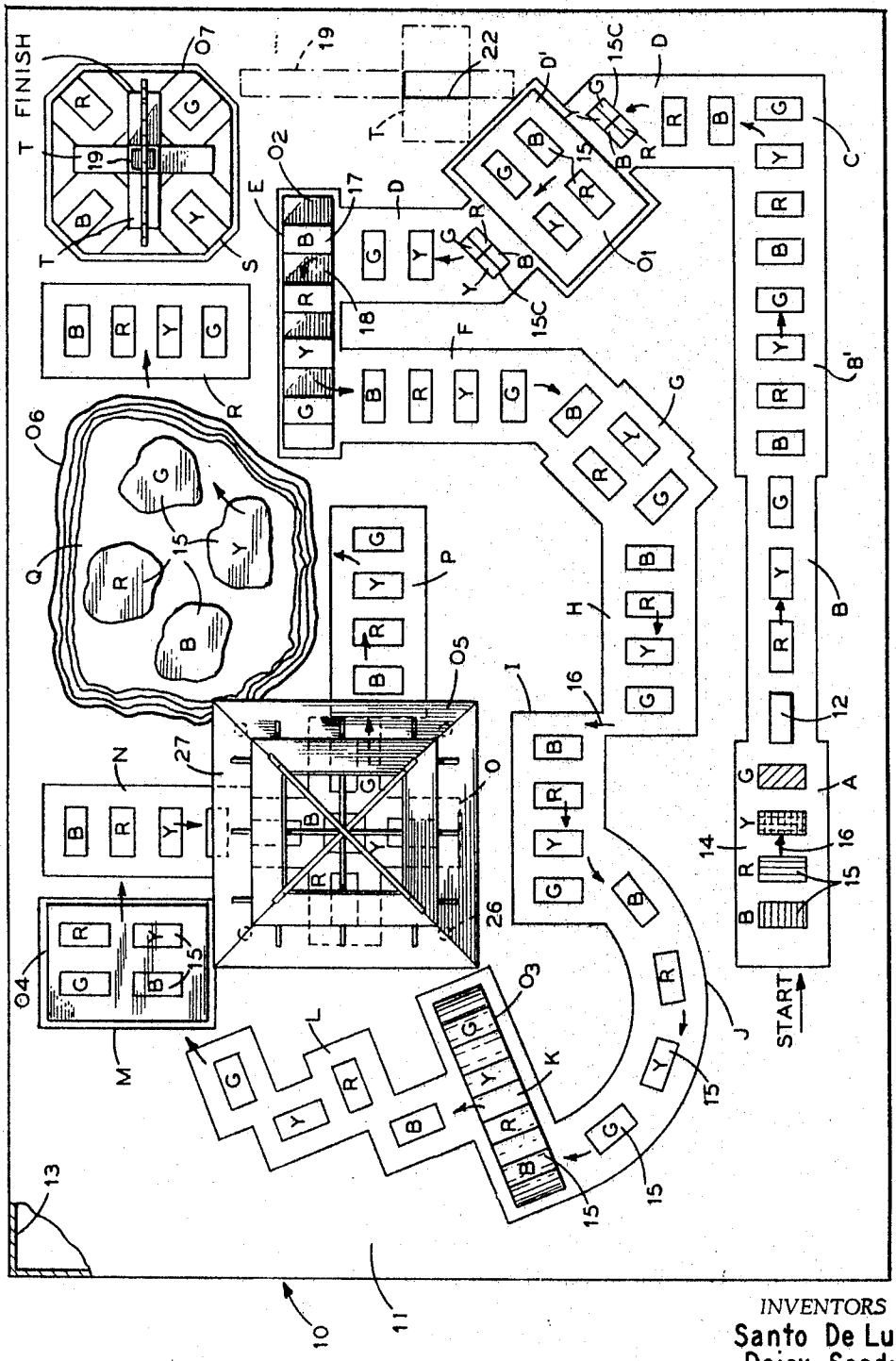
July 29, 1969 S. DE LUCIA ET AL 3,458,198

