



## Lesson 23 Teacher's Notes

### The Play in Trump Contracts

#### Aims

- To emphasise the differences between no-trump play and suit play
- To train the class to make a plan when there are trump
- To explain why we sometimes have to postpone drawing trump

#### Content

- 1 Remind the class that there are **5 possible strains** – *clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades and no-trump* – but they are not **equally popular**  
The most popular game contract is **3NT**, because it is the **lowest** game contract, needing only 9 tricks. Next come 4♥ and 4♠, the **majors**.  
The **minors**, 5♣ and 5♦ are the least popular because they need 11 tricks  
One out of three games is played in no-trump: the other two in a suit contract.
  - 2 Underline the differences between suit play and no-trumps play  
**Sure tricks** may not be sure – you cannot count AKQ as 3 tricks since a defender might trump one. Instead, we count **losers**. **Losers** are the tricks that **may** be lost.  
We count them by looking at each suit in turn, starting with the trump suit.  
When counting losers look at **both** hands: dummy may be able to take care of a loser in declarer's hand by trumping it.
  - 3 Illustrate the advantages of counting losers  
By counting losers we know whether there are more than we can afford to make our contract.  
In 4♠ or 4♥ we have to make **10 tricks**, and can afford only **3 losers**.  
In 5♣ or 5♦ we need **11 tricks** and can afford only **2 losers**.  
In part score contracts we can afford more losers – but not too many!  
After counting losers, the next step is normally to **draw trumps**.  
Once that is done, the play continues as in no-trumps: choose the Work Suit and develop it.
  - 4 Demonstrate **discarding a loser**  
When you do not draw trump you run the risk of having your winners in the **side suits** (not trump) ruffed. Whenever it is practical the first thing we do is **draw trumps**.  
Drawing trump is easy when we have a **solid suit**: we can play as many rounds as necessary **without giving up the lead**.  
If the trump suit is not solid we may have to **give up the lead** in order to establish the trump suit.  
If the defenders can cash enough tricks to defeat our contract we may have to **discard a loser** before playing trumps.
  - 5 When playing in a Suit Contract we follow these steps
    - a. Count the Losers
    - b. If there are too many look for ways of reducing them to the right number
    - c. Draw trump if either: **you can do so without losing the lead**  
or: **you can afford to lose the lead because your losers are not Immediate**If you have too many **immediate losers** take essential discards first – then **draw trump**
- NB** Do not draw more trumps than necessary: you need trumps to keep control of the side suits  
Establish Tricks in the Work Suit – continue as if you were playing in no-trumps