July 14, 1964 H. G. MOSS 3,140,876

WORD GAME PIECES HAVING CORRELATED INDICIA ON A PLURALITY OF FACES

Filed Sept. 10, 1962 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

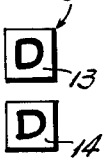


Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

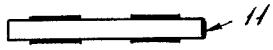


Fig. 5

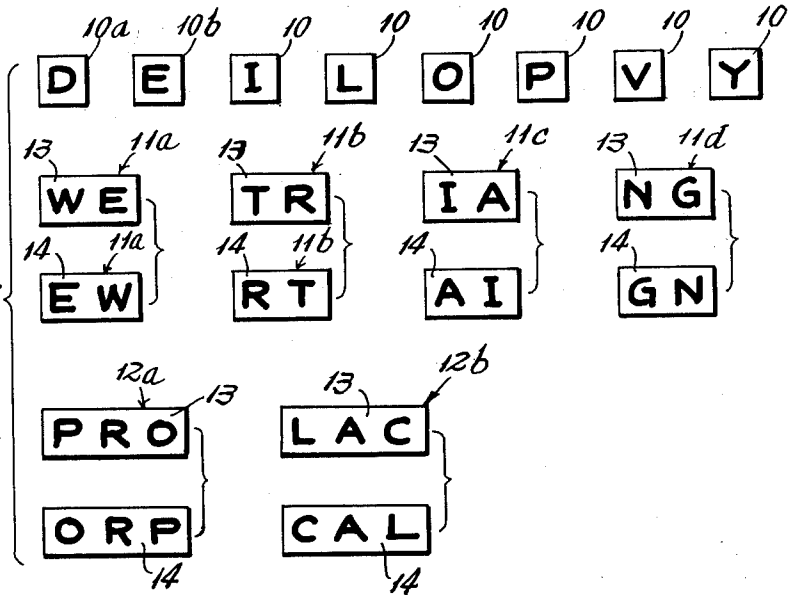


Fig. 6

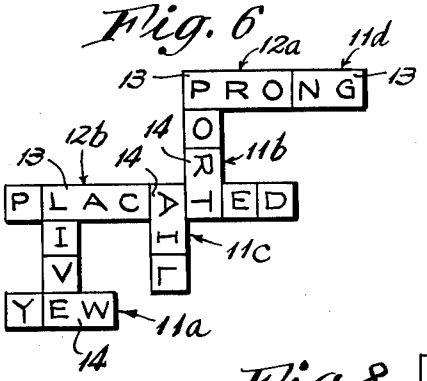


Fig. 7

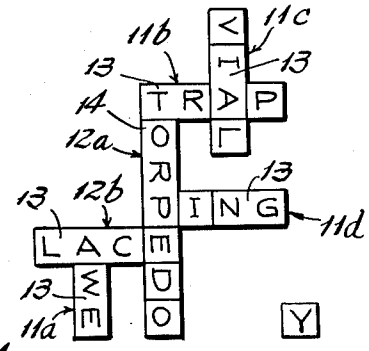
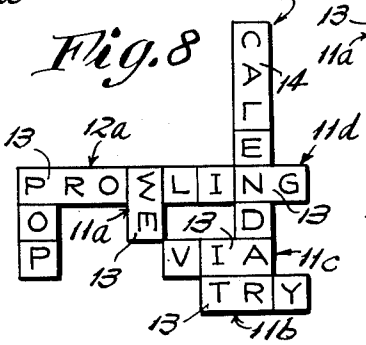


