Opening Theory Made Easy

Twenty Strategic Principles to Improve Your Opening Game

by Hideo Otake 9-dan

translated by John Power

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Contents

Preface v
Glossary vi

Chapter One
Fuseki Fundamentals

Principle 1
Corner enclosures aim at side extensions..... 2
Principle 2
Be flexible in deploying from the star point..... 10
Principle 3
Find the right pincer..... 18
Principle 4
Have a counterplan to deal with invasions..... 26
Principle 5
The 5-4 stone aims at outside influence..... 36
Principle 6
The 4th line is the line of development,
the 3rd line is the line of completion..... 44
Principle 7
Build box-like moyos..... 52

Chapter Two
Good Shape

Principle 8
Family feuds waste resources 62
Principle 9
Don't permit a hane at the head of your stones 70

Principle 10
You can never catch up if you push from behind 78
Principle 11
The empty, triangle is bad shape..... 88
Principle 12
The ponnuki is worth 30 points 96
Principle 13
Don't atari automatically 104

Chapter Three
Strategy

Principle 14
Attack the opponent by stealing his base 112
Principle 15
Don't attach against weak stones 120
Principle 16
Try to kill two birds with one stone 128
Principle 17
Use thickness to attack 136
Principle 18
Keep away from solid positions 144
Principle 19
Reduce a large moyo lightly 152
Principle 20
Don't cling to stones that have served their purpose..... 160

Preface

The stones do not come into contact very much in the opening stage, so on the surface it seems reassuringly peaceful. On the other hand, judging what the biggest moves are can be perplexing. Everything is too vague - it's hard to establish a criterion for evaluating different moves. Yet if you neglect the fuseki, you can't hope to make progress at go. After all, it's the basis of your whole game.

The fuseki is certainly amorphous, but concealed within it are a number of key points, points of crucial importance to your overall development. Gaining an understanding of what these points are is certainly a sure way to improve.

In this book I have selected what I consider to be the 20 key points of the fuseki and explained them with concrete examples. This book is made up of three chapters, but the division is not very significant. I recommend that the reader treat my 20 principles as proverbs and familiarize himself with them until they become second nature factually several traditional go proverbs are included). Knowledge of these principles will help you to develop a deeper understanding of the fuseki and to master its basic strategy. That in turn will make you a much stronger go player.

I would like to thank the go writer Murakami Akira for his help in putting together this book.

Otake Hideo
August 1985

Glossary

aji — potential (options, possibilities)

atari – the threat to capture a stone or a group of stones on the next move.

fuseki – the opening moves of the game (usually defined as lasting until the first fight begins).

gote – a move not requiring an answer; losing the initiative. Compare *sente*.

bane – a diagonal move played from a friendly stone in contact with an enemy stone.

joseki – a set sequence of moves, usually in the opening. Locally they are the best moves for each side.

miai – points of exchange; interchangeable point.

moyo - a large territorial framework, potential but not actual territory.

ponnuki – the shape made when a stone is captured by four enemy stones.

sabaki – making light flexible shape in order to save a group.

sente – a move that must be answered or an unacceptable loss will be suffered.

tesuji - a skilful tactical move.

Chapter One

Fuseki Fundamentals

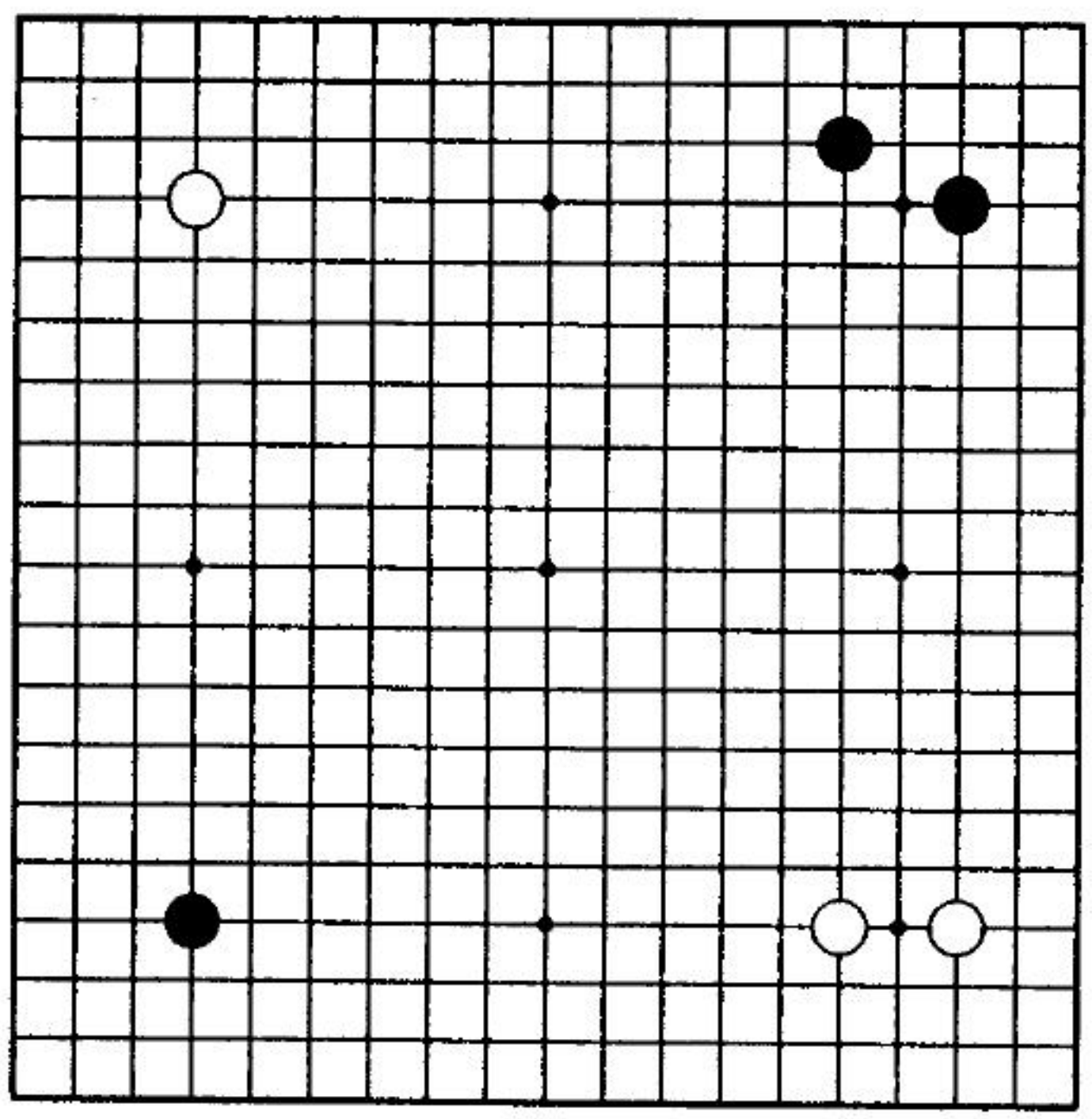
A common pitfall in studying any subject is to rush on to the more advanced areas before one has properly mastered the basics. To avoid making that mistake, I would like to begin by reviewing the fundamental principles that really are basic to an understanding of the fuseki.

Principle 1
Corner enclosures aim at side extensions

After an enclosure, what next?

The first steps in the fuseki emphasize the corners. When you play a 3-4 stone, in particular, you should waste no time enclosing the corner This will usually build about ten points of secure territory.

However, the value of an enclosure is not just the points of territory it surrounds. Securing a solid base in the corner makes it easy to develop along either side from the corner.



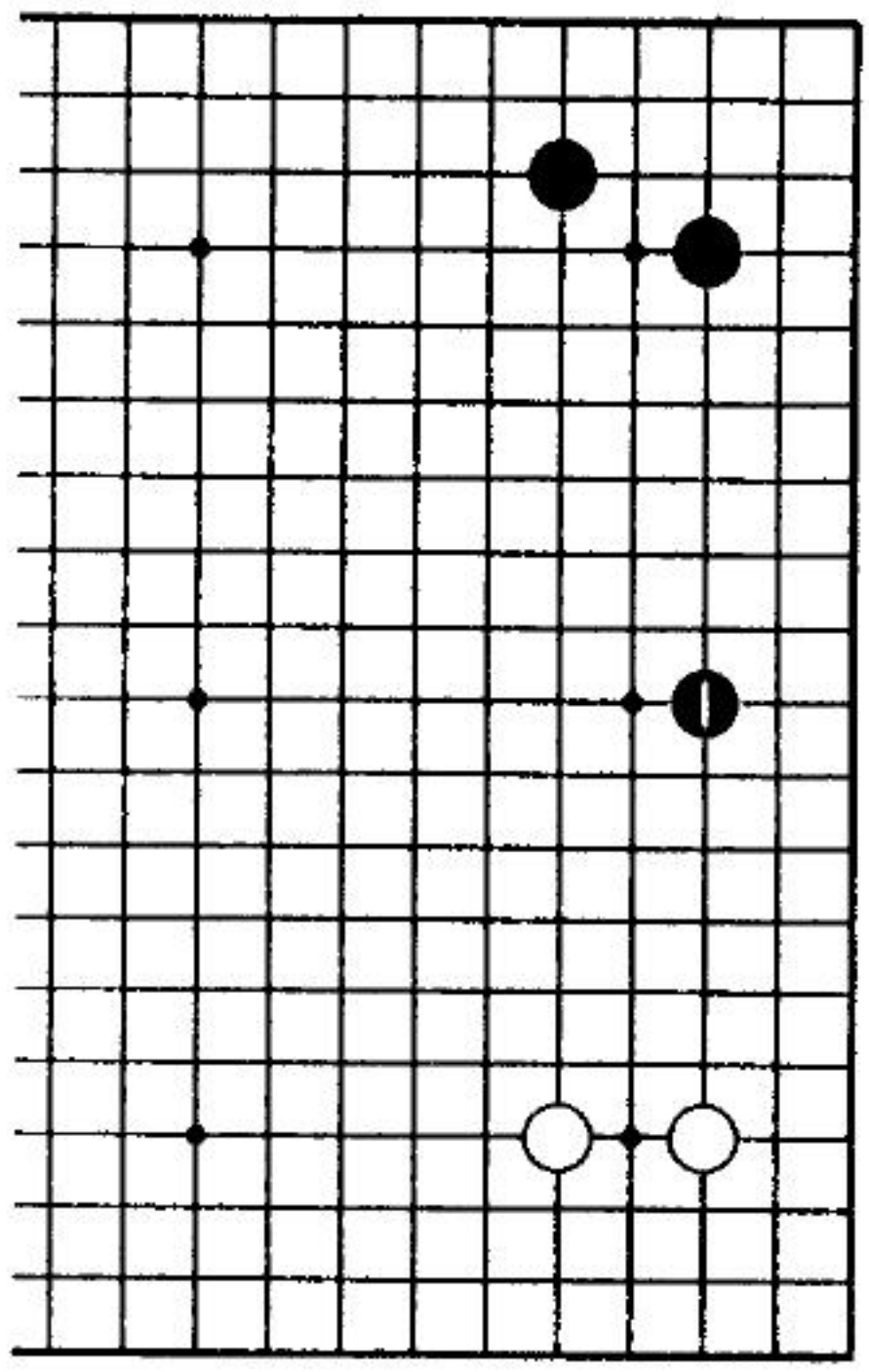
Theme diagram
Where should Black aim with his next move?

Dia. 1: the key point for both sides

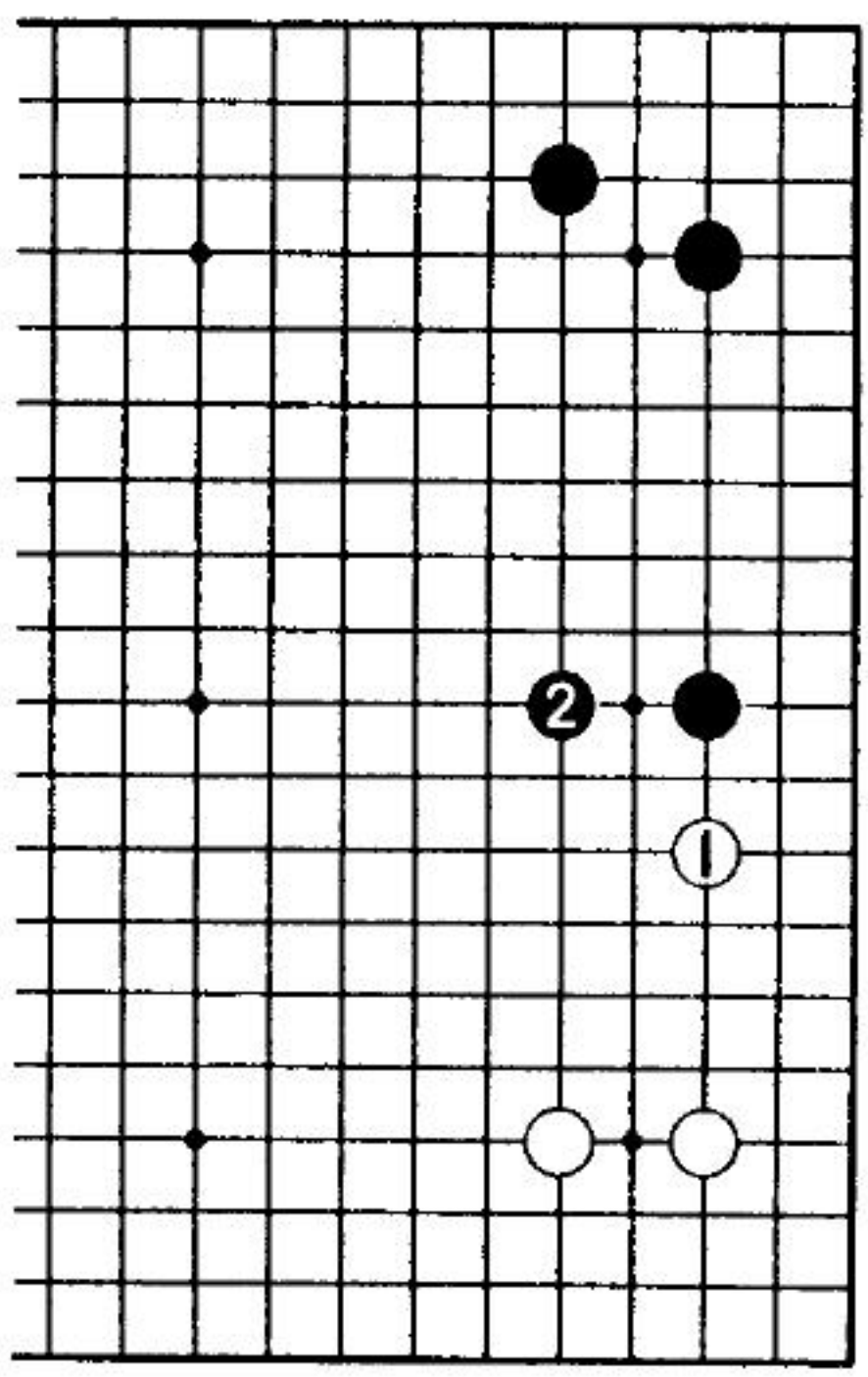
An extension in the direction of 1 is the biggest point on the board. Thanks to Black's solid base in the corner, there is a strong possibility that the area between the corner enclosure and the extension will become black territory. White would also like to extend to 1 from his corner enclosure below, so we can conclude that 1 is the key point for both sides.

Dia. 2: looking like black territory

If White responds with an extension of his own at 1, the idea is to expand Black's territorial framework into the centre by jumping to 2. The area inside the extension is now beginning to look like black territory.



Dia. 1



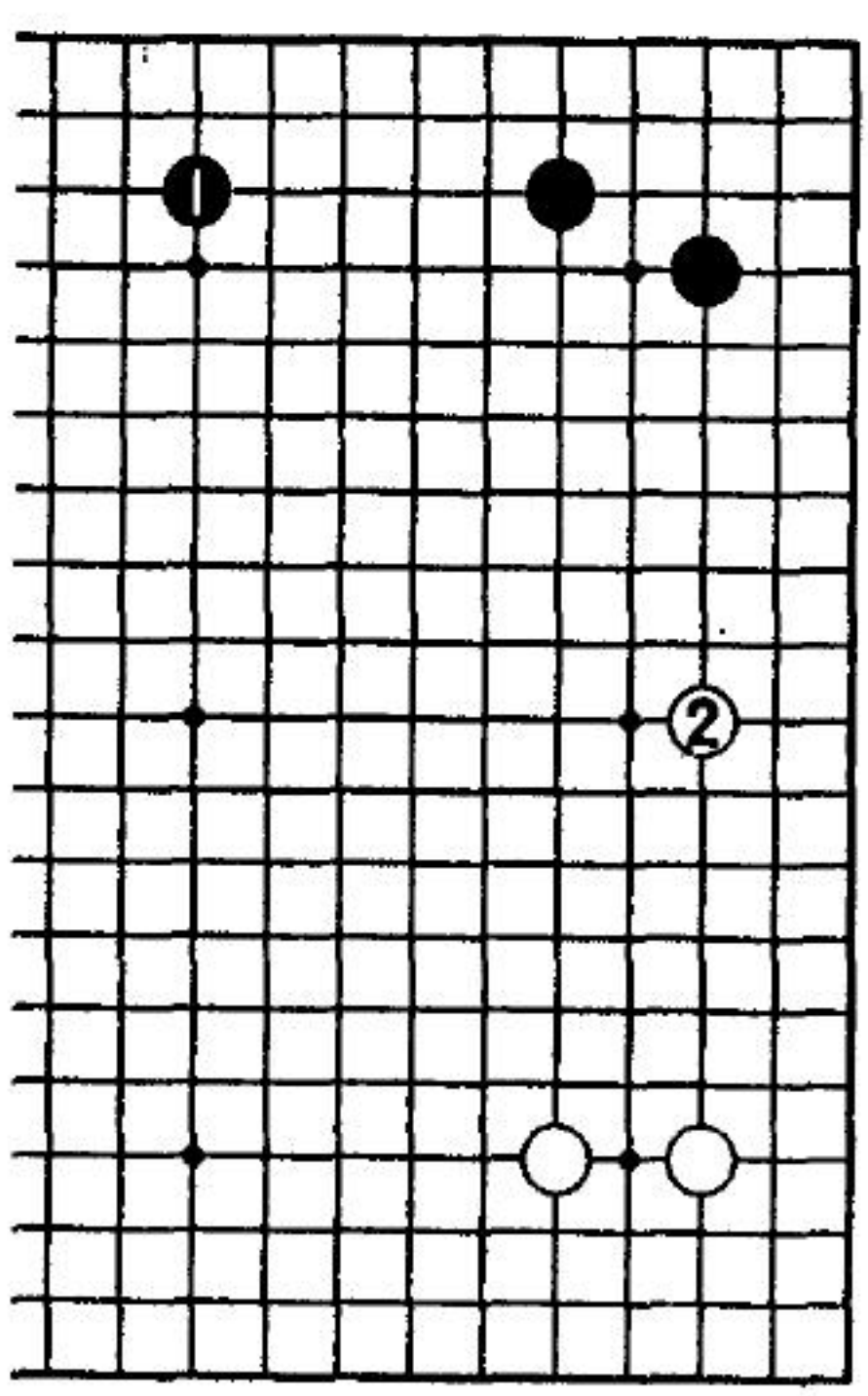
Dia. 2

Dia. 3: comparison with the top

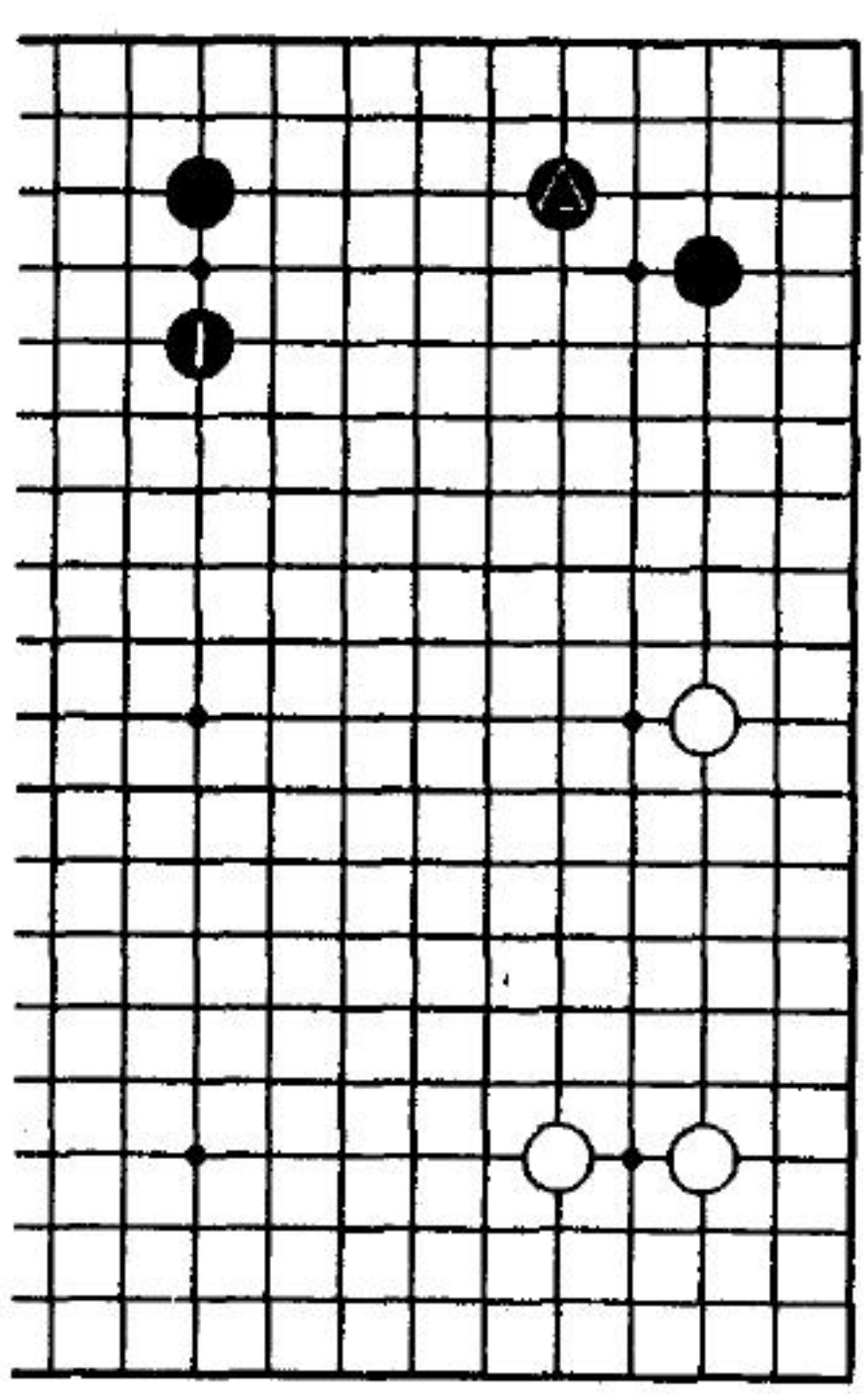
The other extension Black can make from his enclosure is in the direction of 1. If you ask which is the bigger extension, however, the answer has to be the one on the side. Black will be dissatisfied when White extends to 2. Let's explain why.

Dia. 4: questionable balance

The position at the top is like the framework for a one-storey house. When you try to add a second storey with 1, the structure becomes badly balanced because of the low position of the marked stone. In contrast, it's easy to build a second storey with the extension on the right side in Dia. 1. (In Dia. 2, Black gets two solid walls facing each other.)



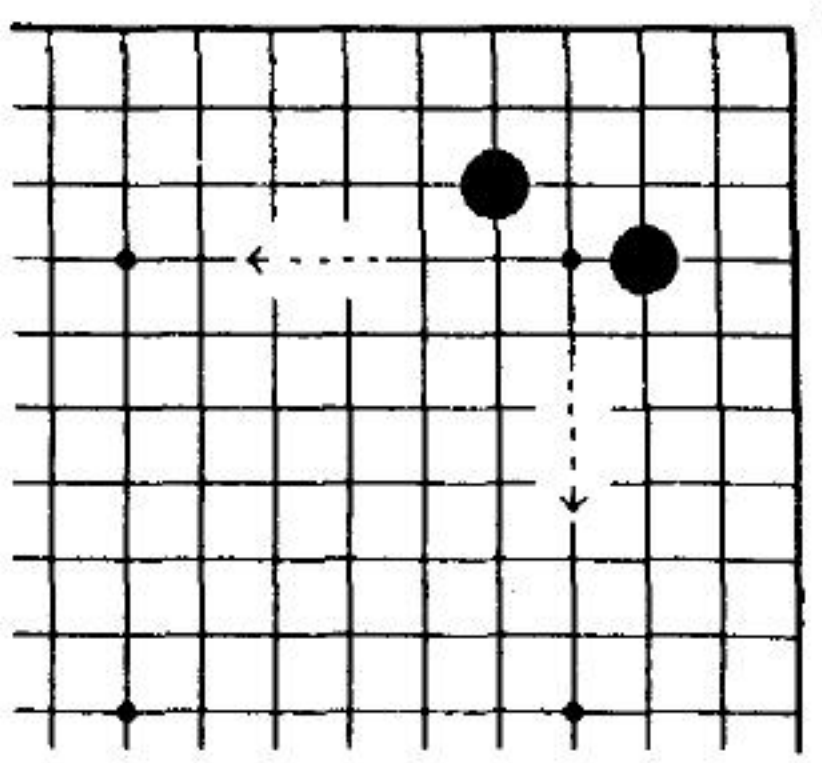
Dia. 3



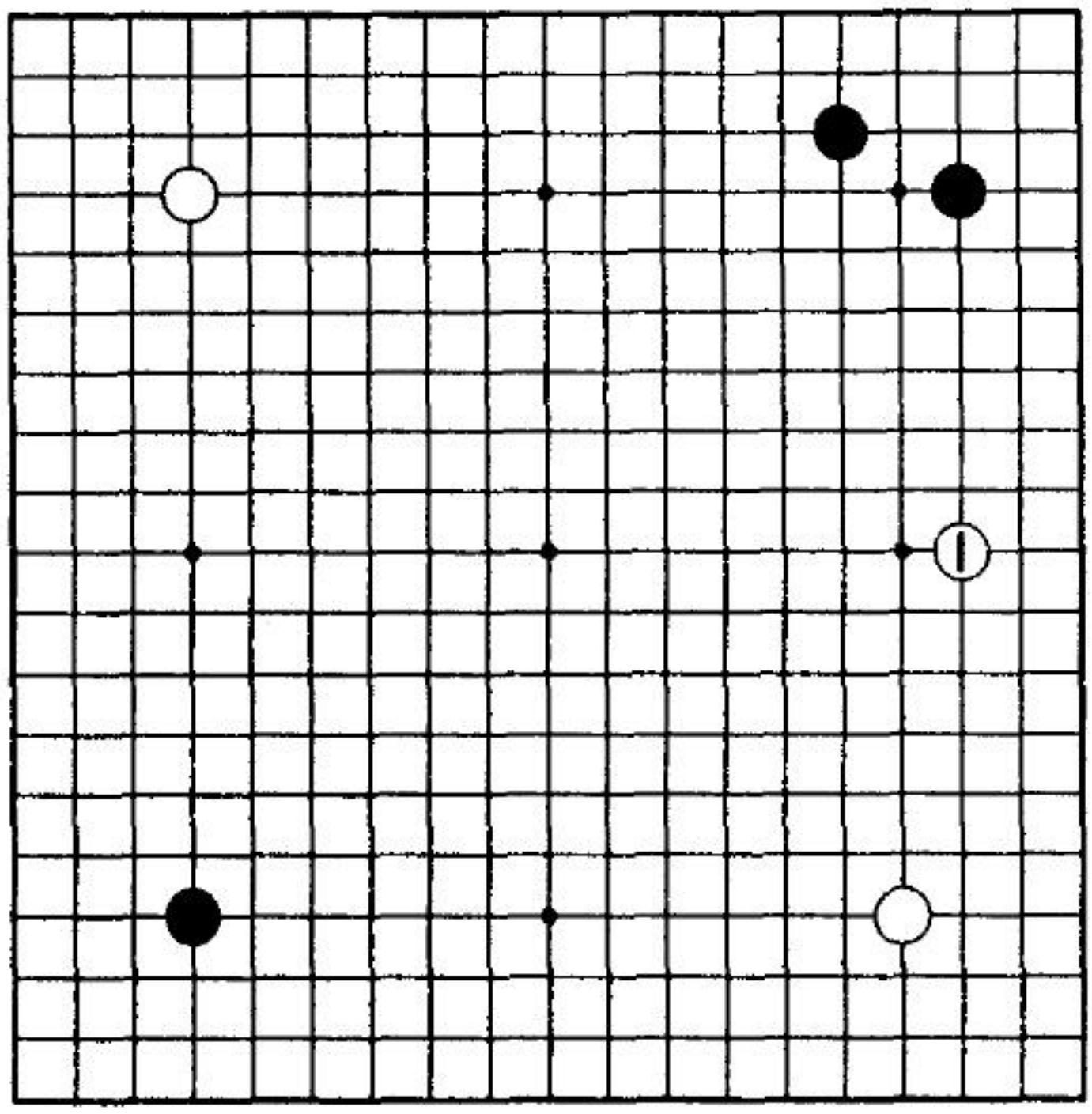
Dia. 4

Dia. 5: the primary direction

Extensions can be made in two directions from an enclosure, indicated by the arrows, but Black has better prospects of building a two-storey house below, so this is the primary direction of the enclosure: the enclosure faces down the side. In comparison, an extension along the top is slightly inferior in value.



Dia. 5



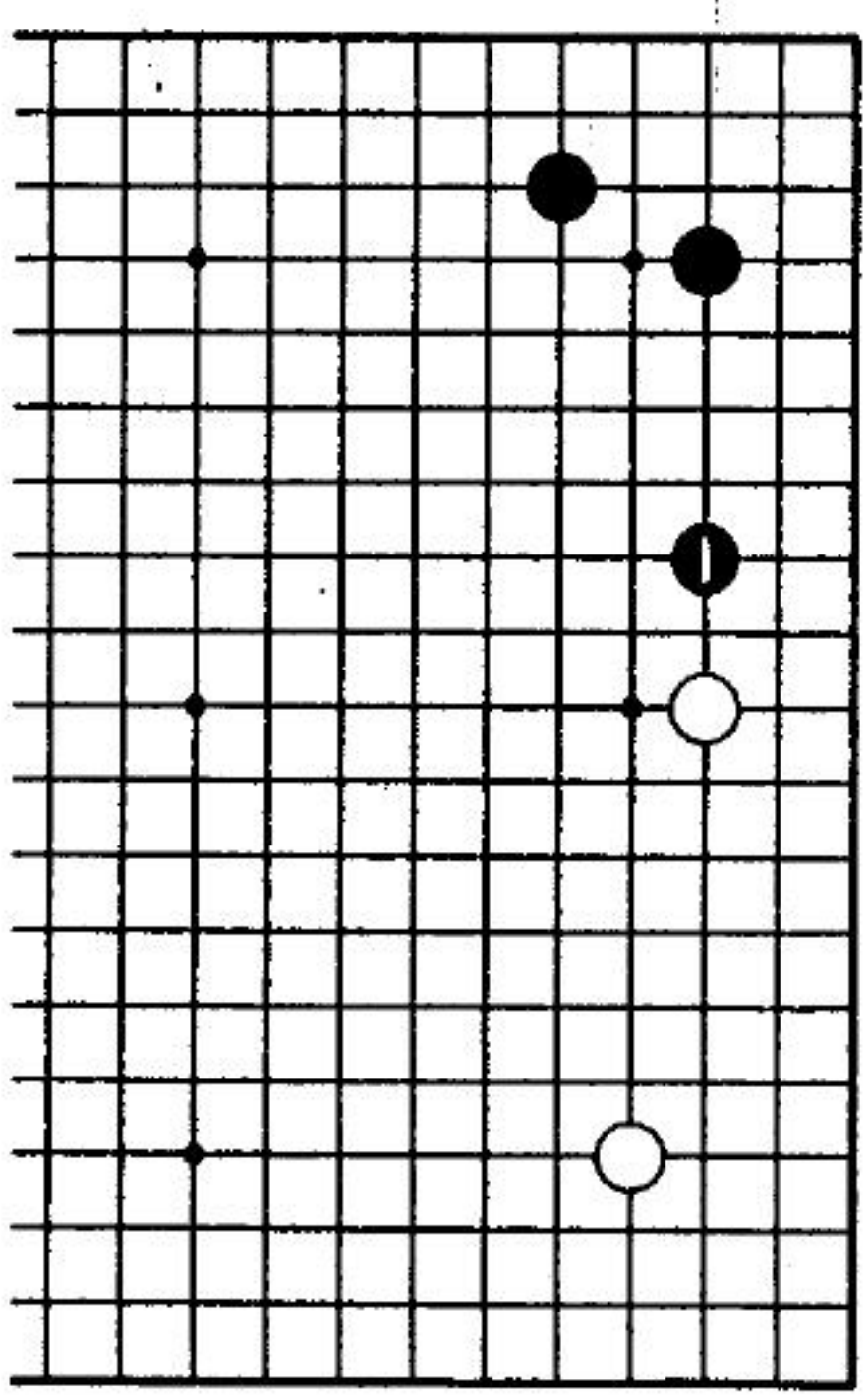
Dia. 6

Dia. 6: getting in Black's way

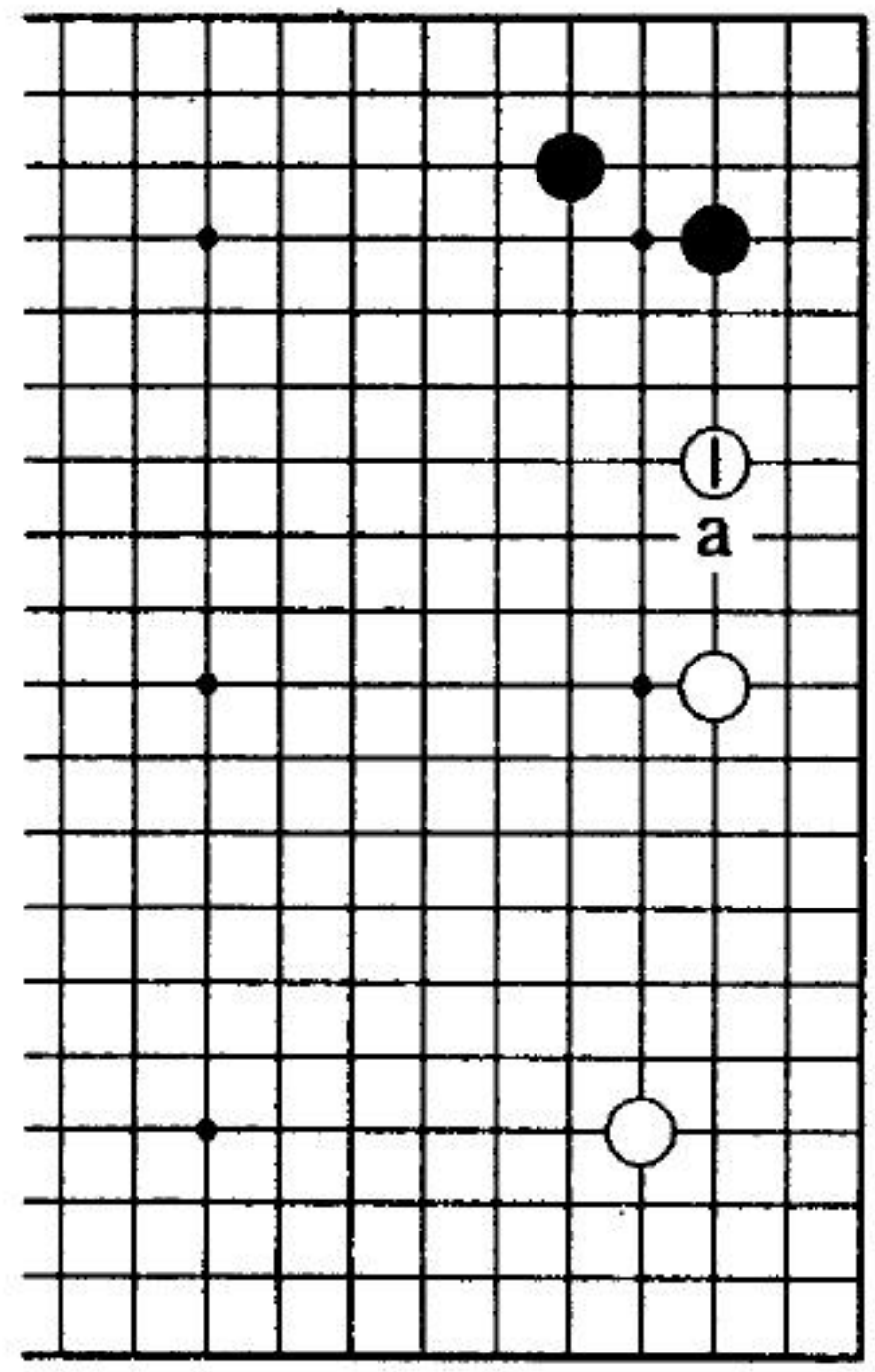
White has only one stone in the bottom right corner, so it's his turn to play. White 1 is a big move because it gets in the way of an extension in the primary direction from Black's enclosure.

Dia. 7. still a good move

Even after White has played on the side, Black still has room to make an extension. Black 1 may be more narrow than before, but it is still a good move. Being more solid, it can more easily be converted into territory.



Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 8: just as big

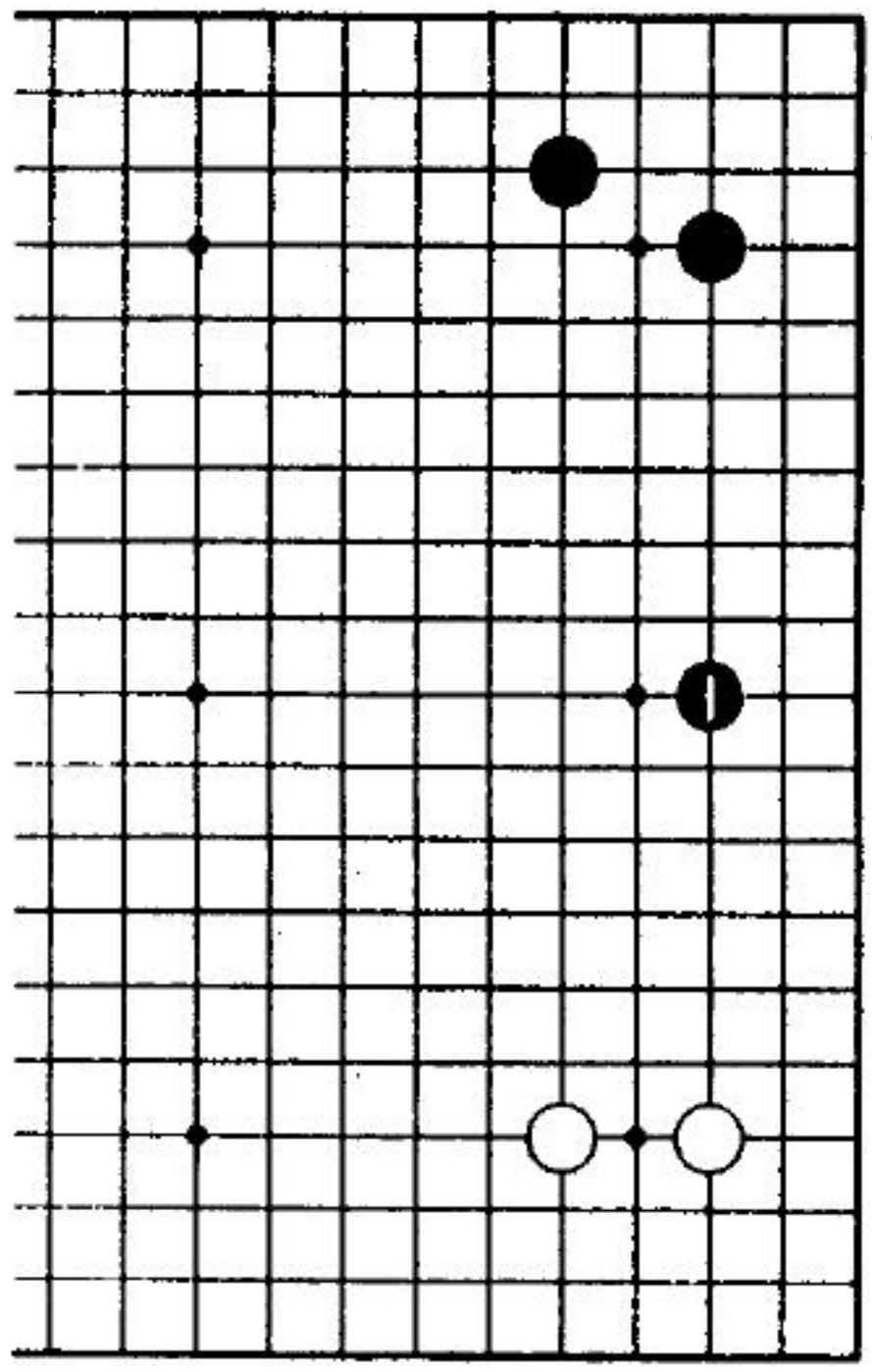
Since Black 'a' is a big move, extending to White 1 has the same value. It may not be easy to accept that White 1 is so big, but it may help to compare it with letting the opponent extend in this direction instead.

Dia. 9: twofold meaning

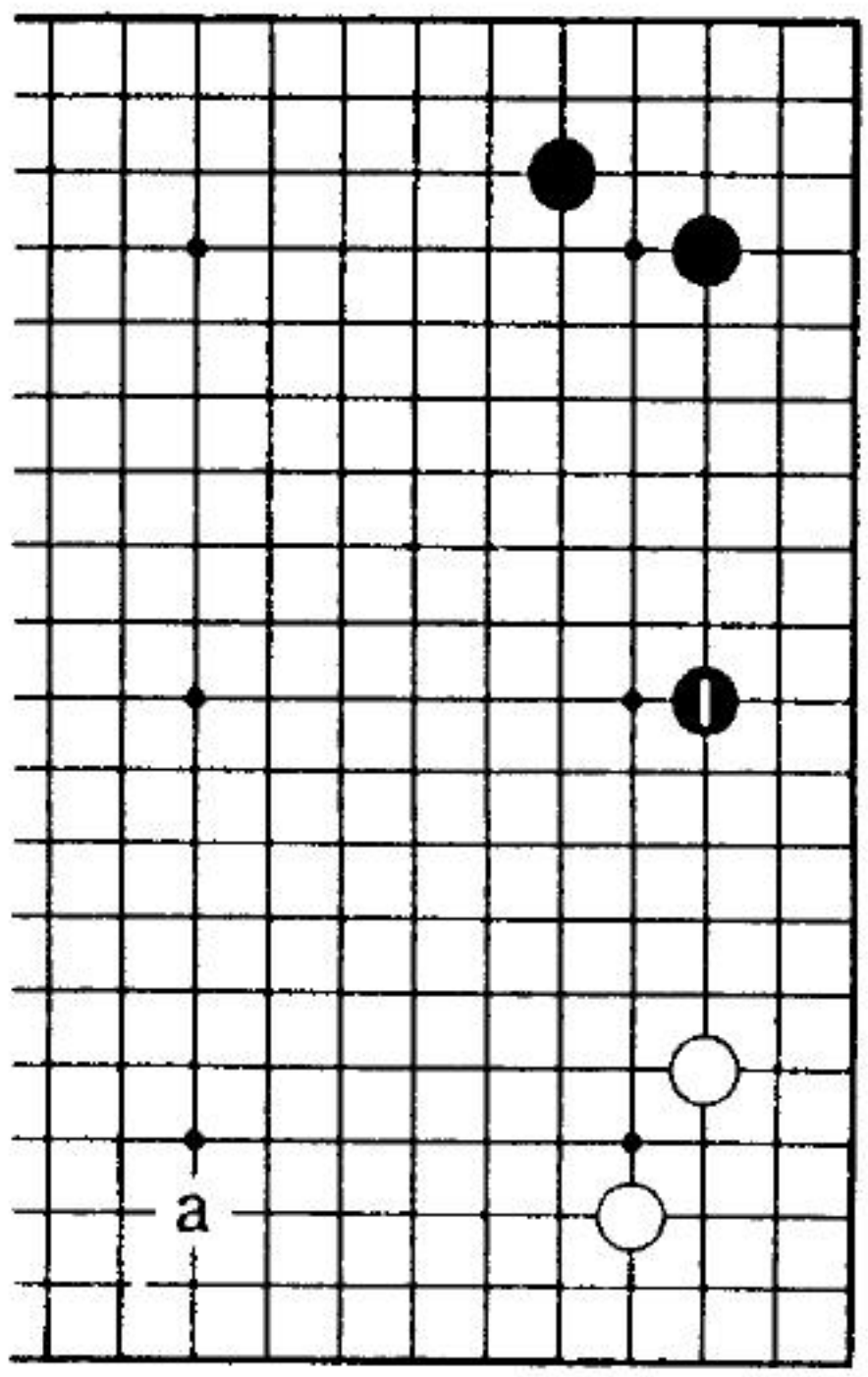
To give the theme diagram again, it should now be clear that Black 1 is a big move in a twofold sense: extending here is the first priority for both Black and White. That's why we called it a key point.

Dia. 10: relationship with White

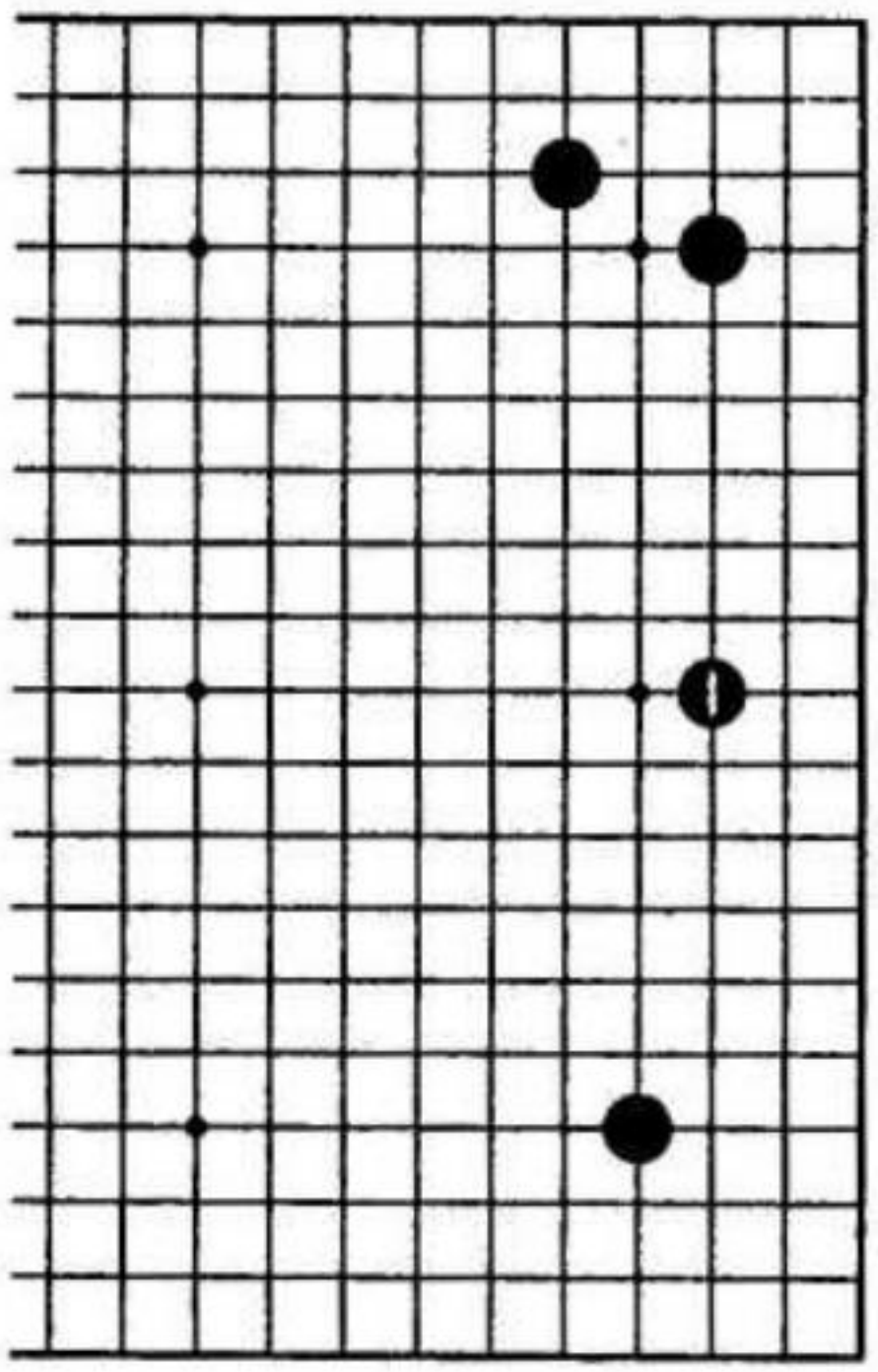
Black 1 is the primary direction from Black's corner enclosure, but 'a' is the primary direction for White. Consequently, 1 is not a key point for both sides, so it is not quite as valuable as 1 in Dia. 9. However, that doesn't change the fact that it's still a first-class move.



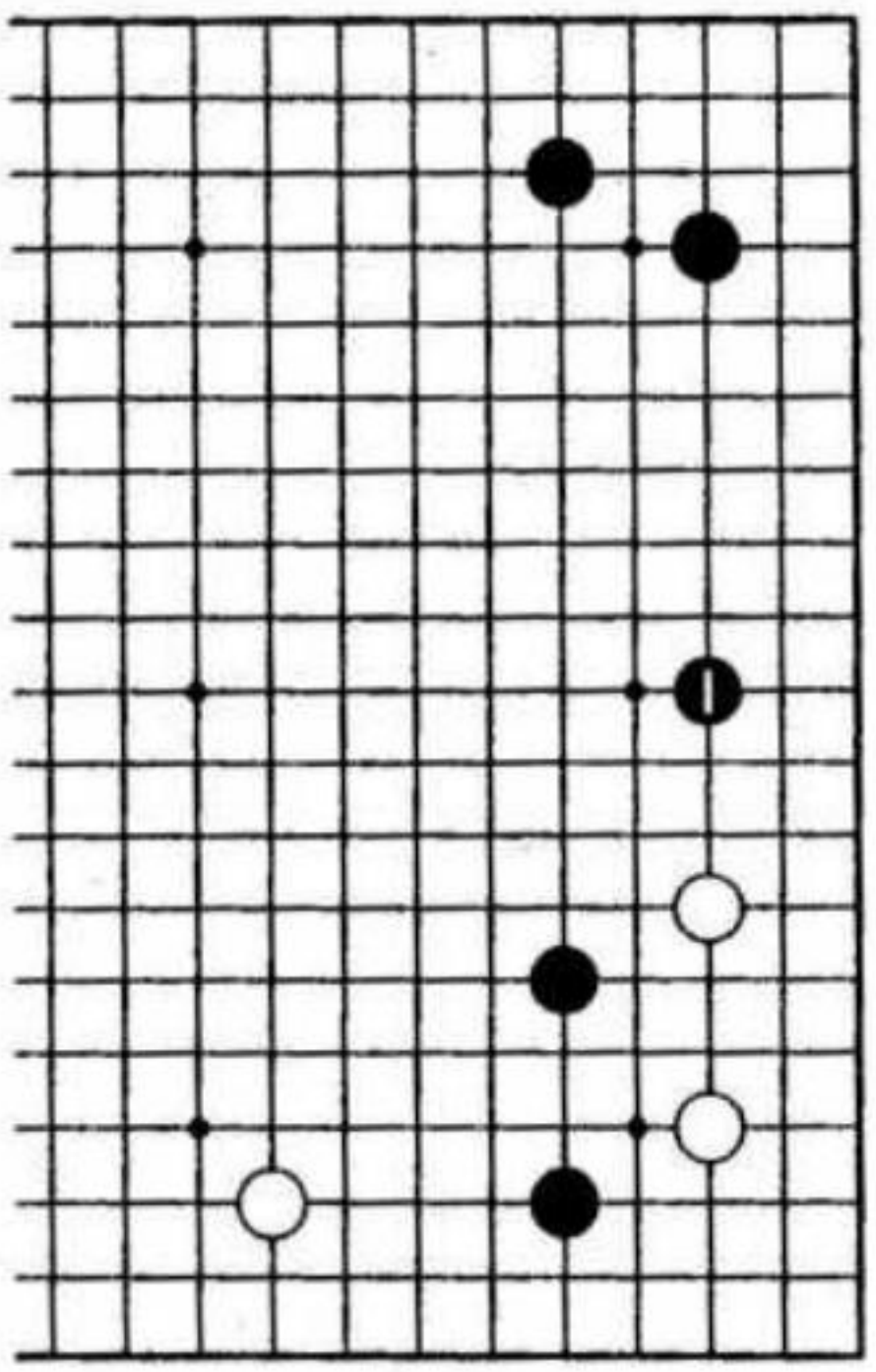
Dia. 9



Dia. 10



Dia. 11



Dia. 12

Dia. 11: large moyo

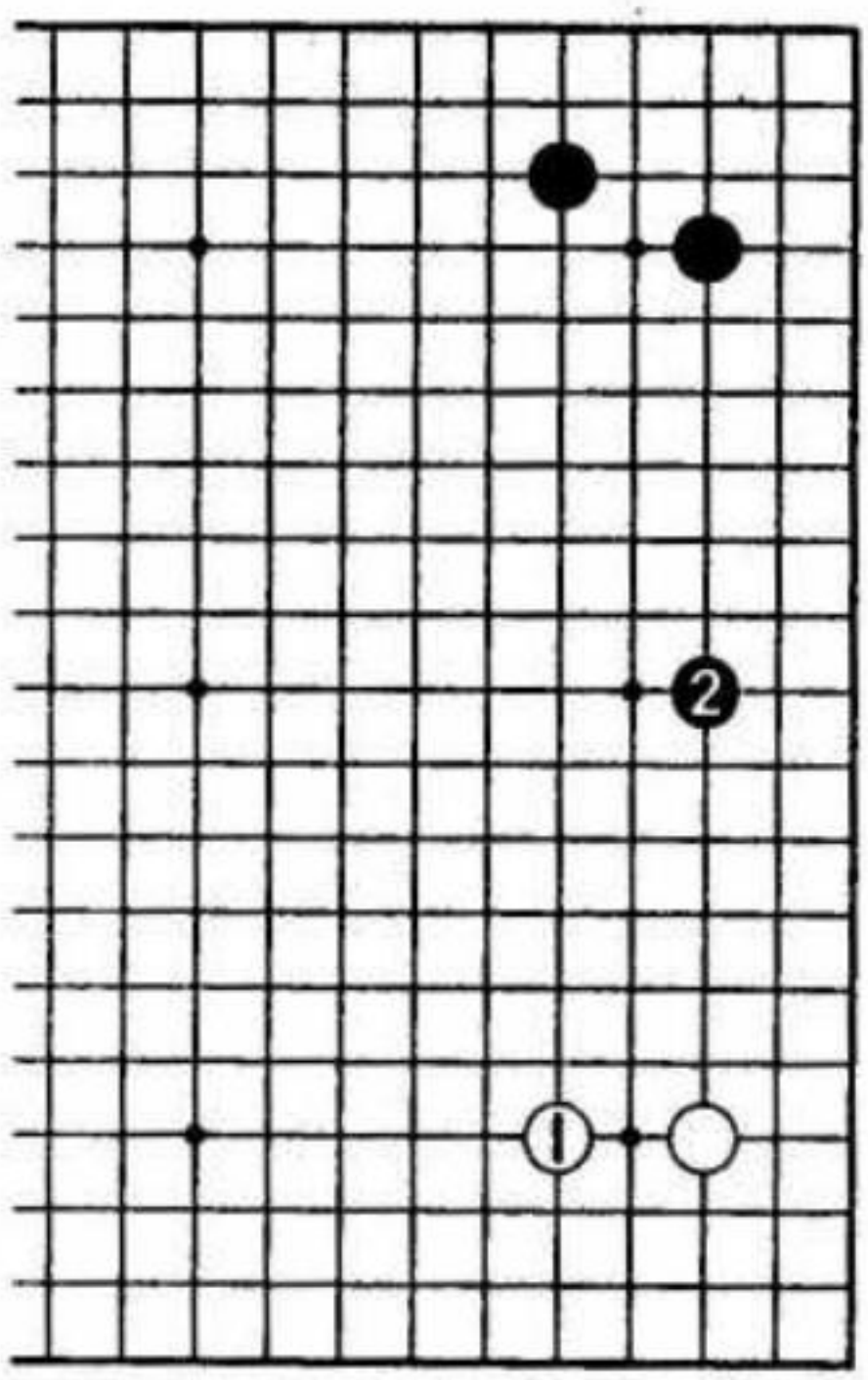
When Black has positions at top and bottom, then Black 1 becomes an extension from both corner positions, which makes it doubly effective. It's now an extremely large move: it transforms the whole right side into a large moyo.

Dia. 12: inferior

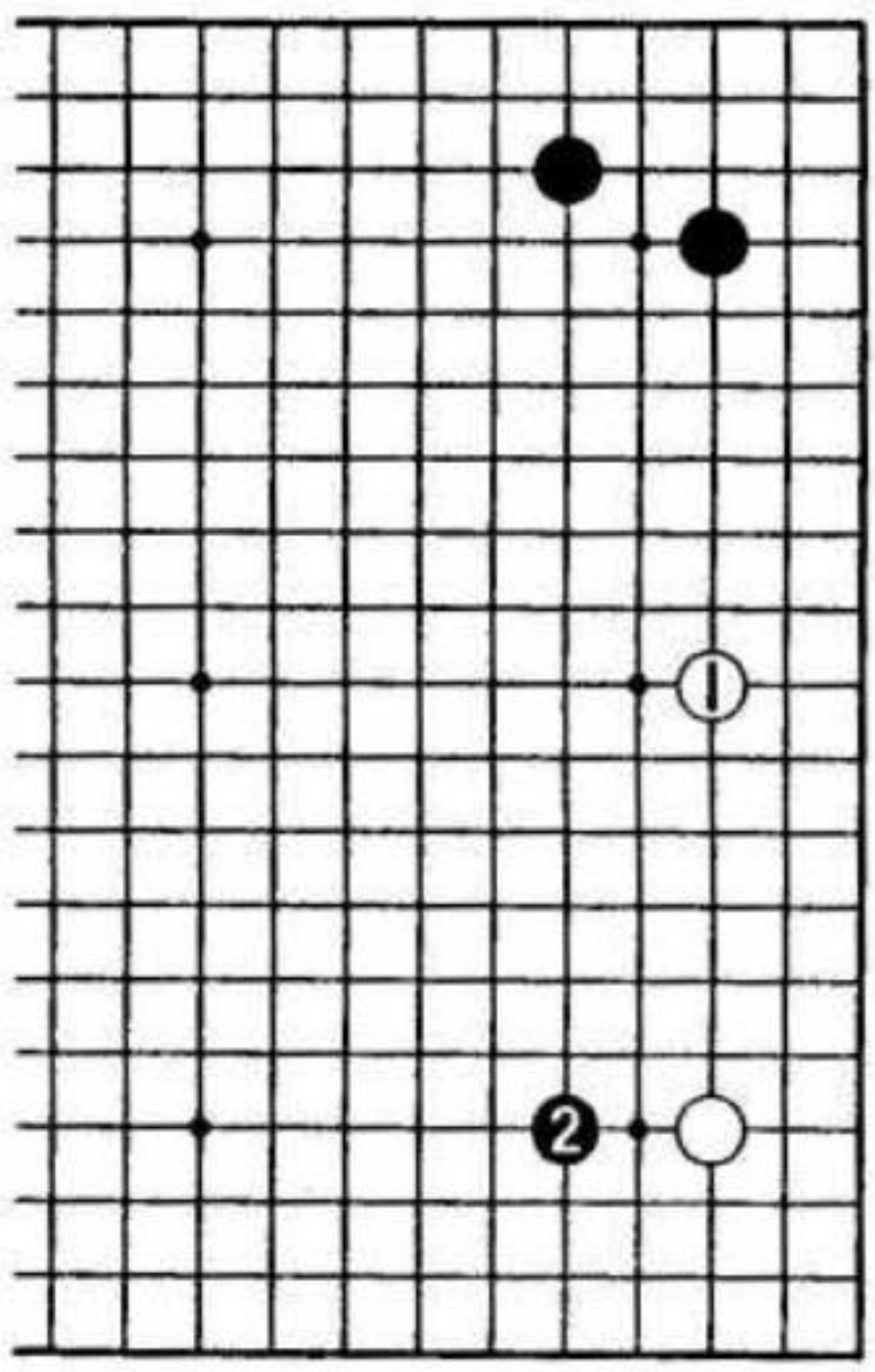
Black 1 is the least valuable extension we have shown so far. The corner has already been trampled upon by both sides, so Black 1 has little potential for further expansion.

Dia. 13: obvious, but ...

When White plays 1, it's obvious that Black will play 2 - our analysis should have made that dear - but that doesn't mean that White 1 is dubious. Enclosing a corner takes priority over a side extension



Dia. 13



Dia. 14

Dia. 14: not necessarily better

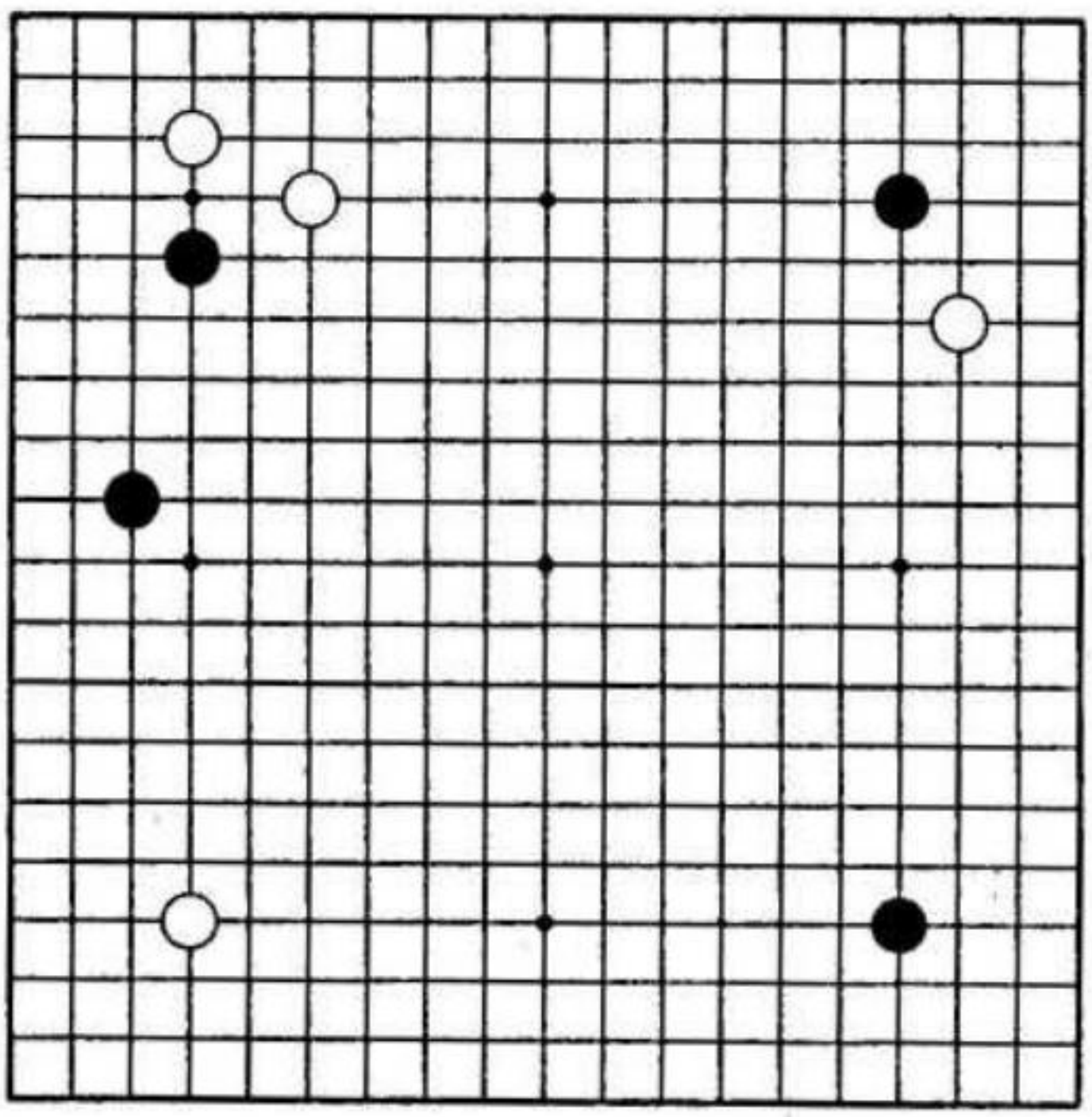
What if White plays 1 to avoid giving Black an obviously good move? This may be a feasible strategy, but you can't say that White gets a better result than in *Dia. 13*. The reason is that Black 2 is just as big a move as 1.

Principle 2
Be flexible in deploying the star point

The 3-4 point is said to favour territory and the star point influence, but it's easy to get confused when trying to work out how to use the star-point stone.

The important thing is not to let yourself be bound by preconceptions. The nature of the star point does not necessarily make it inefficient at securing territory. You have to be flexible, ready to adjust your strategy to changing circumstances, at times using a star-point play to build influence, at other times going for territory.

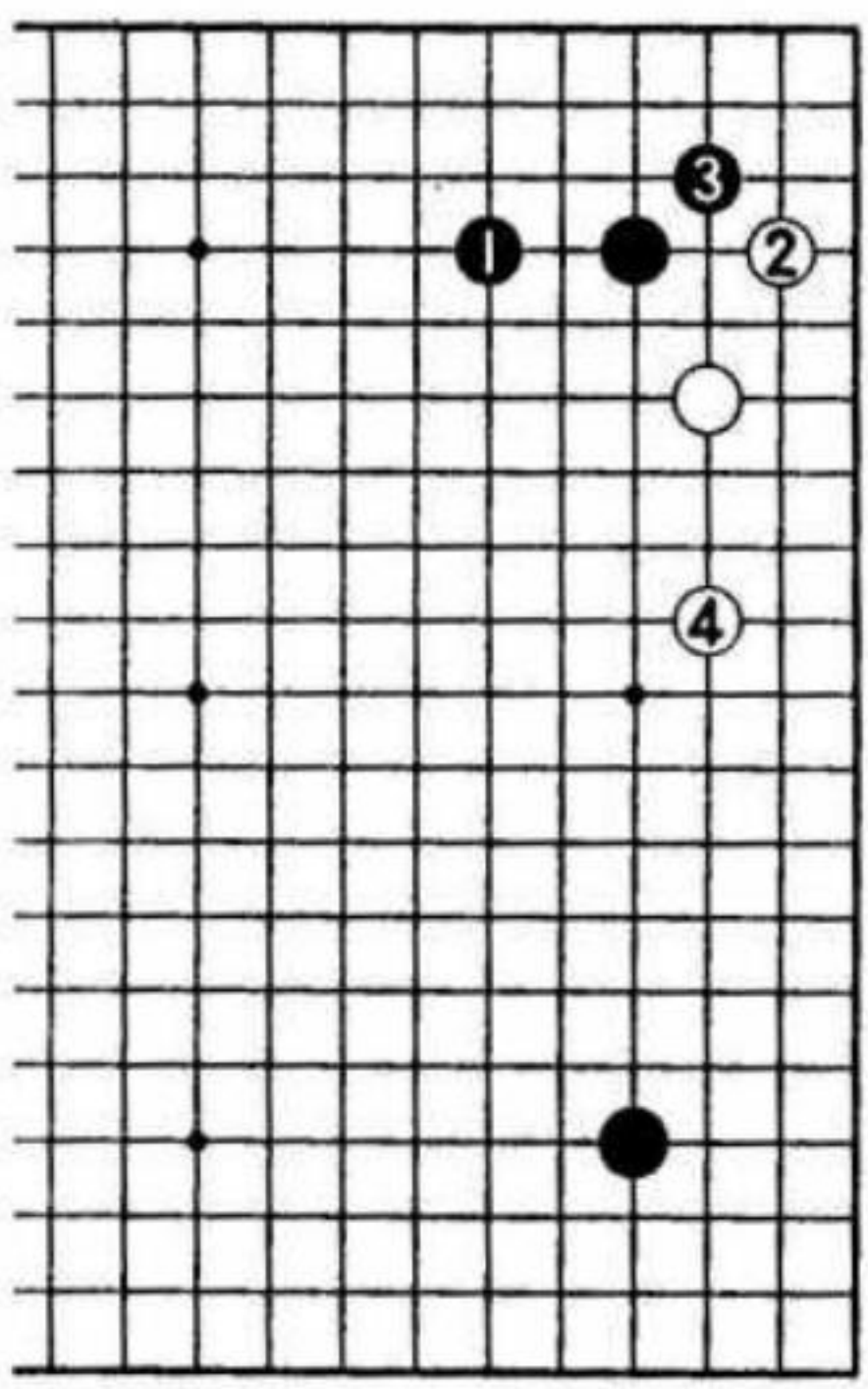
In the position below, what would your strategy be? Restrict your focus to the top right.



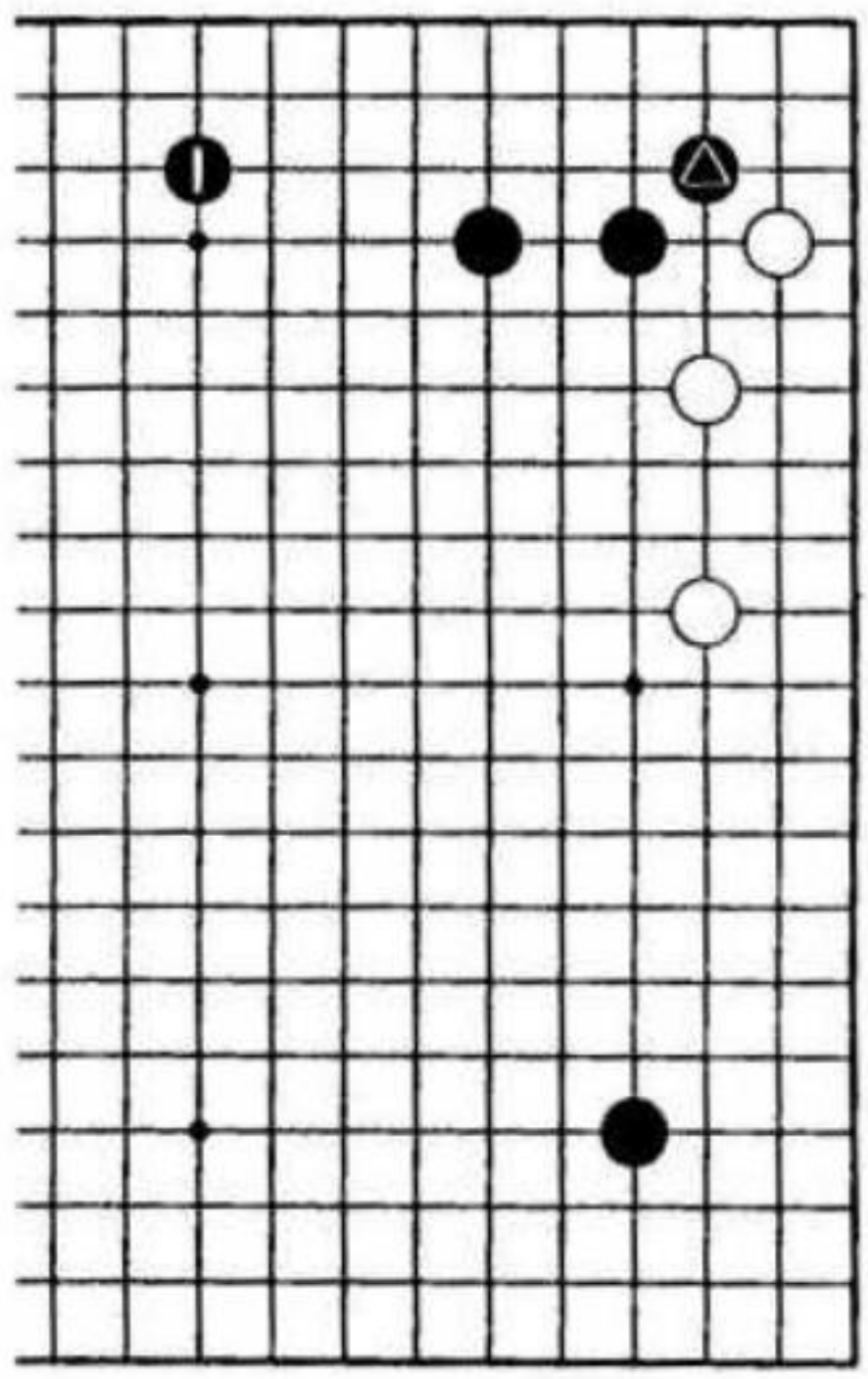
Theme diagram: Black to play
Focus on the top right

Dia. 1: solidifying the corner

Plan One: the quite ordinary strategy of Black 1. If White responds with the 2-4 joseki, Black settles the shape in the corner with 3, making it easy for him to get territory there.



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. probably territory

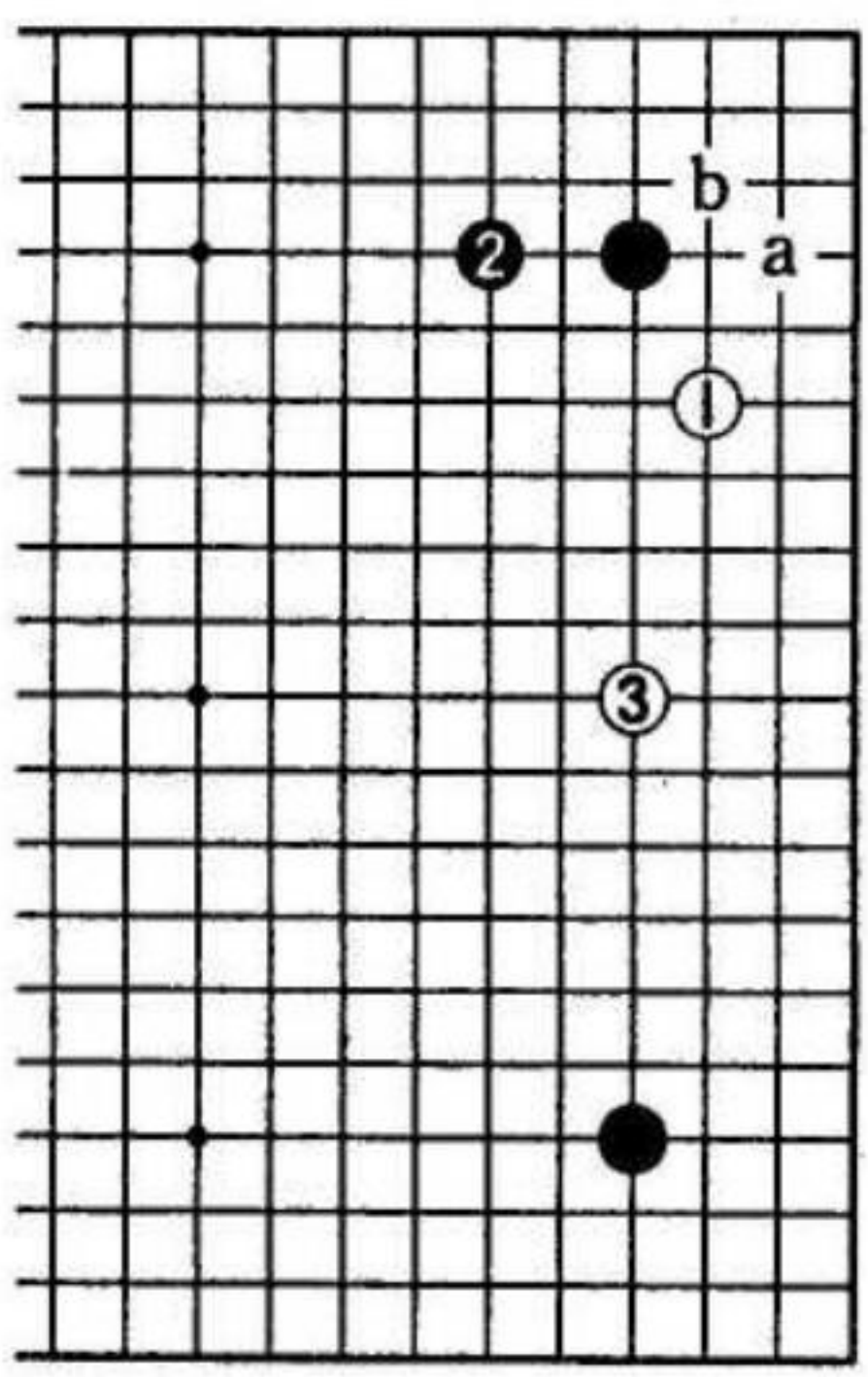
Solidifying the corner makes it easy for Black to get territory at the top by extending to 1. This is an example of a star-point play leading to early territory. The role of the marked stone in achieving this should be noted.

