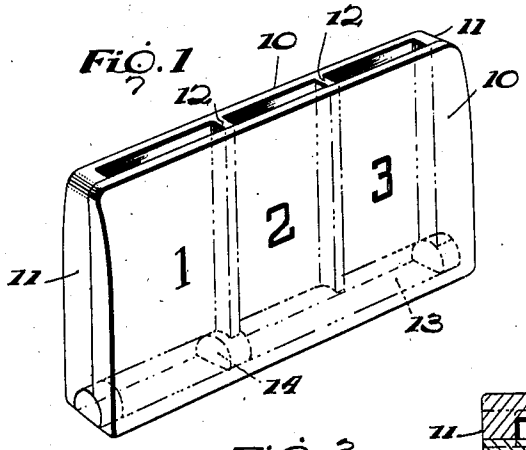
July 20, 1943. E. GARDNER 2,324,691

GAME OR PUZZLE DEVICE

Filed Oct. 19, 1942

Fig. 1



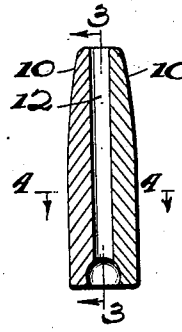


Fig. 2.

Fig. 4.

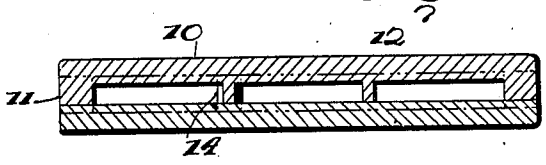


Fig. 3.

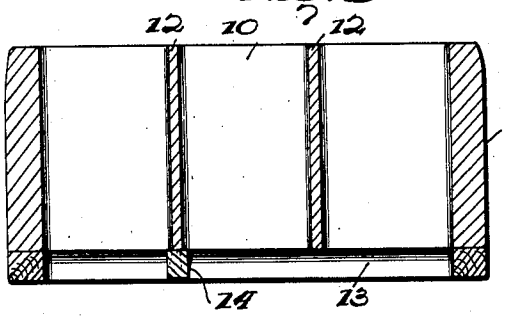
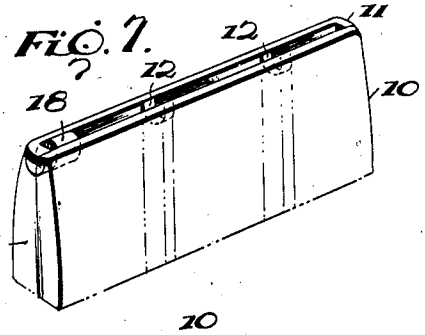


Fig. 7.



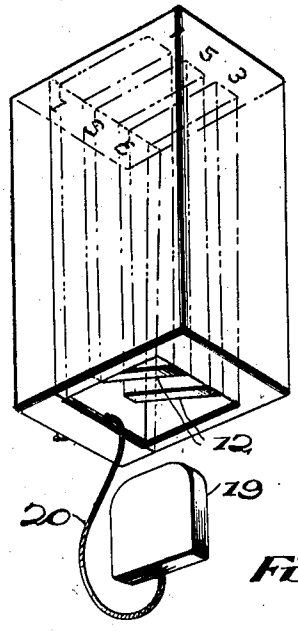
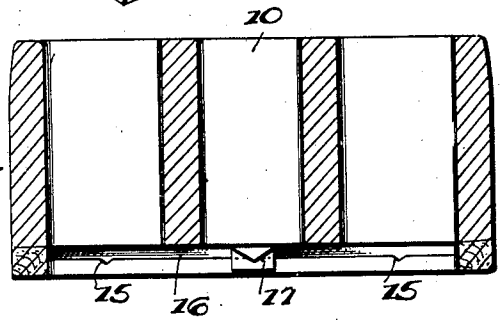


Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.



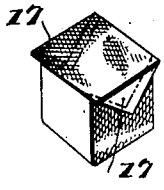


Fig. 8.

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2,324,691

GAME OR PUZZLE DEVICE

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Application October 19, 1942, Serial No. 462,603

14 Claims. (Cl. 273—1)

The present invention relates to games, and more particularly provides a device which is useful in playing a novel type of game and which may also be used as a sort of puzzle.

Generally speaking, the device is primarily intended for use in playing a novel game which is fundamentally a game of chance but in which opportunity is provided for each player to increase his gains and decrease his losses insofar as he is able to develop skill in anticipating his opponent's plans. In other words, the game is modified from games of pure chance by the introduction of a guessing factor by which it becomes possible for each player to reduce the purely mathematical odds against him to such extent as he may be able to outguess his opponent and predict the opponent's intentions.

