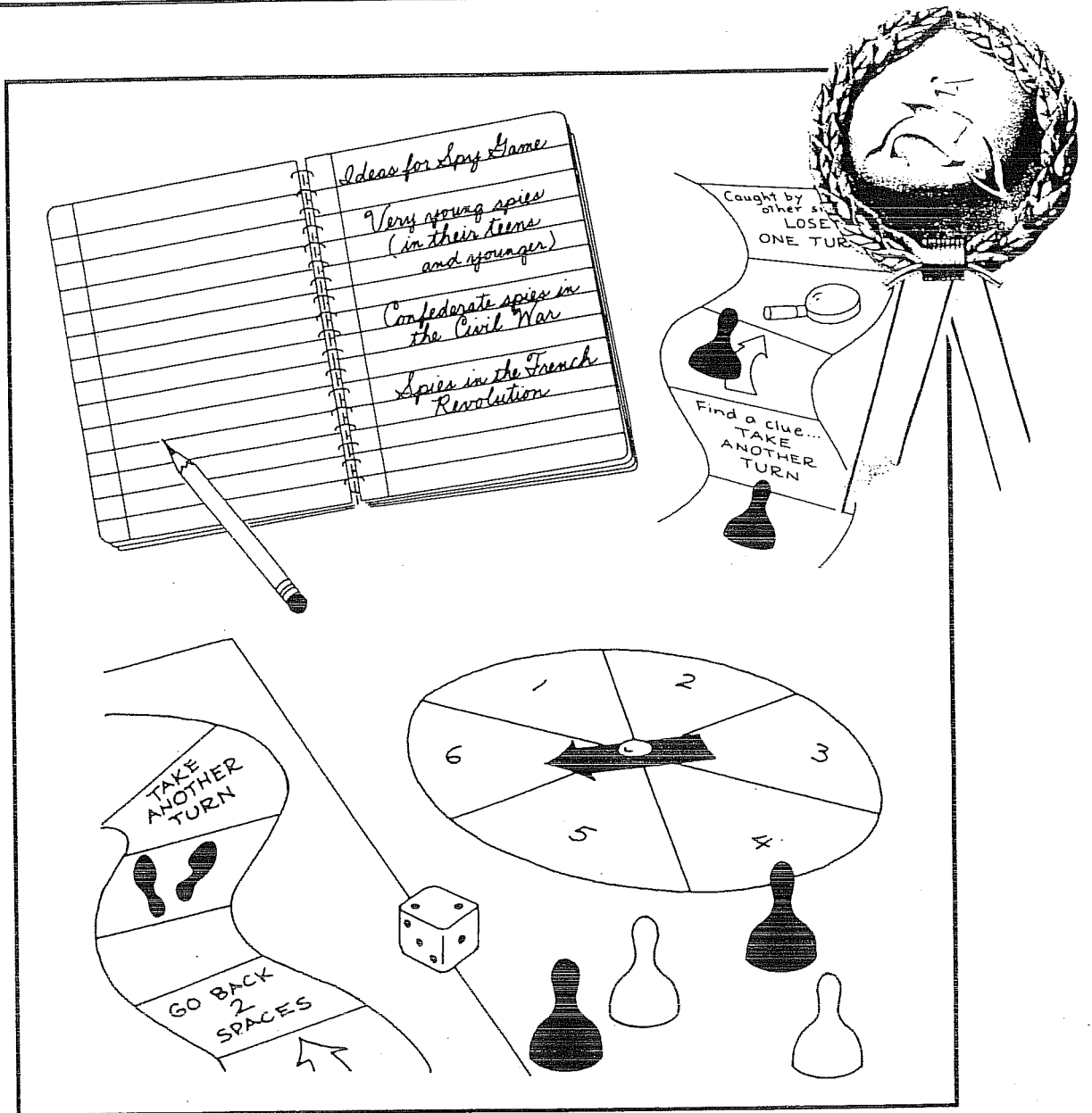


# Design a Board Game

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Planning Your Game

Think about the board games you have played. There were probably some you liked and some you didn't like. What caused you to form your opinion?