BOARD GAME APPARATUS COMPRISING PLAYER MANIPULATED TOKEN ADVANCING AND LIFTING MEANS

Filed Nov. 22, 1965 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1



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Filed Nov. 22, 1965 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

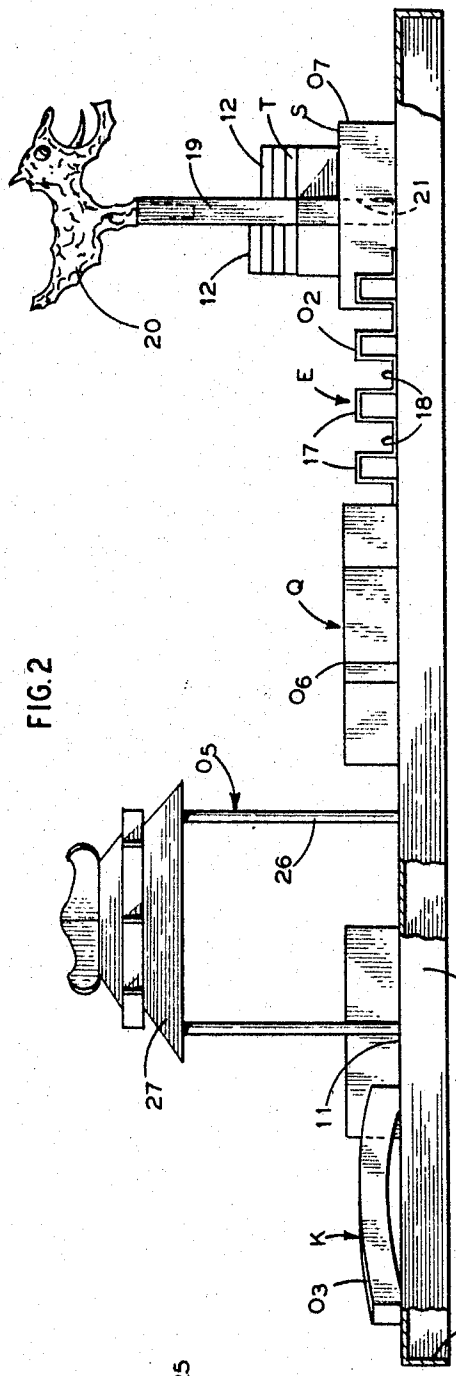


FIG. 2

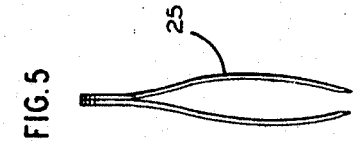


FIG. 5

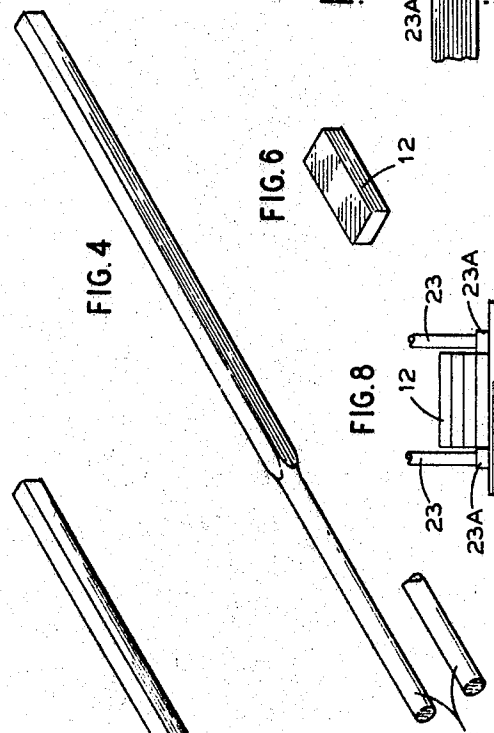


FIG. 4

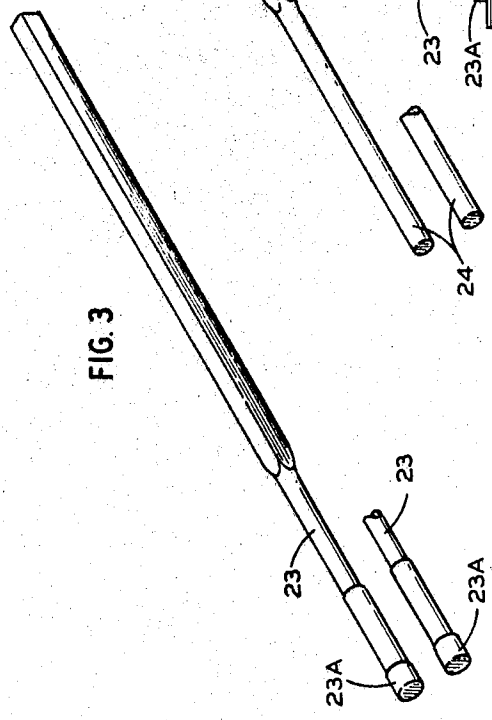


FIG. 3

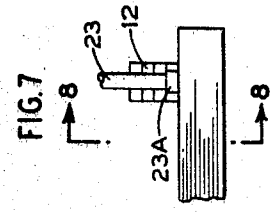


FIG. 7

FIG. 6

FIG. 8

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BOARD GAME APPARATUS COMPRISING PLAYER MANIPULATED TOKEN ADVANCING AND LIFTING MEANS

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A board type action game which comprises a plurality of game tokens and a manipulating means for advancing the respective game token from station to station along a predetermined path and lifting them over a series of obstacles located in said predetermined path. The manipulating means for advancing and lifting the game tokens comprises either a pair of Chinese chopsticks or tweezers.

This invention relates to an action game, and more particularly to an action type game utilizing a board and a manipulating means for moving thereover a plurality of game tokens along a predetermined pathway in a particularly novel manner.

One of the objects of this invention is to provide a board game, the play of which is arranged to develop one's manual skill and finger dexterity, as well as to enhance one's patience and sense of balance.

Another object is to provide a board type, action game which is amusing, suspenseful and enjoyable to play.

Another object is to provide a novel action type game which in interesting and enjoyable for children, as well as for adults.

Another object is to provide a novel action type board game which is relatively simple in structure, can be readily fabricated, and which is positive in operation.

The foregoing objects, features and advantages of this invention are attained by an action game comprising a game board having means formed thereon to define a winding pathway extending thereover. A plurality of playing stations are spaced along the pathway to define a series of successive game stops during the play of the game. A plurality of game tokens are provided for each player with the object of the game