

WPF PUZZLE GP 2026 COMPETITION BOOKLET

Host Country: USA

David Altizio, Walker Anderson

Special Notes: This round is a showcase of puzzle types invented by American and Canadian authors, presented in order of invention. Accordingly, a short history note is given after the puzzle title, and puzzle names are the ones under original publication (instead of canonical names used in this competition in the past). An earlier version of this booklet misspelled three names and incorrectly gave the invention year of Hex loop as 1996.

1. Scrabble [Walker Anderson] (10 points)

unknown inventor; name inspired by Alfred Butts' board game from 1931.

Put at most one letter into each cell so that the given words can be read either across (left-to-right) or down (top-to-bottom) in consecutive cells in the grid. Every word must appear in the grid exactly once, and no other words of two or more letters may appear in the grid (that is, if two cells are filled and are adjacent orthogonally, then there must be a word that uses both of them). Every word must have either a blank cell or the edge of the grid before and after it. All letters must be (orthogonally) connected in a single group.

Some letters may be already supplied in the grid. (It is not guaranteed that all copies of some letter are given.)

Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents from left to right, ignoring any blank cells. If all cells in the row are blank, enter a single letter 'X'.

Example Answer: CYPRUSO, ONMUO, AUR, GA

→	M								
	A		S		L				M
→	C	Y	P	R	U	S			O
	E		A		X				L
	D		I	C	E	L	A	N	D
→	O		N		M		U		O
	N				B		S		V
	I		C	R	O	A	T	I	A
→	A				U		R		
		G	E	O	R	G	I	A	
→					G		A		

ACH	LASTEX
DNR	PIECER
EMI	DRUNKEN
IST	GINMILL
POEM	MINISKI
PRIX	NEEDSTO
GRAND	ONTHEUP
LETON	RETINAE

1a →

1b →

	G	R	A	N	D	
						P
						R
						I
						X

	M						
	A		S		L		M
➡	C	Y	P	R	U	S	O
	E		A		X		L
	D		I	C	E	L	A
➡	O		N		M		U
	N				B		S
	I		C	R	O	A	T
➡	A				U		R
		G	E	O	R	G	I
➡					G		A

[illegible][illegible]



**5-6. Number Place [David Altizio] (8, 65 points)**

invented by Howard Garns for Dell Pencil Puzzles and Word Games magazine in 1979. Descended from previous Latin square puzzles. Would eventually spread to Japan and be renamed "Sudoku", the name that is usually used in this competition.

Place a number from 1 to X into each cell so that each number appears exactly once in each row, column, and marked box. (X is the number of cells in each row.)

Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents.

Example Answer: 312485679, 256849137

1	6	3	5	2	8	7	9	4
7	8	4	9	1	3	5	6	2
9	2	5	6	7	4	8	1	3
3	1	2	4	8	5	6	7	9
6	7	8	3	9	1	2	4	5
5	4	9	7	6	2	3	8	1
8	9	1	2	3	7	4	5	6
2	5	6	8	4	9	1	3	7
4	3	7	1	5	6	9	2	8



		4		6	
3					1
6					
					4
1					6
	3		2		



					6	7		
1	2						8	9
		3	4					
					9	3		
5	7						6	2
		4	2					
					1	9		
4	8						7	3
		1	7					

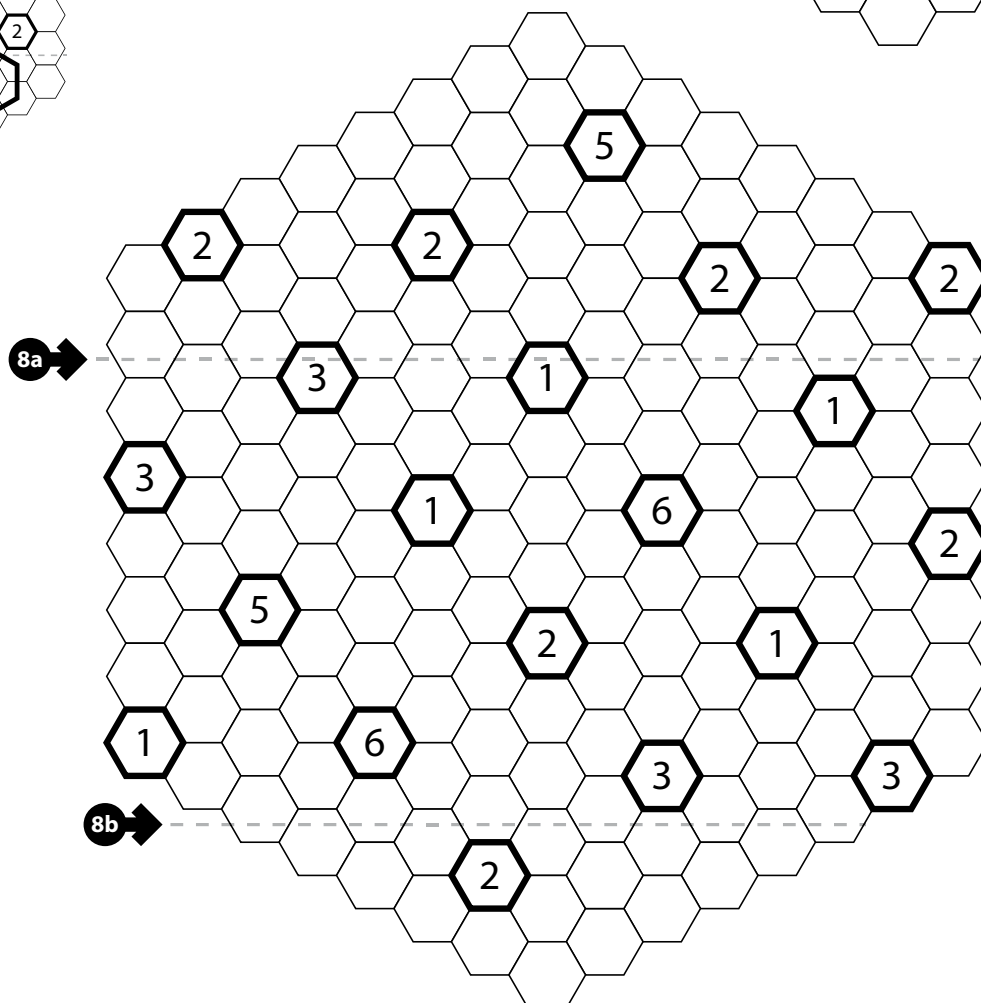
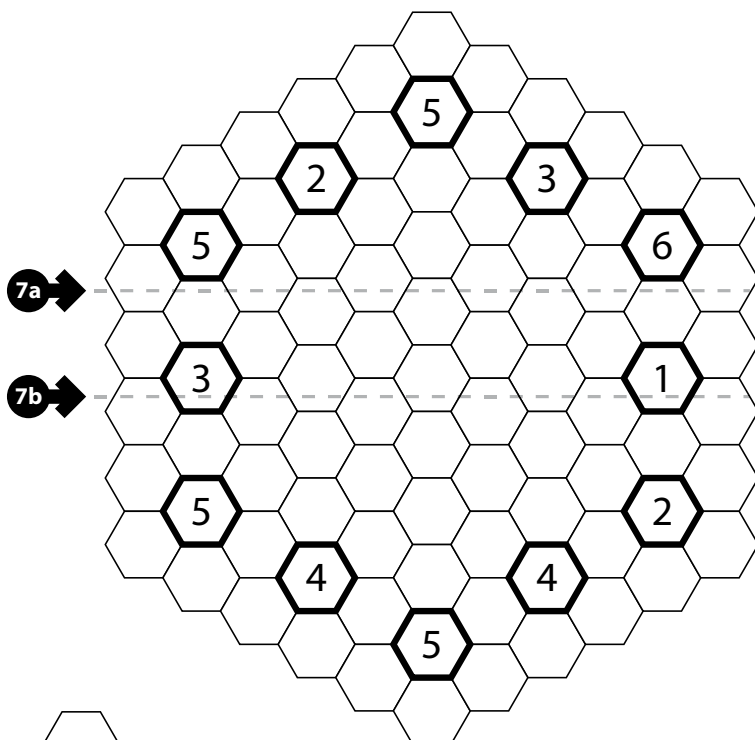
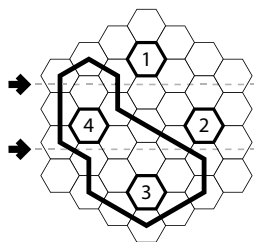
**7-8. Hex Loop [David Altizio] (23, 99 points)**

invented by Erich Friedman in 1999. Also called "Beeline".

Draw a single loop that passes through centers of touching cells. The loop may not intersect itself or pass through the same cell more than once. The loop can only go straight or make "soft" (120°) turns; it cannot make "sharp" (60°) turns. Some cells contain number clues; each clue indicates the number of touching cells that the loop passes through. The loop cannot pass through cells with clues.