An important object of the invention is to provide an interesting game or puzzle device of exceedingly simple and inexpensive construction.

Another object is to provide a game which can be played by anyone with a minimum of instruction and experience but which appeals to the beginner as affording opportunity to develop skill and increase his chances of success.

A further object is to provide a device for enabling a skilled player to succeed in winning from his opponent in proportion as the player is able correctly to estimate and appraise the opponent's psychological attitude when confronted with the choice of playing for low stakes with greater chance to win on each play or playing for higher stakes with less chance to win on each play.

Additional objects are concerned with providing a game and a device for playing it having numerous interesting features the principal and more important of which will sufficiently appear as the following specification proceeds.

In the accompanying drawing, which illustrate certain preferred embodiments of a device proposed by the invention,

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment;

Fig. 2 is a cross sectional view of the structure shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a lengthwise sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is another lengthwise sectional view, taken at right angles to the section plane of Fig. 3, on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 5 is a phantom perspective view of a modified form of embodiment;

Fig. 6 is a view corresponding to that of Fig. 3, but showing a further modification;

Fig. 7 is a perspective view, corresponding to that of Fig. 1, but showing a still further modification; and

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of a sliding stopper used in the embodiment shown in Fig. 6.

Referring now to these figures, it will be observed that the game device comprises a generally box-like structure having a plurality of adjoining compartments or chambers which have their tops and bottoms aligned and normally open. This structure or its functional equivalent is common to all the embodiments of the invention. Thus, in the device shown in Figs. 1 to 4 inclusive the box comprises two sides 10 and two ends 11, the sides being connected by a plurality of partitions 12, here shown as two in number, which cooperate with the ends 11 to space the sides apart and divide the box into a plurality of compartments or chambers, here shown as three in number.

Associated with each compartment is an index number, plainly displayed on the outer surface of the box in juxtaposition to each of the compartments. These indicia, shown as the figures 1, 2 and 3 in Fig. 1, are in this form of the device displayed on each of the sides. For convenience, each of the compartments will be hereinafter designated by the index number which it bears in Fig. 1.

The partitions 12 terminate short of the plane of the bottom edges of the sides and these sides are rabbetted or undercut to provide a lengthwise trackway 13 extending along and under the several compartments. A stopper 14 is contained within this trackway so as to be slidable along it, and is retained in the trackway by the overhang of the grooved sides, as is best shown in Fig. 2.

The proportions of the structure are such that each compartment is of the relatively long narrow shape shown in Fig. 4, and the stopper 14 is made substantially as short as the thickness of each partition 12. By sliding the stopper along its trackway it is possible to obstruct the bottom of any selected one only of the compartments if the stopper be positioned at approximately the middle of the bottom of the selected compartment, but it is not possible effectively to obstruct more than one compartment at any single time because, as has been seen, the stopper is best made but little if any longer than the thickness of each partition 12.

The stopper is preferably recessed sufficiently in its trackway so as to be invisible from the sides of the device.

Various rules may be adopted for the playing of the game. While these rules are subject to

considerable variation, the principle underlying each of the games that may be played is the same. This principle can probably best be understood from an explanation of one form of game that may be played.

One of two persons playing the game holds the device and may for convenience be designated the holder, while his opponent may be called the player. The player is provided with a number of playing pieces or tokens in the form of slugs or discs having generally the shape of coins which will fit through any of the compartments when introduced through its top opening and will fall through a bottom opening if the latter is unobstructed by the stopper **14**. The holder moves the stopper **14** along its trackway so as to obstruct one or another of the compartments. This is done in such a way that the player does not know which compartment has been obstructed, and the player then understakes to drop a token through any one of the compartments which he may select. The object is to select one of the compartments which the holder has not obstructed. If the player succeeds, as will be evidenced by the token falling out of the box through the bottom opening, he wins the play by such score as may be agreed upon. If the token fails to fall through, the holder wins by a corresponding score.

It will of course be obvious that, with the device arranged to have three compartments as shown in the illustrated embodiments, the player has two chances out of three to win on each play. These mathematical odds are however offset by assigning different scoring values to the different compartments. In the illustrated embodiments the indicia **1**, **2** and **3** are used and each compartment has a scoring value equal to the index number associated with it. Thus, if the player succeeds in dropping a token through the compartment marked **3**, he scores three points, while if the token drops through compartments **1** or **2**, he scores one or two points, as the case may be.