Dia. 3: the significance of the exchange

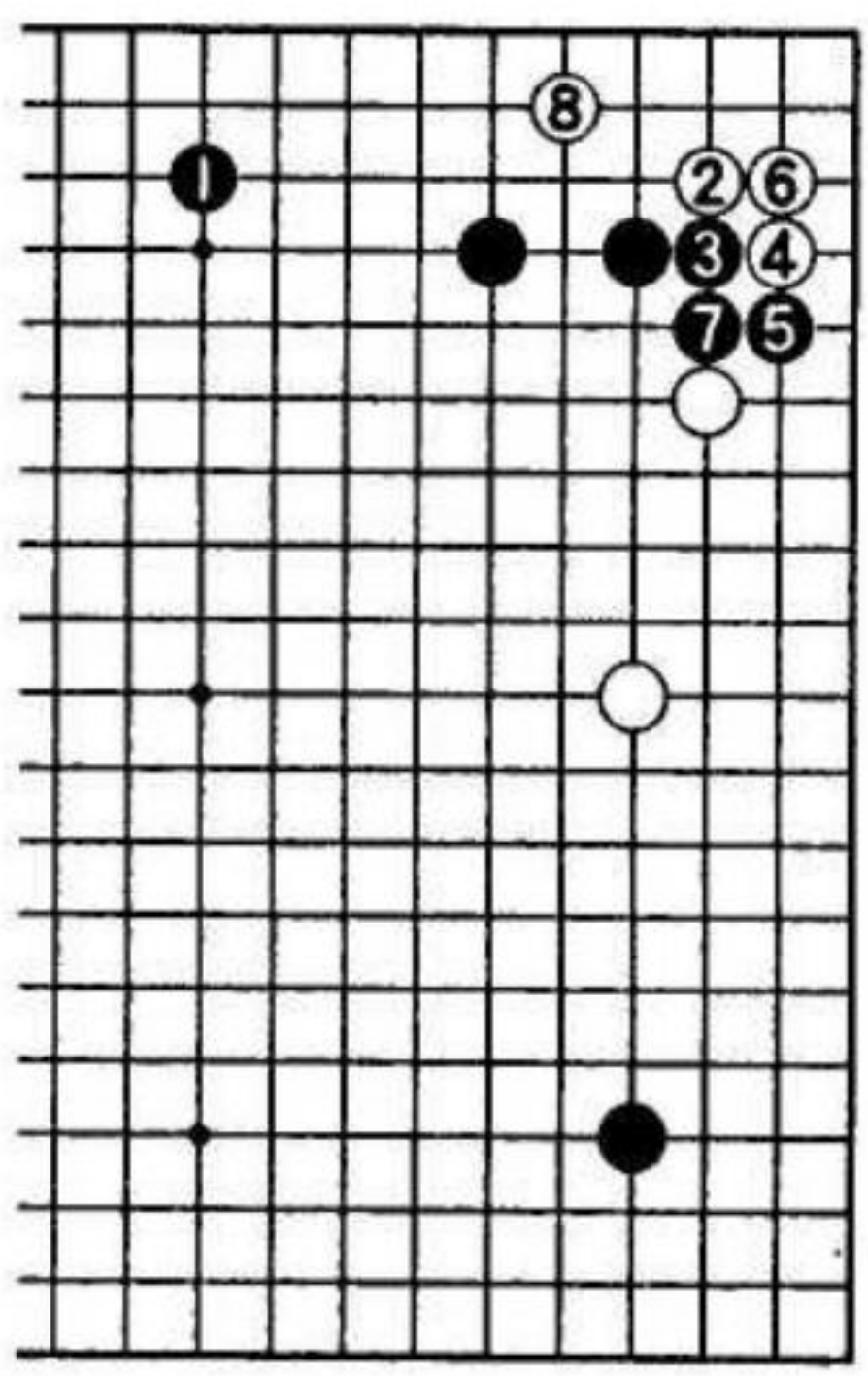
White can also omit the White 'a'-Black 'b' exchange, simply taking up position with 3. What effect does this change in strategy have?

Dia. 4: no territory

Let's assume that Black extends to 1 in an attempt to take a large corner territory. This leaves a gap behind: White can invade at 2. Black does not suffer a loss in this result, as he secures outside influence, but his territory is destroyed.



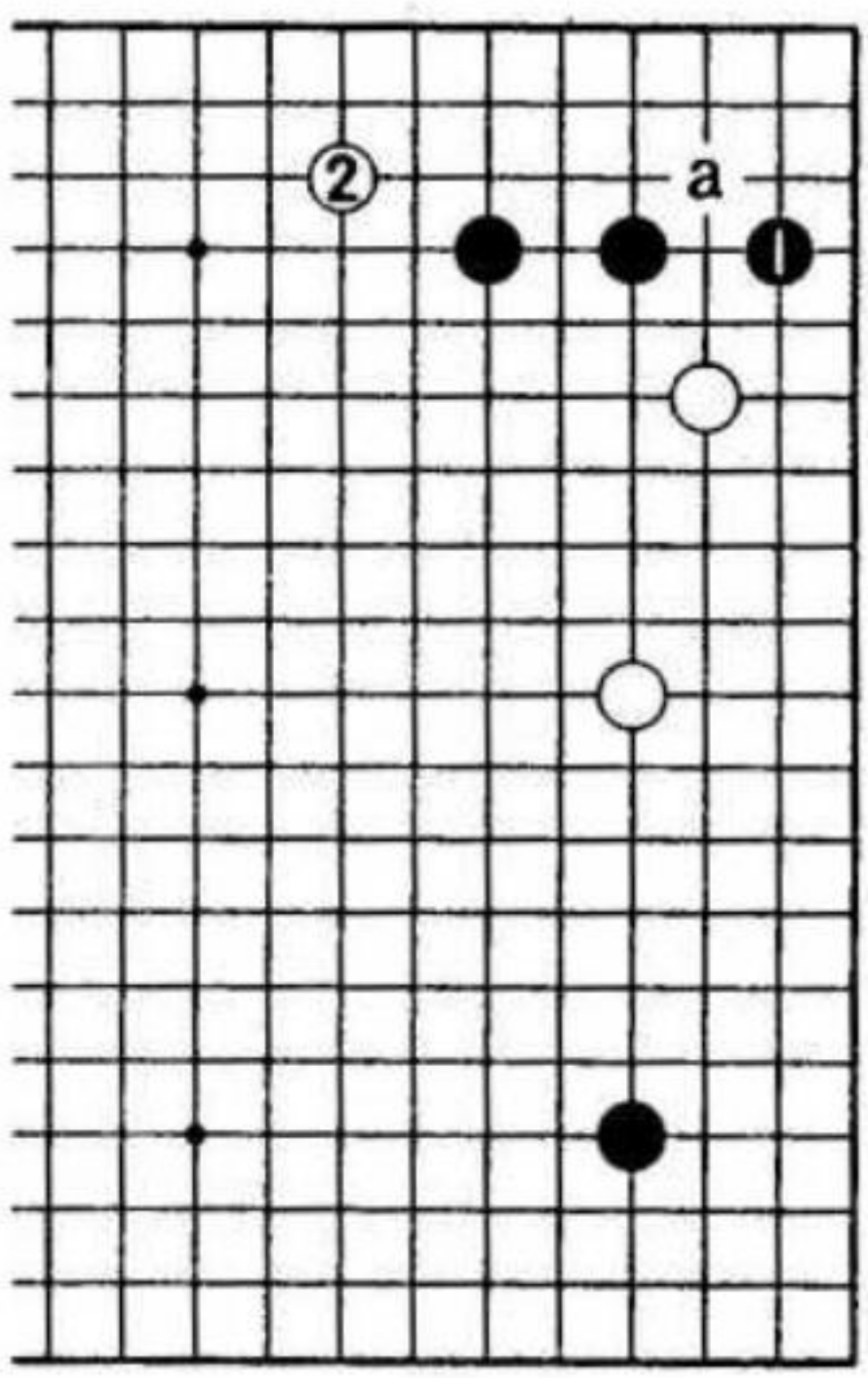
Dia. 3



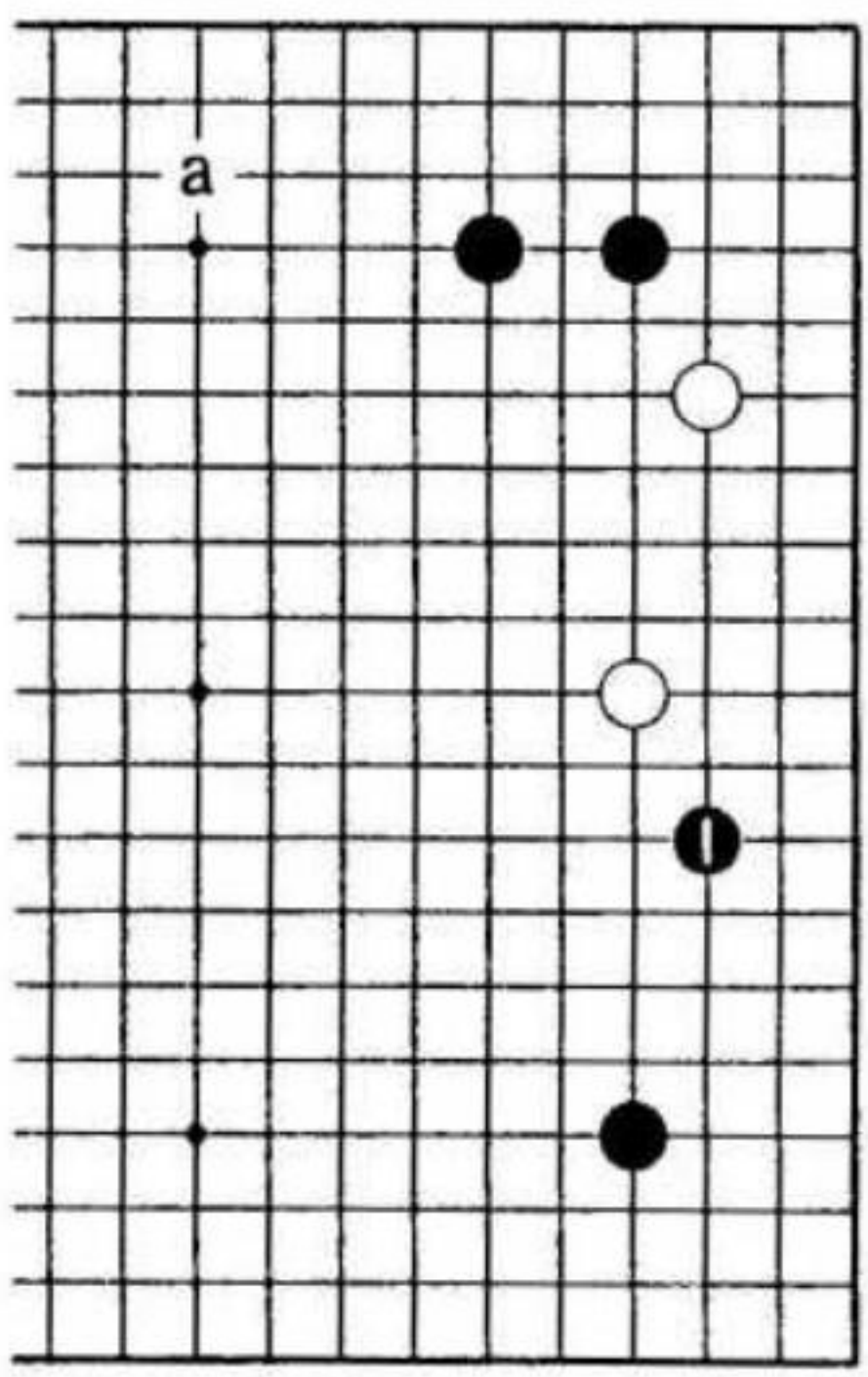
Dia. 4

Dia. 5: can't be greedy

If Black tries to hold on to his corner territory by forestalling White 'a' with 1, then White can obstruct him by extending to 2. Black can't hope to get a large territory. In short, you have to recognize that it is difficult for Black to get territory after *Dia. 3*.



Dia. 5



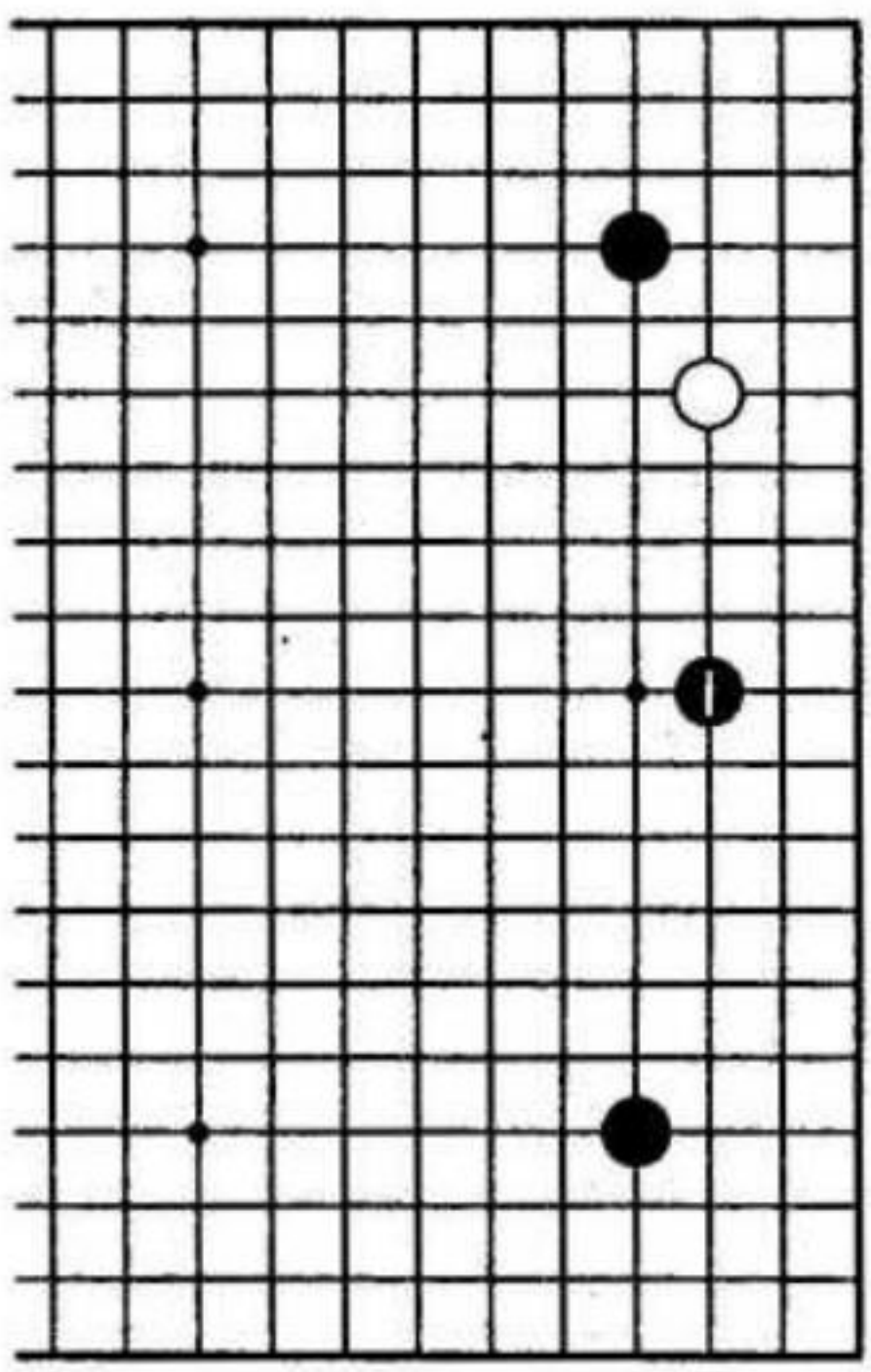
Dia. 6

Dia. 6: a good strategy

In this kind of position, the important thing is not to be greedy for immediate territory. Menacing the two white stones with the extension to 1 looks like a good strategy. Of course, that's not to say there's anything wrong with the strategy of threatening to take territory by extending to 'a'.

Dia. 7. the pincer

Plan Two: the pincer. The second possibility is to make a pincer from the direction of 1. If the star-point stone is oriented towards influence, then this pincer certainly matches it Of course, there are a number of other possible pincers.



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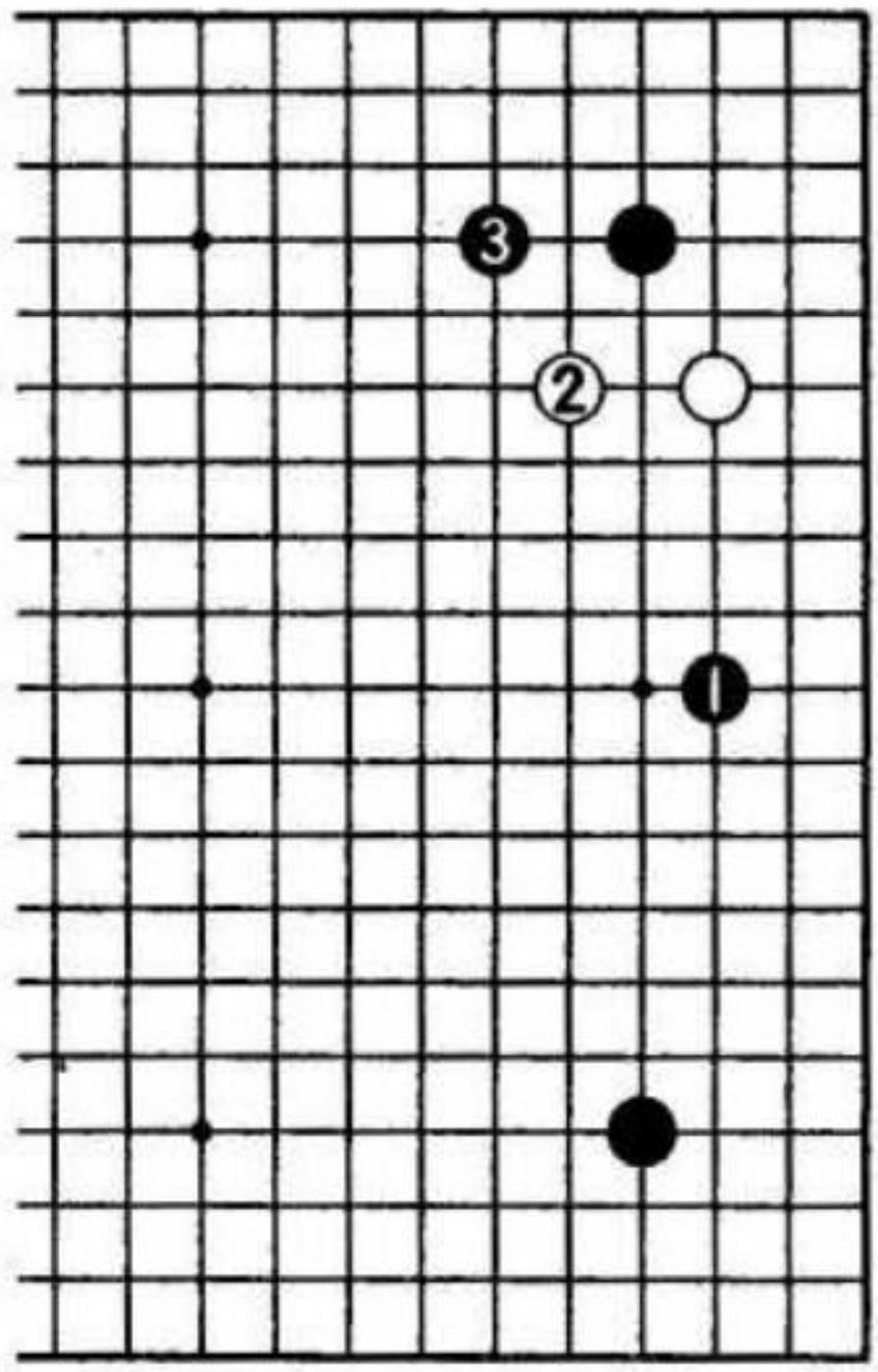


Dia. 8

Dia. 8: ideal development

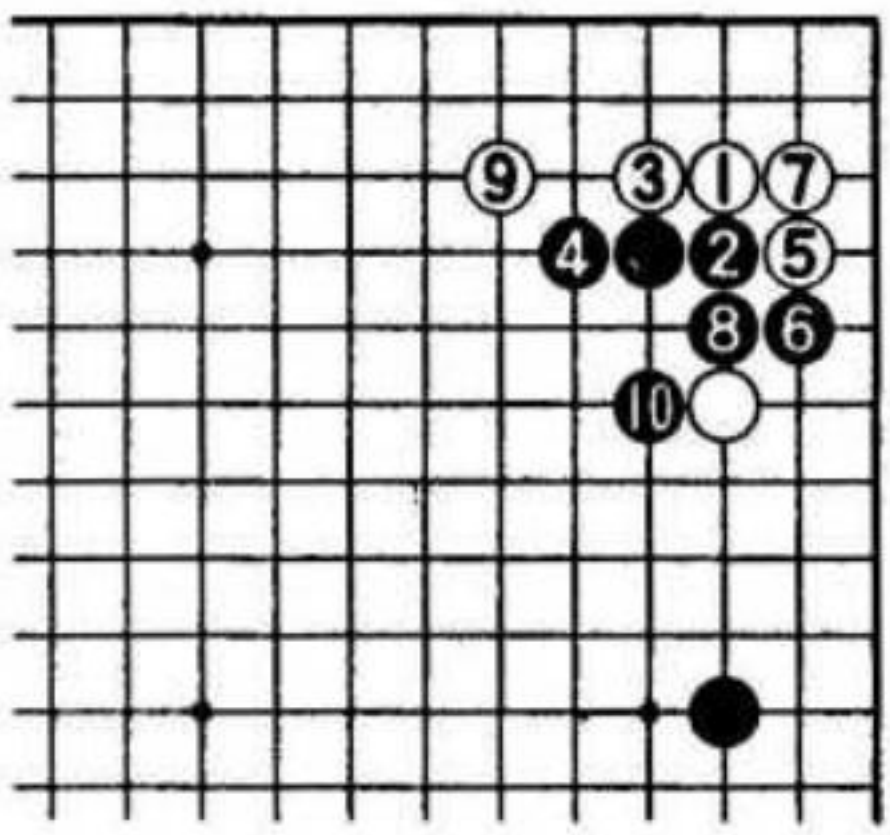
Black will be very satisfied if White flees with 2, as he gets to play 3, a move that combines attack and defence. Consequently, White 2 is not considered a very good move.

Dia. 9: ceding the corner

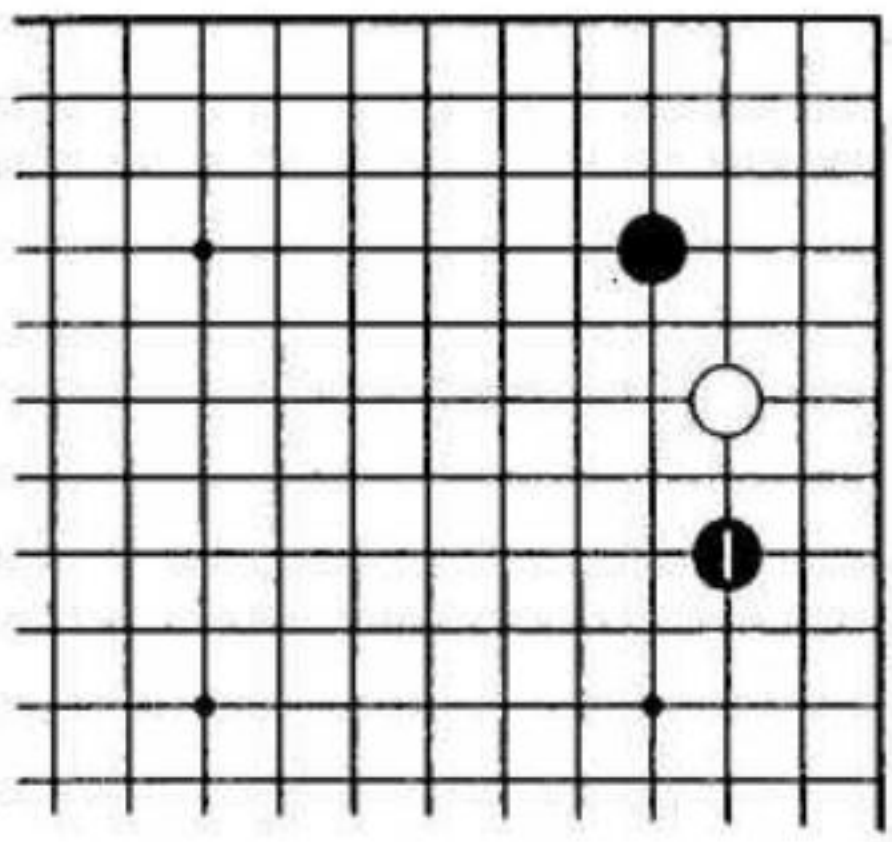
Invading the corner is considered the standard answer to the pincer. The moves to 10 are a joseki: Black cedes the corner territory to White and as compensation secures influence extending from the right side towards the centre.

Dia. 10: the narrow pincer

Black also often plays the narrow pincer of 1.



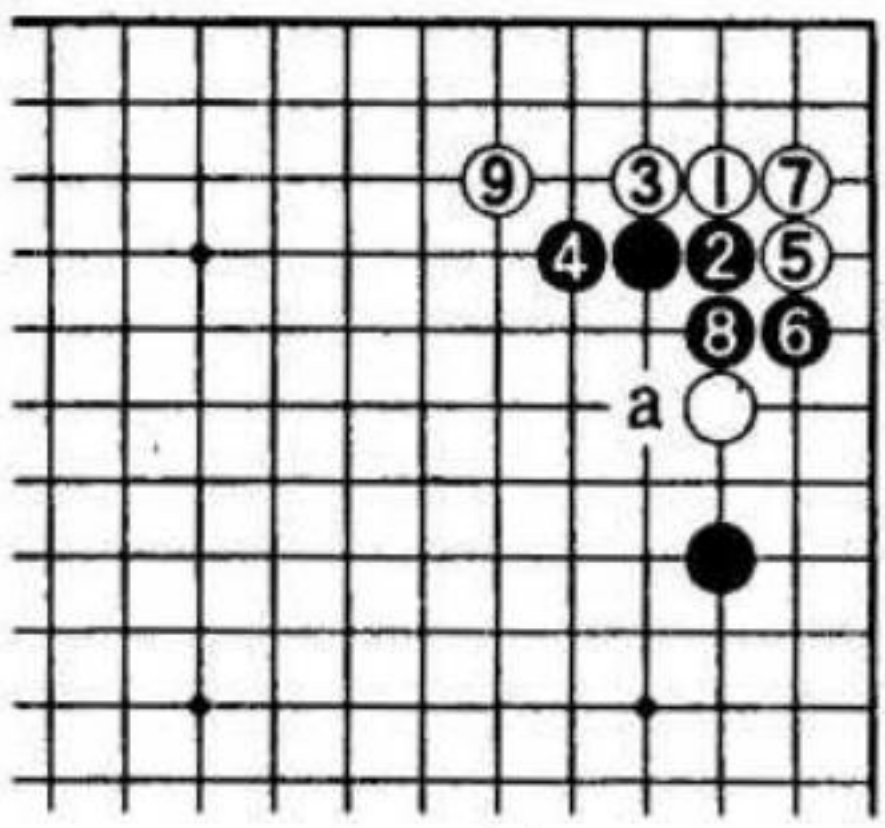
Dia. 9



Dia. 10

Dia. 11: same strategy

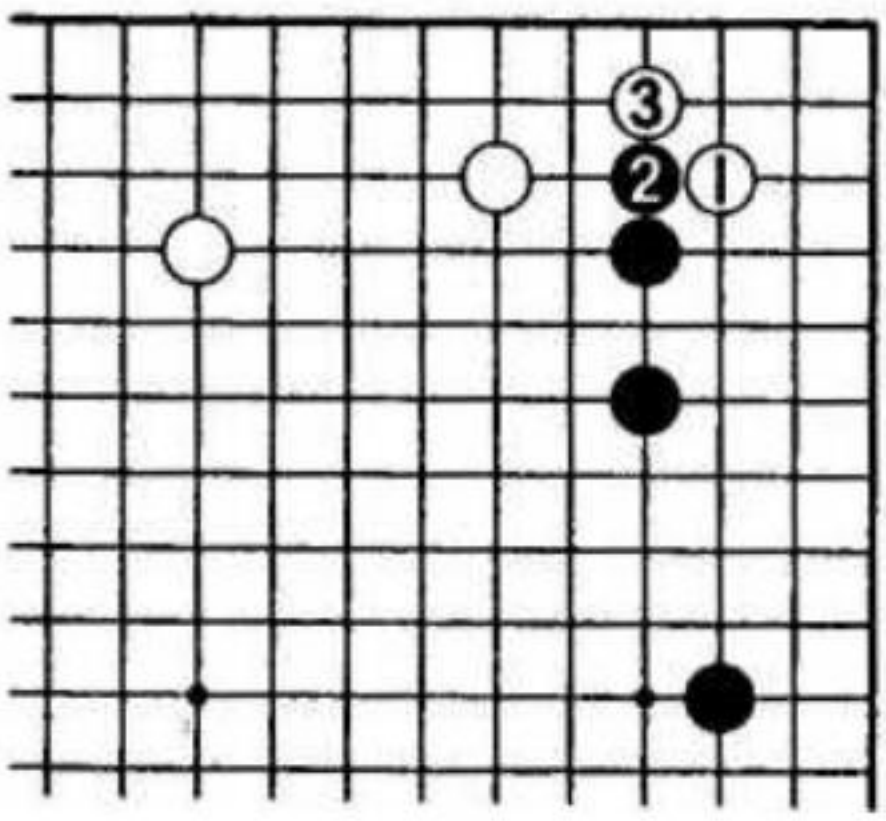
The same sequence to 9 follows, but this time the reinforcement of Black 'a' is not necessary.



Dia. 11

Dia. 12: after the invasion

This position is the same as in *Dia. 4*, but the board has been rotated. There are two ways for Black to play after White's invasion



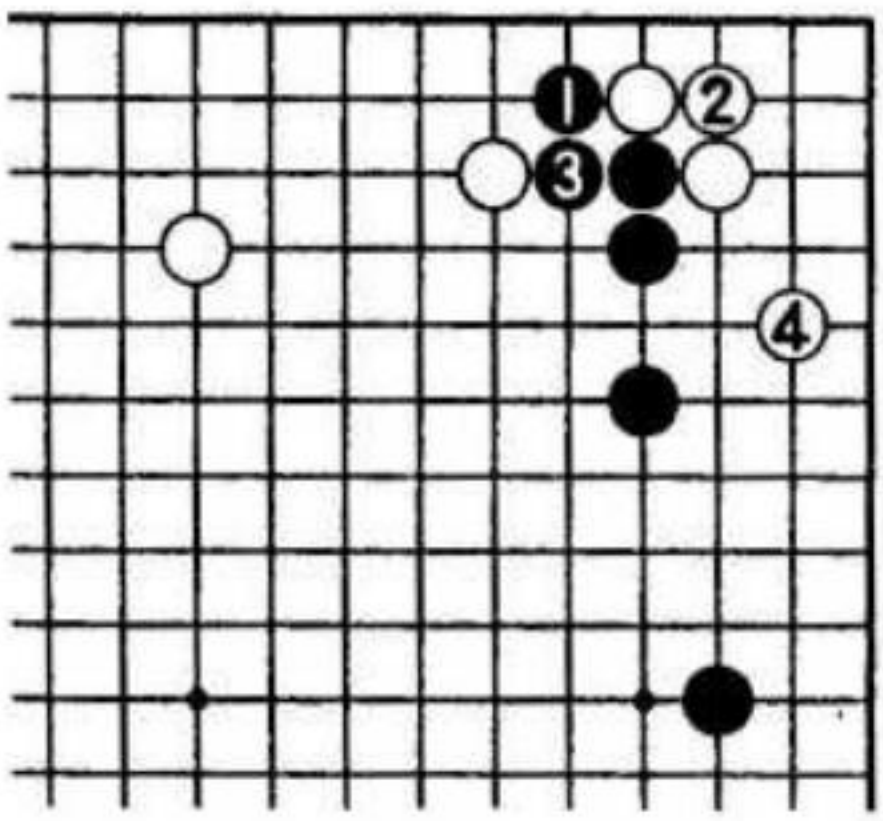
Dia. 12

Dia. 13: intercepting

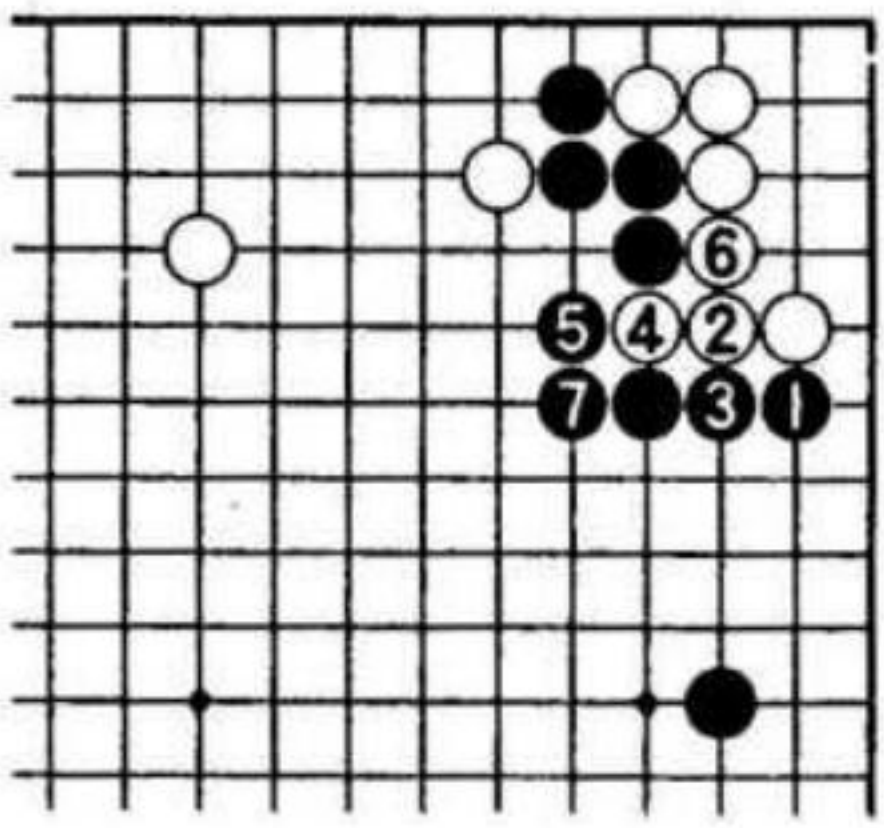
Black blocks at 1 when he wants to build influence - he writes off the corner territory. After 4 -

Dia. 14: focus on influence

Black can seal White in by attaching at 1. He gets a bit of territory on the right side, but rather than that he is pinning his hopes on his overall influence.



Dia. 13



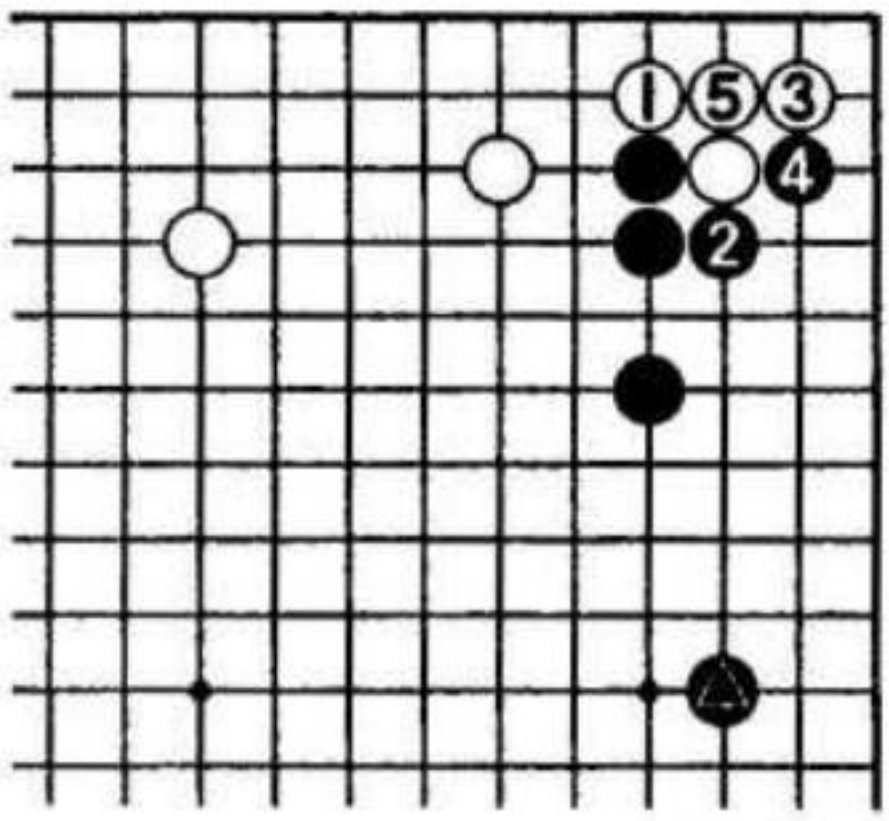
Dia. 14

Dia. 15: corner territory

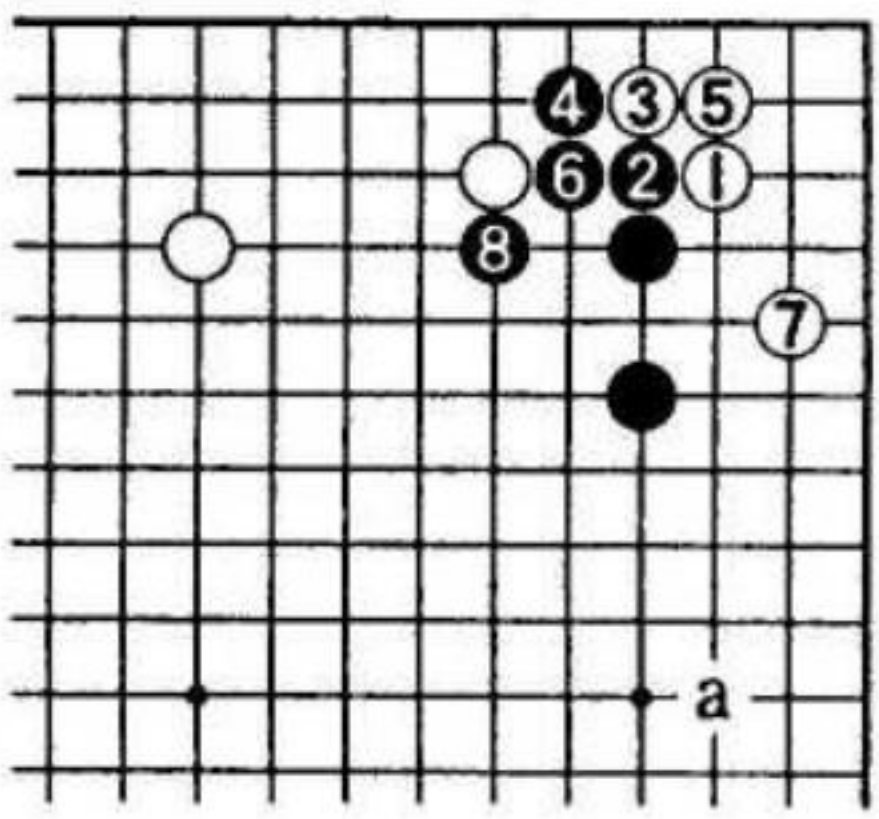
The other possibility is to block at 2: Black wants to use the marked stone to make territory. The moves to 5 are a joseki.

Dia. 16: must intercept

In this position, Black has no extension around 'a', so intercepting at 4 is an absolute must.



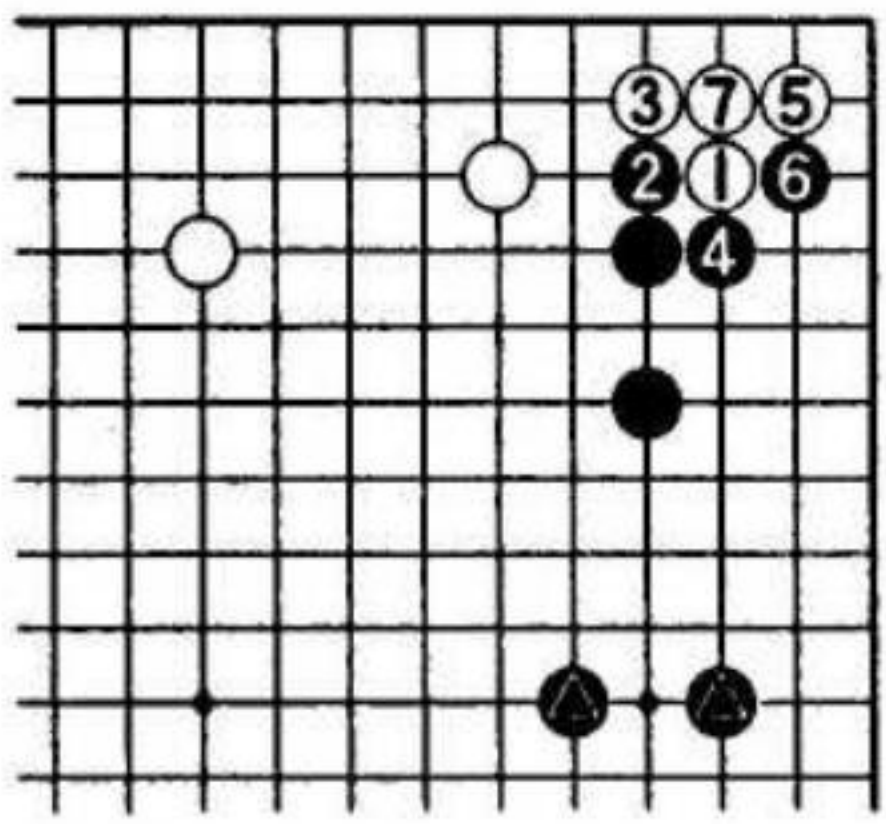
Dia. 15



Dia. 16

Dia. 17. take territory

In a position like this, with the marked stones in place, going for territory is natural. Blocking at 4 is appropriate.

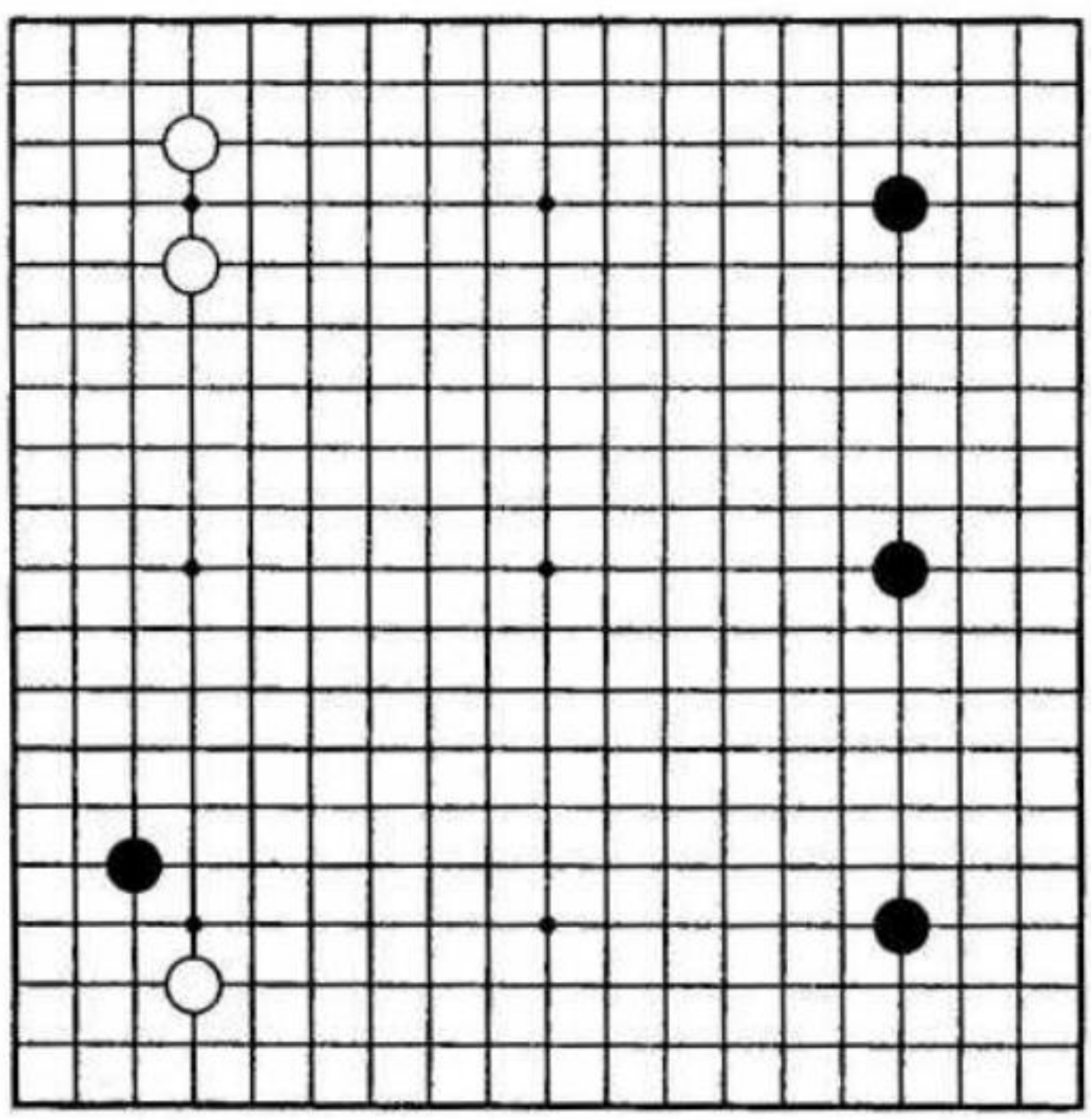


Dia. 17

Principle 3
Find the right pincer

The aim of a pincer is to attack the opponent, so in practice only moves from one to three spaces away qualify as pincers. A move four spaces away doesn't apply much pressure, so it can't be called a pincer.

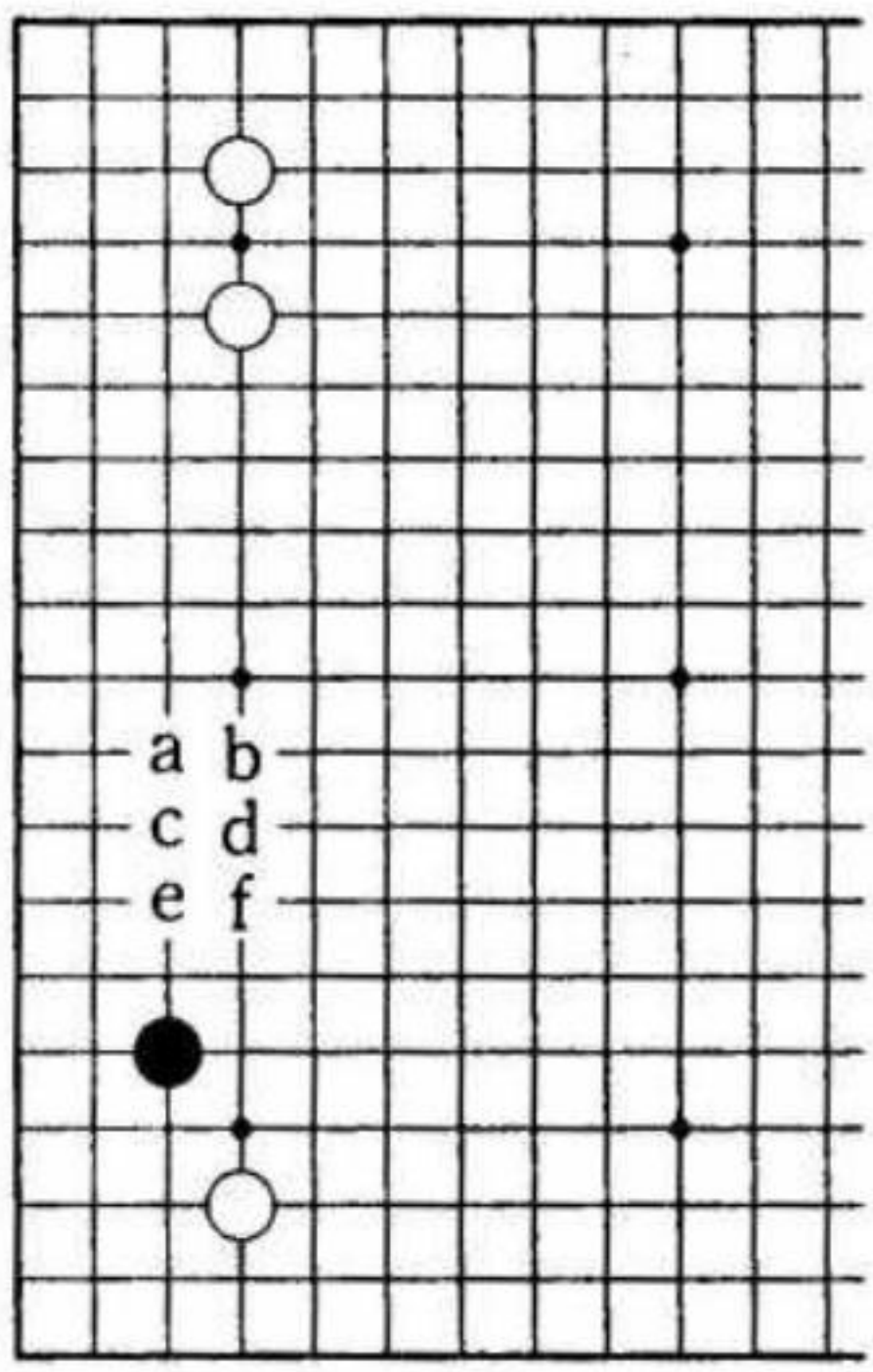
Pincers play just as important a role in the fuseki as extensions, so it is important to understand how they work and the role they play in fuseki strategy.



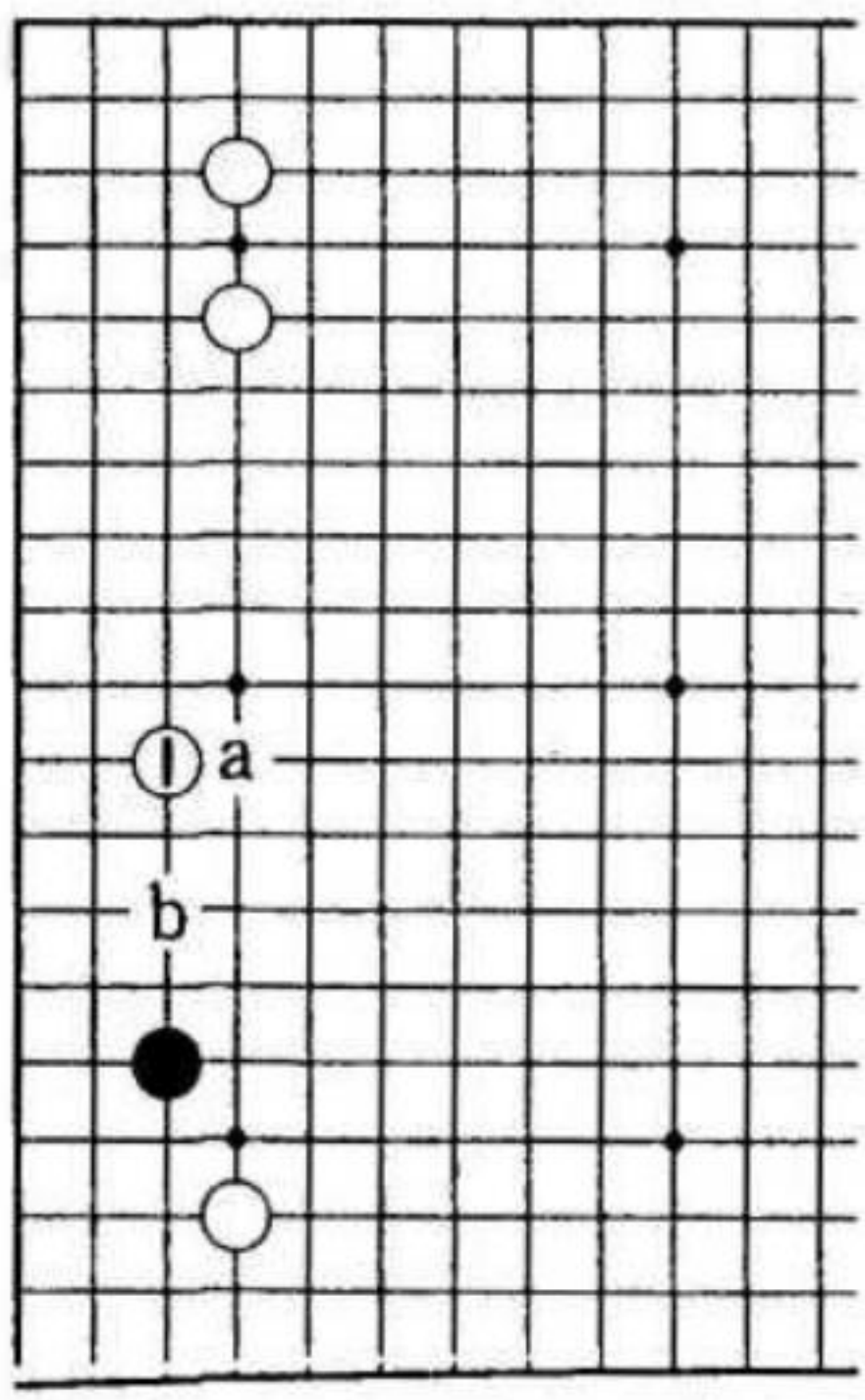
Theme diagram: White to play
The focus is on the bottom left

Dia. 1: the six types of pincers

In this position White wants to pincer the solitary black stone. There are six pincers available, ranging from dose-up one-space pincers to wide three-space pincers. Of course, the presence of the white corner enclosure in the background must not be forgotten.



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

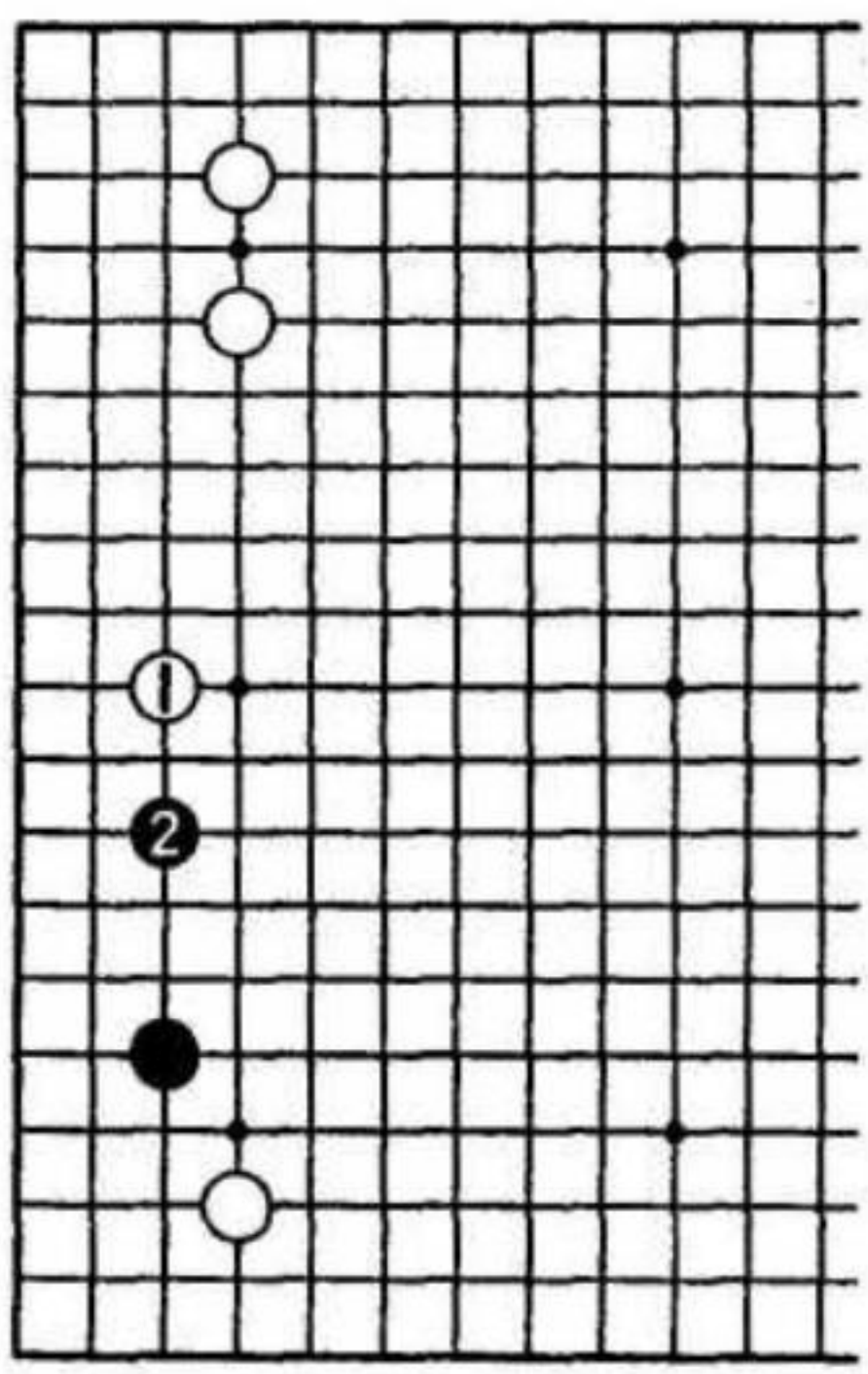
Dia. 2: extension-cum-pincer

When you consider the fact that White 1 or 'a' also works as an extension from White's top position, it becomes apparent that it is the move that best serves his purpose. A pincer at 'b' would be a little too distant from the top to qualify as an extension.

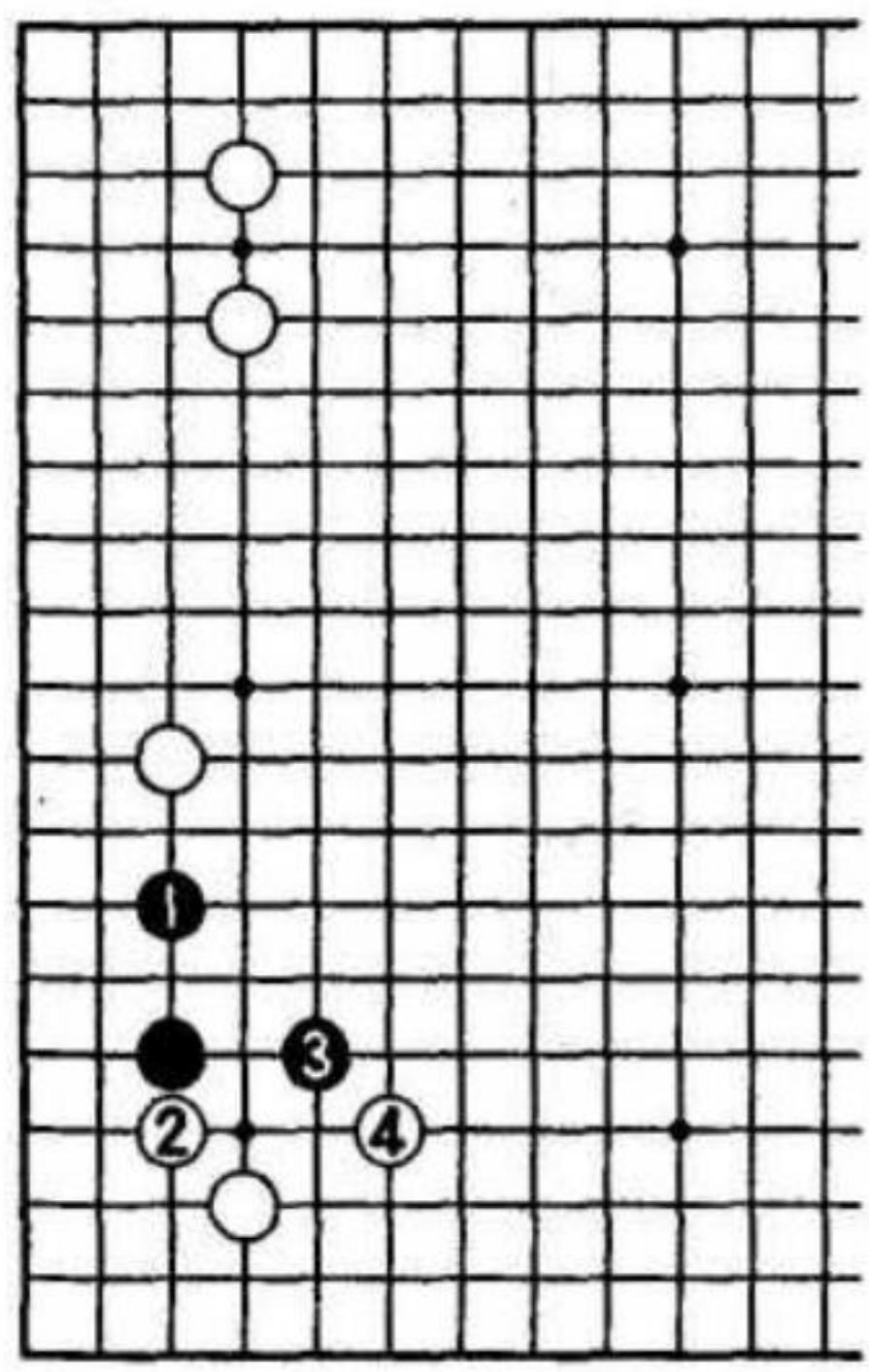
Note, however, that I am not saying that 'b' is an inferior move.

Dia. 3: just an extension

Since White 1 is an extension from a corner enclosure, it will probably be easy to make territory with it. However, it fails to serve as much.of an attack, since Black has room to extend to 2. Focussing on attack rather than on making an extension will be more interesting.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: Black remains insecure

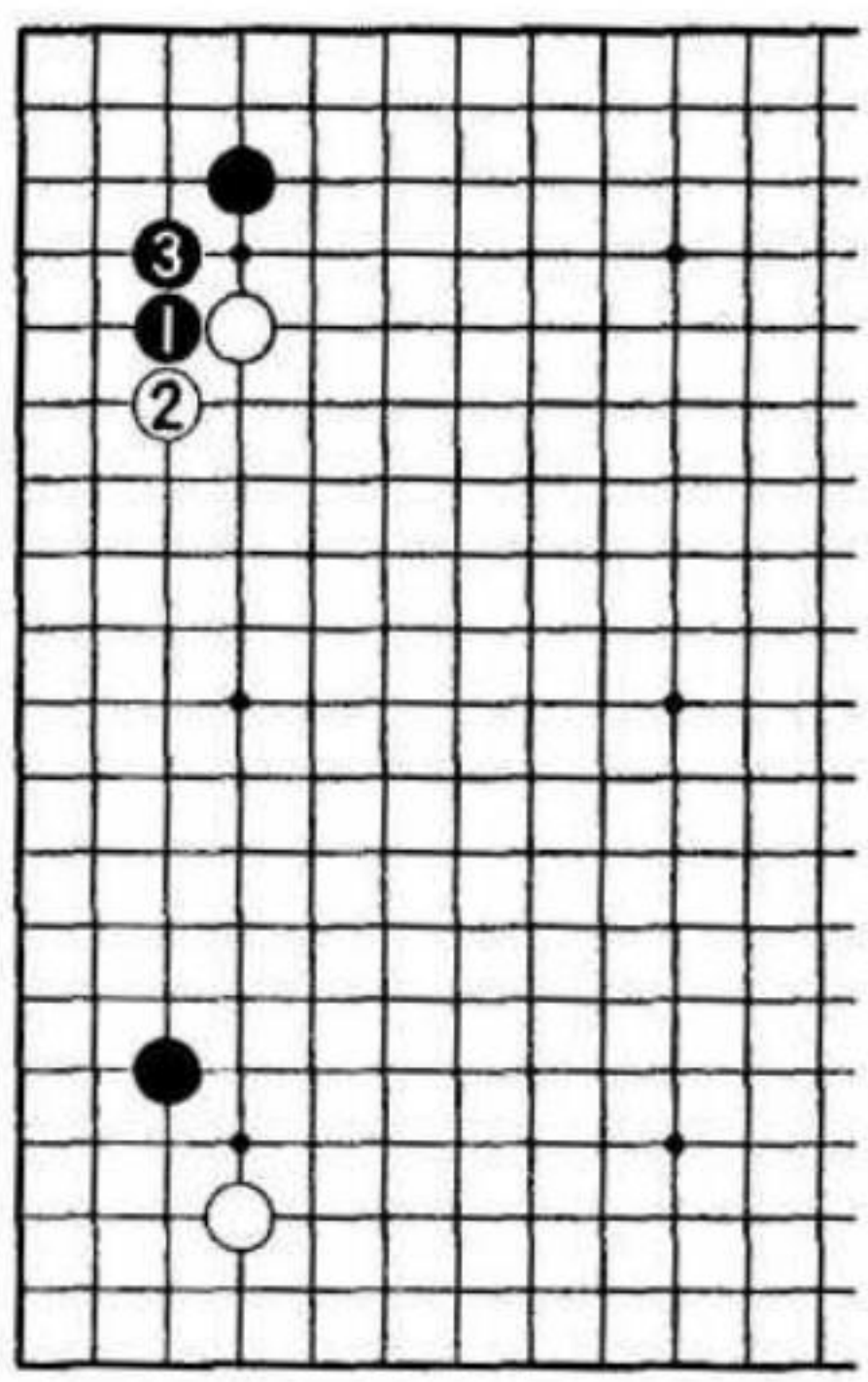
Black may have room to extend to 1 when White makes the three-space pincer, but White 2 stops him from securing much of a base, so Black 1 is not satisfactory. White achieves the objective of his pincer. He gets a nice attack going with 4.

Dia. 5: White's strategy?

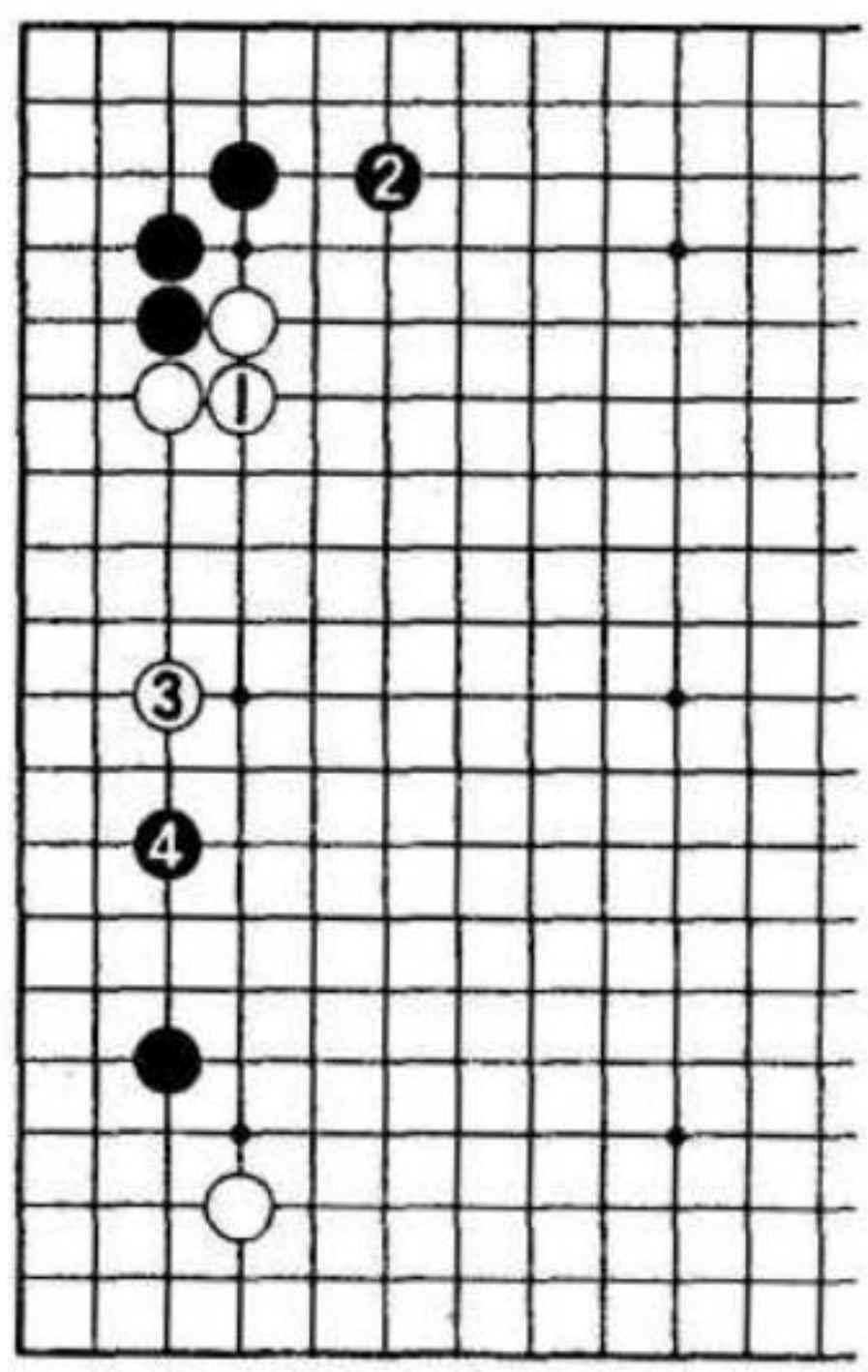
Let's look at another position Black has just played 1 and 3. There is a well-known joseki here, but I would like you to take the bottom left corner into consideration in planning White's strategy.

Dia. 6: not a pincer

First, let's try connecting at 1. If Black 2, then in the local context White 3 is the joseki, but this does not function as a pincer against the black stone below. When Black extends to 4, it's clear that White's overall strategy leaves something to be desired.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

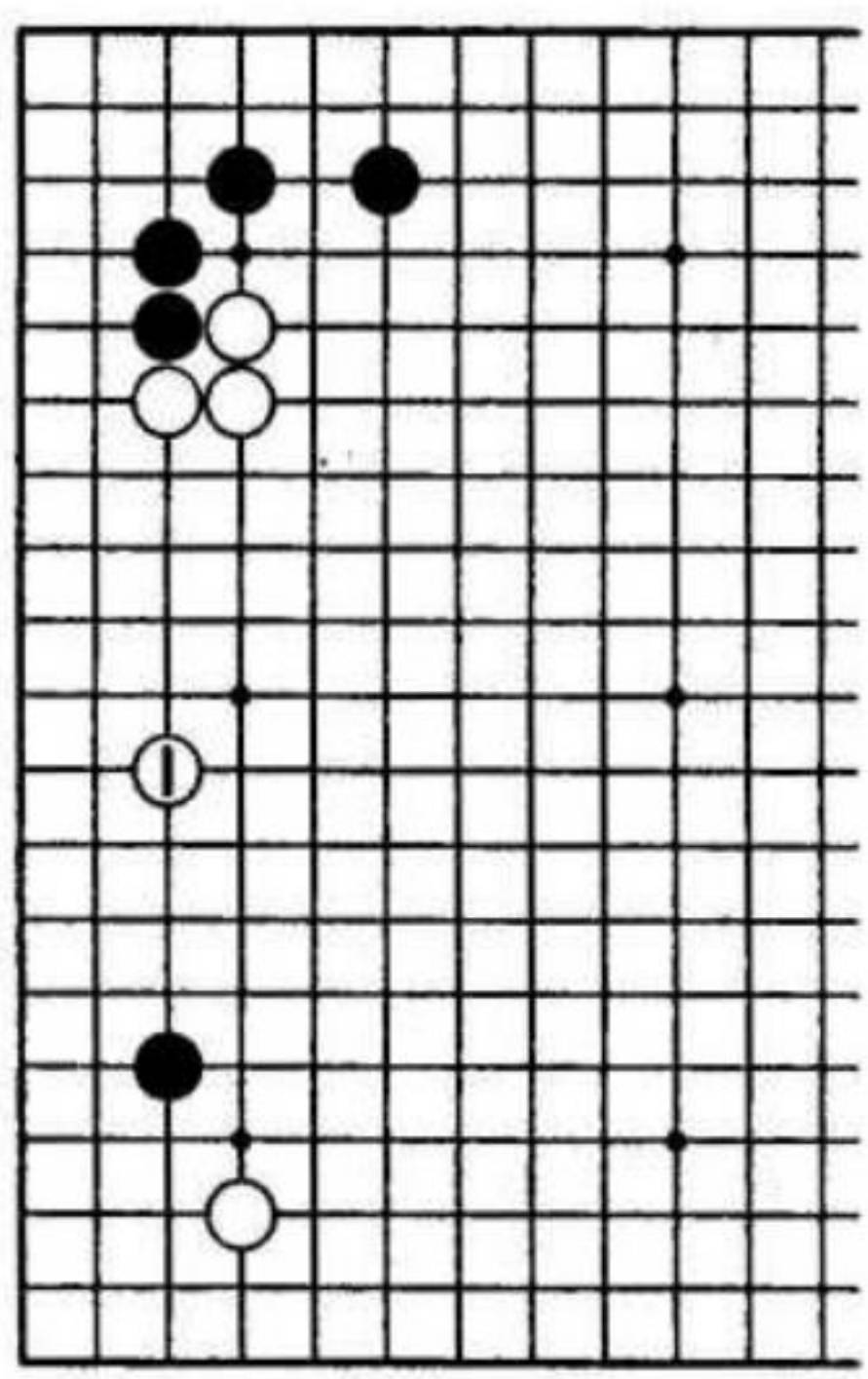
Dia. 7. going one line further

White wants to make an extension, but he also wants to make a pincer. The answer is to go one line further with 1.

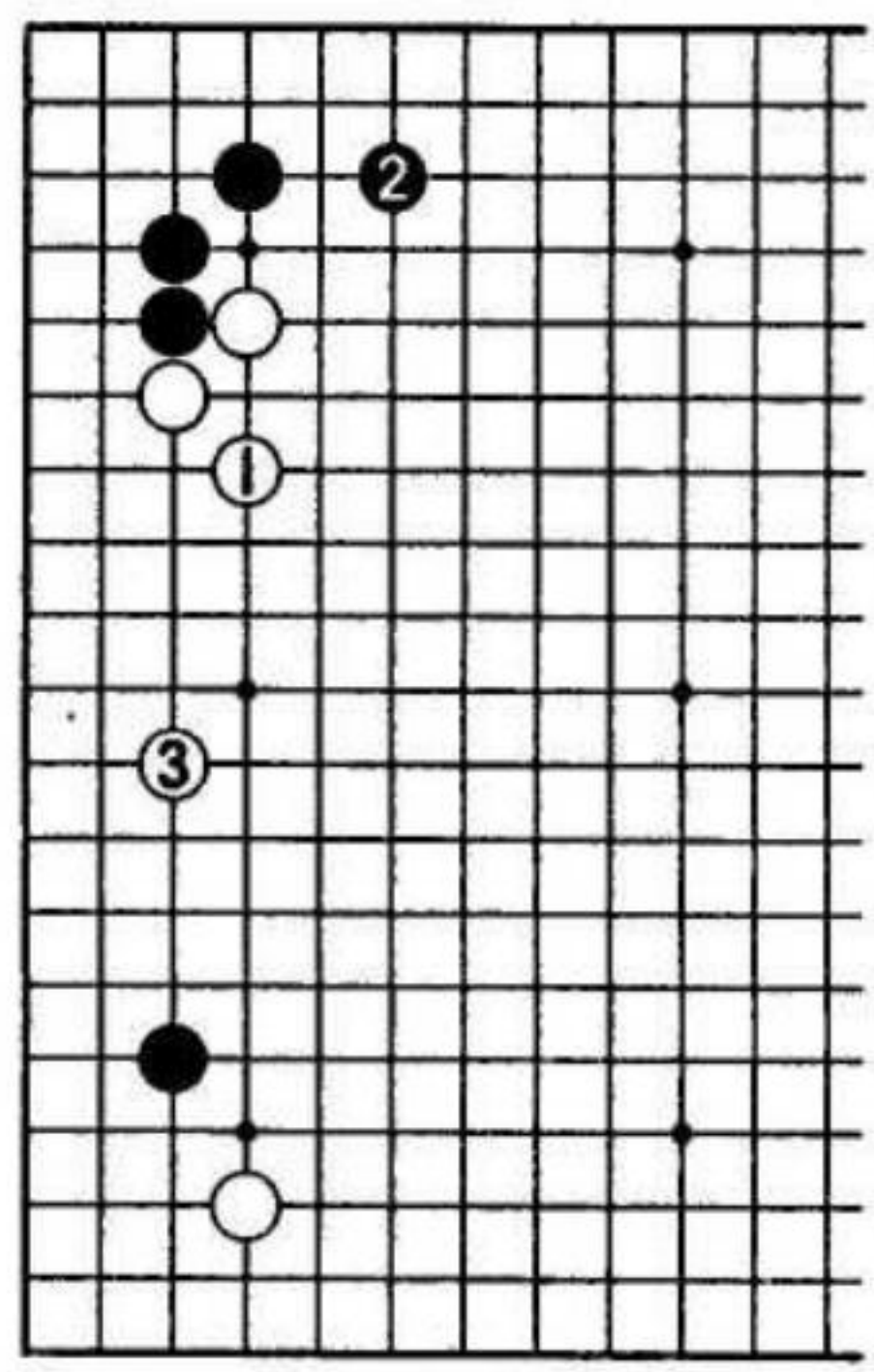
White 1 is one space wider than the joseki move. If that worries you -

Dia. 8: the right joseki

Then you should try the diagonal connection of 1. White can next play 3, a pincer that is also the joseki move. You have to take the trouble to choose the right joseki for the circumstances.