being to move the tokens from station to station in a particular manner. In accordance with this invention, a manipulating means is provided for each of the players by which he is required to advance his tokens from station to station along the pathway. In moving the game tokens, it is required that the tokens be stacked one on the other by the player at each station with his manipulating means during the play of the game as the token or column of tokens is progressively advanced from station to station. Accordingly, as the tokens are progressively advanced, they are also being progressively stacked. This continues until a player causes his stack to collapse.

In one form of the invention, the manipulating means comprises a pair of chopsticks which are adapted to be manipulated by the respective players to stack the tokens one on the other and to advance the tokens during the play of the game. For the very young players, an alternate construction of the manipulating means is provided in the form of tweezers.

Means defining obstacles are spaced along the pathway to provide for added amusement and excitment during the play of the game. Each of the obstacles are formed to define station stops some of which are spaced or raised above the playing surface of the board whereby the tokens

or column of tokens being advanced along the pathway must be periodically raised as such obstacles are approached.

Further, the respective stations along the pathway are arranged in a plurality of groups with the number of stations in each group equal to the maximum number of players or teams which can play the game at any given time. Also, in accordance with this invention, the stations in one group are angularly disposed or specifically orientated in a predetermined relationship with respect to the stations of the next succeeding group of stations. This particular arrangement is provided to enable each player, when manipulating his game tokens from station to corresponding station of successive groups, to be similarly handicapped. As the game is played with chopsticks, the game has a Chinese theme.

A feature of this invention resides in the provision of a game board constructed with means defining a pathway along which a series of game tokens are progressively advanced and stacked one on the other during the play of the game by the use of manipulating means in the form of chopsticks.

