instructions for any particular player are divided into two halves. For example, the instructions for player P₁ would be provided partially on panel 20 and partially on panel 18.

The quantity of deed cards 64 is preferably seven in number, one for each of farm (32), factory (34), labor (42), transportation (44), realty (66), bank (68), and dispensing or market (46). These deed cards are marked with a nominal or face value. The components of the game also include twenty deposit slips in the amount of one hundred dollars, two thousand dollars worth of chips 82, and twelve each of the movable members 36 disposed within the receptacles 32 and 34.

Preliminary to starting the game, the chips 82 are evenly distributed among the players with each player having five hundred dollars worth of chips. The movable members 36 are in their respectively labeled receptacles 32 and 34. A score pad is on the board 12. The cards 64 constituting deeds are disposed upright within the slots 72. The players are seated in places chosen by mutual con-

sent or by drawing lots. The players may mutually decide on some maximum time per move.

A complete game consists of an initial bidding stage, a playing stage of a prescribed number, such as three, pairs of acquisition and clearance periods, and a final inventory stage during which each player's assets are tallied and victory is measured in terms of the number of points scored.

The game is started by the bidding stage which is as follows. Play is started by the player at location P₁ and rotates successively to P₂, P₃ and P₄. Player P₁ begins by either passing or making a bid for any one of the economic activities such as farm, factory, market, etc. Successively, players pass or bid on the first selected economic activity until the same is purchased by the highest bid. A single pass on a given economic activity eliminates that player as a contestant for subsequent bids on that economic activity. The highest bidder receives the deed to the economic activity from the treasury in exchange for the amount of his bid. This deed is then visibly displayed toward the center of the board 12 by placing the same in one of the slots 74 or 76 in front of the player. The bidding process continues until all of the property is sold or until all players have passed in succession following the last acquisition of an activity. The money accumulated in the treasury is evenly divided among the players except for any remainder which is not so divisible and therefore remains in the treasury.

The acquisition period is now commenced. Starting with the player immediately to the left of the last successful bidder, and rotating clockwise, each player in turn makes one move until the last of the farm and factory movable members 36 reaches a consumer, namely a player at one of the positions P₁-P₄. The moving of members 36 is accomplished as follows.

The player who owns the farm or the factory deed may move as many of his members 36 as he wishes from the receptacle 32 or 34 to the receptacle 38 or 39, respectively. In doing so, the player must pay the owners of the deeds to labor and transportation the price indicated on board 12 for each member 36 moved. For example, the player who owns the deed to the farm and who wishes to move one member 36 to receptacle 38 must pay labor ten dollars and transportation five dollars.

If the player who owns the farm or factory also owns one or both of labor and transportation, he of course does not make payment for the one owned when members 36 are moved. Since the movable members are preferably in the form of spheres, the player need only place the member 36 at the top of the chute 38' or 39'. Thereafter, the member 36 will roll into the receptacle. The player who owns the deed to the market exemplified by receptacle 46 may buy any number of the movable members disposed within receptacle 38 or 39 by paying the owner thereof the prescribed fee. For example, the player owning the farm paid a total of fifteen dollars to labor and transportation for each member 36 moved to receptacle 38. In order for the owner of the deed to the market to be able to buy the member 36 and subsequently move the same from receptacle 38 to receptacle 46, the owner of the deed to the market must pay the owner of the farm thirty dollars. The amounts which the respective deed holders must pay in conjunction with selling or moving the members 36 are applied to the surface 16 and illustrated with accompanying arrows in FIGURE 2. The arrows are utilized to designate payments by owners of farm, factory, and market.

The players in addition to being deed holders to various economic activities also assume the role of consumers. As consumers, the players buy the farm or factory units simulated by the members 36 from the player who owns the deed to the market. A maximum purchase of members 36 by the players is suggested. When a player buys a farm unit from the market, he pays the owner of the deed to the market forty dollars for the movable mem-

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ber 36. The player at position P_1 will retain his chips 82 within the receptacle 52. Any members 36 purchased by the last-mentioned player will be removed from receptacle 46 and permitted to roll down chute 52' into receptacle 52. Both chips and spheres may be retained within the receptacle 52.

The player whose turn it is to make a move, must make one of the above moves if he can. If a lack of money prevents such a player from making any of the above moves, he may mortgage the deed to any of his economic activities to obtain the necessary money. To mortgage an economic activity for any reason, the owner of the deed delivers the same to the player who owns the deed to the bank and the latter pays him the amount on the deed. Any mortgage deeds are placed within the slots 78 and 80. The player who mortgages a deed continues to remain the owner thereof but pays ten percent of his mortgage amount as interest during each successive clearance period and has the option of buying it back then at its face mortgage value.