Dia. 7



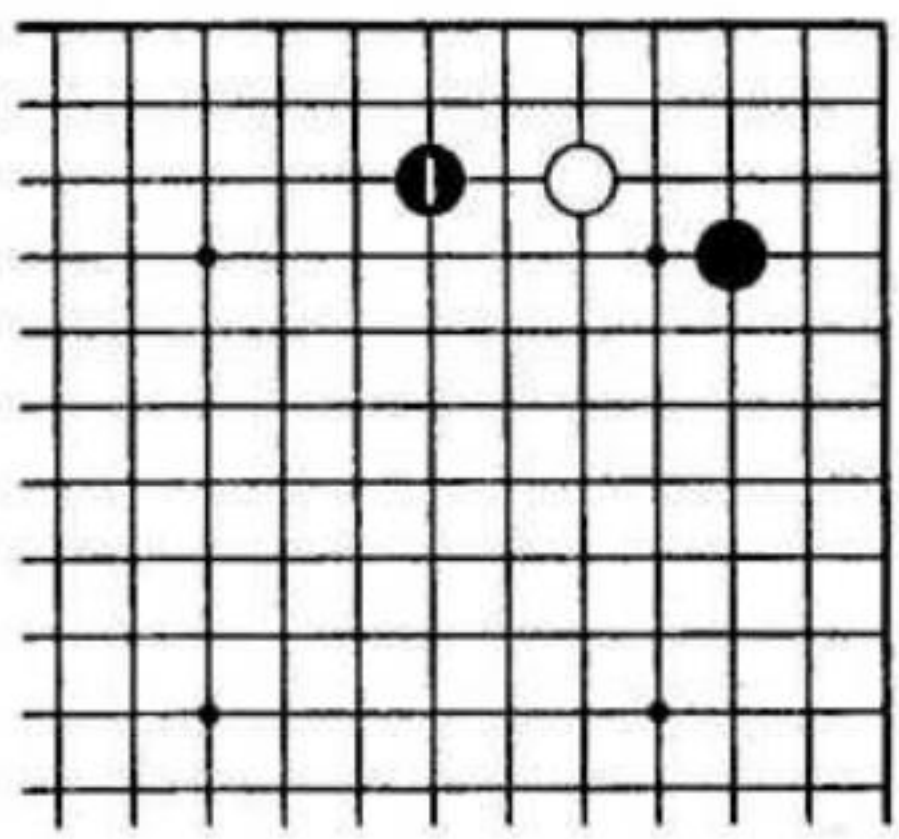
Dia. 8

Dia. 9: the sharpest pincer

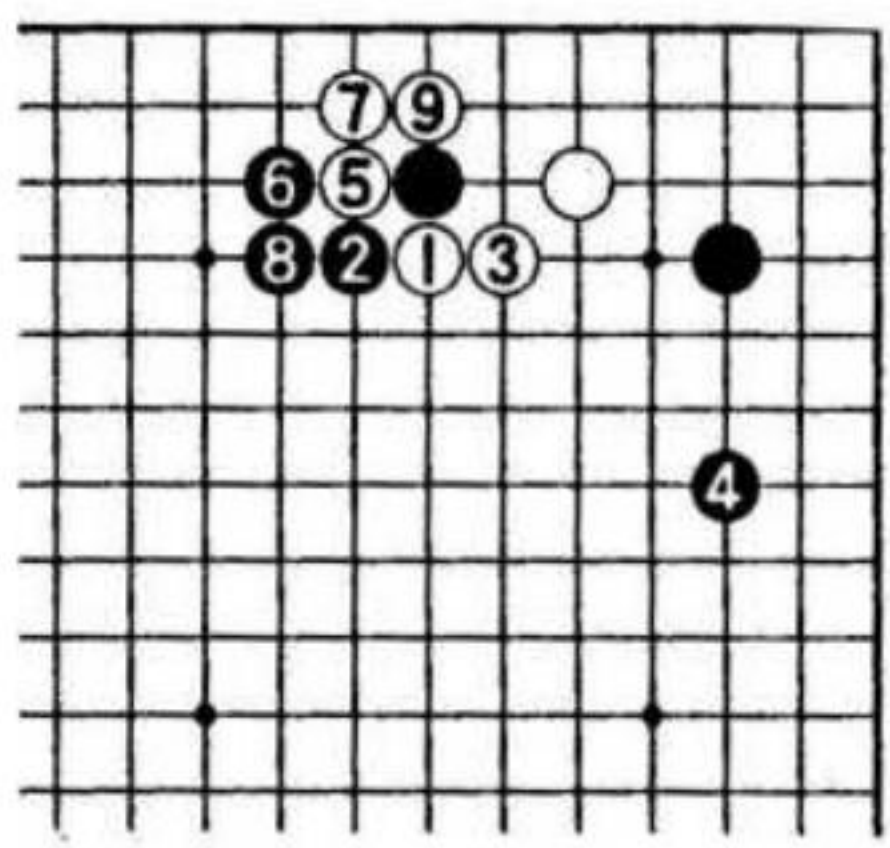
This may be the place to discuss the differences between the various pincers. To start with, the dose-up pincer of 1 will lead to immediate fighting.

Dia. 10: a busy fight

A hectic fight will follow the contact play of 1. The moves to 9 are one possible continuation.



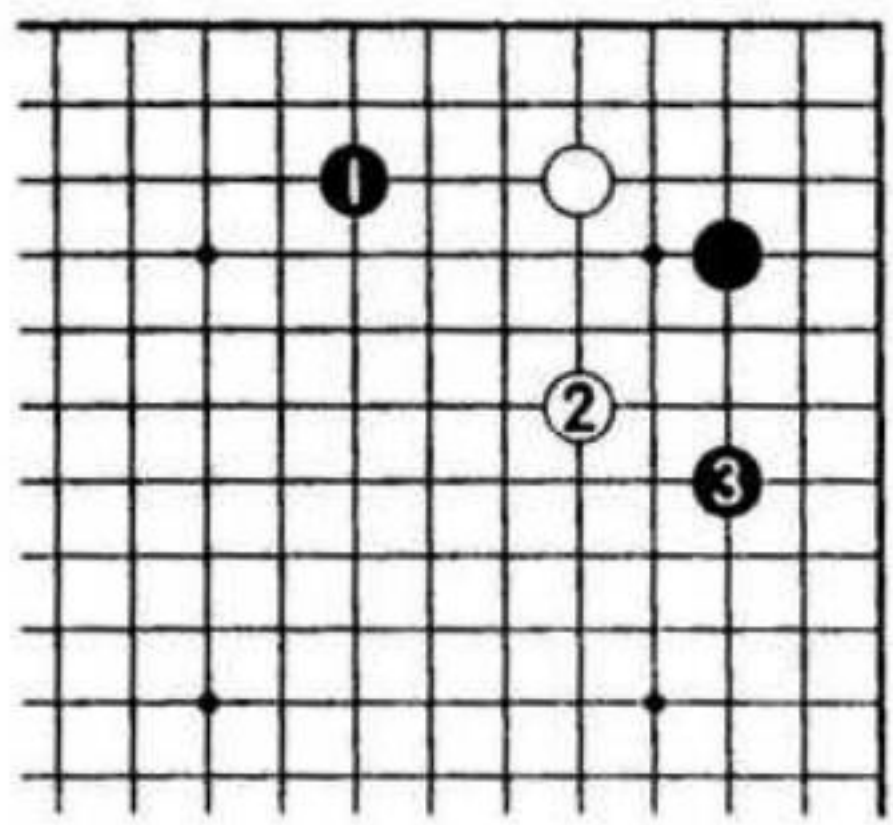
Dia. 9



Dia. 10

Dia. 11: more easygoing

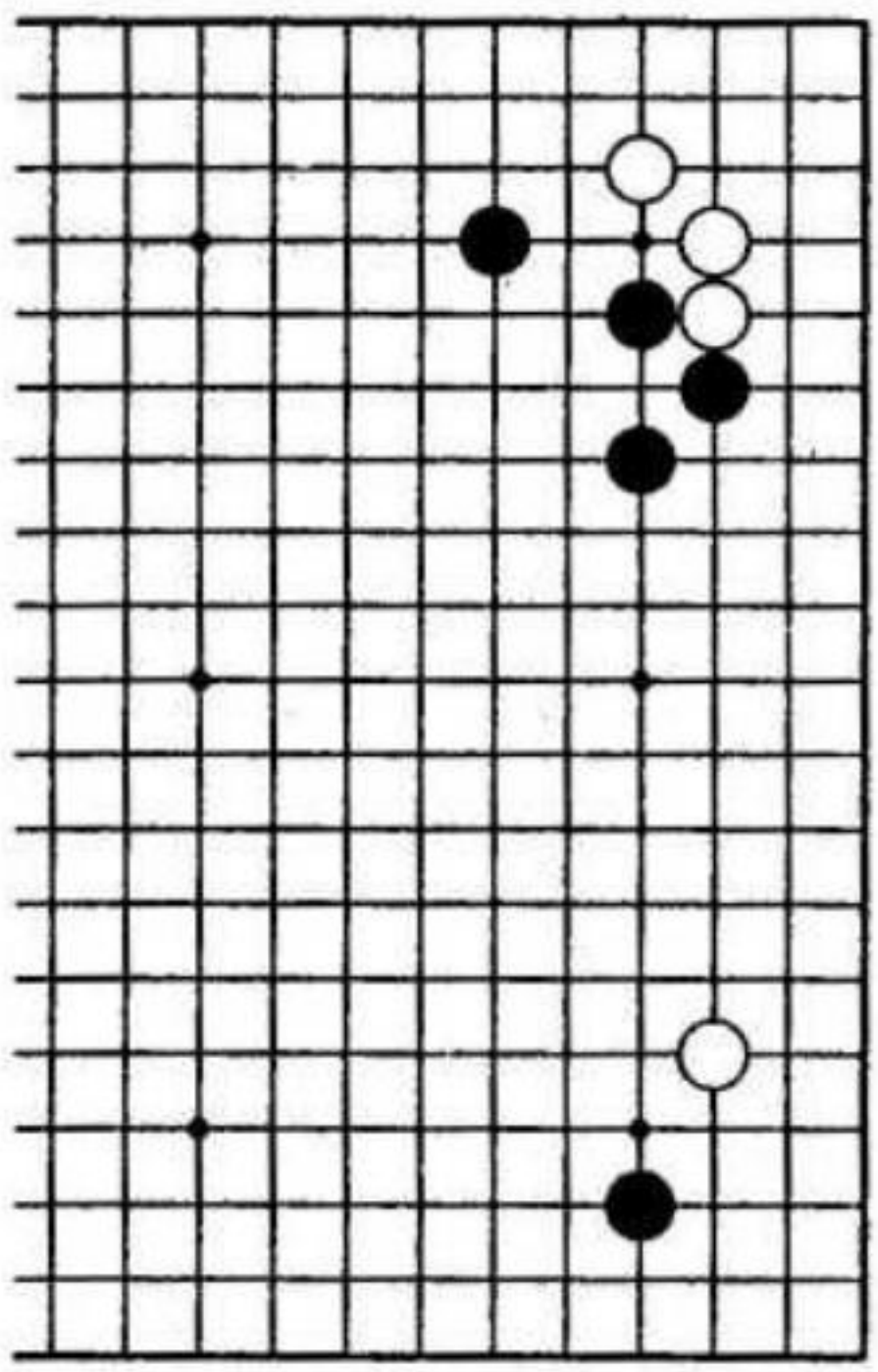
Black 1 is a little bit more leisurely. The game might continue with simple moves like 2 and 3. Needless to say, the three-space pincer is even more leisurely.



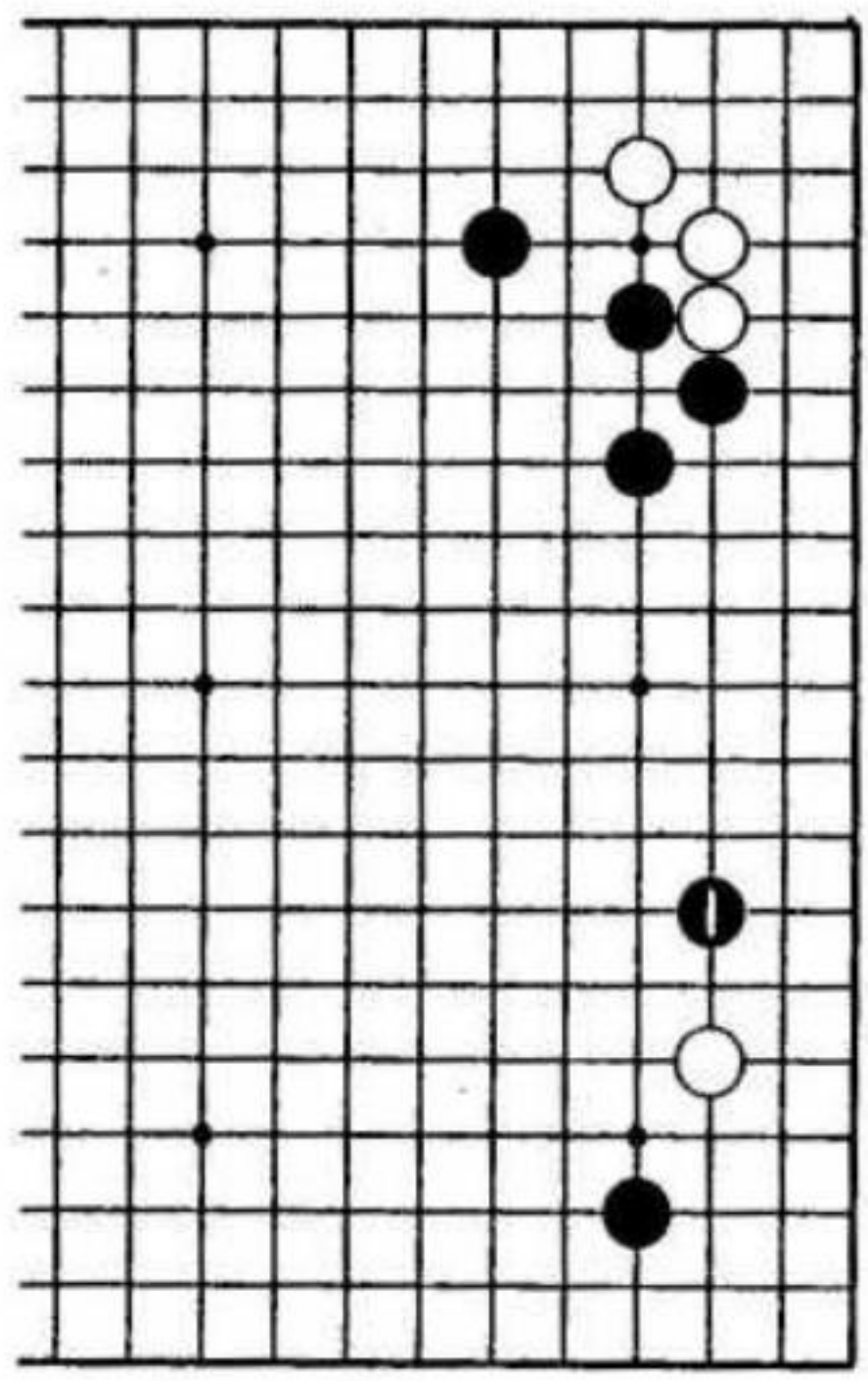
Dia. 11

Dia. 11 choosing the right pincer

We already know that the pincer is a good move when Black has influence at the top. The question is: which pincer works best?



Dia. 12



Dia. 13

Dia. 13: severest

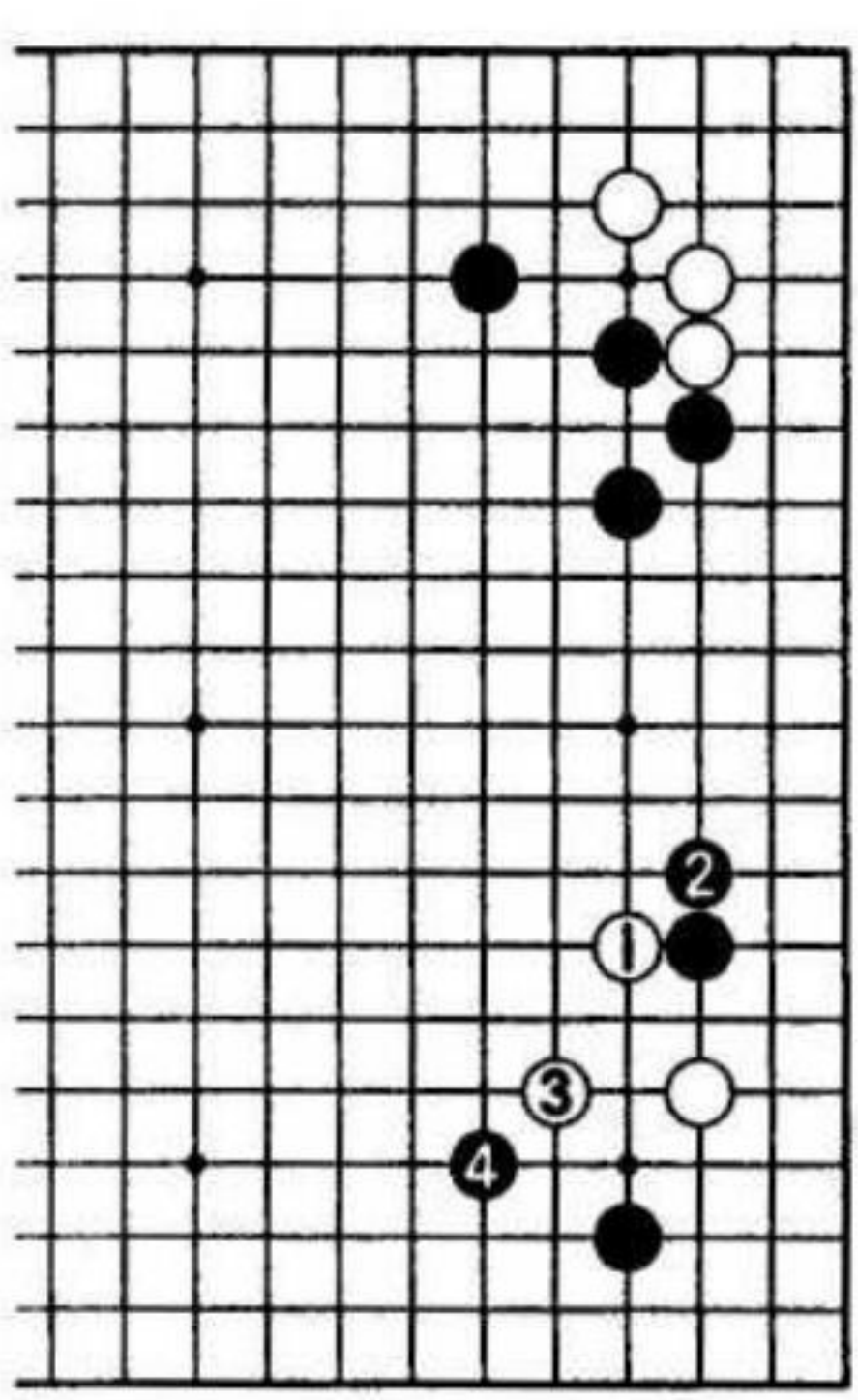
Black's influence at the top is quite strong, so he need have no worries about starting a fierce fight with the all-out pincer of 1. This move also functions as an extension from the position above, and, of course, the wider an extension the better use it makes of thickness.

Dia. 14: profitable attack

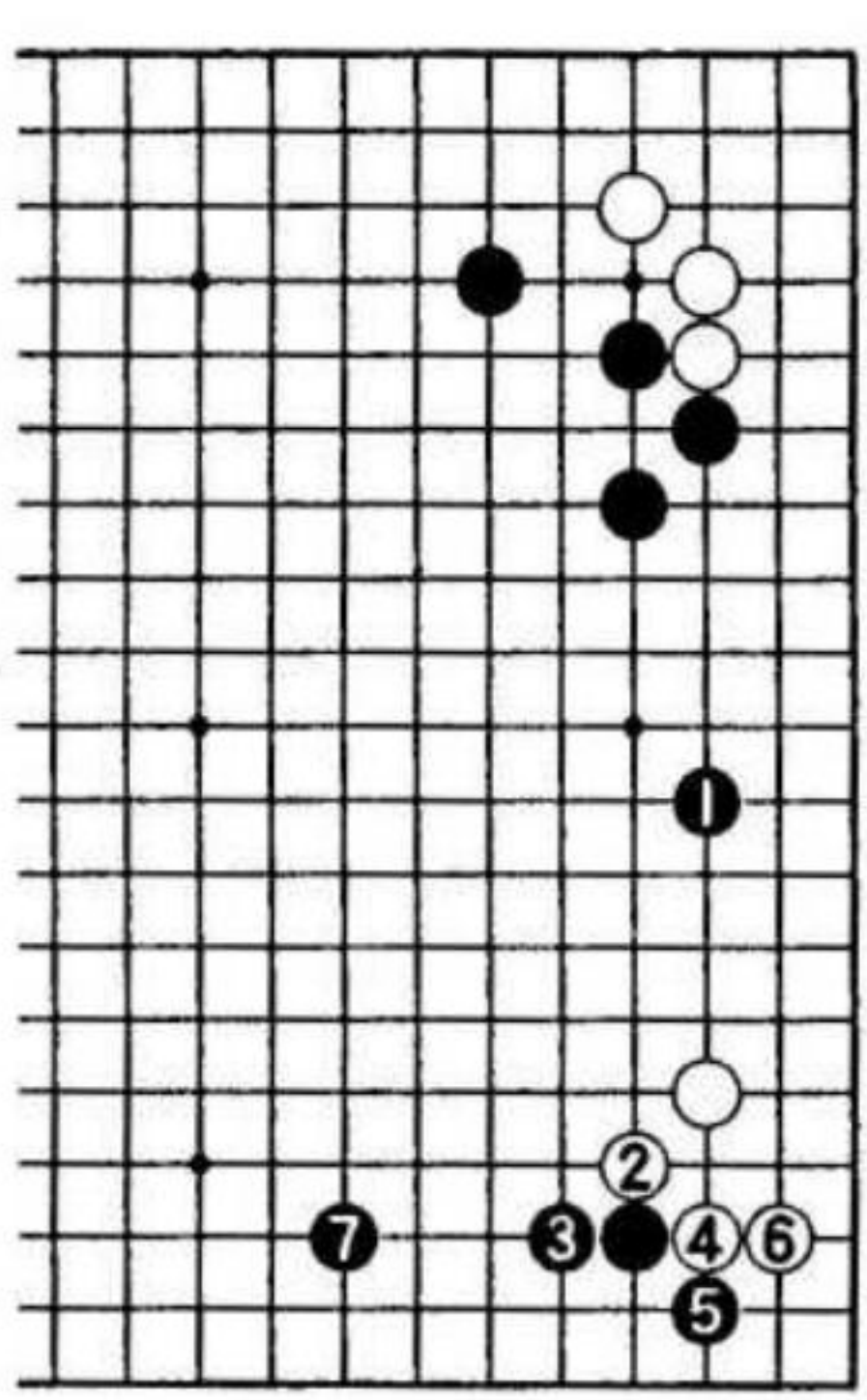
This is one possible continuation. Black answers White 1 by pulling back at 2, then continues his attack with 4. White's play here helps Black to convert the top area into territory naturally. If White simply jumps to 3 instead of 1, Black still gets a good result by answering with 4.

Dia. 15: too narrow

The three-space pincer is too leisurely: it gives White too much scope. For example, if he settles himself with 2 to 6, Black will be a little dissatisfied, as his extension from the top is a little too narrow.



Dia. 14

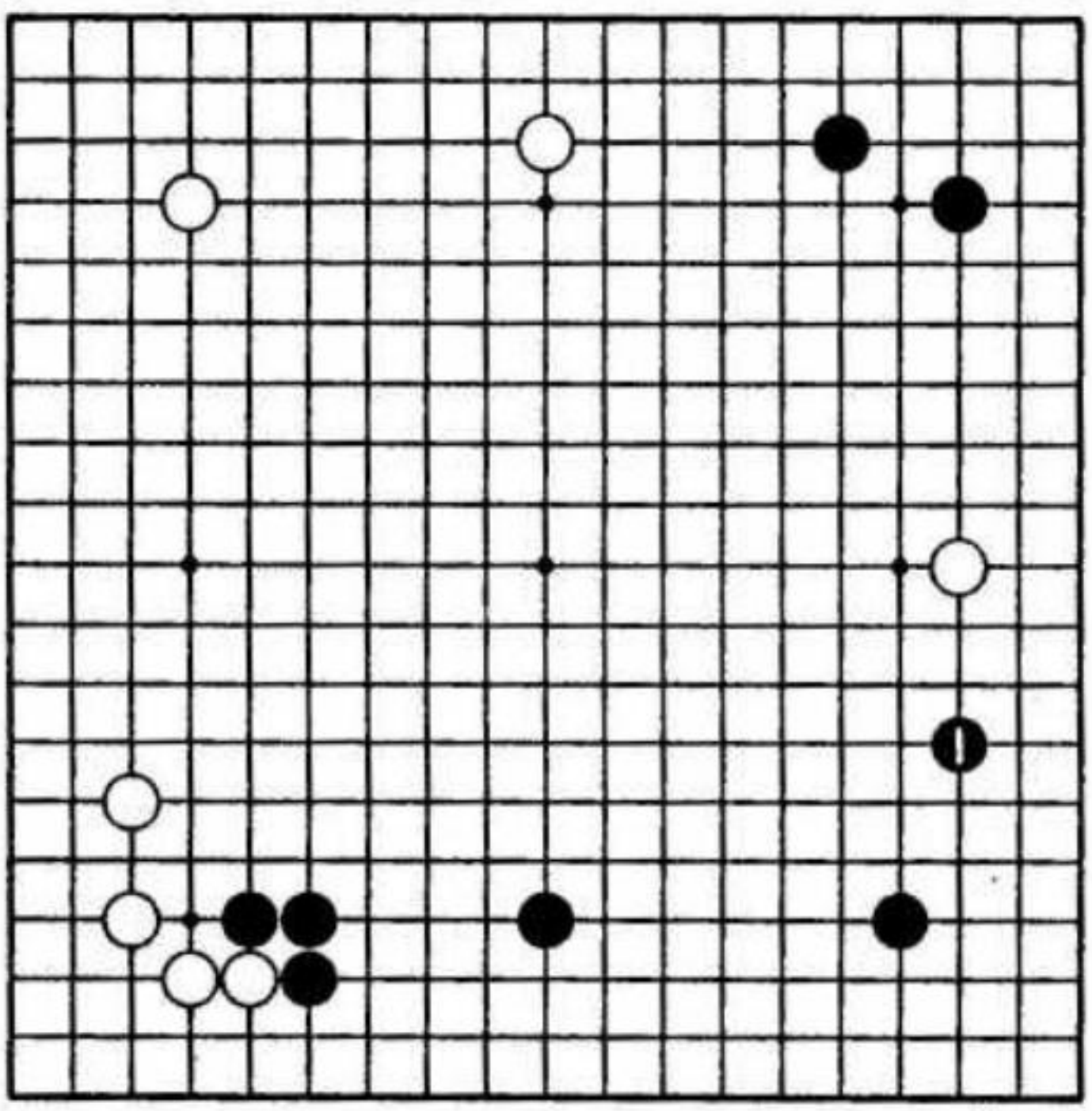


Dia. 15

Principle 4
Have a counterplan to deal with invasions

Extensions are very common moves in the fuseki, but you always have to be prepared for the possibility of an enemy invasion. Wide extensions are more efficient, but they are also easier to invade, so you have to have your countermeasures ready. You also have to know what the safe limit for an extension is when there are enemy forces in the vicinity.

When Black plays 1, White has to make an extension up the right side. How far should he go?



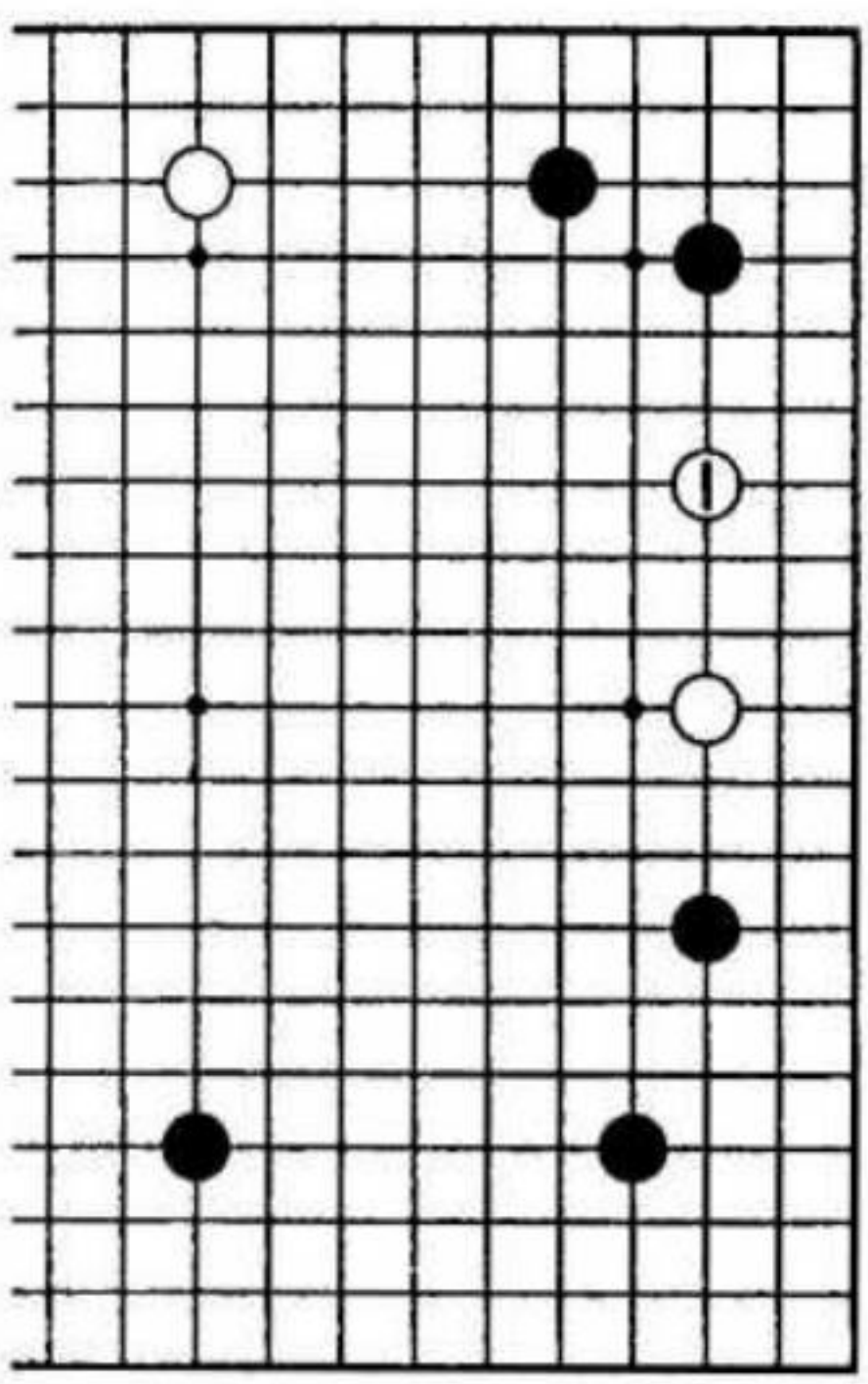
Theme diagram
Find the best extension for White.

Dia. 1: the basic extension

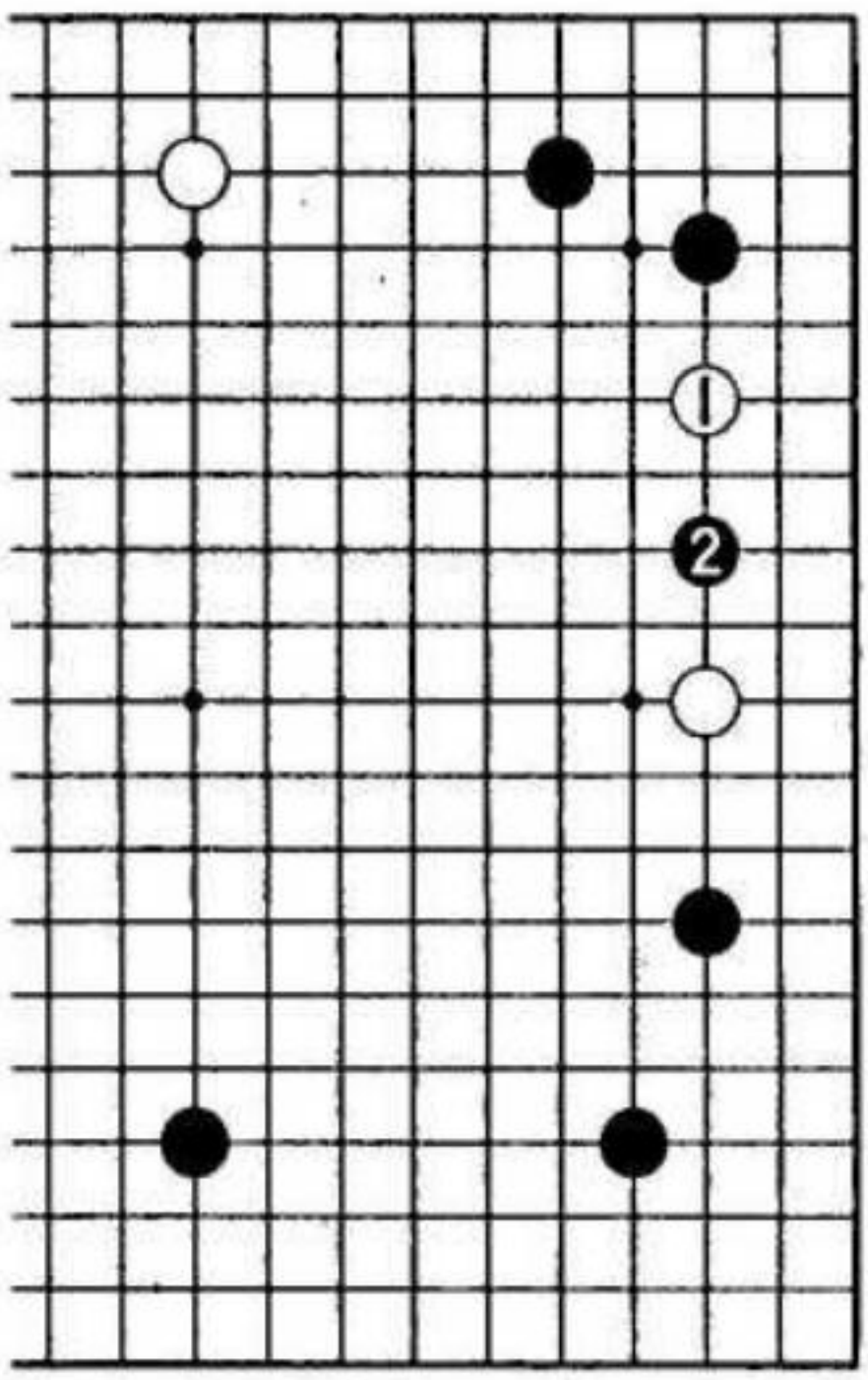
White 1 is the basic move when White wants to defend an isolated stone rather than expand his influence. These stones cannot be split, so White can be sure of getting some territory, which means that he can stabilize his group.

Dia. 2: greedy

Trying to get extra territory by extending to 1 is greedy. There is a gap in White's position, which Black can exploit by invading at 2.



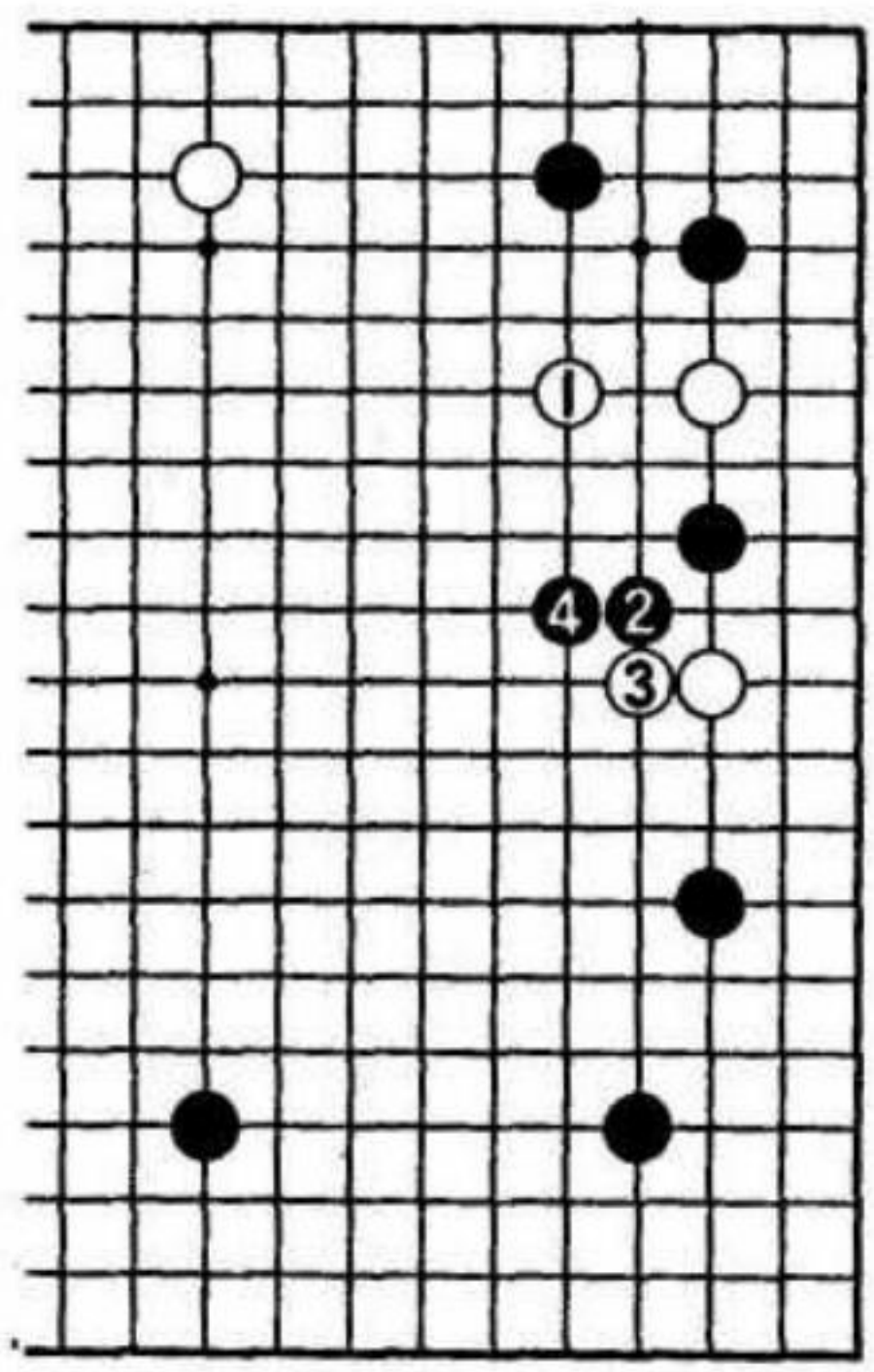
Dia. 1



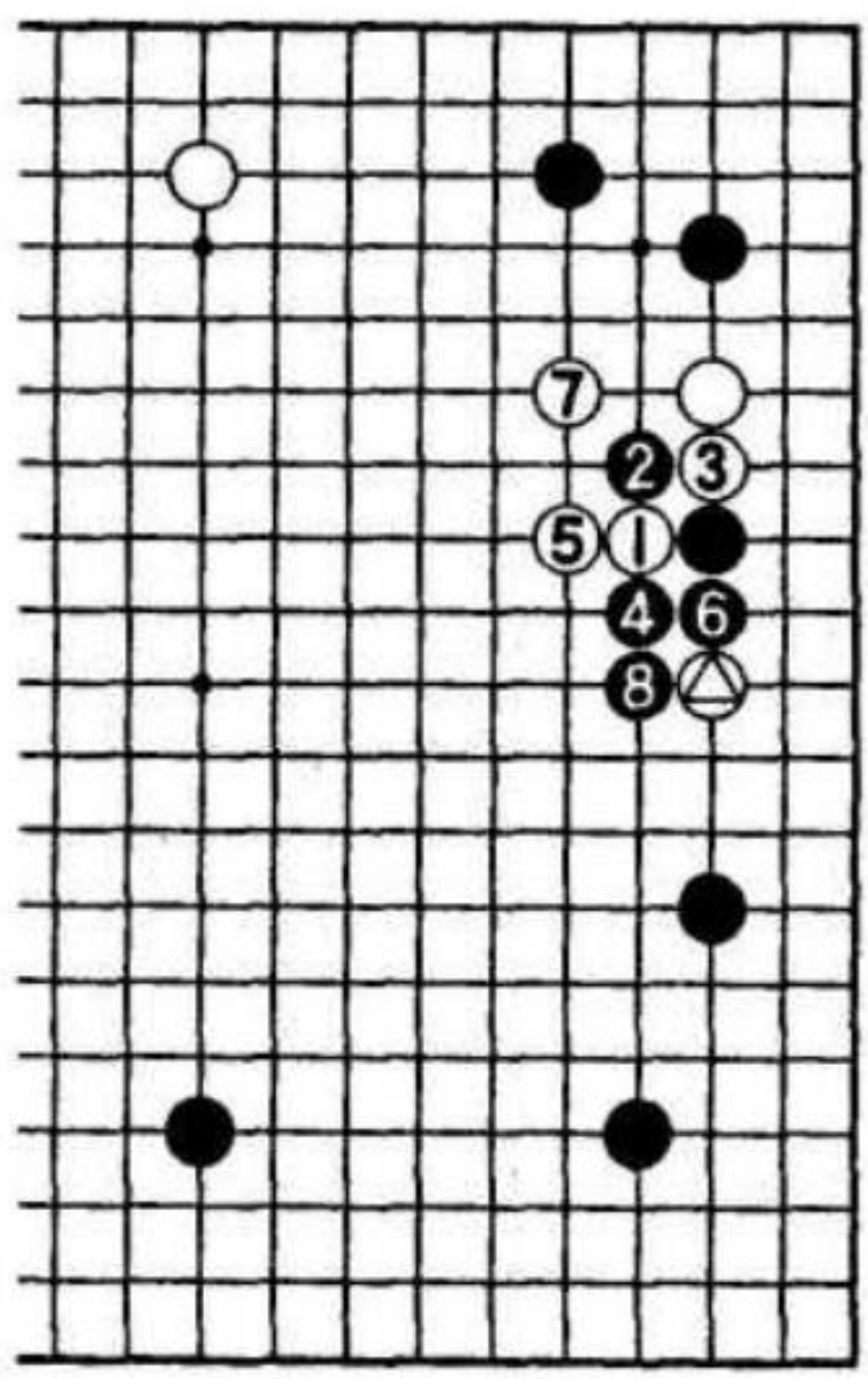
Dia. 2

Dia. 3: split into two

White 1 shows that White is prepared to fight back, but he is forced into an unfavourable fight when Black splits his position into two with 2 and 4. The presence of the black stones at the top and at the bottom makes this a tough fight for White.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: can't connect

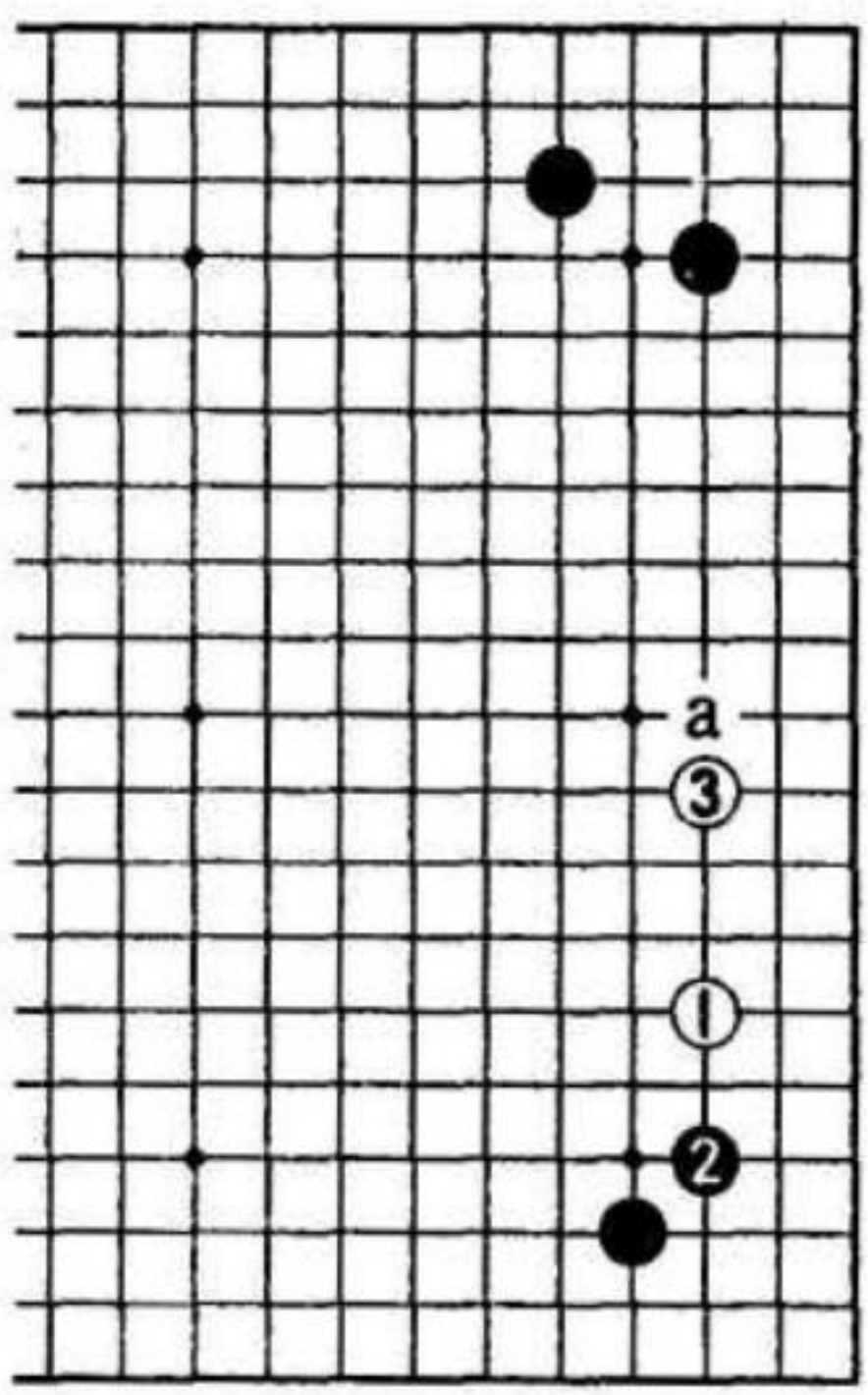
Is there no way for White to link up his two stones? White has a try with 1, but Black keeps him separated with 2 to 6. Having the marked stone cut off is a major setback for White.

Dia. 5: the standard move

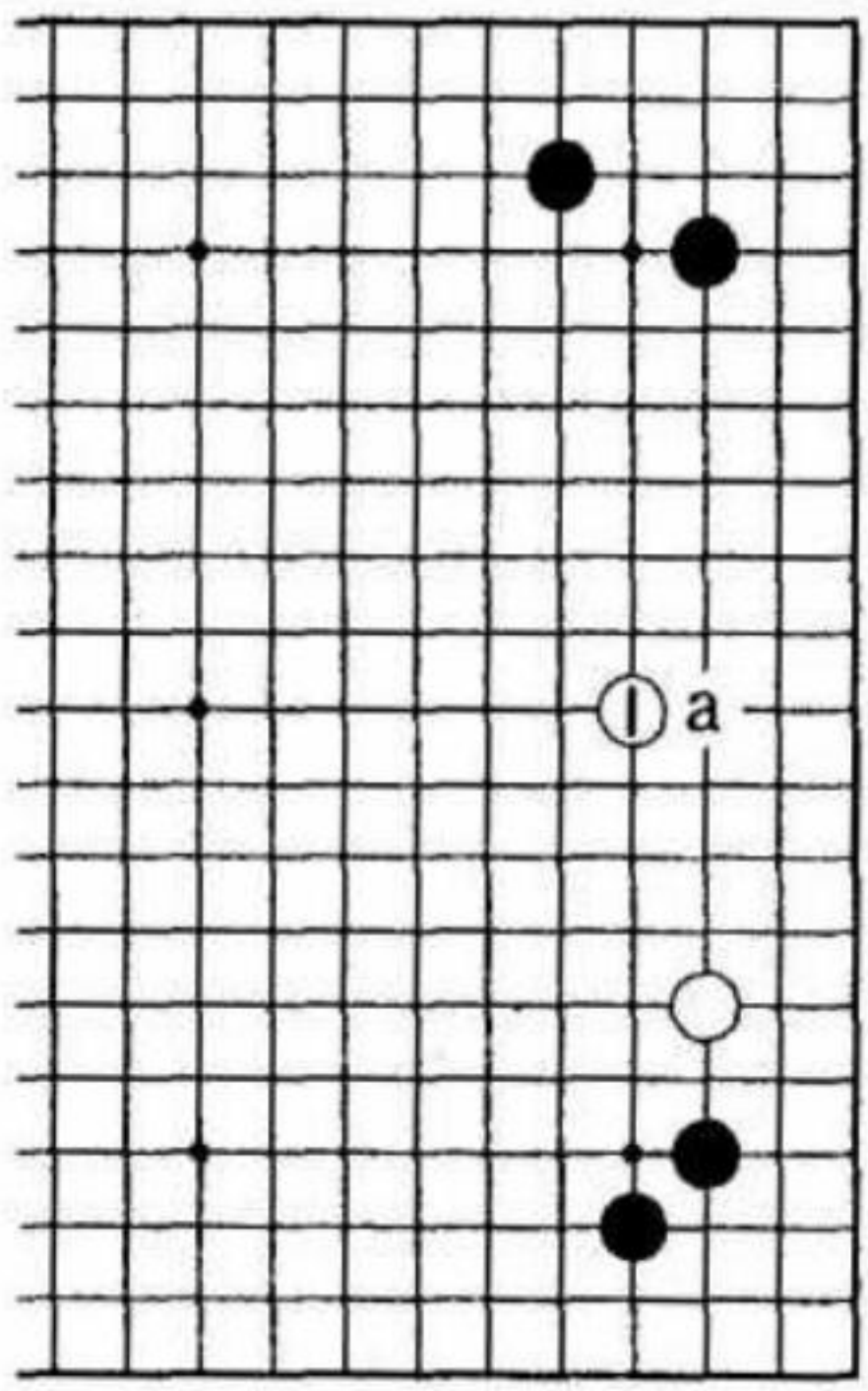
When you want to reinforce a weak stone, the two-space extension is the standard move. Extending to 3 is no more than common sense. The wider move of 'a', open to a black invasion as it is, is insecure.

Dia. 6: the 3rd line and the 4th line

That doesn't mean that White can't make a three-space extension here, however. Instead of 'a', the answer is to play the high move of 1 on the 4th line. This has fewer weaknesses than the low move, and it may achieve a more efficient result.



Dia. 5



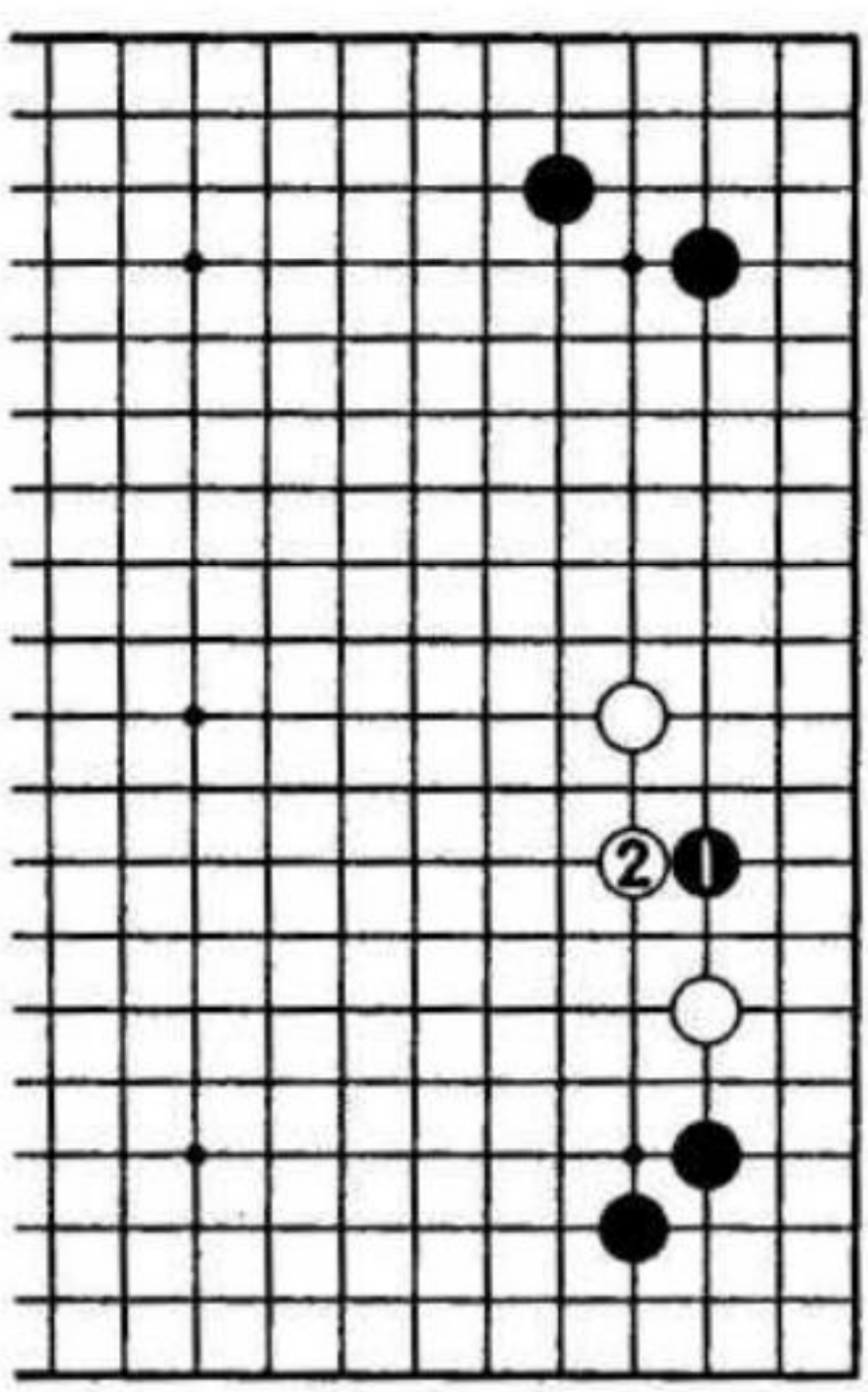
Dia. 6

Dia. 7. counter to the invasion

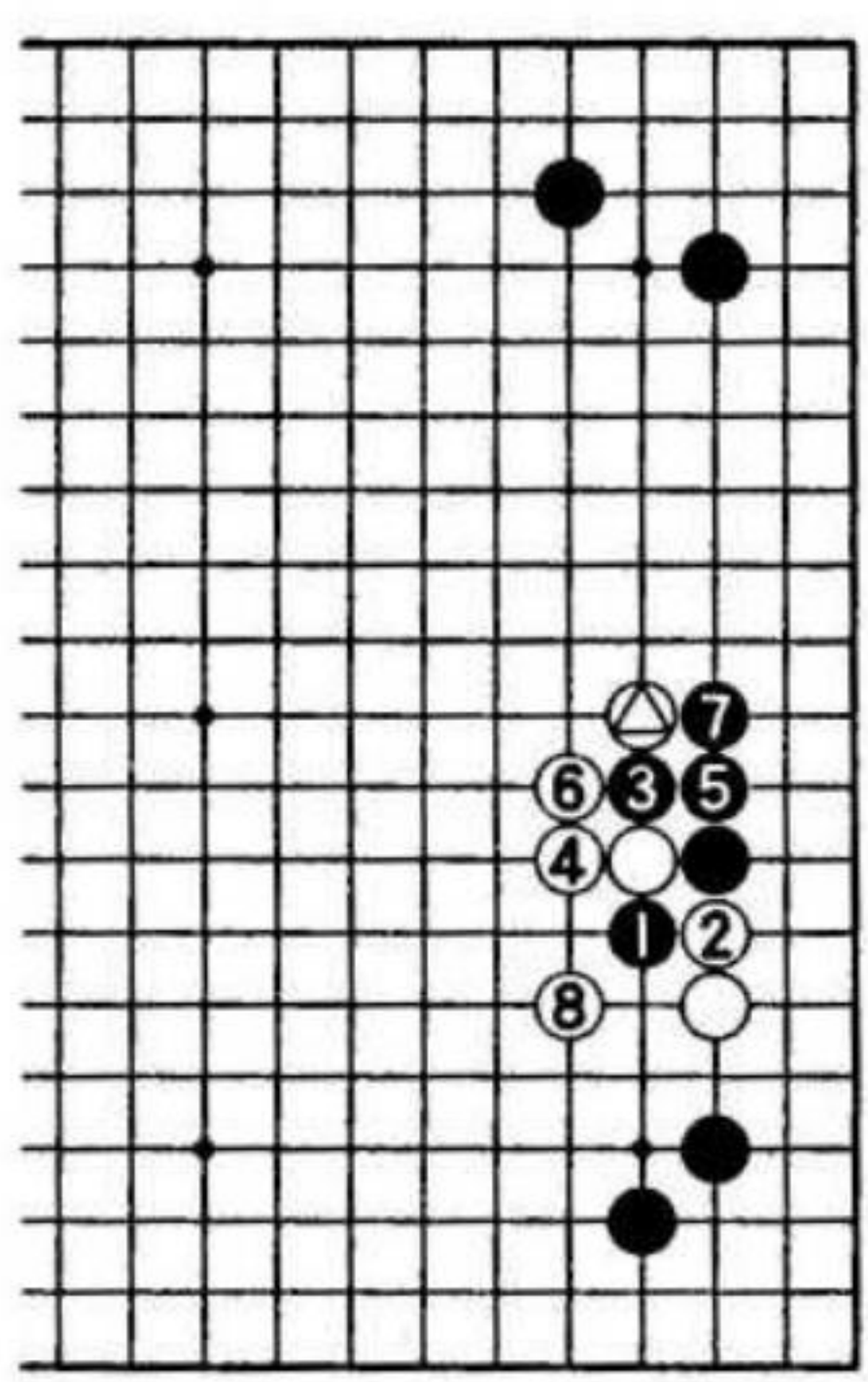
As before, Black can invade in the gap between the two stones, but this time White has a counter: the contact play of 2. Now it's not so easy for Black to split White's position into two. That's the advantage of the high extension Next -

Dia. 8: maintaining a connection

If Black 1, White cuts at 2. Black must connect at 5, so White blocks on top at 6, maintaining his connection with the marked stone. This is the difference from the low extension. After 7, White catches Black 1 in a Beta, stabilizing his whole group.



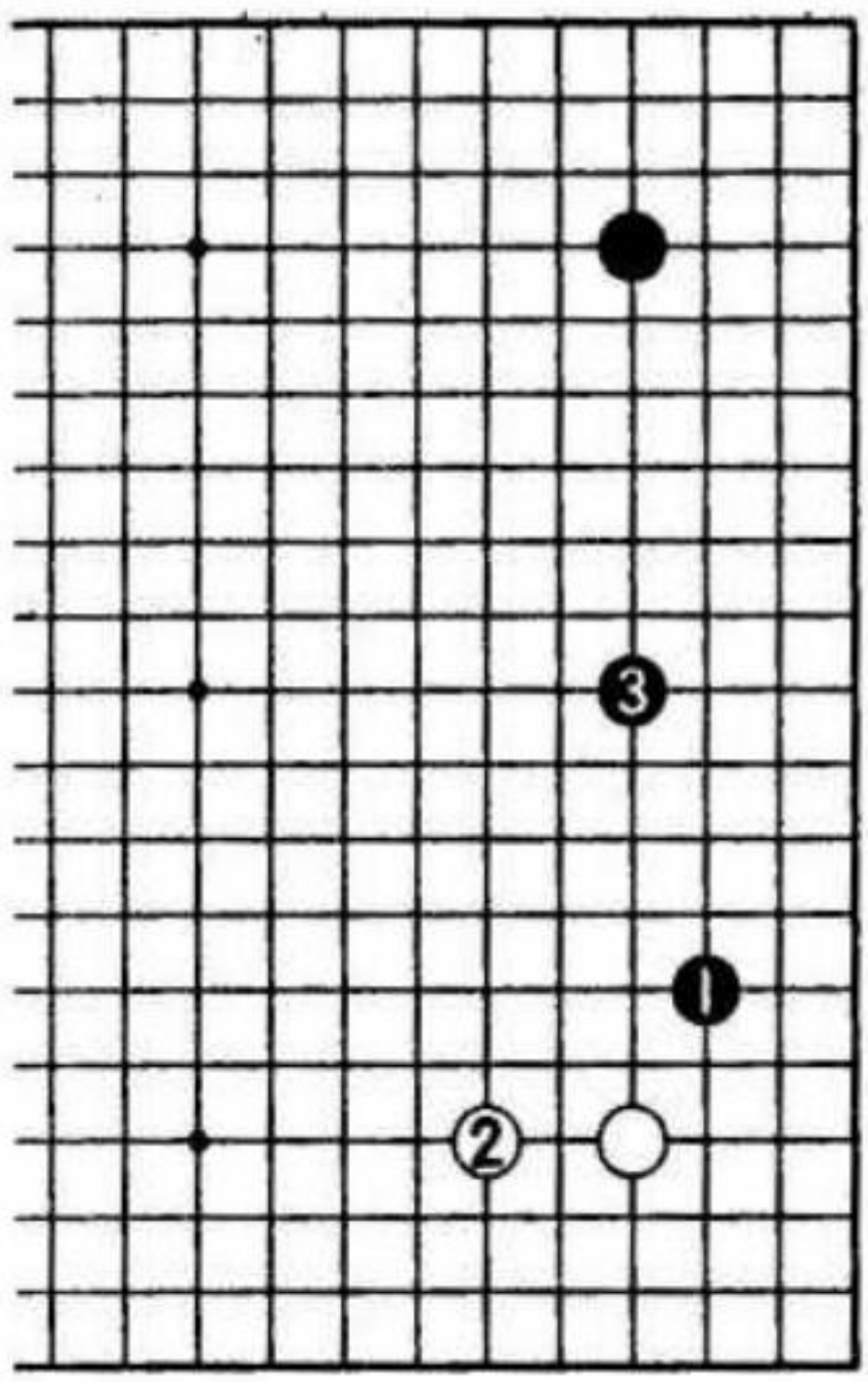
Dia. 7



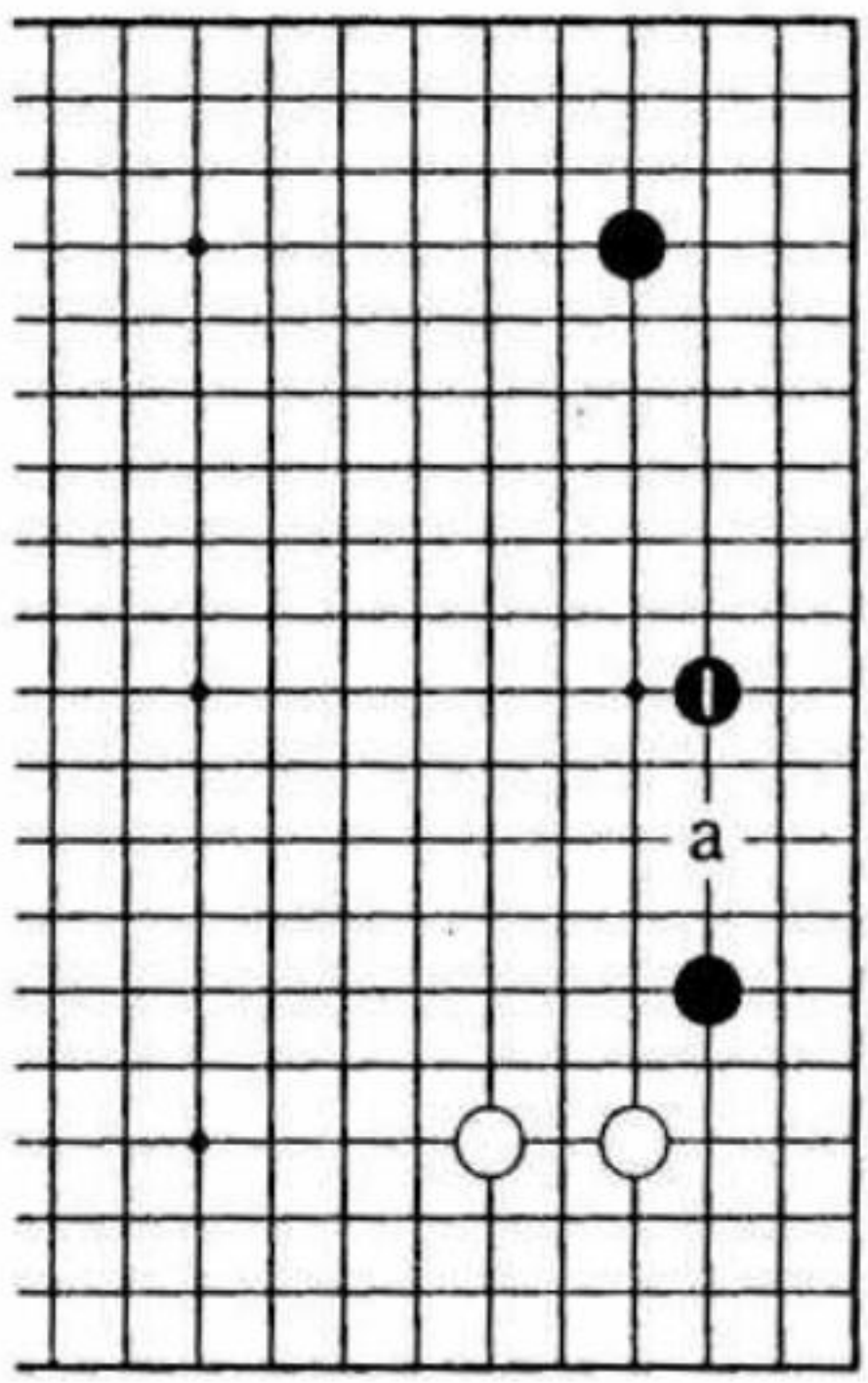
Dia. 8

Dia. 9: a common position

The position here often comes up in actual play. Why does Black want to make the high extension? Well, for one thing it makes good balance with his star-point stone above.



Dia. 9



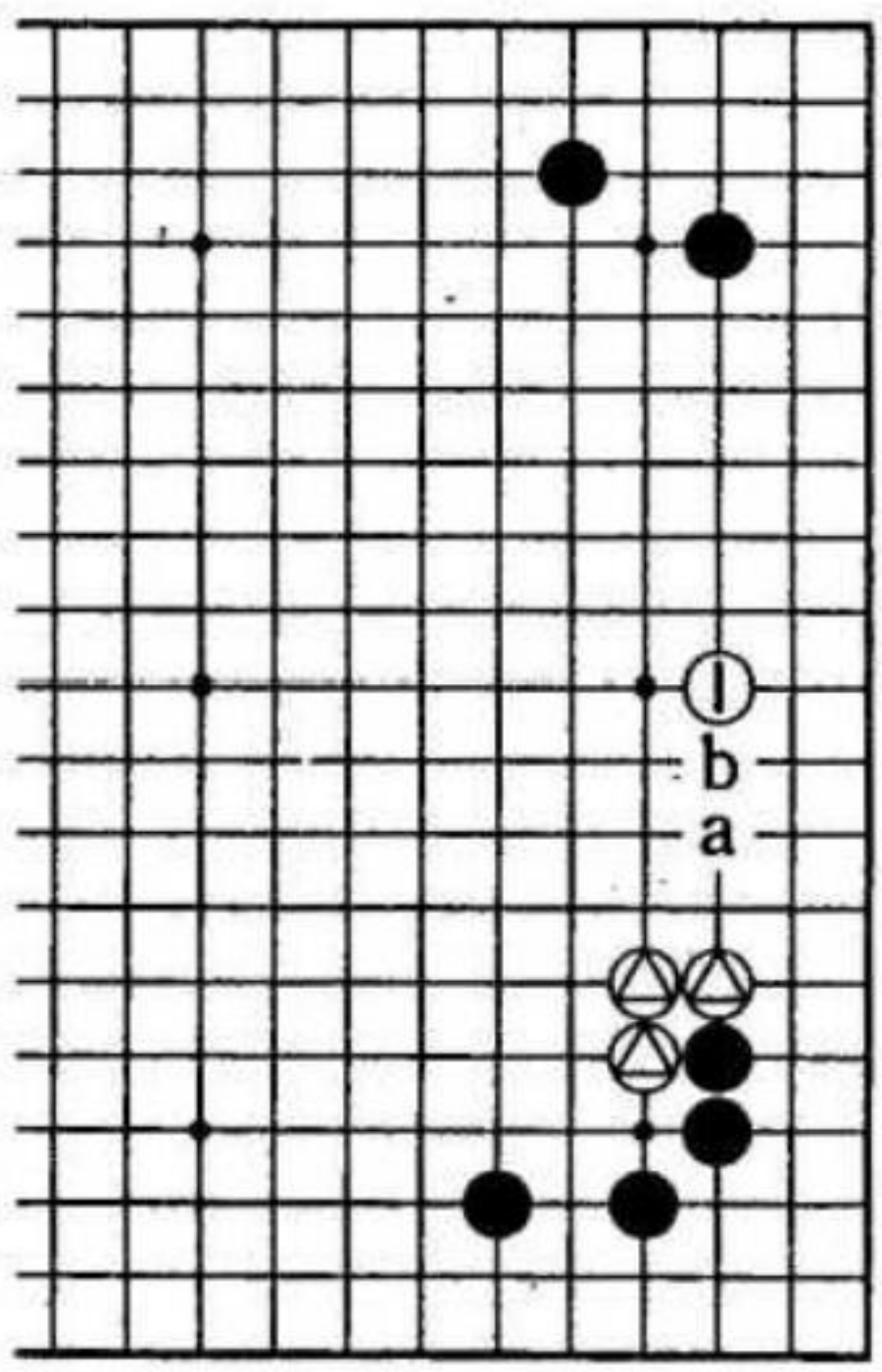
Dia. 10

Dia. 10: not bad, but ...

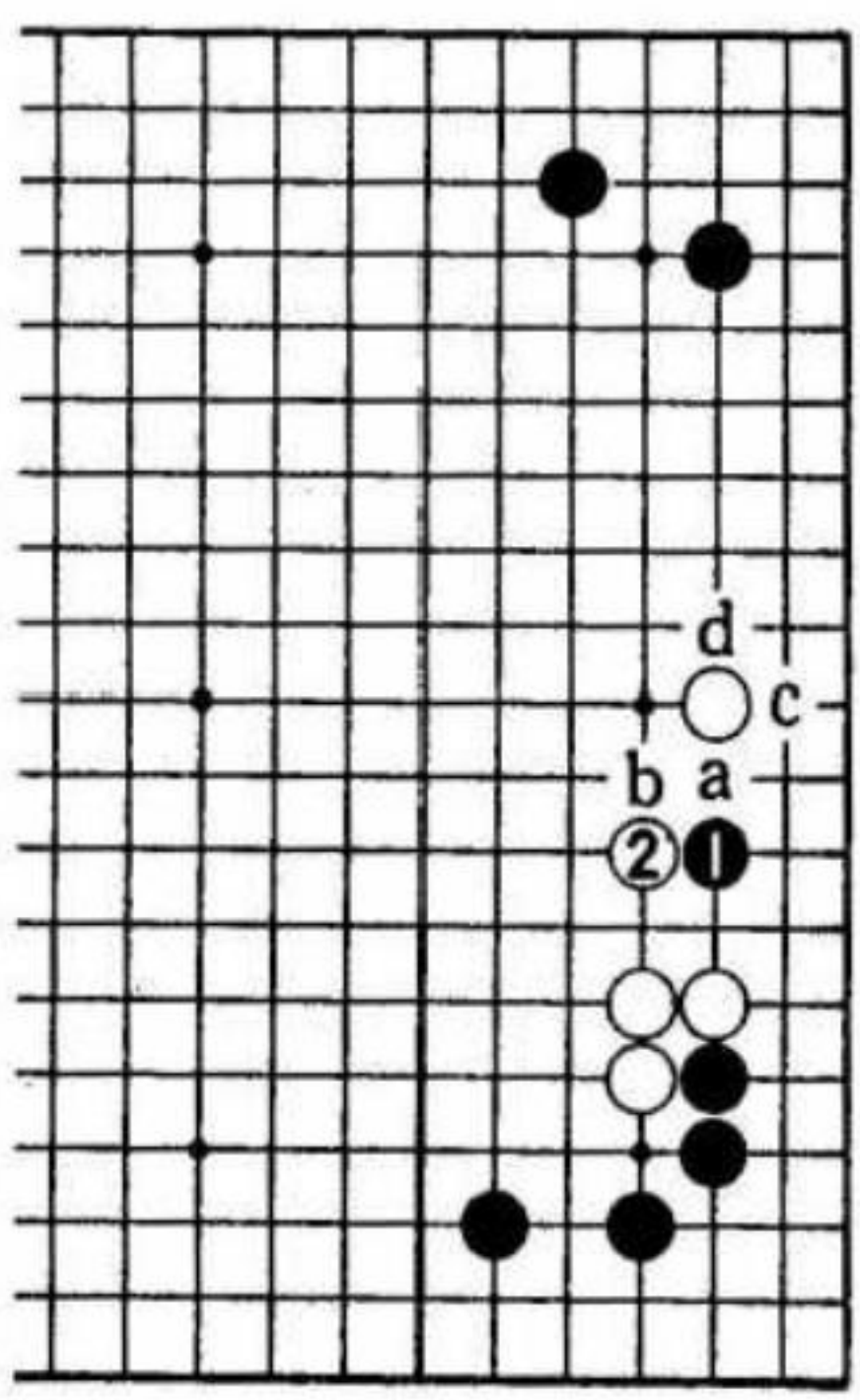
I am definitely not saying that Black 1 is a bad move, but it is certainly difficult to deal with White's invasion at 'a' That's another reason for preferring *Dia. 9.*

Dia. 11: the low move is correct

The low extension is the appropriate move for stabilizing the three marked stones. These stones have built up a little bit of strength, so White decides he needn't worry about the weak point at 'a'. White 'b' would be more solid, but it would be too tight and lacking in efficiency.



Dia. 11



Dia. 12

Dia. 12: White's counter

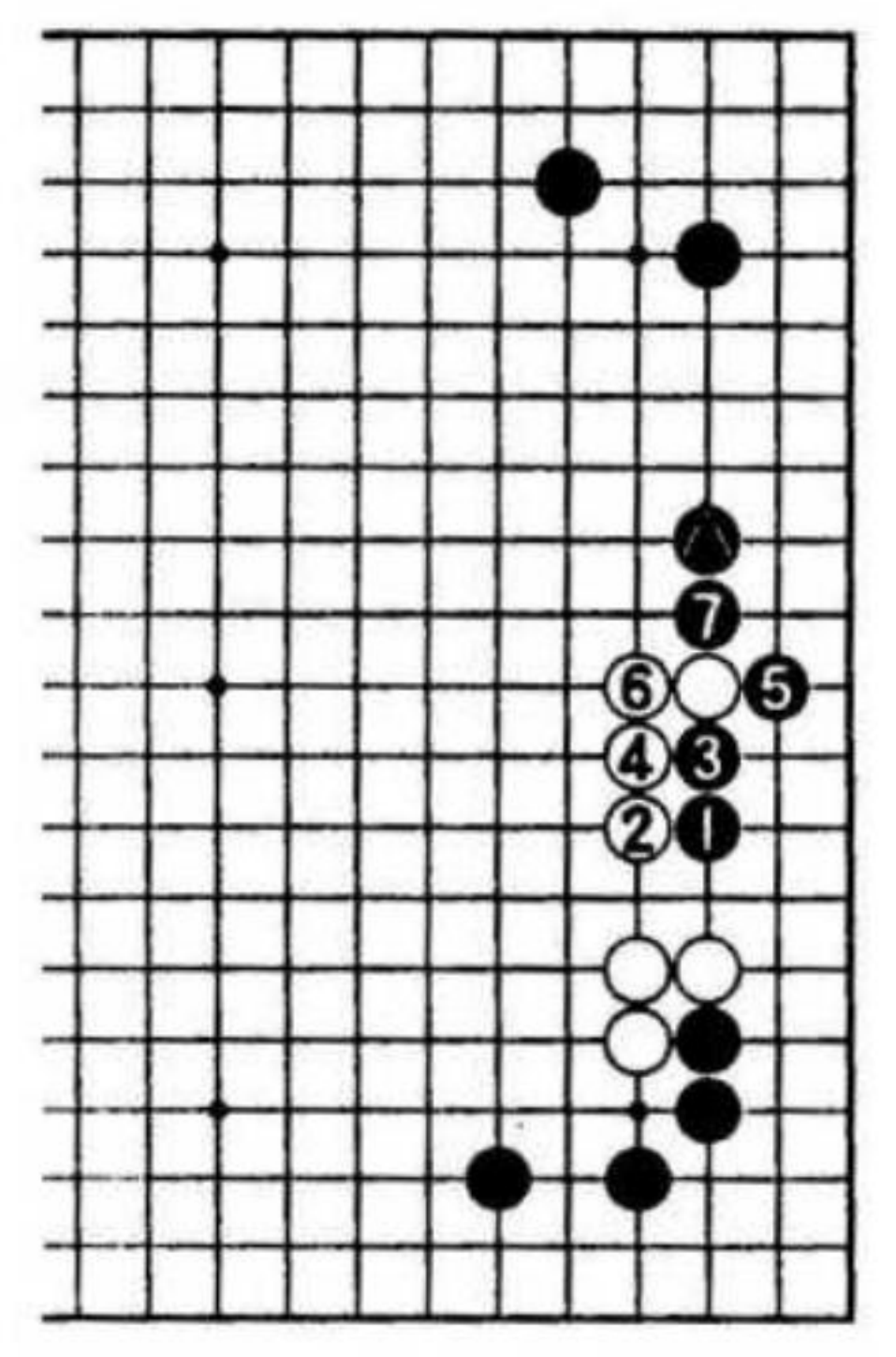
If Black invades at 1, White counters with 2, confident that nothing bad will happen If Black continues with 'a', White 'b', Black 'c', White 'd', White builds excellent influence while Black gains little.

