The Other Dummy

One of my favorite stories about <u>learning</u> is one about the pottery class. The teacher tells the first class that their project for the term is to create the perfect piece of pottery. The teacher tells the second class to make as many clay objects as possible. Can you guess which class made the most creative and "perfect" pieces? It was the second class, who learned by making mistakes and then learned from those mistakes.

Alright, let's make some pottery.

If you've heard my lectures before, you know to count your winners. Using your handout, your job is to count the number of tricks. That's it. Count the number of tricks. How are you planning to make your contract?

In the first column, second row, the contract is two spades. How many tricks do you have with a club lead? Hopefully, you have seven tricks. Where is your eighth trick? It's ruffing a spade in the hand with trump shortness. Does ruffing diamonds in the north hand give you an eight trick?

In the first column, sixth row, you hopefully have five spades, one heart, two diamonds, and a club. That may only be nine tricks.   Where's the tenth trick?

So far, it looks like we've learned that the real dummy is the hand with the fewest trumps. Why is that? Because counting ruffs in the long hand doesn't increase your number of tricks.

In the middle column, how many tricks do you have in spade slam? If the opponents don't lead a heart (if they lead a diamond, club, or spade), declarer can play the ace of clubs and the queen of clubs, throwing the heart. Otherwise, you must draw trumps and try to set up the diamonds.

In the middle column, how many tricks do you have in the three heart contract with a club lead? The good news is that the club finesse works. Now, how many tricks do you have? You still need clubs to be 3/3 or the ten of hearts to be doubleton.

In the middle column, there's a contract with the jack of diamonds lead. How many tricks do you have? Can you make your contract with a bad trump break?

On the bottom row of the middle column, how many tricks do you have? You can make ten tricks on a cross ruff.

On the top row of the rightmost column, how many tricks can you count? I only count 9: six spades and three diamonds. In one of truly rare hands, the contract can be made on a dummy reversal. Ruff a club; play a diamond to the ace; ruff a club; diamond to the king, ruff a club; spade to the king; ruff a club

with the ace and play a spade to the queen on the board. Draw the last trump and play a diamond to your queen, giving up the last three heart tricks.

In the rightmost column, how many tricks do you have in the contract with the queen of clubs lead? Do you see any dangers? If you come to your hand to lead a heart, if the ace of hearts is offside, defense can hold you to 9 tricks. It's better to take diamond finesse and ruff a diamond on the board before attempting to draw trumps.

In the grand slam, how many tricks do you have with the jack of diamonds lead?

How many tricks do you have in the six spades by south in the rightmost column? Did you notice that there are five losers in the north hand and six losers in the south hand? What is a master hand? The master hand is the one with the strong trumps, the side suit, which can easily be set up, or the one with the fewest losers. The hand with the most short suits is often the best candidate for the dummy.

How many tricks do you have in the bottom rightmost slam? Because you only have one entry to the board, your only play is to cash the ace and king of spades, hoping to catch a doubleton honor or that spades are 3/3.

When I was five or six, my sister and I played robot. That's where I took a diaper pail, drew some gears on the side, and placed that diaper pail on my head. My sister then commanded, "Okay, robot, take three steps forward." With her instructions, she could march me around the yard. It's that same process of doing, making mistakes, and getting feedback that we call learning.

Any question?