



US 20050225032A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**  
**Weinreb**

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2005/0225032 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Oct. 13, 2005**

(54) **GAME INVOLVING STACK OF ELEMENTS**

(52) **U.S. Cl. .... 273/292; 273/153 R; 273/148 R; 273/293**

(76) **Inventor: Chaim Raphael Weinreb, New York (IL)**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Correspondence Address:  
**CHAIM RAPHAEL WEINREB**  
**C/O DALIA PELEO**  
**APT 54**  
**311 EAST 75TH STREET**  
**NEW YORK, NY 10021 (US)**

An apparatus for playing a game for multiple players, comprising a plurality of elements capable of being placed in a stack in any order, each element having several segments in identical locations, some open and some closed, and the closed segments having thereon various colours or images, letters, numbers or symbols and the elements are provided with certain grids and/or other visual controlling and identifying features and/or presentation, gaming and containment accessories, according to the different embodiments and in association with their rules, whereby when certain elements are stacked together in particular order and orientation, a random and changeable assortment of colours, images, letters, numbers, symbols or sections of paths is visible, into which predetermined meaningful lingual, visual, numerical or logical values may be derived, discerned or completed by the players.

(21) **Appl. No.: 11/150,426**

(22) **Filed: Jun. 11, 2005**

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Nov. 19, 2003 (GB) ..... GB0326902.4

**Publication Classification**

(51) **Int. Cl.<sup>7</sup> ..... A63F 1/00**

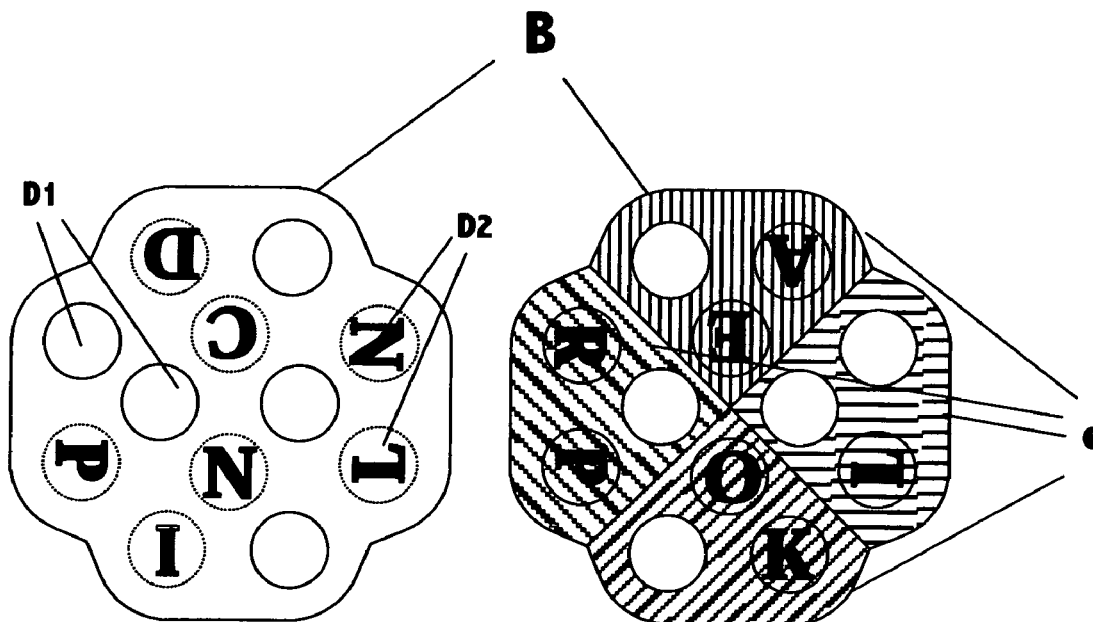


Fig 1a

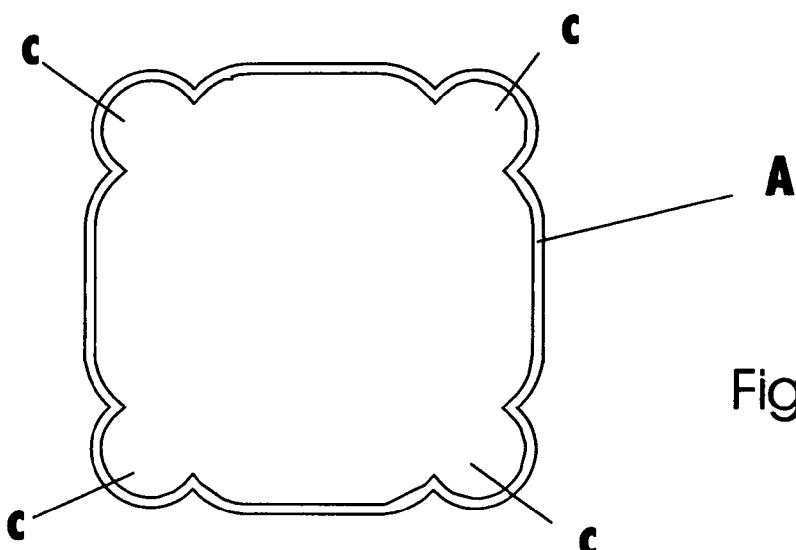
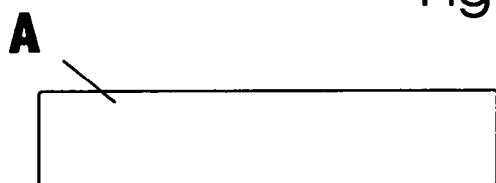