Dia. 13: successful invasion

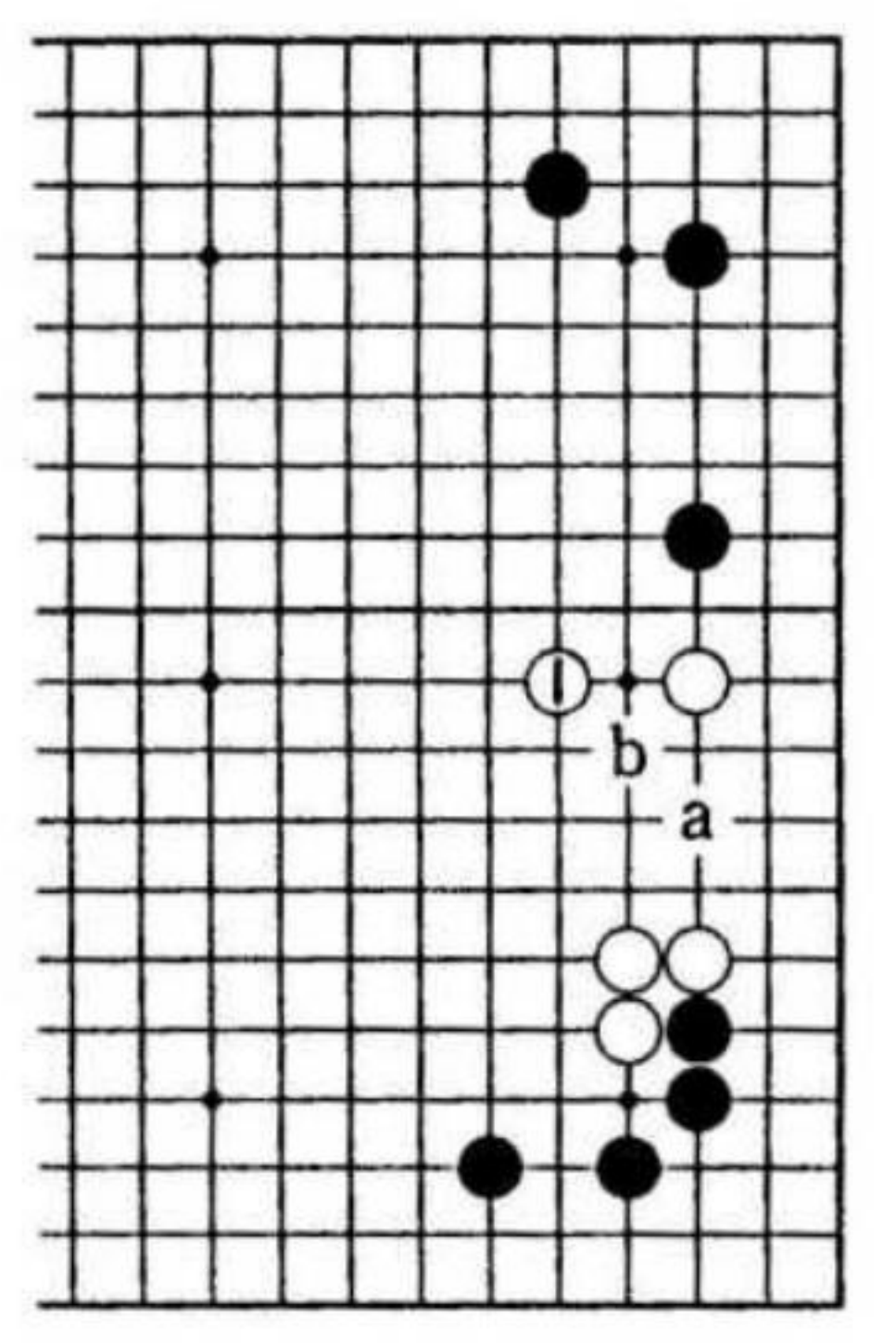
If Black first makes the marked extension, then the invasion of 1 becomes a powerful move. Black easily links up with 3 to 7 while destroying all of White's territory. Even so, the white stones are all linked up, so he does not suffer irreparable damage.

Dia. 14: reinforcing

If the game has reached a stage at which destroying white territory with 1 in *Dia. 13* is a big move, then White can secure his position by jumping to 1. If Black 'a', White 'b'. However, 1 is not absolutely necessary, as *Dia. 13* may be acceptable for White.



Dia. 13



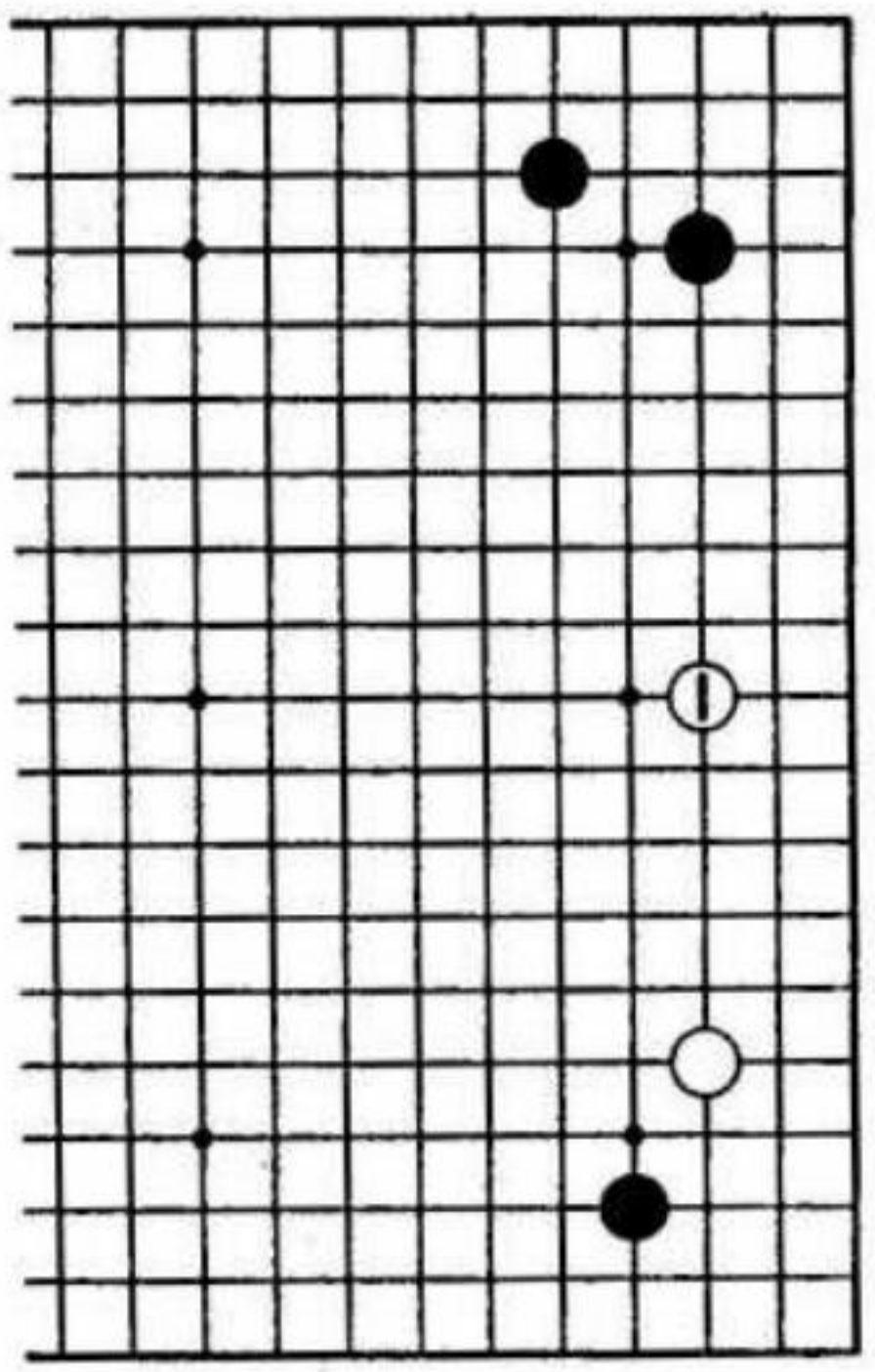
Dia. 14

Dia. 15: extending too far?

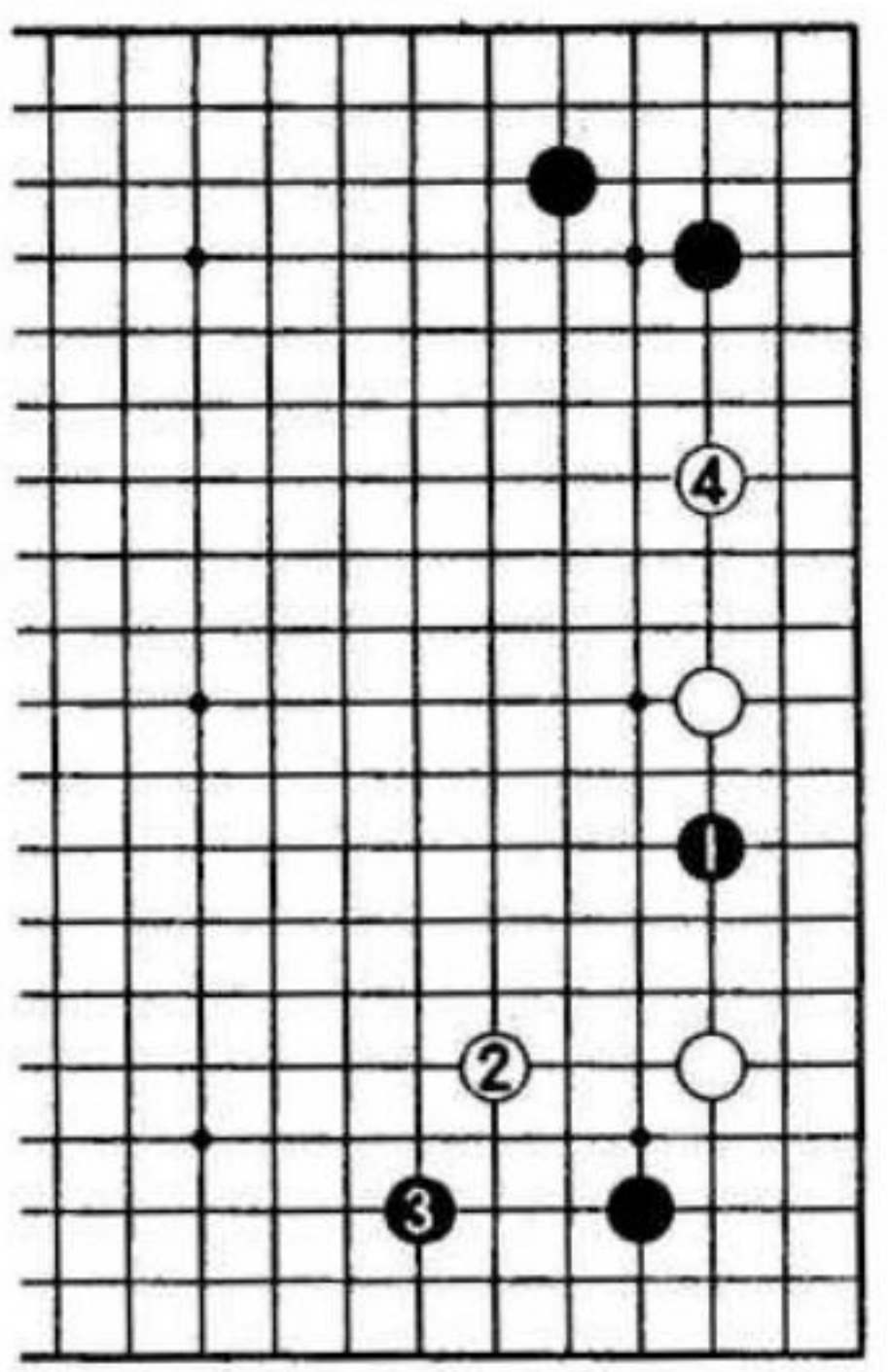
How about extending to 1 in this position? If Black can invade the three-space extension, then surely the four-space extension is even more vulnerable. Not so - if you have worked out your counter, there's nothing wrong with making the wider extension.

Dia. 16: room to extend

If Black invades at 1, White jumps to 2, making Black defend the corner with 3, then he extends to 4. This two-space extension is the key to White's strategy: so long as he can secure himself here, he judges that he will not get a bad result from Black's invasion.



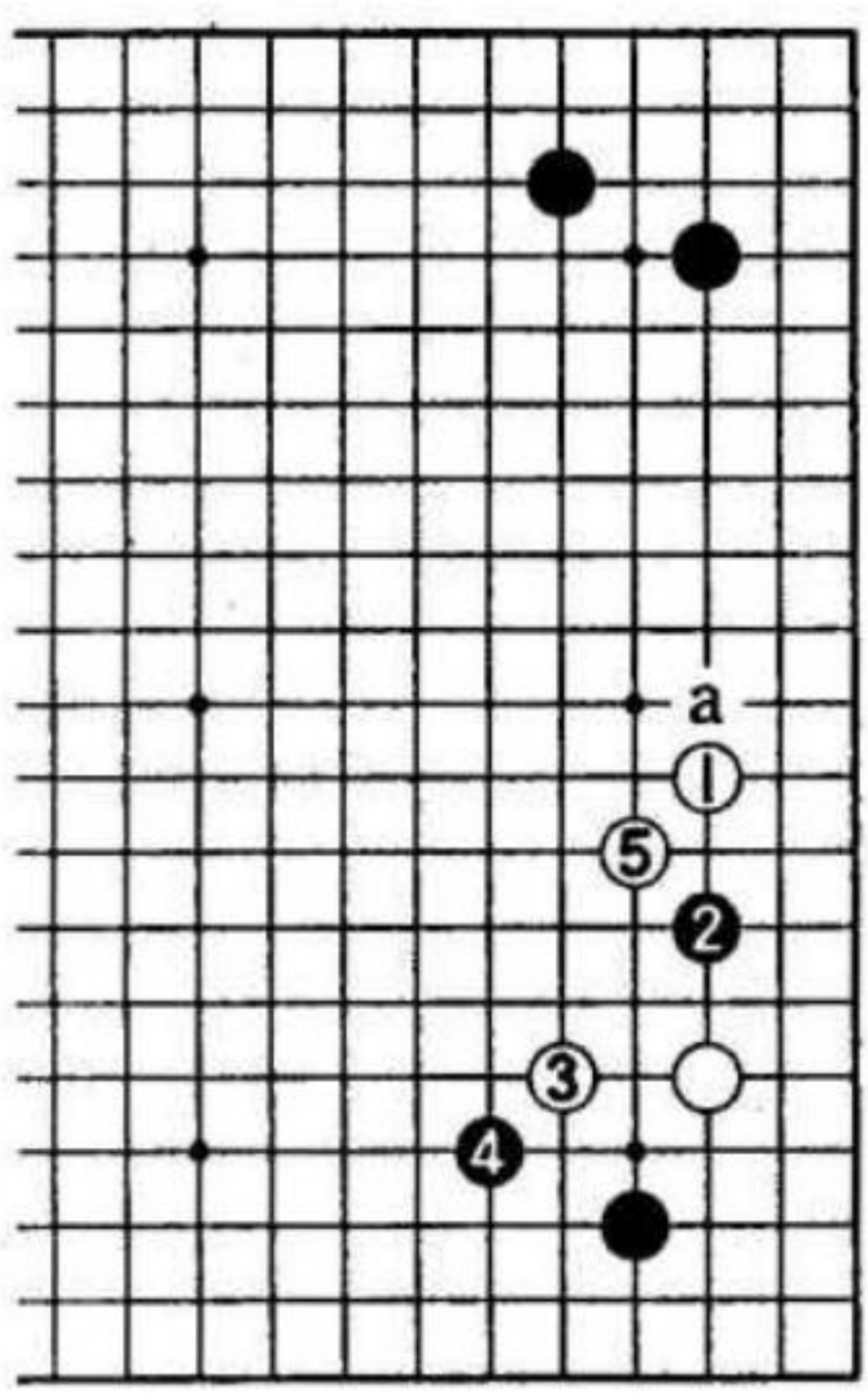
Dia. 15



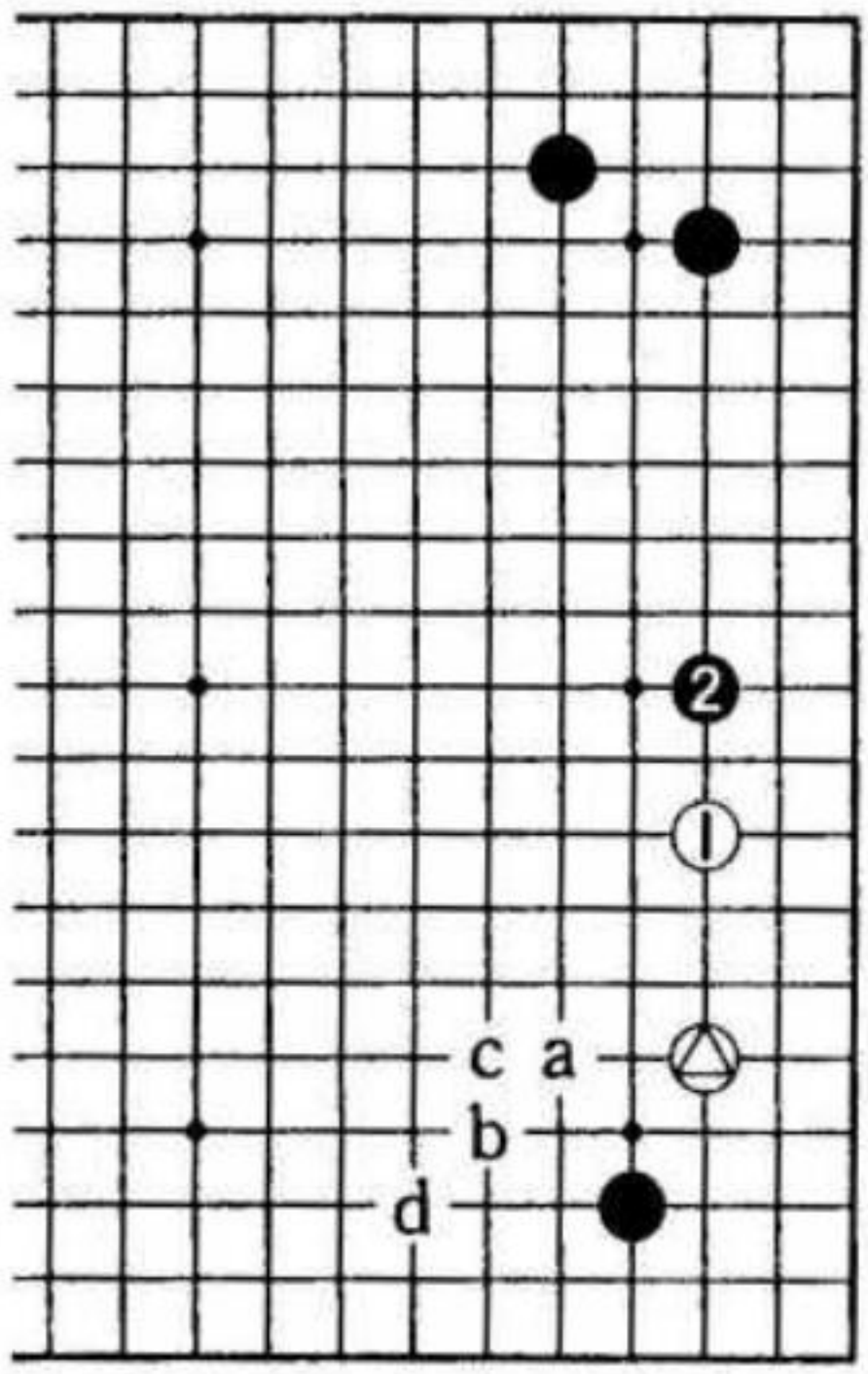
Dia. 16

Dia. 17: more solid

If extending to 'a' is quite safe, then White has even less to worry about when he makes the three-space extension to 1. If Black invades at 2, White exchanges 3 for 4, then immobilizes the black stone with 5.



Dia. 17



Dia. 18

Dia. 18: too solid

In this position, one can assume that Black will answer White 'a' at 'b' or White 'c' at 'd', so the marked white stone is stronger than it looks. That's why it has the ability to make a wide extension - White 1 is too solid. Black is the one who will be able to make a wide extension with 2.

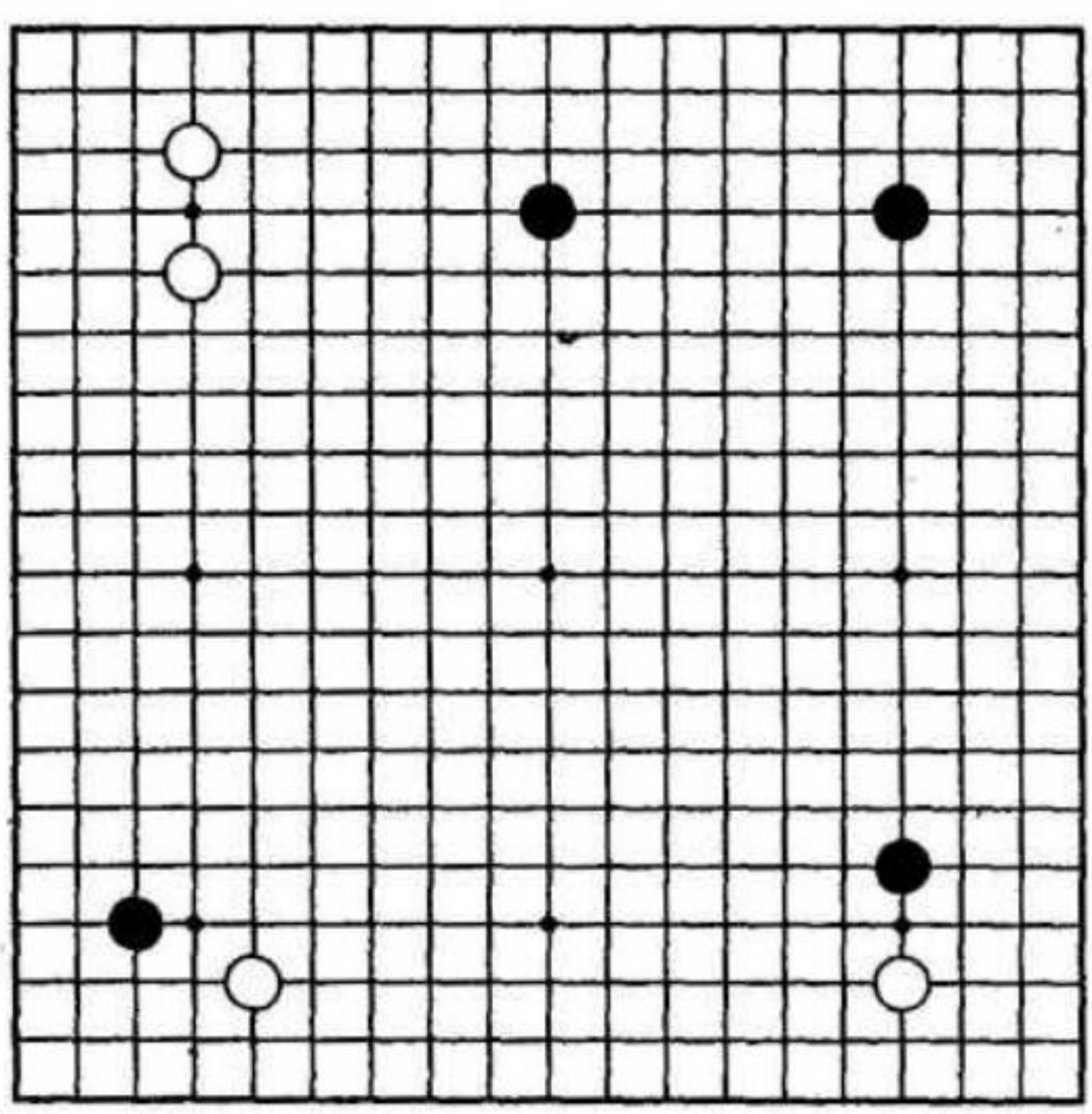
Principle 5
The 5-4 stone aims at outside influence

Focus on the bottom right corner

Each point in the corner has its own characteristics, but those of the 5-4 point are more marked than the others. It aims at outside influence. In this respect, the 3-5 point is similar.

The value of outside influence is hard for low-ranked players to grasp. As you gain experience in fighting, it becomes more apparent.

How should Black use his 5-4 stone in the bottom right corner to build up influence?



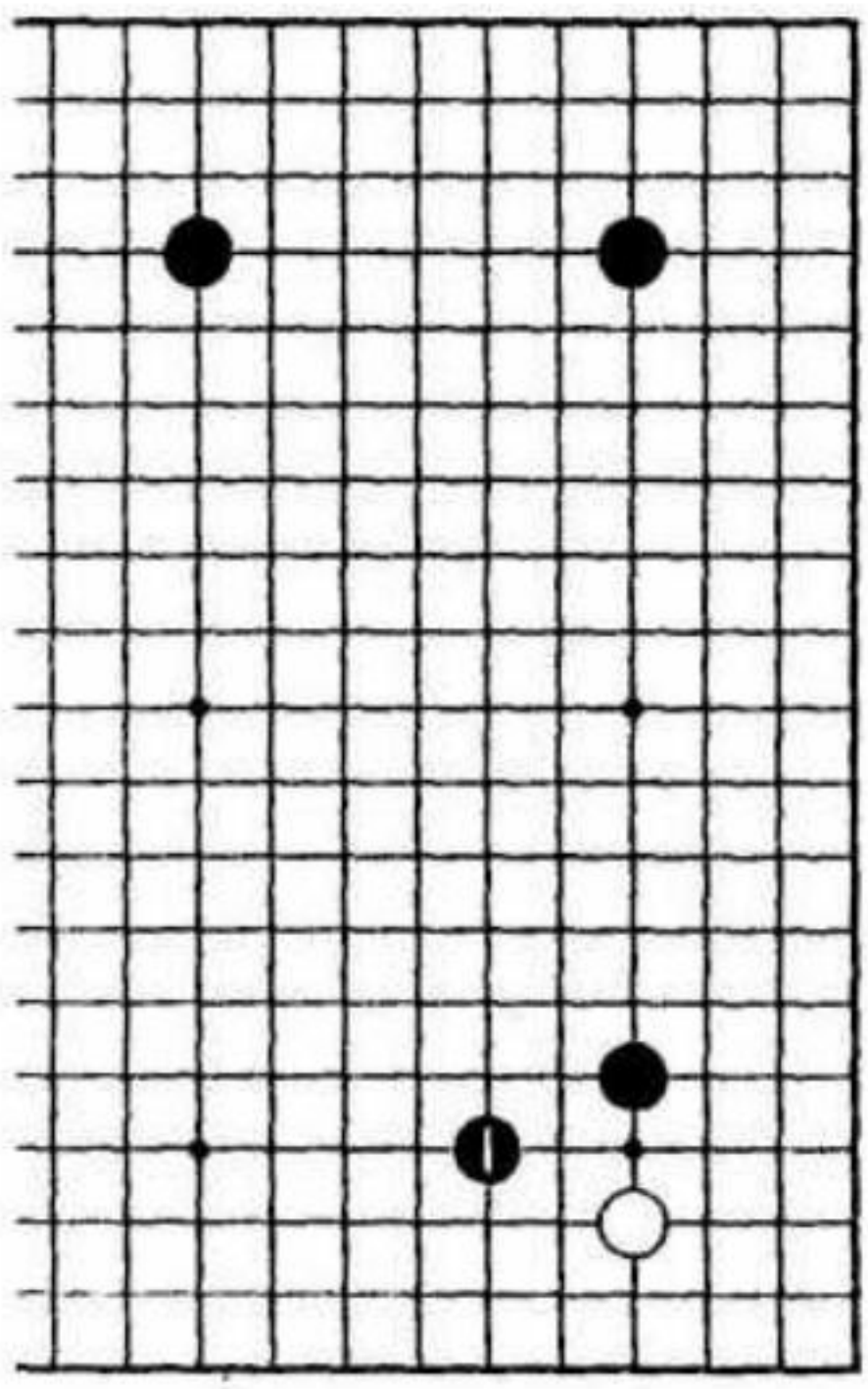
Theme diagram: Black to play
Focus on the bottom right corner

Dia. 1: applying pressure

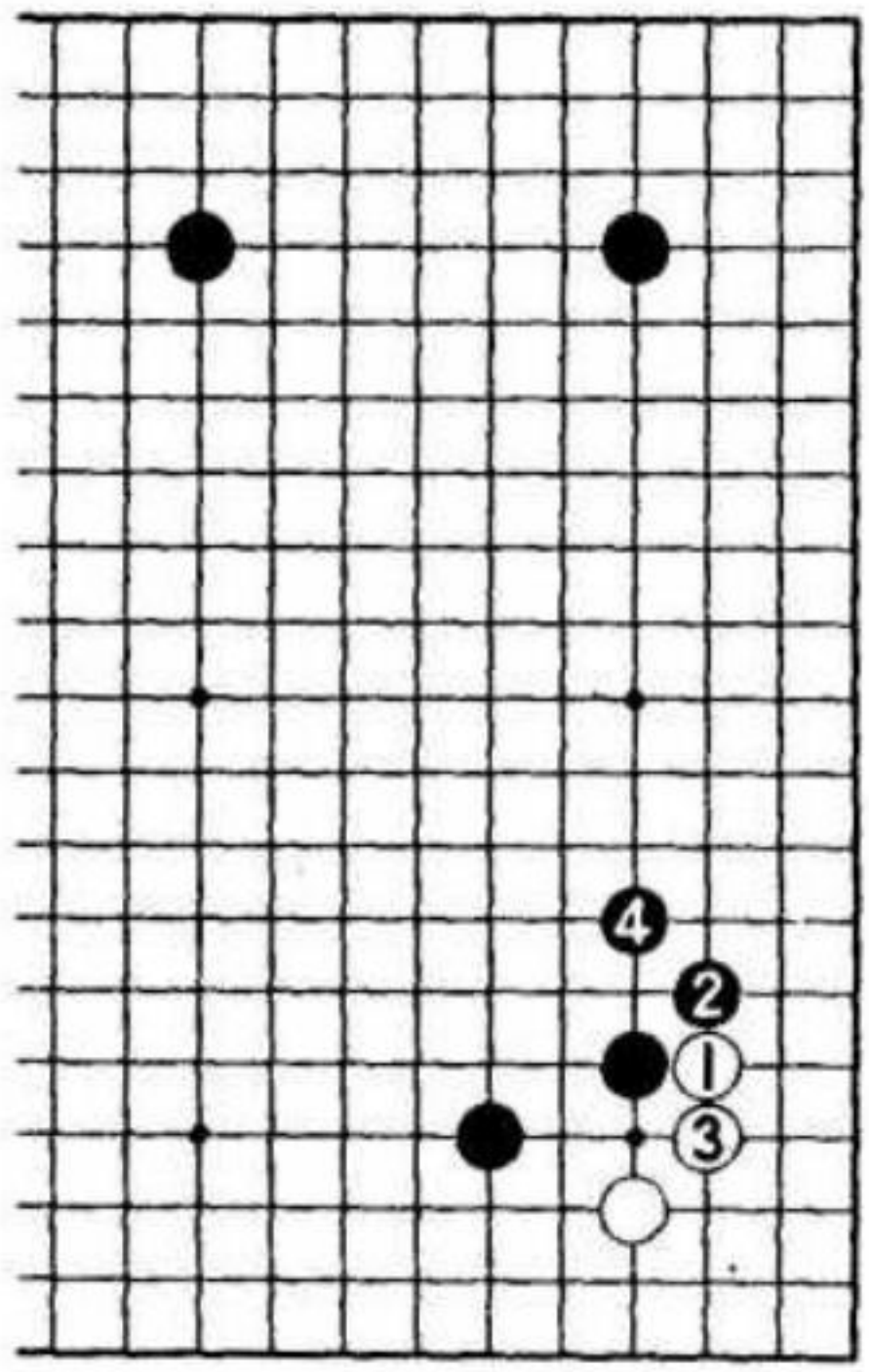
Black applies pressure with the knight's move of 1. This is the standard continuation from a 5-4 play. White's corner stone now feels lonely, so he will have to play something there. If he does, Black will build outside influence naturally.

Dia. 2: profit v. influence

White 1 and 3 are one technique for settling oneself in the corner. Black's diagonal connection of 4 builds influence facing the centre. However, White has secured about ten points of territory in the corner, so in the local context the result is equal.



Dia. 1



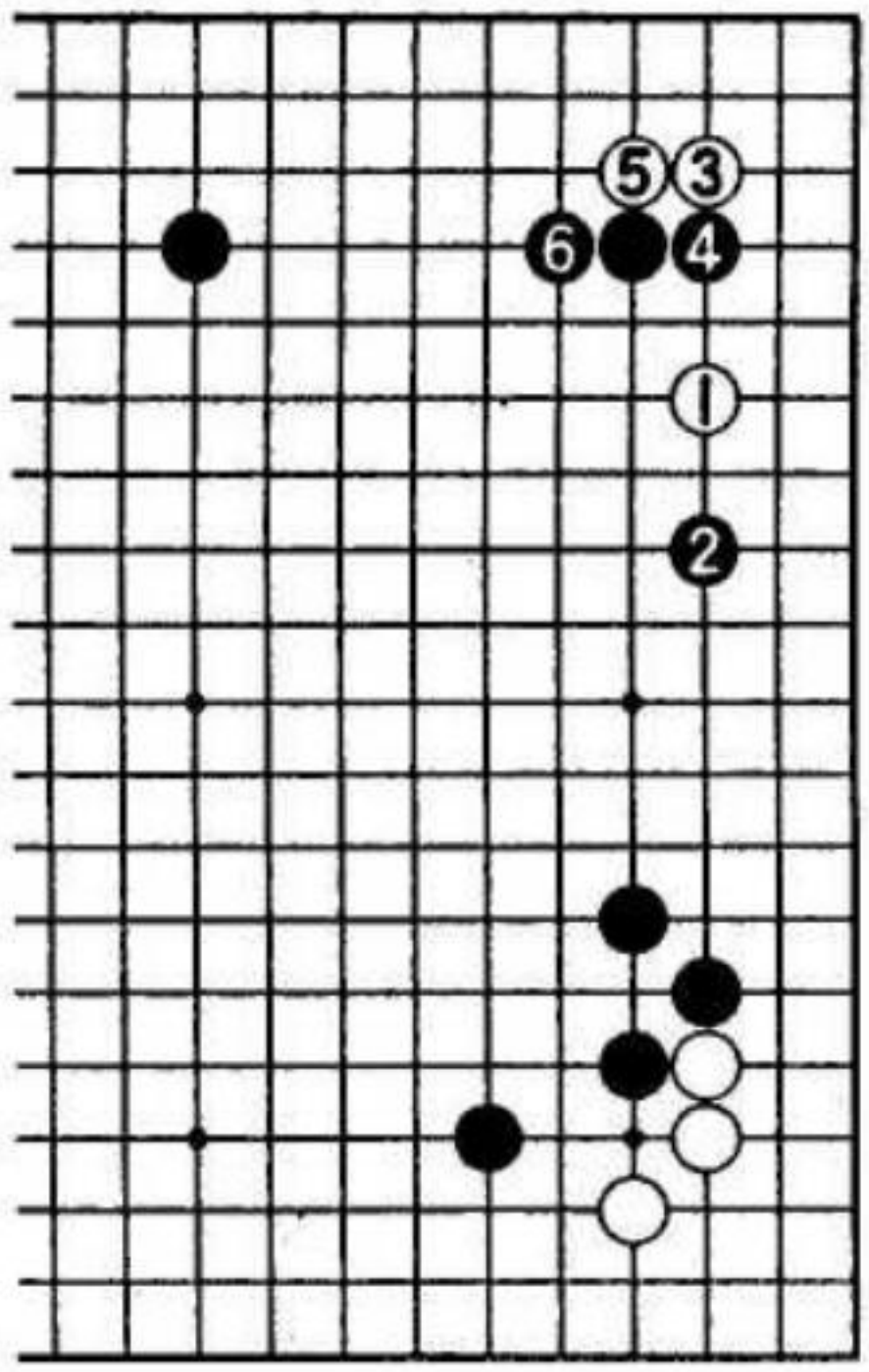
Dia. 2

Dia. 3: making use of influence

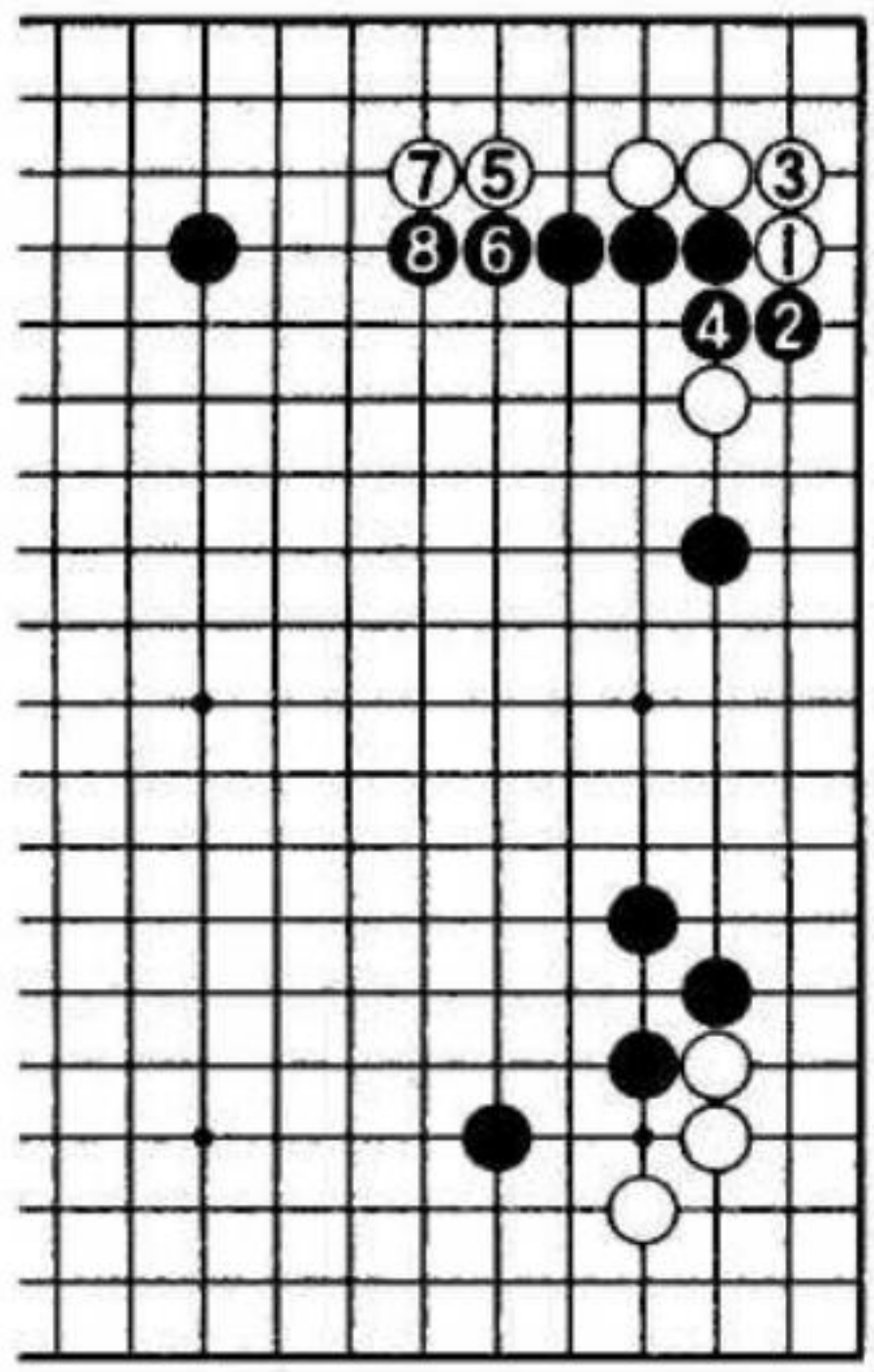
This is one example of how Black could make use of the influence he built up in *Dia. 2*. If White plays 1, Black makes the dose-up pincer of 2. If 3, he intercepts with 4, then -

Dia. 4: major influence.

The continuation to 5 is a corner joseki. Black continues by sealing White in with 6 and 8, thus building up large influence on the right side. Black will be very happy with this result.



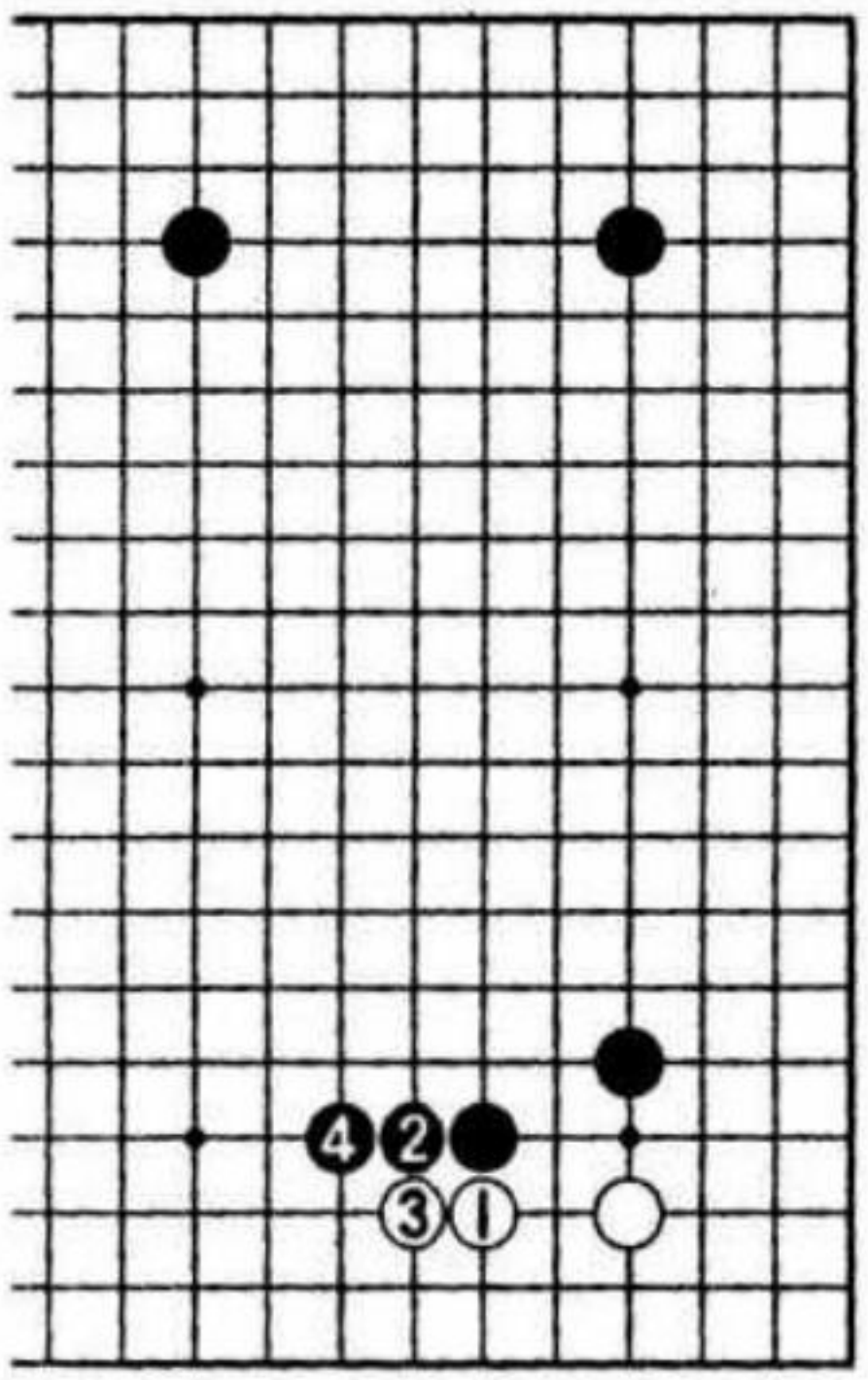
Dia. 3



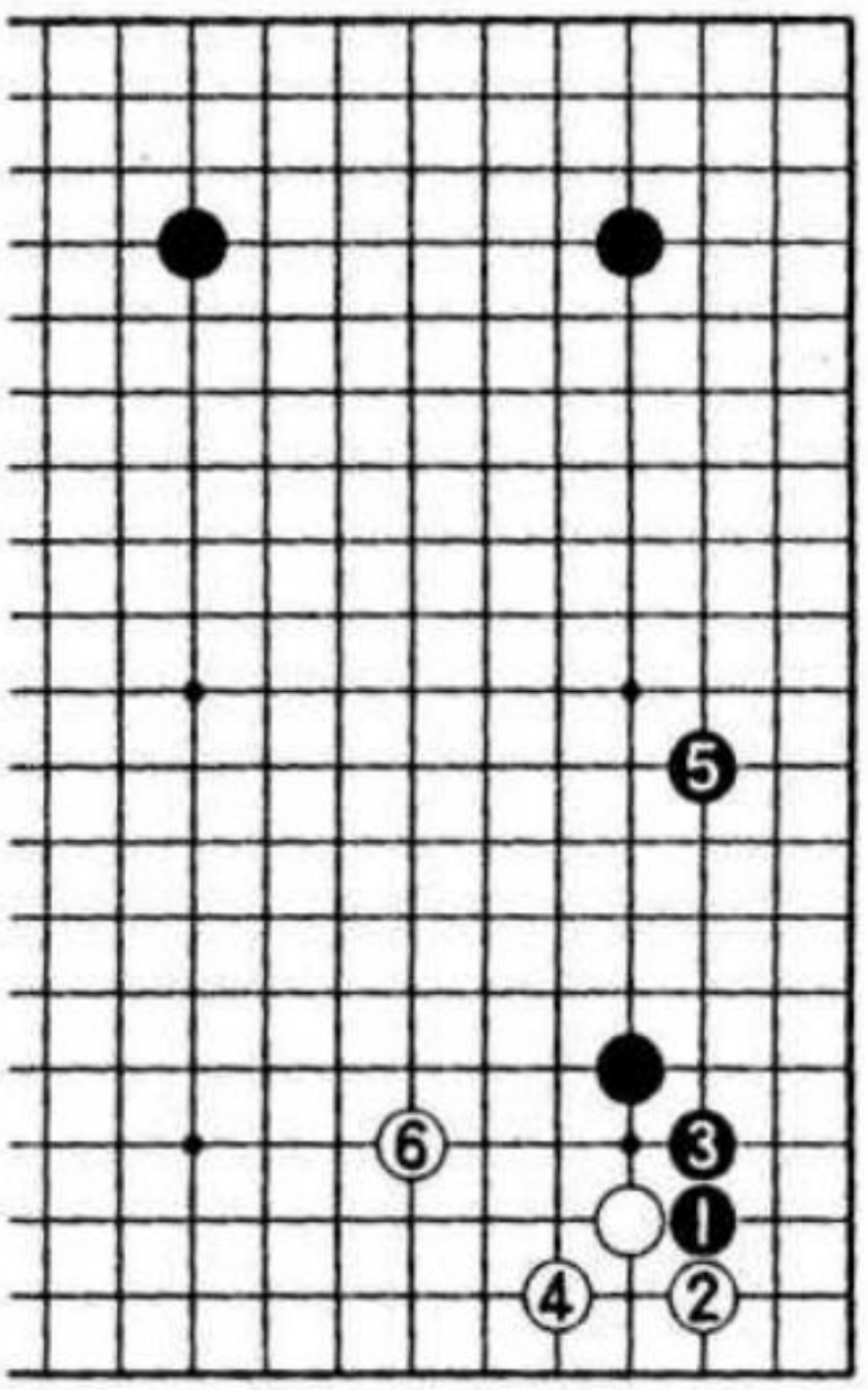
Dia. 4

Dia. 5: variation

White may try something different. Attaching at 1 is another way of stabilizing his corner stone. However, Black is still able to build outside influence with 2 and 4.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

Dia. 6: developing on the right

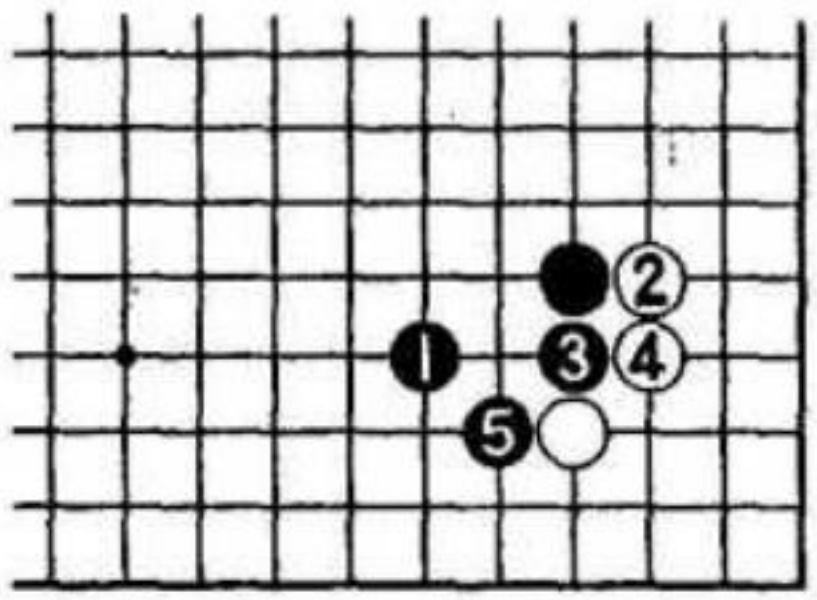
The 5-4 stone is not limited to building outside influence. Black can also build a base on the right side by attaching at 1.

Dia. 7. Black's variation

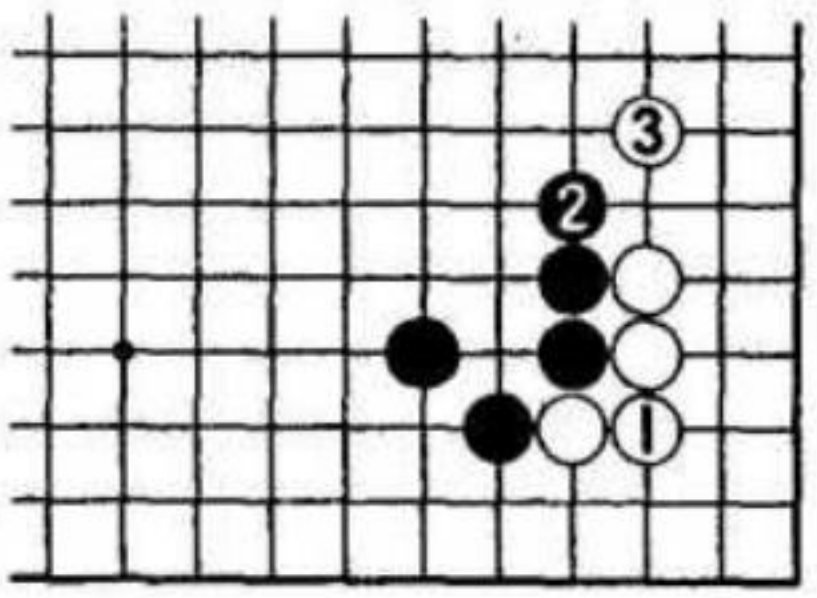
There are also other ways for Black to build outside influence. For example, he can answer White 2 by pushing down with 3 and 5. Next -

Dia. 8: developing towards the left

White 1 to 3 complete a division of profit and influence. Black's influence is directed towards the centre and the left.



Dia. 7



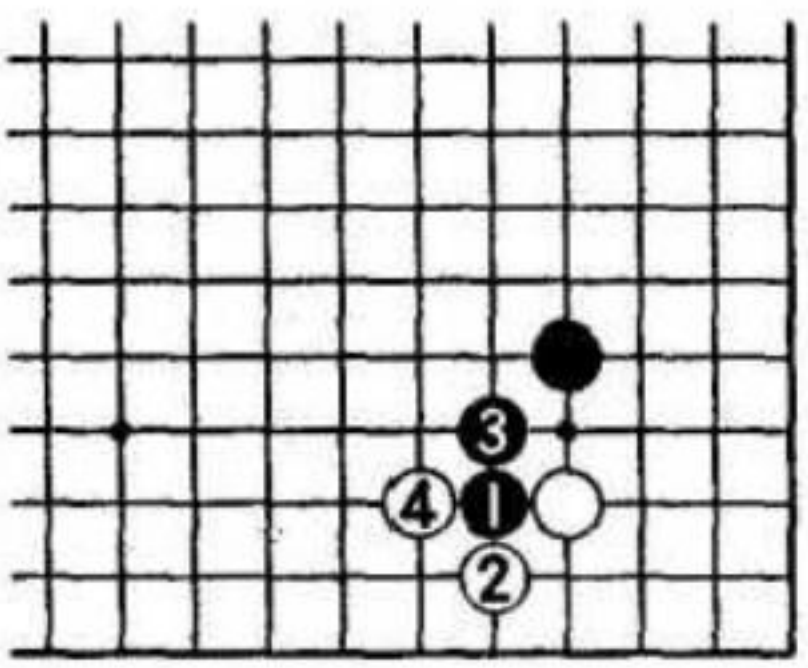
Dia. 8

Dia. 9

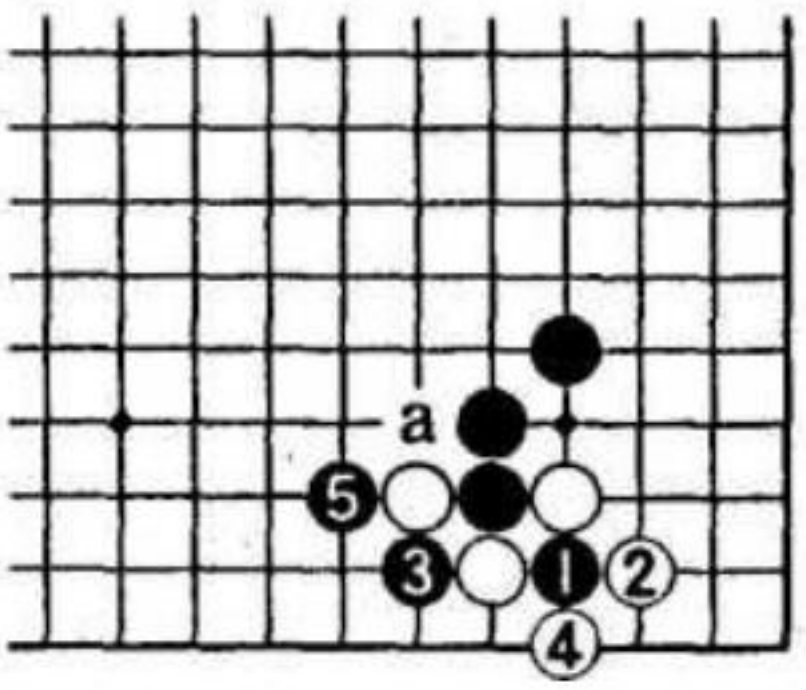
Attaching on the outside at 1 is another joseki. After 4 -

Dia. 10: ladder

Black sacrifices a stone at 1 and captures the outside white stone in a ladder. When he captures at 'a', he will have strong outside influence.



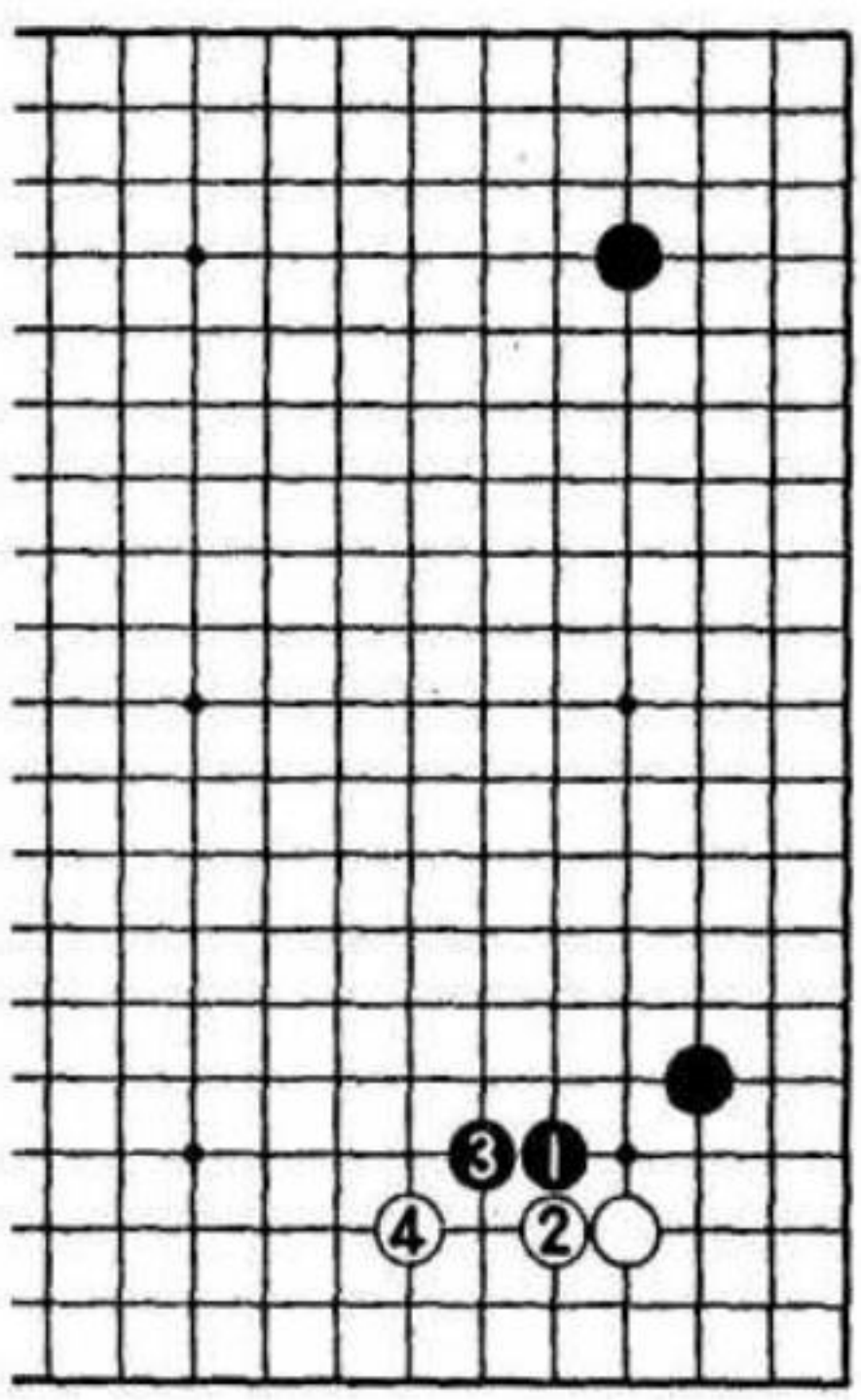
Dia. 9



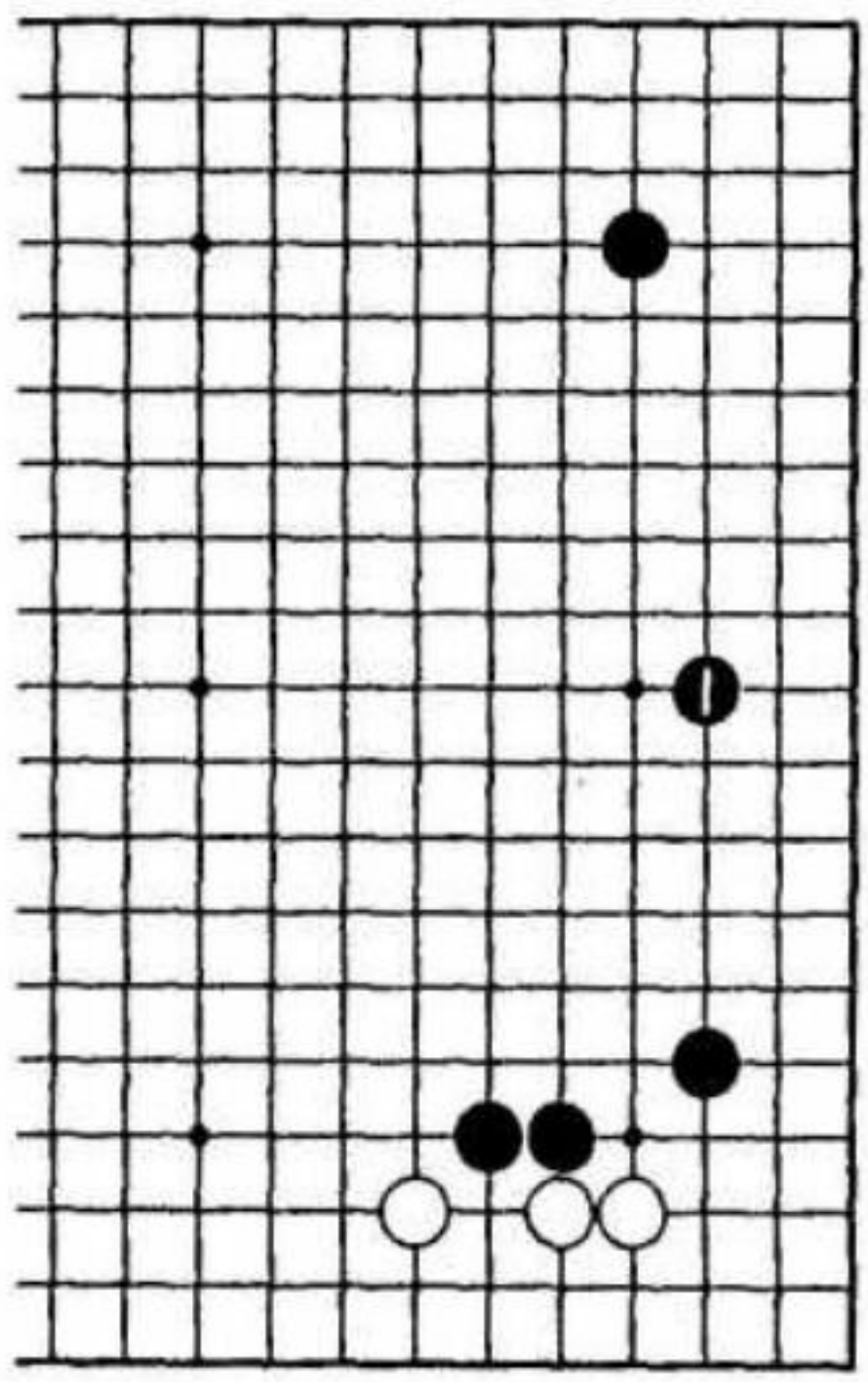
Dia. 10

Dia. 11: the nature of the 3-5 point

The 3-5 point is also suited to building outside influence. For example, if White has played a move on the 3-4 point, Black can press down on him with 1 and 3. The moves to 4 are a set pattern. Next -



Dia. 11



Dia. 12

Dia. 12: a necessary extension

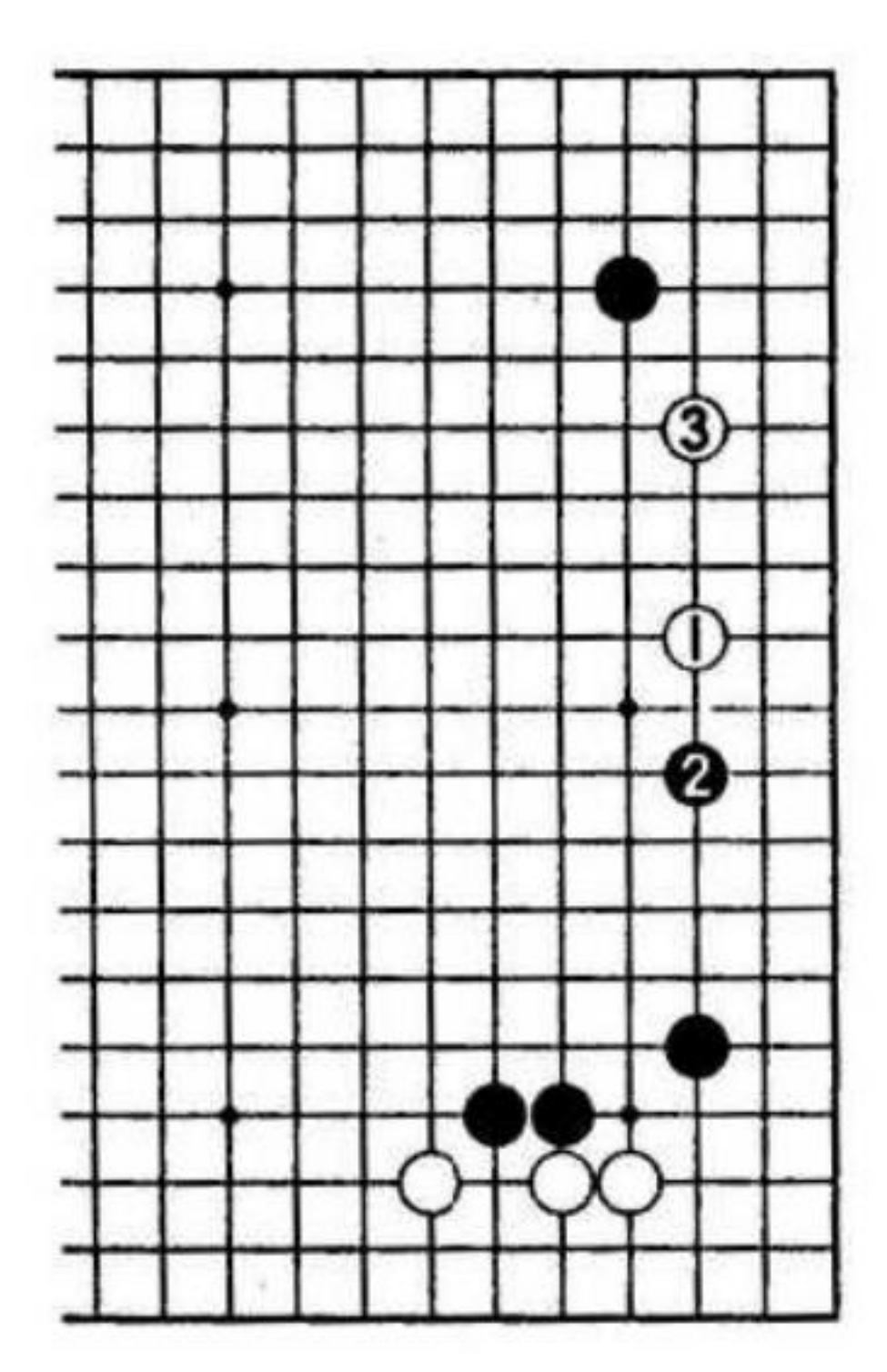
Black should continue by extending to 1. The reason is that the right side area is a little too wide, so Black's outside influence is too loose. The truth of this is easy to demonstrate. If Black omits 1-

Dia. 13: too cramped

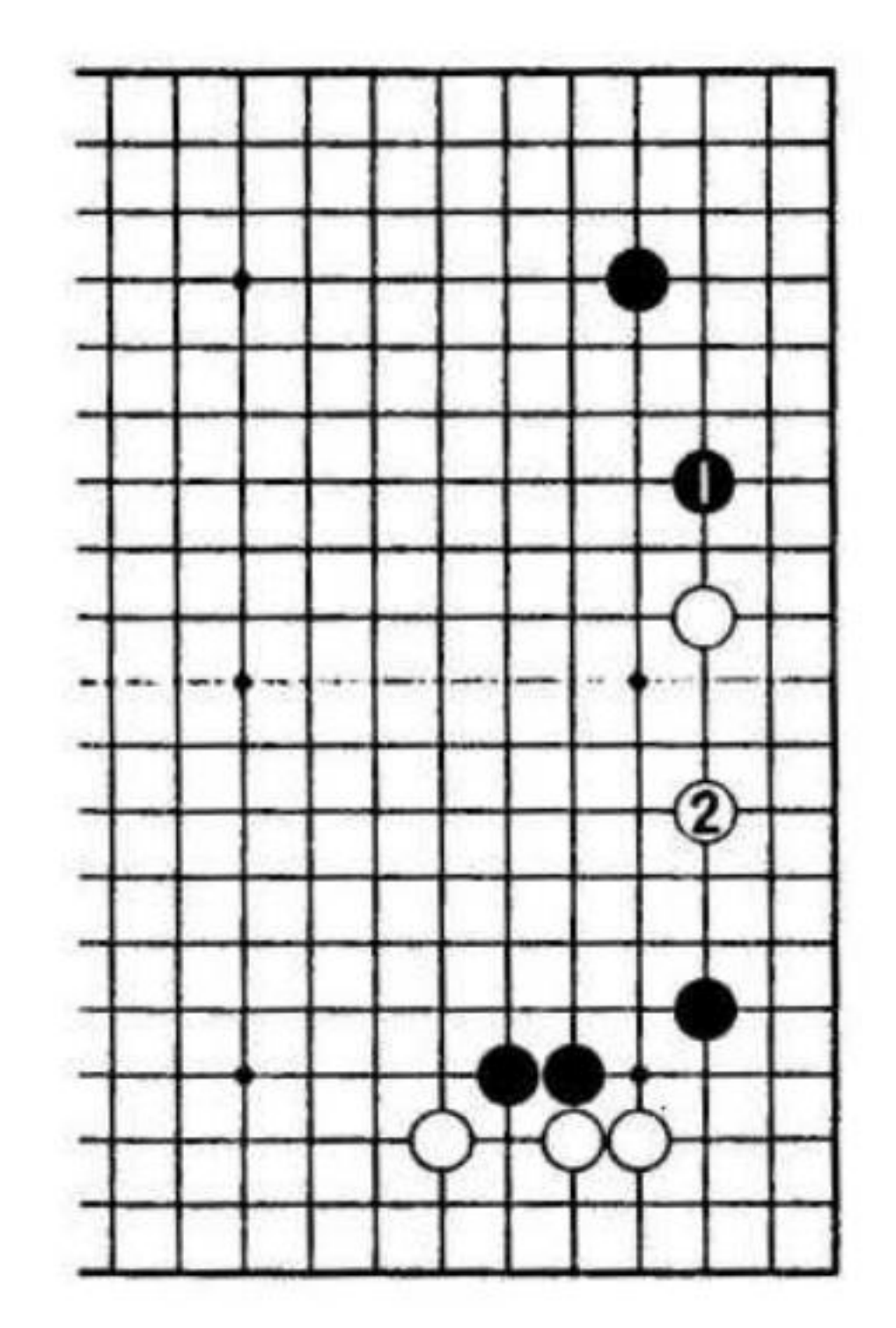
What happens if White is allowed to play 1 first? The only extension Black can make from the bottom is the three-space one of 2, which is too narrow to make effective use of his outside thickness. White has room to extend to 3, so Black can't make much of an attack on him.

Dia. 14: immune to attack

Attacking from the top with 1 is not an improvement. When White extends to 2, Black won't be able to use his influence below to mount an attack In fact, if he doesn't watch out, he will be the one to come under attack.



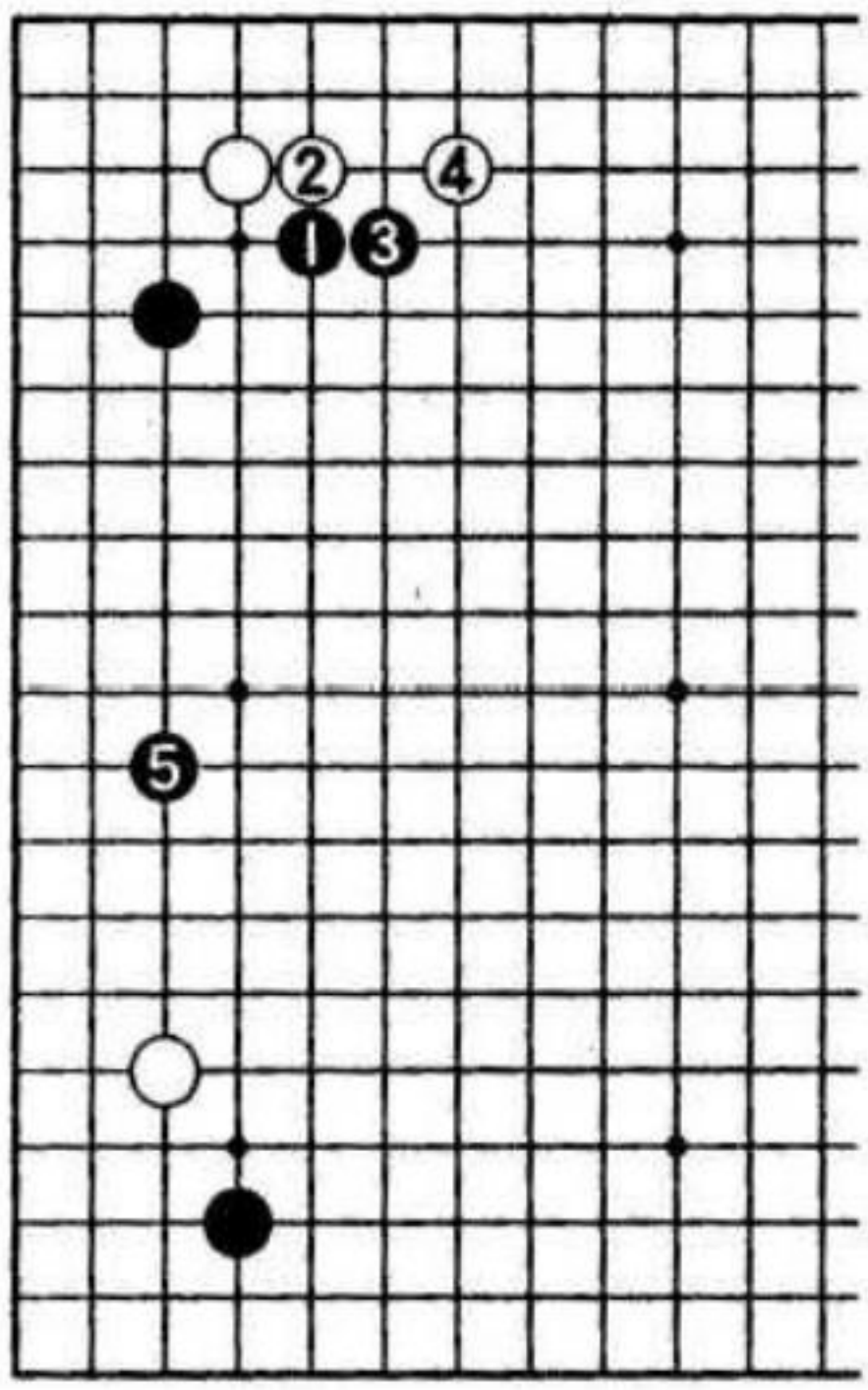
Dia. 13



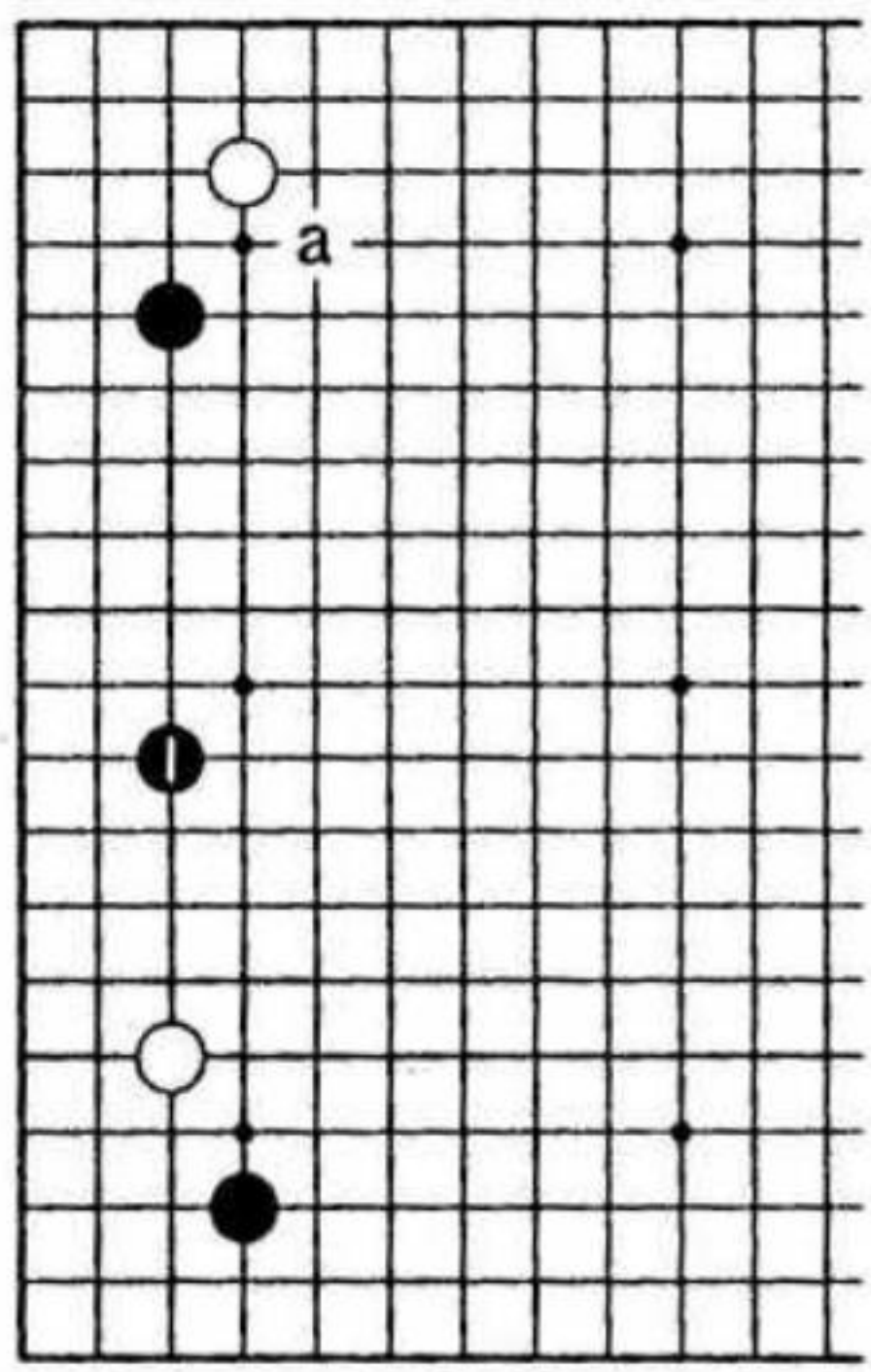
Dia. 14

Dia. 15: a consistent strategy

This is an example of how to make effective use of influence based on a 5-3 stone. Black first builds his influence with 1 and 3, then attacks with 5, a combination extension and pincer. He is following a consistent strategy.



