

The 28th Korea TESOL International Conference 2021
Re-Envisioning ELT. Altogether, All together.

Teaching the Board Game Go to English Learners



Image Source: Chinese Aseop (2013)

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The Rotten Axe

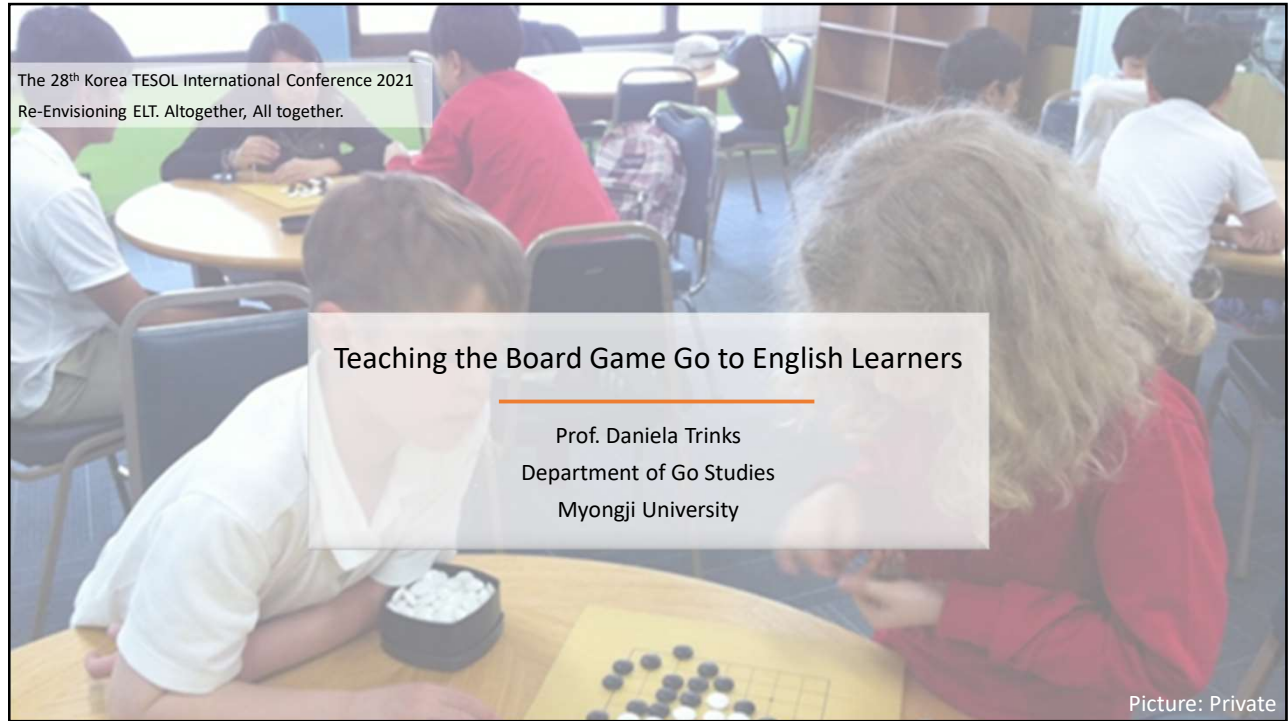


Chinese fable on how fast time can fly when playing or watching a game of Go.


Once upon a time, a woodcutter saw two monks in the mountains playing Go. Fascinated, he watched them play and put his axe aside. When the game was over, the monks disappeared into the clouds. The handle of the axe was rotten, and the blade rusted. The woodcutter returned to his village but could not find anyone he knew – more than a hundred years had passed since he had left the village.

Image Source: Chinese Aseop (2013)


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More than 70 national Go organizations joined the International Go Federation.



Go Players Worldwide

- China: Weiqi 围棋 (Surrounding Game)
- Japan: Igo 囲碁
- Korea: Baduk 바둑
- Vietnam: Cờ Vây

Picture: Private (Left), Korea Baduk Association (2020)

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What is Go?