Fig 1b

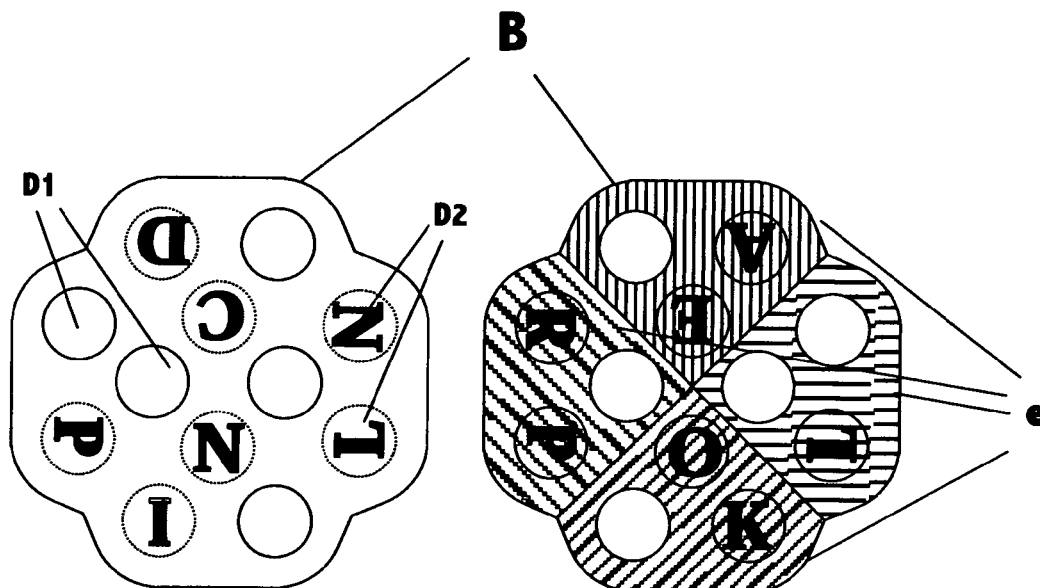


Fig 1c

Fig 1d

Fig 2a

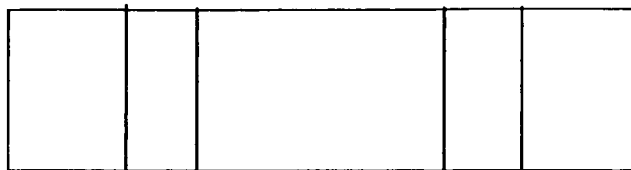


Fig 2b

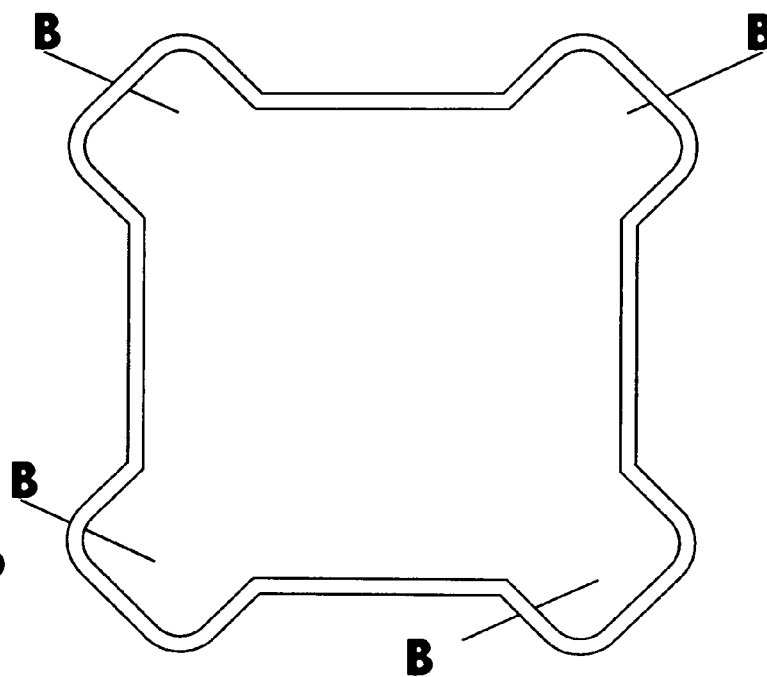
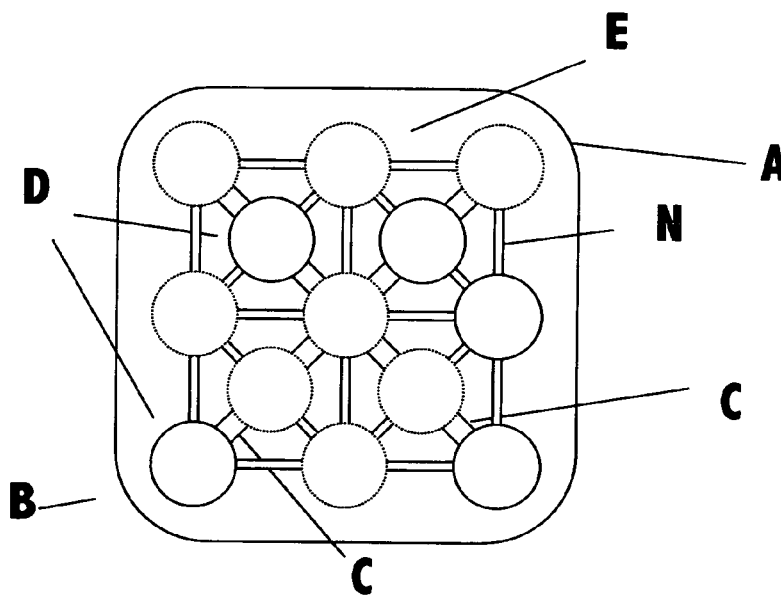


