

Making a Set of Squares – Directions

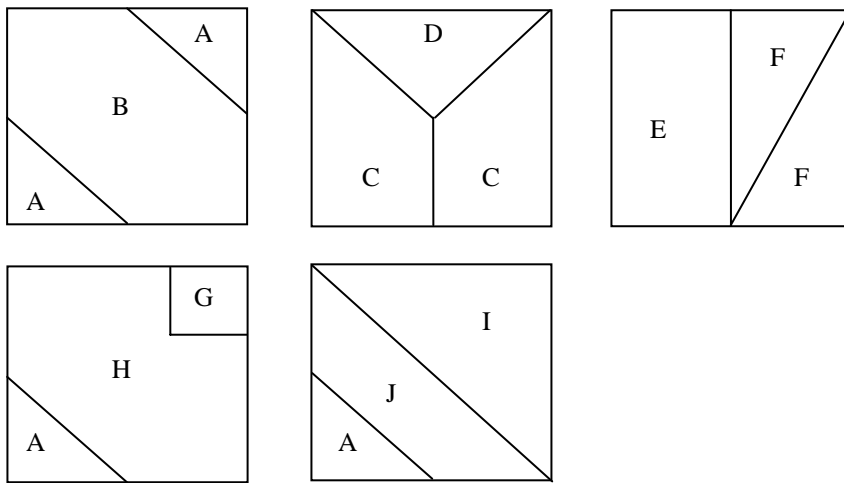
From: Handbook of Structured Experiences

By Pfeiffer and Jones

(Reproduced from Pfeiffer and Jones, 1974)

A set consists of five envelopes containing pieces of cardboard cut into different patterns which, when properly arranged, will form five squares of equal size. One set should be provided for each group of five persons.

To prepare a set, cut out five cardboard squares, each exactly 6x6 square inches. Place the squares in a row and mark them as below, penciling the letters lightly so they can be erased.



The lines should be so drawn that, when the pieces are cut out, those marked A will be exactly the same size, all pieces marked C the same size, and so on. Several combinations are possible that will form one or two squares, but only one combination will form all five squares, each 6x6 inches. After drawing the lines on the squares and labeling the sections with letters, cut each square along the lines into smaller pieces to make the parts of the puzzle.

Label the five envelopes 1,2,3, 4, and 5. Distribute the cardboard pieces into the five envelopes as follows : envelope 1 has pieces I, H, E; 2 has A, A, A, C; 3 has A, J; 4 has D, F; and 5 has G, B, F, C.

Erase the penciled letter from each piece and write, instead, the number of the envelope it is in. this makes it easy to return the pieces to the proper envelope, for subsequent use, after a group has completed the task.

Each set may be made from a different colour of cardboard.

BROKEN SQUARES

Instructions for the Observers

You are going to observe a game in which five players are participating. Each player has before him a packet containing pieces of cardboard. The purpose of the group is to make five squares of equal size using these cardboard pieces. They are instructed to try and make these squares as soon as possible. Their task will be considered as complete only when all individuals have before them squares of equal size. The norms they are expected to observe include the following:

- (a) No member is allowed to speak.
- (b) No member can demand, ask for or take pieces from other person.
- (c) However, members are to give pieces to each other or receive pieces from others.

As an observer you may ensure that the norms are followed by the groups of players. You may note the behaviour of different participants on the following dimensions.

- (i) Who is willing to give pieces?
- (ii) Who made the squares first?
- (iii) Who broke his square first in order to give pieces to others?
- (iv) Who was reluctant to break his square once he made?
- (v) Who was holding to the pieces and with what effect?
- (vi) Who is looking around assessing the needs of other participants and trying to help others?

You may note down any other behaviours shown by the participants that either facilitated or inhibited the group performance and completion of the task.

Instructions for Players

Each of you have an envelope before you which contains pieces of cardboard to make squares. The task of your group is to make five squares of equal size as soon as possible. The task would be considered as complete when every member has a square before him of the same size as others have before them. Please observe the following norms while participating in this game.

- (a) No member will speak.
- (b) No member is allowed to demand or ask for pieces from others.
- (c) Members may however, give pieces to others. The pieces can be given to another person but cannot be thrown in the middle or anywhere else.

Introspective Report

1. How satisfied are you with your own performances in the group?
 - I am very much satisfied
 - I am more satisfied than dissatisfied
 - I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - I am more dissatisfied than satisfied
 - I am very much dissatisfied

2. Please give reasons for your satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
3. What factors do you think have influenced the success or failure of your group?
4. How differently would you play this exercise if this is played again? What strategy will you use and why?