- ① Board Game
- ② East Asian Culture
- ③ Art
- ④ Mind Sport
- ⑤ Leisure Activity



Photo: Le (2018)

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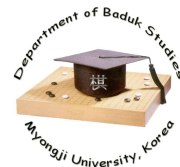
Go is taught in after-school programs and Go schools.



Professional Go players earn up to 1 Mio US\$ per year.

What is Go? (Contin.)

- ⑥ Educational Tool
- ⑦ Academic & Research Subject
- ⑧ Profession



Photos: Claasen 2020 (top left) Cyberoro 2020 (top right), private (bottom)

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Origin

One of the legends says, that the Chinese Emperor Yao (2337–2258 BCE) invented the game of Go to teach it to his rebellious son Danzhu.



Image Source: Leibniz (1710)

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Go Quiz: True or False?

- ① In 1996, a Japanese and an American were the first astronauts who played Go in space. (true / false)
- ② The current presidents of China and South Korea both like the game of Go. (true / false)
- ③ There is no computer program that can defeat a human Go professional. (true / false)

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Cultural Insights (1)

- ① In 1996, a Japanese and an American were the first astronauts who played Go in space. (true/ false)



During their space mission in 1996, Daniel T. Barry (US) and Koichi Wakata (Japan) played a game of Go.

Photo: NASA (1996)

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Cultural Insights (2)

- ② The current presidents of China and South Korea both like the game of Go. (true/ false)

During his visit to China in 2017, Korean President Moon Jae-in received a Go set present from Chinese President Xi Jinping.



Photo: Blue House (2017)

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Cultural Insights (3)

- 3 There is no computer Go program that can defeat a human Go professional. (true / **false**)



In 2016-2017 the A.I. AlphaGo has defeated top professionals from South Korea, China and Japan.

Photo: Cyberoro (2016)

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What do you need to play Go?

- Board
- Stones
- Players

9x9 board

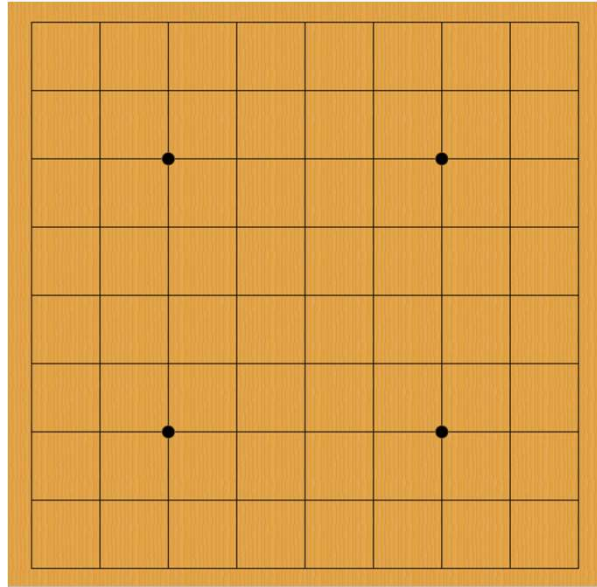
19x19 board

Photo: Private

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Basic Rules (1/5)