Here are some questions to think about:

- Do you prefer race games, such as Parcheesi™ where the object is to get to a certain point first?
- Do you like accumulation games, such as Monopoly™, in which you must collect or accumulate a certain number of things?
- Do you like games of skill, such as chess and checkers?
- Do you like word games, such as Scrabble™?

Some board games combine elements from more than one category. How would you describe Trivial Pursuit™ or Clue™?

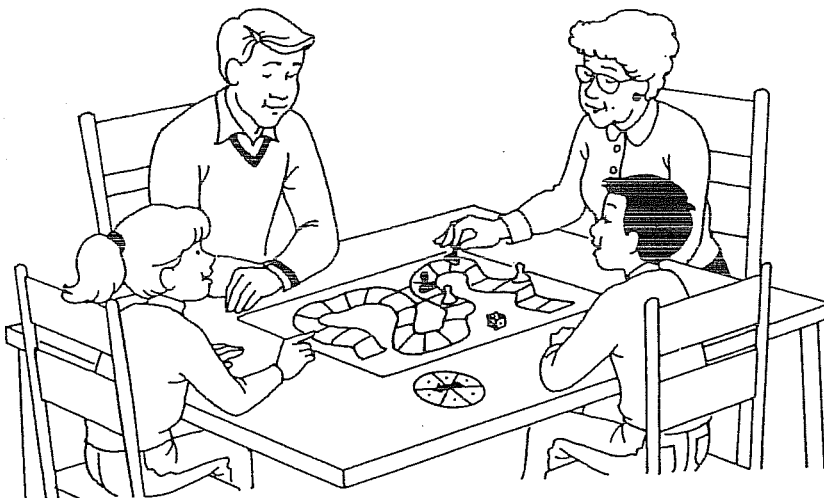
Examine some successful games. Try to analyze what it is that makes them so popular. Record your ideas in your notebook.

Research has shown that three factors help to make a game successful. Do you agree with them?

1. Even on the shelf, the game must look appealing and attract the attention and curiosity of the player.
2. There must be something unusual or interesting about playing the game.
3. The game must keep the players' interest so they will want to play it again.

How do your favorite games meet these requirements? Keep in mind the factors you think are important as you design your own game.

Another important point to consider is who will play your game. Do you want to design a game for younger children, for your own friends, or one that adults will like as well?



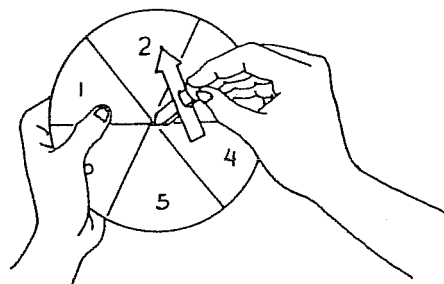
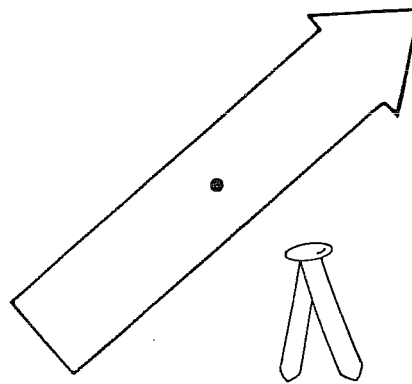
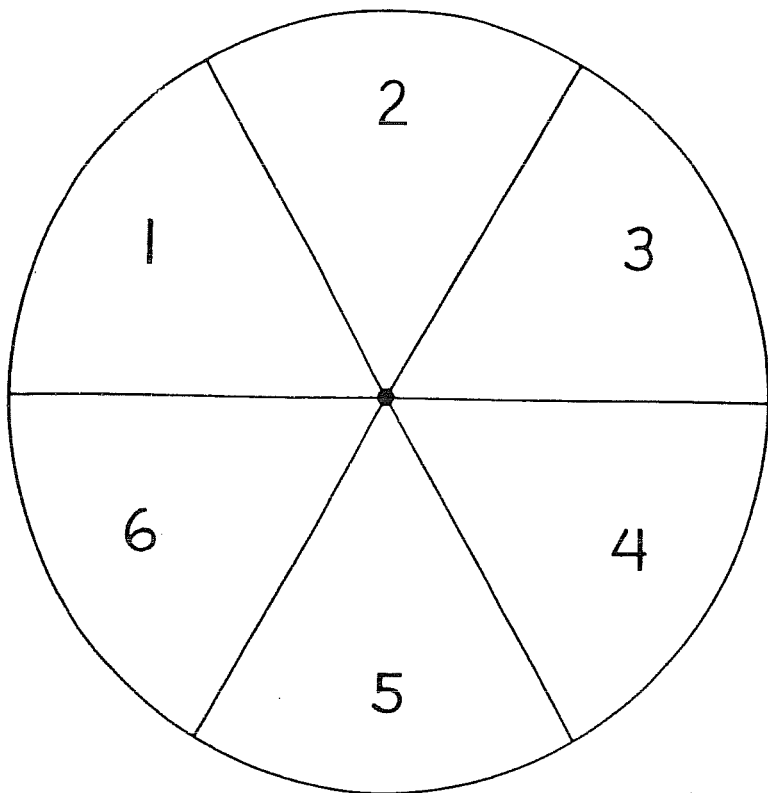
By now you should be getting some definite ideas about your game. You should know what kind of board game you are going to create, the object of the game, and who will play it.

