



## Lesson 1 Teacher's Notes

### Aims:

- To get to know your class, and introduce your learners to one another
- To explain the basic mechanics of playing bridge
- To introduce your learners to bridge jargon which may be new to them
- To familiarise them with the way bridge hands are written down
- To familiarise them with Minibridge

### Content:

- 1 Find out what experience your learners have of trick-taking card games.  
(If they have not played cards before you must proceed more slowly – start them on forms of whist)
- 2 Seat them at **tables** in groups of four with a sample **board** or wallet.  
Explain that they play in **partnership** with the player opposite.  
They are called **North, South, East** and **West**, written **NS** and **EW**
- 3 Study the **pack** of cards from the board  
Name the four **suits** – **spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs**, written **S, H, D, C** or **♠ ♥ ♦ ♣**  
Explain the **rank** order of the thirteen cards, from ace down to two  
The **Honour** cards are Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Ten, written **A, K, Q, J, 10**  
The remaining cards are **spot cards** or pips or 'X's, written **9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2** or **xxx**
- 4 Study the board (or wallet).  
Note the points of the compass and the indication of who is **dealer**.  
Explain that a board is dealt just once, and then passed on so that results can be compared.  
Show them a **travelling score slip**, and where it fits into the board
- 5 Explain how Bridge is played  
The aim of the game is for your side to take as many **tricks** as possible  
A **trick** is 4 cards played in **clockwise** order.  
The first card played is the **lead**.  
Everybody must **follow suit** (play a card of the suit led) when they can  
Each trick is **won** by the highest-ranking card played to it.  
Whoever wins the trick leads to the next one.
- 6 Demonstrate the mechanics of **Duplicate** Bridge  
We play cards **face up** then turn them over when the trick is complete  
Each player keeps his own cards so that the board can be passed on for the next table to play.  
The side that won a trick turn their cards face down in front of them with the short side towards them  
The side that did not win it places their cards with the long side towards them.  
(Why? So that we can see how many tricks each side has won so far)
- 7 Play a couple of example boards in no-trump with everybody playing as in Whist  
Demonstrate how to **sort** a hand – cards in rank order, suits alternating red and black.  
Introduce the idea of **Hand Evaluation** – the **Point Count**. Ace=4, King=3, Queen=2, Jack =1  
What is an **average** hand in a 40 point pack?  
**Strong** and **weak** hands.
- 8 Explain how Minibridge works  
All four players, in clockwise order starting with the dealer, announce how many **points** they have.  
Check that the total is 40 – if not, try again



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- 9     The partnership with more points will be the *declaring* side.  
The player in that partnership with more points will be *declarer*.  
The player with fewer points will be *dummy*.  
The partnership with fewer points will be *defenders*.  
Play starts with Dummy putting his hand face up on the table  
He places the cards in columns by suits, in *descending order of rank* (revise *sorting* a hand)
- 10    The player on declarer's left plays the first card to the first trick by placing it face up on the table.  
This is known as the *opening lead*
- 11    The next player is the dummy. He takes no active part in the play.  
Declarer directs the play of both his hand and dummy.  
His task is to make at least 7 tricks with the combined values of his hand and dummy.
- 12    After a few hands played in no-trump introduce the idea of a *trump contract*  
Explain that there are two types of contract – *trump* and *no-trump*  
When we have no more cards in the suit led we may *ruff* in a trump contract.  
A *trump* beats a plain card.  
A trick is won by the *highest trump* played.  
**Following suit is compulsory; ruffing** (and *overruffing*) are optional
- 13    Play some Minibridge hands with a trump suit  
The preliminaries are the same (announcing points, deciding declaring side, nominating declarer)  
Declarer decides whether to play in no-trump or a suit  
When dummy goes down declarer looks to see which suit he and dummy have most cards in.  
If there is no suit of 8 or more cards declarer announces that he will play in no-trump.  
If there is a suit with 8 or more cards between the hands declarer announces that suit will be trump  
Dummy moves that suit to his right.  
Once declarer has chosen one of the five *denominations* (no-trump, spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs) the *play* (the taking of tricks) begins with the Opening Lead  
*(It is a good idea to demonstrate the power of trump by playing one or two boards twice, once in no-trump then again in a suit contract)*
- 14    At the end of the hand the players complete a Minibridge travelling score sheet so that the players at other tables can compare the number of tricks taken.