Fig. 8



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WORD GAME PIECES HAVING CORRELATED INDICIA ON A PLURALITY OF FACES

Filed Sept. 10, 1962 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 9

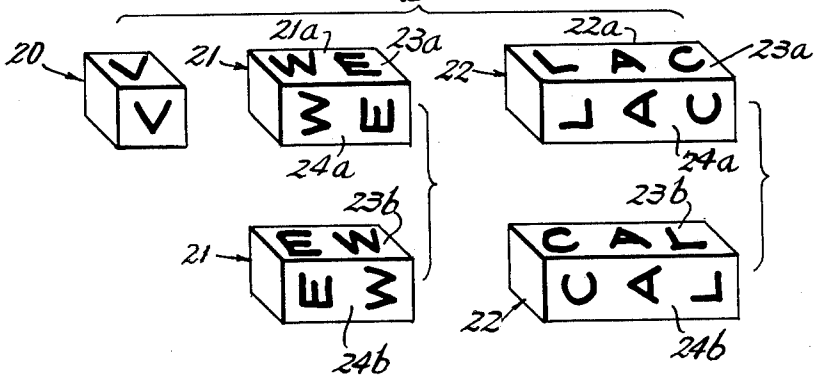
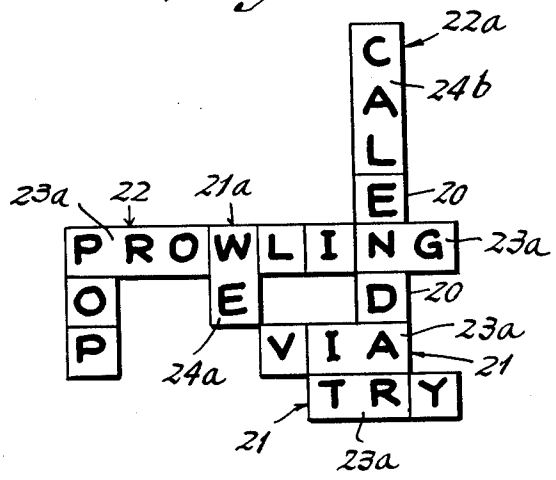


Fig. 10



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3,140,876

WORD GAME PIECES HAVING CORRELATED INDICIA ON A PLURALITY OF FACES

Harry G. Moss, 80 Santa Fe Ave., Hamden, Conn., assignor of one-third to Gertrude R. Sperling and one-third to Charlotte F. Moss, both of Hamden, Conn.

Filed Sept. 10, 1962, Ser. No. 222,610
7 Claims. (Cl. 273—137)

This invention relates to games, and more particularly to games which are played with movable pieces to form words.

In my copending application Serial No. 862,308, now Patent No. 3,053,537, there is illustrated and described a word building game having for its object to provide an interesting and instructive game involving the use of playing pieces of several different kinds or classes, some being substantially square and having single letters of the alphabet, others being elongate and having equispaced thereon two letters which are frequently found adjacent in English words, and others having three similarly frequently adjacent letters, the object of the game being to combine the pieces to form as many complete words as the player can using a predetermined number of pieces of each kind selected at random from larger groups of pieces.

In the form of my invention illustrated and described in said application, in order to provide for easy reading of the words when the letters on a multiple letter piece are arranged in vertical rows and to permit the order of the letters to be reversed, the letters are mounted on disks which are rotatably mounted on the pieces to rotate through 360°. While this adjustability of the letters was quite a convenience in playing the game, the cost of producing the pieces in durable form by known methods was found to be prohibitively high so that the cost to the vast majority of the public was too great.

Therefore, recourse is being had to another species of my said invention which can be manufactured and sold at an acceptable cost and which is illustrated and described herein.

In the present embodiment of my invention, instead of the letters on the elongate multiple letter pieces being rotatable, they are printed or otherwise provided on the pieces so as to be permanently positioned upright to the longitudinal edges of the pieces and on at least two sides of each piece, the letters on one side being in the reverse order to those on the other side. For example, one side of the piece may carry the letters arranged "CAL" while on the other side the letters would be arranged "LAC," thus permitting the player to use the piece for either combination of letters merely by turning the piece so that the side having the desired combination of letters is uppermost.

This is an advantageous arrangement since the two combinations of letters are ever present, one or the other being made visible by the player merely by turning over the piece. The actual appearance of the letters in the reverse order is more suggestive of the possible use of the piece than would be the case if the letters were rotatable as in my said application and had to be rotated manually to produce the combination the player had in mind.

With the arrangement of the letters permanently positioned on two sides of the piece, when the piece is played so that the word is to be read vertically, some slight difficulty may be encountered at first in reading the word, since the letters would be sidewise, but this can be overcome by the player turning his head slightly to the side.

In the form of my invention in which the letters are on two sides only of the piece, the piece is preferably relatively thin and oblong in cross-section and carries the letters on its opposite broad faces.

However, to avoid any inconvenience in reading the words on which the letters are vertically disposed, the piece may be made to have a square cross-section with the letters on the multi-letter pieces being provided on two of the sides so as to be upright to the longitudinal edge of the piece, to be read horizontally, and the letters on the other two sides being placed parallel to the longitudinal edges of the piece, to be read vertically, the letters reading the same way but reversed in order on opposite sides of the piece. For instance, the piece having the letters "C," "A" and "L" are displayed as "CAL" on one side and "LAC" on the opposite side. On an adjacent side of the piece the letters are displayed

"C"
A
L

while on the opposite side they are displayed

"L"
A
C

The scoring may be done according to any prescribed rules. Preferably, the value of the score for forming a word is related to the number of letters contained in the word so that the longer the word formed by the player the higher the score; and there may be a penalty applied for pieces left in the player's hand which at the end of each "hand" cannot be used to form a word.

