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(71) Applicant: **GEOGRAMMA S.p.A.**
07026 Olbia (IT)

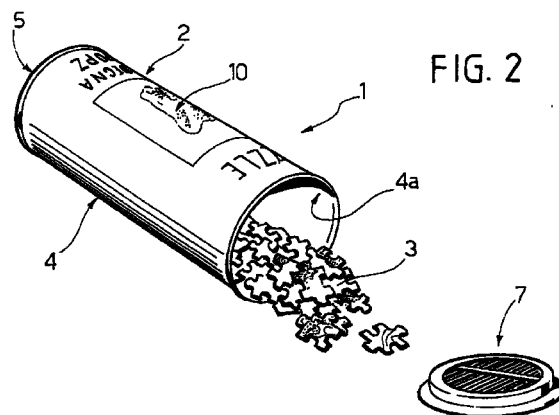
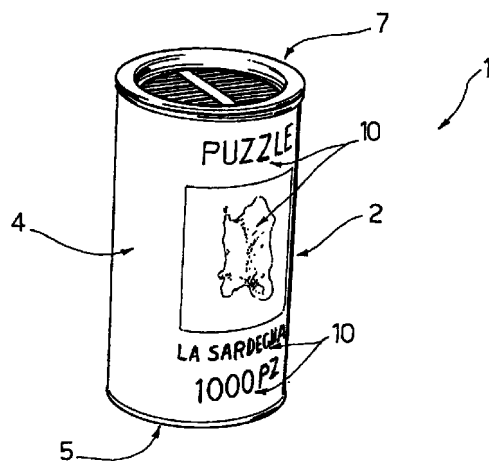
(72) Inventor: **Costagiu, Anna**
07026 Olbia (IT)

(74) Representative:
Eccetto, Mauro et al
Studio Torta S.r.l.,
Via Viotti, 9
10121 Torino (IT)

(54) **Combination of a jigsaw puzzle and a container**

(57) The combination of a jigsaw puzzle and a container wherein a tubular metal container (2) contains a number of pieces (3) that can be fitted together, and has an outer surface (4) on which graphics and pictures (10) are imprinted stably.

FIG. 1



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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a jigsaw puzzle.

[0002] Jigsaw puzzles are known in which a parallelepiped-shaped cardboard box contains a number of flat, shaped pieces, and normally has a removable flat cardboard lid with an illustration of the picture produced when the pieces are fitted together.

[0003] As is known, the pieces are tipped out of the box onto a flat surface to find and assemble pieces which fit together; and, at the end of a first assembly session, the loose pieces are put back into the box.

[0004] This is repeated many times when the puzzle has a large number of pieces and/or the user is not particularly skilled, so that the cardboard box, being picked up, opened, closed and put away repeatedly, is easily worn, damaged or deformed, with the result that some of the pieces may get lost.

[0005] It is an object of the present invention to provide a jigsaw puzzle designed to eliminate the aforementioned drawbacks typically associated with known puzzles.

[0006] According to the present invention, there is provided a jigsaw puzzle wherein a container contains a number of pieces; characterized in that said container is made of metal and is tubular in shape; said container having, on an outer surface, graphics and pictures imprinted stably on the container.

[0007] Being rigid and made of metal, the container therefore cannot be damaged or deformed, thus preventing any of the pieces from getting lost.

[0008] A preferred, non-limiting embodiment of the invention will be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a view in perspective of a container for a jigsaw puzzle in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

Figure 2 shows the Figure 1 container in a different position.

[0009] Number 1 in Figure 1 indicates as a whole a jigsaw puzzle wherein a container 2 contains a number of flat, shaped pieces 3 (of known type) which can be fitted together.

[0010] More specifically, container 2 is made of metal, is in the form of an elongated, circular-section tube, and comprises a cylindrical lateral wall 4, and a flat circular bottom wall 5 closing a first end of tubular container 2. A second end of tubular container 2 is closed by a flat lid 7 which clicks onto free end portions 4a of cylindrical lateral wall 4 and which may be made of plastic or metal material. Cylindrical lateral wall 4 is defined by an outer surface imprinted stably, e.g. lithographically, with graphics and pictures 10 comprising, for example:

- . a drawing or photograph showing the subject produced when pieces 3 are fitted together (e.g. an aerial photograph of a portion of the earth's surface);
- . the name of the subject (e.g. aerial view of Sardinia);
- . the maker's name and trademark;
- . the number of pieces (e.g. 1000 PIECES); and
- . the degree of difficulty.

[0011] Lid 7 may also show the subject and the maker's name and trademark.

[0012] Pieces 3 are preferably, though not necessarily, housed inside a bag of plastic, e.g. transparent plastic, material (not shown) housed inside tubular container 2.

