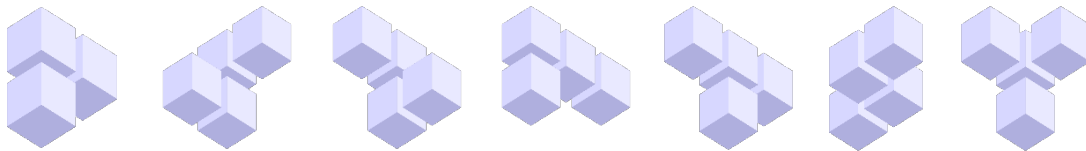


Activity Idea

SOMA Cube Puzzle *Recommended for Adults*

The SOMA Cube is a type of puzzle invented by Danish mathematician Piet Hein (1905-1996) in 1933 or 1936 (depending on the source). The puzzle consists of seven, three-dimensional, *Tetris*-like pieces that must be assembled to form a whole cube (and later, other figures). Its name is generally understood to be derived from the fictitious drug used in the novel *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, presumably because the puzzle is so addictive. *Brave New World* is a dystopian novel published in 1932. Widely considered one of the greatest novels of the 20th century, it's often compared to George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). *Brave New World* is set in a futuristic World State where members of society are controlled through the consumption of a drug called soma, which keeps them in a peaceful, dream-like state.



Web Links:

Instructions to create pieces and diagrams by Sebastian Kirsch <https://tinyurl.com/somacubekirsch>
SOMA cube diagrams and instruction videos by Jo Nakashima <https://tinyurl.com/somacubenakashima>
SOMA (1969) game instruction manual by Parker Brothers <https://tinyurl.com/somacubegame>
Biography of Piet Hein on Gale Literature Resource Center <https://tinyurl.com/yc4x3sex>

Books:

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley on OverDrive tinyurl.com/rgm2ggr
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley (Audiobook) on Overdrive tinyurl.com/uzy7utb

Video:

"Aldous Huxley and Dystopian Pleasure" (Episode 10 of *Great Utopian and Dystopian Works of Literature*) on Kanopy tinyurl.com/rpqj8g5

Spark an Idea!

Construct your own SOMA puzzle cubes by folding pieces of paper at home then challenge yourself to solve the puzzle – or just have fun making any number of other shapes.

We'd love to see your shapes. Share them with us on Twitter or Instagram @LACountyLibrary or #LACountyLibrary!