### Designing the Board

Now you need to think about the board itself. Ask yourself these questions:

- Will the board be large or small?
- Will the game require playing pieces?
- Does it need a spinner or chance cards?
- What will spark interest in the game?
- How will my game be unusual?

If your game needs a spinner, you can trace the one on this page. The arrow can be fastened to the spinner with a metal paper fastener. You may think of your own way to make a spinner or to change this one to suit your game.



Make several sketches of your game board to try out different ideas. Once you have picked the best ideas, make a working model. Draw your board carefully, using a ruler. Make any lettering neat, straight, and easy to read. Since this is a model and not your finished game, do not decorate it with detailed art work.

## Writing Directions

You have now come to what may be the most difficult part of designing your game — writing the directions. Here are five guidelines:

1. Read over the directions to some of your favorite games. They may give you some ideas about what you need to include and how to word your directions clearly. Good directions are essential. Without them, people won't be able to play your game.

2. State clearly the age level for which the game is intended, the number of players, the object of the game, and any other information that will introduce the game to the players.

Here is an example:

*This game, To Catch a Spy, is a game for two to four players, aged eight to adult. The object of the game is to learn the identity of the spy. The first person to identify the spy correctly is the winner.*

3. Explain what materials are needed and what the players must do to set up the game. List the parts included with the game, so the players can be sure nothing is missing.

4. State clearly how to play the game. Include the order of play, how to proceed with the play, and what to do if anything unusual happens. For instance, what happens if two players land on the same space?

5. Ask other people to read your directions to see if they are clearly written and easy to follow.

## Field Testing Your Game

You have made a working model of your board game and equipment, assembled all the necessary parts, and written your directions. Now you are ready to fieldtest your game.

Have some friends play your game. Don't give them any help as they play, but watch to see if they have trouble. After they finish, ask them questions. Did they enjoy playing the game? Was it fun? Were the directions clear? Did any situations come up that weren't covered in the directions? Was there anything they especially liked or disliked about the game? How could it be improved?

You will probably think of other things you want to know. You may want to change your game and fieldtest it again with another group of friends. Were the results the same? Now is the time to correct any problems and make improvements.

Don't become discouraged if your game doesn't work out perfectly the first time, or even the second time. Designing a really good game isn't easy!

### Making Your Final Version

When you have your game just the way you want it, make a final version. This time make the board as colorful and appealing as you can. Make it durable as well, so that it will last a long time. Write your final set of directions neatly or type them on a typewriter or computer.

Now that your game is finished, enjoy sharing it with people in the age group for whom you designed it. If your school library has a game section, ask the librarian if your game can be kept there. You may think of other ways to share it, too.

Congratulations! You have worked hard and made a great game!

