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Introduction

Thinking games are designed for children to have fun while exercising their thinking abilities. The games in this book give practice in such skills as planning, drawing inferences, seeing things from other points of view, formulating questions, and thinking of possibilities.

There are already a number of good thinking games available for children to play — chess, Monopoly, Mastermind, etc., and even hide-and-peek, which involves some planning, originality, and seeing things from another person's point of view. This book supplies sixty-four new games, and its companion volume, *Thinking Games 1*, supplies sixty-four more. There were several reasons for creating these new games. The most obvious reason is that children can profit from having many more games available. Not every child likes or has a talent for chess. Other strategy games are needed to provide a range of choices. Moreover, no single game teaches very much. As you play chess you may improve your planning abilities a little bit, but mostly you just become better at playing chess. And so it is with every game. To stand much chance of experiencing any general improvement in thinking skills, you need to play a variety of games.

The games in this book differ from many others in that they are cheap (they either require no special materials or ones that you can easily obtain yourself) and the rules are easy to learn. We have also tried to design the games to avoid dog-eat-dog competition. There is enough competition to generate excitement, but it is frequently competition between

teams rather than individuals, and the games are designed so that children will almost always experience some measure of success.

All the games have been thoroughly tested and revised, with different groups of children, so that you can be reasonably sure they will work with children of the appropriate ages. There are quiet games and active games, games for two and games for a classroom-size group to play at once. There are games for all levels of sophistication, including some that adults may enjoy. Games are grouped according to the number of players, and **within each group the first games are for younger children and the later, more challenging games, are for older children.**

Primarily the games were designed for use in school. They can be introduced at odd moments or made a regular part of the curriculum. In try-out schools children played games for about an hour a week, on the average. Some teachers supervised the games rather closely. Others introduced the games and then let children play them independently while other classroom activities were going on. The games can be used equally well at home or with other children's groups.

We have some research evidence to show that children who play the games regularly over the span of a school year improve in creative thinking skills and in their ability to participate in group problem-solving. Some teachers have reported improvements in reasoning abilities, but we have no evidence that this is a typical result. Our guess is that children will have to play thinking games

Draw Me Nothing



SKILLS: PERCEPTUAL ORGANIZATION, IMAGERY.

Players try to make marks that do not look like an object while the group tries to identify an object in the marks.

Players: 2 or more.

Materials: Blackboard and chalk.

Game Procedure

1. Each player takes a turn making a simple mark on the board, for example, a line, a curve, a squiggle, and so on.
2. As each player adds a mark, she should try to make sure that she draws "nothing." Her mark should not combine with previous marks to make a recognizable object.
3. Once four marks have been made, players may begin to look for something in the drawing.
4. If a player sees something, she calls out "Stop!" goes to the board, and traces what she sees. She must trace a complete object.
5. If she can trace something recognizable, she erases the board and begins a new game with a single mark.
6. If her tracing is debatable, the other players make the decision.

Variations

Two players may play the game by taking turns making marks on a sheet of paper. When one player thinks she sees something, she tells the other player and traces what she sees. A point is given each time a player traces something recognizable. The first player to get five points is the winner.