Answer: For each designated row, enter the letter for each cell, from left to right. The letter for a cell is 'I' if the path goes straight through the cell, 'L' if the path turns in the cell, and 'X' if the path does not go through the cell (including clue cells). Note that the horizontal rows "zigzag" across the diagonal rows, and are indicated with dashed lines.

Example Answer: LXLXXXX, LLXXILX

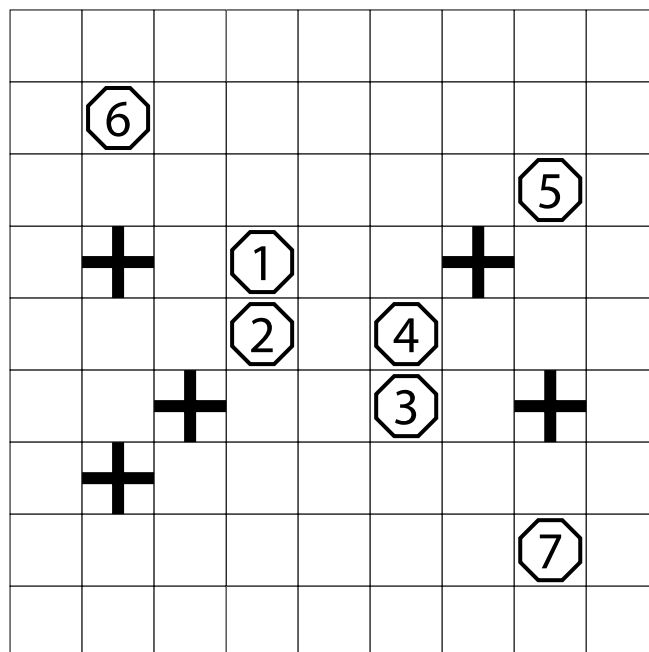


**9-10. Railroad Tracks [Walker Anderson] (9, 30 points)**

invented by Craig Kasper in 2000. First seen in the 2000 World Puzzle Championship. Usually appears as "Railways" in this competition.

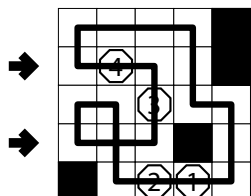
Draw a single loop that passes orthogonally through centers of cells. The loop must go through all non-black cells and cannot go through any black cells. The loop goes straight and intersects itself in the cells marked with a crossing. The loop may not enter the same cell more than once except at these marked crossings. The loop must go straight through the cells with numbers, and it must go through these numbers in numerical order (starting over at 1 once all cells have been reached).

9 →



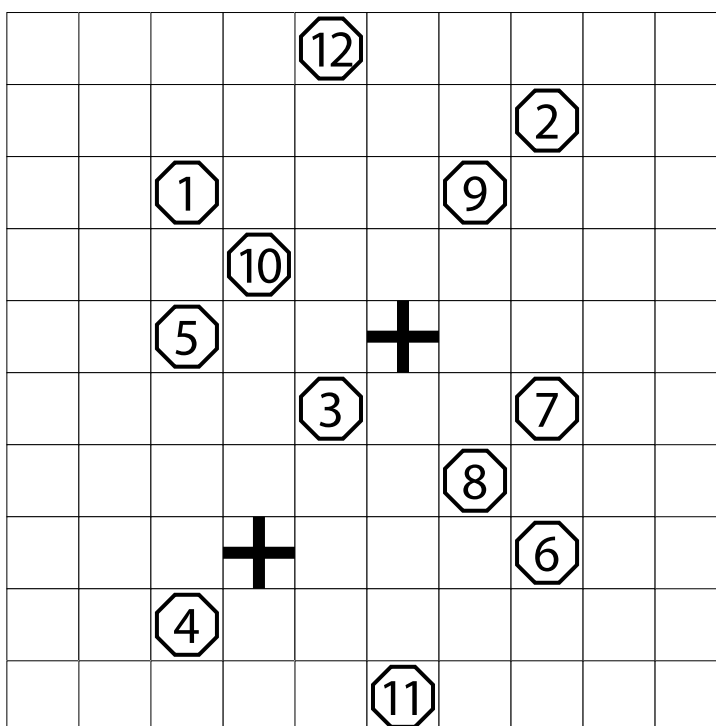
Answer: For each designated row, enter the letter for each cell, from left to right. The letter for a cell is 'I' if the loop goes straight through the cell, 'L' if the loop turns in the cell, and 'X' if the loop intersects itself in the cell, and 'X' (also) if the cell is black. You may use other characters, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: LILIX, LXLXI



10a →

10b →



**11-12. Smullyanic Dynasty [David Altizio] (14, 42 points)**

invented by Adam R. Wood in 2005. The name references logician Raymond Smullyan. Also the origin of the word "dynasty" to represent the shaded cell constraints present in Heyawake and Hitori.

Shade some cells so that all other cells are connected orthogonally and no two shaded cells share an edge. Some cells have number clues that might or might not indicate the number of "corner-sharing cells" that are shaded. (A "corner-sharing cell" is a cell that shares at least one corner with the indicated cell, including the cell itself.) If the cell should be left unshaded, the number must be correct. If the cell should be shaded, the number must be wrong.

Answer: For each indicated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'O' for an unshaded cell and 'X' for a shaded cell. Ignore number clues when entering your answer. You may use other characters, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: XOOOO, OOXOX

→	2				
	3	0	1		
	5			3	
→	3	1	2		
		2			

12a →

12b →

11a →

11b →

	1					2	2		
		3			2			1	
		1			3			2	
	2			1			3		
	0			9			3		
		1			9			1	
		2			2			1	
	3			0			3		
	1			2			2		
		2	1					2	

1		0				2		2		0
	5		4		5				5	
		2						3		
			3		3					1
1						1		3		
	5				5				5	
		3		3						1
1					3		2			
		2						3		
	5				5		3		5	
0		2		1				2		0

**13-14. Str8ts [David Altizio] (19, 20 points)**

Invented by Jeff Widderich in 2008. This genre has commonalities with "Numbers in Order" (Ivan Adrian Koswara) and "Straight Cross" (Naoki Inaba), but introduces numbers in black cells as a second clue type.

Place a number from the given list into each unshaded cell. No number can appear more than once in any row or column (including in shaded cells). Some numbers are given for you.

A group of unshaded cells connected to each other only horizontally or only vertically (ending at a shaded cell or the edge of the grid) is called a "word". Every word must be entirely composed of consecutive numbers, with no gaps. (The numbers within a word do not need to be in order.)

The circles in the cells are only used for entering your answer.

Answer: Enter the contents of each circled cell, reading the cells from left to right. (Ignore which row the circles are in.)

Example Answer: 5 4 6 2 5 5

{1-6}

2		6	5	4	
3	4	5	6	2	1
	5	4	1	3	2
5	6	3	2	1	
6	2	1	3	5	4
	3	2	4		5

→ 5 4 6 2 5 5

{1-8}

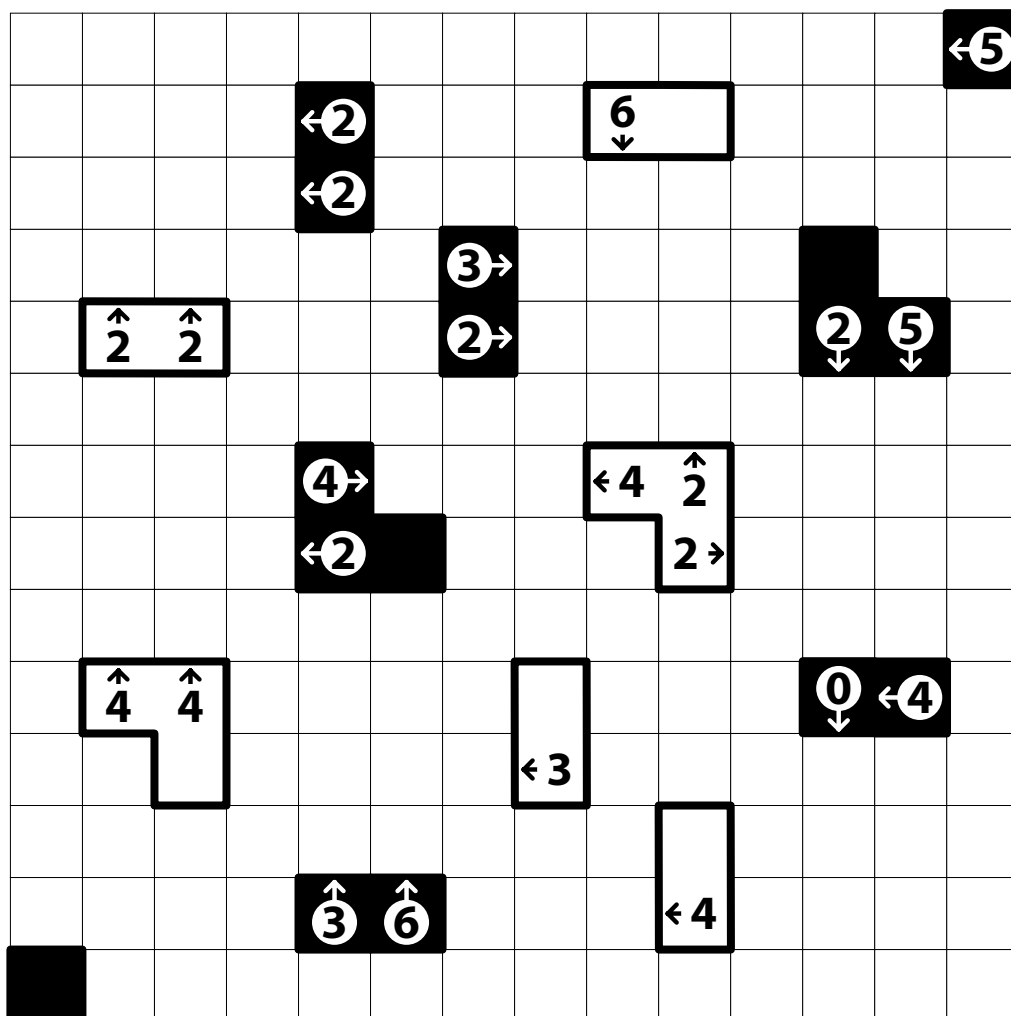
	1					2	
		7		5			
					6		
1			4				
				1			7
		4					
			2		4		
	7					8	