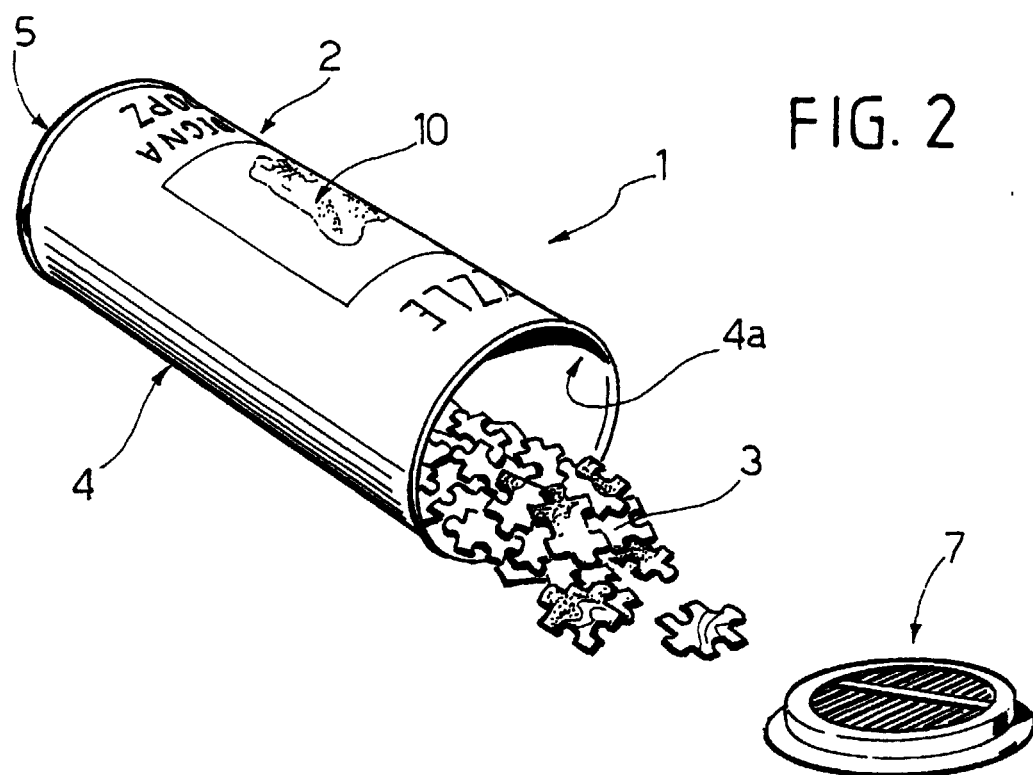
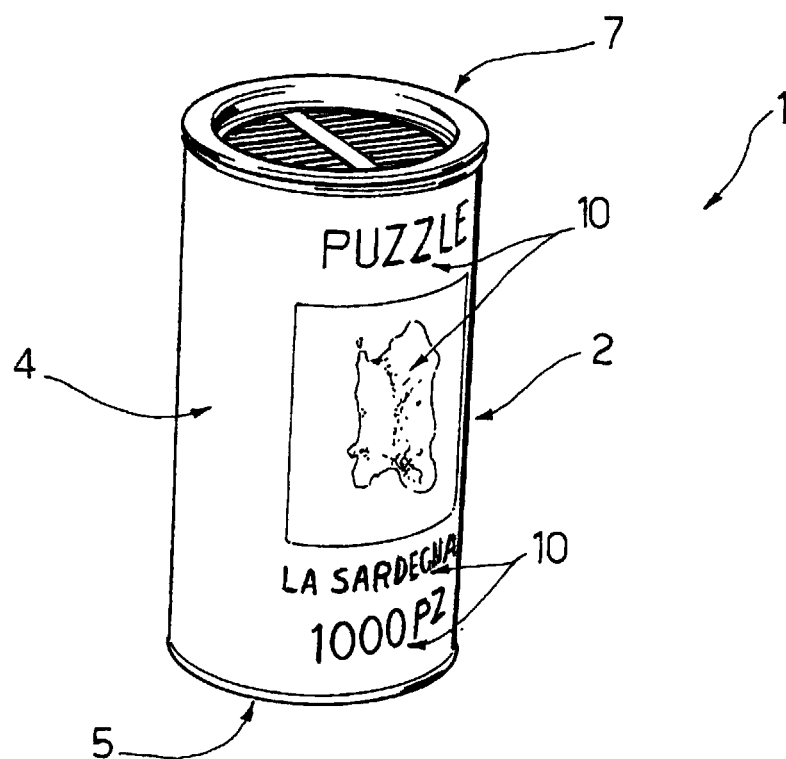
[0013] Clearly, changes may be made to the jigsaw puzzle as described and illustrated herein without, however, departing from the scope of the present invention.

[0014] For example, tubular container 2 may be open at both ends and have two removable lids which click onto opposite ends.

Claims

1. A jigsaw puzzle wherein a container contains a number of pieces; characterized in that said container (2) is made of metal and is tubular in shape; said container having, on an outer surface (4), graphics and pictures (10) imprinted stably on the container.
2. A jigsaw puzzle as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that said graphics and pictures (10) are imprinted lithographically.
3. A jigsaw puzzle as claimed in Claim 1 or 2, characterized by comprising at least one flat lid (7) for closing an end portion of said tubular container.
4. A jigsaw puzzle as claimed in Claim 3, characterized in that said lid (7) is made of metal material.
5. A jigsaw puzzle as claimed in Claim 3, characterized in that said lid (7) is made of plastic material.
6. A jigsaw puzzle as claimed in Claim 3, characterized in that said lid (7) clicks onto said container.
7. A jigsaw puzzle as claimed in any one of the foregoing Claims, characterized in that said tubular container (2) has a circular cross section.

FIG. 1





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 12 2897

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) B65D A63F
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 30 January 2001	Examiner Martens, L
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 00 12 2897

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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30-01-2001

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