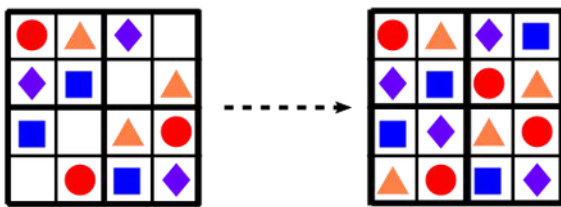


Strategy

— SHAPE SUDOKU — PUZZLE

Use four tokens each of four different types. For example, use different colored gummy bears. We have used orange triangles, blue squares, red circles, and purple diamonds. To create one of these puzzles, start with the answer – this will be a pattern of tokens with one of each kind in each row and column, and one of each kind in each 2 by 2 corner box of the grid.

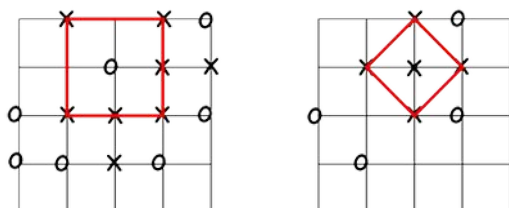


Once you have the “answer,” pull off some of the tokens and place them in a pile to the side. Finally, give the puzzle to your child to figure out how to put back the tokens that were pulled off.

Although you can remove any set of tokens you feel will make a good puzzle, there are some simple strategies for creating puzzles: remove one token from each row; remove all of one kind of token and one each of the other tokens; or remove one entire row and column.

— FINDING SQUARES — GAME

Create an empty 5 by 5 grid using five horizontal and vertical lines. Players take turns putting their tokens on points where the lines cross in the grid.



The first player with four tokens on the corners of a square of any size wins.

As your child gets experienced with this, change the rules to allow squares with diagonal sides.

— DOTS AND BOXES — GAME

This satisfying game starts with a rectangular grid of dots - say 3 by 4. During a turn, a player draws a horizontal or vertical line connecting two unjoined adjacent dots. If the new line completes a 1 by 1 box, the player earns a point and draws another line. When no more lines can be drawn, the player with the most points wins. An easy way to keep track of points is to put an initial inside each earned box.



Although this is traditionally played with little squares, it can also be played with dots in a pattern to produce triangles or hexagons - it's just a bit harder to draw.