Dia. 15



Dia. 16

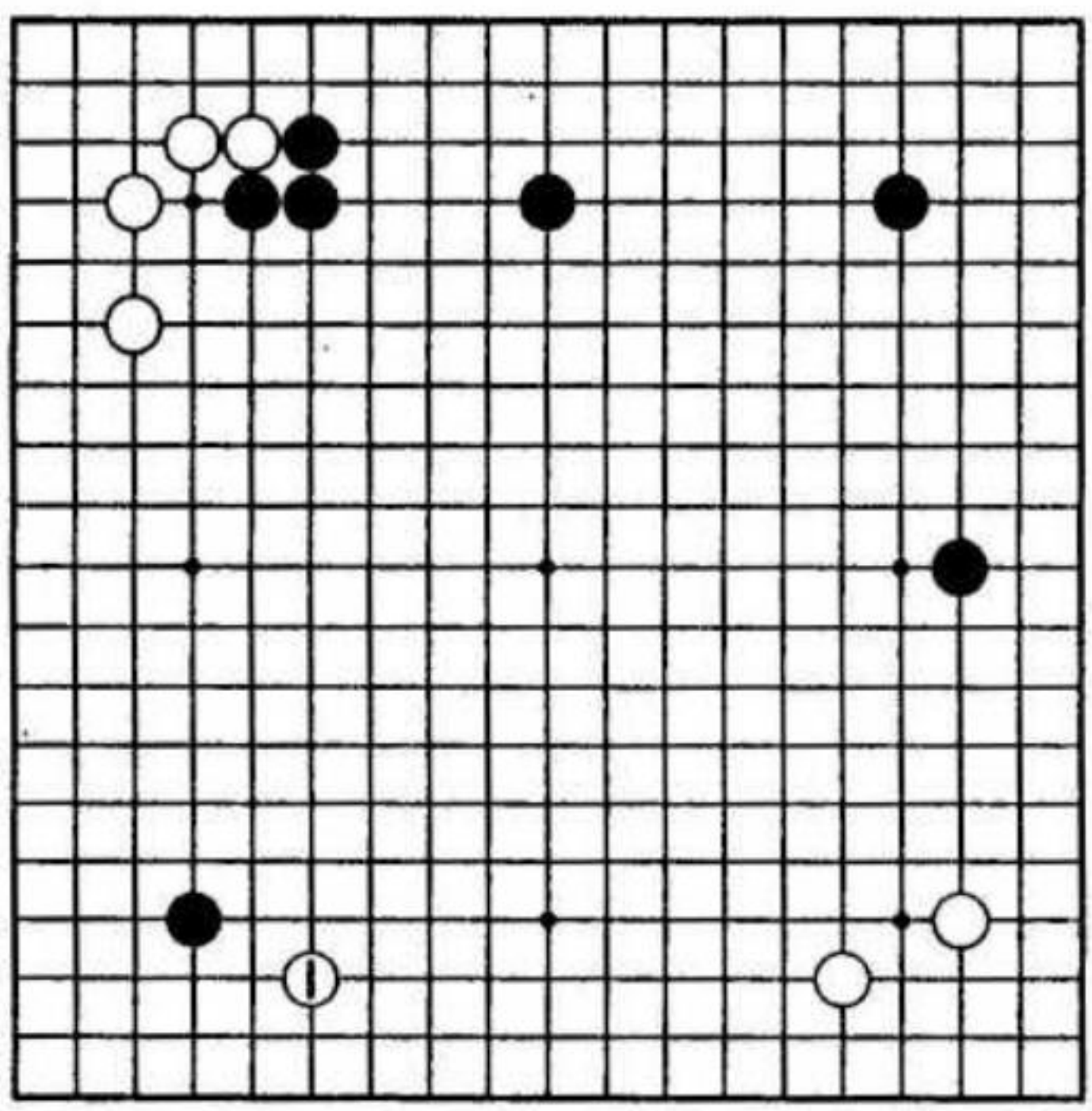
Dia. 16: keeping in reserve

Black's strategy here has something in common with his strategy in the previous diagram, though it is more high-level. He pincers at 1 immediately, keeping the pressing move of 'a' in reserve. Doing so creates a more open game, with more possibilities for variation.

Principle 6
The 4th line is the line of development, the 3rd line the line of completion

Positions are usually established on the 3rd and 4th lines in the fuseki, so it is important to be aware of the difference between them. The difference of just one line can completely change the development of a game.

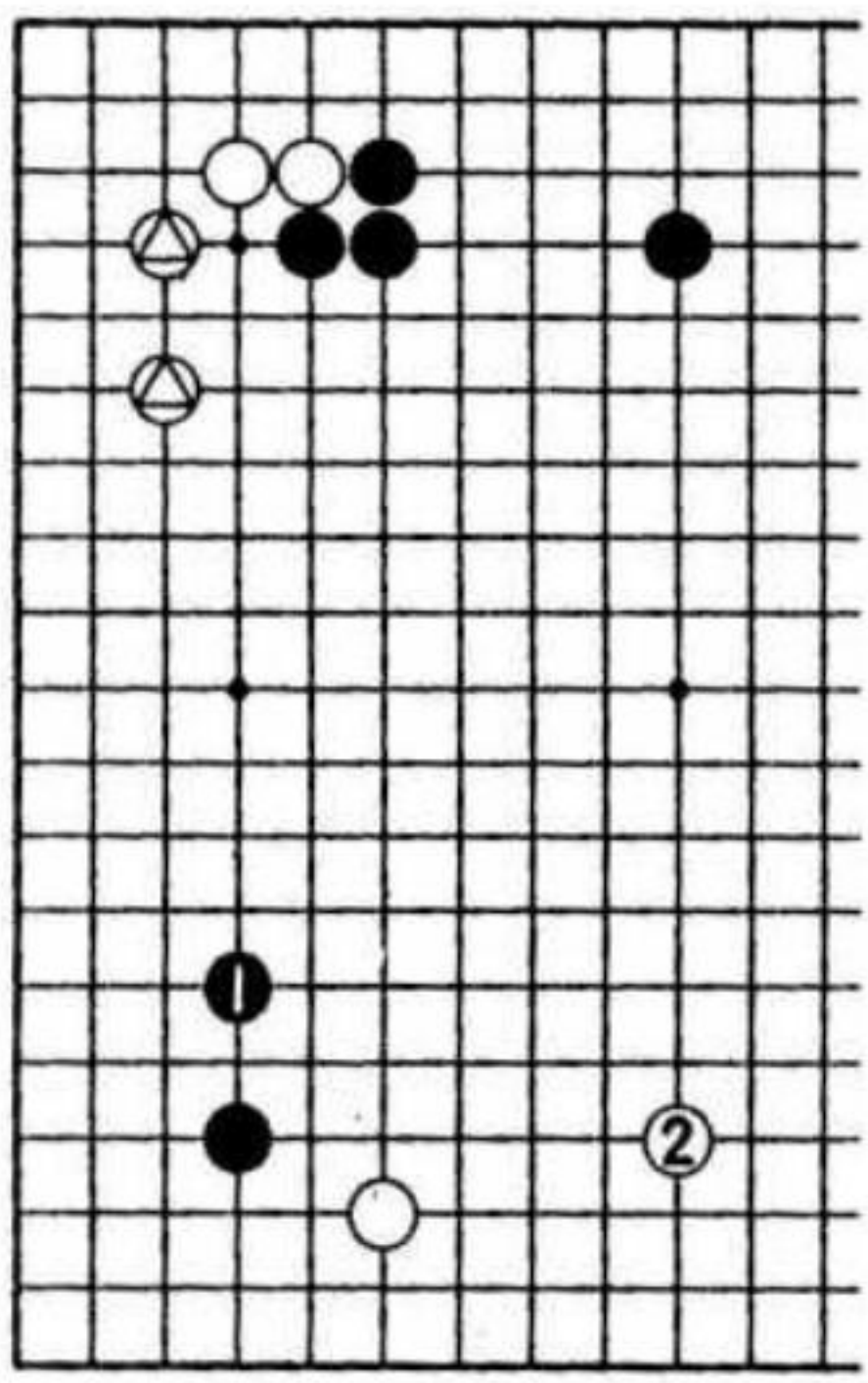
White has just played at 1. How should Black play if he wants to defend his star-point stone? You should take into account the position on the top left.



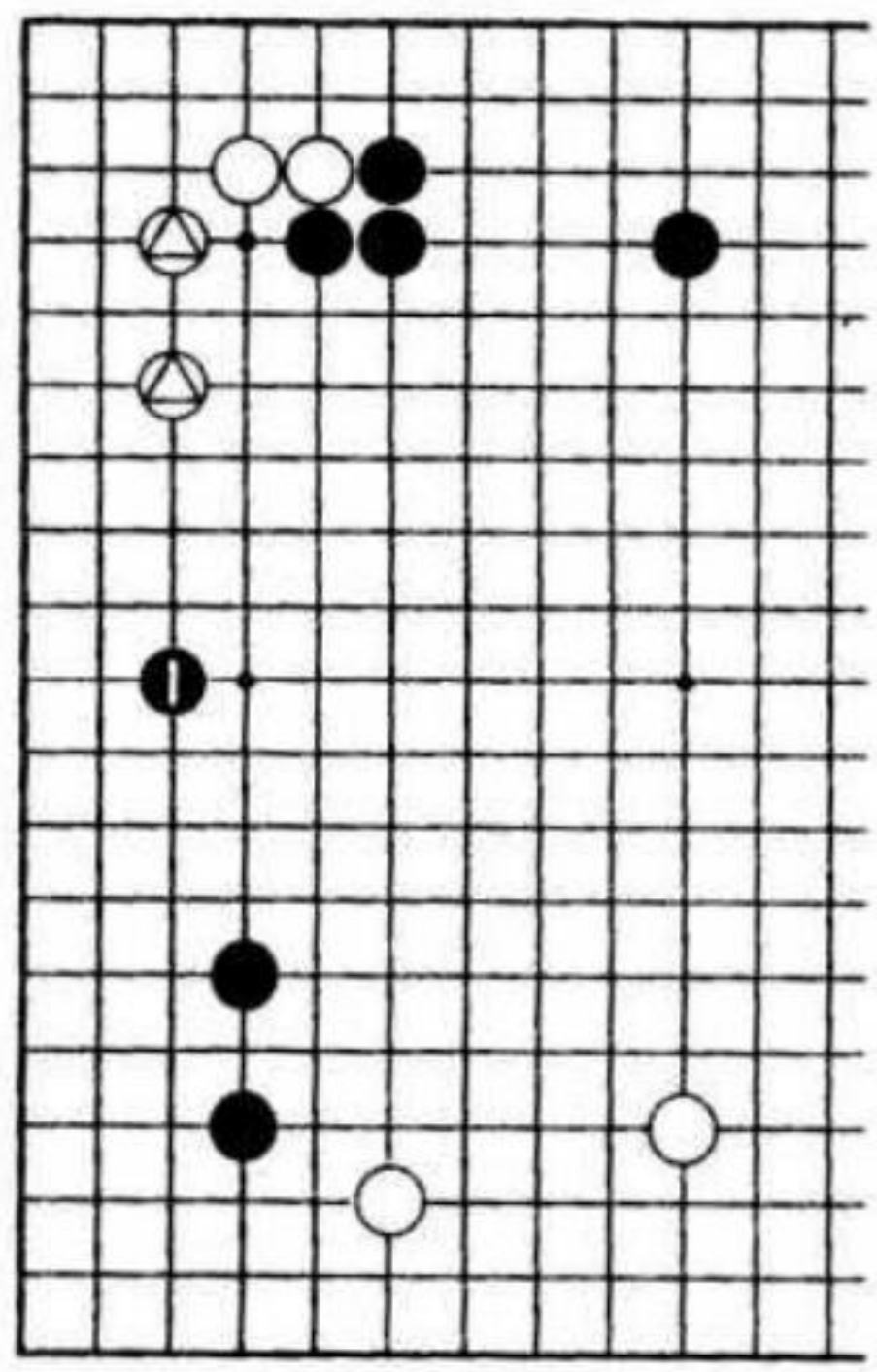
Theme diagram
Focus on the top left

Dia. l: the drawback for Black?

The important point to bear in mind in this game is the low, solid position of the two marked stones in the top left corner. First, let's assume Black plays 1 and White takes up position with 2. What problem is left behind on the left side?



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2: potential for development

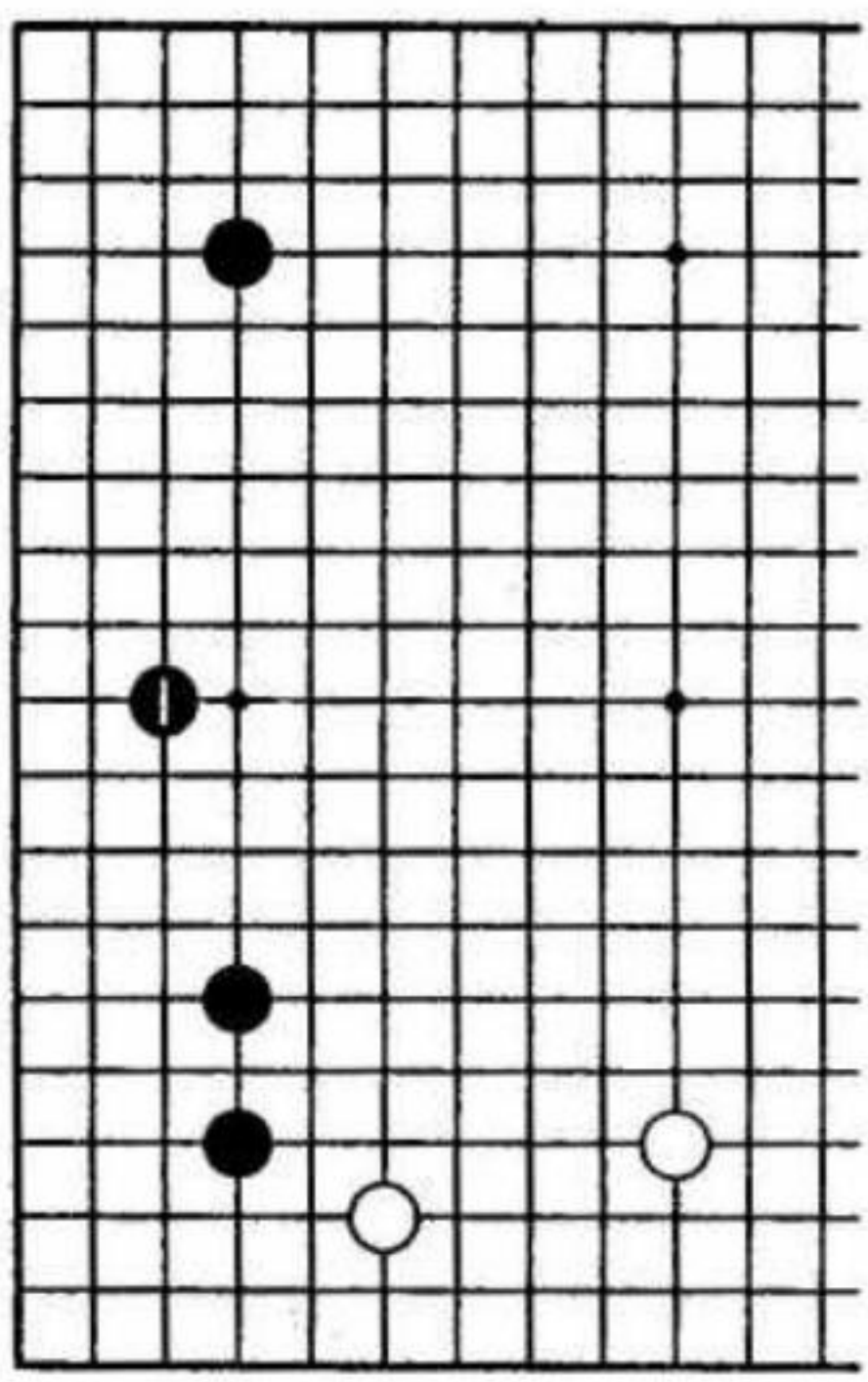
When he has made a one-space jump from the star-point stone, Black naturally wants to continue by extending to 1. However, the presence of the marked white stones means that there's no potential for further development up the left side. In other words, Black 1 is a move with little future.

Dia. 3: dual potential

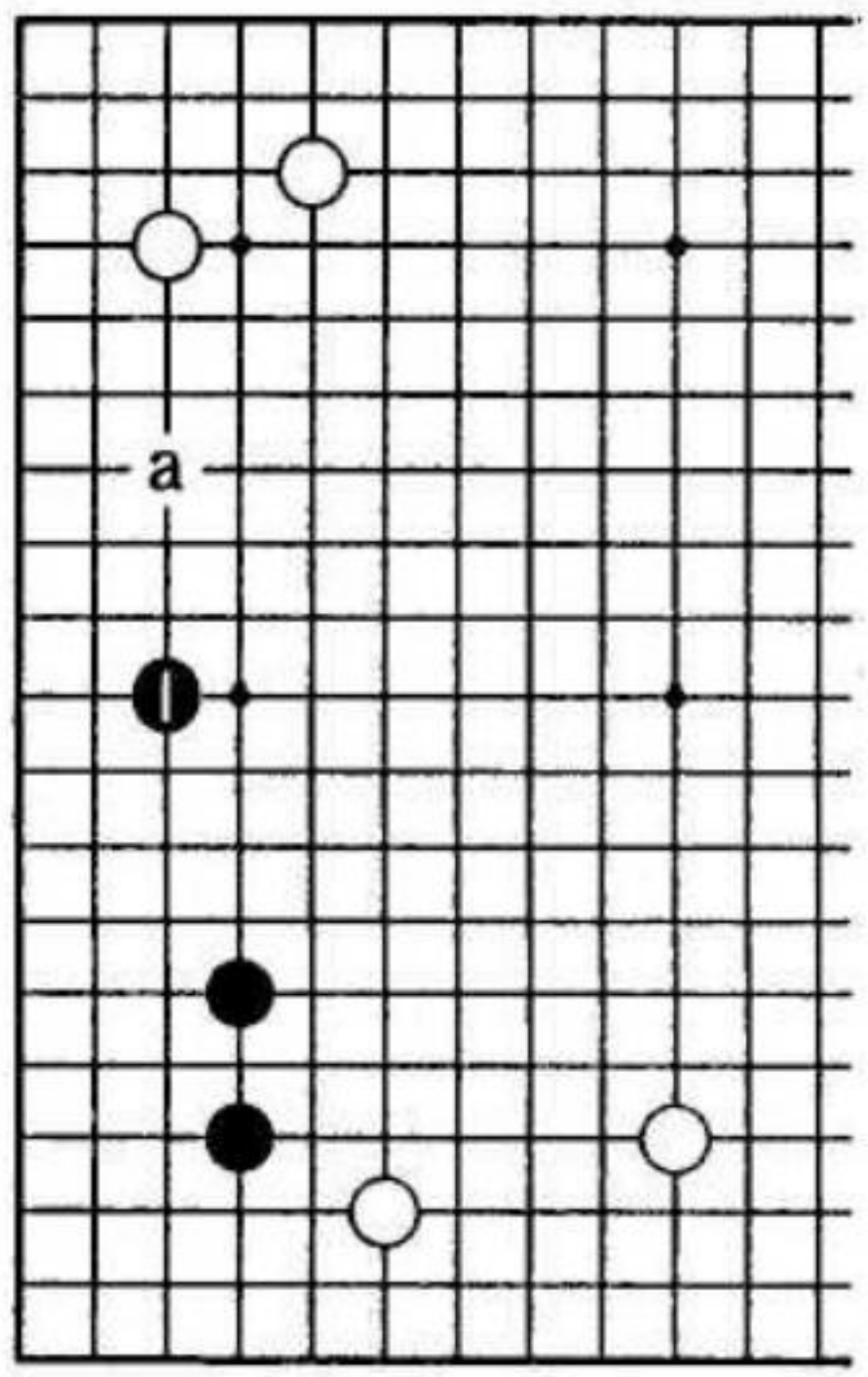
How do we determine if a side extension has potential? Black 1 is the same as 1 in *Dia. 2*, but its also an extension from the black stone at the top. That makes it doubly efficient. It has much richer future potential.

Dia. 4: a key point

How about this extension? Since his enclosure at the top is facing down the side, White would also like to extend to this point. That makes 1 a key point, so it is a large extension. Moreover, Black has potential for further expansion with 'a'.



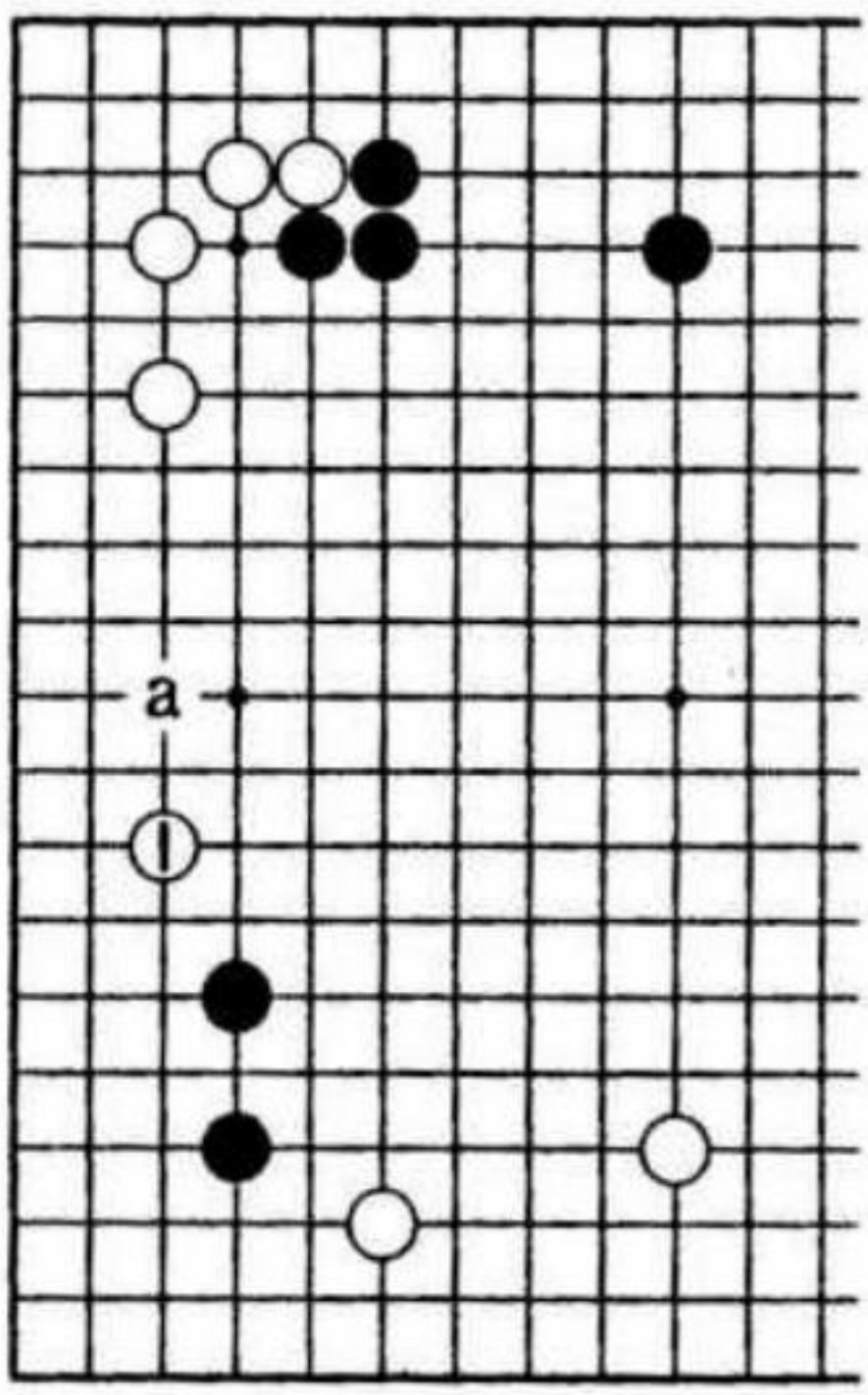
Dia. 3



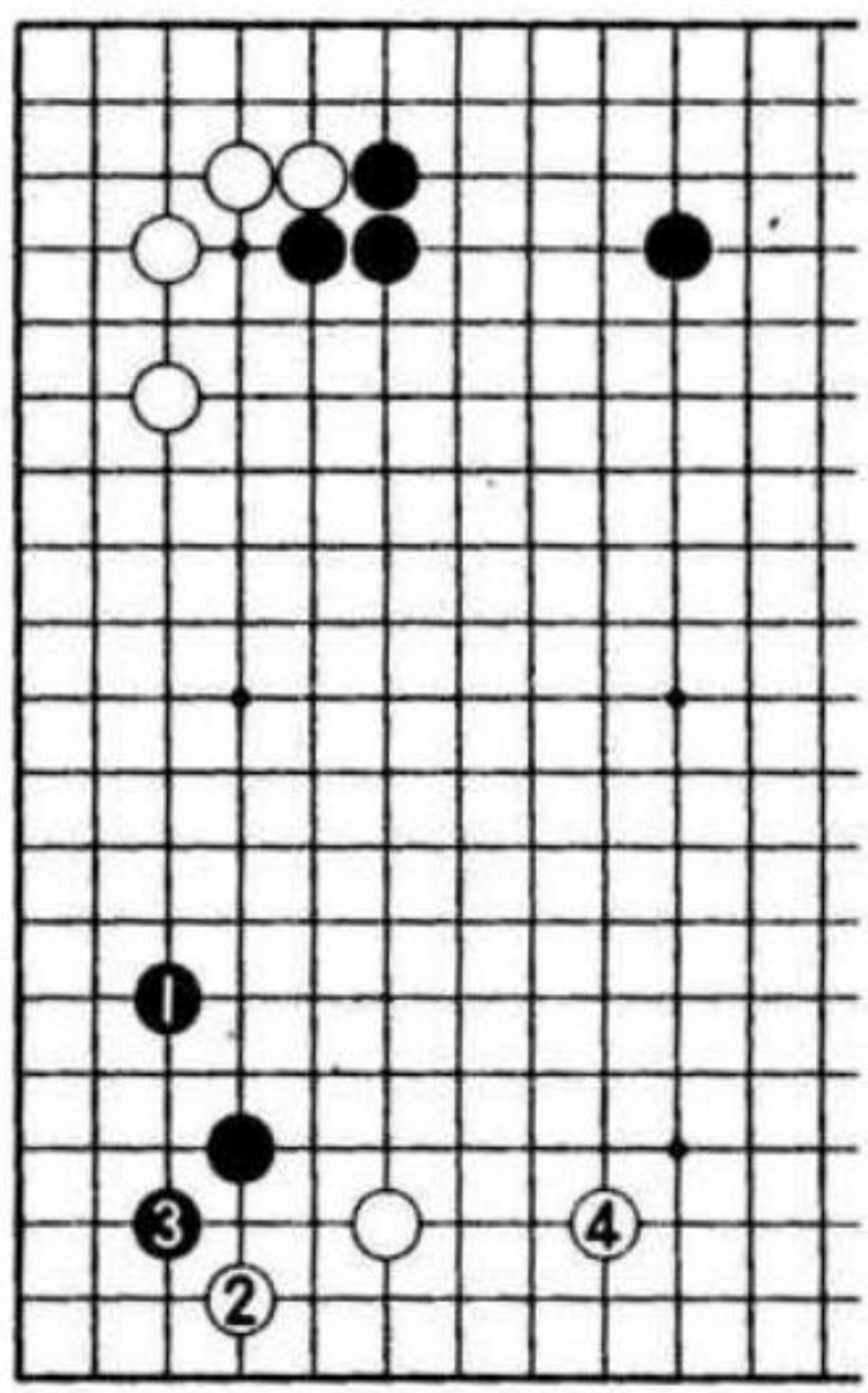
Dia. 4

Dia. 5: floating

To go back to the position in the theme diagram, we established that the value of a black extension to 'a' is a little on the low side, yet if Black doesn't play something, white will play at 1. Black finds that his corner enclosure is floating, which is a little worrying.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

Dia. 6: the correct enclosure

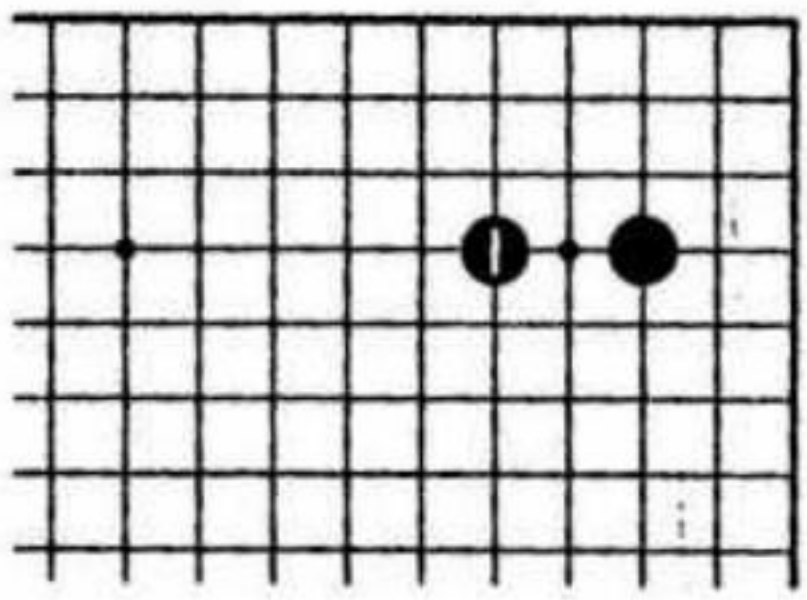
That means that the original one-space move was dubious. How about the low move of 1? If White 2 and 4, the exchange here comes to a dose. Black's position is solid and settled, giving his group stability.

Dia. 7. the one-space enclosure

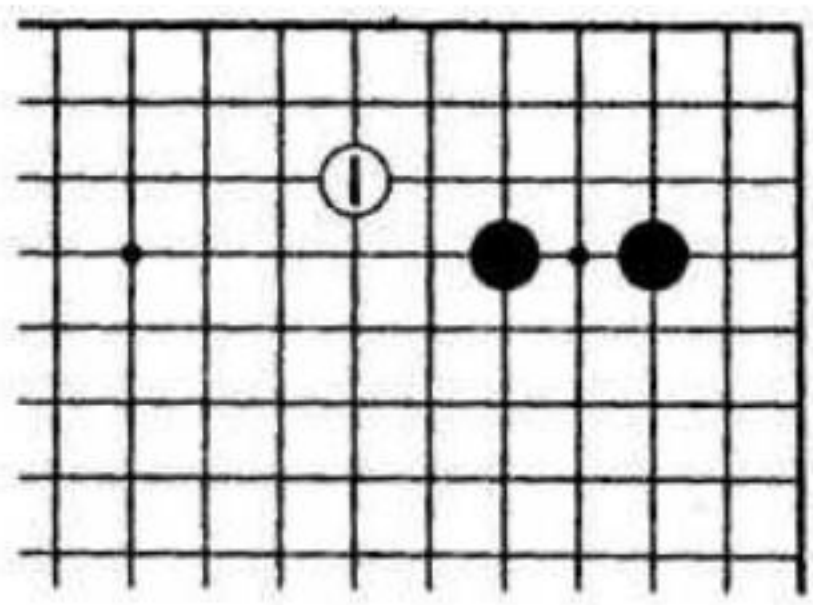
Let's look at the differences between the 3rd and 4th line as they concern the corner. First, the high enclosure of Black 1.

Dia. 8: the weak point

The weaknesses of the one-space enclosure become apparent when White extends to 1.



Dia. 7



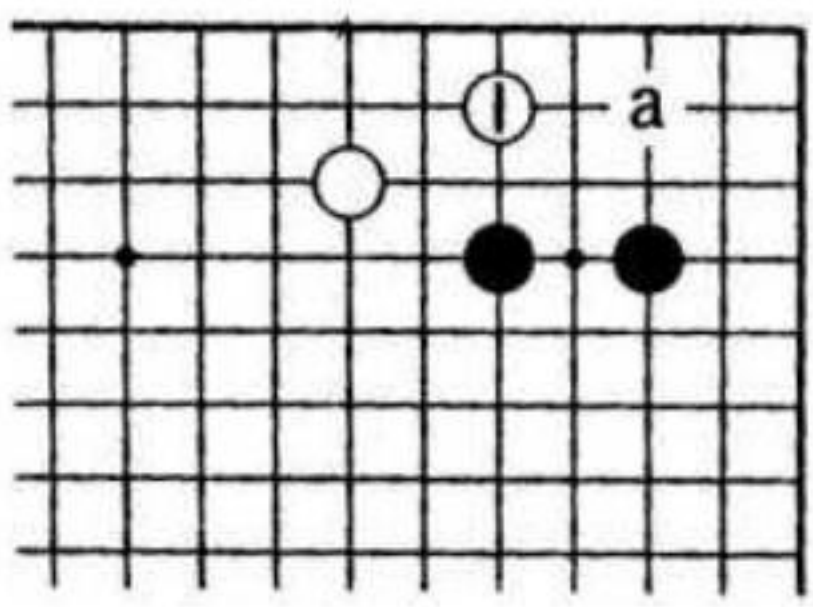
Dia. 8

Dia. 9: scooping out Black's base

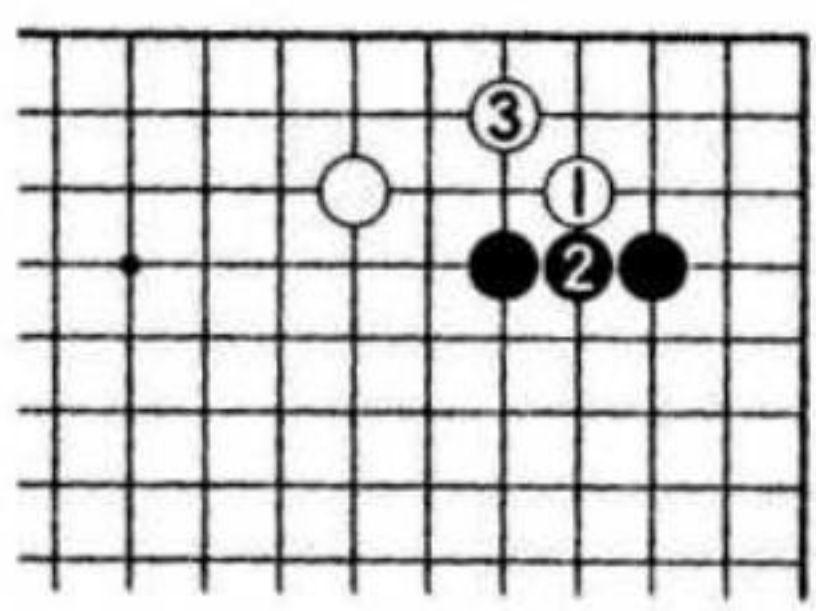
White can scoop out Black's base by sliding to 1. Black could defend at 'a', of course, but his corner territory has been considerably reduced.

Dia. 10: the peep

An alternative strategy for White is to start with the peep of 1.



Dia. 9



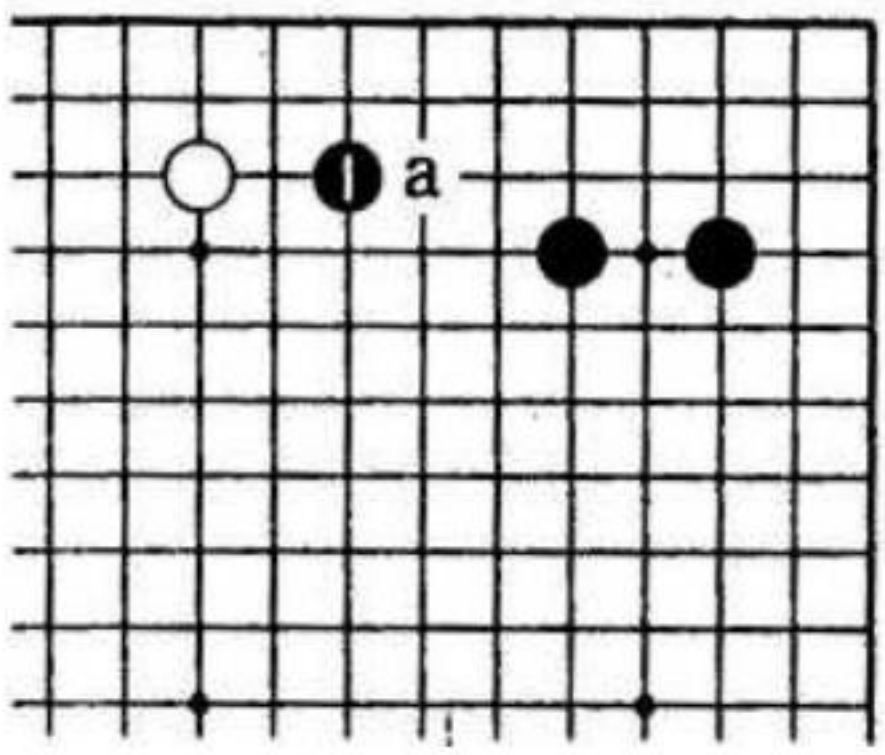
Dia. 10

Dia. 11: defending the weak point

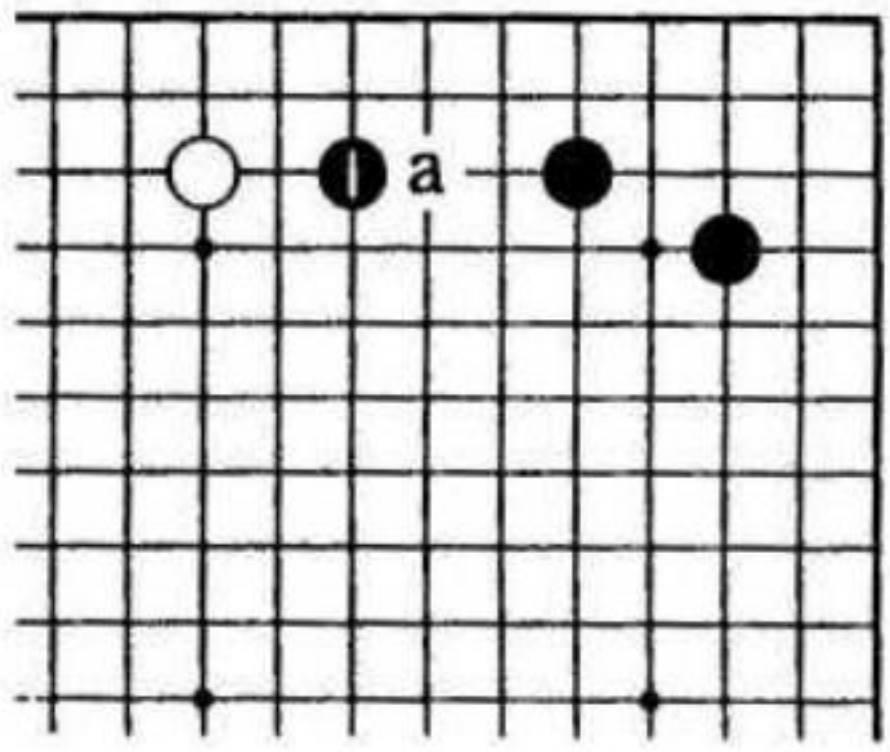
Black 1 becomes a big territorial move, as it prevents White from exploiting Black's weaknesses with a move at 'a'.

Dia. 12: non-urgent.

In the case of the knight-move enclosure, there are no corner weaknesses to exploit even if White plays 'a', so Black 1 is not as urgent as in the previous diagram.



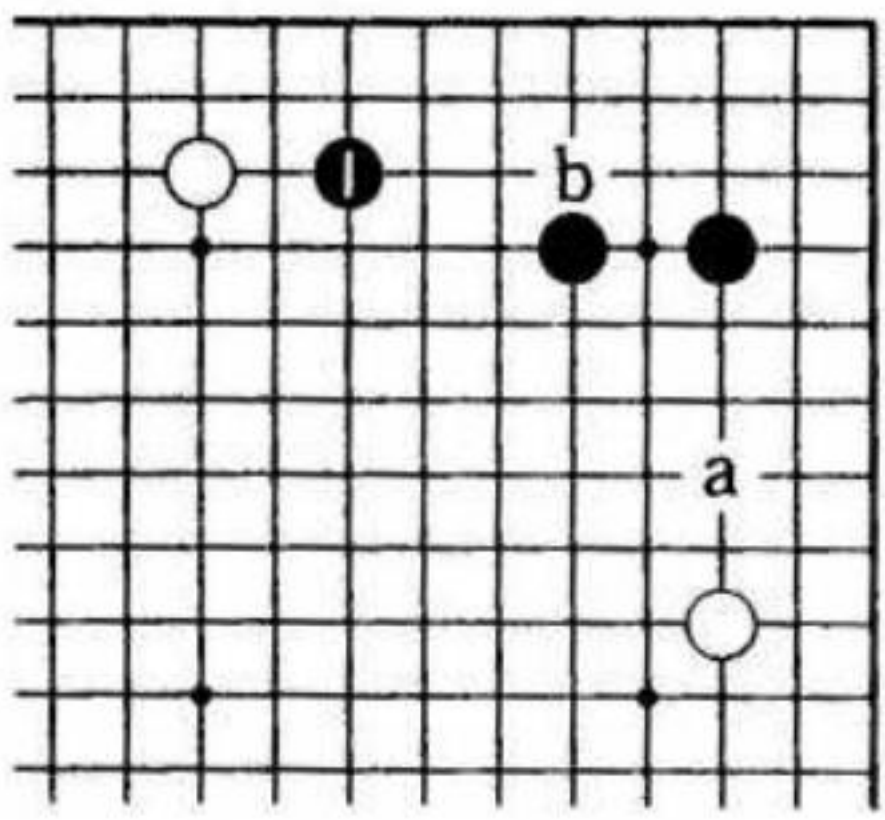
Dia. 11



Dia. 12

Dia. 13: comparison

Compared with 'a', Black 1 is more urgent. If, however, Black had a small-knight enclosure with 'b', then Black 'a' would now be the more urgent move.



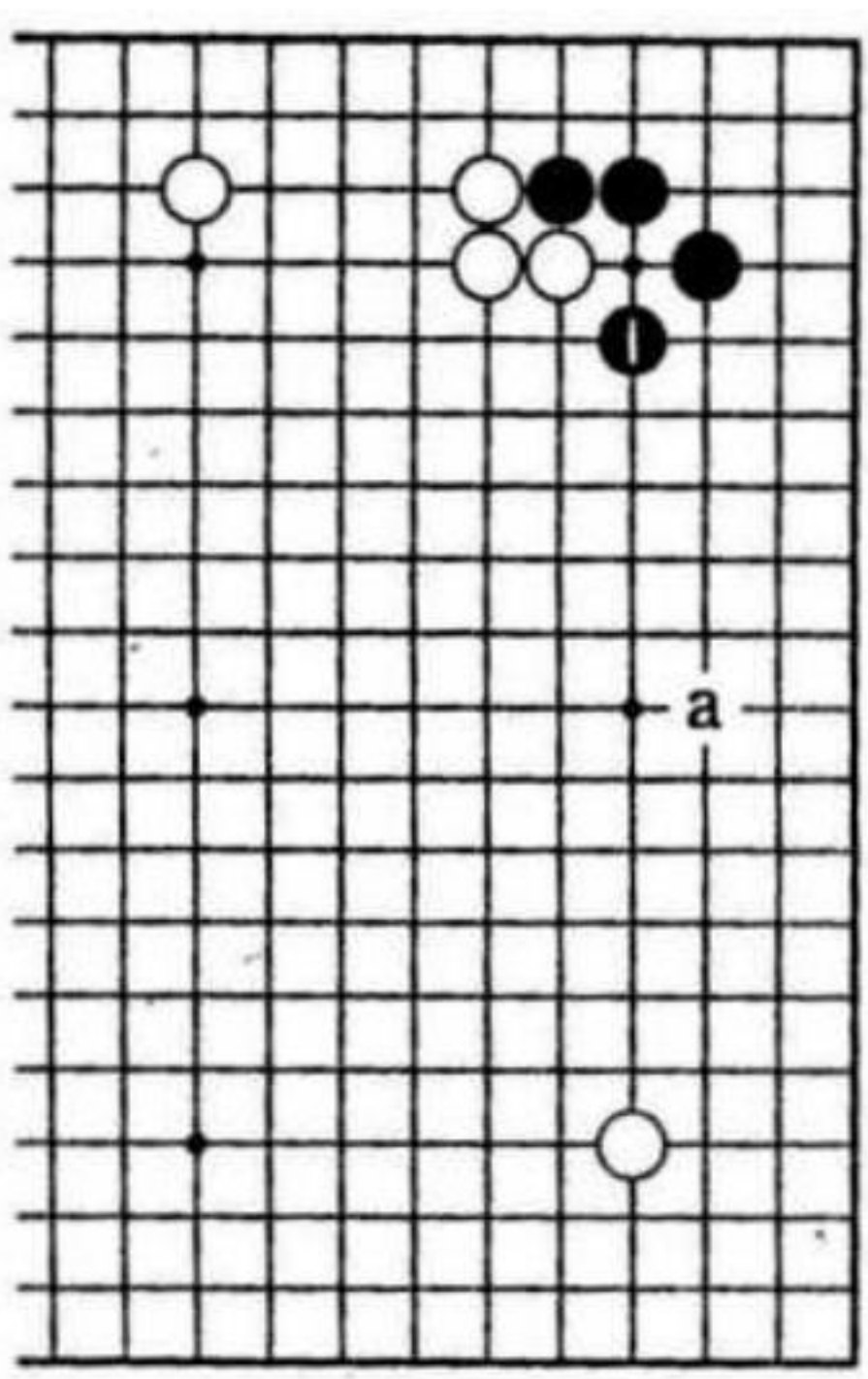
Dia. 13

Dia. 14: aiming at development

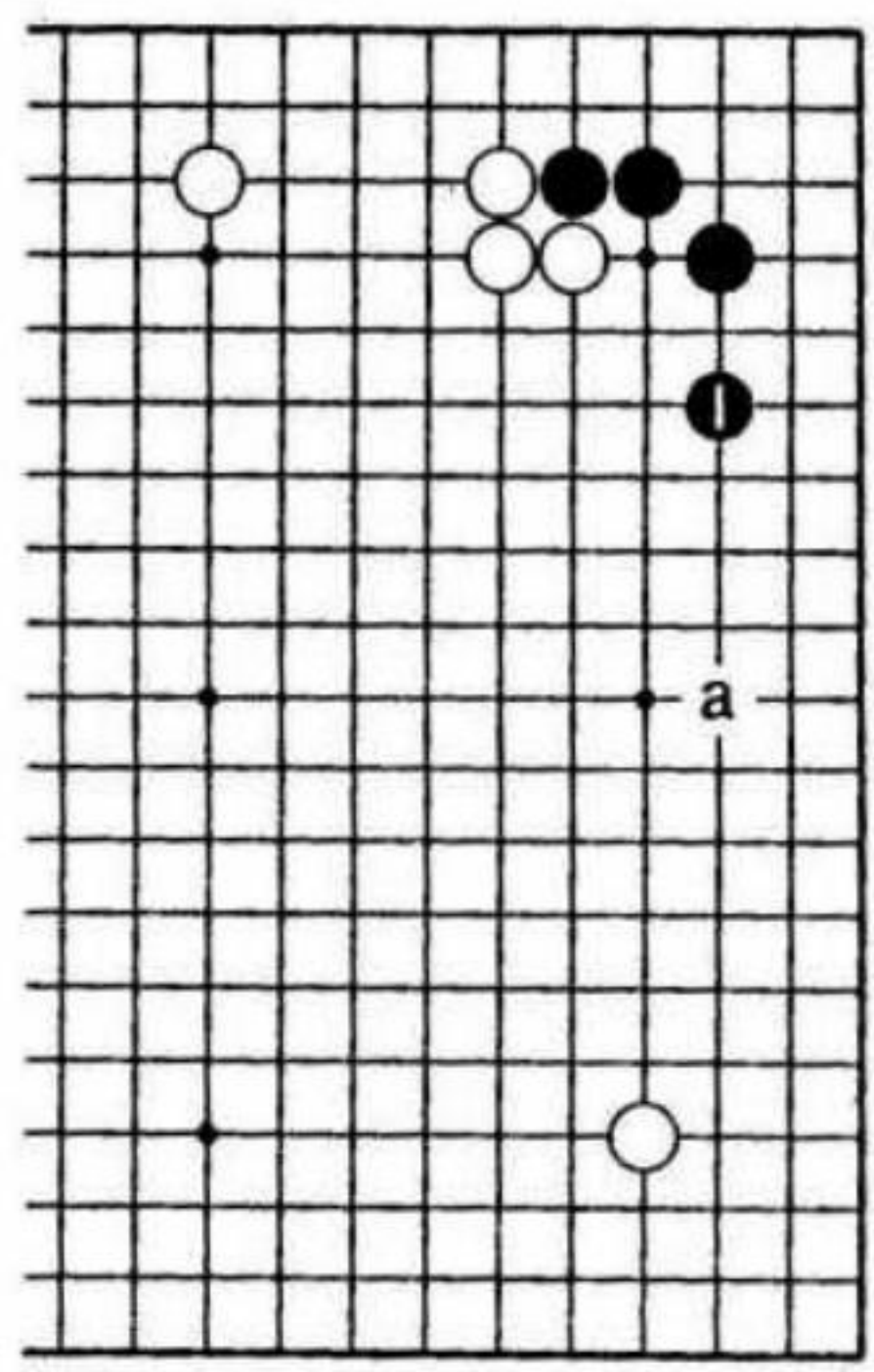
Let's compare the two moves open to Black here. The first is 1. Since it's on the 4th line, it aims at further development. An extension around 'a' is now a big move.

Dia. 15. a finished shape

The other move is the low move of 1. This solidifies territory on the 3rd line: it creates a finished shape that doesn't particularly aim at further development. Consequently, an extension to 'a' is not worth as much as 'a' in the previous.



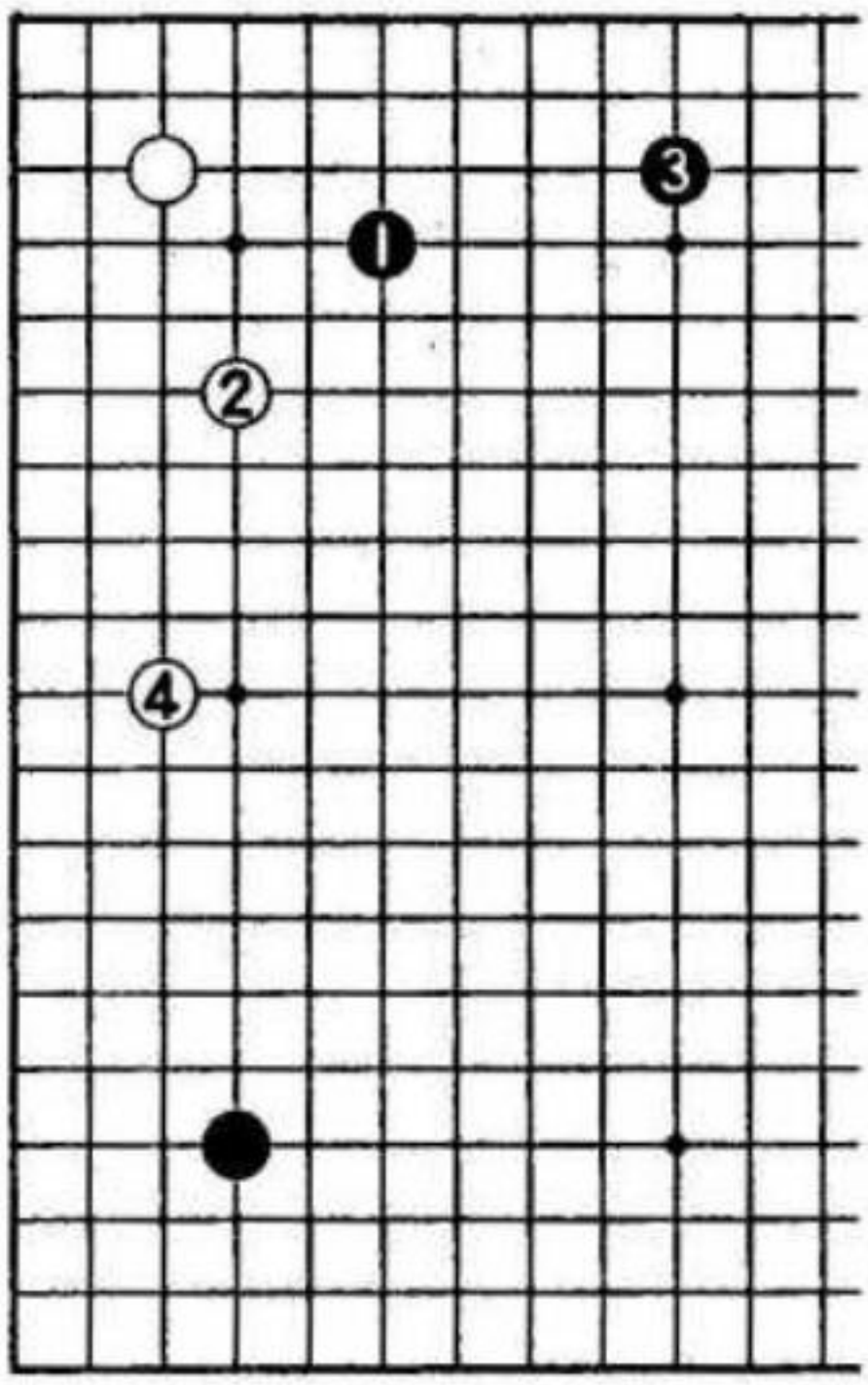
Dia. 14



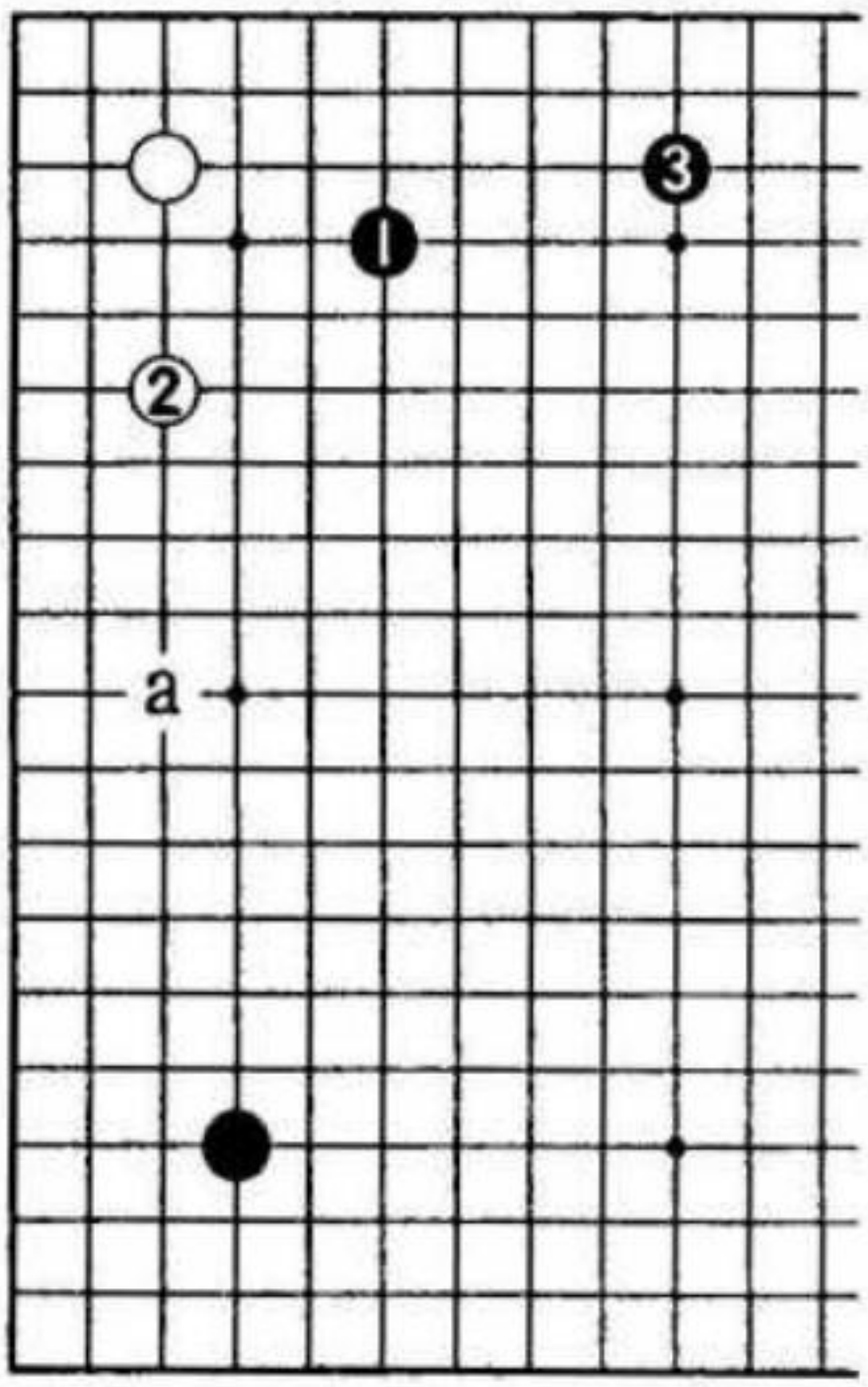
Dia. 15

Dia. 16: unfinsihed

White 2 is a developing move; it does not make a finished shape. Playing high on the 4th line is more ambitious than the 3rd line, but on the other hand it is more vulnerable. As in *Dia. 14*, another move is needed to make balance and complete the shape.



Dia. 16



Dia. 17

Dia. 17: completion

White 2 finishes off White's shape with one move. Being on the 3rd line, it makes White secure and stable. On the other hand, White can't expect to gain so much by extending to 'a'; his overall position would be too low.

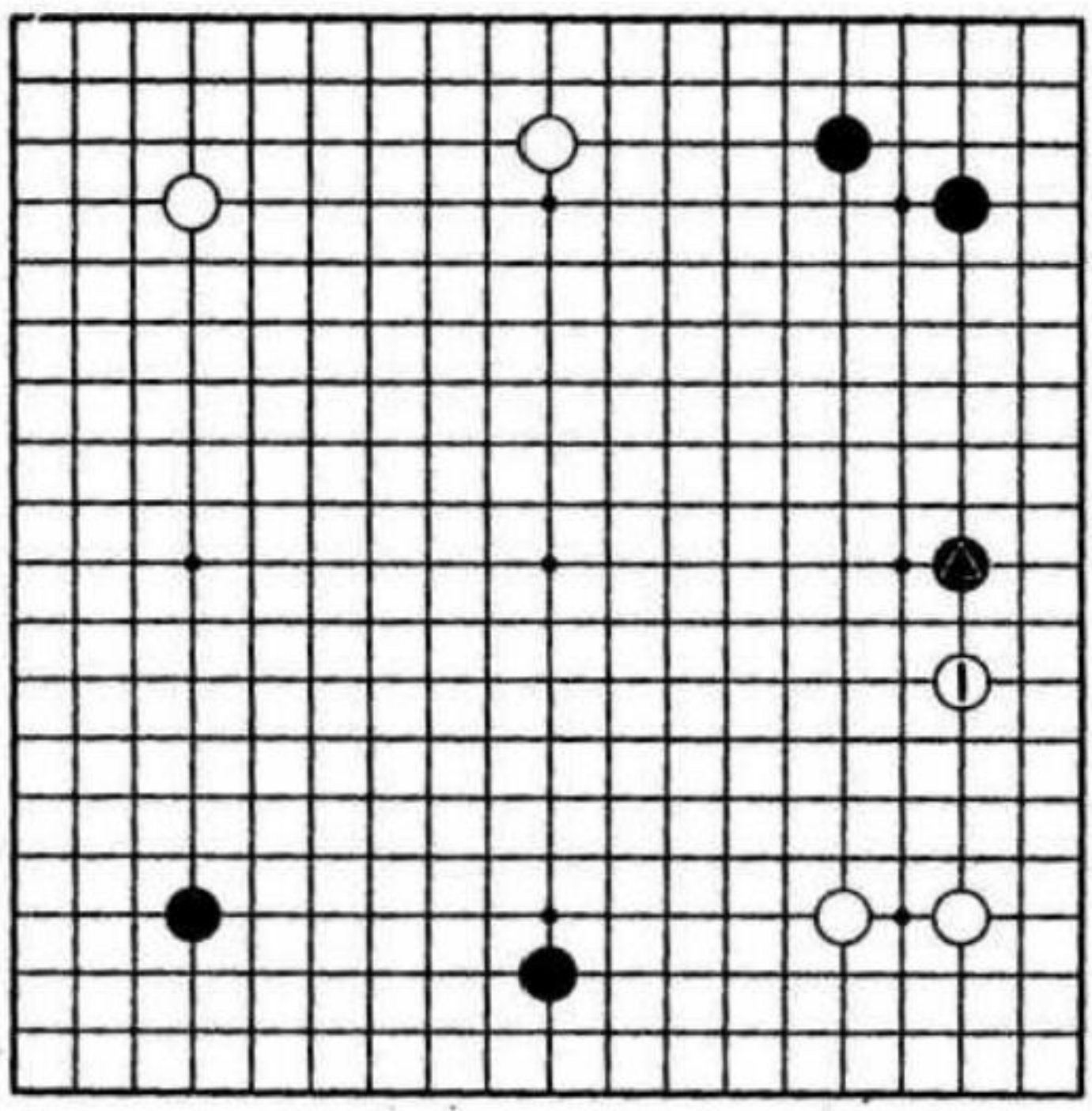
I hope that the foregoing has served to clarify the main differences between the 3rd and 4th lines.

Principle 7
Build box-like moyos

When building territory, one first establishes a base in the corner, then extends along the side, but that's by no means the end of the story. After extending along the side, you now have to expand into the centre.

Extensions along the side secure flat territories; expanding into the centre makes them three-dimensional. An understanding of three-dimensional territory is important in the fuseki.

When White extends to 1, the marked black stone is weakened. How should Black defend?

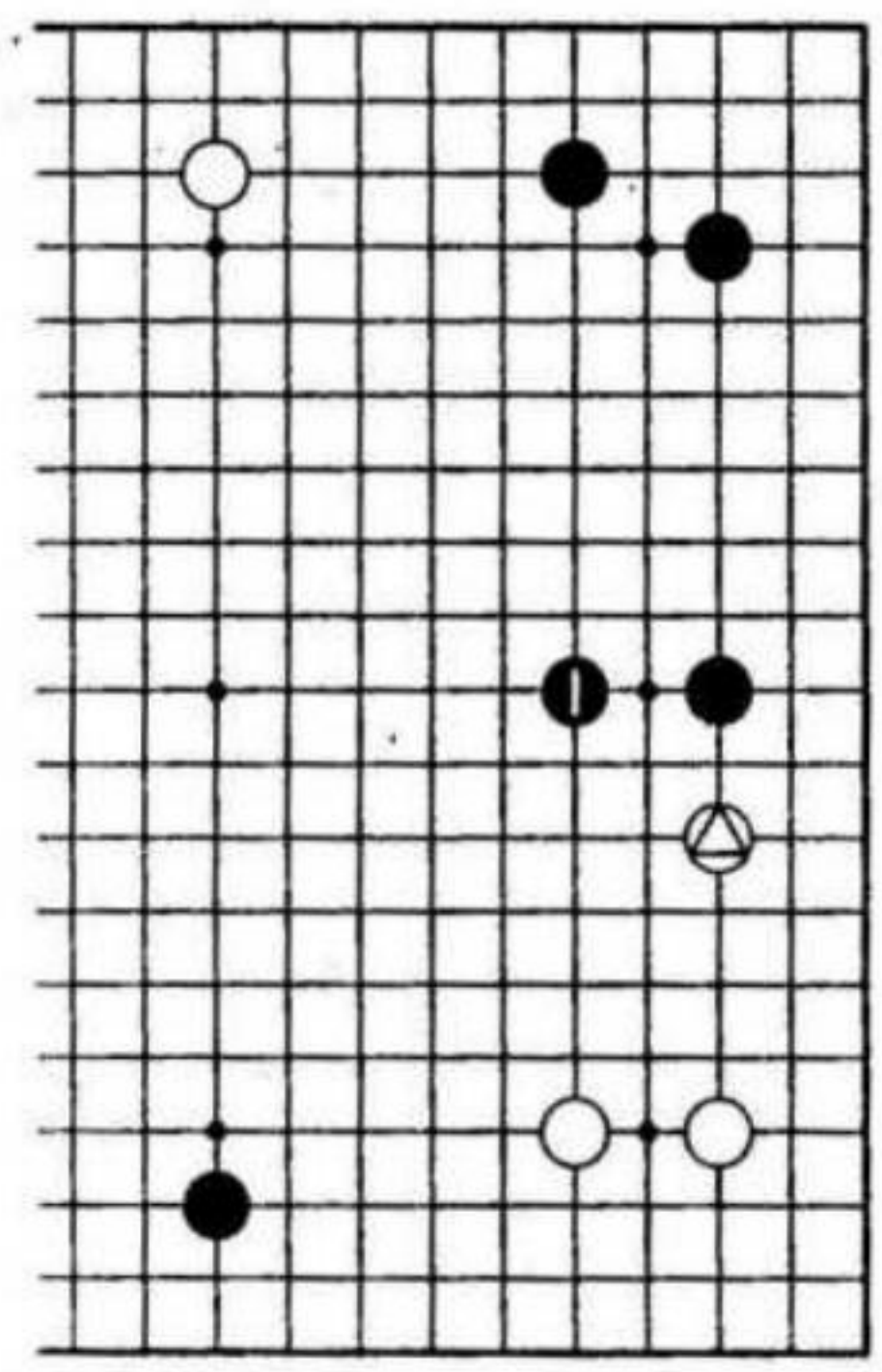


Theme diagram: Black to play
How to defend territory

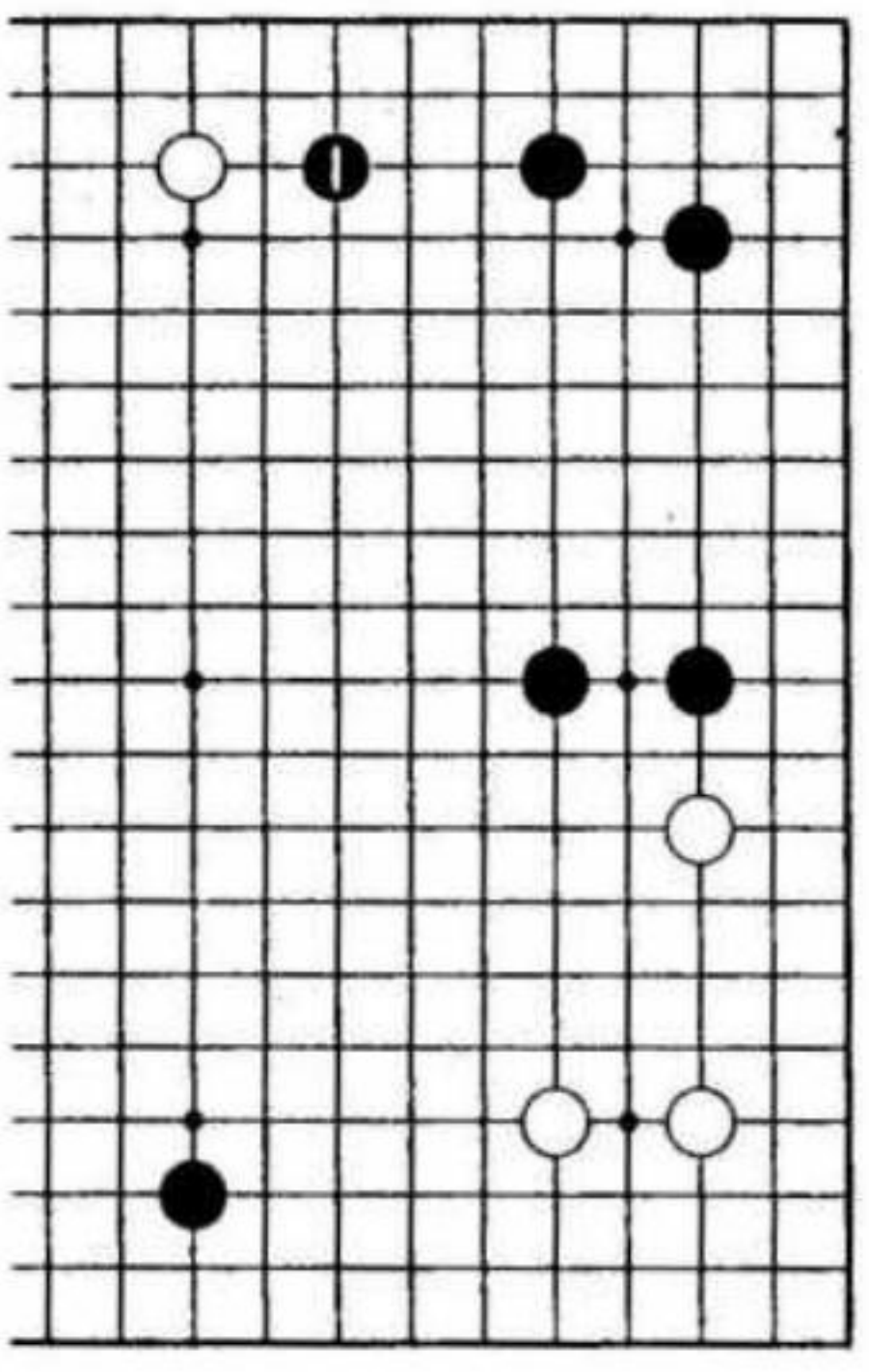
Dia. 1: a box-like shape

Black should expand his territory by heading towards the centre with 1. At the same time, 1 defends against the threat of the marked white stone.

After Black jumps to 1, his whole position still has a lot of potential for expansion.



Dia. 1



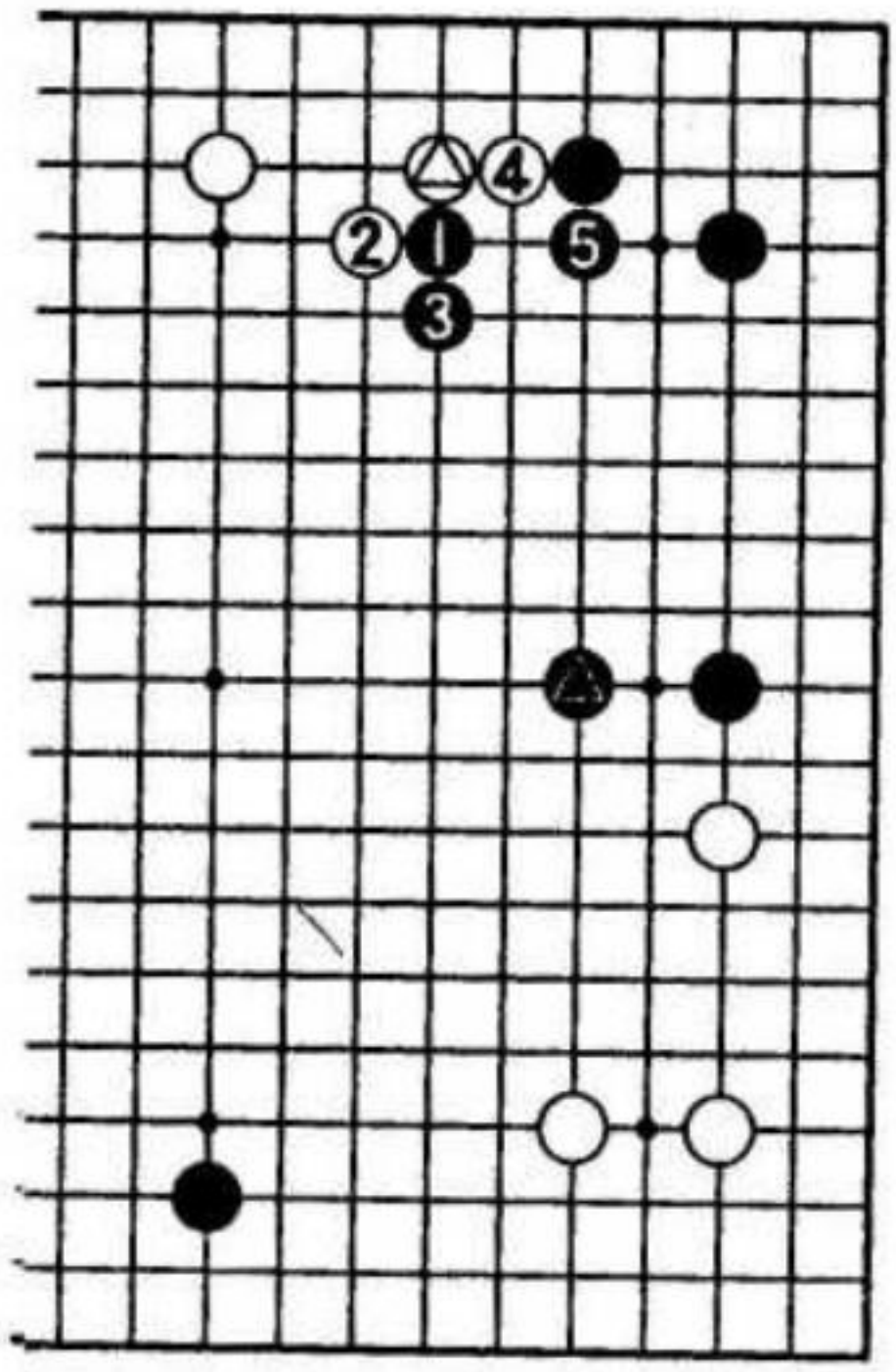
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: large moyo

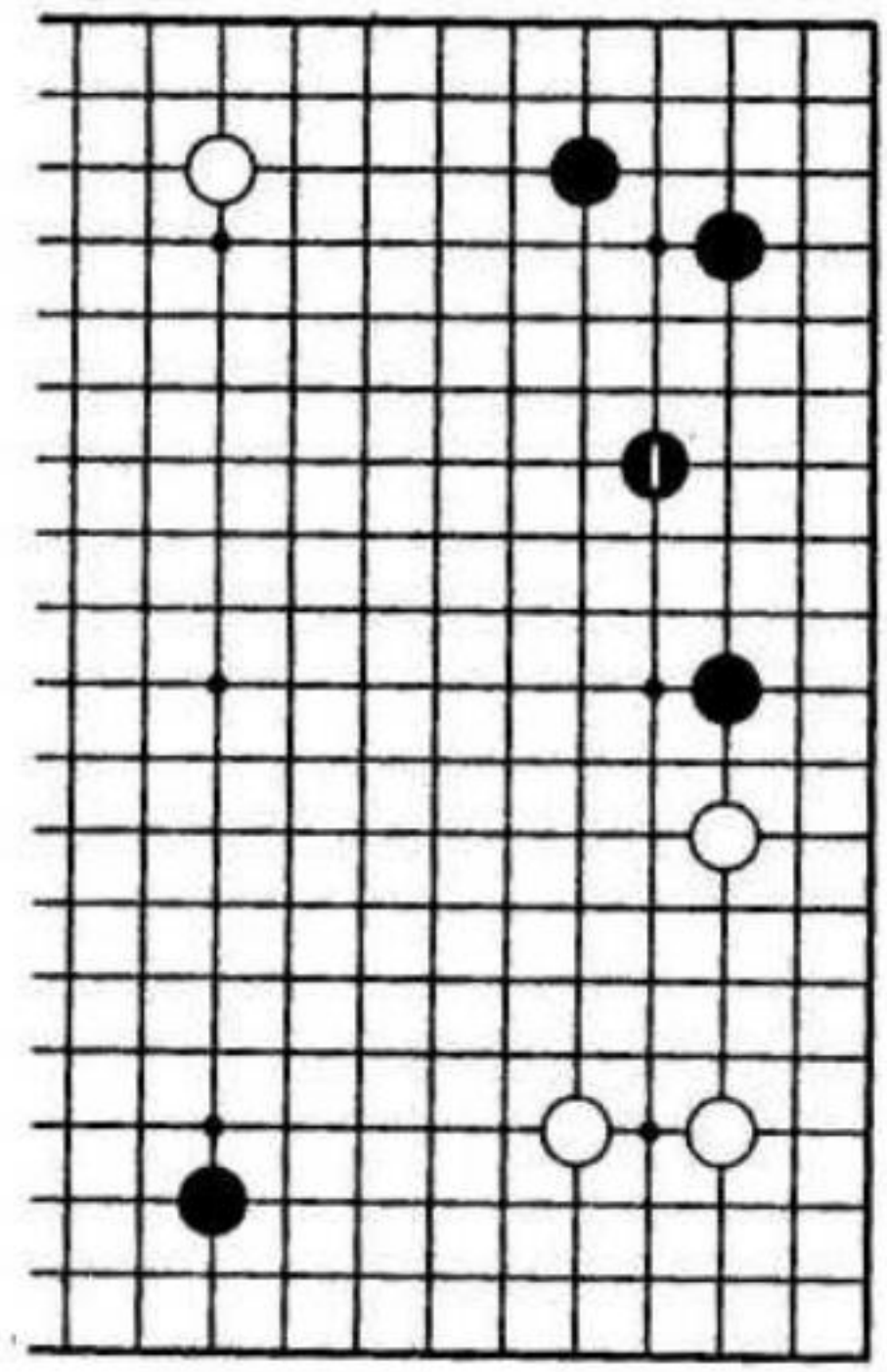
Let's assume that Black is blessed with the opportunity to extend to 1. This gives Black a large moyo extending from the corner along the sides and into the centre.