Other features and advantages will hereinafter appear.

In the accompanying drawings—

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a single-letter piece;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of a double-letter piece;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of a triple-letter piece;

FIG. 4 is a longitudinal section of a triple-letter piece;

FIG. 5 is a composite view representing fourteen pieces assumed to have been taken from a bank to form a player's hand, the obverse and reverse sides of each double and triple-letter pieces being shown bracketed together;

FIG. 6 is a plan view of a crossword pattern formed by using the pieces shown in FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a view similar to FIG. 6, showing a different pattern made with the same pieces as those used in FIG. 6 except for one unused piece shown at the side displaying the letter "Y";

FIG. 8 is a view similar to FIG. 6, showing the same pieces used to form another pattern;

FIG. 9 is a composite view showing a form of my invention in which the pieces are square in cross-section and the multi-letter pieces have letters displayed on the four oblong sides, the letters on opposite sides being in reverse order and the letters on one pair of opposite sides reading horizontally and those on the other pair reading vertically; and

FIG. 10 is like FIG. 6, but showing the four-sided pieces like those of FIG. 9.

The game of this invention, in the embodiments disclosed herein in FIGS. 1 to 8, comprises a plurality of playing pieces of three different kinds. There are preferably forty-eight square pieces **10**, each carrying a single letter, as, for instance, the pieces **10***a* carrying the letter "D," the pieces **10***b* carrying the letter "E" as indicated in FIG. 5. There may be thirty rectangular pieces **11** having the same width as the square pieces **10** but having twice the length and each having two letters side by side as, for instance, the pieces **11***a* carrying the letters "W" and "E," the pieces **11***b* carrying the letters "R" and "T," the pieces **11***c* carrying the letters "A" and "I," and the pieces **11***d* carrying the letters "N" and "G" as shown in FIG. 5.

There are provided eighteen rectangular pieces **12** having the same width as the pieces **10** and **11** but having three times the length and each piece **12** carries side by side three letters, as for example, the piece **12***a* which

carries the letters "P," "R" and "O," and the piece **12***b* which carries the letters "L," "A" and "C."

In the broader aspects of this invention, there may be any desired number of different pieces. The letter arrangements on the several pieces are optional, bearing in mind only that they must be capable of forming words in the particular language for which the game is designed. Also, there may be longer pieces, for instance such as would carry in equispaced relation four, five or more letters.

Of course, there may be a larger or smaller number of triple-letter pieces **12** or double-letter pieces **11** or single-letter pieces **10**.

A selection of pieces and the letter designations thereon which has proven very satisfactory in practice is given below.

50 single-letter pieces:

A (5); B (3); D (3); E (8); F (1); G (2); I (4); J (1); K (1); L (1); M (2); N (1); O (6); R (1); T (2); U (3); V (1); W (1); X (1); Y (1); Z (2).

30 double-letter pieces:

WE	TH	YE
ND	TR	FA
DE	SP	GO
ST	OO	WH
IN	MI	AI
FL	AT	AN
LY	SH	TI
AM	KI	NG
IO	CH	LI
QU	NK	MO

20 triple-letter pieces:

RUS	LAC	ION
IVE	CER	TED
PAR	TRA	FOR
DIS	CIT	NER
REL	CON	ESS
ATE	PER	PRO
CRO	LIT	

In my prior application Serial No. 862,308, now Patent No. 3,053,537, the letter designations on the multi-letter pieces were provided on rotatable carriers so that the letters can be read upright from left to right or from right to left horizontally and from bottom to top or top to bottom perpendicularly in forming crossword patterns of words. However, the cost of producing the pieces with rotatable letter-carrying disks by known methods, as pointed out above, was found to be prohibitively high for mass sales of a game of this character.

To meet this situation, recourse is had to other species of my game which are described and illustrated herein in which the letters are carried directly on the surfaces of the pieces in fixed positions and yet are capable of being used in crossword patterns in the same way and with the same results as the pieces disclosed in my said copending application.