It will be apparent that proper selection of different scoring values for the several compartments can be made more or less to equalize the odds. Thus, considering the values assigned in Fig. 1, and remembering that the player has mathematically two chances out of three on any given play to succeed in dropping a token through the selected compartment, it will be observed that should he select each of the compartments an equal number of times he will, according to the law of probability, win two out of every three plays but this score will not necessarily be twice that of the holder. The score depends on the value of the compartment selected. If, therefore, the holder chooses always to obstruct compartment **3** and the player selects each of the compartments on an equal number of plays, the total scores of both parties will be equal because theoretically the player will win a scoring value of one and two points out of each three plays and will lose a scoring value of three points.

Should the holder choose to obstruct each time compartment **2**, and should the player select each of the three compartments an equal number of times, the odds will be in favor of the player, since he will win theoretically four points out of each three plays and will lose only two points.

The odds in favor of the player will be increased still further should the holder choose to obstruct on each play compartment **1** and should the player select all the compartments an equal number of times.

Of course in actual play the holder will not always obstruct the same compartment. He will tend most frequently to obstruct the compartment of highest value, because the player will probably tend most frequently to play that compartment. Persons playing the game soon recognize this tendency on the part of each other and herein lies a principal feature of the game because the play soon becomes a contest between the holder and the player in which each tries to outguess the other and predict whether the other will play for the highest stake, which is hard to win, or for one of the lower stakes, which are easier to win.

In using the game players best begin by attempting to appraise the psychological tendency of the opponent to be reckless or conservative, and as the game proceeds the parties constantly attempt to adjust these appraisals to correct and offset errors in them demonstrated by the oppenent's policy or mode of play.

In some cases it is found that the graduated odds fixed by the scoring values **1**, **2** and **3** shown in Fig. 1 do not work out sufficiently equally. In such cases other specific scoring values may be agreed upon. Thus, the compartment designated **1** may be given unit scoring value, the one designated **2** may be assigned a scoring value of three, and the third may be given a scoring value of five or six. For this reason it is sometimes better to eliminate the numerical indicia and substitute different colors for the compartments. The players may then agree on the values of the different colored compartments, just as players in a poker game adopt different values for the different colored chips.

The physical structure of the device may include various useful features facilitating its manipulation by the holder and its use by the player. Thus, in Fig. 6 the trackway is shown provided with a pair of notches **15** cut opposite each other in each of two narrow ledges **16** along the vertical center line of each compartment. Cooperating with these notches are bosses **17** on the special type of stopper shown in Fig. 8. The bosses and notches aid the holder in accurately seating the stopper centrally of the selected compartment and make it unnecessary for him to look at the device while he adjusts the stopper.

In Fig. 7 a further modification is illustrated. In this form of the device the top openings are provided with a trackway containing a stopper **18** which may be substantially like the stopper **14**. In playing with this embodiment tokens are not used. The player simply moves the stopper **18** to cover a selected compartment after the holder has positioned the stopper **14**, and the device is then examined by both parties to determine whether or not the same compartment is obstructed by the two stoppers.

In the form shown in Fig. 5 the several compartments are set side by side, rather than end to end. That is to say, they are aligned sidewise or edgewise rather than lengthwise. With this embodiment no sliding stopper is used. Instead, a plug **19**, preferably kept captive on the box by a loose cord **20**, is inserted by the holder in one or another of the three bottom openings, being inserted high enough to be invisible to the player who of course drops a token through one or another of the top openings, or fits into one or another of the top openings a plug like the plug **19**.

In all forms the device may be made of some inexpensive material such as wood parts glued

together, but of course the specific material is not important except for considerations of economy and durability.

The device may be made in other forms without departing from the inventive principles embodied in the preferred forms that have been herein illustrated and described. Thus, for example, the several zones offered for selection by the holder and the player need not be made as open compartments or chambers, but may comprise areas merely of a block-like member appropriately indicated by some marking or indicia. At the ends of these zones, which should preferably extend substantially from the top to the bottom of the member and should be arranged side by side, openings would be provided for the reception of means analogous to the stoppers or plugs shown in the illustrated device. Of course the stopper, plug or the like operated by the holder would be received in an opening formed in the member in such a way that the received means would be out of sight of the holder's opponent. The opening receiving the means operated by the opponent might be conspicuously positioned at the top of each zone.