Dia. 3: still a moyo

Let's assume instead that White gets to play the marked stone. Even now Black can build a moyo by attaching at 1. That shows how much future potential the marked black stone has.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: no ambition

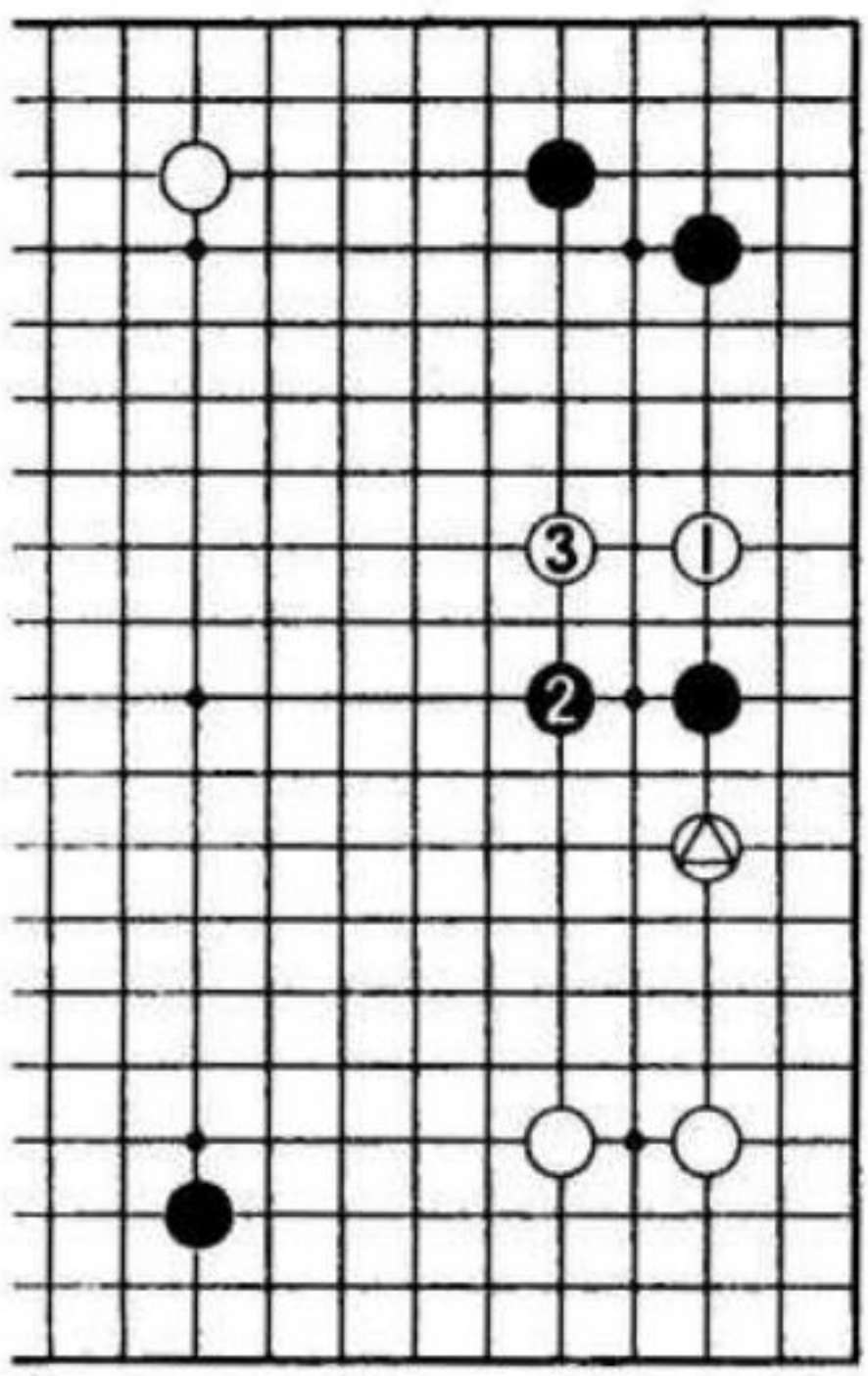
Black 1 may be solid, but it is too flat: it has little future. Black is limiting his territory by his own hands. In effect he's saying: 'I don't want any more territory than this.' He has no ambition.

Dia. 5. a fight

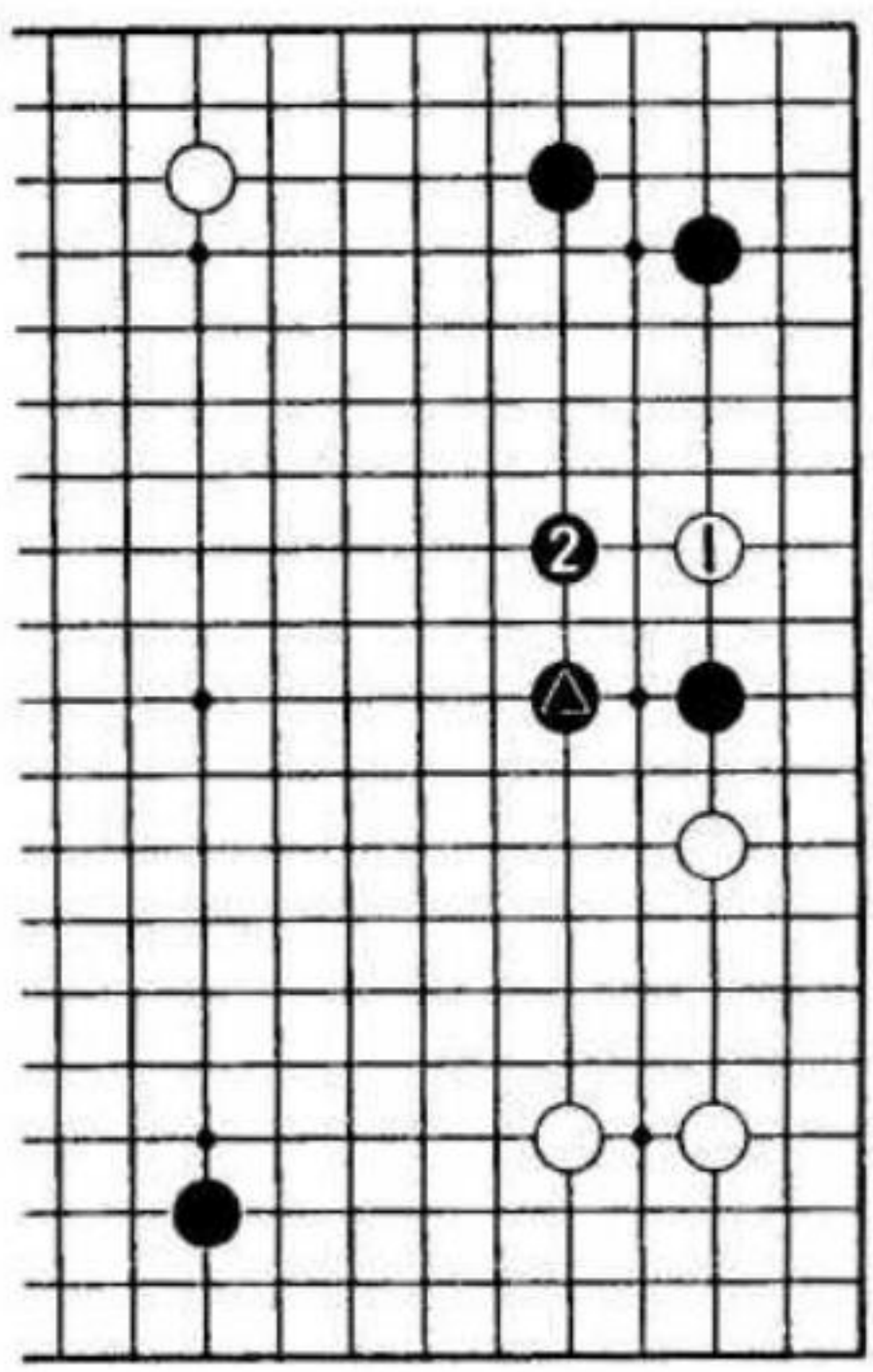
If Black neglects to reinforce in response to the marked stone, he has to be prepared for a white invasion at 1. A fight follows - one that is not necessarily favourable for Black.

Dia. 6: no weaknesses

The marked black stone is an adequate reinforcement. That is not to say that invading at 1 is impossible, but it will certainly be a very tough fight for White when Black surrounds him with 2. Black has no weaknesses, in contrast to *Dia. 5.*



Dia. 5

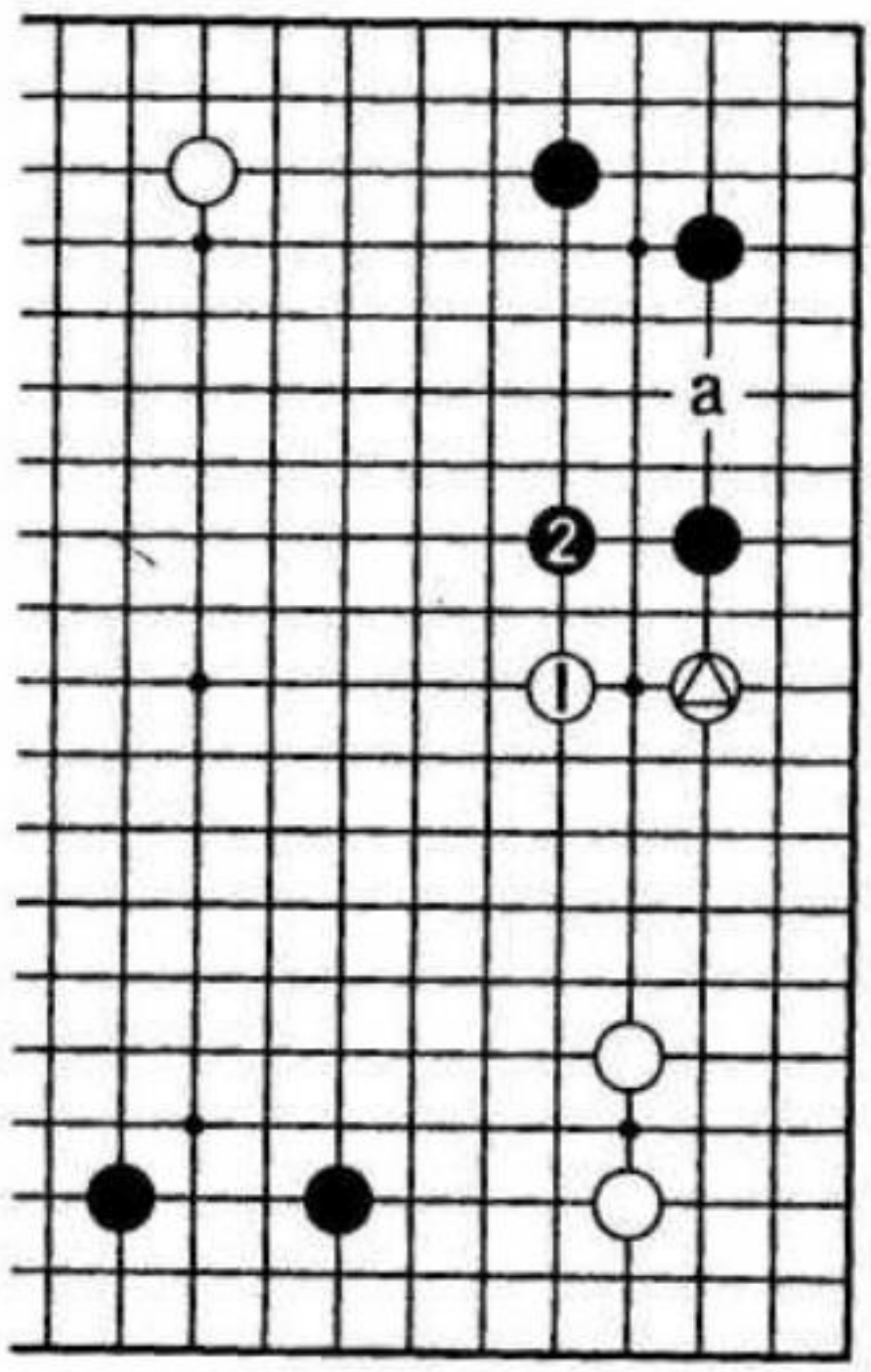


Dia. 6

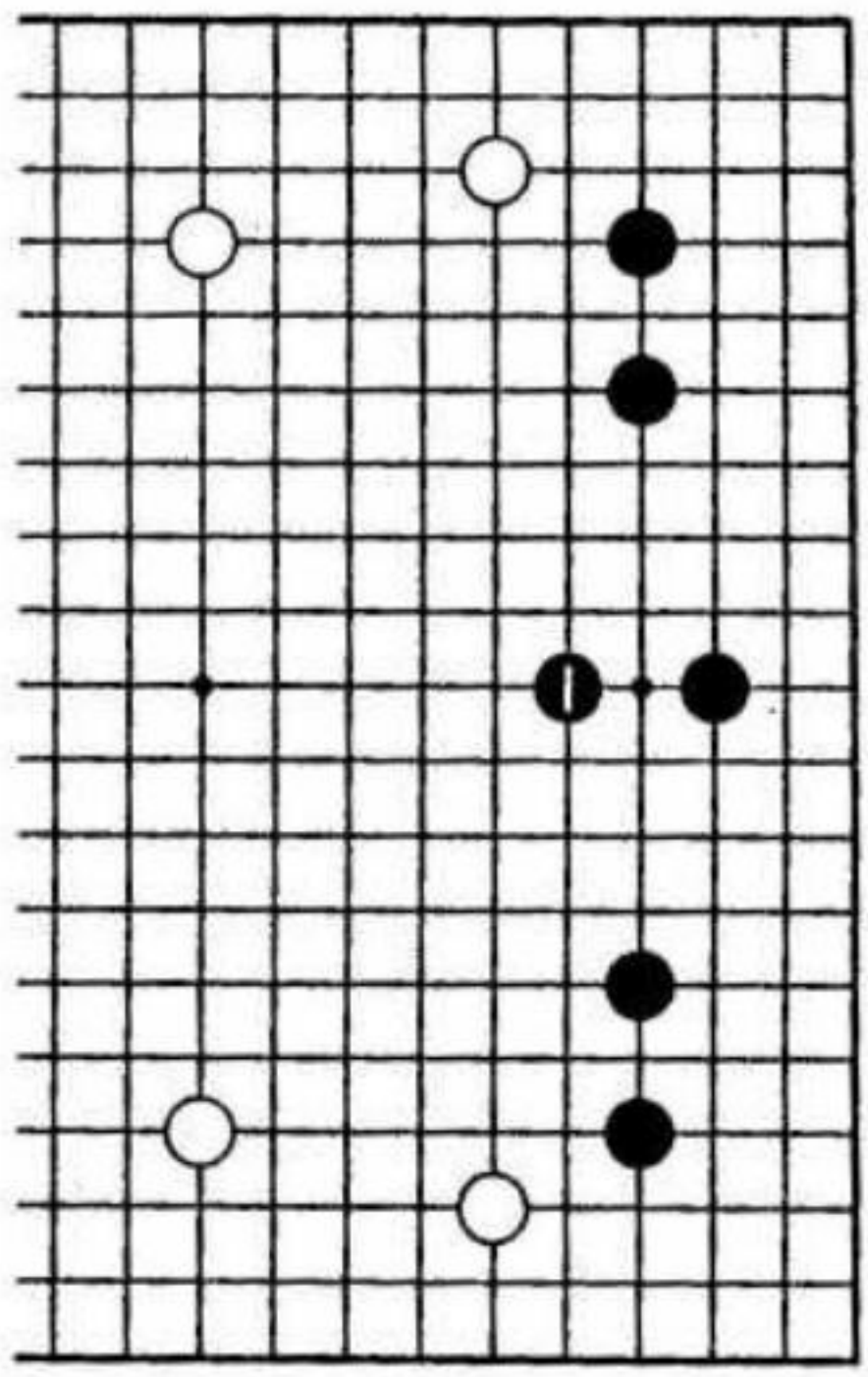
Dia. 7: aiming at an invasion

The distance between his corner enclosure and the marked stone will make White feel a little insecure. If he decides to defend, jumping to 1 is the correct move. This move revives the threat of invading at'a'.

Black 2 is also a good move.



Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 8: impressive thickness

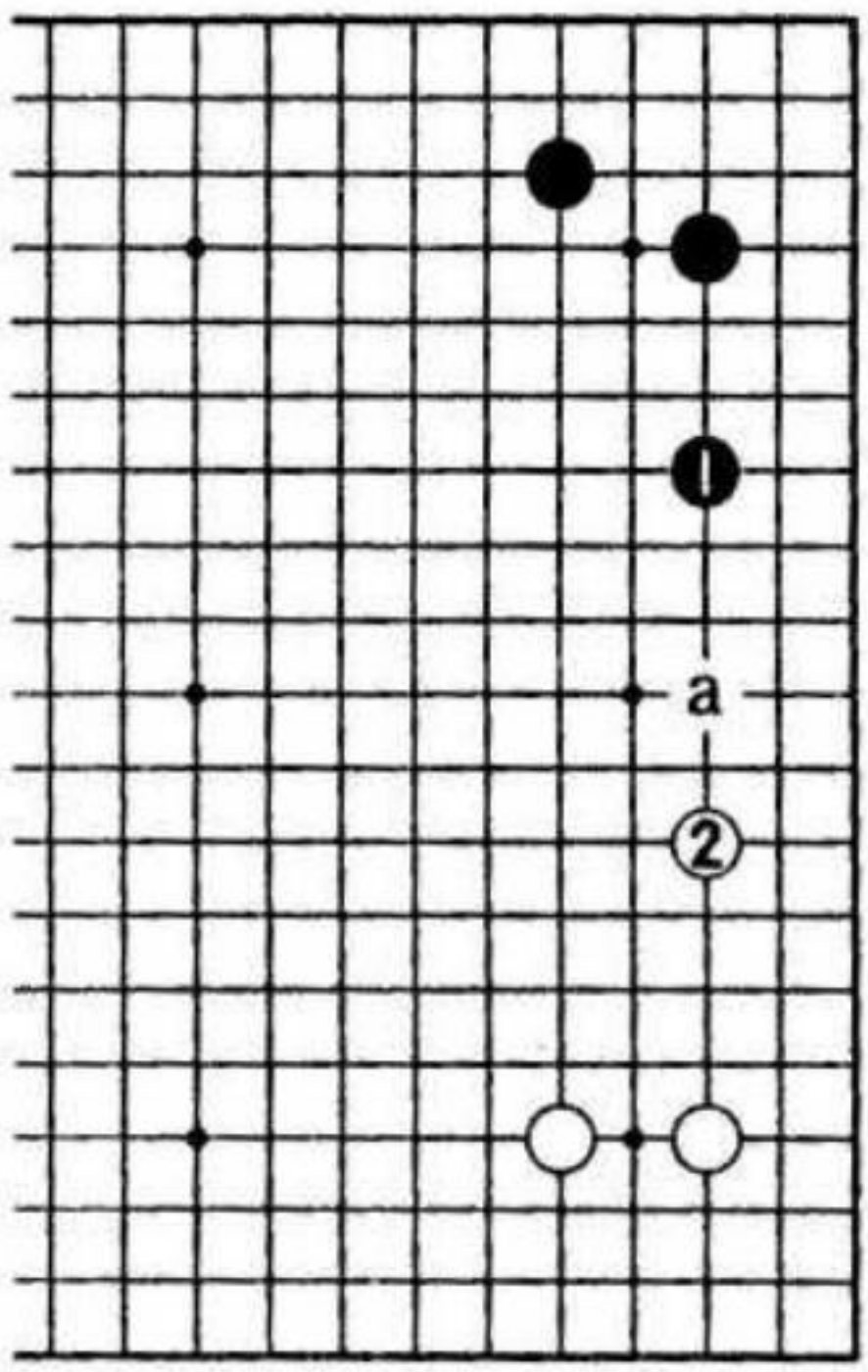
Black already has a moyo along the right side. The best way to strengthen this moyo is to jump to 1. This is a good move that creates centre thickness and plays a big role in expanding Black's moyo.

Dia. 9: timid

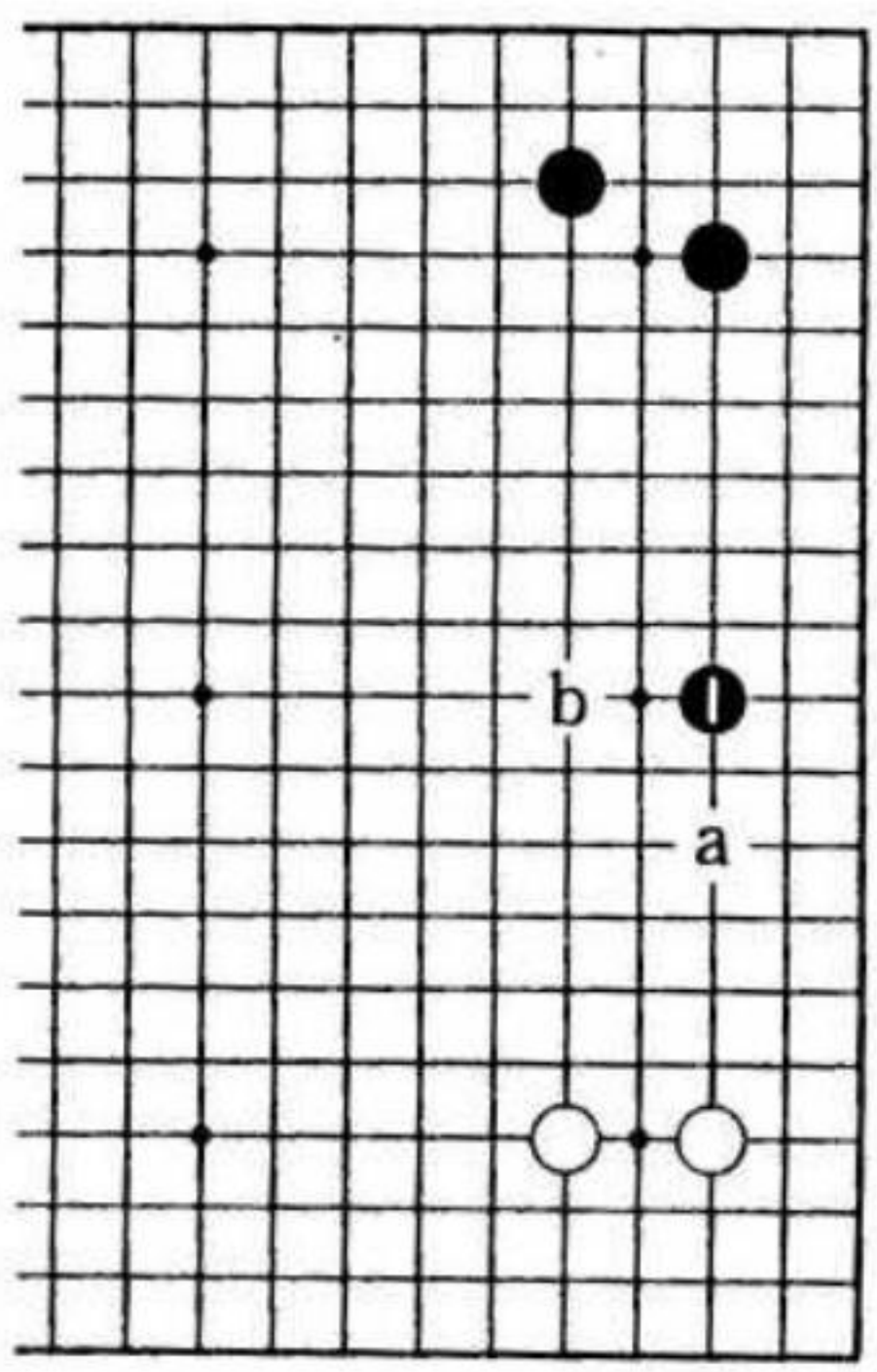
This position goes back to an earlier stage of the game before the theme position. The timid extensions of 1 and 2 show that neither player understands the importance of three-dimensional moyos. For Black to continue with 'a' would be dull and plodding.

Dia. 10: large-scale

By now it should be obvious that Black should play on a grand scale by extending to 1. Since Black 'b' is a good answer to White 'a', he has no reason to feel uneasy.



Dia. 9



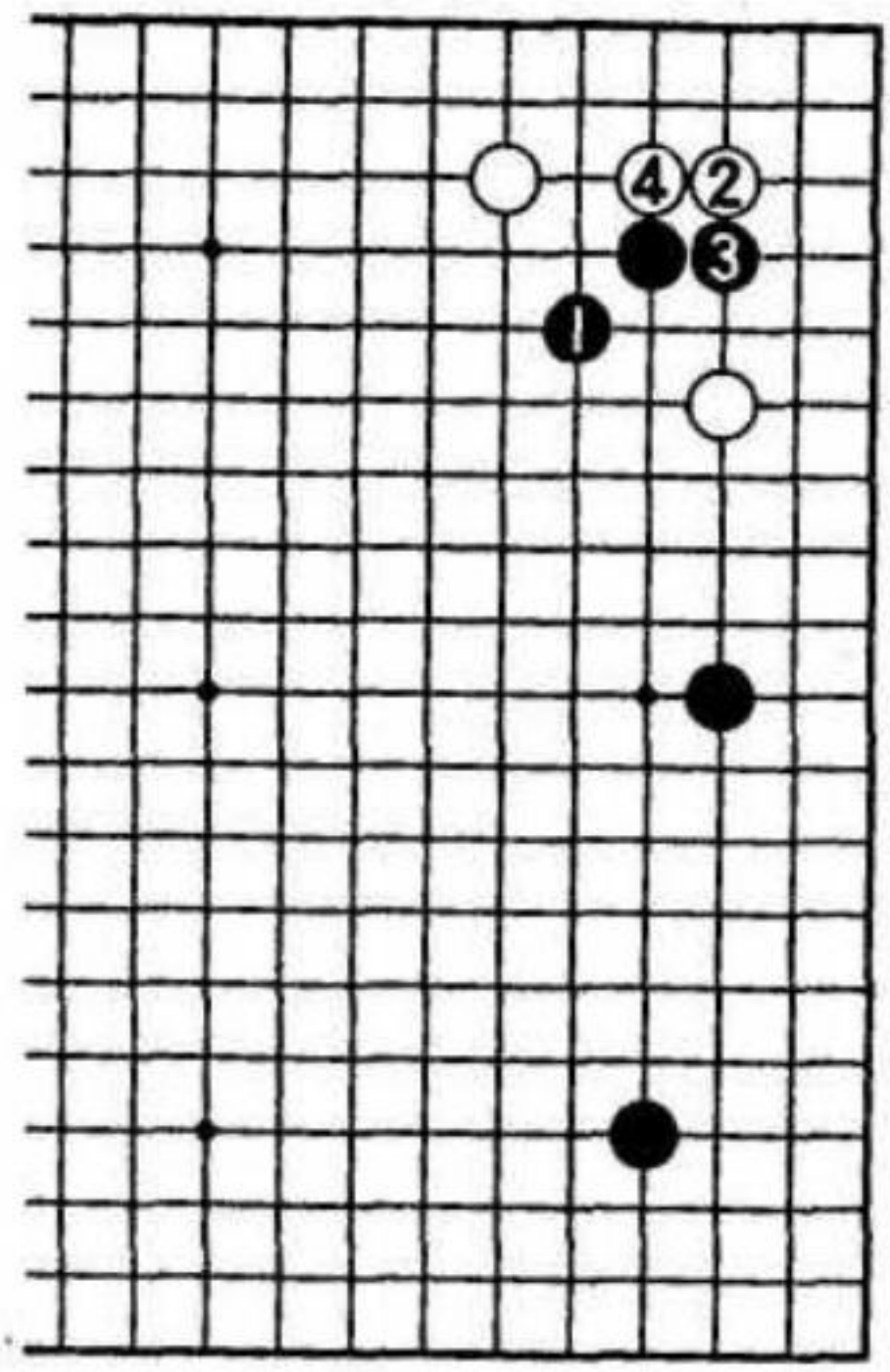
Dia. 10

Dia. 11: a common pattern

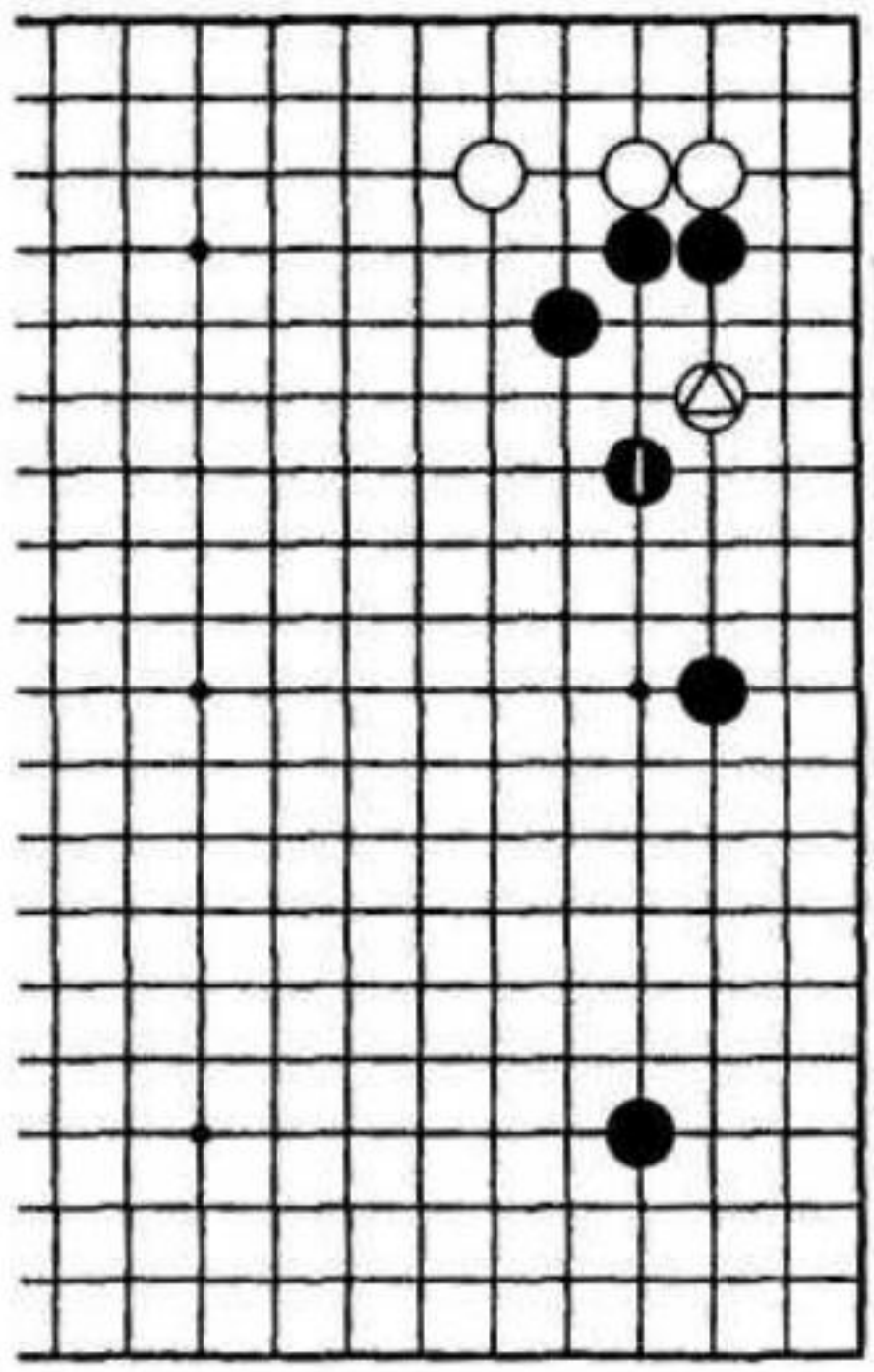
The moves to 4 form a standard pattern, one also often seen in handicap games. How should Black continue? Players with a three-dimensional feel for the game will probably have a different approach from players without such a feel.

Dia. 12: desire to settle oneself

There are many players who will press at 1; unfortunately, there's nothing three-dimensional about this move. Black's only aim is to settle himself as quickly as possible by capturing the marked stone. The same comment applies as to *Dia. 4:* Black is himself limiting the size of his own territory. Black 1 is lacking in ambition. Next -



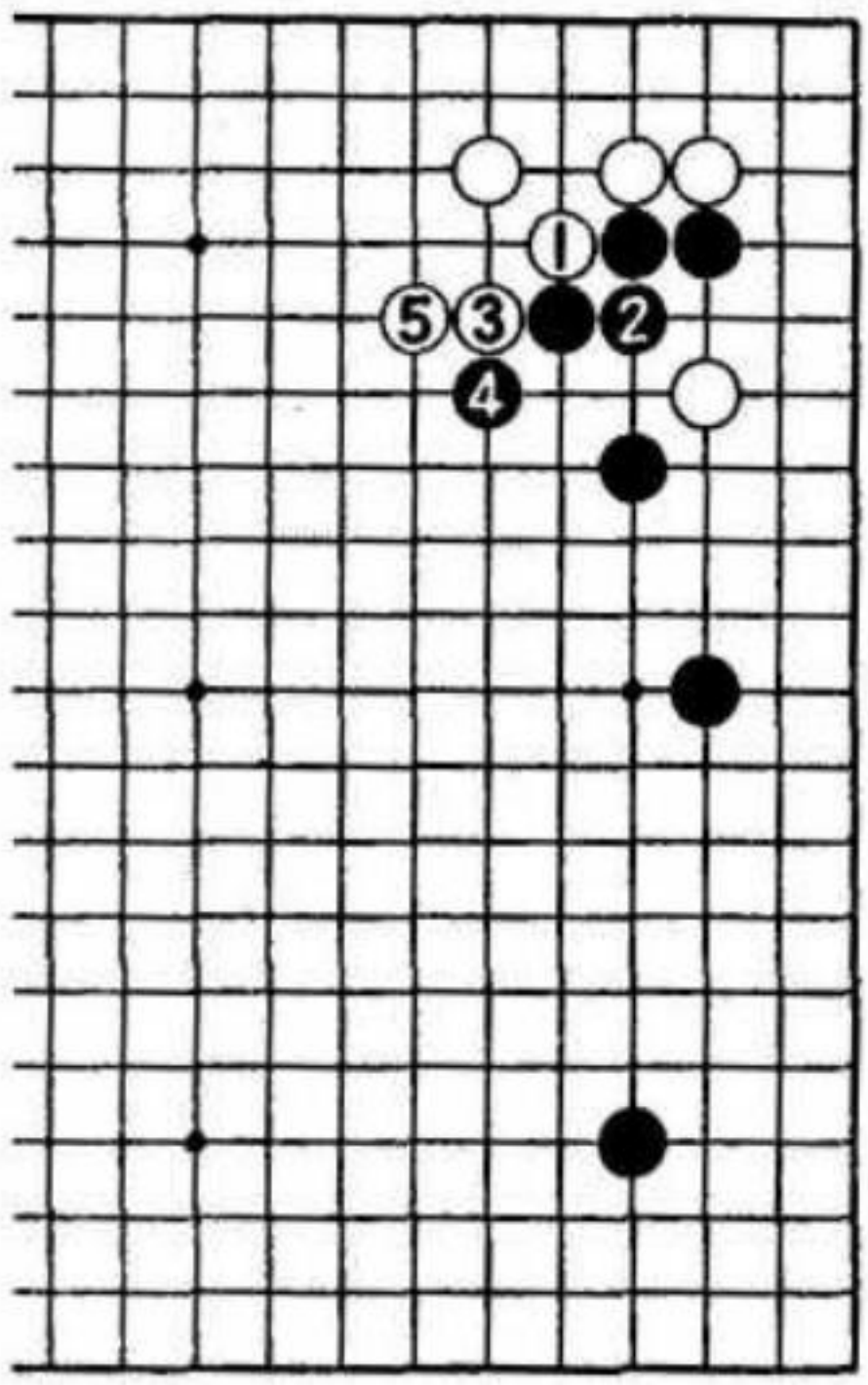
Dia. 11



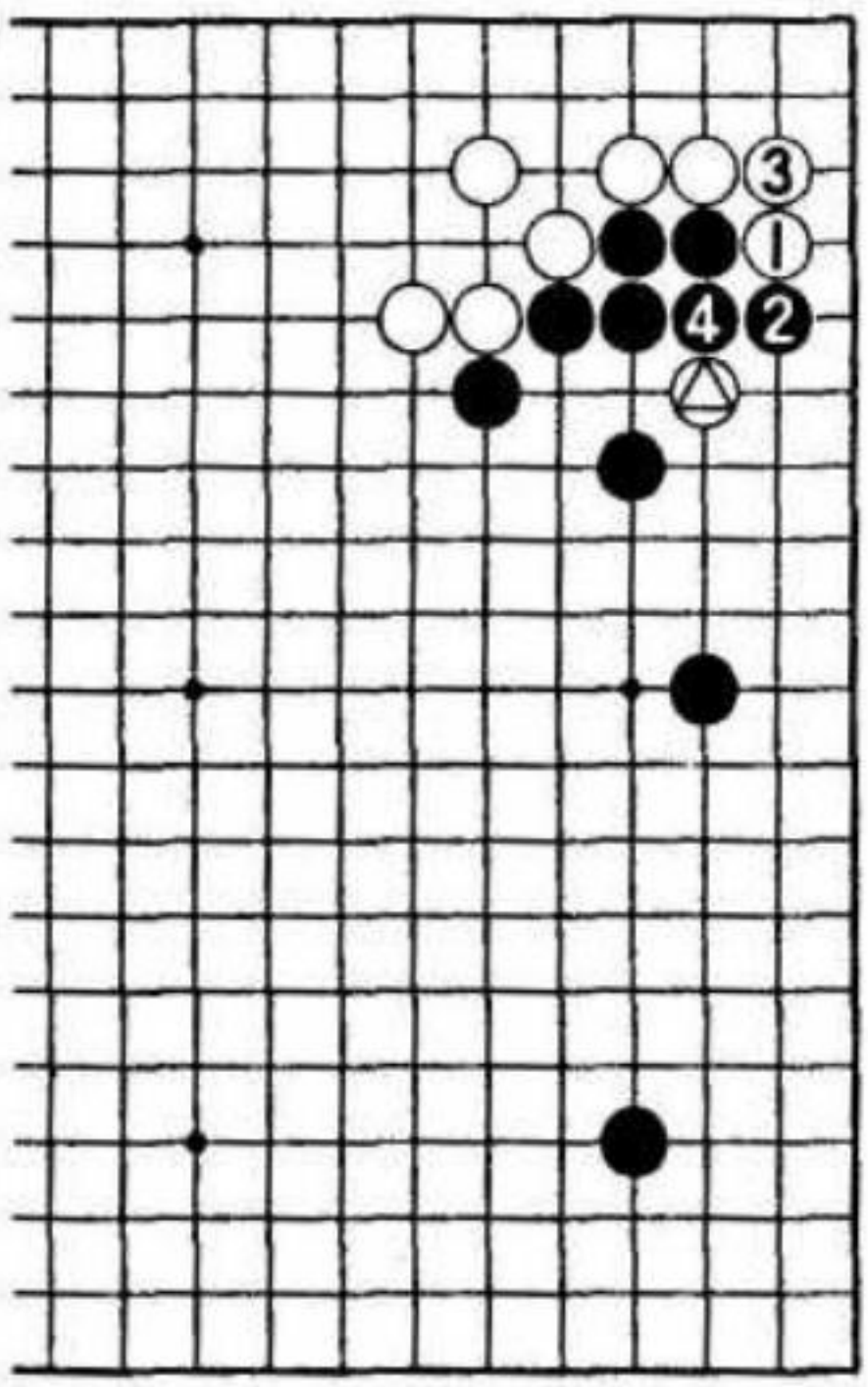
Dia. 12

Dia. 13: good shape for White

White can make good shape by forcing with 1, then playing 3 and extending at 5. Black's territory may look big, but it is not really. White has built very good shape, with no wasted stones. Next -



Dia. 13



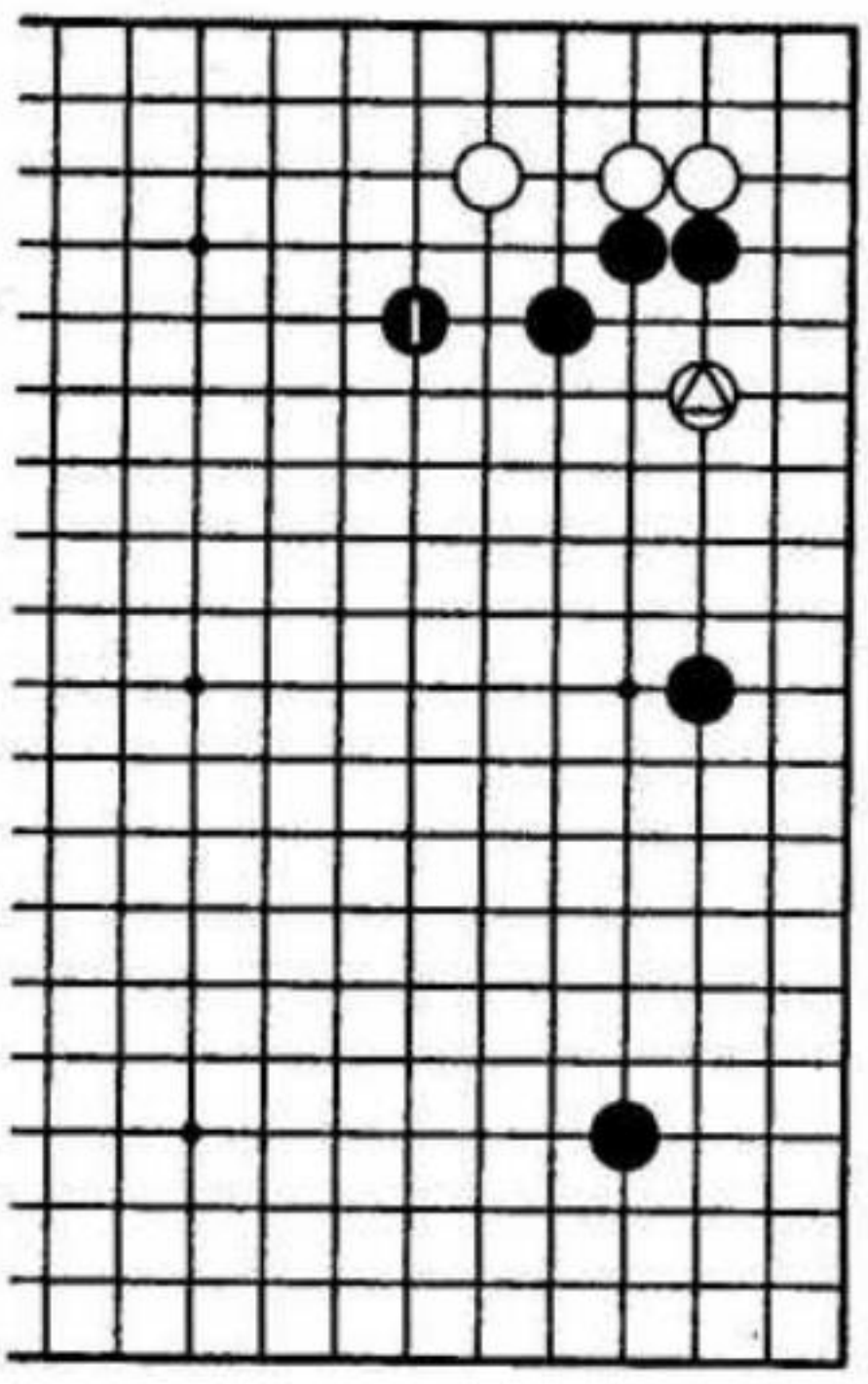
Dia. 14

Dia. 14: whittling Black down

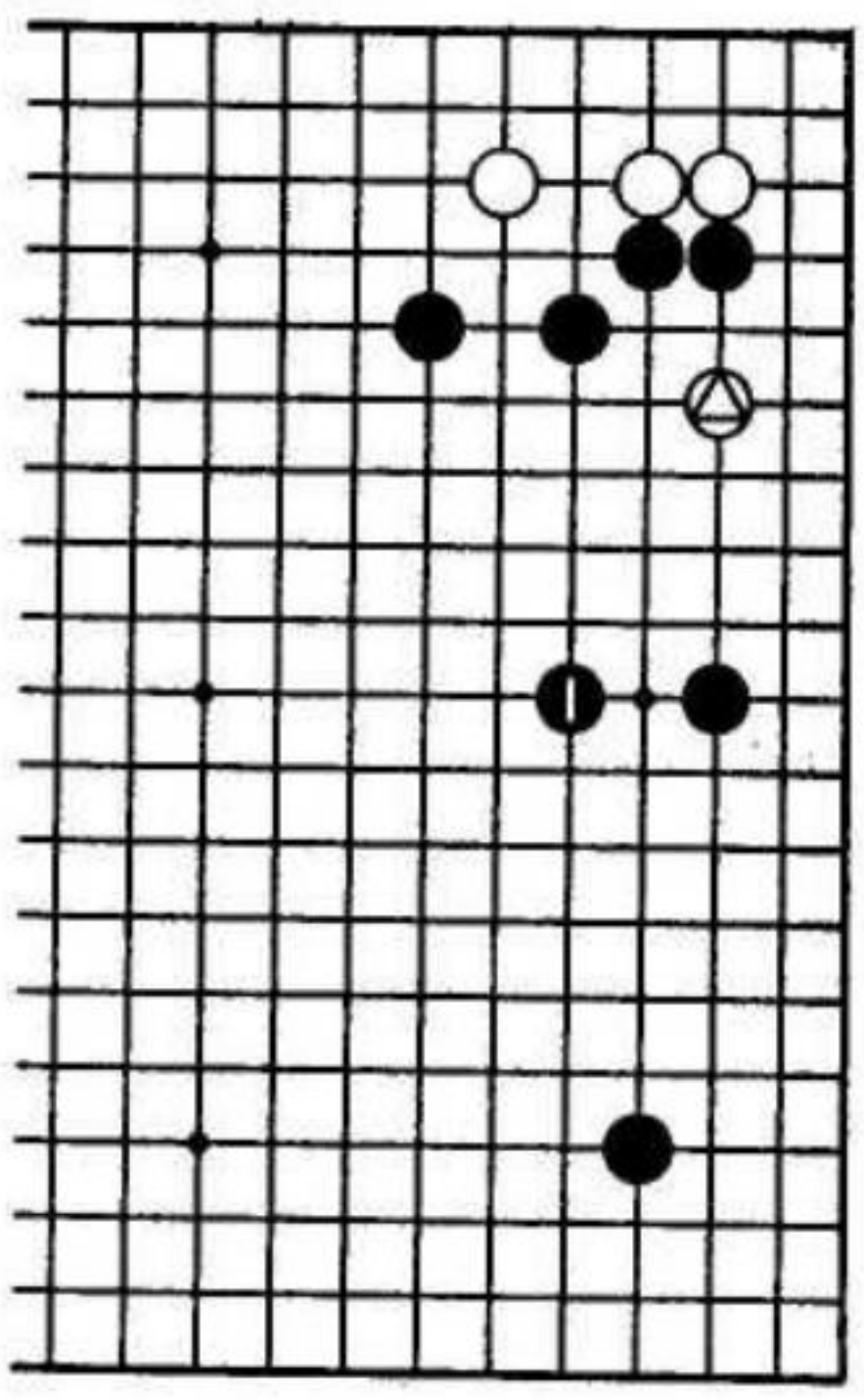
Sooner or later, White will probably play 1 and 3, forcing Black to connect at 4. Black might be satisfied with having captured the marked stone, but if you look at it objectively, Black's territory is not so big. In the local context, White has had the better of this encounter.

Dia. 15: play on a grand scale

The question then is: how should Black play? Jumping to 1 is recommended. You may feel uneasy, because this does not secure the capture of the marked stone, but if White wants to flee let him. Pulling out this stone will create quite a burden on White.



Dia. 15



Dia. 16

Dia. 16: dreams for the future

If White doesn't try to escape, jumping to 1 becomes a good move. I hope you agree that capturing the white stone on a grand scale like this is incomparably superior to *Dia. 14.* Black's play here shows true ambition.

Chapter Two
Good Shape

When stones come into contact with each other, that is, when fighting starts, the significance of individual moves becomes much greater. The fuseld has its own fighting, so, to make sure you don't go wrong in the first step of a fight, it's essential to learn the basics of good shape.

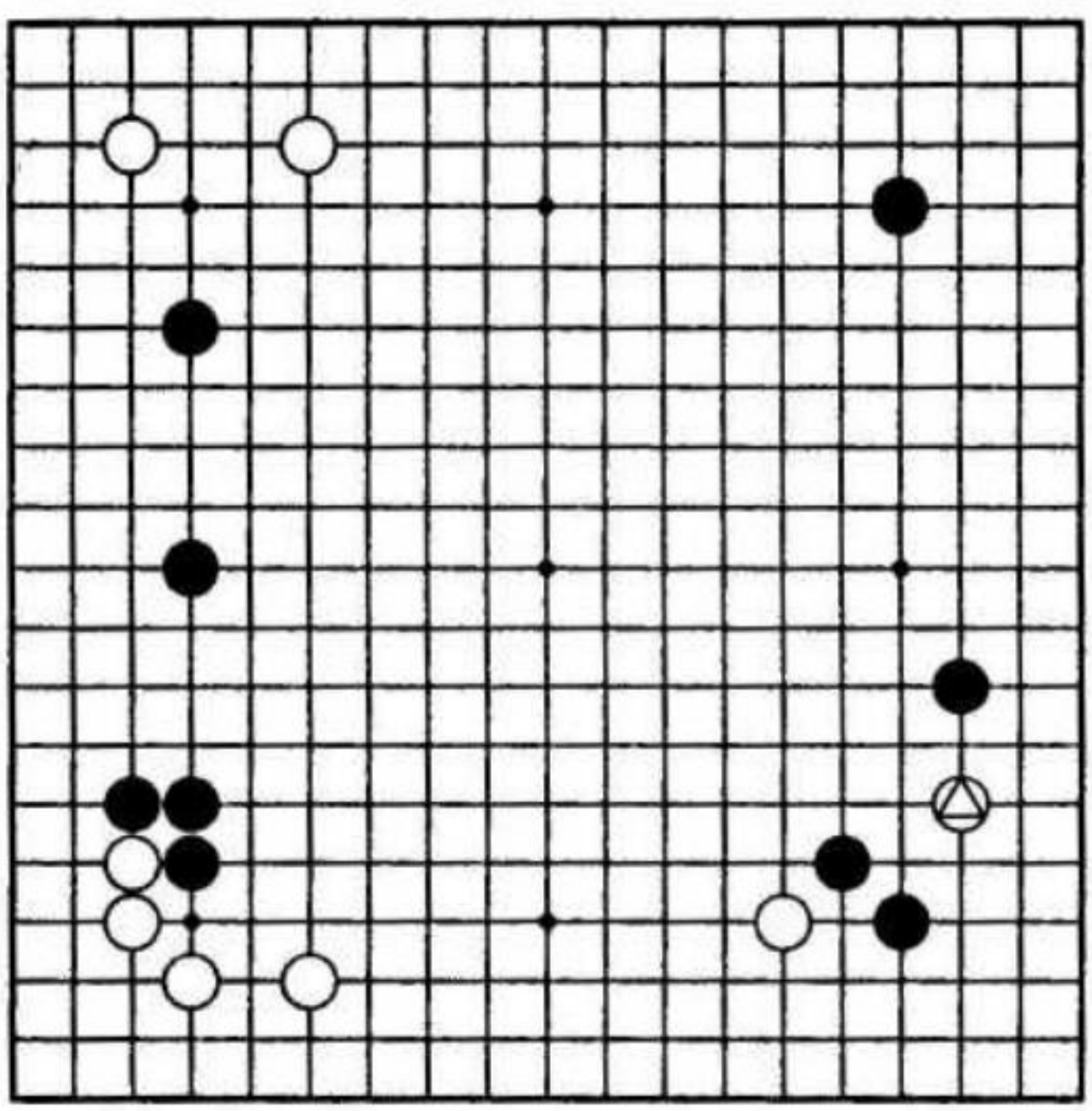
Principle 8
Family feuds waste resources

Avoid hurting yourself

Each stone you place on the board has to function to the full value of one move. Letting stones go to waste will handicap your development

One of the most common ways of wasting moves is to indulge in 'family feuds'. Weak kyu players are particularly prone to this fault.

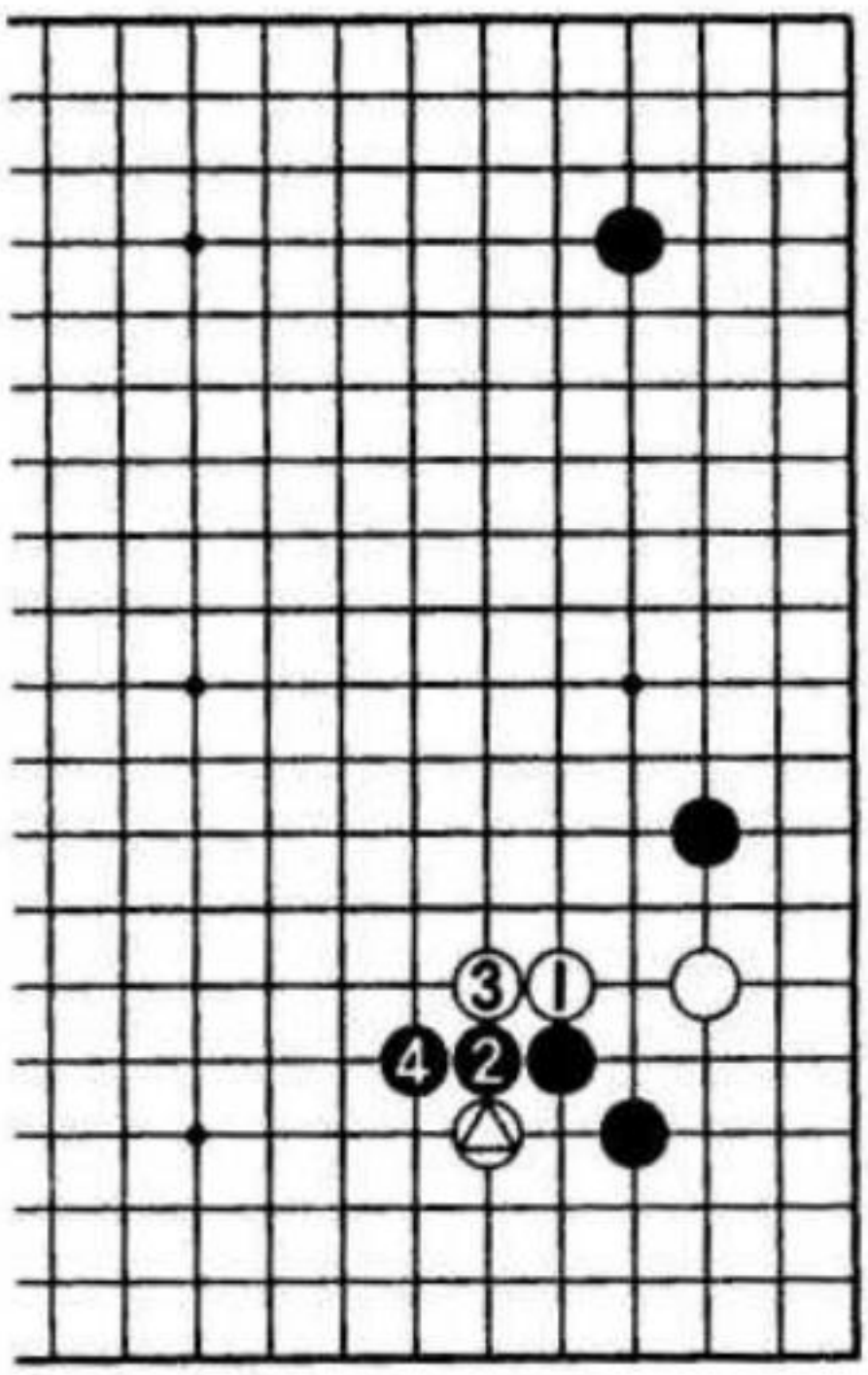
White's marked stone in the theme diagram is in a little bit of trouble. How should White handle the situation?



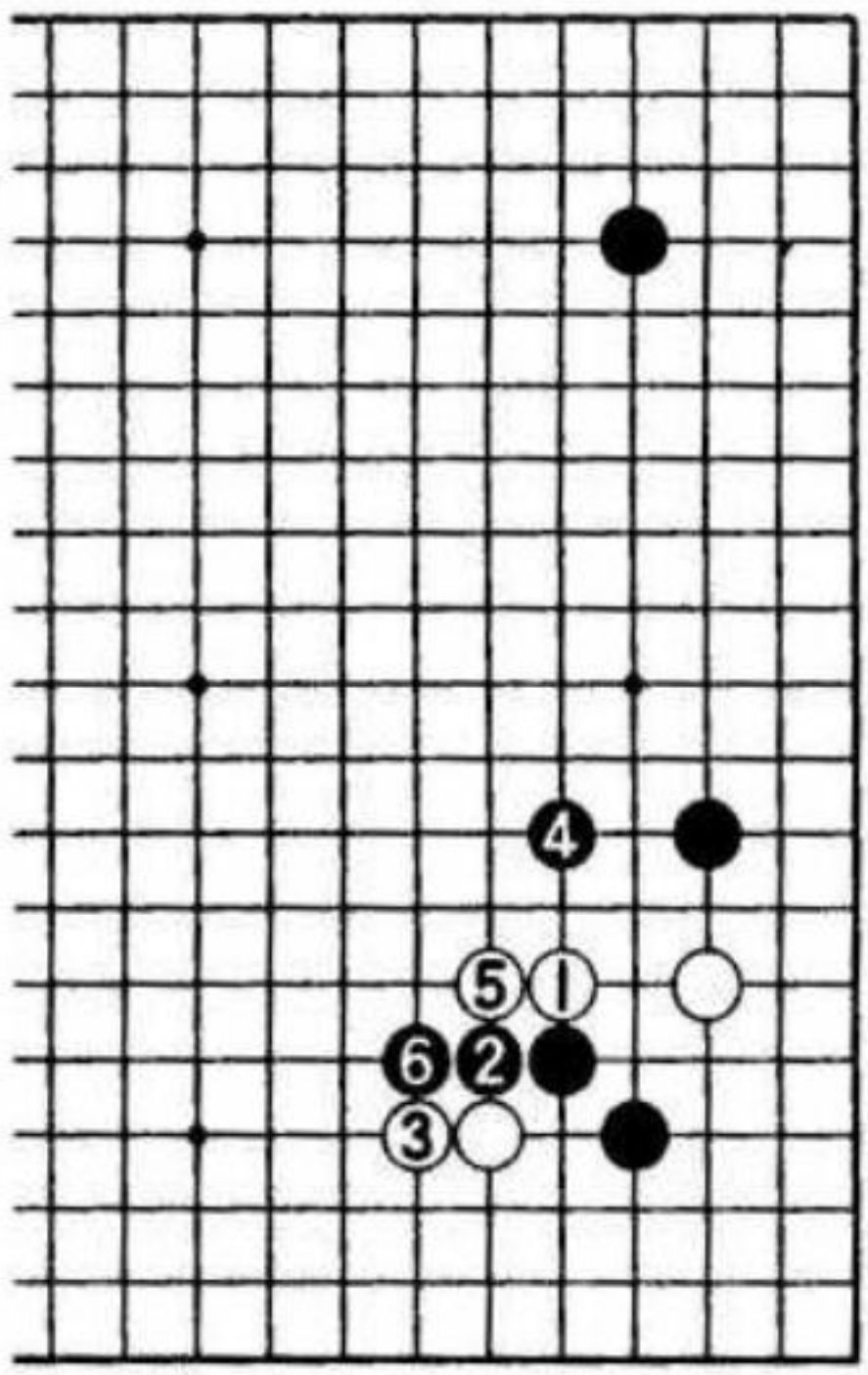
Theme diagram
White to play

Dia. 1: wasting a stone

Weak players are likely to move out by attaching at 1, then pushing along at 3. This is exactly what the term 'family feud' refers to. The reason is that White's own moves are helping Black to damage the marked stone.



Dia. 1



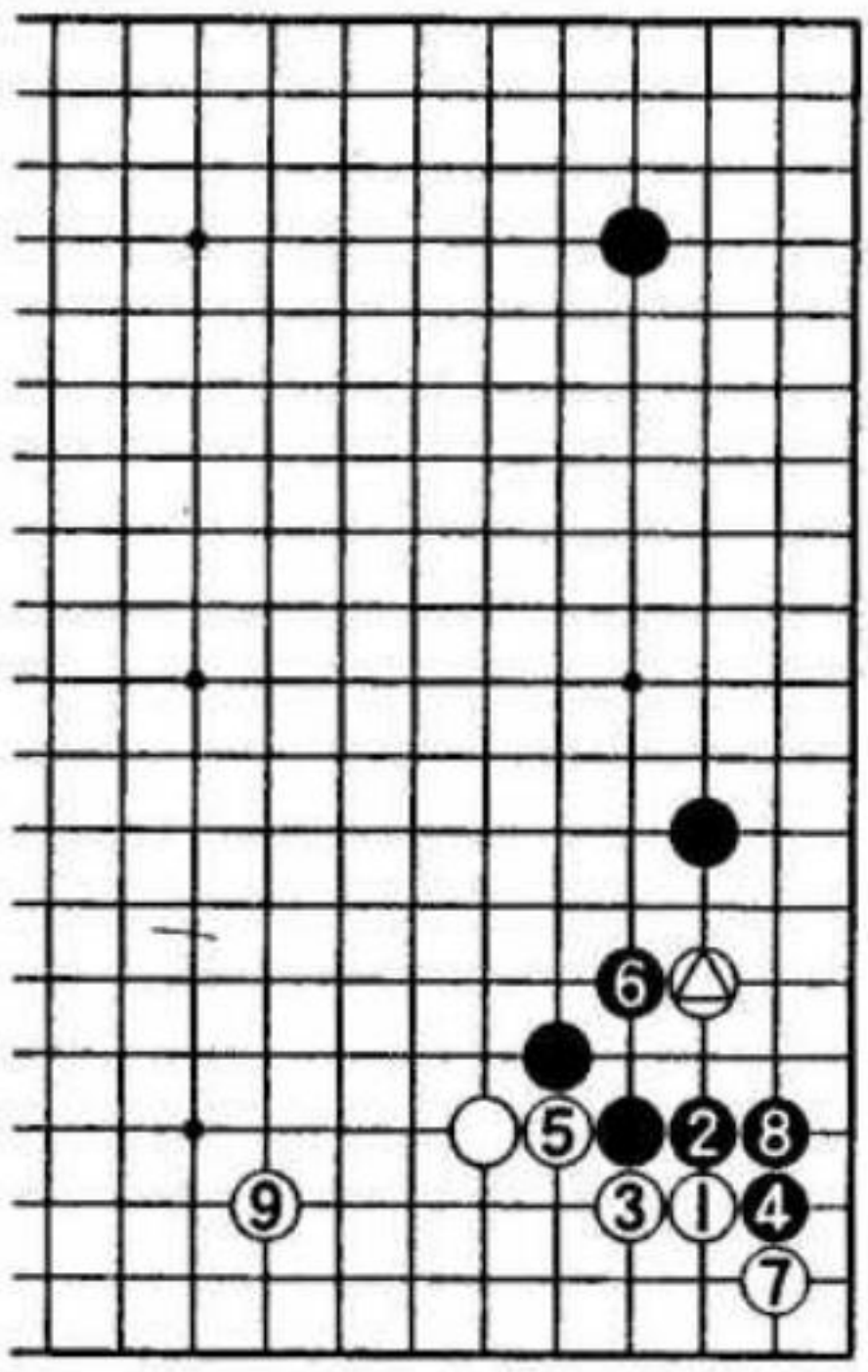
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: a hectic fight

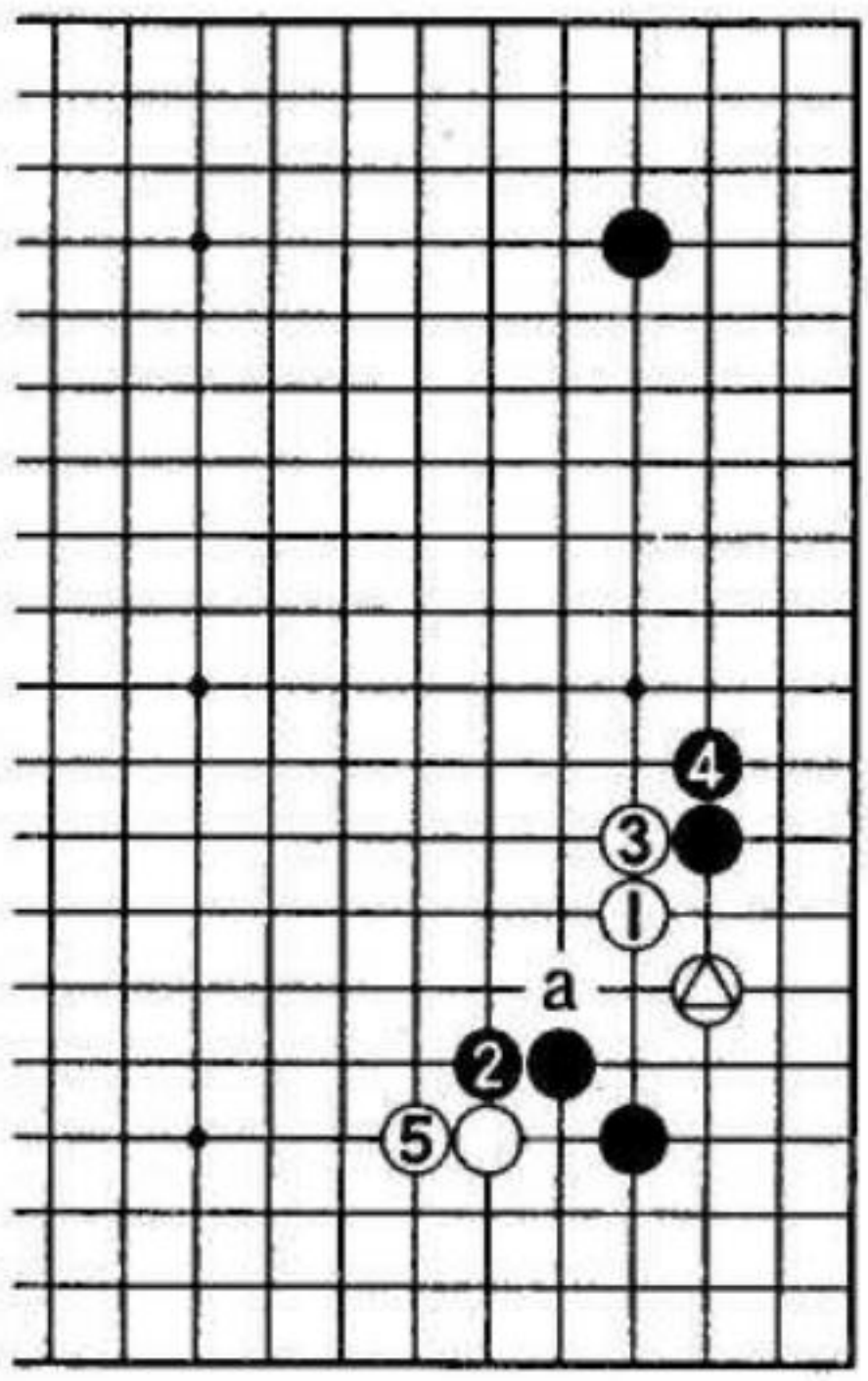
Since the result in *Dia. 1* is painful, White might switch to 3 here. However, White will find himself caught up in a hectic race to save two weak groups when Black attacks with 4 and 6. He will be faced with a tough fight.

Dia. 3: natural flow

The best way for White to play is to switch to the corner at 1. He calmly sacrifices the marked stone, taking territory at the bottom in compensation. Since the marked stone was under a lot of pressure, giving it up makes sense. The sequence here is natural.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: escaping

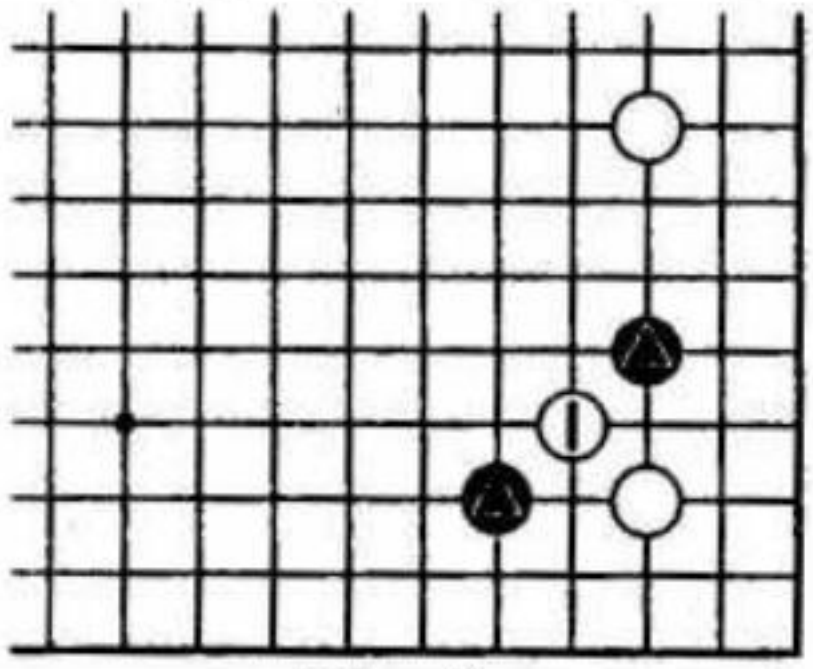
If White wants to save the marked stone, he must play 1 instead of attaching at 'a'. After 2, he can push up at 3; if Black answers at 4, he can escape at the bottom with 5. Compare this result with *Dias.* 1 and 2: one doesn't get the feeling here that Black has split White down the middle.

Dia. 5: split into two

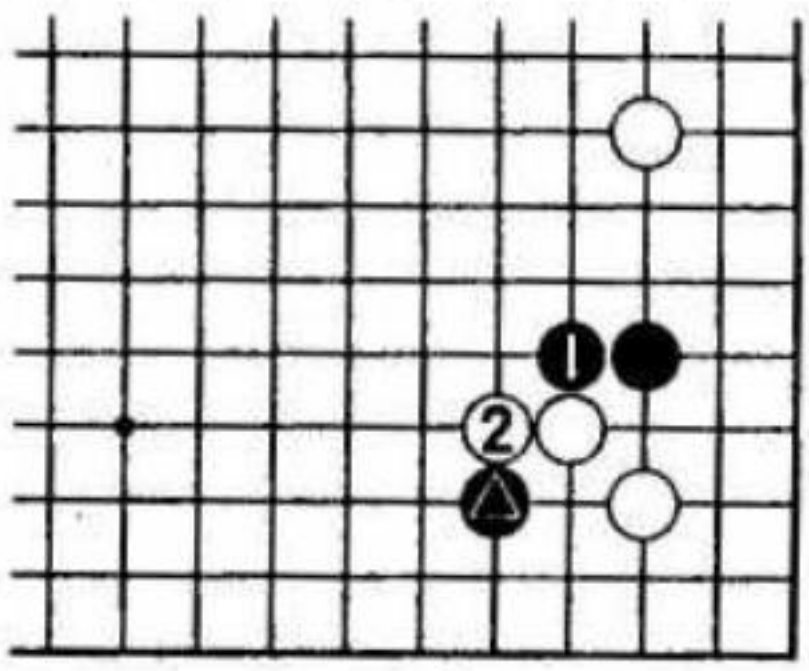
This is another example of a 'family feud': White 1 drives a wedge between the marked black stones.

Dia. 6: hurting oneself

Pushing along at 1 only provokes White 2, which hurts the marked stone. Black's 'family' is at war with itself. Next -



Dia. 5



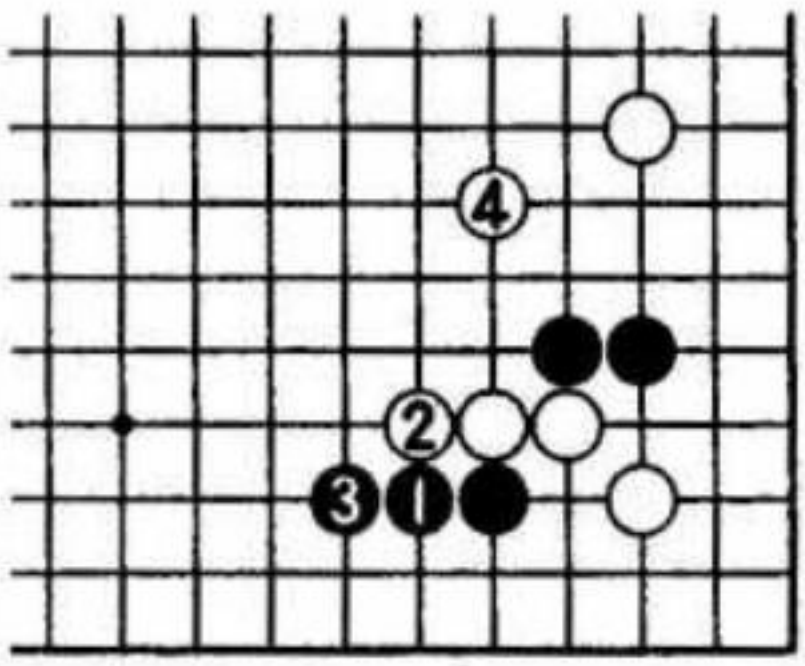
Dia. 6

Dia. 7: hopeless

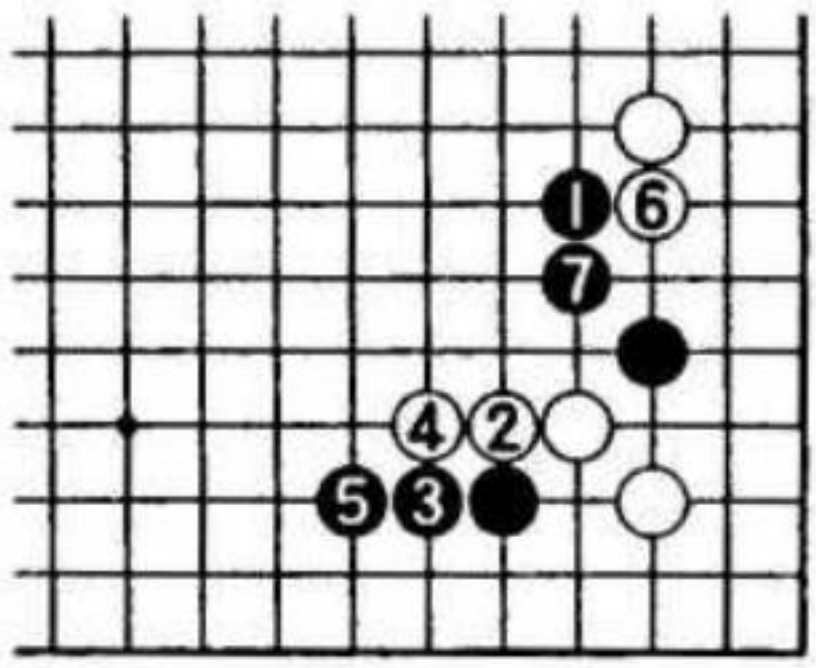
If Black helps the bottom stone with 1 and 3, then the two stones above are in a hopeless position after 2 and 4.