Another feature of this invention resides in the provision of a game in which the play of the game enables one to enhance his finger dexterity.

Another feature of this invention is to provide an action type game which also has a therapeutic value for handicapped people in that the manipulation required during the play of the game requires one to exerecise his hands and fingers in a particular manner.

Another feature resides in the provision of an action type game which also enhances one's patience and his sense of precision and balance.

Other features and advantages will become more readily apparent when considered in view of the drawings and specification in which,

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of the game board of the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is a side elevation view of the game board of FIG. 1.

FIGURE 3 is a detail perspective view of a pair of chopsticks adapted to be utilized in conjunction with the game board of FIG. 1.

FIGURE 4 shows a slightly modified chopstick construction adapted to be utilized in the play of the game.

FIGURE 5 shows a modified form of manipulating means.

FIGURE 6 is a perspective view of a game token adapted to be utilized in conjunction with the board of FIG. 1.

FIGURE 7 shows a fragmentary detail portion of the game board, illustrating the manner in which the game tokens are manipulated.

FIGURE 8 is a side view taken along line 8—8 of FIG. 7, illustrating the manner in which the game tokens are manipulated over the surface of the board.

Referring to the drawings, there is shown in FIG. 1 a plan view of the board layout **10** employed in the game of the instant invention. As shown, the game board **10** comprises a substantially rectangular member having a plane surface **11** over which a plurality of game tokens **12** are adapted to be moved as will be hereinafter described. If desired, the playing surface **11** may be circumscribed by a depending wall **13** extending about the periphery of the board to define a support therefor. Accordingly, the playing surface **11** may be spaced above the supporting surface, such as a table or the like. It will be noted that the game board **10** may be formed of any suitable material, as for example, paperboard or cardboard, or it may be formed of plastic material as by blow molding, vacuum forming or injection molding. The game board **10**

may be alternately formed of sheet metallic material, as for example by stamping or drawing the same to any desired shape.

In accordance with this invention, a means formed on the playing surface of the board defines a pathway **14**. If desired, the means defining the pathway may be printed on the surface of the board, as by lithography, or formed thereon by any suitable identifying indicia means to indicate the outlines thereof. It will be noted that a plurality of stations **15** defining game stops are spaced along the pathway **14**. To determine the direction of travel over the pathway, the same may be provided with suitable indicating means, as for example, arrowheads **16** or the like to indicate the direction to be taken during the play of the game.

In the illustrated form of the invention, each station **15** is made substantially rectangular in shape and a plurality of stations are arranged in groups spaced along the pathway. Each group contains a number of stations. The number of stations **15** in any given group is equal to the maximum number of players or teams which can play the game at any one given time.

By way of illustration, the stations **15** on the illustrated board of FIG. 1 are clustered into groups identified as A, B, B', C, D, D', E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S. Thus, in the illustrated form of the invention, each group contains four stations. With the illustrated board **10**, one to four players can play this game at any one given time, or more than four players constituting teams can play the game at any given time. Accordingly, it will be understood that the specific layout of the path means **14** can be varied as desired without adversely varying or modifying the inventive concept herein being described.

The respective stations **15** which define station stops along the pathway **14** are illustrated as being substantially rectangular in form. However, they may assume any desired shape. If desired, each station stop of the first group A may be identified by a suitable indicia, e.g., a distinct color, such as blue, red, yellow or green, the color scheme being repeated in the same sequence in the other groups along the pathway. It is important to note that stations **15** are spaced from one another by a distance sufficient to permit positioning of a manipulating means between adjacent stations as hereinafter described. It will be also noted that a station **15** in any one group is specifically orientated with respect to the corresponding station of the next succeeding or adjacent group so that during the play of the game a player is required to change the position or lay of the token or rotate the same as it is advanced from a station in one group to a corresponding station in the next group as will be hereinafter described. The respective stations of each group are orientated so that each player, during the play of the game, is required to apply the same manipulation to the token in moving from station to corresponding station of successive groups. In this manner all the players are similarly handicapped in advancing the tokens along the game board.