Fig 2c



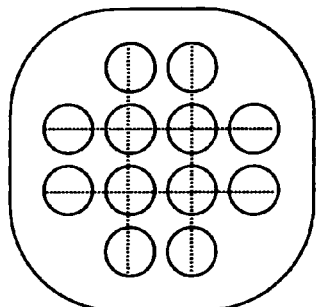


Fig 3a

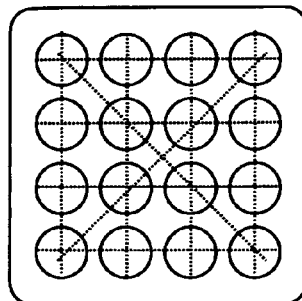


Fig 3b

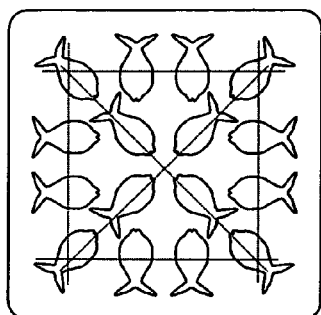


Fig 3c

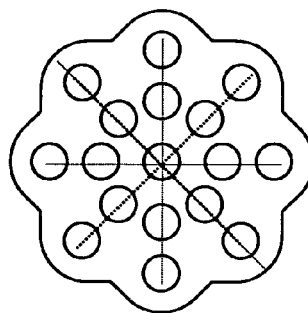


Fig 3d

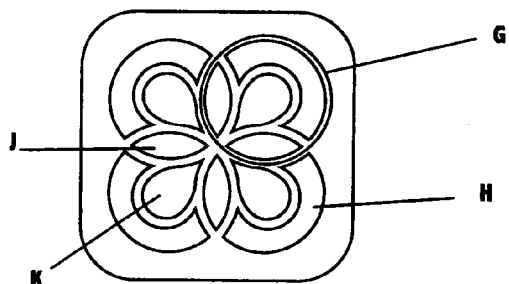


Fig 3e

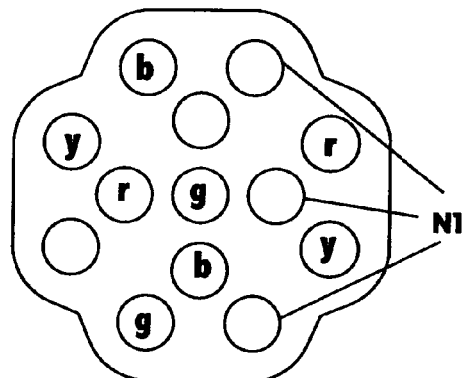


Fig 4

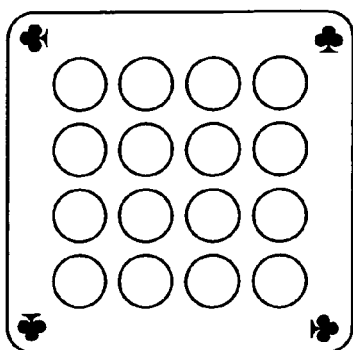


Fig 5a

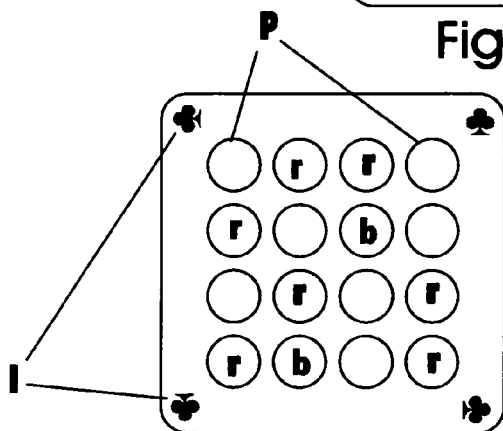


Fig 5b

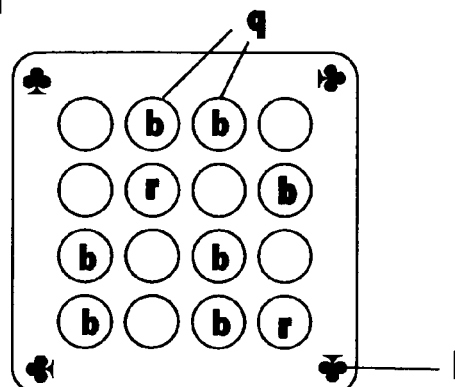


Fig 5c

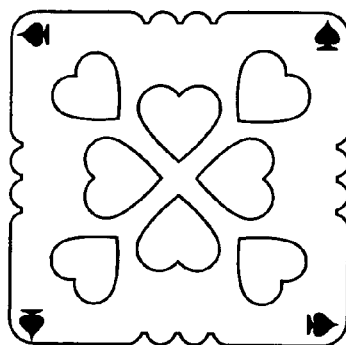


Fig 6a

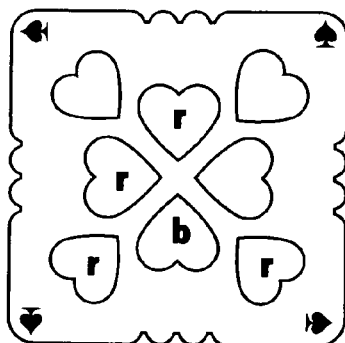


Fig 6b

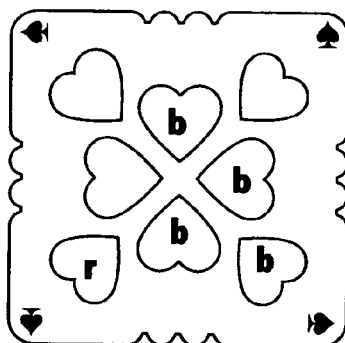


Fig 6c

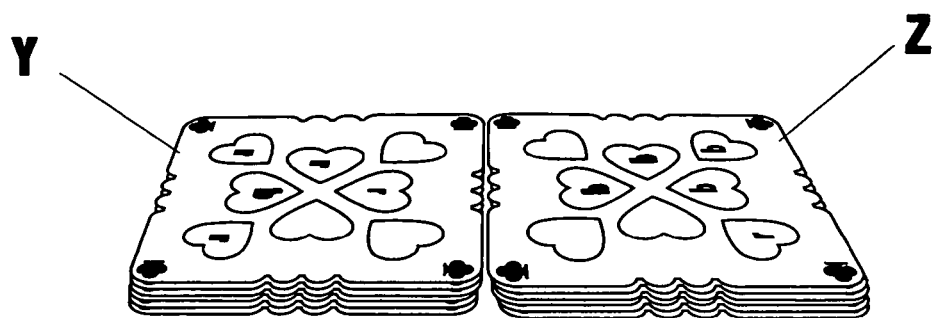


Fig 7a



Fig 7b



Fig 7c

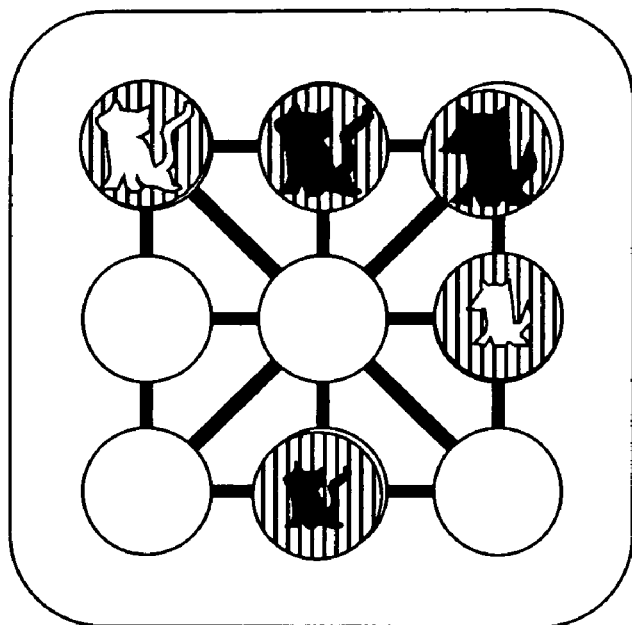


Fig 8a

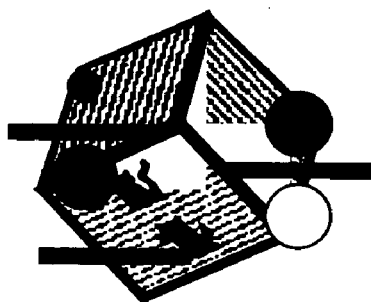
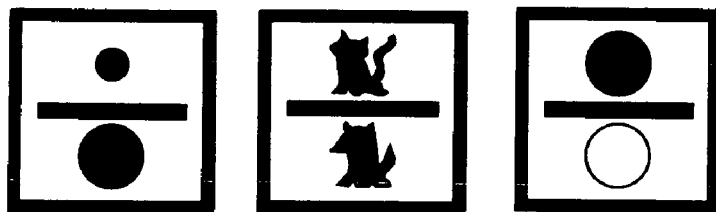