Dia. 8: safe

If Black wants to escape, then 1 is the move. Playing away from his other stone stops the opponent from splitting him down the middle. Both groups are more or less safe after 7.



Dia. 7



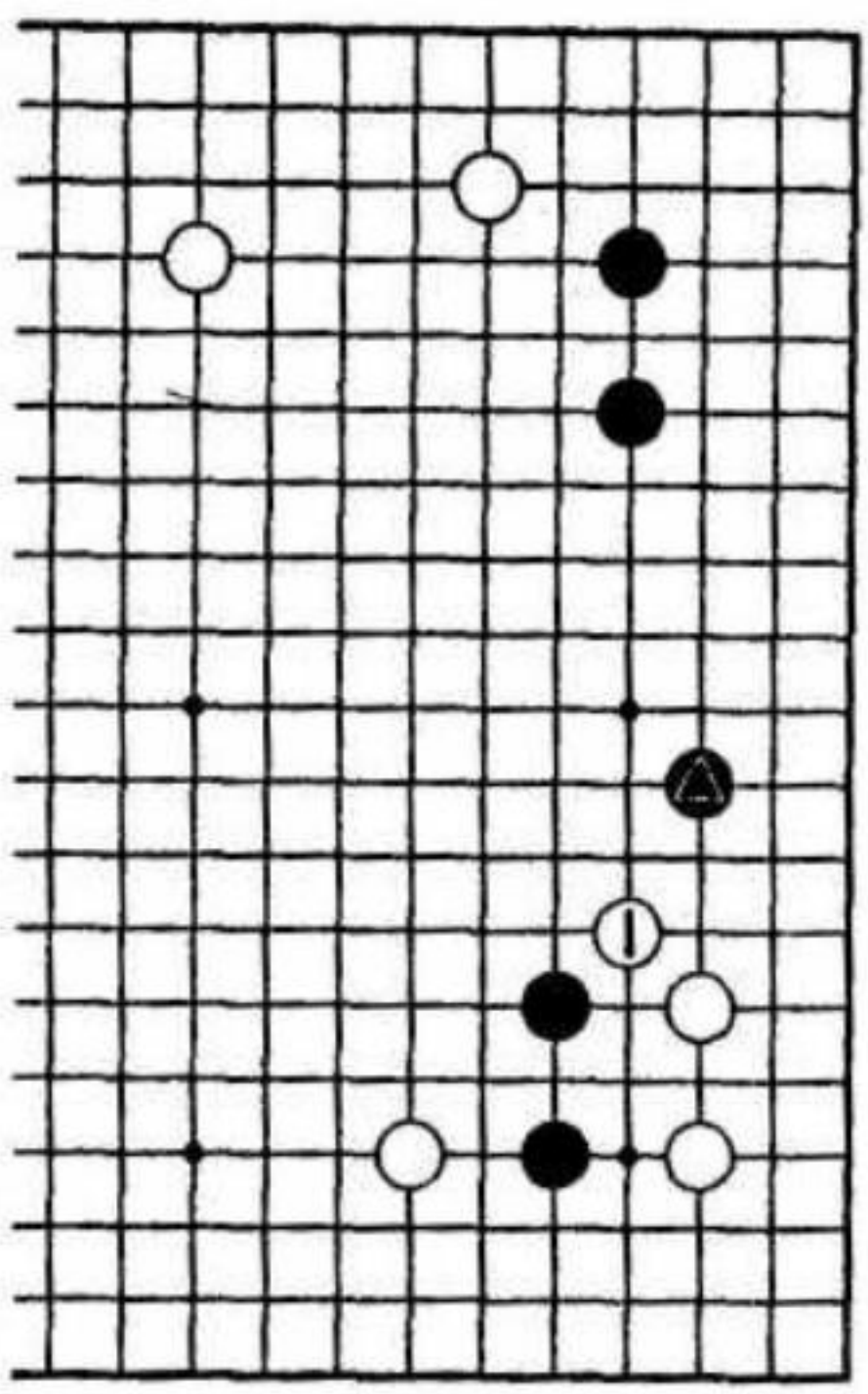
Dia. 8

Dia. 9. how should Black escape?

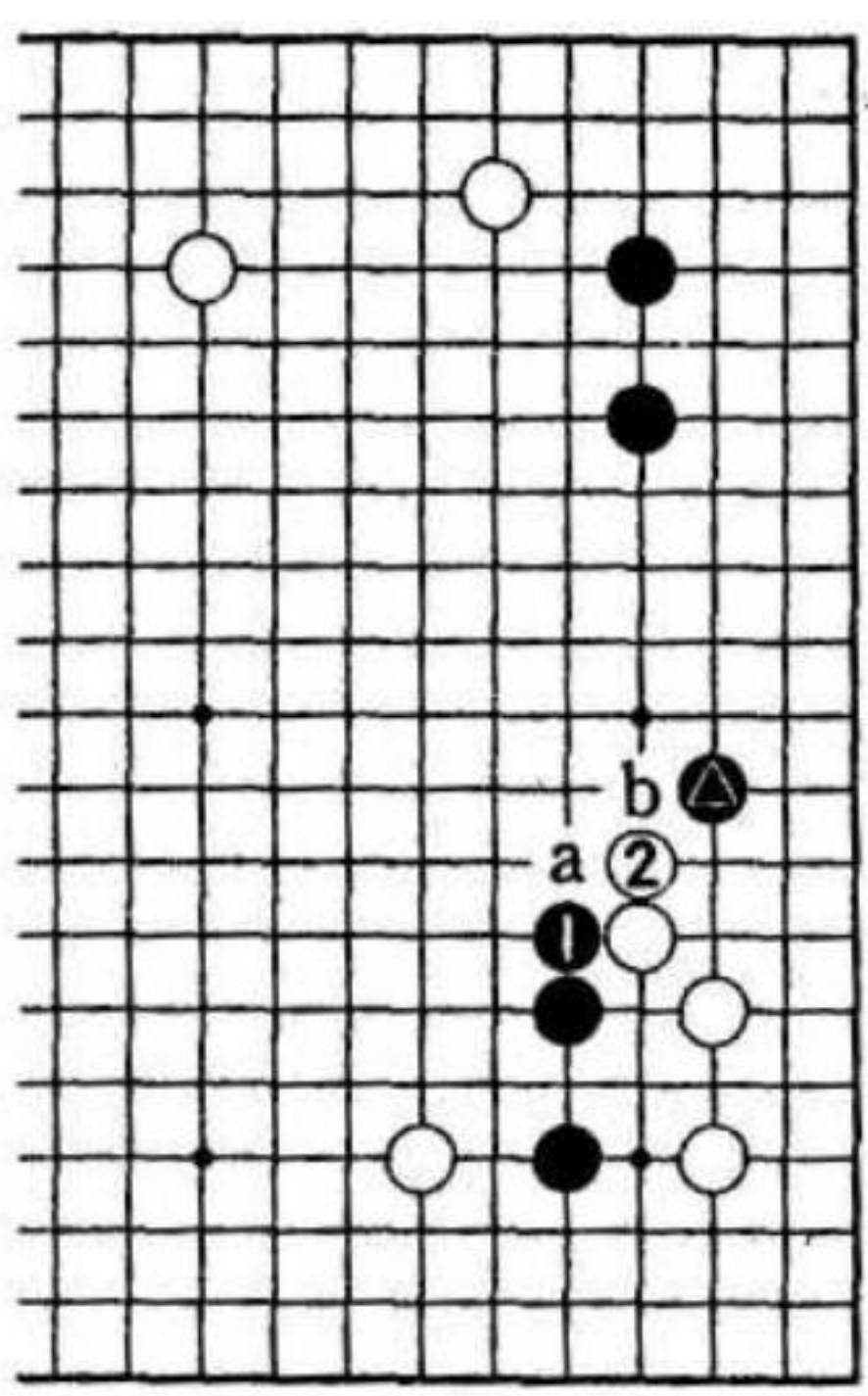
White has just played at 1. The two black stones are under attack, but Black has to be careful how he rescues them. Pay attention to the marked stone.

Dia. 10: weakening oneself

Black 1 is a bad move: it leads to a family feud. White 2 weakens the marked black stone; if next Black 'a' and White 'b', this stone will become little better than scrap. Instead of pushing up at 1-



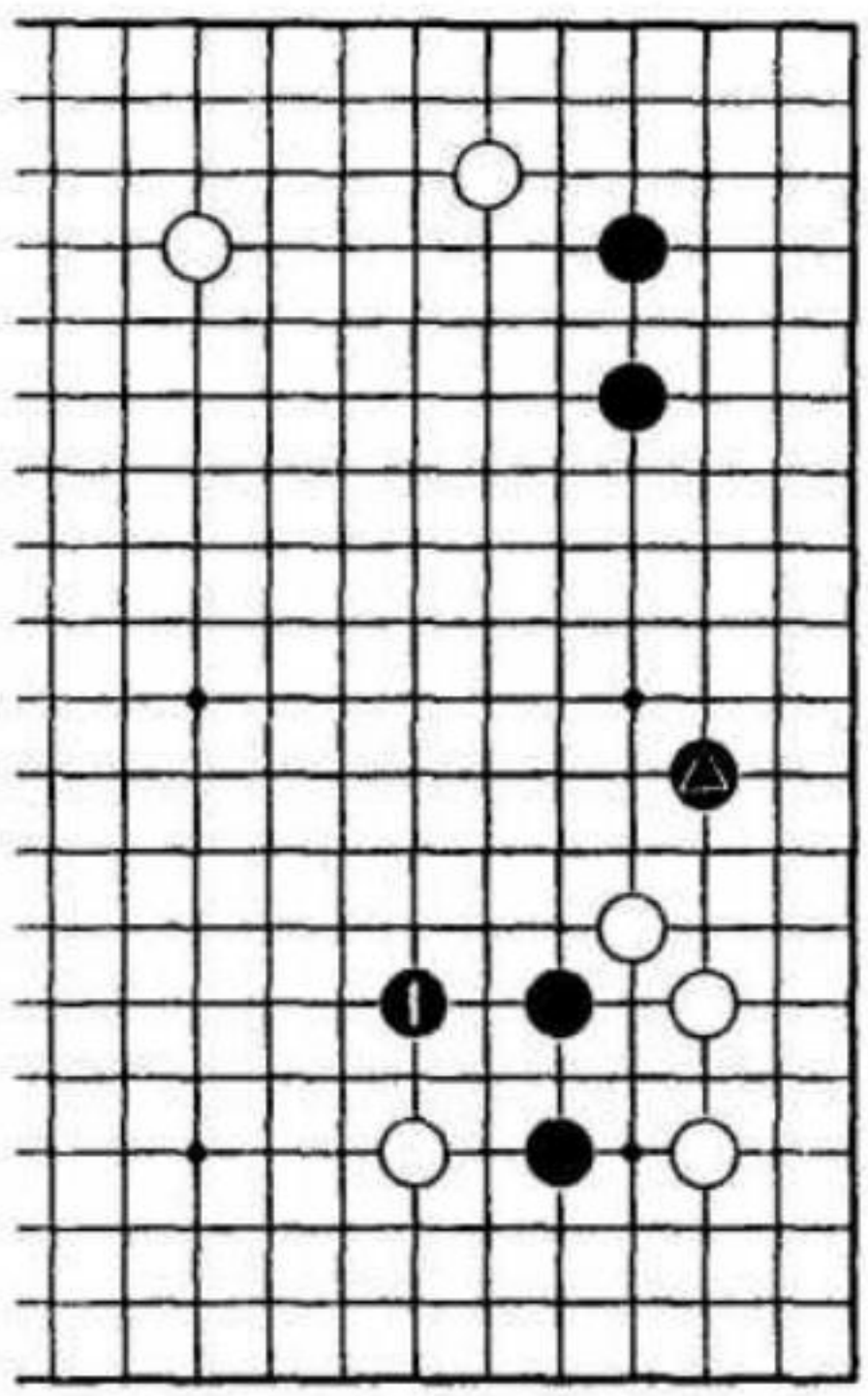
Dia. 9



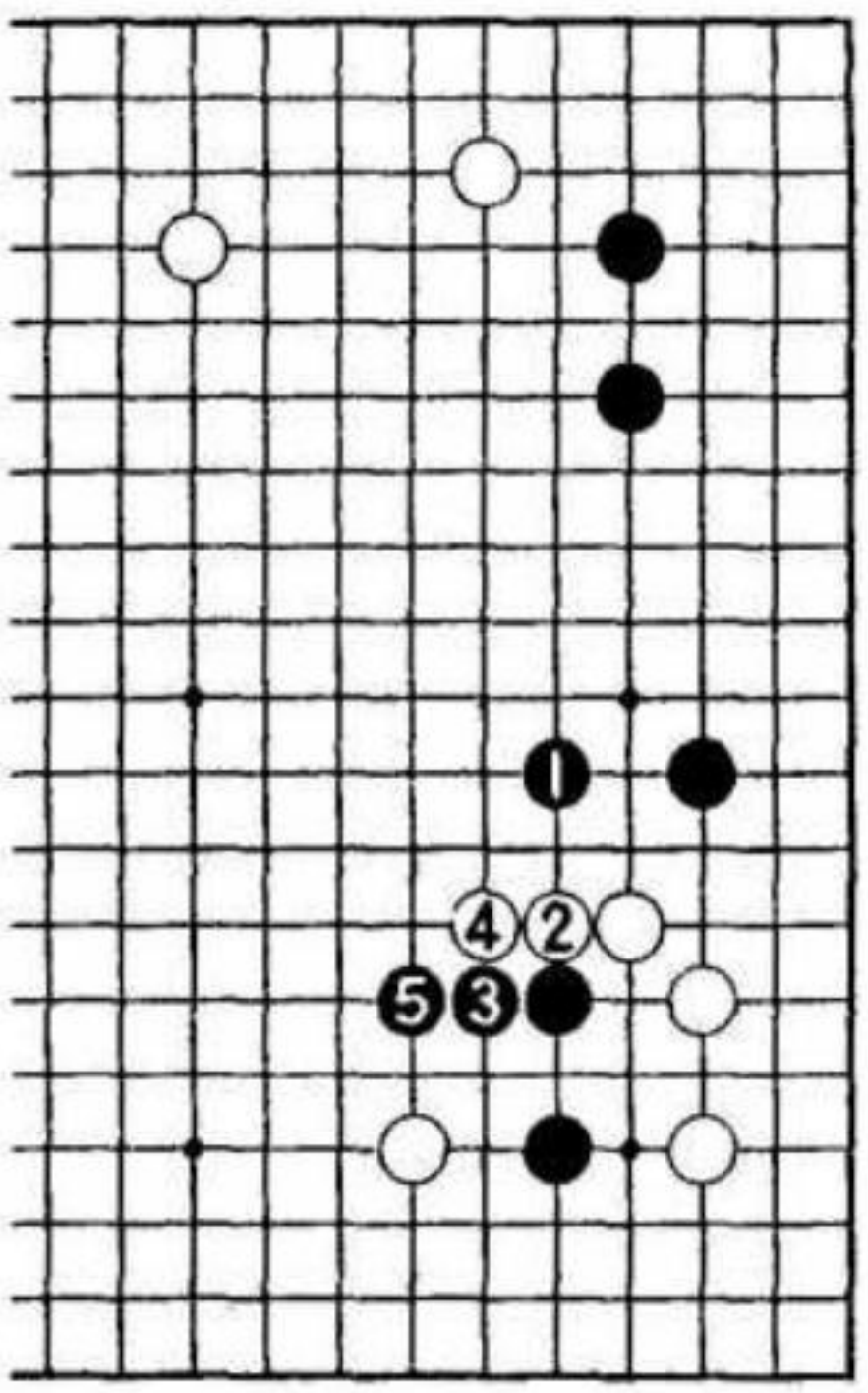
Dia. 10

Dia. 11: changing direction

Black should switch direction completely, escaping by jumping out to 1. This avoids weakening his marked stone: it doesn't help the opponent the way 1 in *Dia. 10* did. Instead of 1 here -



Dia. 11



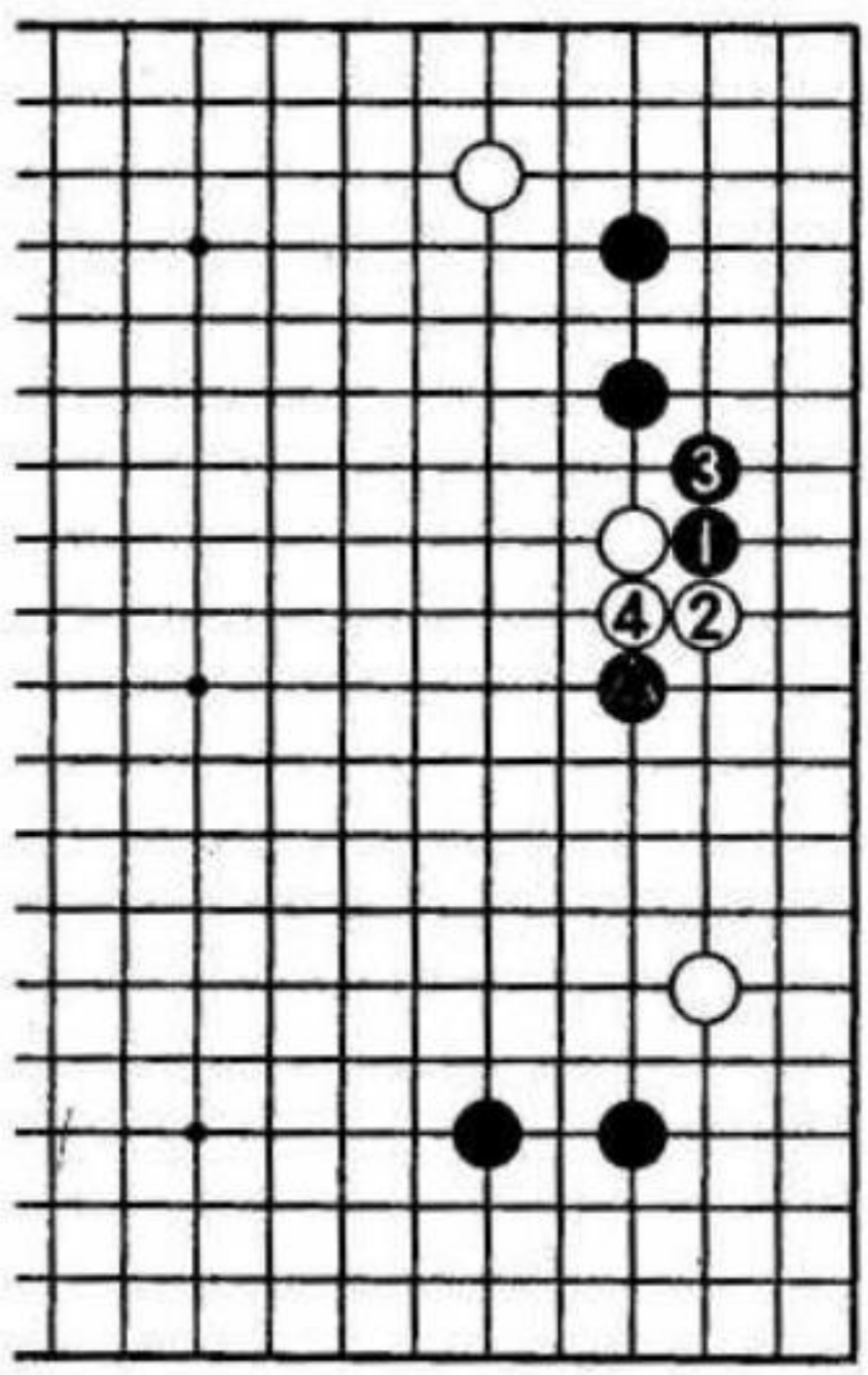
Dia. 12

Dia. 12: another good strategy

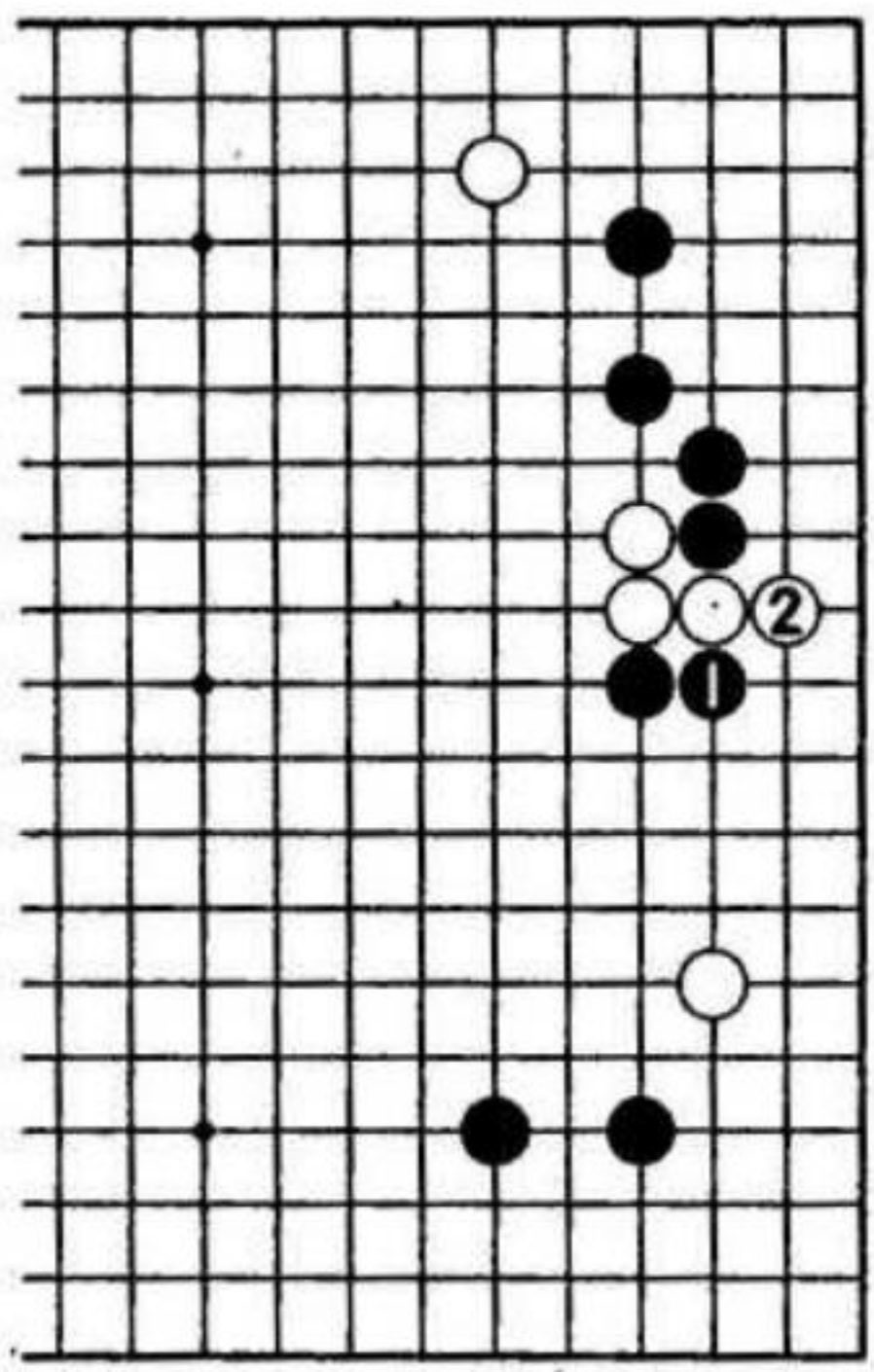
Another possibility is to jump out with 1. If White 2, Black moves out with 3 and 5. White may seem to be splitting Black into two, but note the differences from *Dia. 10*: Black 1 is further away from White's wall, and Black is moving out one step ahead of White with 3 and 5.

Dia 13: abandoning an ally

Probably every go player has been guilty of playing moves like 1 and 3 here in the early stages of his career. This is a prune example of a 'family feud'. Black 1 may strengthen the corner, but it abandons an ally to the enemy. Weakening the marked stone like this is truly reprehensible.



Dia. 13



Dia. 14

Dia. 14: getting worse

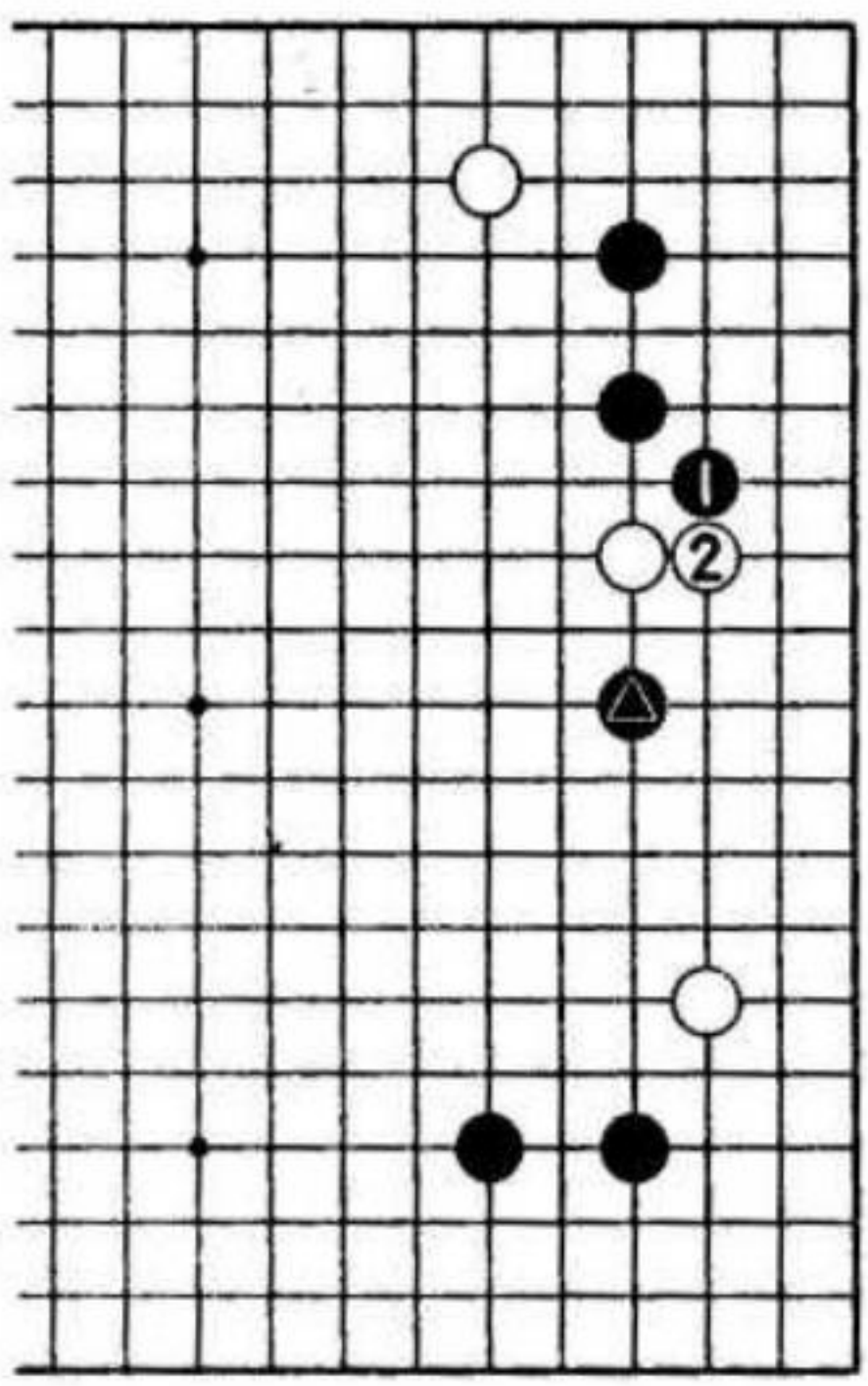
Continuing with 1, as some weak players do, only makes the situation worse. Letting White descend at 2 seriously weakens the corner, while of course Black 1 and the other stone are still weak The ensuing fight will be very tough for Black.

Dia. 15: also bad

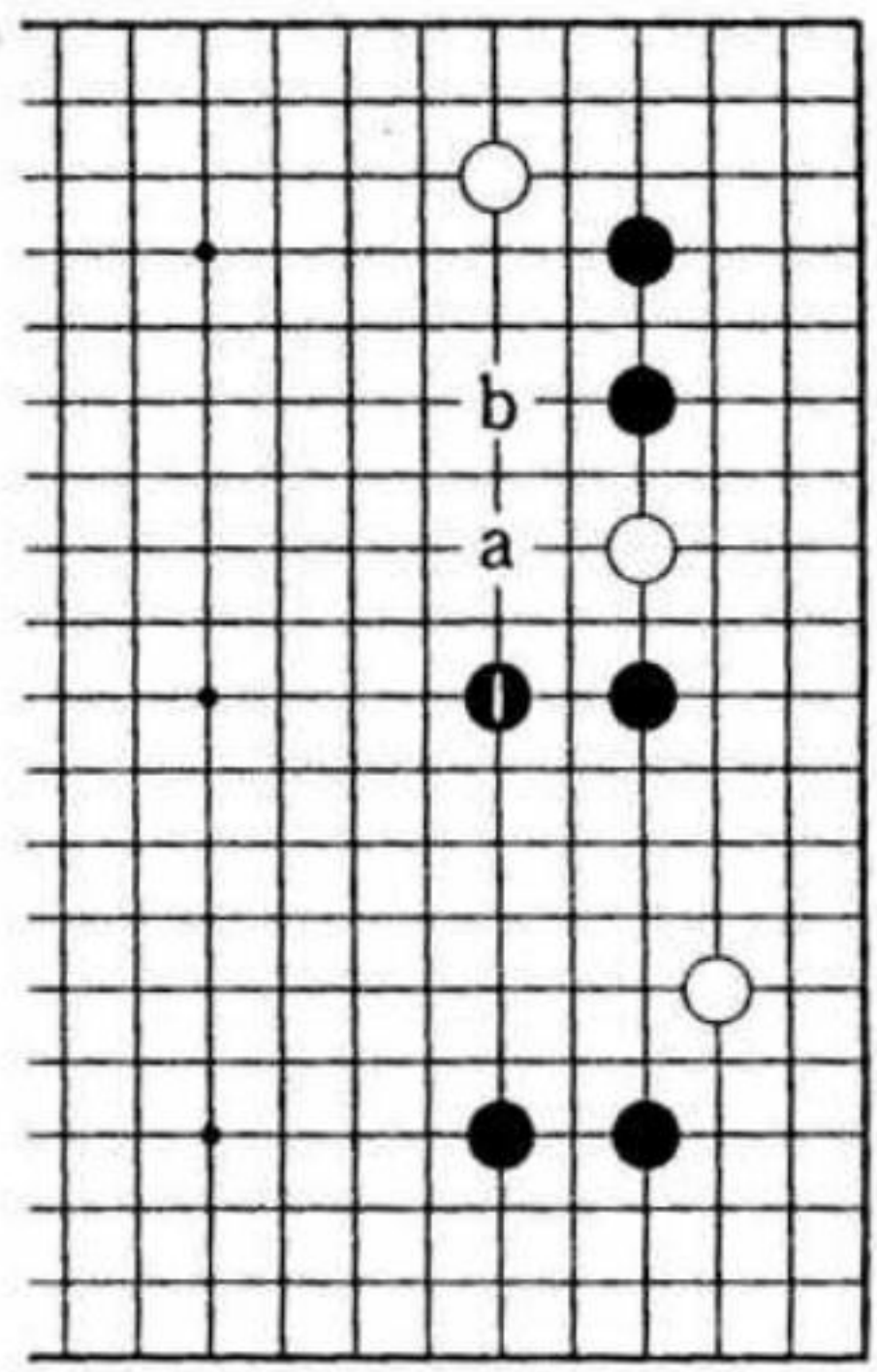
Black 1 is not as bad as 1 in *Dia. 13*, but provoking White 2 does weaken the marked stone a little, so this is a 'family feud'. Note also that Black 1 doesn't really strengthen the corner very much.

Dia. 16: simplest

The best and simplest move is jumping out to 1, which avoids hurting one's allies. If White 'a', Black keeps the initiative with 'b'.



Dia. 15



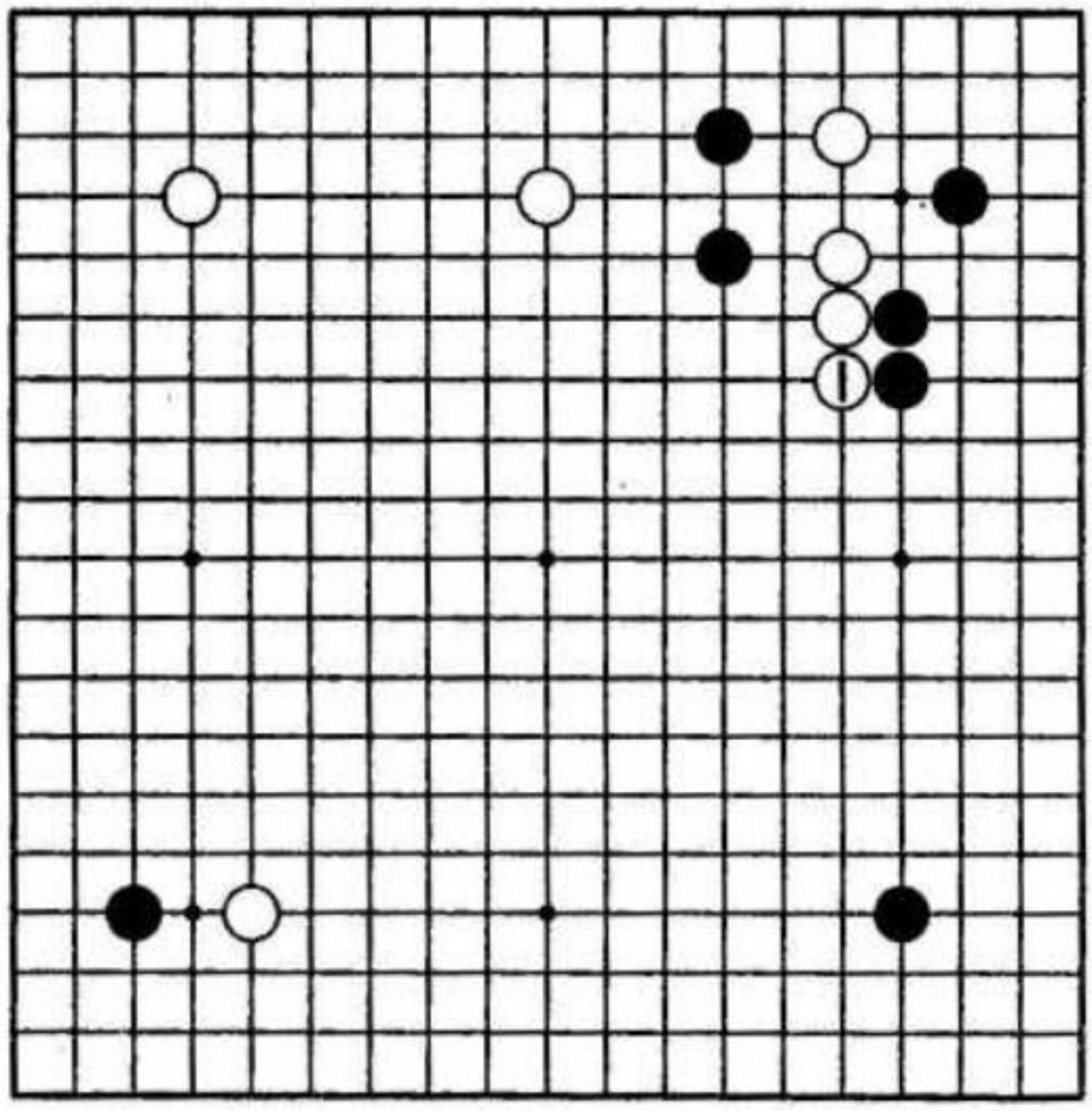
Dia. 16

Principle 9
Don't permit a hane at the head of your stones

Should Black play on the left or the right?

The efficiency of stones is proportional to their potential for development. The bud of future growth has to be carefully nurtured. Letting the opponent nip that growth in the bud will handicap your game.

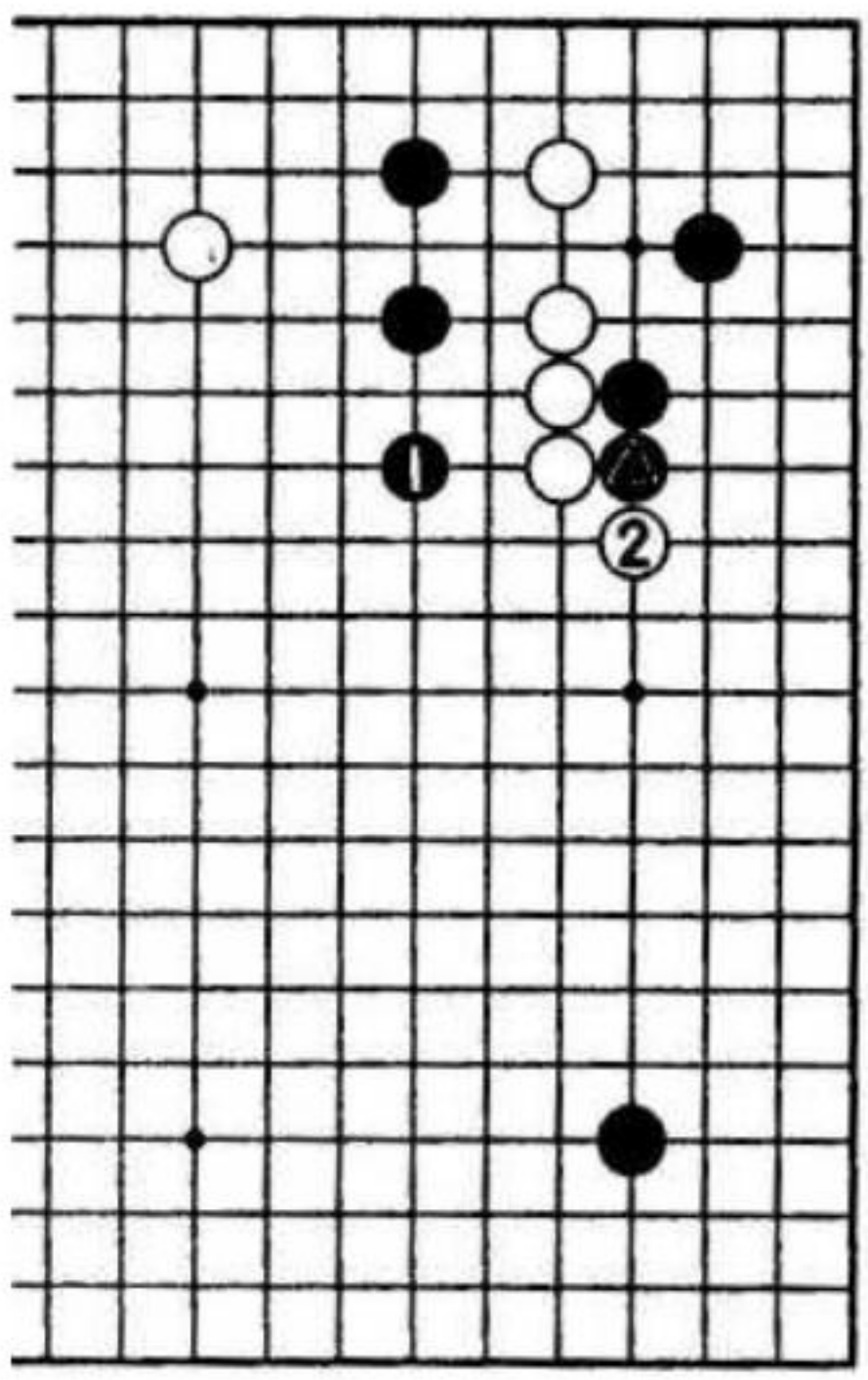
White has just pushed down at 1. What should Black do? He is worried about his two stones to the left ...



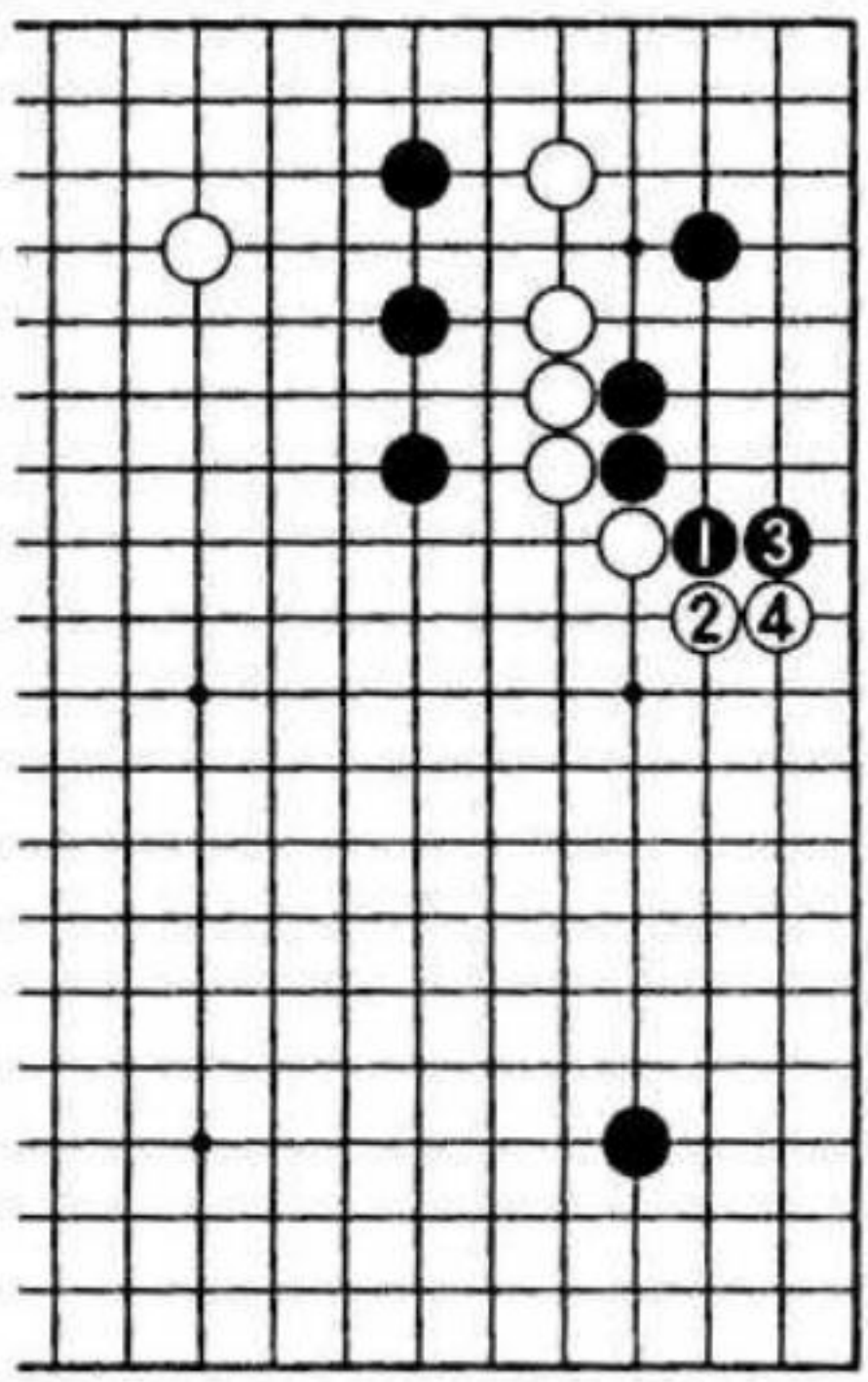
Theme diagram
Should Black play on the left or the right?

Dia. 1: fleeing on the left

The two stones on the left appear weaker, so let's assume Black escapes with 1. That allows White to hane at 2, which in turn blocks the potential of the marked stone. This is an important minus for Black.



Dia. 1



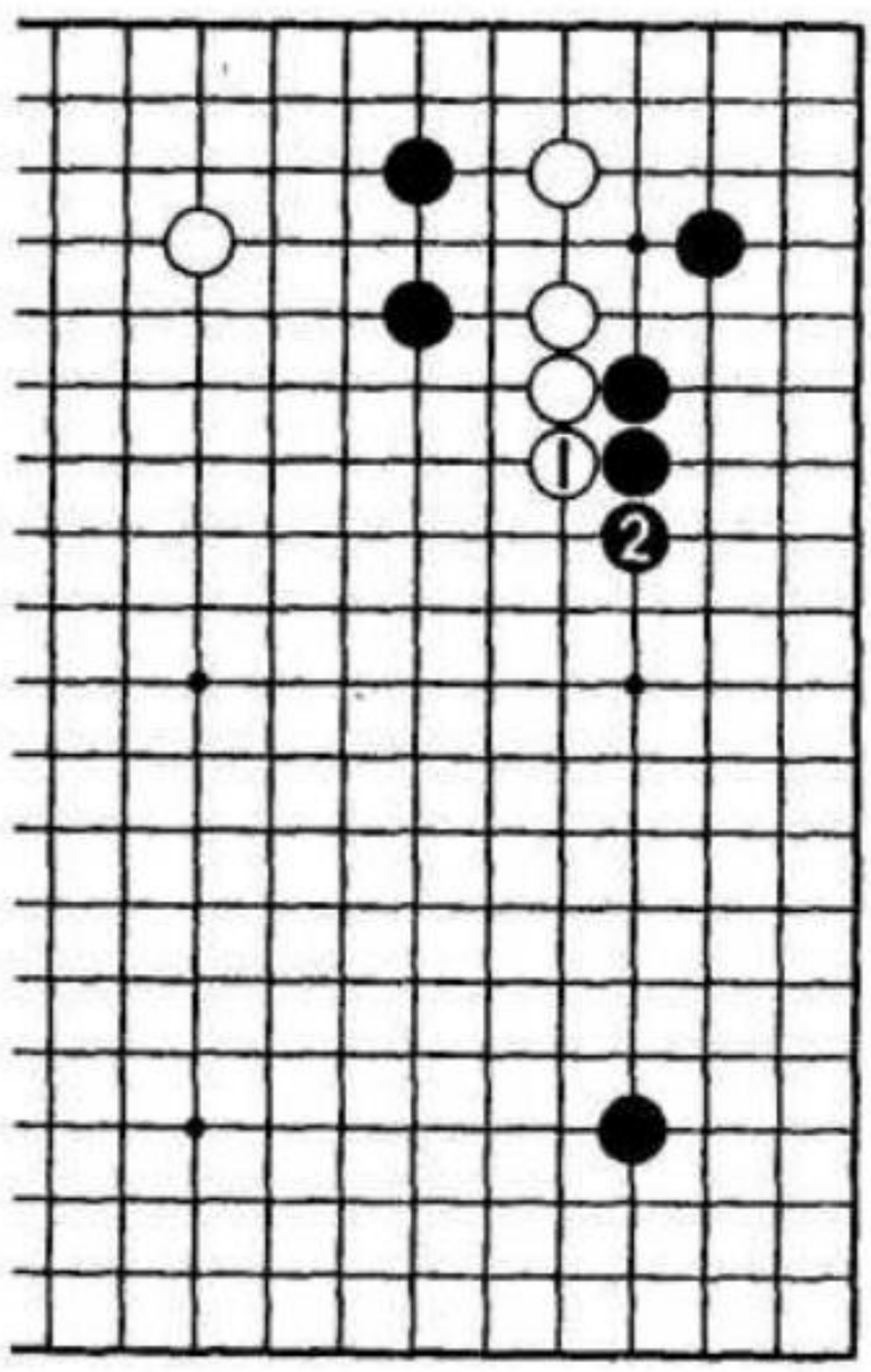
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: an incalculable loss

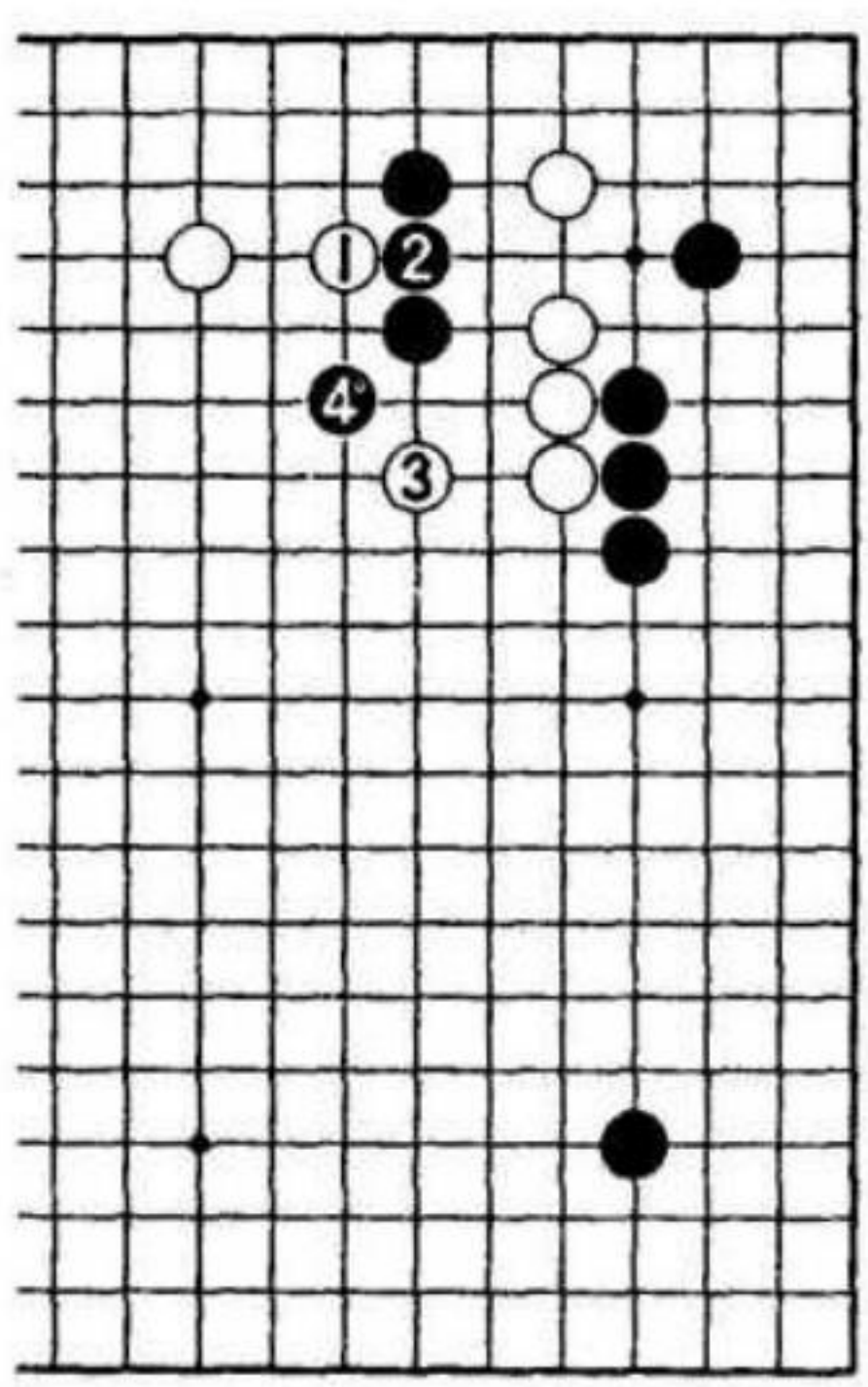
Even if Black hanes at 1, White counter-hanes with 2. After 4, Black is confined to the corner and has lost all his potential to develop. On top of that, his shape is still defective, so all-in-all he has suffered an incalculable loss.

Dia. 3: at whatever cost, extend!

Whatever happens, Black must answer 1 by extending at 2. Just remember: don't let the opponent hane at the head of your stones. Even if the two stones to the left are captured, you have to play at 2.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: can't be captured

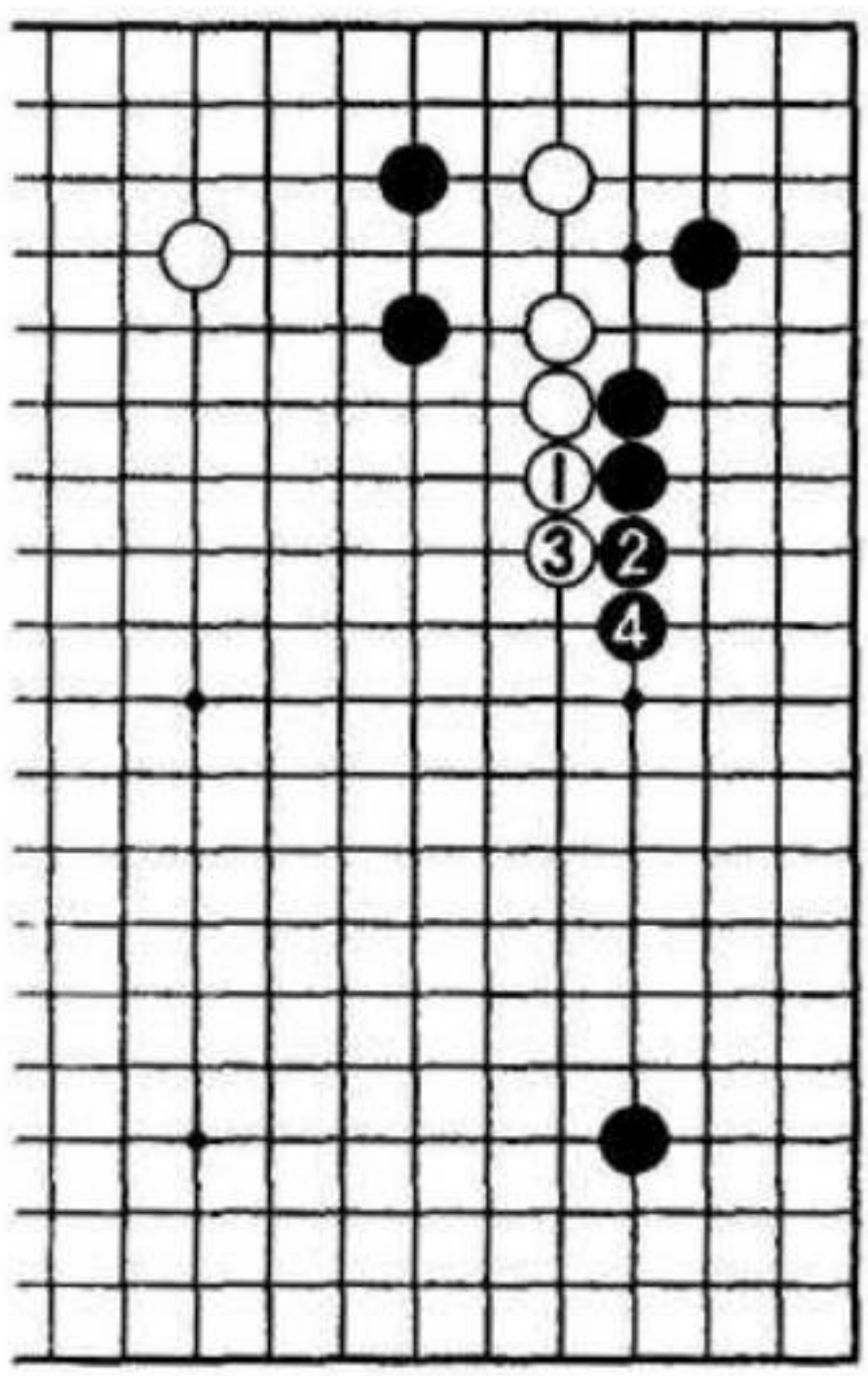
We said 'at whatever cost' above, but actually it won't be, so easy for White to capture the stones. Even if he attacks with 1 and 3, Black should be able to escape after 4.

Dia. 5: extend again!

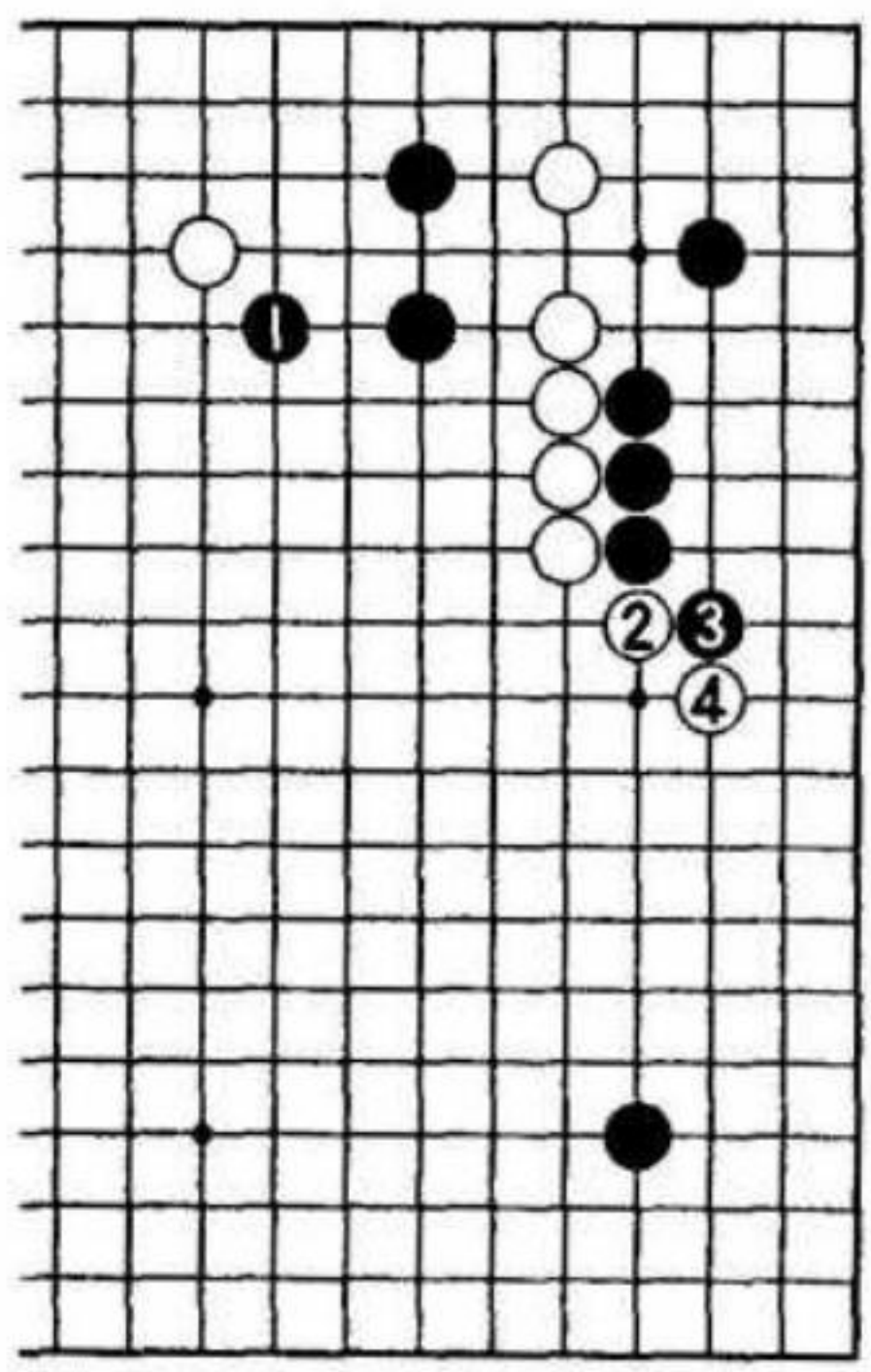
Black 2 is therefore essential. If White keeps pushing with 3, Black should extend again with 4. The other two stones are getting weaker and weaker, but 'at whatever cost' . . . After all, Black takes considerable profit with 2 and 4.

Dia. 6: similar result

If Black switches 4 in *Dia. 5* to 1 here, White will hane with 2 and 4, dashing his hopes of developing. This result is similar to *Dia. 2.*



Dia. 5



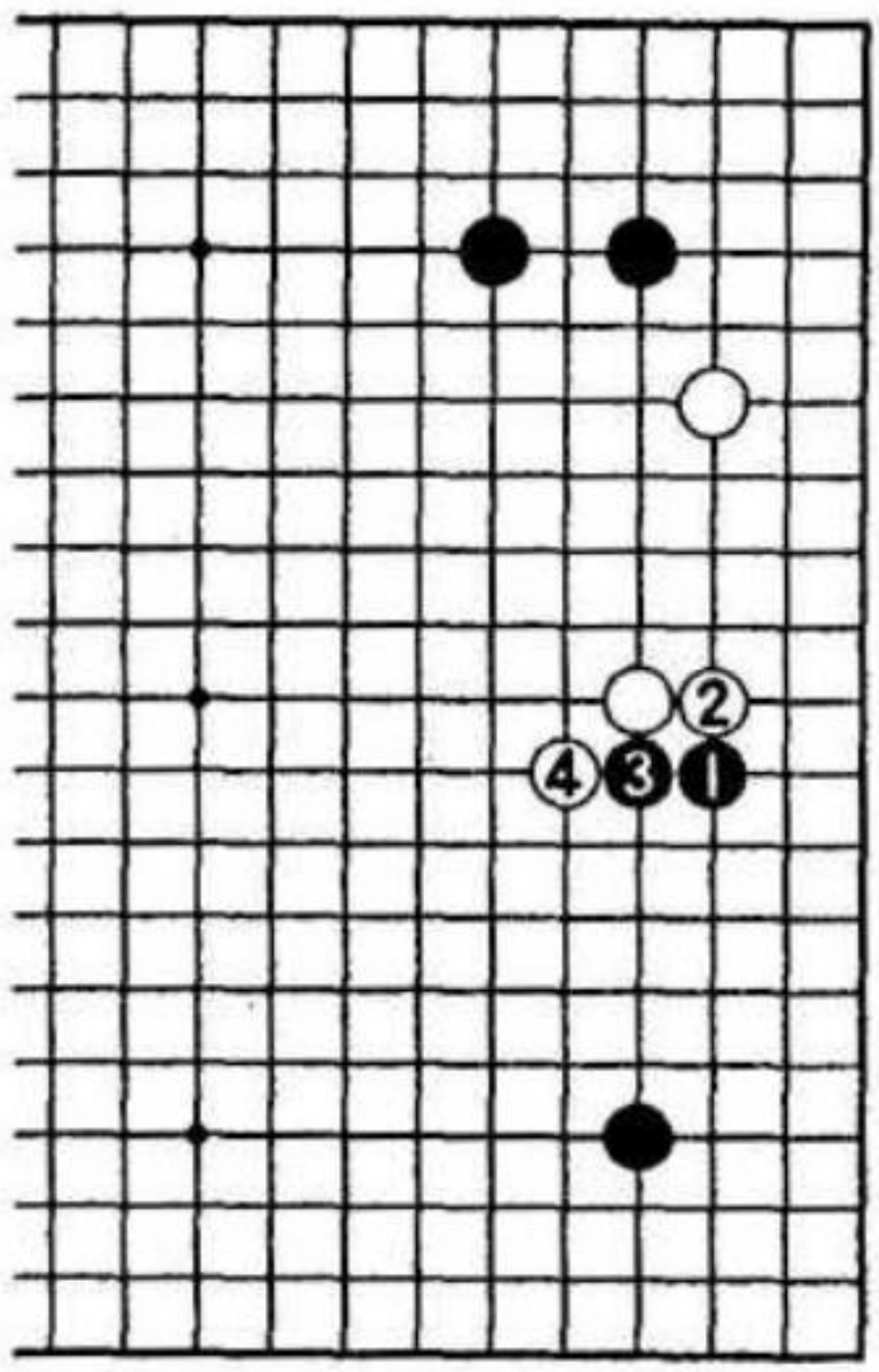
Dia. 6

Dia. 7: a beginner's mistake

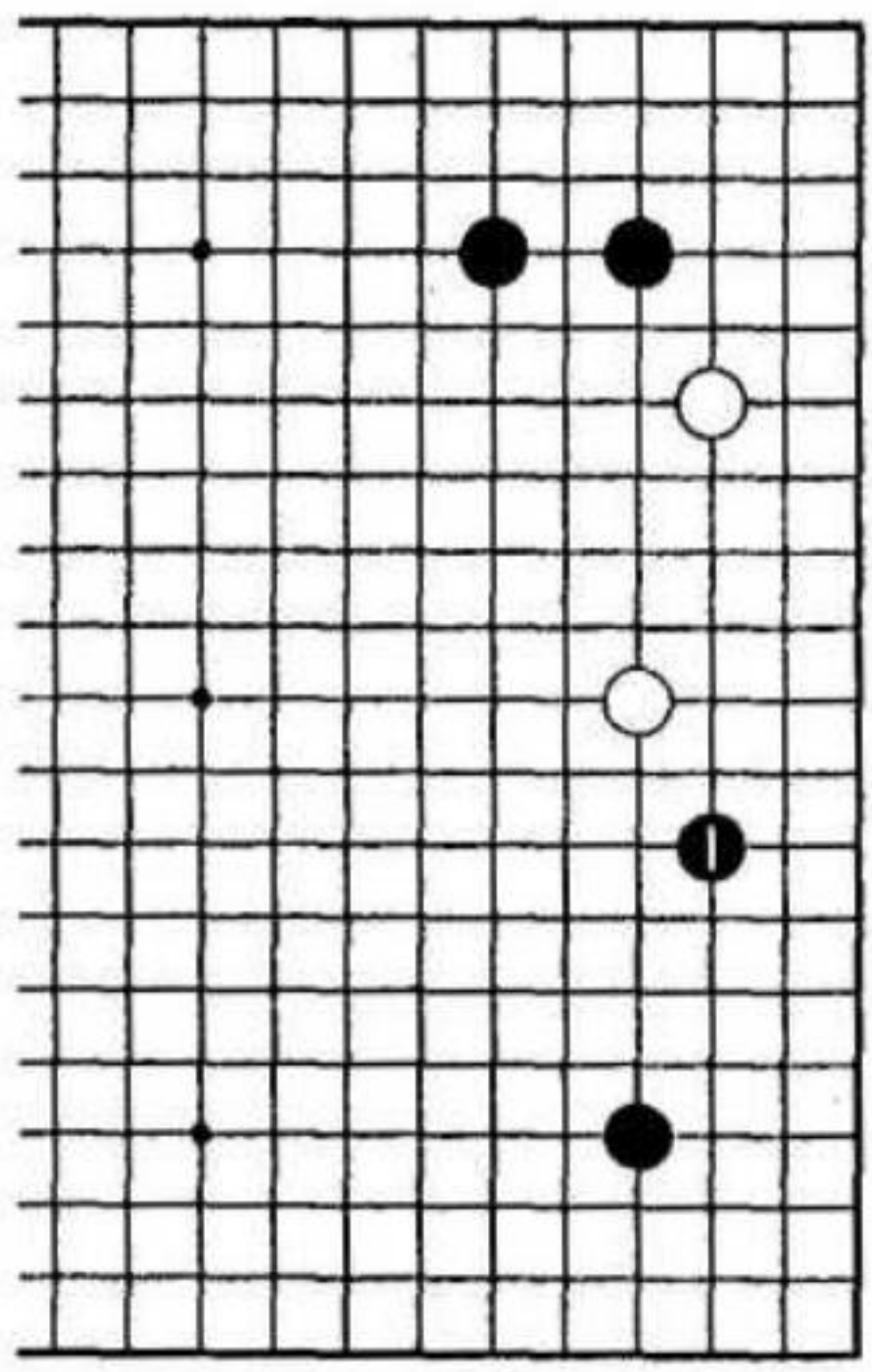
Black 1 is the kind of bad move relative beginners often make. The reason it's bad is that after 2 and 3 White can bane at the head of two stones with 4. From White's point of view, 4 follows the proverb, 'hane at the head of two stones without hesitation'.

Dia. 8: holding back

Needless to say, Black's strategy with 1 in *Dia. 7* is unreasonable. Holding back one line with 1 is the correct approach here. Recklessly challenging the opponent to contact fights may harm your own side.



Dia. 7



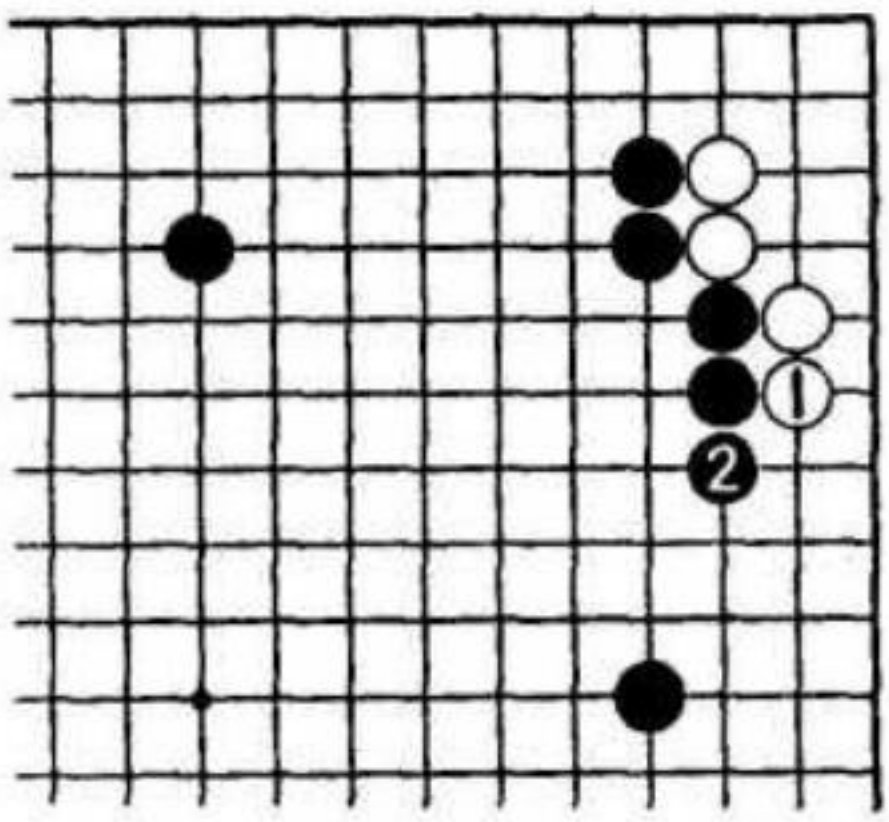
Dia. 8

Dia. 9: a common pattern

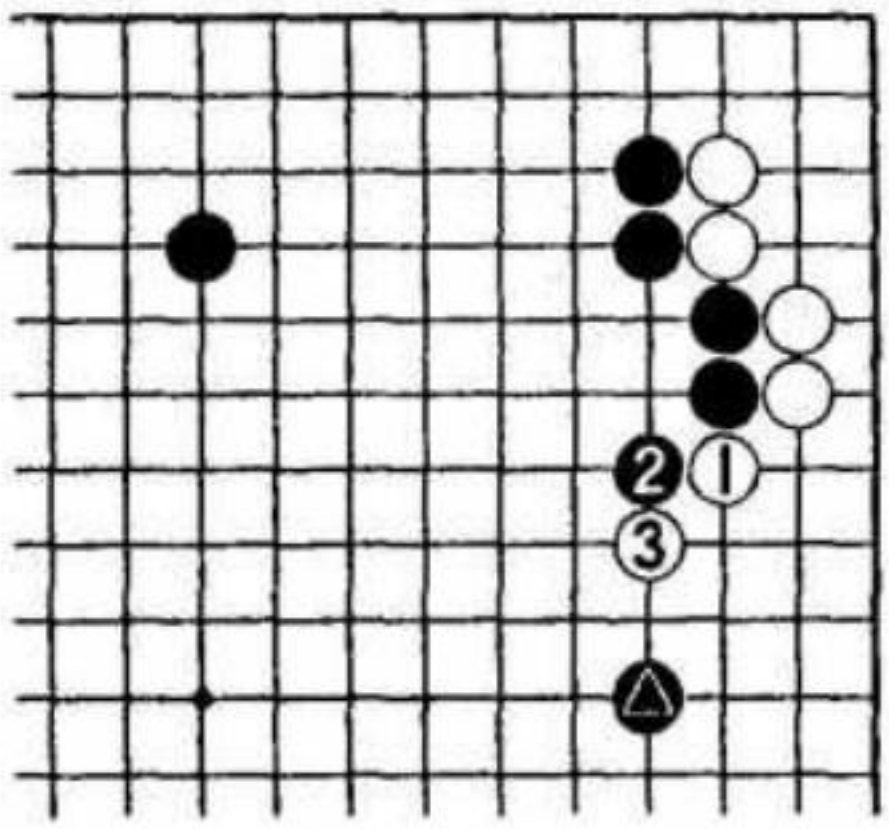
This is a common corner pattern. Note that Black must answer 1 by extending at 2.

Dia. 10: trouble

If Black neglects to extend, White will hane at 1, then 3, placing the link with the marked stone in jeopardy.



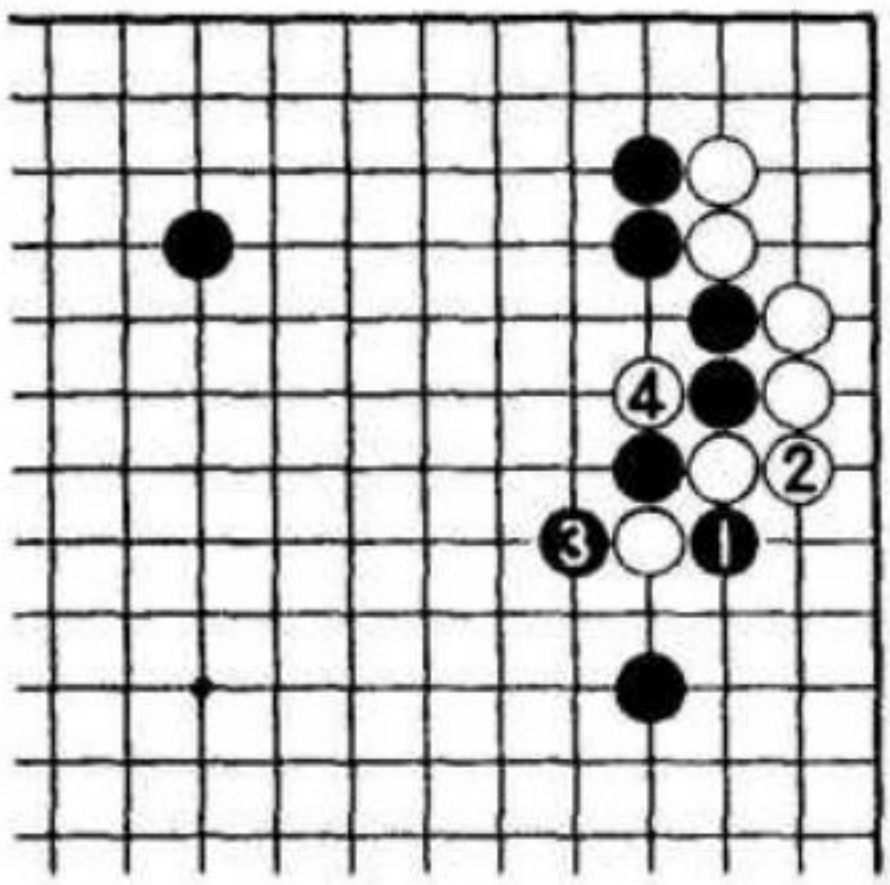
Dia. 9



Dia. 10

Dia. 11: disaster

Black can of course play 1 and 3, but giving White the double atari of 4 is disastrous. One wall of Black's moyo collapses.

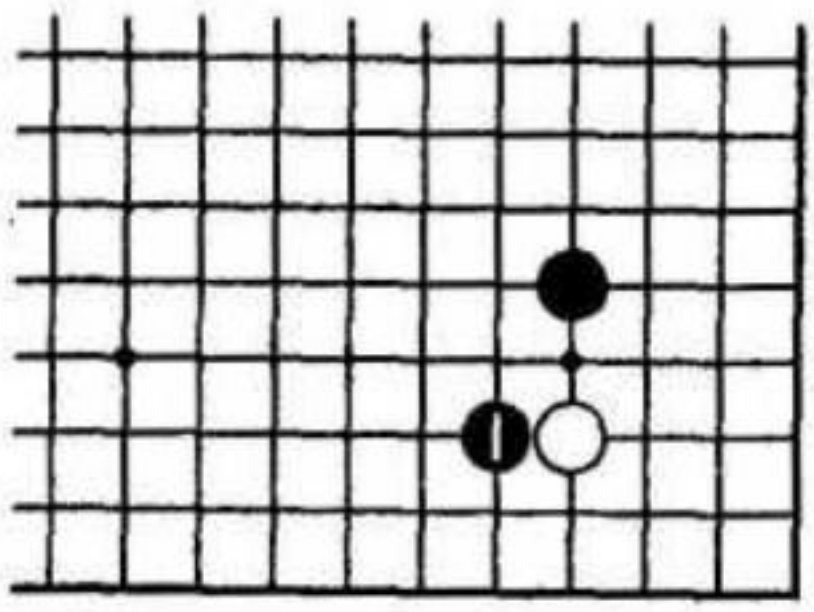


Dia. 11

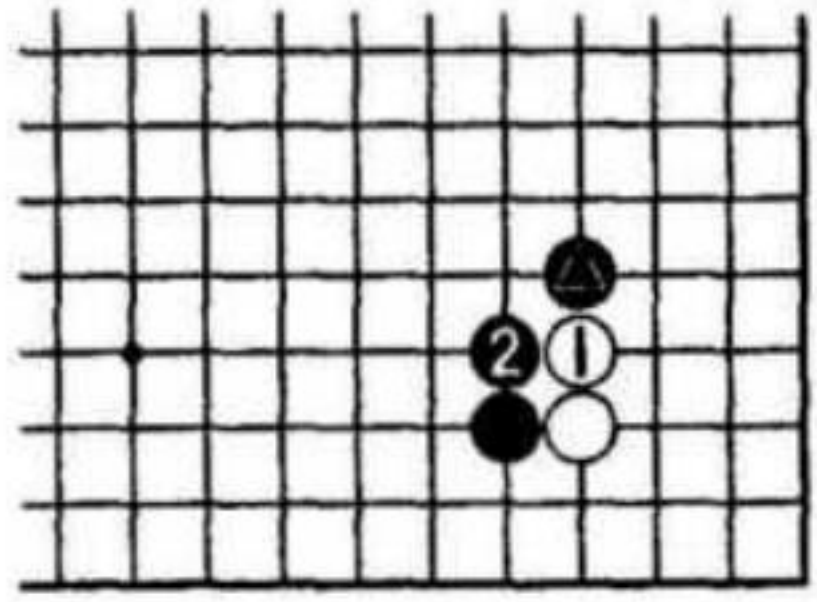
Let's examine the possible answers to the outside contact play of 1.