13 →

{1-8}

				6		
		2			7	
4			6			1
	3			4		
		3				

14 →



**17-18. Pentominous [David Altizio] (17, 38 points)**

invented by Grant Fikes in 2013 as a variant on Fillomino. First appeared on Grandmaster Puzzles.

Divide the grid into pentominoes (contiguous regions of five cells) such that every cell is part of exactly one pentomino. Pentominoes of the same shape (rotations and reflections of a pentomino count as the same shape) cannot touch each other along an edge (but they may touch diagonally). Some letters are given in the grid. Each letter must be part of a pentomino with that letter's shape. It is permissible for a pentomino to contain more than one letter or no letters at all. (It is possible for some pentomino shapes to never appear in the grid, or more than once.)

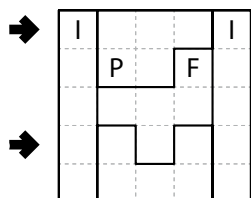
The letter-to-shape correspondence for pentominoes has been supplied for you.

In the competition puzzle, there may be black areas that are not part of the grid.

Answer: For each designated row, enter the letter for the pentomino that each cell is part of, from left to right.

Example Answer:

IPPP I, IUFIUI

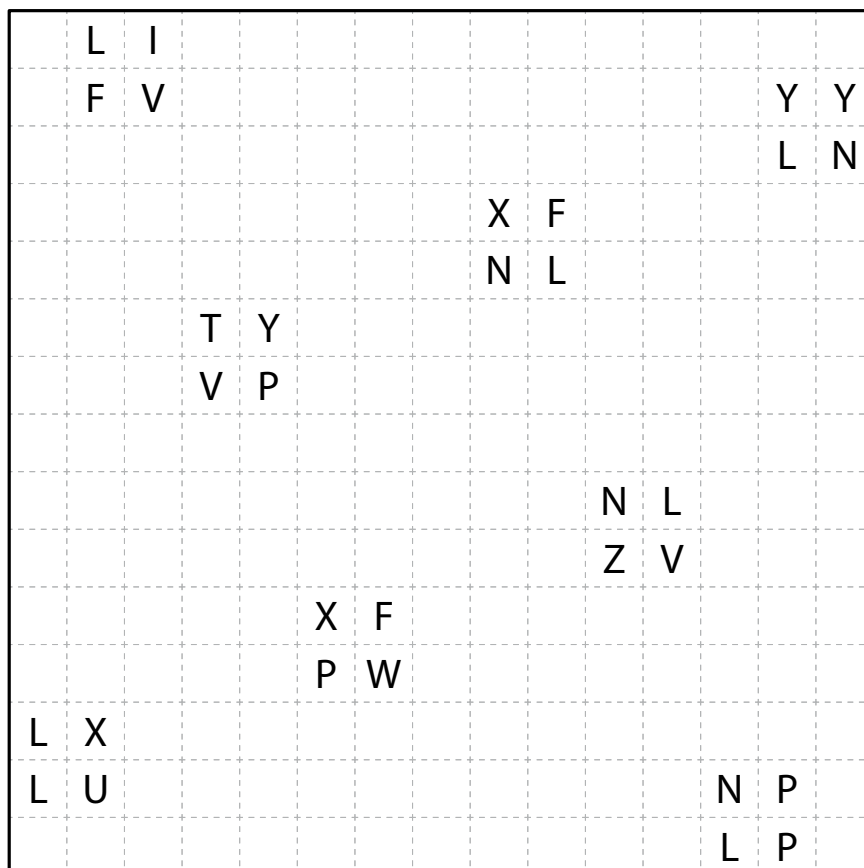
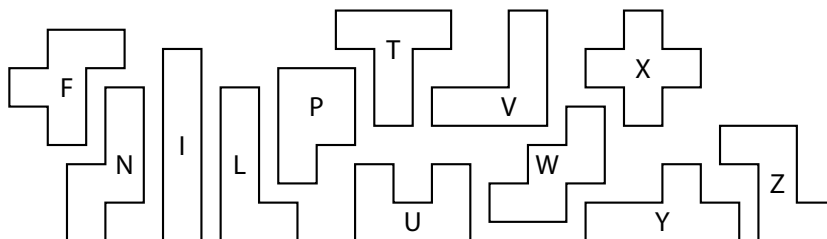
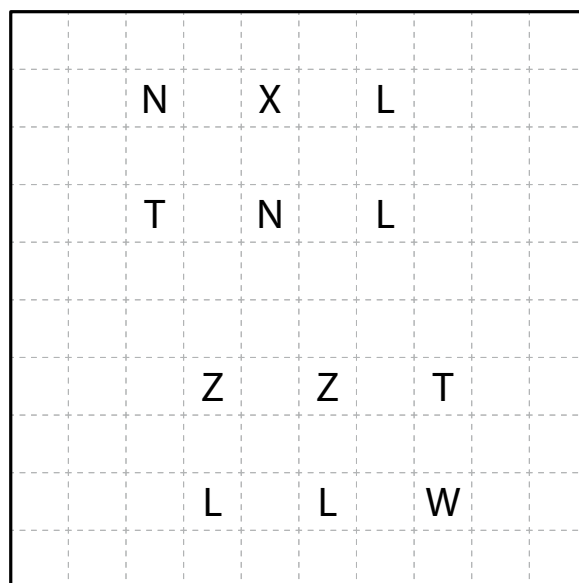