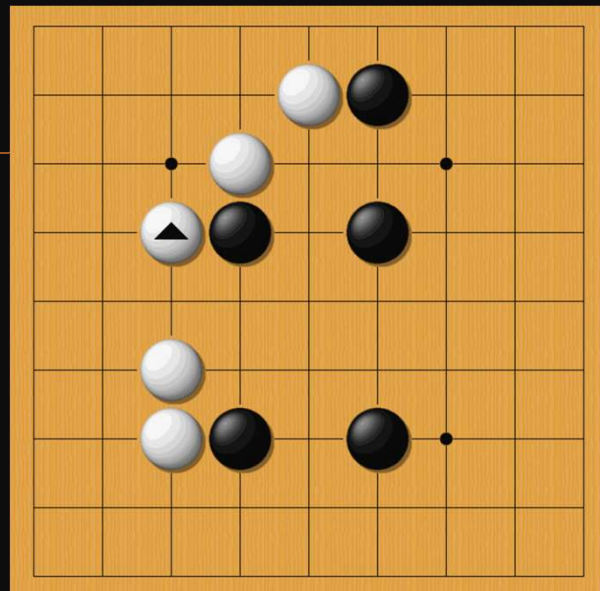
- The game of Go starts with an empty board.
- One player takes the black stones, the other takes the white stones.
- The player with the black stones begins by placing a stone on an empty intersection. After that White also plays a move, then Black one, and so on.



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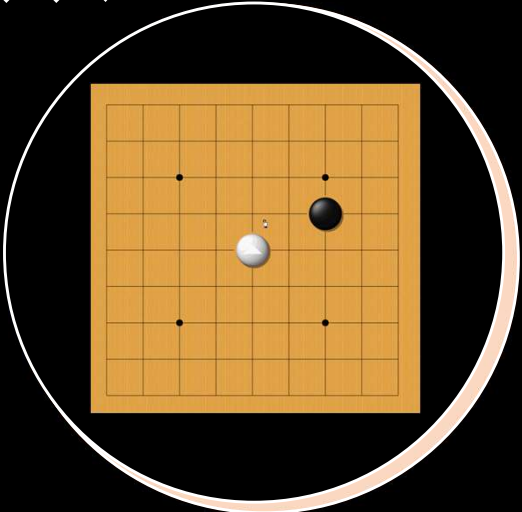
Basic Rules (2/5)

- The objective of the game is to surround a bigger area of the board than your opponent.
- In this game, you can see that Black surrounds an area on the right, while White takes the left side.
- Once a stone is placed, it can't be moved.



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Basic Rules (3/5)



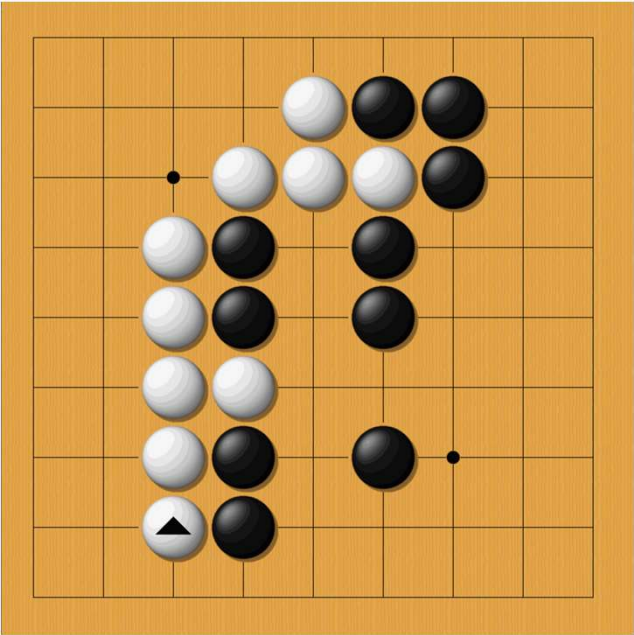
- However, you can capture opponent's stones.
- This white stone in the center has four ways to escape. If Black blocks all of them, the white stone is captured.
- A captured stone is kept until the end of the game and it is worth one point.