In the species of the invention described in FIGS. 1 to 8 inclusive, the pieces **10**, **11** and **12** are rectangular in cross-section and have substantially less height than breadth and are provided on opposite sides with flat surfaces on which the letters are displayed, thus forming obverse faces **13** and reverse faces **14**, the illustrations of opposite faces being bracketed in FIG. 5.

According to the present invention as shown in FIGS. 1 to 8 inclusive, the letters displayed on the obverse faces **13** of the multi-letter pieces are shown in reverse order on the reverse faces **14**—the letters on both faces being upright relative to the longitudinal edges of the pieces and reading across the pieces in the same direction but in reverse order. For instance, the piece **11***a* shown in FIG. 5 has on its obverse face **13** the letters "WE" while on the reverse face **14** of the piece **11***a* the letters are displayed "EW." The same is true of the two-letter pieces **11***b*, **11***c* and **11***d* shown in FIG. 5. The three-letter piece **12***a* having the letters "P," "R" and "O" has the letters

arranged on the obverse face **13** "PRO" while on the reverse face **14** the letters are arranged "ORP," and the same is true of the other illustrated three-letter piece **12***b*.

Thus there are provided two-letter sequences for each of the multi-letter pieces **11** and **12**, and this, it will be noted, increases the opportunity for forming words without increasing the number of pieces.

The single-letter pieces need not have letters displayed on opposite sides; however, it is advantageous to do so since, by having the letters on both faces **13** and **14** as indicated in FIG. 1, the letter is displayed to the player at all times without turning the piece over to see the letter.

In playing the game with the pieces **10**, **11** and **12**, all the pieces are placed in a bag or other container and tumbled or shuffled. Each player withdraws at random or is dealt from the bank without inspection a predetermined number of single-letter pieces **10**, a predetermined number of double-letter pieces **11** and a predetermined number of triple-letter pieces **12**. In the examples herein given by way of illustration, each player receives fourteen pieces—two triple, four double and eight single-letter pieces and this may constitute a playing set or hand.

Assuming for the purpose of explanation that the game is to be played solitaire or in case the play is similar to duplicate bridge which will be later described, a player endeavors to obtain the highest score from his pieces by selecting from the pieces which he has obtained from the bank such pieces as he considers will make words juxtaposed crossword-fashion either horizontally or vertically and such additional words as can be formed by juxtaposing other pieces either horizontally or vertically in combination with pieces already played.

Assuming that the player obtained from the bank all the pieces shown in FIG. 5, after due consideration he may arrange them as shown in FIG. 6, forming one eight-letter word "Placated," one five-letter word "PRONG," two four-letter words "PORT" and "LIVE," and two three-letter words "YEW" and "AIL."

The rules made for playing in this and the following examples are as follows, and this is only by way of explanation, it being understood that any rules suitable to the players may be prearranged:

The value of each word is determined by multiplying the number of letters in a word by the next higher number. For example, a two-letter word scores 6 (2 multiplied by 3); a three-letter word scores 12 (3 multiplied by 4); a four-letter word scores 20 (4 multiplied by 5). Thus, in the example given, the score for the word "PLACATED" would be 72 points; the score for the word "PRONG" would be 30 points; the score for the word "YEW" would be 12 points. For the vertically arranged words, the score for the word "PORT" would be 20 points; the score for the word "AIL" would be 12 points; and the score for the word "LIVE" would be 20 points. Thus the total score would be 166.

In placing the pieces, the player would turn the pieces **11** and **12** so that the word formed would read horizontally from left to right or vertically from top to bottom.

The fascination and interest which may be had by the game of the present invention is illustrated by referring to FIGS. 7 and 8 in which identical pieces are shown in different arrangements making different words and producing different scores. For instance, in FIG. 7 there are no eight-letter words—there are four four-letter words, one three-letter word and one seven-letter word, giving a total of 148 points. However, the letter "Y" was unused and that would cause a penalty of 5 points, making a score of 143 points—23 points less than the score with the pieces arranged as shown in FIG. 6.

Contrasted with this, the arrangement of the pieces shown in FIG. 8 would produce a score of 192 points, it being understood that the identical pieces shown in FIG. 6 are used. For instance, as shown in FIG. 8, there are two eight-letter words—the word "PROWLING" and the

word "CALENDAR." There are three three-letter words and two two-letter words.