18a →

18b →

17a →

17b →



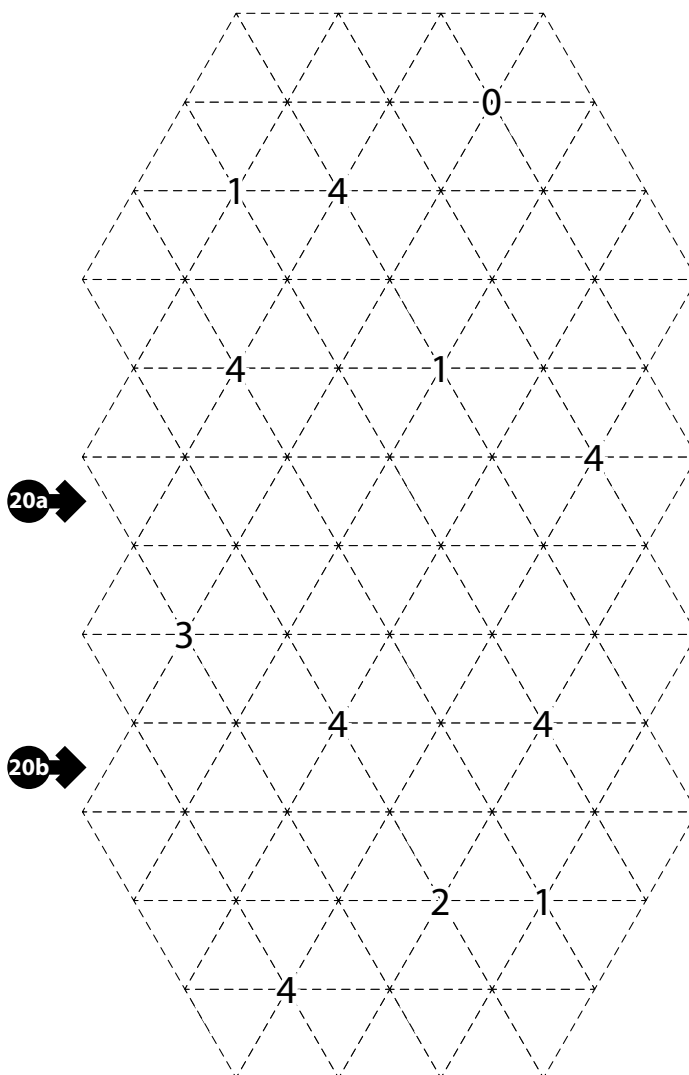
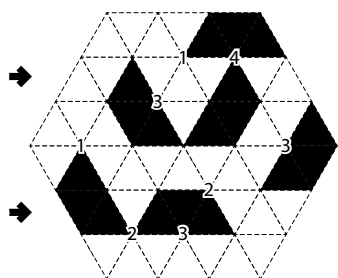
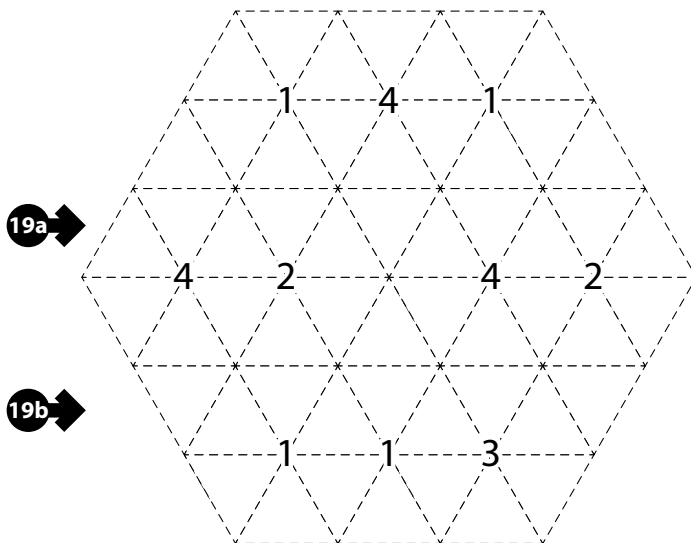
**19-20. Trapezoids [Walker Anderson] (13, 70 points)**

invented by Dan Adams for his blog in 2016. Dan's genres are notable for originating on non-square grids.

Shade some cells black (leaving the other cells white) so that the grid is divided into non-overlapping regions; cells of the same color are considered in the same region if they are adjacent along edges. All black regions must have exactly 3 cells. The grid must have only one white region. There are some numbered clues in the grid; each clue indicates the number of black cells that must touch that clue.

Answer: For each indicated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'O' for an unshaded cell and 'X' for a shaded cell. You may use other characters, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: OOXOOOXOO, XXOXXXOOO



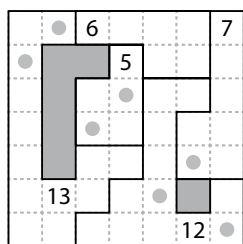
**21-22. Utopia [Walker Anderson] (15, 41 points)***invented by Jamie Hargrove in 2017.*

Divide the grid along the dashed lines into regions. Each region must contain exactly one number, which must be equal to the area of that region (in cells). Each region must contain exactly one 2x2 group of cells; none of these 2x2 groups (among all regions) can touch along a cell edge.

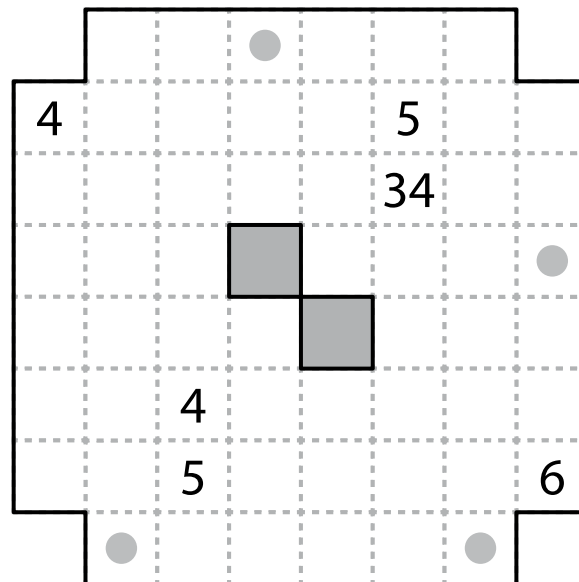
The dots in cells are only used for entering your answers. The grid may have holes that are not part of the grid.

Answer: For each dot, determine which region it is in and enter the area of that region (in cells). Read the dots from left to right. (Ignore which row the dots are in.) Use only the last digit for two-digit numbers; e.g., use '0' for a dot inside a region of area 10.

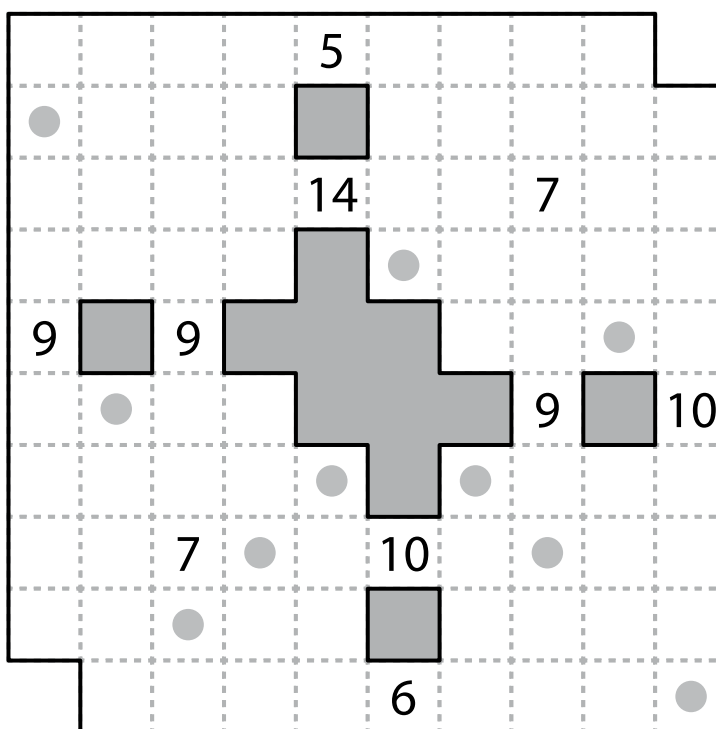
Example Answer: 3355272



→ 3 3 5 5 2 7 2



21 →



22 →



**23-24. Kakume [David Altizio] (22, 95 points)**

invented by Andrew Parr for the 2017 US Puzzle Championship.

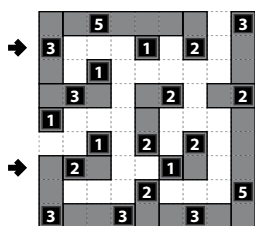
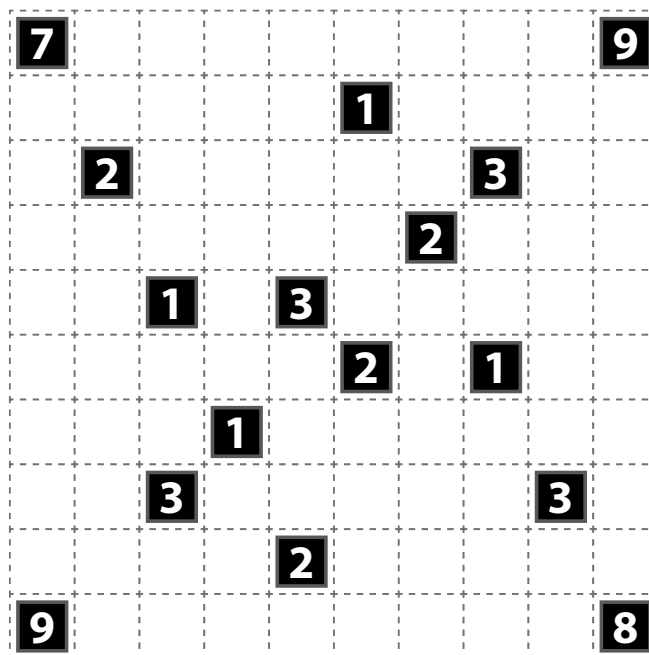
Find some rectangles in the grid such that no rectangles overlap and each rectangle contains exactly one number, which must be equal to the area of that rectangle (in cells). (Squares are considered rectangles for purposes of this puzzle.) Cells that are not in any rectangle are called "maze cells"; for any two maze cells, there must be exactly one way to draw a path between them that only goes orthogonally through maze cells. Every 2×2 group of cells must contain at least one maze cell. There must be exactly two maze cells touching the edge of the grid.

Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'o' for a maze cell and 'x' for a cell in a rectangle. You may use other characters, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: xooooxox, xxxooxxox

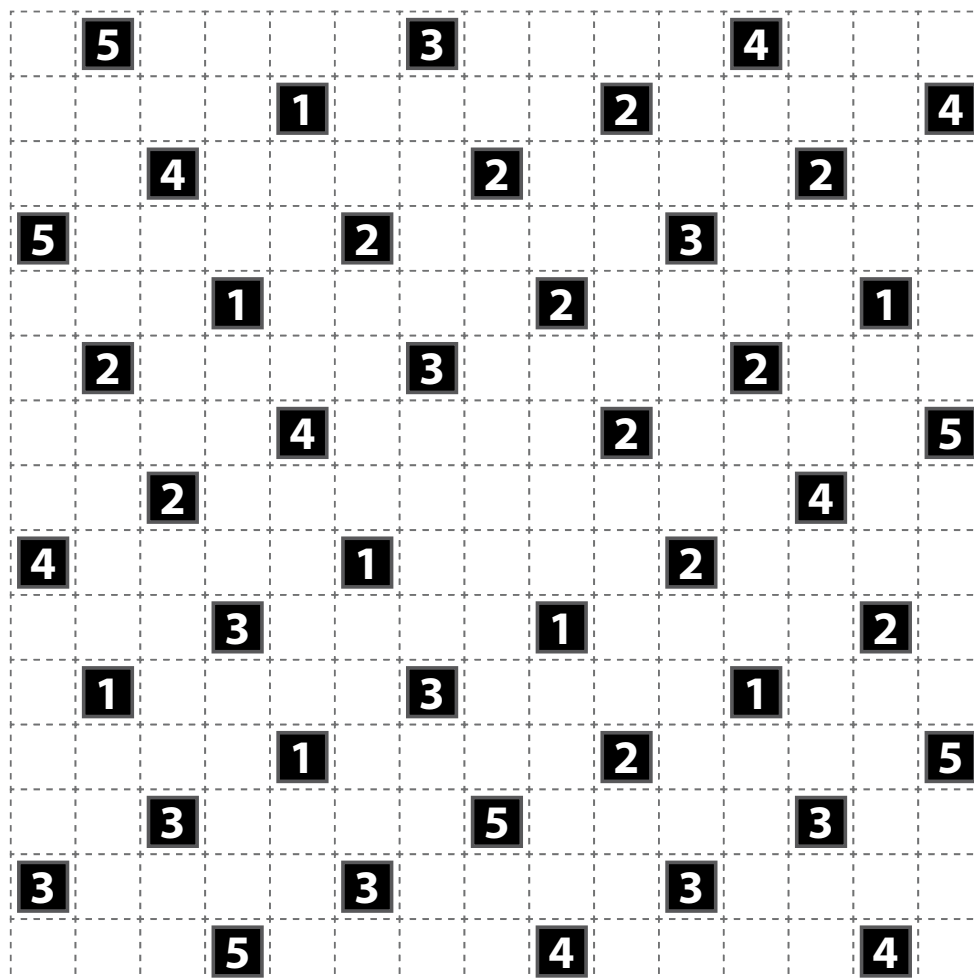
23a →

23b →



24a →

24b →



**25-26. Times Zone [Walker Anderson] (26, 29 points)**

invented by David Millar in 2019. A variant has appeared as "Times Out" in this competition.

Place a number from 1 to X into each cell so that each number appears exactly once in each row and column. (X is the number of cells in each row.) Also, draw a single, non-intersecting loop that only consists of line segments between the dots along the dashed lines.

25a →

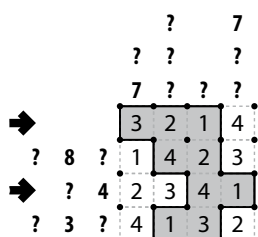
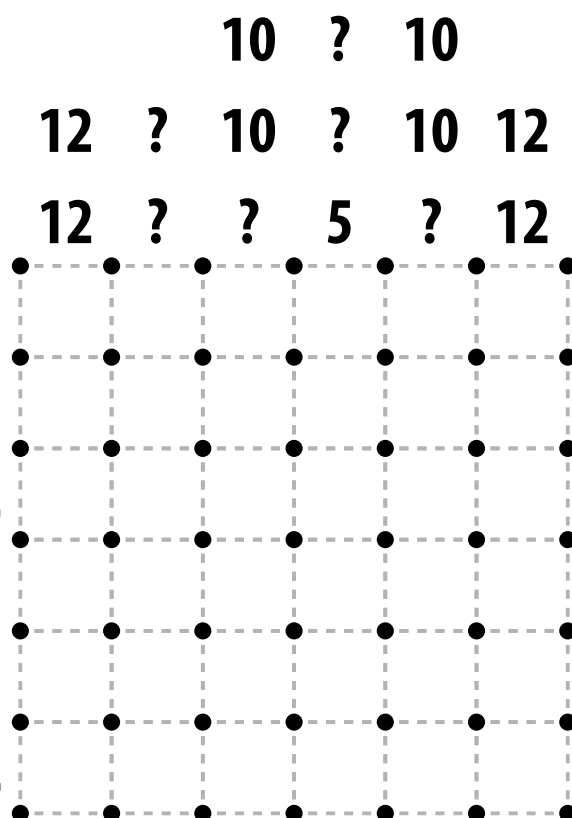
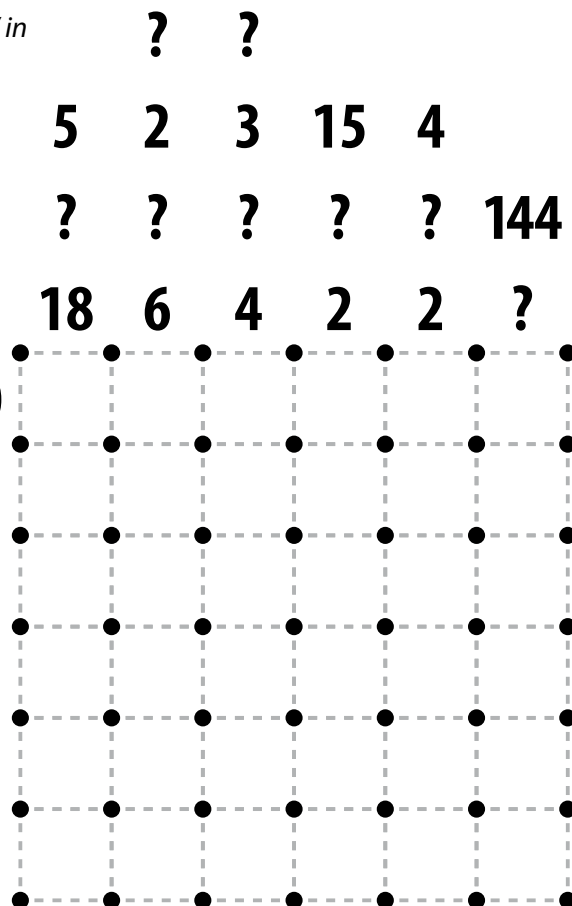
Numbers outside the grid (when given) represent *all* contiguous groups of numbers along that row or column, in positional order. These groups are separated by cell edges that are part of the loop. A group inside the loop is represented by the product of its numbers; a group outside the loop is represented by the sum of its numbers. (A group with a single number is represented by the number itself.) Some numbers may be replaced by a question mark (?); these numbers can be greater than 9.

25b →

Answer: For each designated row, enter the numbers in its cells from left to right. Do not include any numbers outside the grid. (You may ignore the loop for purposes of answer entry.)