Fig 8b



A

B

C

Fig 8c

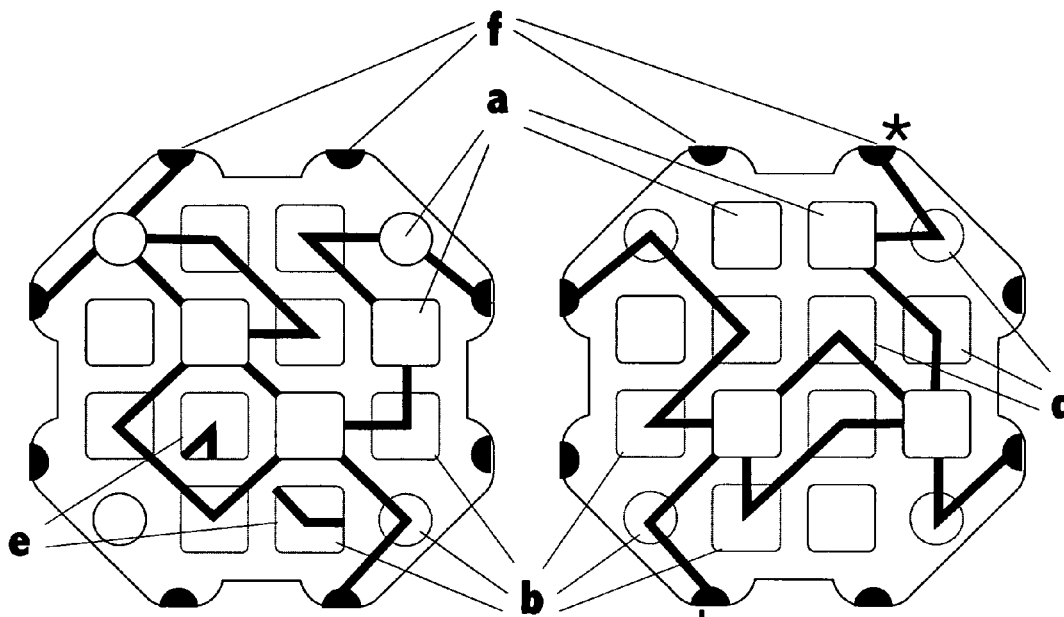


Fig 9a

Fig 9b

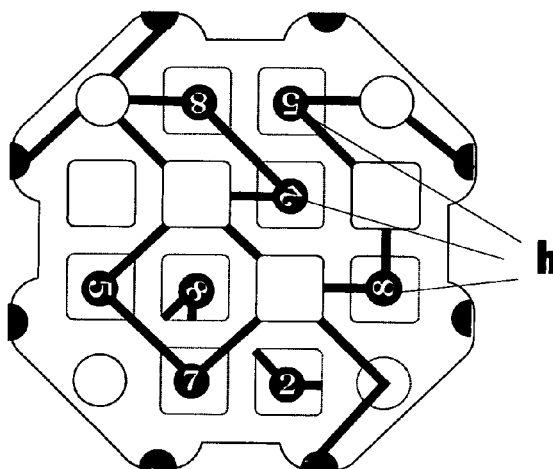


Fig 9c



## GAME INVOLVING STACK OF ELEMENTS

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] Several puzzles of the stacking type were suggested prior to this invention and following the success of the Rubik's cube, in which the aim was to produce six solid colours, one solid colour on each of the six faces of a cube. The best examples are Allen's WO-A-91/00758 (D1) Green's U.S. Pat. No. 5,299,805 (D2) and Weinreb's GB2345645 (D3).

[0002] Allen's (D1) puzzle presents a number of symmetrically shaped elements, with a layout of proportional segments, some open (being transparent or cut out) while others are covered with various colours. All the faces have more than one colour on the closed segments, with the aim of the puzzle to arrange the layers so that predetermined multi-coloured blend of coloured segments will be visible on one side only of the stack. (see FIG. 2 of D1). D1 never suggests solution on both sides of the stack.

[0003] Green's (D2) puzzle requires solutions on both sides of the stack, but equally all the elements bear more than one colour on all faces. Like D1 the target is to arrange the layers so that a predetermined multi-coloured blend involving all the puzzle's colours will be displayed on both sides of the stack (D2 FIG. 3).

[0004] Weinreb's (D3) introduced two outer elements, apparent by inspection alone, acting as filters, with one colour only upon their closed segments, therefore allowing solutions that require solid colours on both sides.

[0005] The major deficiency of the above described inventions is that they are all limiting the play for only one player at the time and cannot be considered as a social pastime where a number of players interact with each other.

[0006] The advantage of the present invention on the said prior art is that whereas the prior art was concerned only with a puzzle for a single player, solitaire style, the present invention is intended to be played by more than one player therefore features and/or accessories for the various versions of this invention were added as detailed hereunder.

[0007] That whereas in the prior art the requirement of the user was only skill, in the present invention the features, modifications and devices reflect the two added factors of luck and fairness, which are required for an enjoyable social game and having these factors finely balanced.

[0008] Each of these versions employs different features of the described elements within various precisely balanced compositions, with or without the additional accessories, and in association with the particular game rules, to provide maximum playability.

[0009] An object of the invention is to provide a challenging multi-layer and multi-player stacking social game that when a score is registered, a random and changeable assortment of colours, images, letters, numbers or symbols may be visible by the players on one or both sides of the stack, to provide a material from which a meaningful lingual, visual, numerical or logical may be derived by the players.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] A feature of the invention is the provision of an apparatus for playing a game for multiple players, compris-

ing a plurality of flat elements capable of being placed in a stack in any order, each element having several segments on both faces in locations which overlie the segments of the other elements when the elements are in a stack, some of the segments being open and some being closed, so that the segments on the inner elements which are under open segments of the outer elements are completely visible through the open segments of the outer elements when the elements are stacked together, and the closed segments having thereon various colours or images, letters, numbers or symbols and the elements are provided with certain grids and/or other visual controlling and identifying features and/or presentation, gaming and containment accessories, according to the different embodiments and in association with their rules, whereby when certain elements are stacked together in particular order and orientation, a random and changeable assortment of colours, images, letters, numbers, symbols or sections of paths is visible, into which predetermined meaningful lingual, visual, numerical or logical values may be derived, discerned or completed by the players.

