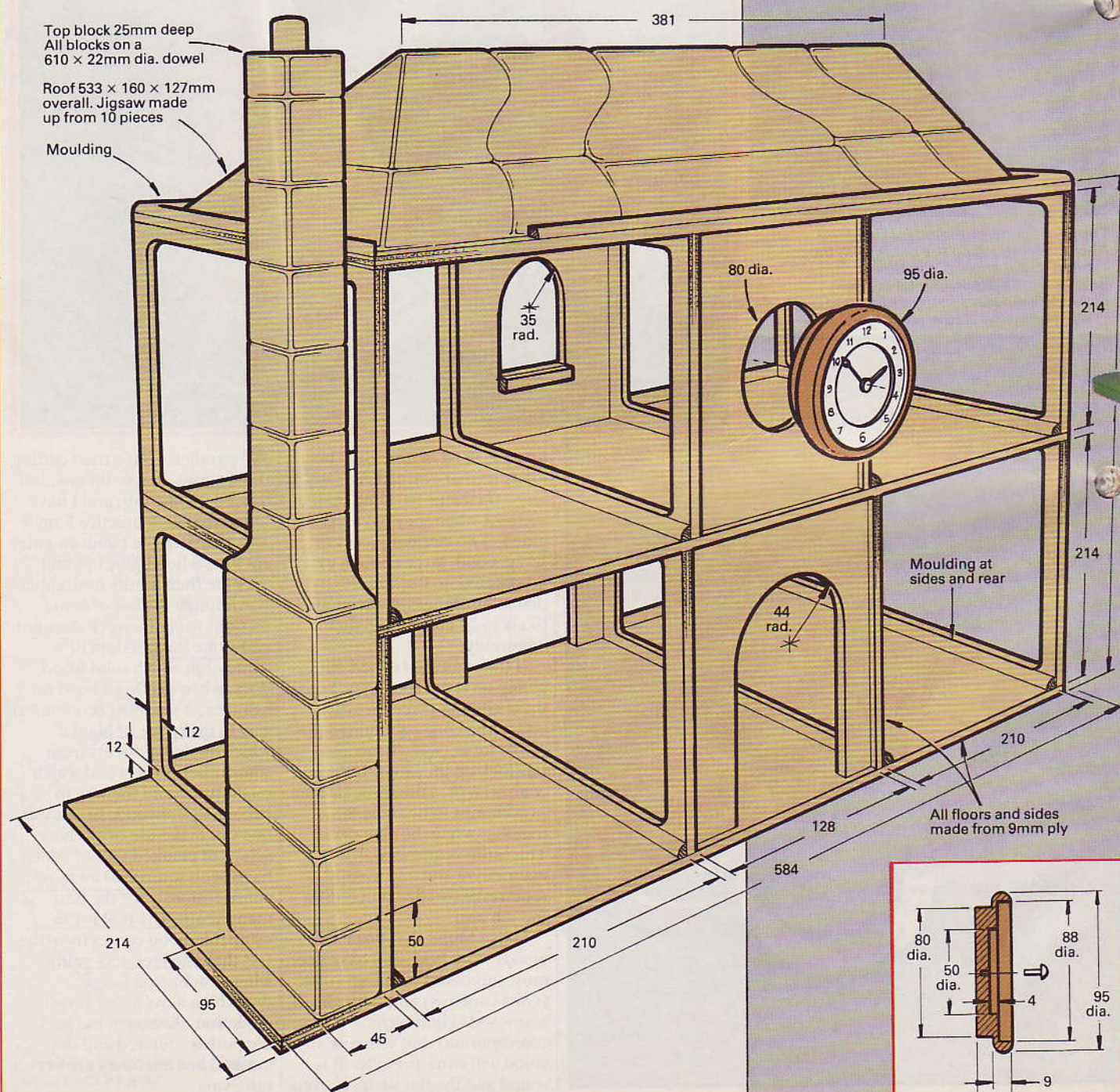
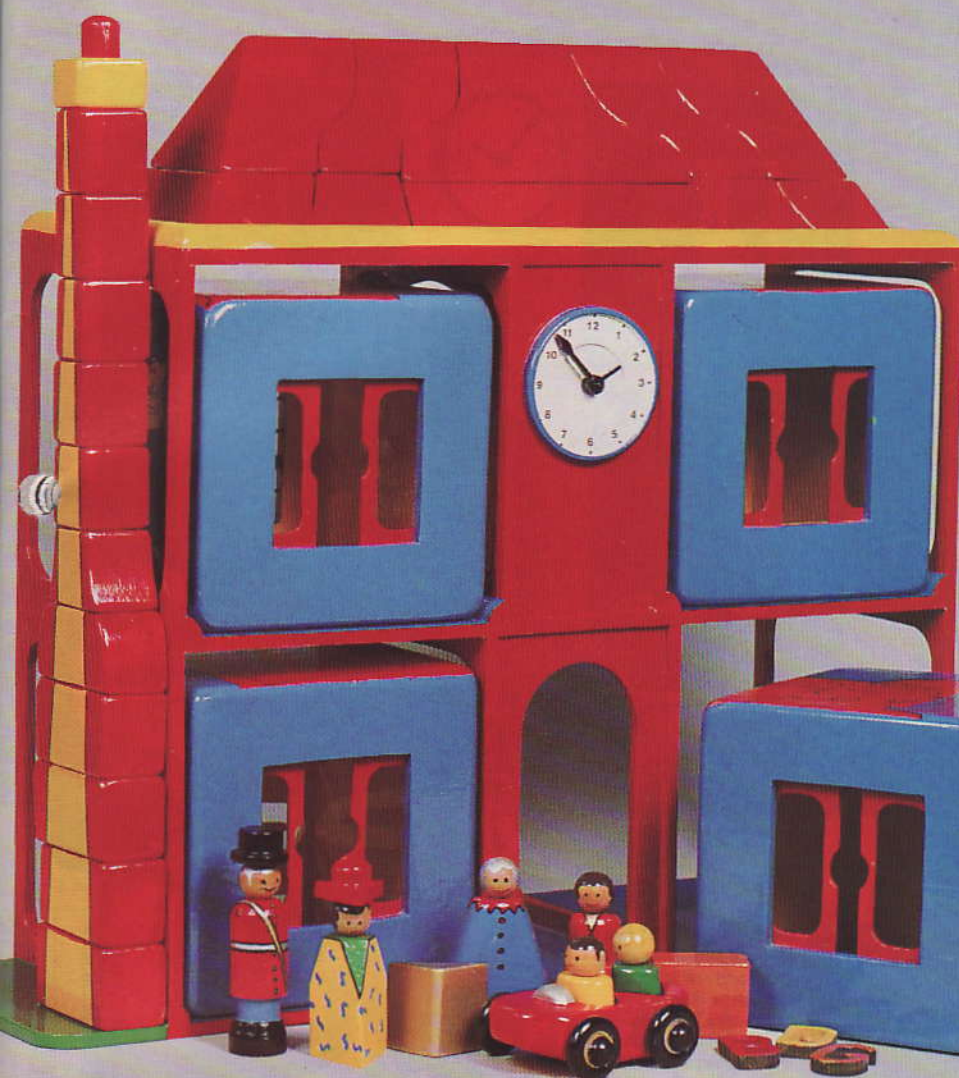


