

Deduction

A game for the piecepack by Mark Biggar

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3-5 players, 40 min

Equipment

- a piecepack (the pawns and dice are not used)
- an opaque bag or cup to draw coins
- paper and pencil for each player for notes

Description

This is a deduction game like Sleuth or Clue where you try to determine a missing tile by asking questions about the tiles in the other player's hands.

Game Setup

Shuffle the tiles suit-side down thoroughly. Place one tile aside, leaving it suit-side down without letting anyone see its suit side. This is the missing tile, which the players are trying to deduce. Place all the coins in the bag or cup. Choose a first player by any agreed upon method.

Deal the remaining tiles evenly among the players, turning any left over tiles suit-side up in the center of the table for all to see. I.e., for a three player game, deal seven tiles to each player with 2 left over; for a 4 or 5 player game, deal 5 or 4 tiles to each player with 3 left over.

Game Turns

Player turns go clockwise. Each player's turn consists of drawing a coin from the cup or bag, revealing the drawn coin to all players and then asking any one of the other players a single question based on the value or suit of drawn coin. There are only two types of questions a player can ask:

1. "Do you have a _____?", where the blank is filled in with either the suit (Sun, Moon, Crown or Shield) or number value (Null, Ace, 2, 3, 4 or 5) of the drawn coin. The player asked must either answer "Yes" or "No", and if he answers "Yes", must show the asker a single tile from their hand that matches the question without showing that tile to any other player.
2. "How many _____ do you have?", where the blank is again filled in with either the suit or number value of the drawn coin. The

player asked must answer with the number of tiles in their hand that matches the question.

For example, if the drawn coin is the “3 of Suns”, then a player can ask any of the 4 following questions:

1. Do you have a 3?
2. Do you have a Sun?
3. How many 3's do you have?
4. How many Suns do you have?

After the player has asked the question and received an answer, and if he believes that he has deduced the missing tile, then he may announce its identity and peek at the missing tile. If he is correct, then he shows the missing tile to the other players and has won the game. If he is wrong, then he has lost the game and he leaves the tile hidden and no longer takes turns, but must still answer questions from the other players.

If a player chooses not to make an announcement (or makes one and loses), the drawn coin is placed back in the cup or bag which is passed to the next player for use on their turn.

Each player may use their paper and pencil in any way they wish to keep any secret notes about what they have discovered as an aide to their deductions.

Design Notes

1. This game is much more like Sleuth than Clue.
2. I took care of the uneven deal problem by exposing all the extra tiles to all players. Thus everyone starts out knowing about a third of the tiles.
3. As there are only two attributes to determine (unlike three in Sleuth or Clue) limiting the allowed questions to those related to the drawn coin prevents making the game too easy.

History

20030204 mab 0.5 Playtest version.
20030321 mab 1.0 First www.piecepack.org version.
20040729 mab 1.1 Annual clean up and added design notes.

Thank you for playing my game. Please report rules problems or variant suggestions to mark@biggar.org.

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