[0011] Each element has two faces and can be stacked in either of two attitudes each having a different face uppermost.

[0012] Preferably, each element can have at least two orientations relative to an adjacent element in a stack of elements.

[0013] Preferably the elements are of proportional dimensions, square, triangular, polygonal, star shaped or elongated and having more than one orientation in relation to each other. Alternatively the elements may be of any shape, even irregular and with only one orientation in relation to each other, provided that when they are stacked together, the segments of each element always exactly overlie on the segments of the other elements.

[0014] Preferably the elements are made of cardboard or plastic.

[0015] Preferably the open segments are either cut out windows or unprinted transparent substance.

[0016] The closed segments may carry colours, pictures or parts of pictures, letters, numbers, symbols or parts of routes. In some embodiments the area of the elements between the segments and also the areas between the segments and the edges of the element, may be utilised to merge with the visible segments.

[0017] The shape of the segments may be either regular being rectangle, round, polygonal or star shaped or irregular being in the shape of people, animals, objects or any other irregular shape whatsoever. Even if the shape of the element is completely symmetrical, a segment may be asymmetrical and irregular if it is part of a pair of segments reflecting each other about a line of axis (see Weinreb GB2345645 page 8, lines 18-29).

[0018] Segments on the same element may differ from each other in size and/or shape.

[0019] Each element has two faces. However in most embodiments only one face may be covered with images, the reverse being kept blank or with a neutral single pattern similar to a pattern on the back of playing cards.

[0020] In some embodiments the game may be played satisfactorily just by manoeuvring the elements themselves,

without requiring any further device or accessories. On other embodiments however various accessories or devices, as will be described below, may be required. In these embodiments the number of elements in the present invention is limited only by the capacity of the said device.

[0021] All the embodiments according to the present invention involve the players endeavouring to be the most successful, or being the quickest, in finding the best or longest required combination, be it lingual, visual or numerical, amongst the random assortment of the visible segments on one or both ends of the stack. This required combination may be a dictionary word if the closed segments carry letters, or complete line of the same colour or a correct sequence if the segments carry colours, or the largest aggregate if the segments carry numbers, or an uninterrupted route between start and finish points, or a closed loop, if the segments carry parts of routes.

[0022] Versions of games according to embodiments of the present invention come in different shapes and sizes but all involve stacking a number of elements with the aim of reaching a random assortment predefined as favourable, the elements all having areas known as segments which match the segments of other elements when they are placed in a stack. The segments may be open, i.e. they can be seen through, or closed. The elements have two faces and the closed segments, on one or both faces of the elements, are coloured or carry a letter or a picture or part of a picture or part of a map or part of a route or a number.

[0023] Each of these embodiments employs the described features of the described elements in different measures and compositions, with or without the additional accessories, to provide maximum playability.

[0024] We shall now describe the various embodiments with the help of the enclosed illustrations, and for the sake of clarity we shall refer to them in alphabetical order, and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:—

[0025] FIGS. 1a and 1b respectively show side view and upper view of the device used in EMBODIMENT A while FIGS. 1c and 1d show a typical element for two versions of this embodiment.

[0026] FIGS. 2a and 2b respectively show side view and upper view of the device used in EMBODIMENT B while FIG. 2c shows a typical element for this embodiment.

[0027] FIGS. 3a to 3e show further possible grids for EMBODIMENT B.

[0028] FIG. 4 shows a typical element for EMBODIMENT C

[0029] FIG. 5a shows a grid of element in the first version of EMBODIMENT D while FIGS. 5b and 5c shows two sides of a typical element of this version.

[0030] FIG. 6a shows a grid of element in the junior version of EMBODIMENT D while FIGS. 6b and 6c shows two sides of a typical element of this version.

[0031] FIGS. 7a-7c show the stacking, arraying and manoeuvring of elements during a game of the junior version of EMBODIMENT D.

[0032] FIG. 8a shows a typical element for EMBODIMENT E while FIGS. 8b and 8c show the special criteria die used in this embodiment.

[0033] FIGS. 9a and 9b show two typical elements of EMBODIMENT F, while FIG. 9c shows a typical element of a further version of that embodiment.

[0034] We shall now describe the different versions and embodiments of the invention with relation to the drawings.

[0035] In the first embodiment of the present invention, referred to hereinafter as EMBODIMENT A, a multitude of elements with closed segments are provided. Also a device is provided to align the elements correctly whereby when two or more elements are placed in a stack, the segments of one element overlay exactly on the corresponding segments of the other elements. This device is simply a tray A, as illustrated in FIGS. 1a and 1b, whose outer outline corresponds exactly to the outline of the element B (FIG. 1c), but with the exception that suitable finger holes C are located on four sides to facilitate easy removal of the stacked elements from the tray A.

[0036] In a preferred version of EMBODIMENT A 36 elements B are being provided, each having twelve segments D upon it, some open (D1) and some closed (D2), the closed segments D2 on one side of the element are covered with alphabetical letters. The segments not bearing alphabetical letters are open. The reverse side remains blank.

[0037] In a typical game, after an initial quantity of three elements for each player are distributed between the players, and the rest of the elements are placed, face downwards, in a central position as a common stack pile. The players are taking turns to stack, into the tray A, one element at a time, face upwards and at any orientation the player chooses. Once the element is served the server replenishes his/her hand of three by picking the top element from the common stock pile. Scoring may start immediately or alternatively only when a letter is visible in all the 12 possible segments when the stack in the tray is viewed from above and there are no blank segments left. From then on, each element stacked by a player on top of the other elements in the tray is considered a round, in which the random assortment of letters facilitates further scoring of points by the players. The participants are then trying to form the longest word from the visible letters. A timer may be used to restrict the available time to players for each round. Each participant writes his/her word on a piece of paper. When the prescribed time has expired, each player, starting with the player who places that element, calls his/her word and the number of letters in it and the player with the longest word wins that round. The suggested scoring is as follows: For the winner the number of letters of his/her word plus the difference between his/her word and the second longest word suggested. If there is no second suggestion then the score is double the winner word's number of letters. To the player who has suggested the second longest word the score is the number of letters in his/her word less the difference in the number of letters between this word and the winner's word. The rest of the players' score is zero. If two players call words of equal lengths, both are considered winners of the round and score accordingly. Also a special bonus of double the word's number of letters is awarded to the player who has suggested the longest word so far in the game, although this bonus should be restricted to words of at least seven letters. After each round the score sheet is updated to reflect the current scoring results of all the players.