FUN HOUSE



Keeping children amused is not always easy especially if they are of different ages or stages of development. A.J. Jeffries overcame this problem in a novel and exciting way with this delightful fun house with all its attraction of colours, shapes and puzzles





I HAVE two children of different ages and I often have trouble in finding a toy suitable for them both to play with. I therefore designed a toy that would give as many facets of play as possible based on the simple idea of a house.

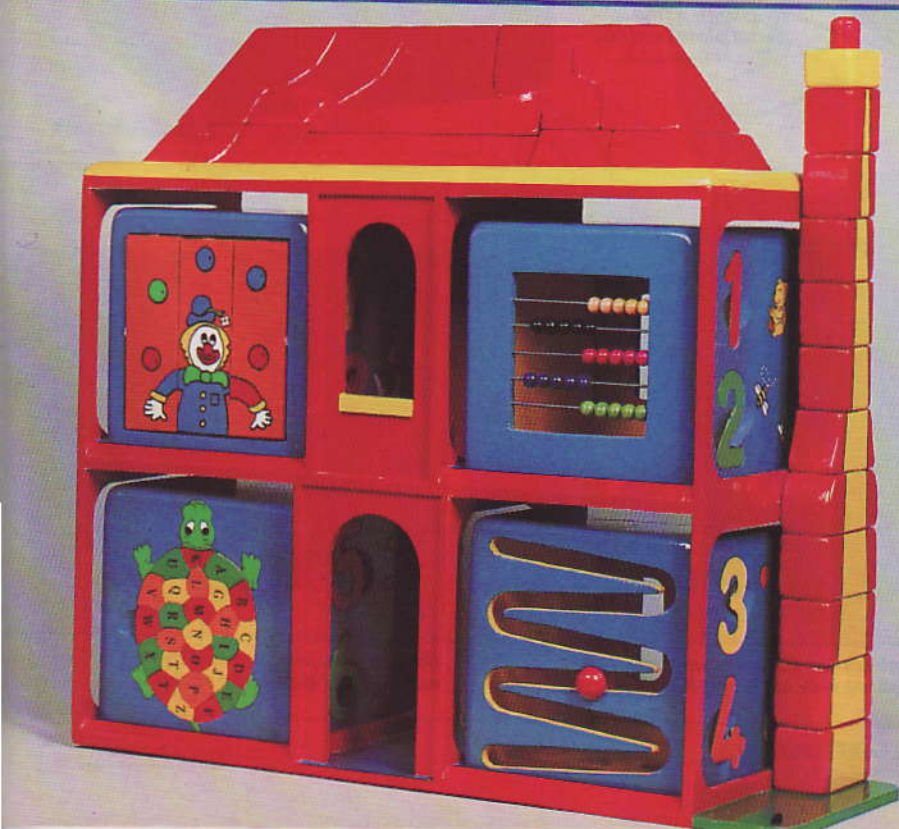
It is a multi-activity house catering for the needs of children of all ages and includes activities both educational and simply fun. The scope for including various other games on the cubes is enormous and will be largely a matter of personal choice. It is for that reason that the drawings show only selected faces from the cubes since to illustrate them all would be repetitive and largely irrelevant.