26a →**Example Answer:**

3214, 2341

**26b** →

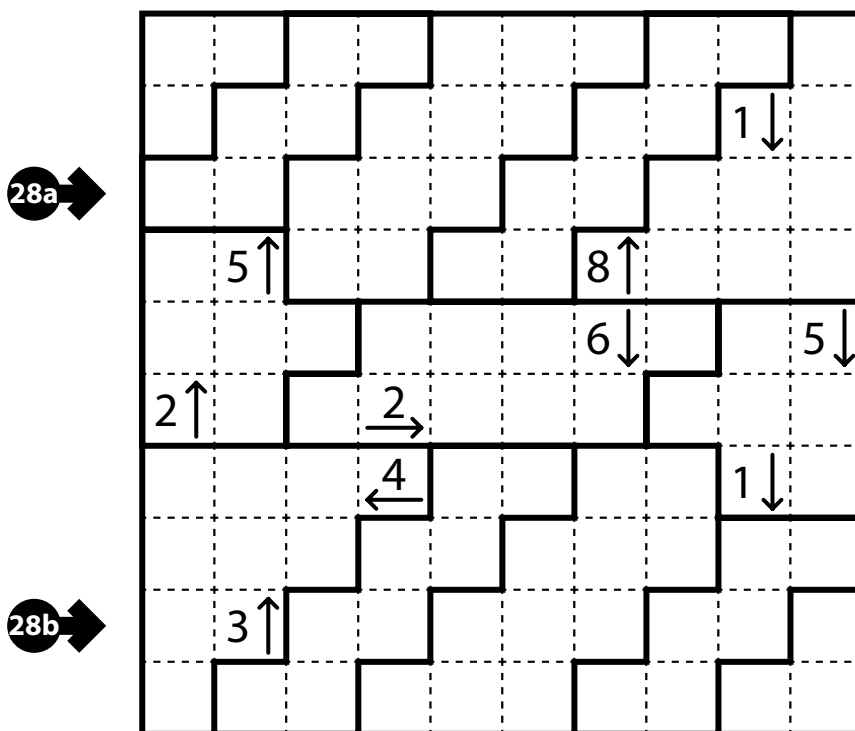
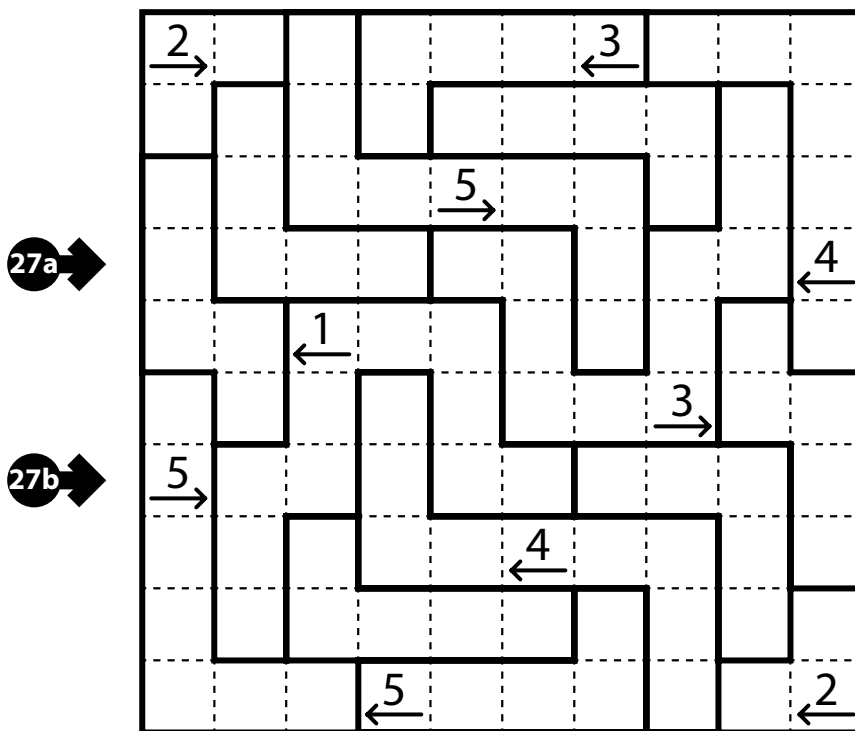
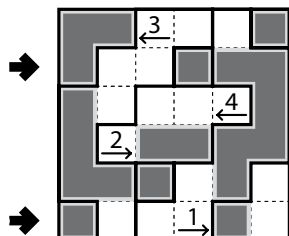
**27-28. Viewpaint [David Altizio, Walker Anderson] (27, 23 points)**

invented by wormsocan in 2019. This type was originally suggested for a 24HPC round, but was never used. Here, we present this genre publicly (with permission) for the first time.

Shade some cells such that each outlined region has exactly one group ("subregion") of connected shaded cells. All shaded cells must be connected into one large group along their edges. No 2x2 group of cells can be entirely shaded. Some cells contain clues with a number and a direction; these cells cannot be shaded. Each number indicates the area (in cells) of the first subregion encountered along the given direction from that cell.

Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'x' for an shaded cell and 'o' for an unshaded cell (including cells with clues). You may use two other characters, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: xooxxx, xooxoxo

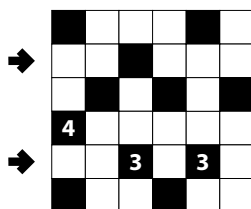


**31-32. Aquapelago [David Altizio] (21, 95 points)**

invented by Walker Anderson for a Secret Santa gift in 2022.

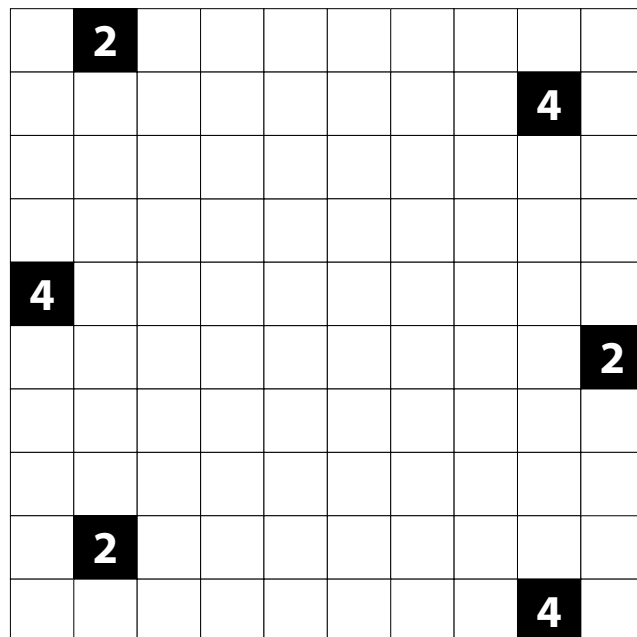
Shade some cells so that all other cells are connected orthogonally and no two shaded cells share an edge. Two shaded cells are considered to be in the same cluster if they share a corner. Some cells have number clues; each clue must be a shaded cell in a cluster with exactly that number of cells. Every 2x2 group of cells must contain at least one shaded cell.

Answer: For each indicated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'o' for an unshaded cell and 'x' for a shaded cell (including cells with clues). You may use other characters, as long as they are distinct.

**Example Answer:**

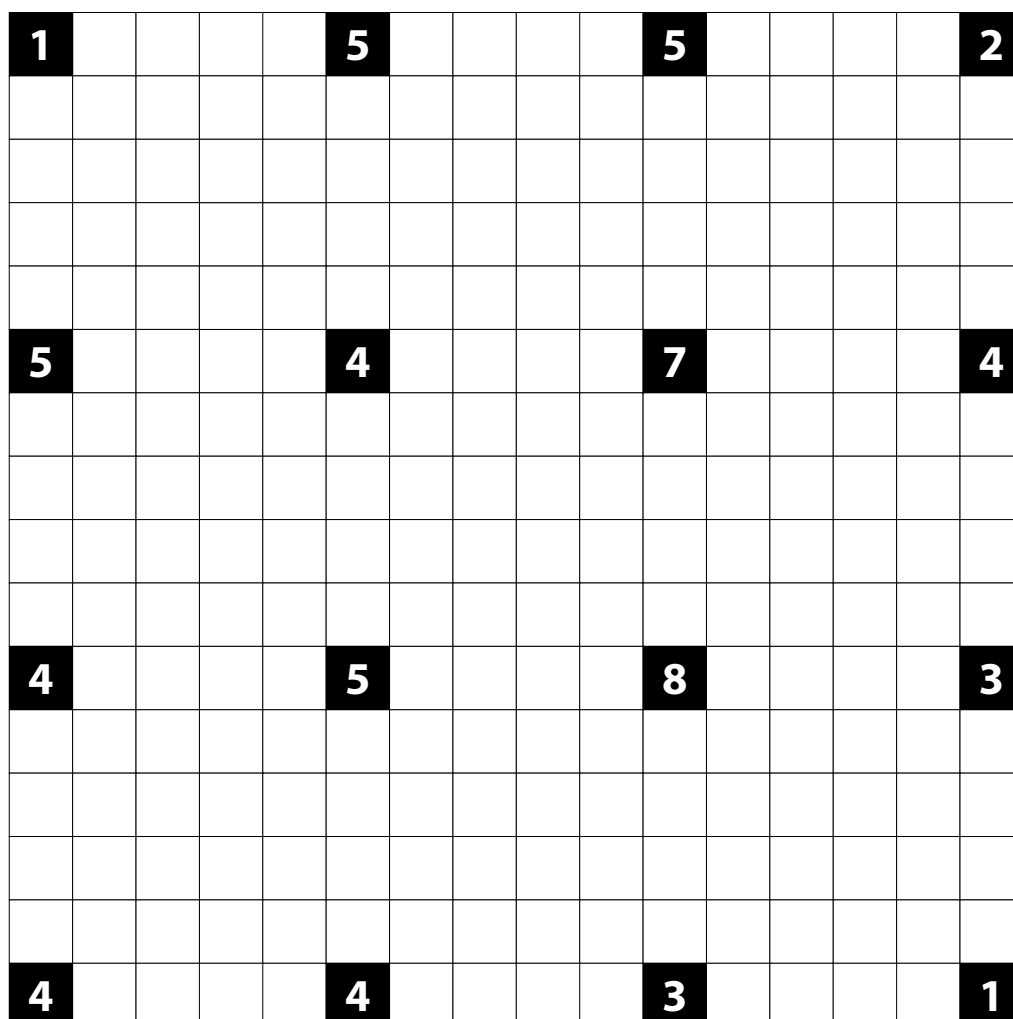
ooXooo, ooXoXo

31a →



31b →

32a →



32b →

**33-34. Isowatari [Walker Anderson] (18, 27 points)**

invented by Jeffrey Bardon, inspired by his work on the game Islands of Insight. Also see "Tetroad" by Naoki Inaba, which has a similar ruleset but only considers tetrominos.