To add interest to the game, it is to be noted that obstacles **O1, O2, O3, O4, O5, O6, O7** are spaced along the pathway. In keeping with the theme of the game, the obstacles may be made to simulate well known objects of Chinese folk lore. For example, such obstacles may include raised platforms **O1, O4, O7**, a pagoda **O5**, emperor's throne T, lily pond **O6**, Chinese bridge **O3**, and a similar bridge obstacle **O2**. Accordingly, it will be noted that each of obstacles **O1–O7** is constructed to define a raised portion to define a surface spaced above the playing surface of the board. Also, some of the obstacles have defined on the raised surface a playing station. For example, obstacles **O1, O4** are similarly constructed, and define simply a raised platform having a plurality of stations **15** formed thereon. Obstacle **O2** is defined by a corrugated form having a series of alternately spaced raised portions **17** and valley portions **18** with the raised portions of the corrugated strip defining a stopping station during the play of the game for the respective players. Another obstacle **O3** may take the form of a Chinese bridge on which the tokens must be moved. The top of the bridge **O3** is also provided with stations **15** to define a stop along the pathway. Also, another obstacle may simulate a lily pond **O6** wherein the simulated lily leaves or stones define stations **15** to form a stop. Also a pagoda structure **O5** may be provided under which there are formed a series of stations. Accordingly, the pagoda defines an obstacle **O5** through which the tokens are to be moved, and thus defines yet another type of handicap or obstacle, as will be noted when the play of the game is described.

The termination or end point of the game pathway may be evidenced by a raised dais **O7** simulating an emperor's throne T to further add to the Chinese theme of the game.

In the illustrated form of the invention, the emperor's throne T is defined by an upright pole structure **19** which has circumferentially spaced thereabout raised station means that define, in effect, the seat portion of the throne. Thus the station means are made sufficiently wide so as to accommodate the width of the game token **12**. A Chinese dragon **20** is removably connected to the top of the pole **19**. In the illustrated form of the invention, the emperor's throne structure T is detachably connected to the game board so that, in the operative posi.ion, it may be inserted into a hole **21** formed in the dais obstacle, and in the inoperative position the pole **19** may be stowed, upon the removal of element **20**, along the marginal portion of the game board as illustrated in dotted lines on FIG. 1.

To accommodate one of the station means of the simulated throne so that the pole structure may lie flat, the game board is provided with an opening **22** to receive one of said means.

Accordingly, it will be noted that in the inoperative position the upright member or pole **19** and the simulated throne seat are disposed in stowed position on the surface of the board.

In accordance with this invention, a plurality of game token **12** are provided for each of the players. If desired, the tokens may be colored to correspond with the color scheme of the stations along the pathway.

As shown in FIG. 6, each game token **12** comprises a rectangular block. However, the size and shape of the block are preferably substantially similar to the size and shape of the respective stations **15** spaced along the pathway.

To effect the play of the game, a manipulating means is provided for each player to advance or stack the tokens in moving from station to station. Essentially, the manipulating means comprises a pair of chopsticks **23—23**. As best seen in FIG. 3, the one pair of chopsticks **23—23** may be provided on tip end portions thereof with circumscribing bands or enlargements **23A** to facilitate gripping the game tokens **12** as will be hereinafter described.

FIGURE 4 illustrates a conventional pair of chopsticks **24—24** which may also be utilized to effect the play of the game. The use of the bands **23A** on the end of the chopsticks **23—23** in FIG. 3 enables the tip end portions to engage the sides of only the end or bottommost token **12** of a stack of tokens as seen in FIGS. 7 and 8. With sticks **23—23** so constructed, the gripping force can be concentrated at the bottom of the stack even when the chopsticks are postioned vertically and the pickup of a stack of tokens **12** is effected by engaging the bottommost token **12**.