It is thought to be manifest that numerous changes may be made in the illustrated and described details without departing essentially from the spirit of the invention. Thus, the chambers or compartments may be made more or fewer than three in number, and they may be otherwise arranged and otherwise stoppered and played, although I prefer the several forms of the device which I have chosen to illustrate and describe and believe that these forms possess distinct advantages over any others that may be provided. Whatever forms be used, I intend them all to be covered by the claims to the extent that they exhibit the novel and inventive principles of the invention as pointed out by the claims.

I claim:

1. A game device comprising a box having a plurality of adjoining compartments all having normally open and mutually aligned top openings and normally open and mutually aligned bottom openings, and means for selectively obstructing any one only of the plurality of bottom openings while leaving the remainder of the bottom openings unobstructed.

2. A game device comprising a box having a plurality of adjoining compartments all having normally open and mutually aligned top openings and normally open and mutually aligned bottom openings, and a single stopper cooperating with the bottom openings and adapted to be positioned so as selectively to obstruct any one only of the bottom openings.

3. A game device comprising a box having a plurality of adjoining compartments all having normally open and mutually aligned top openings and normally open and mutually aligned bottom openings, and means for selectively obstructing one of the plurality of bottom openings, said means being adapted, when in selected obstructing position, to be contained and concealed wholly between the sides of the box.

4. A game device comprising a box having sides and partition means defining a plurality of adjoining compartments all having normally open and mutually aligned top openings and normally open and mutually aligned bottom openings, said partition means terminating short of the lower edges of the sides so that a recess is provided at the bottom of each compartment, and means adapted to fit wholly within and be concealed by a selected one of said recesses to obstruct the corresponding compartment.

5. A game device comprising a box having sides and partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow endwise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and aligned top openings and normally open and aligned bottom openings, and a slidable stopper cooperating with the bottom openings for selectively obstructing any one only of said bottom openings.

6. A game device comprising a box having sides and partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow endwise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and aligned top openings and normally open and aligned bottom openings, a trackway cooperating with the bottom openings, and a stopper slidable in the trackway for selectively obstructing any one only of said bottom openings, portions of the stopper and trackway being formed to cooperate to position the stopper in accurately obstructing relation to a selected compartment.

7. A game device comprising a box having side and partition members defining a plurality of adjoining compartments all having normally open and mutually aligned top openings and normally open and mutually aligned bottom openings, means for selectively obstructing one of the plurality of bottom openings, and indicia carried by the outer surface of said box and juxtaposed to each of said compartments for indicating the value of a play involving each compartment.

8. A game device comprising a box having sides and partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow endwise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and aligned top openings and normally open and aligned bottom openings, a trackway cooperating with the bottom openings, and a stopper slidable in the trackway for selectively obstructing any one only of said bottom openings.

9. A game device comprising a box having sides and partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow endwise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and aligned top openings and normally open and aligned bottom openings, a trackway cooperating with the bottom openings, and a stopper slidable in the trackway for selectively obstructing any one only of said bottom openings, portions of the stopper and trackway being formed to cooperate to position the stopper in accurately obstructing relation to a selected compartment.

10. A game device comprising a box having relatively long sides and relatively narrow partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow endwise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and mutually aligned top openings and normally open and mutually aligned bottom openings, means for selectively obstructing one of the plurality of bottom openings, and indicia carried by said sides and juxtaposed to each of said compartments for indicating the value of a play involving each compartment.

11. A game device comprising a box having sides and partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow sidewise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and aligned top openings and normally open and aligned bottom openings, and a stopper cooperating with the bottom openings for selectively obstructing any one only of said bottom openings.

12. A game device comprising a box having

sides and partition means defining a plurality of relatively long and narrow sidewise aligned adjoining compartments all having normally open and aligned top openings and normally open and aligned bottom openings, and stopper means comprising a plug cooperating with the bottom openings for selectively obstructing any one only of said bottom openings and a cord connected to said plug and to said box for retaining the plug captive with relation to said box.

13. A game device comprising a block-like member having a plurality of zones of different scoring value, each zone extending substantially from the top to the bottom of the member and being arranged side by side, in combination with means cooperating with the zones and operable by one player out of sight of the opponent to record said player's selection of a zone, and means operable thereafter by the opponent cooperating with the zones for indicating the subsequent selection of a zone by the opponent.

14. A game device comprising a block-like member having a plurality of zones of different scoring value, each zone extending substantially from the top to the bottom of the member and being arranged side by side and having a top opening and a bottom opening, in combination with means receivable in one opening of a selected one of the zones and operable by one player out of sight of the opponent to record said player's selection of a zone, and means receivable in an opposite opening of a selected one of the zones and operable by the opponent to indicate his subsequent selection of a zone.

EDWARD GARDNER.