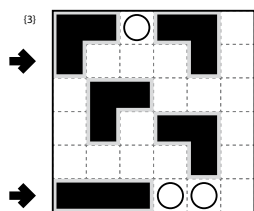
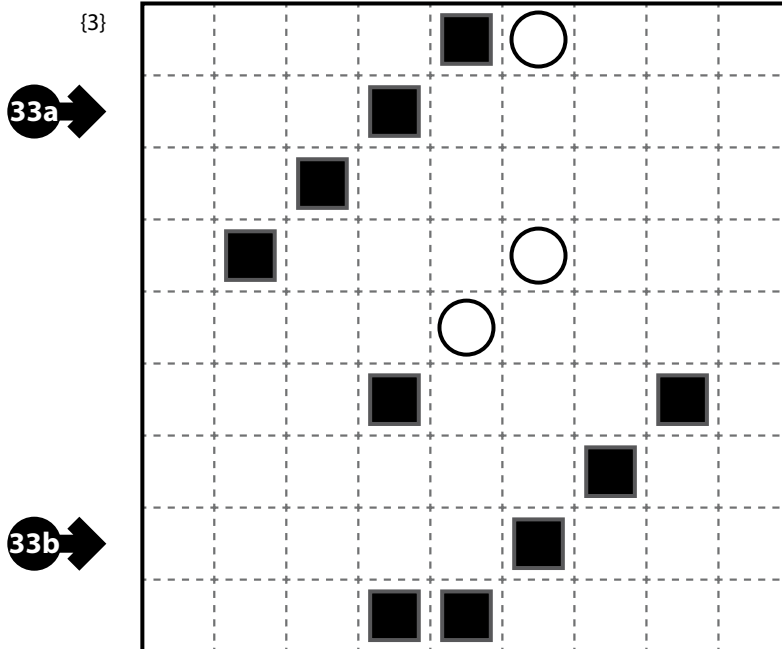
Shade some cells black (leaving the other cells white) so that the grid is divided into non-overlapping regions; cells of the same color are considered in the same region if they are adjacent along edges. Each black region must have the same area (in cells); that area is given in the upper-left of the grid. All white cells must be in the same region. Every 2×2 group of cells must contain at least one shaded cell.

A cell with a black square must be shaded and a cell with a white circle must not be shaded.

Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'x' for a shaded cell and 'o' for an unshaded cell. You may use two other letters or numbers, as long as they are distinct.

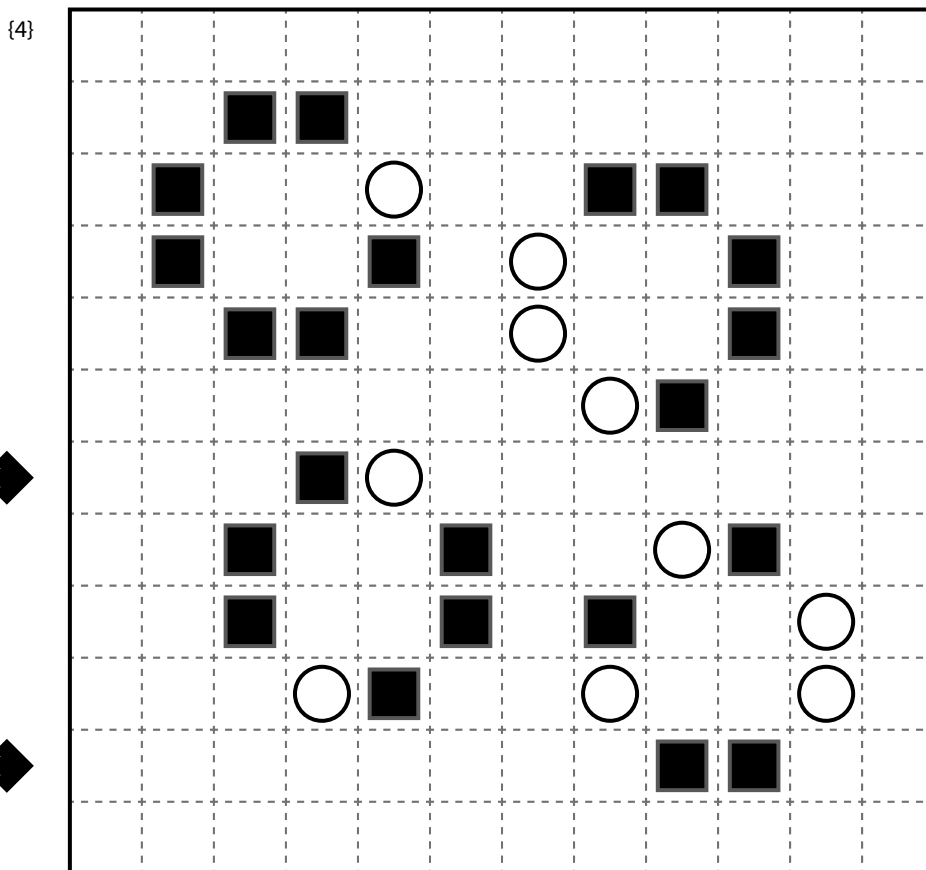
Example Answer:

XOOOXO, XXXOOO



34a →

34b →



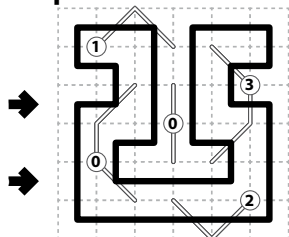
**35-36. Crossroads [David Altizio, Walker Anderson] (24, 37 points)***invented by Emerson Golladay in 2024.*

Draw a single loop that passes orthogonally through centers of all empty cells. The loop cannot intersect itself or enter the same cell more than once.

There are some barriers (connected groups of white outlined line segments) on the grid, each labeled with a number (the location of the number on the barrier is not important). The number is equal to the number of times the loop crosses that barrier. (A loop can touch a barrier without crossing it.)

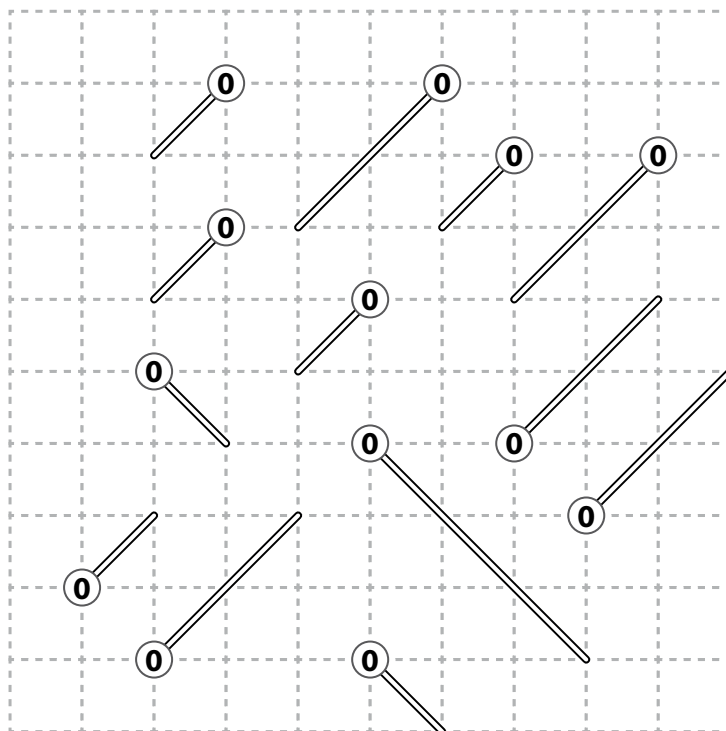
Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents, from left to right. Use 'I' for a cell where the loop goes straight and 'L' for a cell where the loop makes a turn. You may use other characters, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: LLIILL, ILIILI