In accordance with the instant invention, the game may be played in the following manner: Each player starts by placing one token on his appropriate color of starting station arranged in group A. Accordingly, each player in successive turns by the manipulation of the chopsticks **23—23** or **24—24** advances his game token **12** to the corresponding colored station in the next succeeding group of stations B. For example, the token is advanced

from the blue station 15 in the A group to the blue station 15 in the B group. To effect this advance, a player is required to orient the game token with the chopsticks substantially 90° in order to align it with the corresponding station of group B. If he is successful in so transporting the token from the initial station in group A to the corresponding station in group B, he is then permitted to pick up at random another token located in a suitable bank of tokens adjacent the playing board with the chopsticks only and place the second token onto the token resting on the station in group B to which he has moved. Accordingly, he is now required to pick up the stack of two tokens with the chopsticks and move it to the corresponding station in the next succeeding group B' of stations. At this point, if he is successful in making the transfer, he is then required to select yet another token from the token bank, with the chopsticks, and stack it upon the pair of tokens which he successfully moved as a stack to the last mentioned station. Accordingly, the play is repeated until the stack of tokens being formed collapses during a move. Thus, as a player continues around the board the stack of tokens is progressively increased; and the ability to move the stack is made progressively more difficult. When a player is unable to continue, the next player takes his turn and continues the manipulation of the tokens from station to station as hereinbefore described, by stacking successive tokens as he continues along the stations from group to group until a collapse is had. The tokens remaining stacked upon collapse of a column are retained on the station of the last successful move and the others returned to the bank.

After each player has had his turn, the first player then again proceeds from the last station to which he had previously advanced in a similar manner by stacking tokens onto his stack as he continues around the pathway.

The object of the game is to reach the last group S of stations associated with the throne T of the pathway with the highest stack of tokens. In the illustrated form of the invention, the last station is the emperor's throne. Accordingly, the player who reaches the emperor's throne with the largest stack of tokens is declared the winner. Thus, the first player to reach the throne is not necessarily the winner of the game, as the last player may be successful in reaching the throne with a greater or higher stack of tokens. It is, of course, understood that all the manipulation of the tokens is conducted with the chopsticks or manipulation means.

Due to the skill and dexterity required to manipulate the chopsticks, it has been discovered that the game is exceedingly amusing, thrilling, enjoyable and suspenseful to respective players.

To add interest to the game, the obstacles O1 to O7 are placed along the pathway. Such obstacles add interest and excitement as they require the players to manipulate the stack of tokens from the playing surface of the board to the stations on each such obstacle. The interest in the game thus resides in the fact that the more tokens a player can successfully stack, the more difficult becomes the task of lifting or advancing the column of stacked tokens along the pathway or over or under the obstacles provided without collapsing the column.

Also, it will be noted that certain stations require the column of tokens to be rotated a predetermined number of degrees to effect the orientation of the tokens with a given station. Preceding and following the obstacle O1, there are provided composite stopping stations 15C on which each player may be required to stop during the play of the game. Such composite stations 15C can be identified in that they include all the colors of the respective stations 15.

It will be understood that various rules may be formulated to vary the play of the game from that herein described. For example, if desired, each player may be required to successively move from station to station in a group, rather than between corresponding stations of respective groups, by optionally lifting the token off the board or by sliding the token or column of tokens over the board from station to station. If the game is played in this manner, it is then optional on the part of the player as to whether he prefers to slide his token or column of tokens over the surface of the board with the chopsticks or literally pick up the token or column of tokens by means of the manipulating chopsticks and advance the same to the next station. However, regardless of which rules are preferred, it will still be noted that as a player approaches several of various obstacles provided, he has to raise the token or column of tokens from the station preceding the obstacle to the station on the obstacle. Thus, in either form of play, obstacles are presented which must be overcome, and thereby greatly add to the fun, enjoyment and suspense of the game.

Accordingly, it has been experienced that persons of all ages, including children as well as adults, can enjoy this game with equal enthusiasm. However, since the smaller children may not have the necessary dexterity to successfully manipulate the chopsticks 23—23; 24—24, an alternate means may be provided. As shown in FIG. 5, the alternate manipulating means may comprise tweezers 25 which are spring loaded to open position. The tweezers 25 are thus easier for a small child to handle. Thus, both very young chlidren and adults may enjoy the play of the game simultaneously. Accordingly the tweezer manipulation is more simple than that of the chopsticks, and in this manner, an adult and child can play the game in a manner in which the relative individual skills are equalized, thereby rendering the play of the game more competitive.