The frame

The house frame is made from 9mm plywood. Assemble the ground floor, mark out the positions of the sides and centre supports on the base and cut the hole on the left hand side for the dowel to support the chimney. Glue and pin the sides and centre supports at rightangles to the base and insert the arches 5mm from the edge between the centre supports and glue in position.

The second floor can be cut and set in position as shown with the quadrant moulding aiding the securing of the interior divisions.

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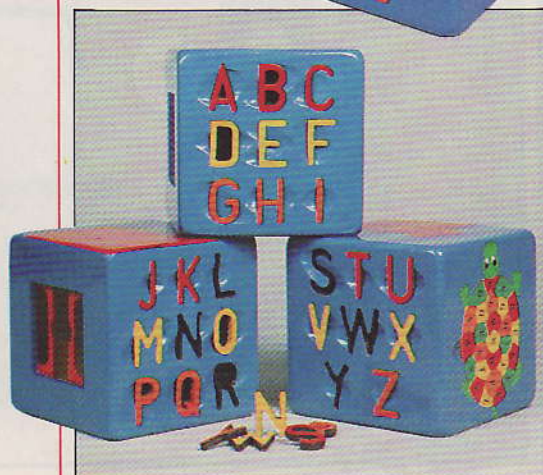
The inclusion of a clock on the front of the house gives an educational interest for the older child.

FUN HOUSE

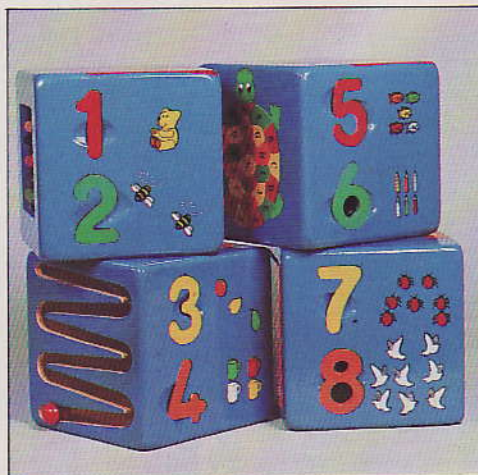
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The simplest of the puzzle pictures is in the form of a bus which is made up from the four cube faces (shown left). The terrapin and caterpillar jigsaw puzzle pieces are held in place using inset pieces of magnetic rubber strip with a thin metal plate behind.



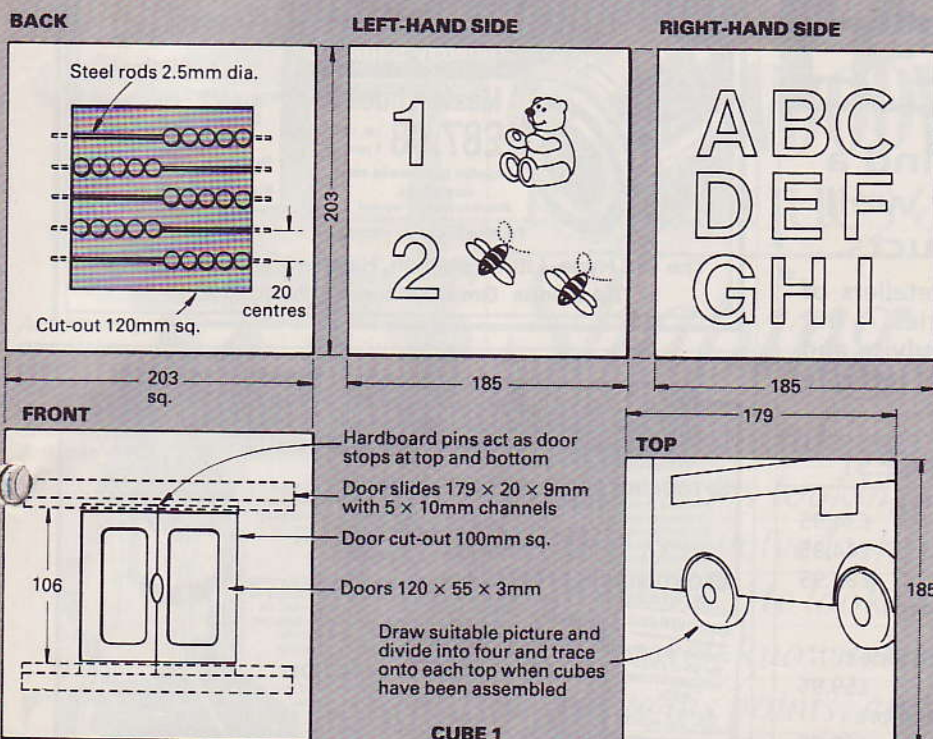
Three faces of the cubes provide the magnetic alphabet.