[0038] When all elements have been stacked in the device, the player with the highest total score is the winner of the game.

[0039] In a further version of EMBODIMENT A each element, as illustrated in FIG. 1d, is divided into four equal sections e, each section having three segments thereof. Each player may use any of the three visible letters in the section that faces him/her more than once to construct his/her word. According to this development some suggested words may be longer than the number of segments but the maximum number of players is limited by the number of the element's orientations.

[0040] In the second embodiment of the present invention, referred to hereinafter as EMBODIMENT B, a multitude of elements with closed segments on one side only are provided, and the closed segments carry various colours. Also a device is provided to align the elements correctly whereby when two or more elements are placed in a stack, the segments of one element overlay exactly on the corresponding segments of the other elements. As in EMBODIMENT A this device is simply a tray, as illustrated in FIGS. 2a and 2b, whose outer outline A correspond exactly to the outline of the element E (FIG. 2c), except that suitable finger holes B are located on four sides to facilitate easy removal of the stacked elements.

[0041] In a preferred version 36 elements E are being provided, each having 13 round segments A on one face only, some open a1 and some closed a2, arranged in a grid designed to provide twelve possible rows N of three segments each and two rows C of five segments each, making altogether fourteen possible rows on the front face of each element, the said possible rows may be marked with thick lines stretched between the segments for the five segment rows C and thin lines stretched between the segments for the three segment rows N. A device as described above is provided to align the elements when they are stacked on top of one another. Each face has closed segments thereon covered with altogether five colours, with at least one segment bearing each of the said five colours, the ratio between the colours on each face, as well as the ratio between the closed and open segments, may vary from one element to another. However, in order to make possible having a visible five segments row C of the same colour, most, and preferably all, elements should have the closed segments of one of the two five segments rows C bearing only one colour.

[0042] In a further version of EMBODIMENT B, some colours may appear more frequently on the closed segments of the total number of elements than other colours and complete rows C and N of the rarer colours are therefore more difficult to achieve. Alternatively the closed segments may carry icons, for instance those similar to the popular "fruit machine", or classic playing card symbols.

[0043] In a typical game, after initial quantity of 3 elements each are distributed between the players, and the rest of the elements being placed with their blank side upwards in a central position as common stock pile, the players take turns, each stacking up to two of his/her elements, in orientation as he/she chooses, into the aligning device, with the aim of creating a predetermined advantageous position in which one or more rows C and/or N of segments, all showing the same colour, are visible when the stack is viewed from above.

[0044] Each player replenishes his/her hand of three elements after each turn, initially from the common stock.

[0045] The other players are then invited to stack their element(s) with the aim of improving the displayed position, by either replacing it by a longer row (e.g. a five-segments row C instead of three-segments row N) or by more rows (e.g. displaying two three-segments rows N rather than one), or in the aforementioned variations of less frequent colours and playing card symbols, displaying a row of a better colour, or a better sequence of symbols, according to a predetermined grading.

[0046] The player whose position cannot be improved upon by the other players is the winner of the round. He/she captures all the elements that are stacked by then in the aligning device and keeps them, blank face upwards, as his/her personal stock pile. This stock pile can be used by him/her when the common stock pile is exhausted. As the winner of the previous round he/she also starts the next round. A player should not have at one time a hand of more than three elements.

[0047] When the common stock pile is exhausted the game enters the second phase when the players must rely for their supplies on their private stock piles that they have captured in the first phase. They may reshuffle or rearrange the elements of that stock only once before that second phase begins. Captured elements during the second phase must be placed by the players in their private stock under the elements that are already there and may be used eventually after the elements above them.

[0048] As the game progresses some players' stock is bound to run out. The last player to survive is the winner of the game. Alternatively, the game terminates as soon as one player has to retire due to depletion of stock and the player with the largest number of elements in his/her stock is the winner.

[0049] In another variation to EMBODIMENT B, instead of colours the segments carry numbers. The players stack their elements as described above with the aim of getting the highest possible aggregate of the visible numbers. Likewise every player is challenging the opponents to try and get higher score and if they fail, then he/she is the winner of the round and captures all the elements that are by then in the aligning tray. This variation can be adopted to represent coins and notes of money and is particularly useful as an educational tool to introduce the public to a new currency and/or to introduce children to monetary calculations.

[0050] In a further refinement of this variation a die or coin may be provided, carrying the plus (+) and minus (-) arithmetical symbols and when the die or coin are showing the minus symbol the winner of the round is the player that reaches the uncontested minimum aggregate when all the segments in the tray are bearing numbers.

[0051] There are other grids also entirely suitable for this and previous versions. FIGS. 3a-3c show three grids where scoring is for four segments rows. There are six such rows in the element in 3a and 3c and ten rows in the element in 3b. FIG. 3d shows a grid for four rows of five segments each.

[0052] The grid shown in FIG. 3e allows for another variation of EMBODIMENT B. In this grid there are three

differently shaped segments, hereinafter referred to as bows (H), leaves (J) and lemons (K). Visual spheres, referred to as “moons” (G), each consisting of two leaves, one lemon and one bow, can also be easily discerned. This variation is played as EMBODIMENT B except that instead of scoring by having a row of the same colour, the player score by displaying of the same colour either a full “moon” (G) or all bows (H), or all leaves (I), or all lemons (J).

[0053] In yet another variation of EMBODIMENT B, this game will be connected to a range of prizes, which may be the actual objects shown in the icons or tokens representing them. There is no limit to the number of elements or players in this variation. Therefore it is particularly suitable for a multi winners promotional operation by commercial companies, whereby an unlimited number of elements are distributed among clients and many winners may be declared according to a predetermined criteria, e.g. when they collect enough stacks showing rows of the products or symbols, or sufficient values on their stacks, or a particular desired stack or series of stacks. Alternatively each element may have closed segments on both sides bearing colours, symbols or numbers, the winner win a large prize if desirable rows are displayed on both ends of the stack and a smaller prize if the stack displays the desirable row only on one end of the stack.

[0054] In the third embodiment, referred to as EMBODIMENT C, plurality of elements are being provided and a device to match the outline of the element, as described above in EMBODIMENT A.