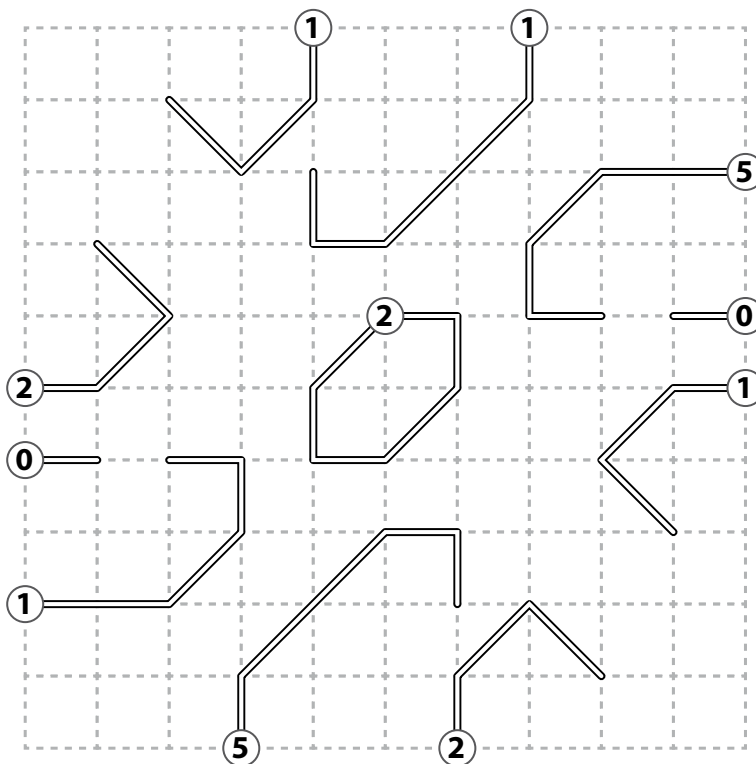
35a →

35b →



36a →

36b →



37-38. Island Pool [Walker Anderson] (12, 29 points)

invented by David Altizio in 2024; first appeared on his blog one year later.

Inspired by a discussion on Discord.

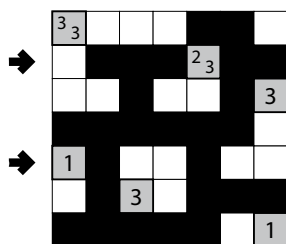
Shade some empty cells black (leaving the other cells white) so that the grid is divided into non-overlapping regions; cells of the same color are considered in the same region if they are adjacent along a cell edge. All black cells are in the same region. No 2×2 group of cells can be entirely shaded.

Some cells contain number clues; these cells cannot be shaded and are neither black nor white. Each clue indicates the areas of all white regions that touch the clue at a cell corner or cell edge, and are given in *no particular order*. If multiple regions touching the clue have the same area, that number will appear more than once. If a region touches the clue at more than one location, that region will only be represented once. As a special case, if the number given in a clue is a zero (0), it means that all of the cells around the clue are shaded.

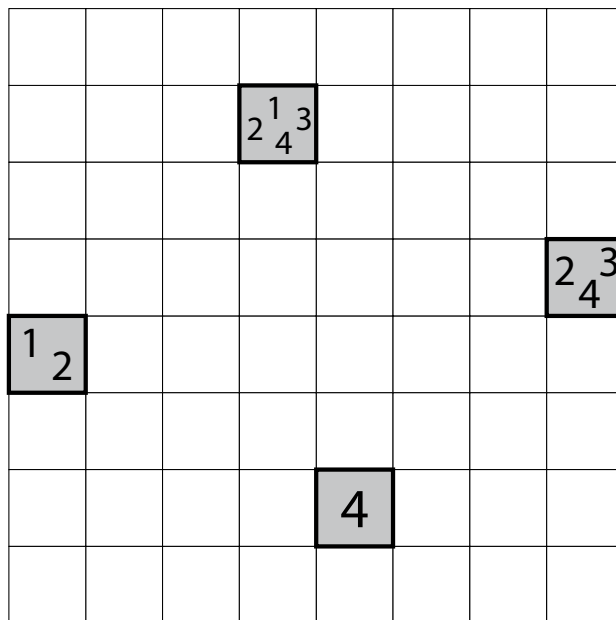
Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'x' for a shaded cell and 'o' for an unshaded or clue cell. You may use two other letters or numbers, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer:

OXXXOXX, OXOOXOO

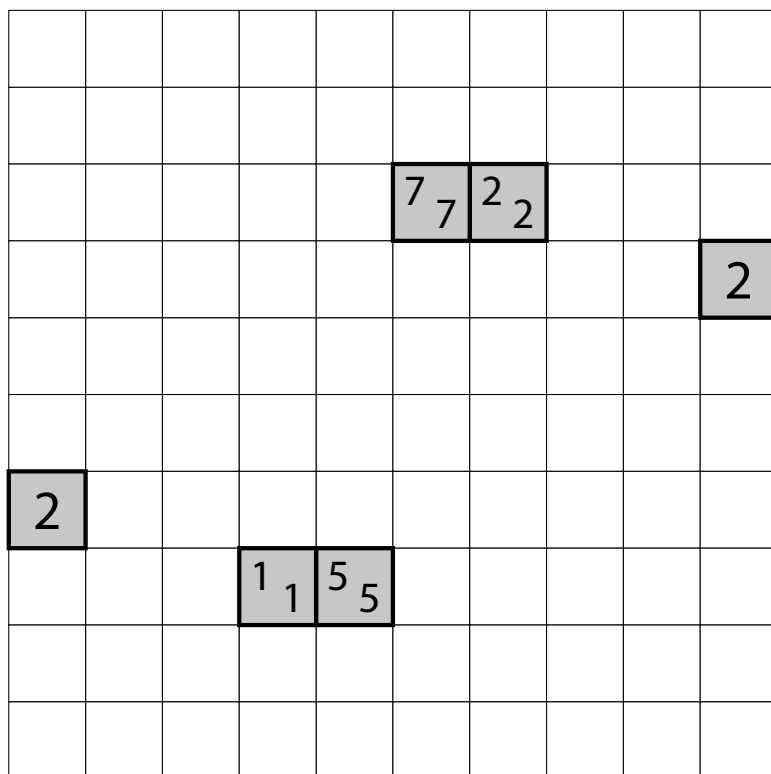


37a →



37b →

38a →



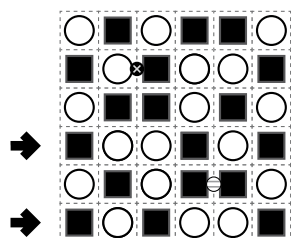
38b →

39-40. Tango [David Altizio, Walker Anderson] (21, 59 points)
invented by Thomas Snyder in 2024 for LinkedIn. This type descended from Binairo, removing the "distinct rows and columns" constraint while adding extra clue types.

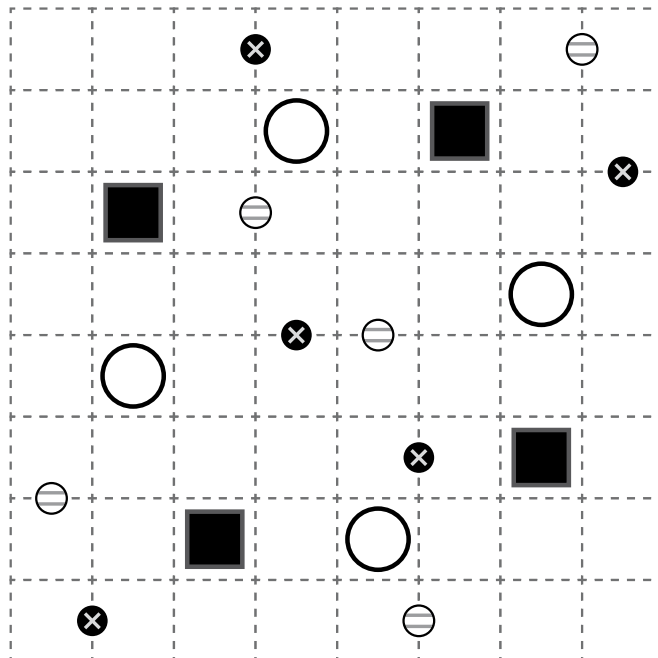
Place a (black) square or a (white) circle into each cell such that each row and each column contains the same number of squares as circles. Every 1×3 or 3×1 group of cells must contain at least one of each symbol (square or circle). Some dotted clues are given on edges that touch two cells. A white dot (with an "=") must touch two cells with the same symbols. A black dot (with an "X") must touch two cells with different symbols.

Answer: For each designated row, enter its contents from left to right. Use 'x' for a square and 'o' for a circle. Ignore any clues on cell edges. You may use two other letters or numbers, as long as they are distinct.

Example Answer: xooxox, xoxoox



39a →



39b →

40a →

40b →