In making the arrangements shown in FIGS. 6, 7 and 8, it will be noted that the piece **12***b* having the letters "L," "A" and "C" in FIG. 6 is placed so that the letters "CAL" displayed on the reverse face **14** are uppermost in FIG. 8 while the piece is placed so that the obverse side is uppermost in FIGS. 6 and 7 displaying the letters "LAC." It will also be noted that the piece **11***c* which contains the letters "I" and "A" has the letters "IA" on its obverse face **13** displayed in FIG. 7 but in the reverse order in FIG. 6, that is, with "AI" on its reverse face **14** displayed. In FIG. 6, the piece **11***a* carrying the letters "W" and "E" is arranged reverse face up displaying "EW" while in FIG. 7 the piece is arranged obverse face up displaying "WE." Thus it will be seen that by providing the playing pieces with the letters on opposite faces, the order of the letters may be varied so as to read upright from left to right in one or the other order, or from top to bottom merely by turning one's head slightly to the right if necessary. This slight inconvenience for some players is offset by avoiding the necessity of rotating the individual letters as is required in my copending application.

It may be, of course, that a player draws pieces from the bank which he cannot use in the pattern to form words as is the case of the piece displaying the letter "Y" in FIG. 7. In such cases, 5 points may be deducted from the score for each letter displayed on the unused pieces whether the letters be single pieces **10**, double pieces **11** or triple pieces **12**.

To avoid the inconvenience of requiring the player to turn one's head or to become accustomed to reading the letters in the vertically disposed words which are lying on their sides, the present invention provides pieces which display letters vertically as well as horizontally.

This is accomplished as shown in FIGS. 9 and 10, by providing pieces **20**, **21** and **22** which are square in cross-section, thus providing four flat faces on which letters may be displayed. As shown in FIG. 9, a two-letter piece **21***a* displays on its obverse face **23***a* the letters "WE" and on its reverse face **23***b* the letters "EW." It also displays on the face **24***a* the letters

"W"
E

and on the opposite face **24***b* the letters

"E"
W

The same is true of the three-letter piece **22***a* which has on its obverse face **23***a* the letters "LAC" and on its reverse face **23***b* the letters "CAL" displayed while on its intermediate face **24***a* it has the letters arranged

"L"
A
C

and on its opposite face **24***b* the letters

"C"
A
L

are displayed. The single-letter pieces **20** each may have its letter displayed on opposite sides or on all six sides if desired.

With the pieces shown constructed like those shown in FIGS. 9 and 10, the player in using the piece in a horizontal word would place the piece with either of the faces **23***a* uppermost depending upon the order in which it is desired to use the letters. In using the piece in a vertical word, the player would place the pieces with the faces **24***a* or **24***b* uppermost according to the word to be formed.

Thus it will be seen that in FIG. 10, which is like FIG. 8, the piece **22***a* is shown with its face **24***b* uppermost displaying the letters

"C"
A
L

Also, that the piece **21***a* is placed with its face **24***a* uppermost displaying the letters

"W"
E

in both cases, permitting the letters to stand vertically.

It will be understood, of course, that the pieces, be they the flat pieces shown in FIG. 5 or the pieces shown in FIG. 9 having square cross-sections, may be made of any suitable material such as wood, plastic or other composition and may have the letters permanently applied by any suitable and convenient means.

In playing the game in the manner of duplicate bridge, each player having drawn down or been dealt the number of different pieces according to the rules, places the pieces in the best arrangement he can within a predetermined time limit to get the highest score, and a record is made of his score. After all the players have completed their play they rotate about the table, one player taking the group of pieces or "hand" of the other player, endeavoring to get the higher score with the same pieces which were used by the first player. This continues until each player has played with each group of pieces drawn down by the respective players, and the player having the highest total score is declared the winner.

In this form of play, the players need not be seated around a table but may be situated in different parts of the room, or even in different rooms, arranging the pieces on boards or their laps or other supports.

The game may also be played in direct competition between several players, each player playing one or more pieces at a time against the pattern formed by the preceding plays, and in this case the score would be determined by the value of the word which the player is able to form or complete, the winner being the player with the highest score at the end of the "hand."

Variations and modifications may be made within the scope of the claims and portions of the improvements may be used without others.

What is claimed is:

1. A word game comprising a plurality of separate rectangular playing pieces each displaying in fixed positions thereon a plurality of letters of the alphabet which frequently are juxtaposed in words of the language for which the game is designed, some of said pieces displaying in juxtaposition two consonants and others of said pieces displaying in juxtaposition two vowels and still others of the pieces displaying consonants and vowels juxtaposed, said vowels and consonants on the several pieces being of uniform size and being equispaced on the pieces whereby the pieces may be juxtaposed in abutting relation to form words of equipaced letters, each multi-letter piece having displayed on opposite faces of the piece the same letters, the letters on one face being in the reverse of the order of the letters on the opposite face.