How to capture stones

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Basic Rules (4/5)

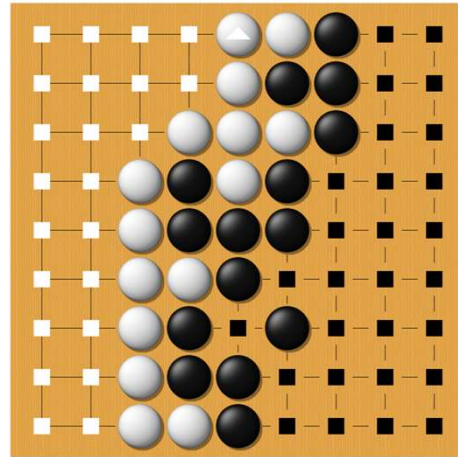
- The game continues until both players decide to finish the game.
- If you don't want to play another move, you can pass.
- If both players have passed, the game is finished and the final score can be counted.



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Basic Rules (5/5)

- Count all empty spots that have been surrounded by one player.
- Black has made 28 points.
- White has made 23 points.
- White gets 6 points to compensate Black's advantage as the starting player. That gives White a total of 29 points.
- Final result: White won by 1 point.



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Summary

The Game of Go

- ancient board game
- easy to learn
- stories
- cultural insights
- fun



Conclusion

The game of Go can be a topic of a single or a series of lessons in which learning English happens on the way.

Photo: Private

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Picture Sources

- Blue House (2017). Moon Jae-In and Xie Jinping's Photo received from: <https://sports.news.naver.com/news.nhn?oid=469&aid=0000380208>
- Chinese Aseop (2013). Ranka -- The Record of Lankeshan, or Rotten Axe Handle. Received from: <http://chineseaesop.blogspot.com/2013/12/ranka-record-of-lankeshan-or-rotten-axe.html>
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- Cyberoro (2020). Prize Money Ranking: First Place Shin Jin Seo. First Breakthrough to 1 Billion KRW. Received from: https://www.cyberoro.com/news/news_view.oro?num=527384&div_no=11
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- Leibniz 1710. Berliner Sammlung zur Förderung der Wissenschaften.
- NASA 1996. National Archives Catalog 2011. STS072-315-034 - STS-072 - Mission Specialists Dan Barry and Koichi Wakata play Japanese game 'GO'. Received from <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/22934866>



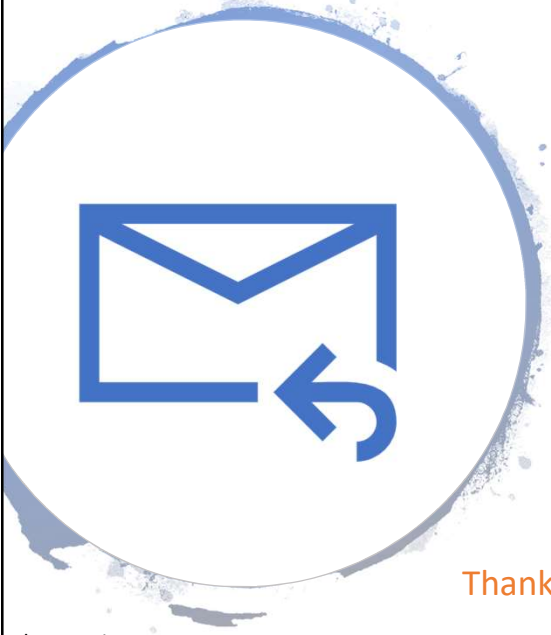
Teaching Resources

- American Go Association. <https://www.usgo.org/> Website on Go news, materials, reports etc.
- British Go Association. <https://britgo.org/> Website on the game of Go in the U.K.
- The American Go Foundation. <http://agfgo.org/pages/home.php> Website for Go teachers in the U.S.
- The American Go Foundation's Youth Site. <http://tigersmouth.org/> Website for young players with Go comics etc.
- The European Go Federation. <https://eurogofed.org/> News and Reports on Go in Europe.
- The International Go Federation. <https://www.intergofed.org/> News on Go around the world.
- The New York Institute of Go. <https://www.ny-go.org/channel> Free Go Video lessons for every level.



Photo: Private

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Questions or Comments?

Contact me via email or during the conference.

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Thank you very much for watching my presentation.




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