[0055] In a preferred variation of EMBODIMENT C, 28 elements H, as illustrated in FIG. 4, are provided, each having thirteen segments N thereof, of which five segments N1, are left open, while the other eight segments N2 are closed and bearing four different colours, red (r), yellow (y), green (g) and blue (b), two segments of each, the distribution of the four colours and the open segments are random and differ from one element to another.

[0056] Ideally having four players, each playing one of the four colours that appears on the elements. Following the equal distribution of the elements among the players, the players take turns. Each player in his/her turn begins by stacking one element in the aligning device, aiming to have at least as many visible segments of his/her colour as any other colour displayed. If this is not achieved after placing his/her first element, he/she must place more of his/her elements until there is no other colour with larger number of visible segments than his/her colour.

[0057] The other players follow suit in their turns. The player who survives last is the winner.

[0058] In the fourth embodiment, referred to as EMBODIMENT D, plurality of elements are provided, all elements having closed segments bearing colours or icons on both sides, all completely proportional in shape, each element having at least two orientations relative to an adjacent element when they are placed in a stack.

[0059] In a preferred variation sixteen square elements are provided, each element having sixteen segments thereon, nine of which are closed segments and seven are open segments, the distribution of the open segments among the closed segments differ from one element to another and the nine closed segments are of two colours only, on both sides of all elements, e.g. red and blue. The sixteen elements are

divided into four groups or series of four elements each, apparent by having the rims of all the elements in each group marked by that group’s symbol, e.g. heart, spade, diamond or clubs. Each element in each group having a different ratio of the two colours on its nine closed segments in relation to the other members of that group, making it one element with a ratio of 8 to 1, second element with a ratio of 7 to 2, third element with a ratio of 6 to 3 and fourth element with a ratio of 5 to 4. And the same ratio repeats itself but in reverse on the other side of the element, but not in reflected position. For example the element with the 6:3 ratio will have 6 red and 3 blue segments on one side of the element and 6 blue and 3 red segments on the other side of the element, positioned randomly but differently. Every element having thereby a majority of blue segments on one face and a majority of red segments on the other face, and the area between the segments as well as the area separating the segments from the edges of the elements is dark blue on the blue majority side and dark red on the red majority side. As four elements of the same ratio are provided in the game, one element for each of the four groups, the difference between them is in the positioning of the open segments and the coloured closed segments.

[0060] FIG. 5a shows a typical grid for an element of EMBODIMENT D. If we look at FIGS. 5b and 5c we see two faces of a typical element, this one of the 7:2 ratio, having seven open segments P. We see that on face one (FIG. 5b) there are seven red (r) closed segments and two blue (b) closed segments, while on face two (FIG. 5c) the reverse happens: seven blue closed segments (b) and two red (r) closed segments. But the positions of the red and blue segments do not reflect each other on the two faces of the element. The group sign K at the corners of the element, and on both sides indicates that this particular element is a member of the clubs group of elements.

[0061] Similarly FIG. 6a shows a typical grid for a junior version of EMBODIMENT D, In this preferred variation the grid allows for only eight heart-shaped segments, and in all the elements three segments are open and five are closed. Each group consists of four elements, two each of the ratios 4:1 and 3:2 for the closed segments. FIGS. 6b and 6c show two faces of a typical element of this embodiment, this one of the spade group 4:1 ratio. Therefore FIG. 6b shows the red side, with four segments (r) in red, and one segment (b) in blue. While on the blue face (FIG. 6c) it is the reverse: four blue closed segments (b) and one red (r) closed segment.

[0062] In a typical game of EMBODIMENT D two players are participating. The players declare their colours—either red or blue. Each player is given two groups/series of his/her choice—comprising altogether of eight elements. Each player then arranges his/her elements in a pile, in a sequence and orientations which he/she considers advantageous, while taking care that all the elements in his/her pile are having his/her colour upwards. The two piles are then presented on a flat surface and are arrayed in close proximity to each other, as illustrated in FIG. 7a, with one side of the red Y pile touching one side of the blue Z pile. Both players play simultaneously. Each picks the top element of his/her respective pile and while keeping it in touch with the opponent’s element, and strictly without changing its orientation, is pushing the other sides of the element forward, as illustrated in FIG. 7b, until the element meets the element

held by the opponent and the two elements completely align with each other, as illustrated in **FIG. 7c**. The two elements are held momentarily as a stack of two elements by the two players, each player inspecting the stack from his/her side and declaring the number of his/her own colour segments visible from their respective ends. The player with the larger number of his/her colour segments is the winner of this encounter and is capturing the opponent's element. The same encounter is then played with all the elements in the pile. The round ends when the pile is depleted. Both players are then rearranging their elements, including the captured elements and arraying them similarly for another round. The game continues until one player is running out of elements.

**[0063]** This game may be played also with four players, each player starting with one group of elements, the four players sitting in a circle, alternating between red and blue. Similarly six or eight players, using double supply of elements may play this game.

**[0064]** While EMBODIMENT D can be enjoyed just by using hands, a device is suggested to facilitate this embodiment if the constant meeting of hands and fingers is not desirable, consisting of a frame in upright position, fitted with an inserting slot at the top or sides.

**[0065]** With this device the game is being played as described above. The two piles are arrayed on both sides of the device and the players simultaneously pushing down the elements into the described device one by one.

**[0066]** The fifth embodiment of this invention, referred to as EMBODIMENT E, is similar to EMBODIMENT B, but in addition to the described device (**FIG. 2a**) a criteria die is provided. In a preferred variation a multitude of totally proportional elements, as illustrated in **FIG. 8a**, are provided, each with nine segments arranged thereon, on one side, in rows of three, some of the segments open and some closed and the closed segments carry small pictures of objects that can be classified in more than one way, e.g. a) generically—either cats or dogs. b) chromatically—either black or white and c) by size—either large or small. The die is provided with six sides, as in **FIG. 8b**, marking twice each of the three possibilities illustrated in **FIG. 8c**: two sides with a mark or symbol representing size (small/large) A; two sides with a mark or symbol representing species (cat/dog) B; and further two sides with a mark representing colour (black/white) C.

**[0067]** In a typical game, after three elements are initially distributed to each player, and the rest are kept as a common stock pile, the first player cast the die, which shows the criteria to follow, e.g. size. The players then take turns in stacking their elements into the device, one at a time, creating ever changing random assortment of images until at least one of the eight possible rows (three horizontal, three vertical and two diagonal) is complete, when viewed from above, with three objects of the same size, disregarding their colour or their generic type (as illustrated by the top row in **FIG. 8a**). The player who created this line scores one point and casts the die to allow for another criteria. All players replenish their hand of three elements from the common pile. The game ends when all the elements are exhausted. The player with the highest score is the winner.