The pagoda obstacle O5 is constructed so that it can be readily assembled and disassembled. It thus comprises four uprights or poles 26 which are set in suitable holes formed in the surface of the board 10, and a detachable top or roof 27 resting on the poles 26. Beneath the roof of the pagoda O5 are stations 15 to define stops. Thus, in advancing the tokens to the pagoda stations, the same are required to be passed under the roof 27.

While the instant invention has been described with reference to a particular embodiment thereof, it will be readily understood and appreciated that variations and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An action-type game apparatus comprising
a game board,
means on said game board defining a pathway,
groups of stations spaced along said pathway,
each group of stations including a plurality of visibly distinguishable stations,
certain of said groups of stations having a raised portion spaced above the plane of said game board to define an obstacle,
a plurality of game tokens adapted to be moved from station to station by the players of the game, each of said stations and said tokens being similarly shaped and dimensioned,
the respective visibly distinguishable stations of each group being angularly orientated with respect to the corresponding visibly distinguishable stations of the next adjacent group in a manner such that a player is required to change the lay of the tokens as they are advanced along the pathway and positioned upon the succeeding stations spaced therealong,
a player's manipulating means for advancing the game tokens from station to station along said pathway and for stacking additional tokens one on the other at each station as said tokens are progressively advanced along said pathway.

2. The game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said manipulating means comprise a pair of chopsticks having means on the tip end of each chopstick to facili-

tate gripping a stack of game tokens during the play of the game.

3. The game apparatus as defined in claim 2 wherein said latter means includes an annular band to enlarge the tip end of each chopstick.

4. The game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said manipulating means comprises a tweezer.

5. An action type game apparatus comprising

a game board,

means on said game board defining a pathway,

a plurality of stations spaced along said pathway,

a plurality of game tokens adapted to be moved from station to station by the players of the game, each of said stations and said tokens being similarly shaped and dimensioned,

a manipulating means for a player to advance his tokens from station to station along said pathway and for stacking additional tokens one on the other with said manipulating means at each station as said tokens are progressively advanced along said pathway,

said manipulating means comprising a pair of chopsticks which must be manipulated by the player to move and stack the tokens one on the other during the play of the game,

a plurality of obstacles spaced along said pathway, said obstacles defining stations along said pathway,

certain of said obstacles comprising a member raised above the plane of said board whereby the tokens advanced along said game board must be lifted and deposited on said member as said raised obstacle is reached.

6. The game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein each group contains an equal number of stations.

7. The game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein all the stations in each group of stations are similarly orientated with respect to corresponding stations in the next adjacent group of stations so that each player in manipulating his token from station to corresponding station of successive groups is similarly handicapped.

8. An action-type game apparatus comprising

a game board,

means on said game board defining a pathway,

a plurality of groups of stations spaced along said pathway,

a plurality of game tokens adapted to be moved from station to station by the players of the game, each of said stations and said tokens being similarly shaped,

a manipulating means for a player to advance his tokens from station to station along said pathway and for stacking additional tokens one on the other with said manipulating means at each station as said tokens are progressively advanced along said pathway,

said manipulating means comprising a pair of chopsticks which must be manipulated by the player to move and stack the tokens one on othe other during the play of the game,

one of said groups of stations defining a starting point and another of said groups of stations defining a finishing point for said game,

said latter group of stations including an upright member detachably mounted on said board,

the stations of said latter group being raised and spaced about said upright member to define the finishing point for each player.

9. The game apparatus as defined in claim 5 wherein the station next preceding one obstacle station defines a common station for each of the players during the play of the game.

10. The game apparatus as defined in claim 8 and including means formed on said board for stowing said upright member in the inoperative detached position.

11. The game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein certain of the groups of stations simulate structures found in China thereby providing a Chinese theme for the game.

12. The game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said player's manipulating means comprises a pair of chopsticks.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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