Numbers are also catered for in the same way as the alphabet.



Simple toys made to suit the openings of the shape sorter.



Roof, clock and chimney

Although the roof appears to be a solid block it is in fact cut from one piece of pine and then re-cut to form a jigsaw. Mark out the shapes as shown or roughly along those lines remembering that the pieces do need to lock together.

For the clock face I used a piece of mahogany and cut out the hands from 3mm plywood. Drill a hole 5mm diameter and about 6mm deep in the centre of the face and secure the hands with a rivet.

The chimney is made from a 22mm dowel set in the base running up through a block of pine. Cut this in one block, drill through and then cut it into the smaller blocks to give it its play value.

Making the cubes

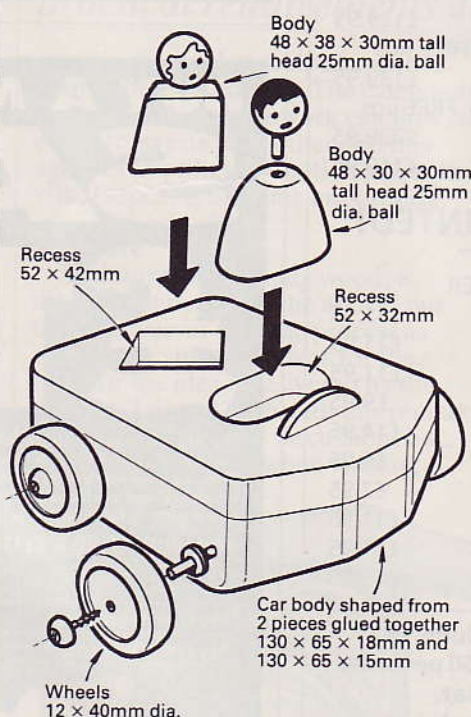
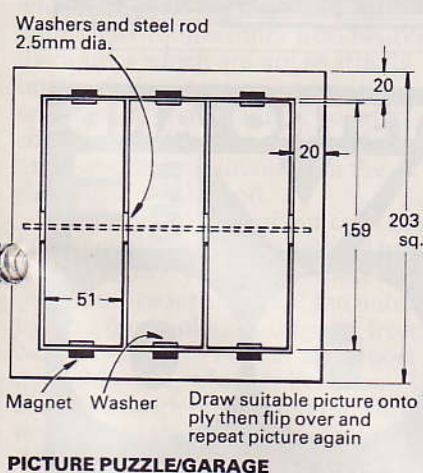
Now we come to the cubes themselves, which as previously mentioned, are open to a wide variety of games and amusements as well as an array of colours to suit the individual. The bottom of the cubes in every case are plain and the tops share a common motif in the form of a London bus which divides roughly into quarters and makes up into a full picture when the cubes come together, as shown in the photograph.

Cube 1 also features an abacus with steel rods run through coloured beads let into the sides of the cube at 20mm centres. Another thing to fascinate the kids is the roller ball feature; this is cut out carefully with a fretsaw and edges well smoothed with sandpaper. Cut a 25mm wooden ball in half and drill a hole in the centre 2.5mm diameter and 5mm deep. Thread the steel rod through a 10mm wooden bead so that it is loose and easily moved. Push one half of the wooden ball onto one end of the rod, put through the channel, and push the other half ball onto the remaining end. Do not fix the resin onto the ball until you have finished painting the cube.

The garage

The garage door picture puzzle is again simply made with a central rod and magnets and washers to hold the sections of door in place as shown in the drawing. Select a theme to suit yourself such as the clown as shown here or another playful character.

After you decide on your own themes and games do make sure that you finish well with sandpaper to avoid any chance of splinters and also be sure to use non-toxic paints for the brightly coloured finish.



PEOPLE AND CAR

Whilst simple figures can be made to suit the cross-sections required for the openings of the shape sorter, another simple fun house accessory is the car with corresponding slots for the figures. The car, of course, can be parked out of the way in the garage.