2. A word game as defined in claim 1, having additional pieces displaying in fixed positions thereon single letters of the alphabet, some of said single-letter pieces each containing single consonants and others of said single-letter pieces each containing a single vowel, the letters of said pieces being of the same size as those displayed on said multi-letter pieces, said single-letter pieces being adapted to be juxtaposed against or interposed between other single-letter pieces and multi-letter pieces to form words, each single-letter piece having the same letter displayed on said multi-letter pieces, said single-letter pieces being adapted to be juxtaposed against or interposed between other single-letter pieces and multi-letter pieces to form words, each single-letter piece having the same letter displayed on opposite faces of the piece.

3. A word game as defined in claim 1, in which each of said multi-letter pieces displays a different combination of letters from the others.

4. A game having a plurality of groups of playing pieces having rectangular faces displaying in fixed positions thereon letters of the alphabet, the pieces in all the

groups having substantially the same width and thickness, each of the pieces in one group having a length equal to its width and displaying respectively single letters of the alphabet, each of the pieces in a second group having a length equal to twice its width and displaying in a line on its obverse oblong face a succession of two letters of the alphabet forming word-parts and on the reverse oblong face a succession of the same letters in reverse order, and the pieces of the third group each having a length three times its width and displaying in a line on its obverse oblong face a succession of three letters of the alphabet forming word-parts and on the reverse oblong face a succession of the same letters in reverse order, said pieces being adapted to be placed in coplanar matching relation edge to edge in horizontal and perpendicular rows to align the letters displayed thereon to collectively form words.

5. A game as defined in claim 4, in which the letters on each of said pieces of said second and third groups are positioned to be substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal edges of the pieces.

6. A game having a plurality of groups of playing pieces having rectangular faces displaying in fixed positions thereon letters of the alphabet, the pieces in all the groups being substantially square in transverse cross-section, the pieces in one group each having a length equal to its width and displaying respectively single letters of the alphabet, the pieces in a second group each having a length equal to twice its width and displaying in a line on each oblong face thereof two letters of the alphabet forming word-parts, and the pieces of the third group each having a length three times its width and displaying in a line on each oblong face thereof three letters of the alphabet forming word-parts, said pieces being adapted to be placed in coplanar matching relation edge to edge in horizontal and perpendicular rows to align the letters displayed thereon to collectively form words, each multi-letter piece having displayed on each pair of opposite oblong faces of the piece the same letters, the letters on one pair of opposite faces standing perpendicular to the longitudinal edges of the piece and the letters on the other pair of opposite faces lying parallel with said longitudinal edges of the piece, the letters on a face of each pair of faces being arranged in one order and the letters on the opposite face of each pair of faces being arranged in the reverse order.

7. A game comprising a plurality of playing pieces having oblong faces displaying in fixed positions thereon letters of the alphabet, all the pieces being square in transverse cross-section, each of said pieces having a length equal to a multiple of its width and displaying equispaced in a line a plurality of letters of the alphabet forming together word-parts, said letters on one pair of opposite faces of said pieces being perpendicular to the longitudinal edges of the pieces and on the other pair of opposite faces being parallel to said longitudinal edges, the letters on one face of each pair of opposite faces being displayed in one order on the other face of each pair of faces being in the reverse order, said pieces being adapted to be placed in coplanar matching relation edge to edge in horizontal and perpendicular rows to align the letters displayed thereon to collectively form words.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

July 14, 1964

Patent No. 3,140,876

Harry G. Moss

It is hereby certified that error appears in the above numbered patent requiring correction and that the said Letters Patent should read as corrected below.

Column 4, line 36, for '"Placated,"' read -- "PLACATED," --; column 6, line 51, for "equipaced" read -- equispaced --; lines 65 to 69, strike out "said multi-letter pieces, said single-letter pieces being adapted to be juxtaposed against or interposed between other single-letter pieces and multi-letter pieces to form words, each single-letter piece having the same letter displayed on"; column 8, line 23, after "order" insert -- and --.

Signed and sealed this 8th day of December 1964.

(SEAL)
Attest:

ERNEST W. SWIDER
Attesting Officer

EDWARD J. BRENNER
Commissioner of Patents