The player who owns the deed to the bank may decline the loan transaction, in which instance the same negotiation can be made with the treasury. Otherwise, the player whose turn it is to make a move passes or deposits any sum of chips 82 that he desires, but in hundred dollar amounts with the player who owns the deed to the bank in exchange for deposit slips. The player who owns the deed to the bank can purchase the one hundred dollar deposit slips from the treasury at ninety dollars per slip. The slips may always be used as money at their face value of one hundred dollars.

The clearance period commences with the player to the left of the player who purchased the last movable member 36 from the player owning the deed to the market thereby concluding the acquisition period. Each player pays the rent designated on each deed which he holds to the player who owns the deed to realty. If necessary, deeds should be mortgaged in order to make this payment. Interest is also to be paid by each player to his mortgagee. If interest cannot be paid, the total economic activity is forfeited to the mortgagee. A player who cannot meet any obligation during the game is then given credit toward his final score for the inadequate assets he does have which are then moved over to the treasury and he is eliminated as a player for the remainder of the game.

Starting again with the same player as set forth for the commencement of the clearance period above, bids are then made as at the start of the game on any economic activity holdings of the treasury and the successful bidder obtains the pertinent holding on the same basis as it was held by the treasury.

A record is entered on the score pad of the number of members 36 of each kind, that is farm or factory, held by each player. Thereafter, the members 36 are returned to the storage receptacles 32 and 34. Treasury money is then evenly distributed among the players except for any small odd balance. Another acquisition period is then started by the player to the left of the last successful bidder or, if none, started by the same player who initiated the round described above.

Following the completion of the pre-agreed number, such as three, of pairs of acquisition and clearance periods, scoring is entered on the score pad. Starting with the player at position P_1 , each player is given credit for face value plus twenty-five percent of all deeds and deposit slips and all members 36 acquired by him during the game. Currency held by a player is credited only at face value. The points scored should be based on the following tabulation: farm members 36—fifty points; factory members 36—seventy-five points; deposit slips—one hundred twenty-five points; bank deed—fifty points; transportation deed—one hundred points; farm deed—one hundred fifty points; factory deed—two hundred points; labor deed—two hundred fifty points; market deed—three

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hundred points; realty deed—three hundred twenty-five points. After tallying the points for each player, the winner is the player who has acquired the largest number of points.

After completion of the game, the components are placed in their normal receptacles and/or locations as illustrated in FIGURE 2. Thereafter, the panels of the cover are pivoted to the solid line disposition illustrated in FIGURE 1 and the latch members 28 and 29 are secured. Thus, the game 10 is now in its storage position with the panels retaining the elements in their respective receptacles and/or locations. That is, panel 20 will retain the members 36 within the receptacles 32 and 34 during the closed or storage disposition of the game 10.

The use of different colors to distinguish the different economic activities mentioned above is desirable. Also, the chutes 38', 39', 48, 50, 52', 54', 56' and 58' are preferably concave to facilitate rolling the members 36 therealong.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes thereof and, accordingly, reference should be made to the appended claims, rather than to the foregoing specification as indicating the scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. A game apparatus comprising a game board, said game board having a centrally disposed receptacle, said game board having a plurality of player positions substantially equally spaced around the periphery of the game board, a player receptacle at each player position on said game board, chutes sloping downward from said centrally disposed receptacle and extending toward said player receptacles, a pair of spaced storage receptacles on said game board, said game board having at least one slot adjacent each player receptacle, each of said receptacles and slots being on the upper surface of said game board, a pair of transfer receptacles on said game board adjacent said central receptacle, said transfer receptacles having chutes sloping downward from points adjacent said storage receptacles to said transfer receptacles, and gravity replaceable game pieces adapted to be disposed in said storage receptacles and being visually distinguishable.

2. A game apparatus as set forth in claim 1 wherein the player chutes include radial extensions extending from points adjacent said central receptacle toward the outer edges of the game board and have further extensions substantially perpendicular to said radial extensions.

3. A game apparatus as set forth in claim 1 including an additional pair of chutes communicating with the centrally disposed receptacle.

4. A game apparatus as set forth in claim 1 including an opening in the upper surface of the game board adapted to receive chips therein, and a writing pad received in a recess on the top surface of said game board.

5. A game apparatus as set forth in claim 4 including a plurality of slots substantially parallel to an edge of said opening adapted to receive deeds therein, said slots being in the top surface of said game board and being of varying depths.

6. A game apparatus as set forth in claim 2 including a pair of slots in the top surface of said game board adjacent each player receptacle for receiving deeds therein, said slots being of different depths and being parallel to said further extensions of said player chutes.

7. A game apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the chutes extending toward the player receptacles include radial extensions extending from points adjacent said central receptacle towards the outer periphery of the game board, said chutes having further extensions substantially perpendicular to said radial extensions, a pair of chutes communicating with said centrally disposed receptacle and sloping down toward said centrally disposed receptacle, an opening in the upper surface of said game board adapted to receive chips therein, and slots in the

upper surface of said game board, in addition to those adjacent the player receptacles for receiving cards therein.

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