**[0068]** In the sixth embodiment of the present invention, referred to as EMBODIMENT F, the elements show a maze

in which the closed segments carry portions of paths which link with paths printed between the segments on the elements to join, when in proper stack, start and finish marks.

**[0069]** The start and finish marks may be either on the margins or on the segments.

**[0070]** In a preferred variation of EMBODIMENT F a device as described above in EMBODIMENT B (**FIG. 2b**) is provided together with a multitude of elements. **FIGS. 9a** and **9b** show two typical elements, each having 16 square and round segments thereon, some (a) open and some (b) closed, and the closed segments on one side of the element carry portions of paths (c) some of which (d) merge with paths printed on the areas between the segments and some other segments (e) with paths which do not merge with paths between the segments, and there are two start and finish marks (f) located at the edges on each of the four sides of the element, and at least one of the two start and finish marks of each side is visually connected to the paths between the segments and the edge of the element.

**[0071]** In this preferred variation 36 elements are provided, all differing from each other by the number and locations of the open segments and by the stretch, extent and design of the paths' network thereof.

**[0072]** Two to four players can participate. Prior to the start of the game each player is initially given a hand of three elements and one element is placed at the bottom of the device. The players then take turns, each stacking one element at a time on top of the elements which are already there, with the aim of visually interconnecting the start/finish mark (f) on his/her side with the start/finish mark across the element by a continuous path. The start/finish marks are considered a start mark for the player who faces them and finish marks for the player who is sitting across.

**[0073]** In a way of example, if a player would place the element illustrated in **FIG. 9b** and stack it on top of the element in **FIG. 9a**, without changing the orientations of both elements, then a continuous path will be visible interconnecting the two start/finish marks marked with asterisks (\*). However only the two players who are facing these marks may create this connection and the first among the two who creates this visual interconnection score the point.

**[0074]** After each turn the players replenish their hand of three elements from the common stock pile.

**[0075]** A player who had created visible interconnection as described scores one point and is also given the option of stacking another element of his hand to score an extra point.

**[0076]** The other players follow by stacking their elements on top of the previous interconnections. The game ends when all elements in the common stack pile are exhausted. The player with the highest score is the winner.

**[0077]** In a refinement of this variation a different method of scoring can be implemented by providing elements as illustrated in **FIG. 9c**, identical to the element in **FIG. 9a**, except that the closed segments carry also digits (h) representing values. The values may also be negative. The score of each interconnection is determined by the aggregate of the values along the interconnected continuous path. For junior editions the values may be replaced by images of rewarding moments, i.e. treasures or discoveries, on one

hand and by negative images, i.e. crocodiles or pirates, on the other hand, with values assigned to each image.

[0078] This variation is particularly suitable for a game involving multitude of players, in a promotional operation for commercial companies, whereby unlimited number of elements are distributed among clients and the winners are the clients who have collected a number of elements which, when stacked together, display interconnection of paths between predefined start and finish points. Prizes may be tied to values attached to particular segments along the interconnected paths.

[0079] In further variations of all the aforementioned embodiments of the present invention the game is adapted for use on a computer, electronic game-machine or television screen, the elements being images generated by the computer and manipulated by the player using a mouse, joystick or similar interactive control device.

1. An apparatus for playing a game for multiple players, comprising a plurality of elements capable of being placed in a stack in any order, each element having on one or both sides several segments in identical locations which overlie exactly the segments of the other elements when all the elements are in a stack, some of the segments being open and some being closed, whereby when the elements are placed in a stack, the closed segments on the inner elements are completely visible through the open segments on the outer elements, and the closed segments having thereon various colours or images, letters, numbers or symbols and the elements are provided with certain grids and/or other visual controlling and identifying features and/or presentation, gaming and containment accessories, according to the different embodiments and in association with their rules, whereby when certain elements are stacked together in particular order, attitude and orientation, a random and changeable assortment of colours, images, letters, numbers, symbols or sections of paths is visible by the players on one or both ends of the stack, into which predetermined meaningful lingual, visual, numerical or logical values may be derived, discerned or completed by the players.

2. A game as claimed in all previous claims in which an aligning device in the shape of a tray is provided whose outlines correspond exactly to the outline of the elements.

3. A game as claimed in the previous claim in which suitable finger holes are located on the sides of the device.

4. A game as claimed in the previous claims, in which each element has twelve segments thereon, some open and some closed, and the closed segments bear alphabetical letters.

5. A game as claimed in the previous claim, in which each element is divided into four equal sections.

6. A game as claimed in claims 2 and 3, in which each element has segments arranged in rows, some open and some closed, and the closed segments bear colours or icons.

7. A game as claimed in the previous claim, in which the segments are arranged in a grid providing twelve short rows of three segments each and two long rows of five segments each, and all the closed segments on at least one long row bear one colour only.

8. A game as claimed in claims 6 and 7, in which the closed segments carry numbers, or images representing coins with their values.

9. A game as claimed in the previous claim, in which a die or a coin is provided, bearing plus and minus symbols.

10. A game as claimed in claims 1 to 3, in which the segments on each element are sections of overlapping spheres.

11. A game as claimed in the previous claim, in which the segments on each element provide four overlapping spheres, and each sphere is subdivided into four shapes, thus creating four "leaves", four "lemons" and four "bows".

12. A game as claimed in claims 1, in which each element has closed segments on both faces bearing two colours only, and the ratio between the two colours on one face repeats itself, in reverse, on the other face, but not in reflected position.

13. A game as claimed in the previous claim, in which the elements are divided into groups/series of four, marked by symbols placed on corners, and the members of each group differ from each other by the ratio and position of the two colours on the closed segments.

14. A game as claimed in claims 12 and 13, in which a device is provided, consisting of a frame in upright position, with an insertion slot.

15. A game as claimed in claims 1 and 6, in which the closed segments carry images which can be classified in several ways and a die is provided with symbols of the different classification criteria.

16. A game as claimed in claims 1, in which the closed elements, and the other areas on the face of the elements, carry portions of paths.

17. A game as claimed in the previous claim, in which there are start and finish marks on each element.

18. A game as claimed in claims 16 and 17, in which the said paths intersect representations of different values.

19. A game as claimed in claims 6 to 8, 10 to 11 and 16 to 18, in which the number of elements provided is unlimited.

20. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the elements of the game being images generated by computer and manipulated by the player using a mouse, joystick or similar control device.

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