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Opening extract from

Cube Countdown

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How to begin your adventure

Are you ready for an awesome adventure in which you must solve mind-bending puzzles? Then you've come to the right place!

Cube Countdown isn't an ordinary book—you don't read the pages in order, 1, 2, 3. . . Instead you jump forward and backward through the book as you face a series of challenges. Sometimes you may lose your way, but the story will always guide you back to where you need to be.

The story begins on page 4. Straight away, there are questions to answer and problems to overcome. The questions will look something like this:

IF YOU THINK THE CORRECT ANSWER IS A, GO TO PAGE 37

IF YOU THINK THE CORRECT ANSWER IS B, GO TO PAGE 11

Your task is to solve each problem. If you think the correct answer is A, turn to page 37 and look for the matching symbol in red. That's where you will find the next part of the story. If you make the wrong choice, the text will explain where you went wrong and let you have another chance.

The problems in this book are all about shapes, patterns, Rubik's Cube games, and number puzzles—prepare to have your brain tested! To solve them, you must use your knowledge and common sense. Use a calculator to help you with complex math problems. To help you, there's a glossary of useful words at the back of the book, starting on page 44.

ARE YOU READY?

Turn the page and let your adventure begin!

CUBE COUNTDOWN



Life is never dull as a Lieutenant at the Cube Command Center, even on your day off! You and your dog Superflip quickly get ready and hurry to HQ.

GET READY TO START YOUR ADVENTURE ON PAGE 8

4

Afraid not! You need to look for a pattern in the numbers.

TURN BACK TO PAGE 19 AND HAVE ANOTHER TRY 6



*

Incorrect. The * symbol is not on the opposite side.

TRY AGAIN ON PAGE 36

Mr. Algebrains, Superflip, and you cautiously leave the patrolship. Everywhere is quiet.

To enter the Cube Command Center, you must input a randomly generated security code.

SECURITY CODE

How many different ways can a Rubik's Cube be arranged?

100,456,877
JUMP TO PAGE 19

43,252,003,274,489,856,000
GO TO PAGE 32

300,253
TURN TO PAGE 12

33 moves would be a good score, but not the best.



HAVE ANOTHER GUESS ON PAGE 41 3

Cube Command Center



Wrong! With one cut, you can only make a rectangle or an isosceles triangle (with two equal sides).



TRY AGAIN ON PAGE 27

No. $\frac{1}{3}$ would be 0.33 lb.

THINK AGAIN on PAGE 33

When you arrive, the room is chaotic. People are running around and shouting. Commanders Korners and Vertex approach you. Vertex starts to speak.

The Rubik Computer controls the world's computers—the banks, electricity grid, food production, trains... We need you to recover the stolen Core quickly!

Vertex seems to think you're a Rubik's Cube whiz, but I'd like to check we have the right person for the mission. So I have three questions for you. First question: A Rubik's Cube is made up of 26 small cubes, called cubies, and has 6 faces. How many cubies are not shared between two or more faces of the Rubik's Cube?

What do you answer?

6 — TURN TO PAGE 19

8 — FLIP TO PAGE 31

12 — GO TO PAGE 42

Correct! 2, 3, 5, and 7 can only be divided by 1 or themselves, so they are called prime numbers. You travel 17 miles north to the Navigator's house.

You find him outside, pacing up and down. You ask him the way to Flatland.

I have no time to help you. I must build four lunar-horse pens, but I keep ending up with five!

You offer to help him in return for his navigation skills.

Which two fences should you reposition to turn five small squares into four?



FENCES A AND B — TURN TO PAGE 21

FENCES D AND F — GO TO PAGE 12

FENCES C AND E — FLIP TO PAGE 38

Wrong! You need that piece to make the square.



TRY AGAIN ON PAGE 17

Wrong! If you slice the cheese into 11 pieces, you won't get $\frac{1}{4}$ for yourself.



TRY AGAIN ON PAGE 14

A

A

Correct! You've spotted that **5 x 3 x 2 = 30**. You fly straight to Fraction Land. Phew—you're three-dimensional again!

You exit the ship and are nearly bitten by a hungry snark! As far as the eye can see, snarks are *eating the planet!* If you don't stop them, your ship will be next!



You decide to tempt the snarks with a slice of mooncheese each. If you keep $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cheese and there are nine snarks to catch, how much cheese will they each get?

$\frac{1}{9}$ GO TO PAGE 37

$\frac{1}{12}$ JUMP TO PAGE 33

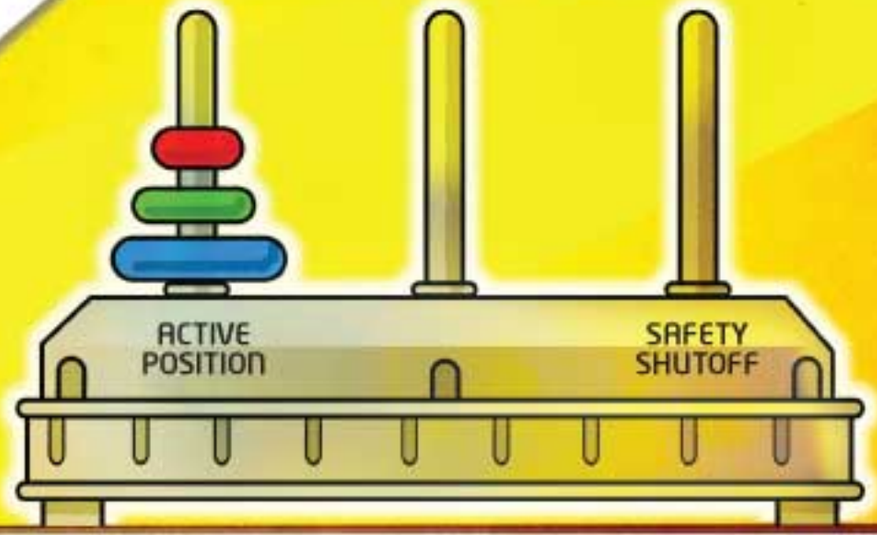
$\frac{1}{11}$ TURN TO PAGE 9

As soon as you land on Planet Star, you can see that something is wrong. An ear-piercing alarm is ringing and flashing lights nearly blind you!

Lieutenant, have you come to save us? The spaceport's power source is overheating. We have minutes to shut it down before we are all vaporized!

You weren't expecting that, but you have to help if you want to stay alive!

You need to move all of the pellets to the safety shutoff position. Move the pellets one at a time between any of the poles and DO NOT place a large pellet on top of a smaller pellet.



The reactor is too dangerous for you to crawl inside, but Superflip could do it.

What is the smallest number of moves that Superflip can make to activate the safety shutoff?

6

6 MOVES
HEAD OVER TO PAGE 16

3

3 MOVES
FLIP TO PAGE 41

7

7 MOVES
GO TO PAGE 30