Dia. 13: crude

White 1 is a crude move. When Black plays 2, we find that in effect the marked black stone is a hane at the head of two stones.



Dia. 12



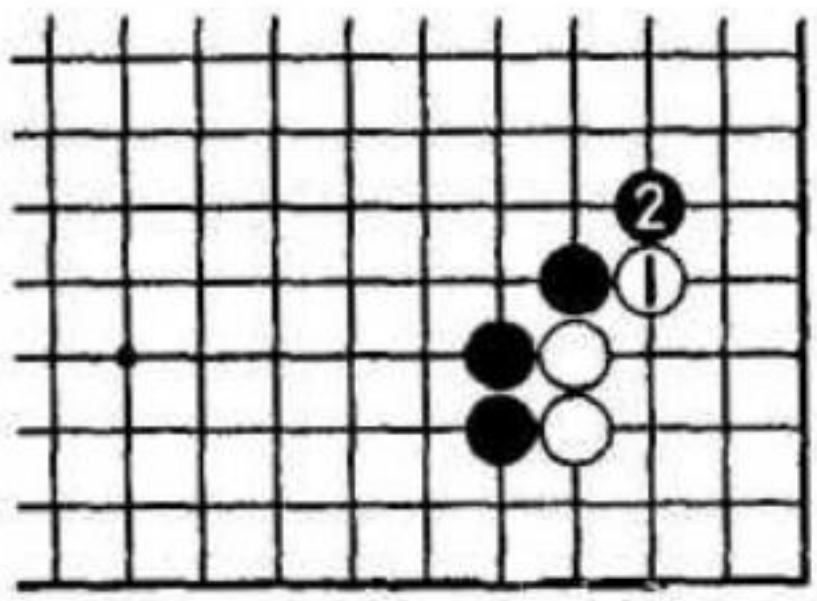
Dia. 13

Dia. 14: can't resist

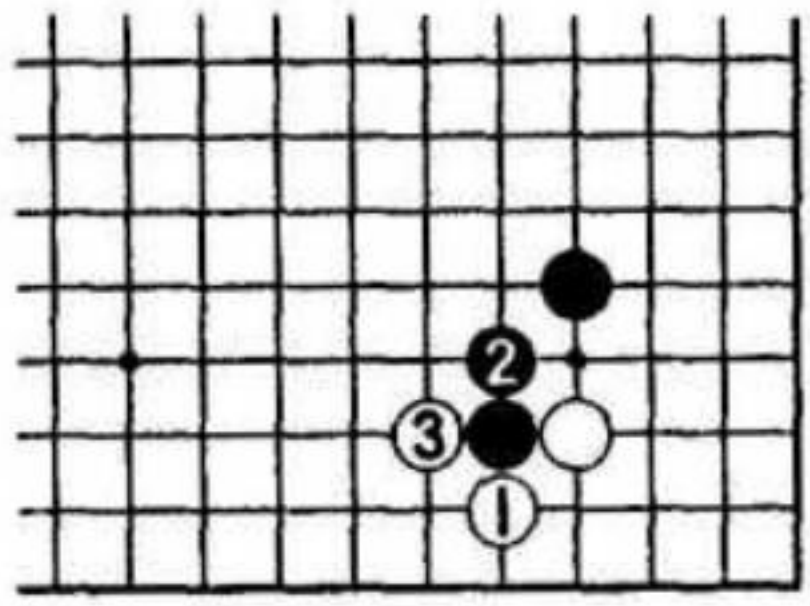
Continuing with a hane at 1 will only help Black The result after 2 will be terrible for White.

Dia. 15: correct

A hane underneath at 1 is the correct move. After 2, White hanes at 3. You can refer to a joseki book for the continuation.



Dia. 14



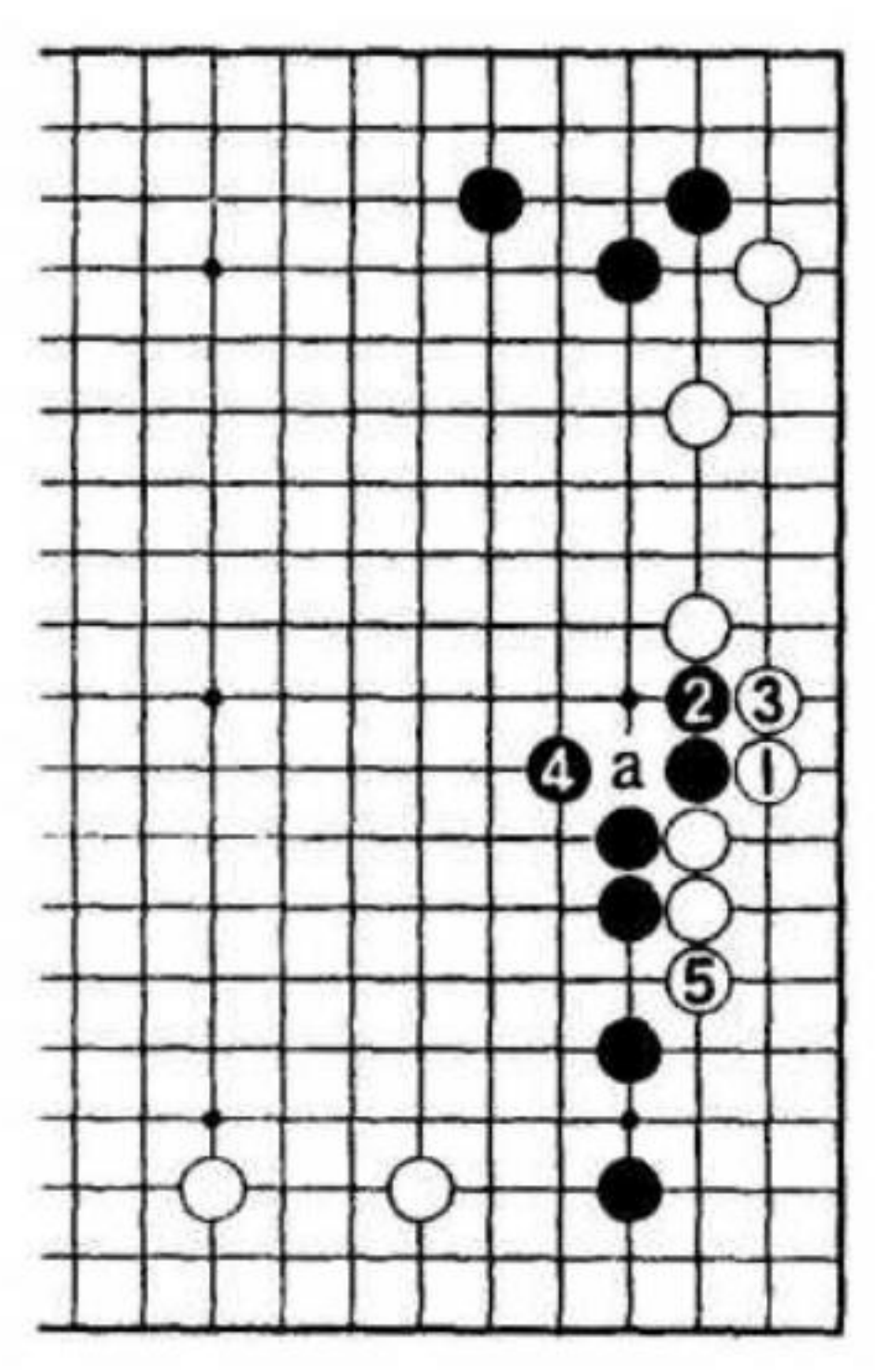
Dia. 15

Dia. 16: banging one's head

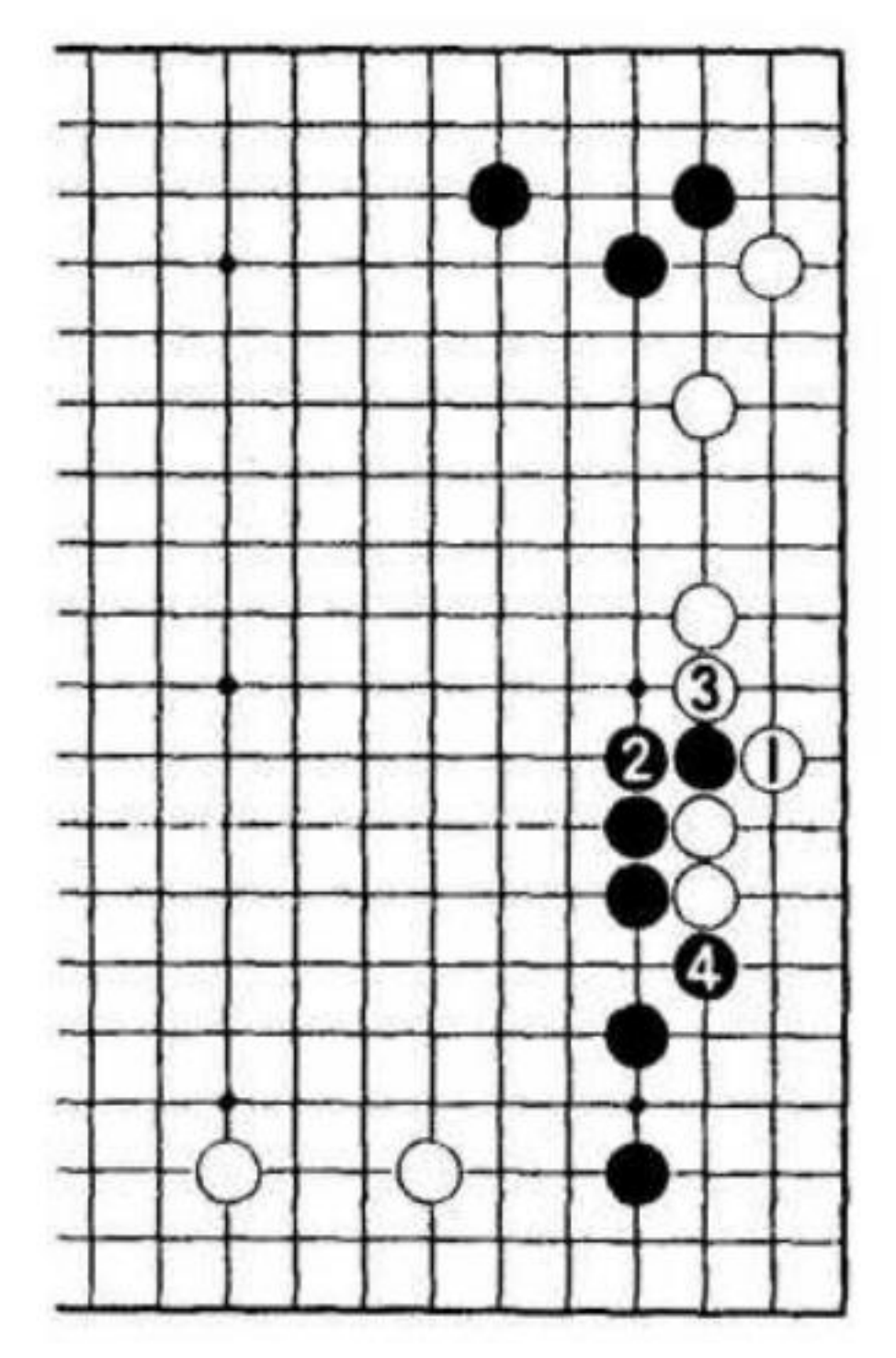
Answering White 1 by extending at 2 is like banging your head against a wall. This is an inefficient move that ignores the impossibility of further development here. After 3, Black must defend the cutting point of 'a' with 4, so White is allowed to make the excellent extension of 5.

Dia. 17: correct

Connecting at 2 avoids making the bad shape seen in *Dia. 16.* Linldng up with 3 is necessary, so Black gets to block at 4. This result is an obvious improvement.



Dia. 16



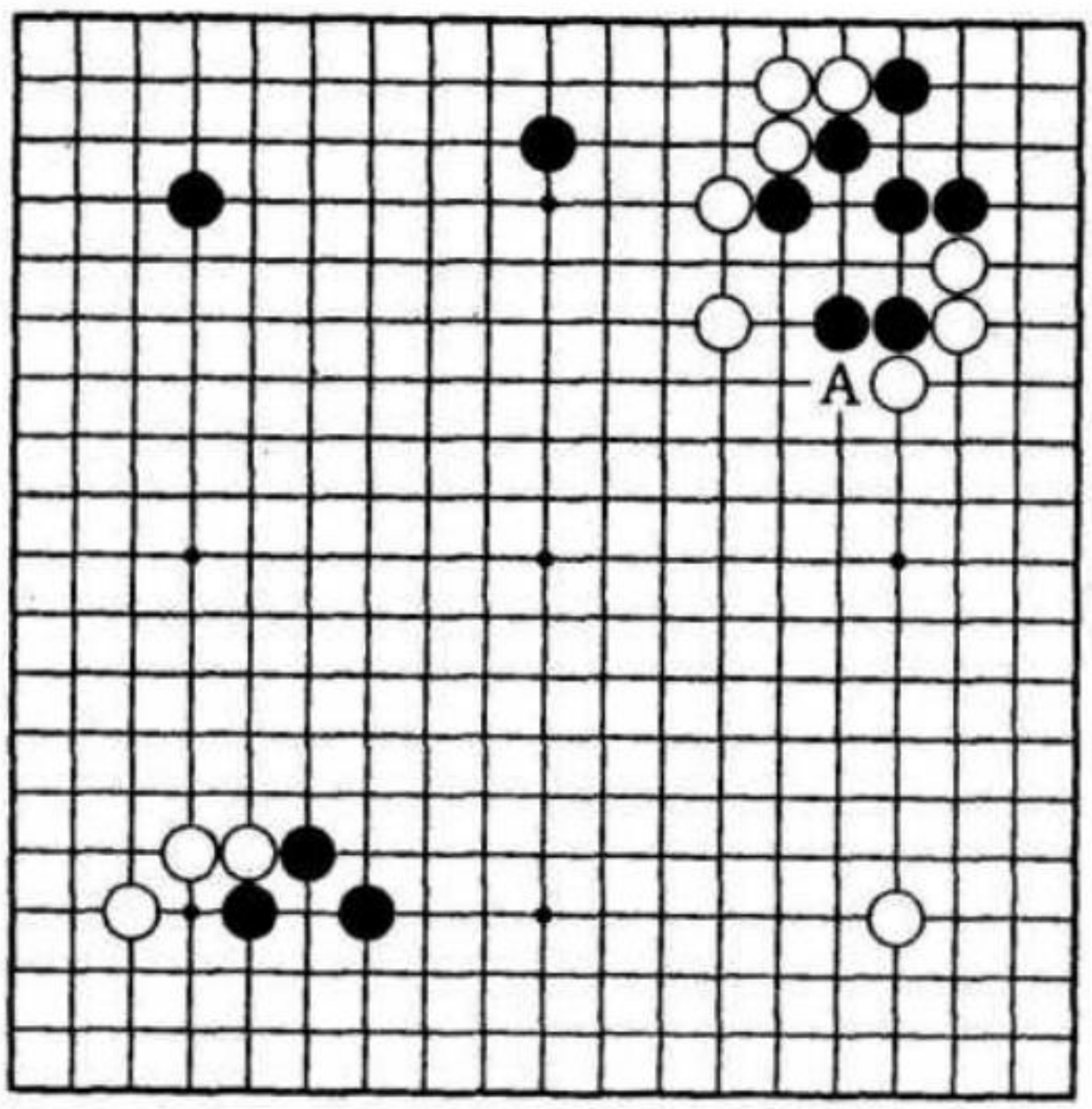
Dia. 17

Principle 10
You can never catch up if you push from behind

Correct shape for moving out

When opposing groups are caught up in a running fight, the side to move out first seizes the initiative. Consequently, you should always try to keep ahead. That also means that you should try to avoid trailing along after the opponent.

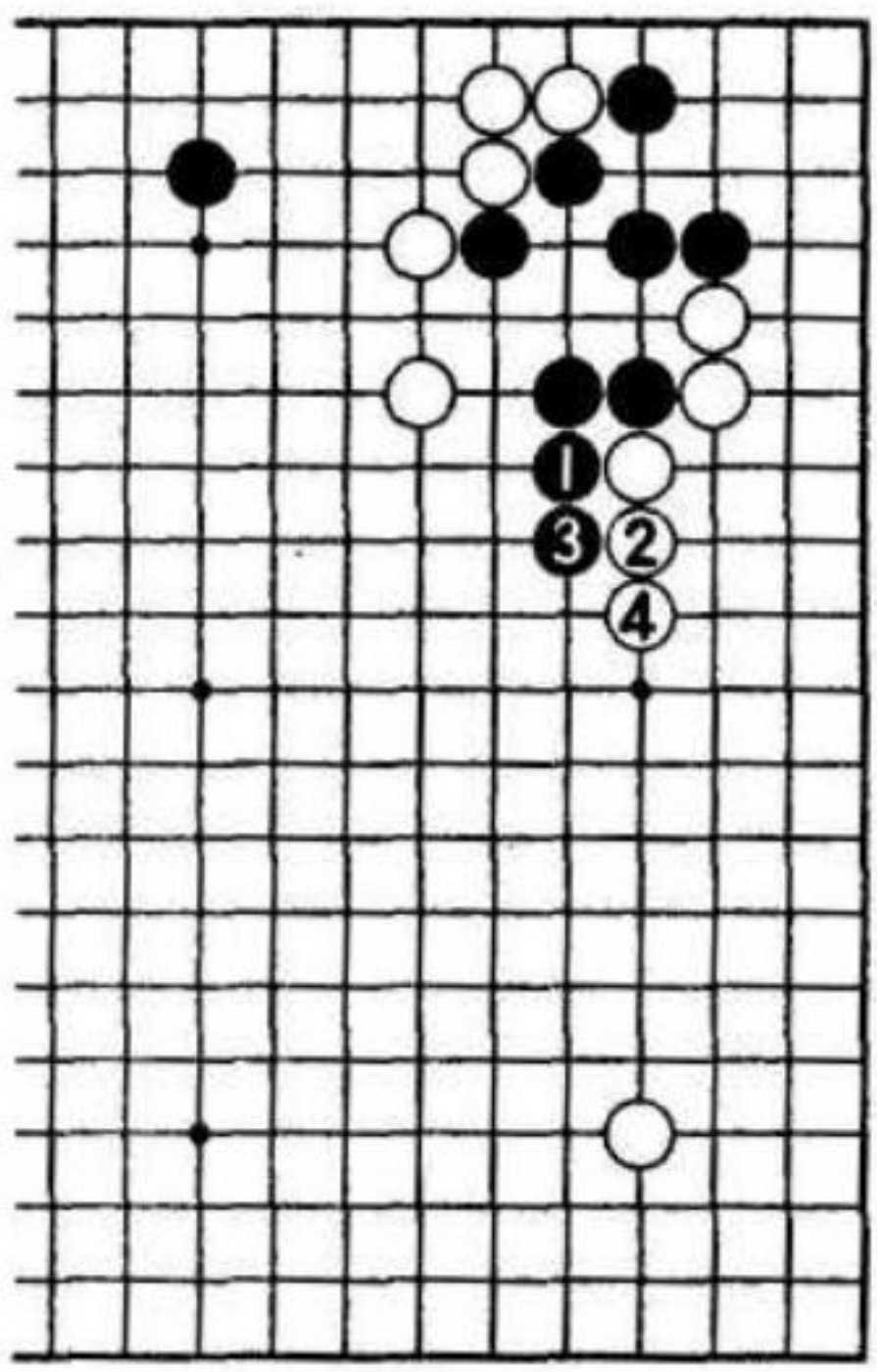
Letting White seal him in with A will not be interesting for Black What should he do?



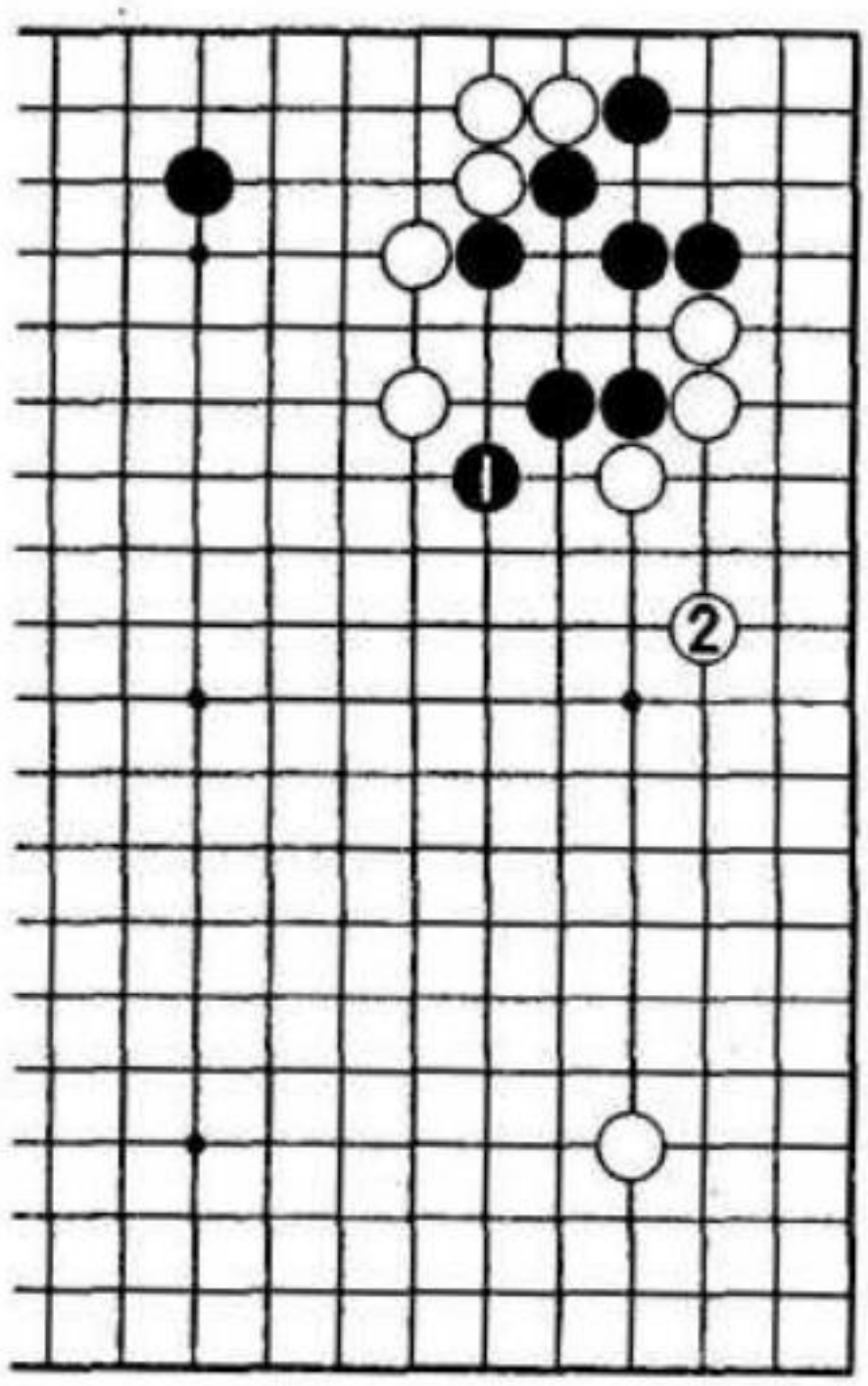
Theme diagram: Black to play
Correct shape for moving out

Dia. 1: excellent for White

Black 1 and 3 may look like strong, vigorous moves, but note that with 2 and 4 White is always one step ahead. The result is that White develops faster. With 1 and 3, Black is 'pushing the cart from behind'.



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2: avoid helping White

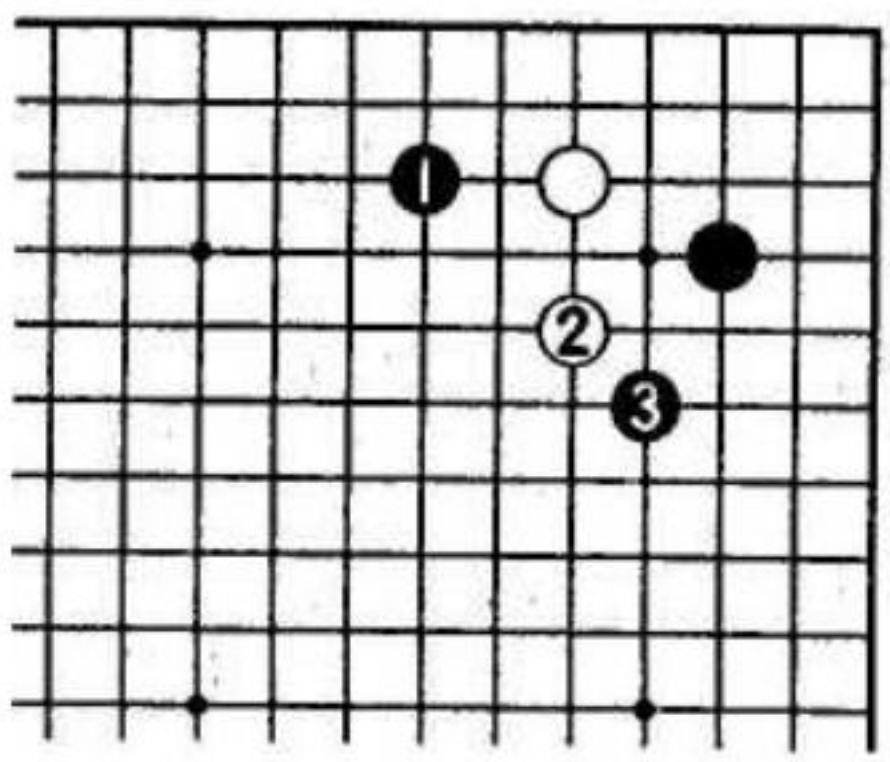
Poking his head out with 1 is better. White will probably defend at 2. The comparison with Dia. 1 shows that White's position here is not so solid --- because Black hasn't helped him.

Dia. 3: White to move

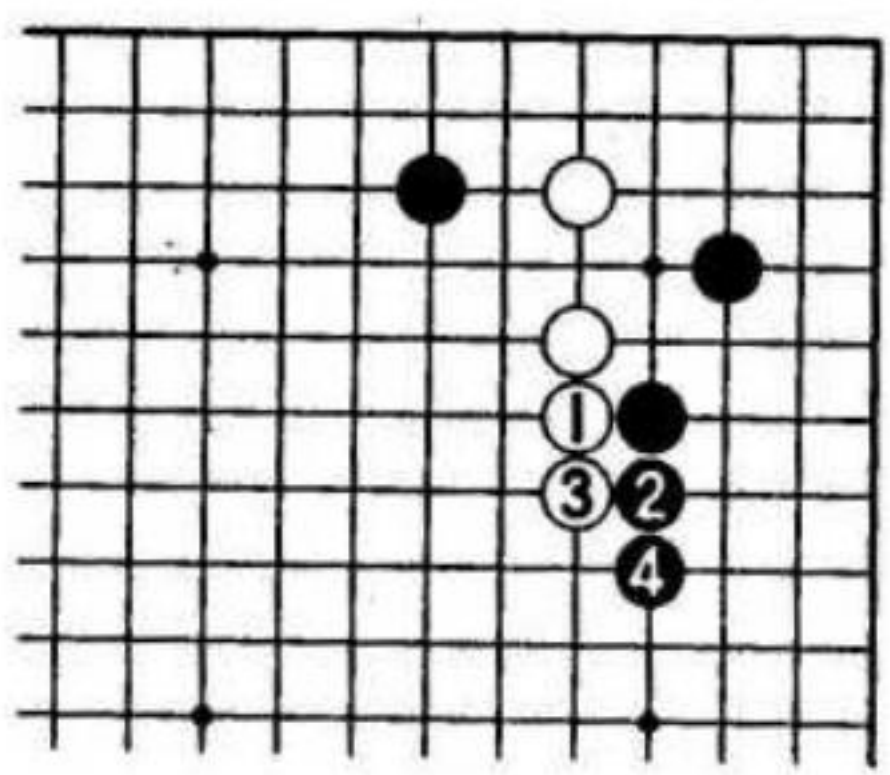
Black has attacked White with the 1-3 combination. How should White move out?

Dia. 4: crude

White 1 and 3 are not to be recommended. Pushing from behind like this makes it too easy for Black to build territory. Black is always a step ahead, so he has more potential for expansion.



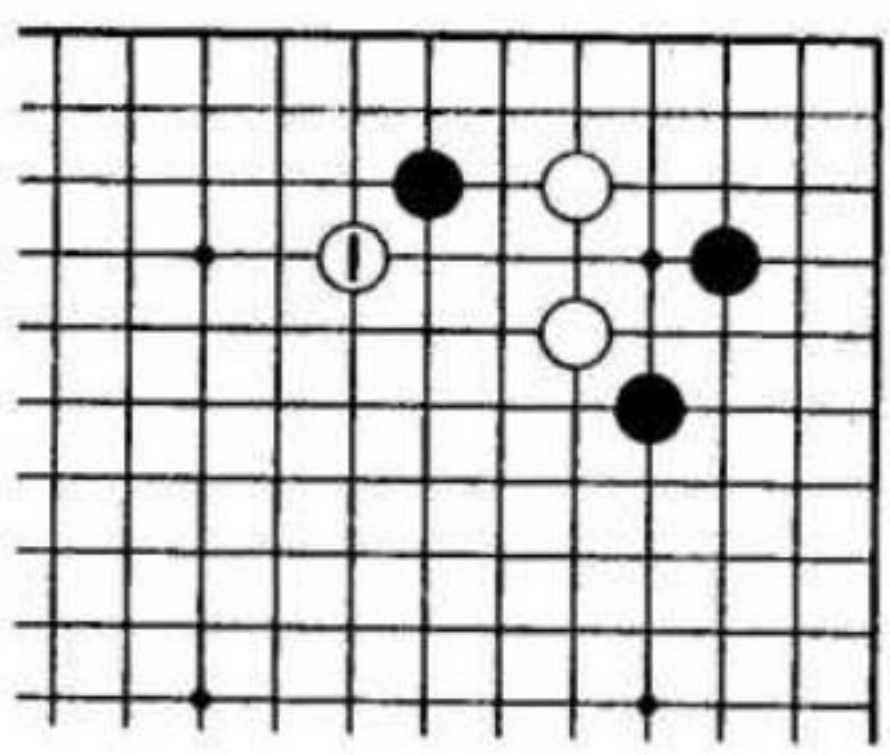
Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 5. a superior strategy

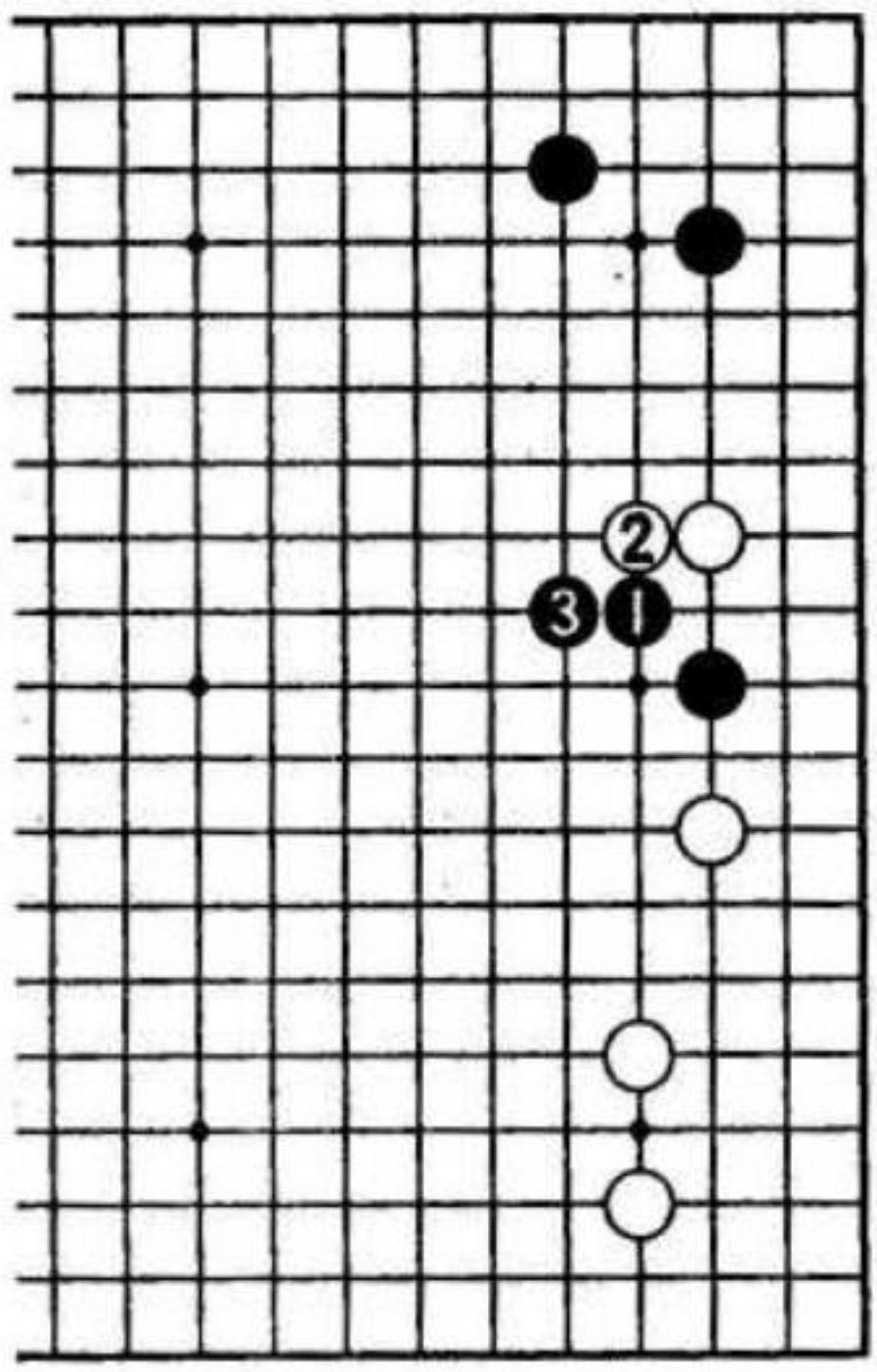
White has to use his ingenuity. Pressing at 1 is one good strategy. Please refer to a joseki dictionary for the continuations.



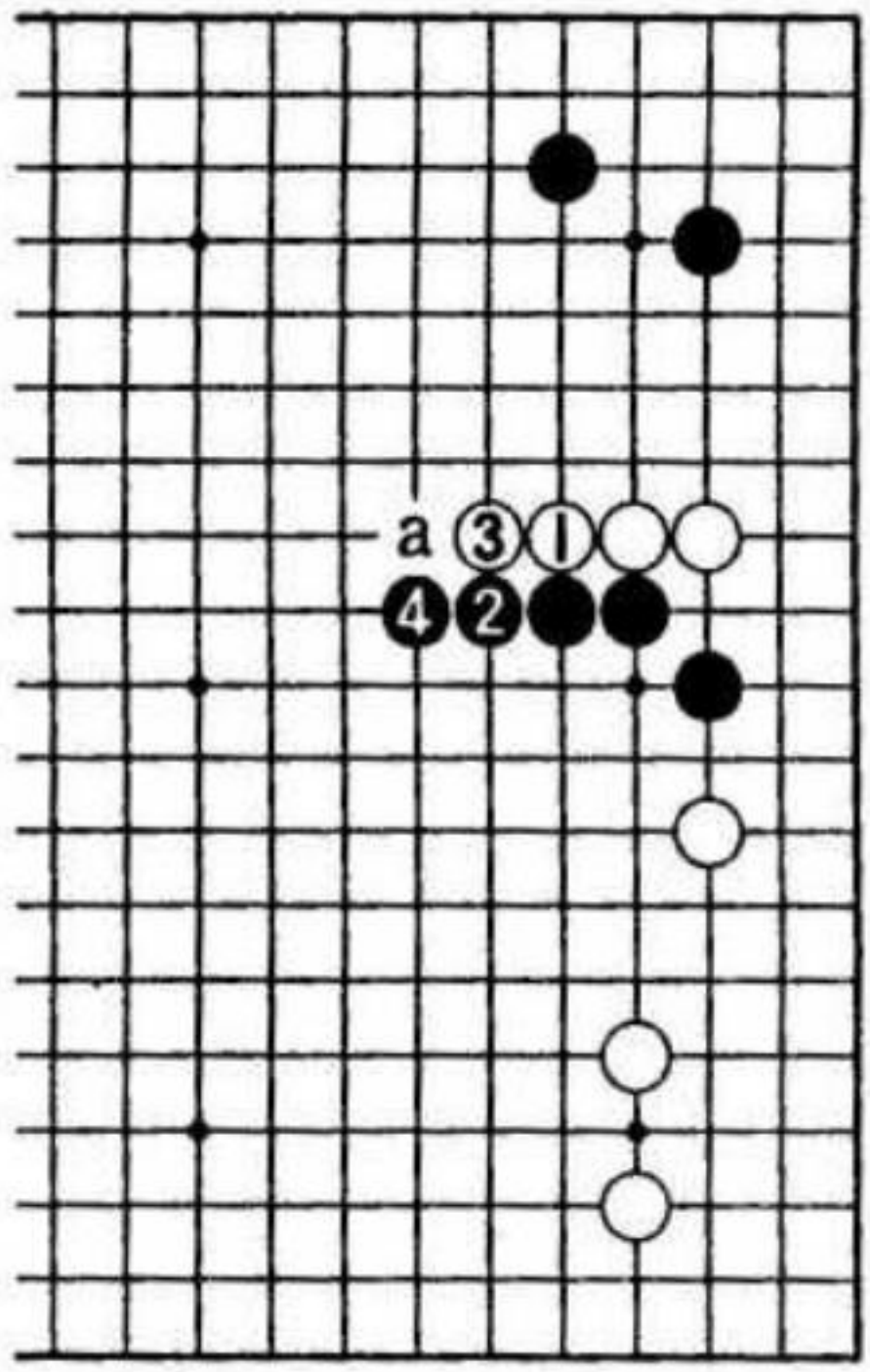
Dia. 5

Dia. 6: a hand-to-hand fight

A fight has started on the side. White has been forced on the defensive. How should he play after Black 3?



Dia. 6



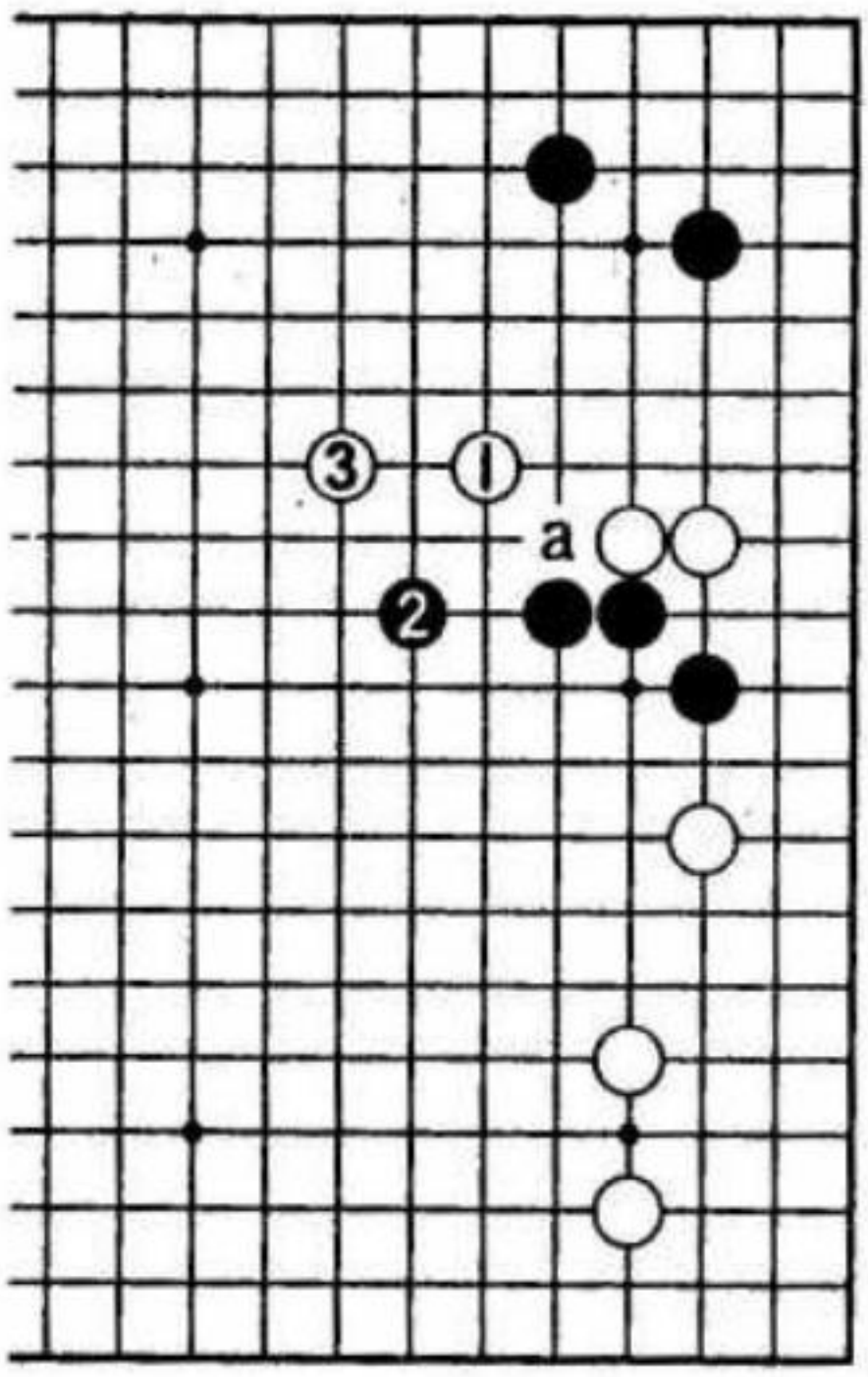
Dia. 7

Dia. 7: initiative to Black

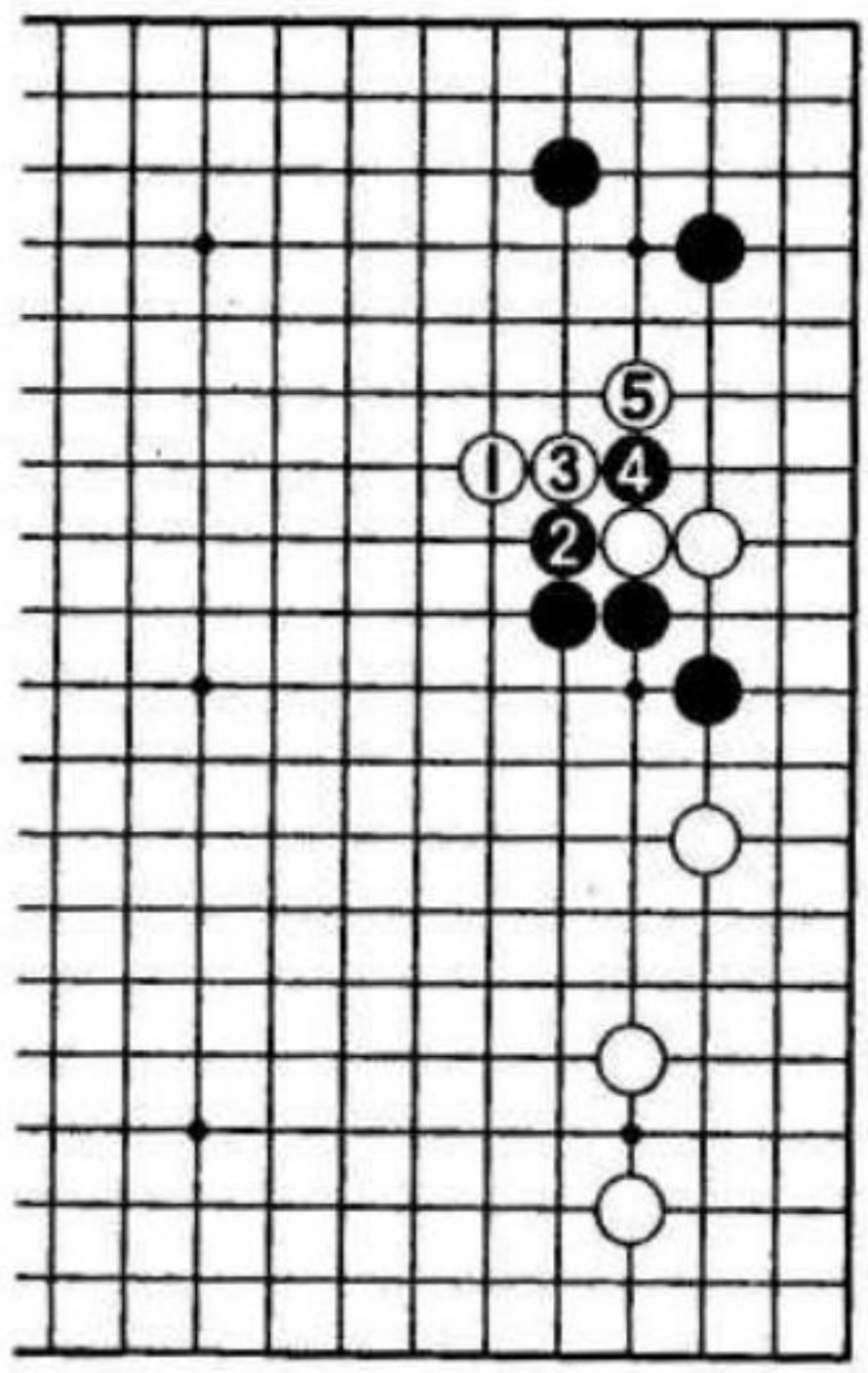
White 1 and 3 push the cart from behind, so White never catches up. Instead of 4, Black can also play more severely, making a hane at 'a'. Either way, he keeps the initiative.

Dia. 8: developing quickly

White can move out more quickly by playing the knight's move of 1. Compared to 'a', he gains a tempo. If Black` White stays ahead with 3.



Dia. 8



Dia. 9

Dia. 9: cutting point

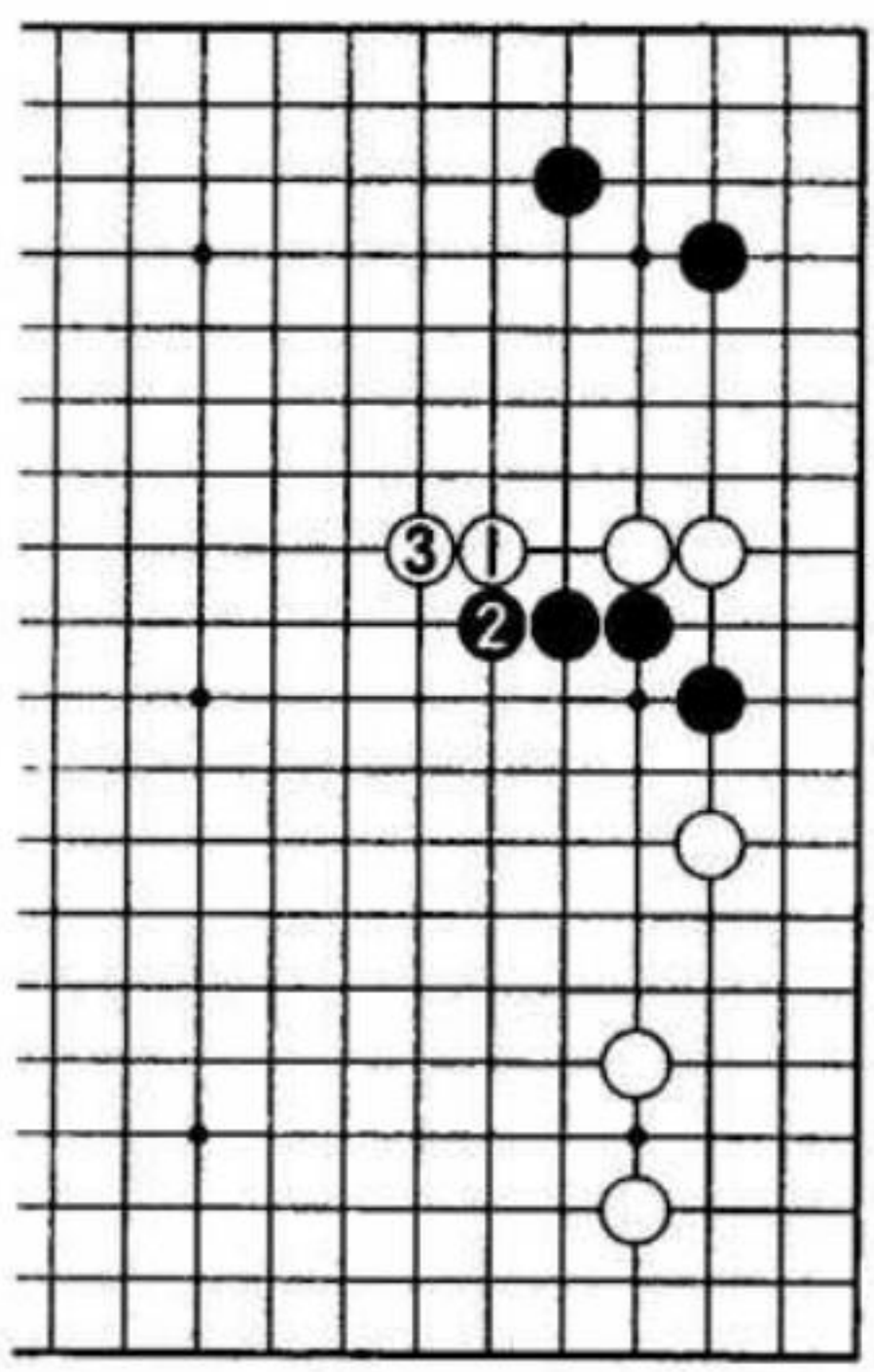
You must be aware, of course, that playing 1 creates a potential cutting point in your shape. At this stage, there is no problem, as White can get a ladder with 5.

Dia. 10: too good

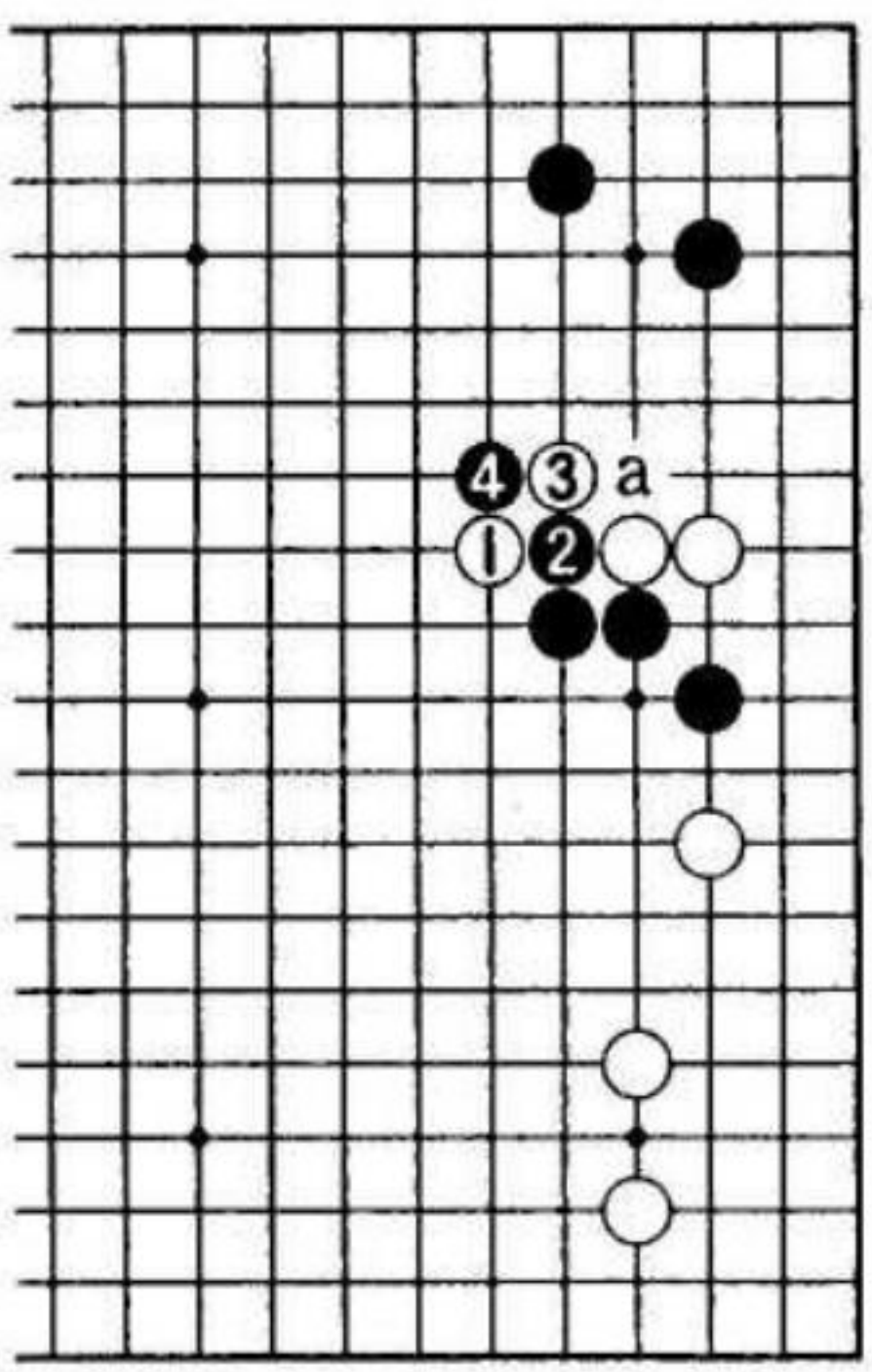
How about moving out with the one-space jump of 1? If Black 2, White is satisfied, as he moves out ahead of Black with 3. However, Black 2 is too kind.

Dia. 11: trouble

Black will cut immediately with 2 and 4. Because of his cutting point at 'a', this fight will probably be more than White can handle. The conclusion is that we can't recommend the one-space jump here.



Dia. 10



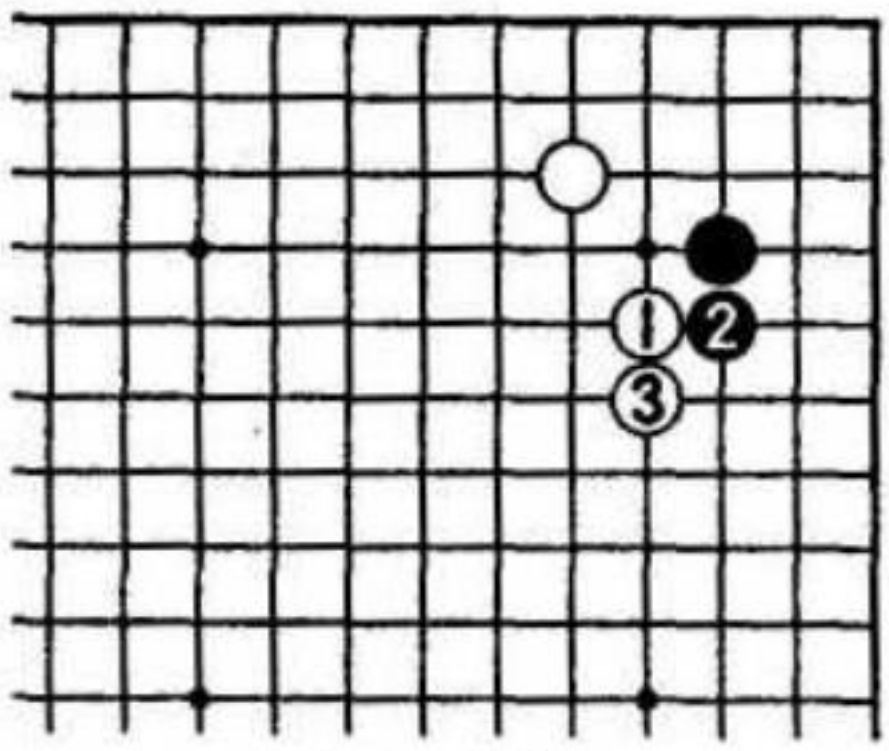
Dia. 11

Dia. 12: Black to play

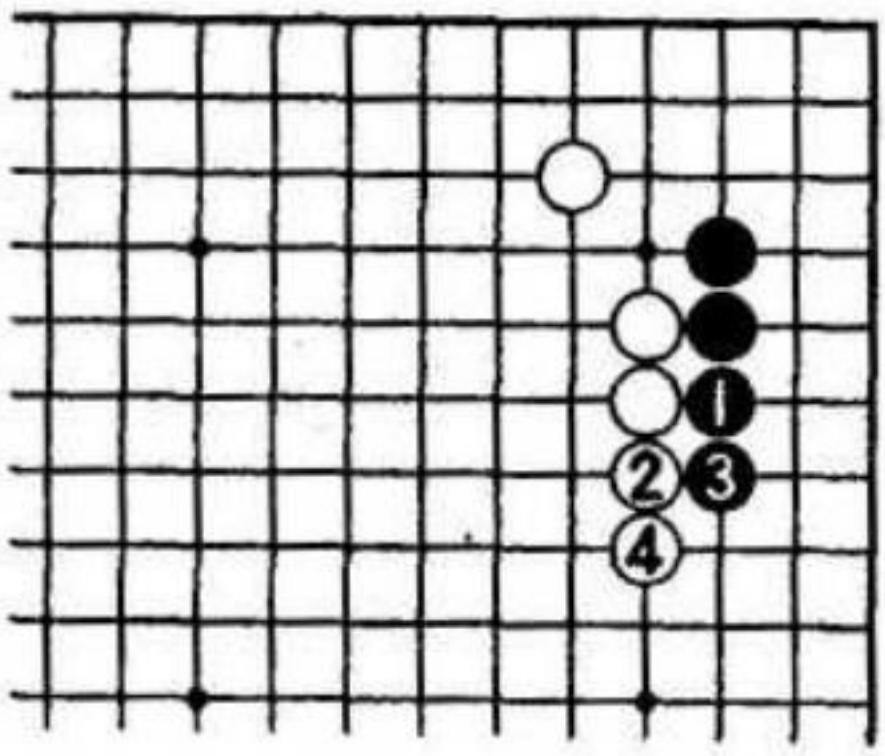
White plays 1 and 3 to build influence. How should Black play next?

Dia. 13: helping White

Pushing from behind with 1 and 3 only helps White to build strong outside influence.



Dia. 12

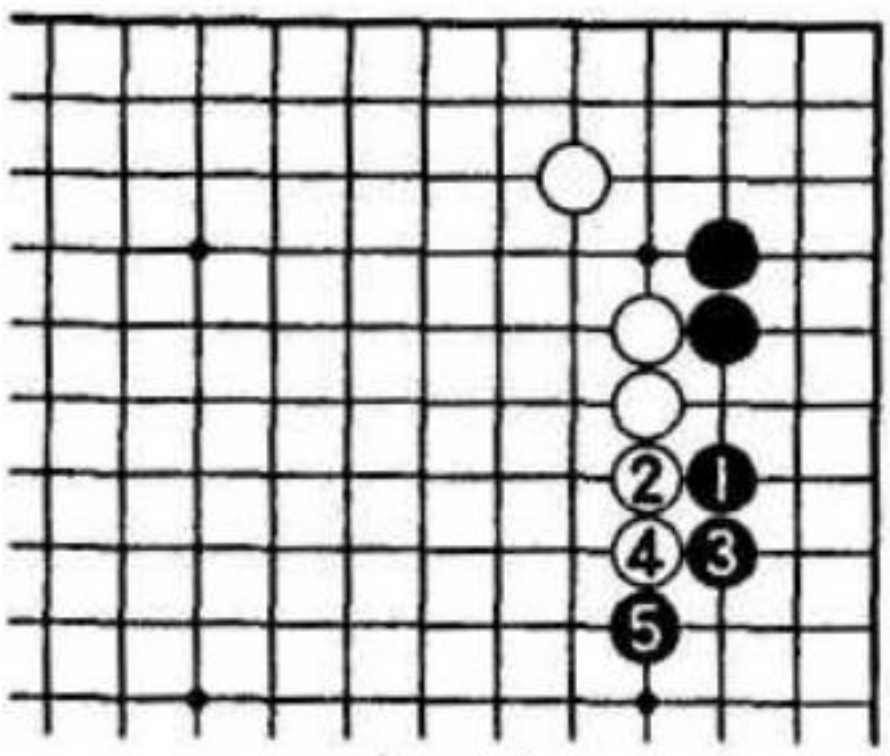


Dia. 13

Dia. 14: jumping ahead

If Black jumps to 1, he will be able to develop one step ahead of White. It fact, it becomes possible for him to hane at the head of White's stones with 5.

When playing like this, however, you must first confirm that there are no major defects in Black's shape.



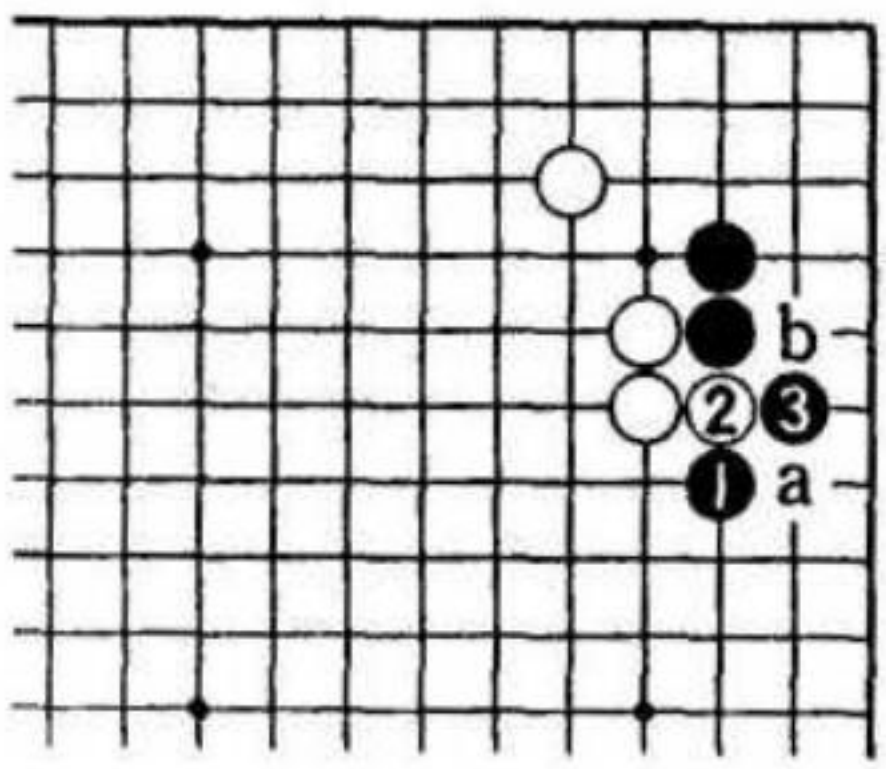
Dia. 14

Dia. 15: safe?

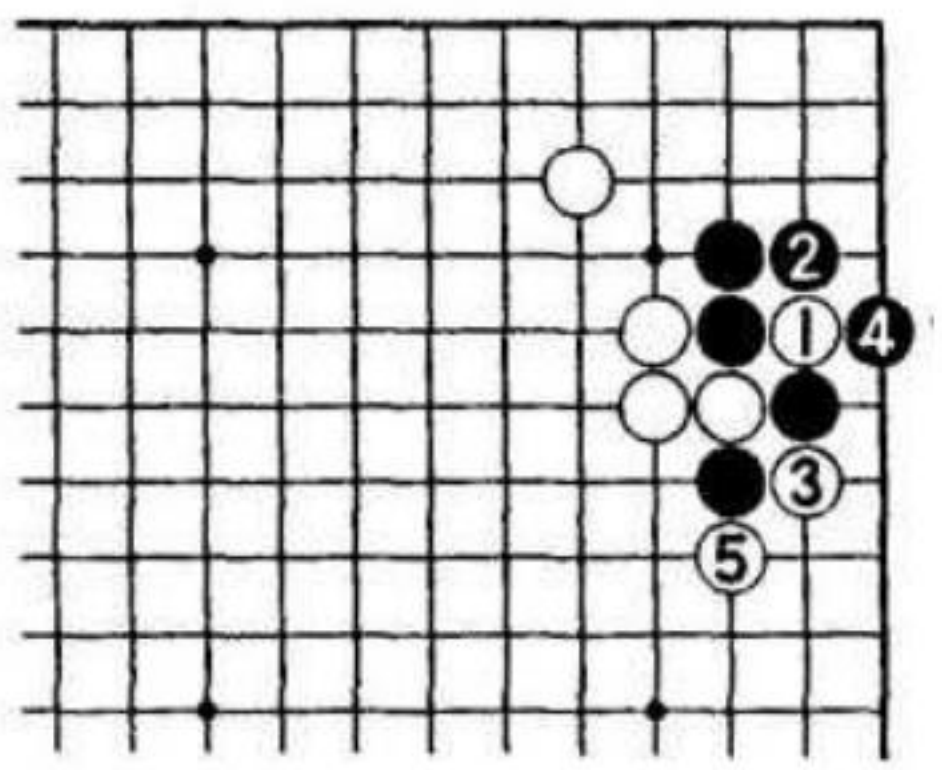
Is it safe to jump to 1? It's a bit worrying that White 2 creates cutting points at both 'a' and 'b'.

Dia. 16: failure

Answering the cut of 1 by capturing at 2 is bad. Black suffers major damage when White gets a ladder with 3 and 5.



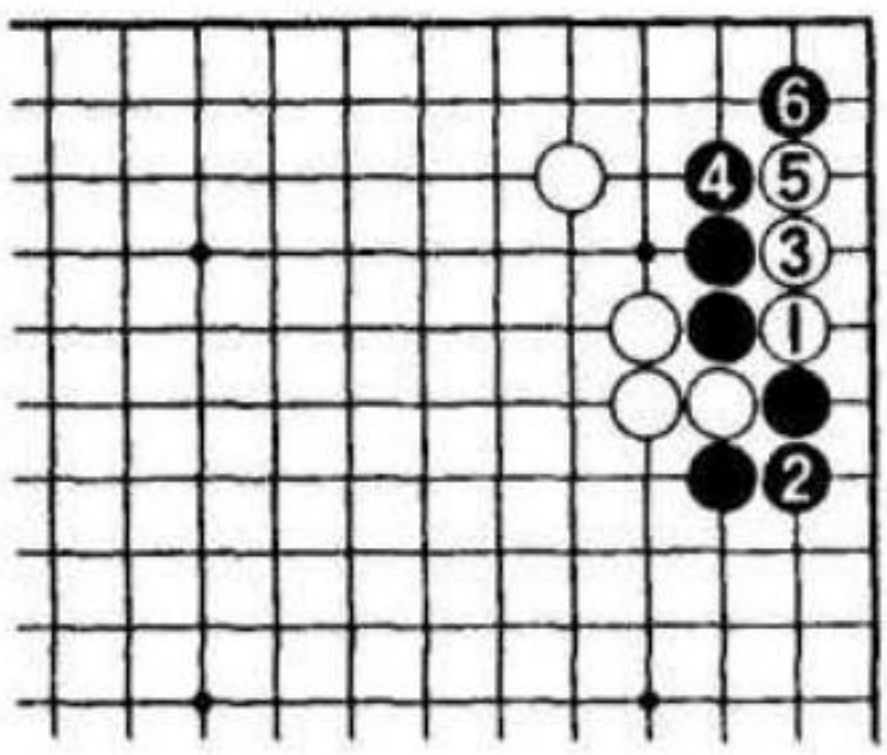
Dia. 15



Dia. 16

Dia. 17: safe

It's safe to connect on the outside at 2. White may start a fight in the corner, but Black wins the capturing race when he hanes at 6. That means that Black 1 in *Dia. 15* is a perfectly valid move.



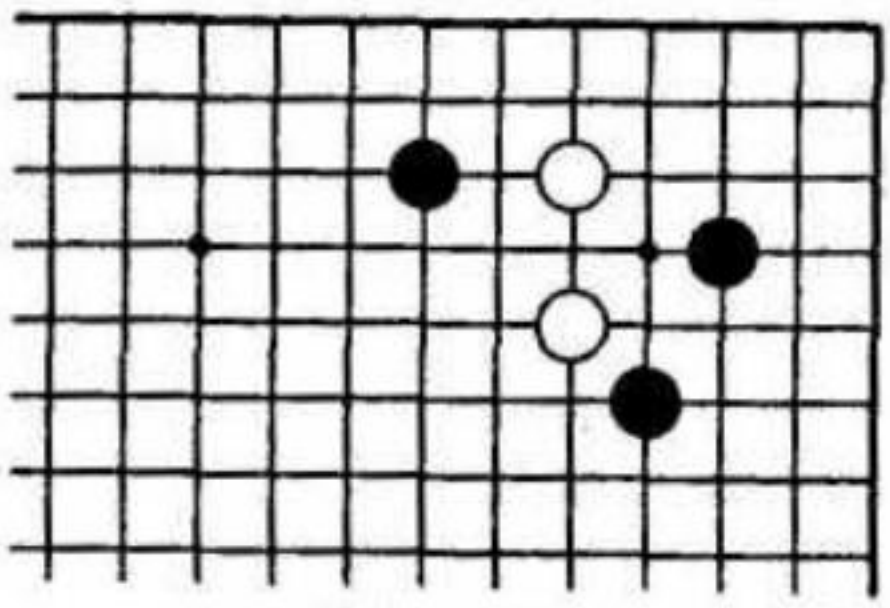
Dia. 17

Dia. 18: Black's turn to play

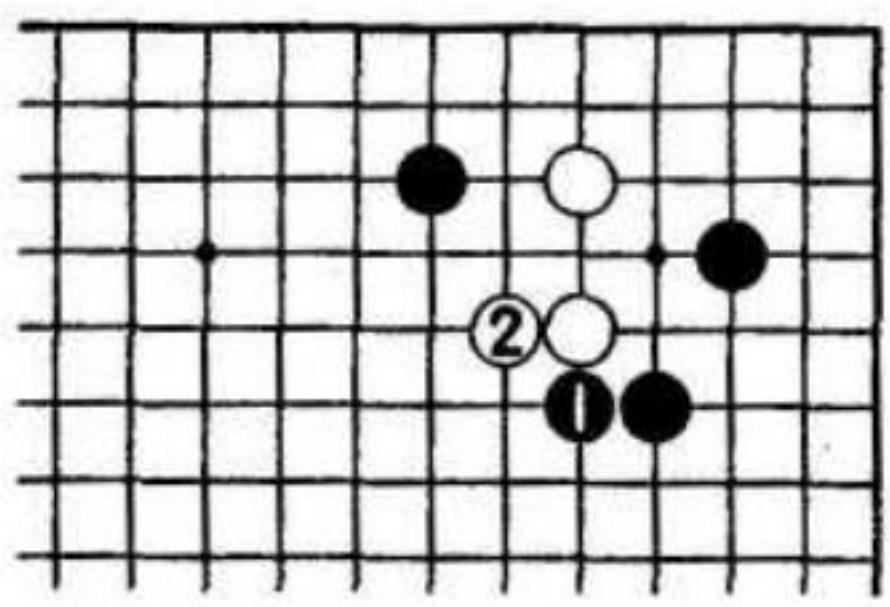
The position is the same as in *Dia. 3*. The difference is that this time we want you to think how you would attack White if it were Black's turn to play.

Dia. 19: severe?

Black 1 might look like a severe move, but it is guilty of the same sin of pushing the cart from behind.



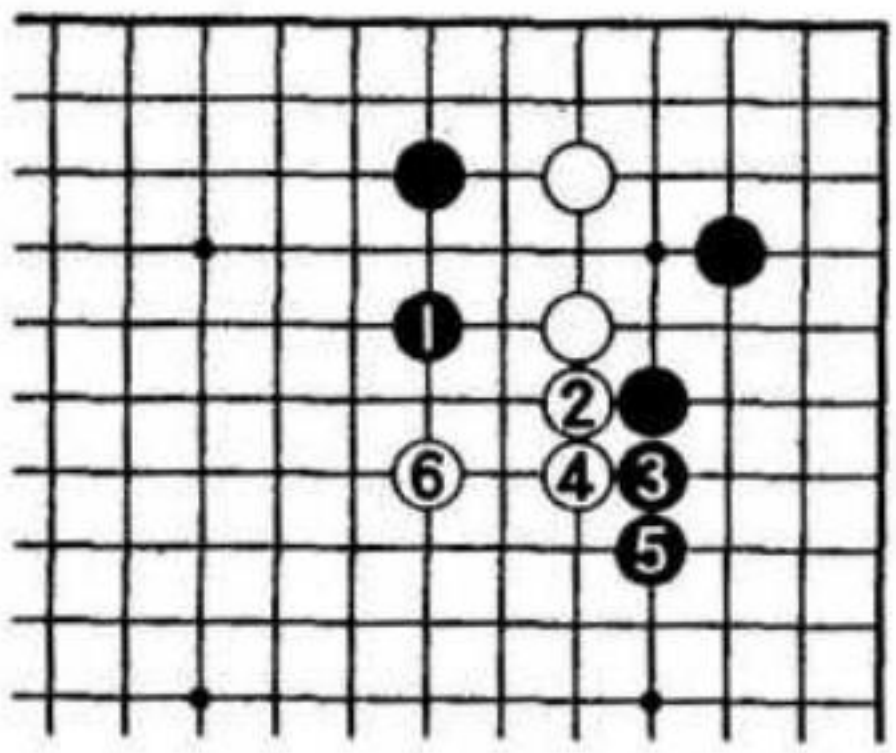
Dia. 18



Dia. 19

Dia. 20: helping Black

Black 1 is a much better move. Pushing down at 2 is White's only move, but now he is the one pushing the cart from behind. This is painful for White. Likewise White 4. In other words, the merit of 1 is that it forces White to help Black.



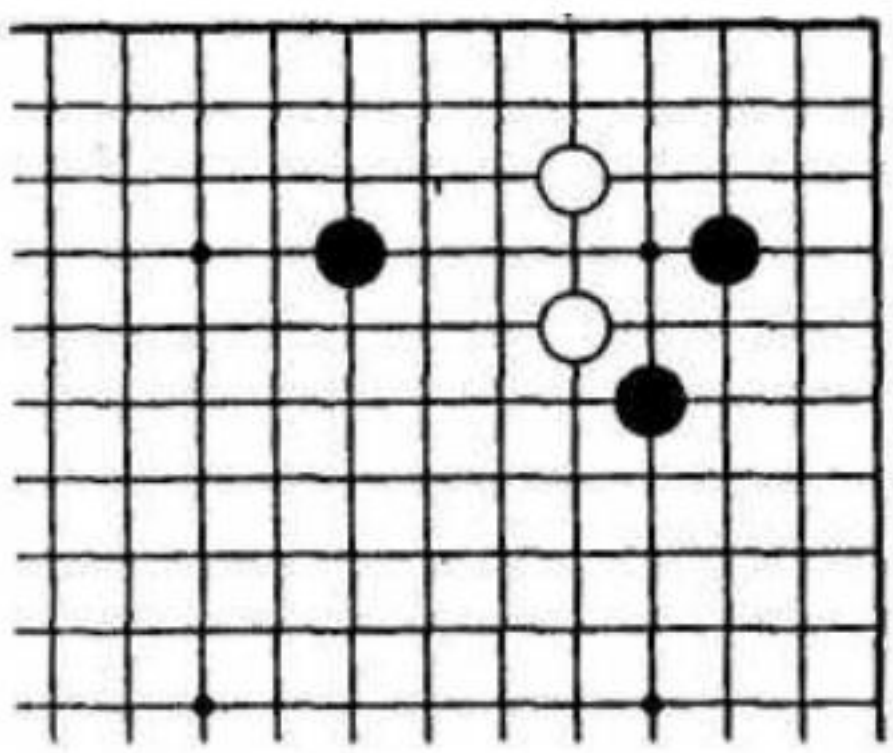
Dia. 20

Dia. 21: Black to play

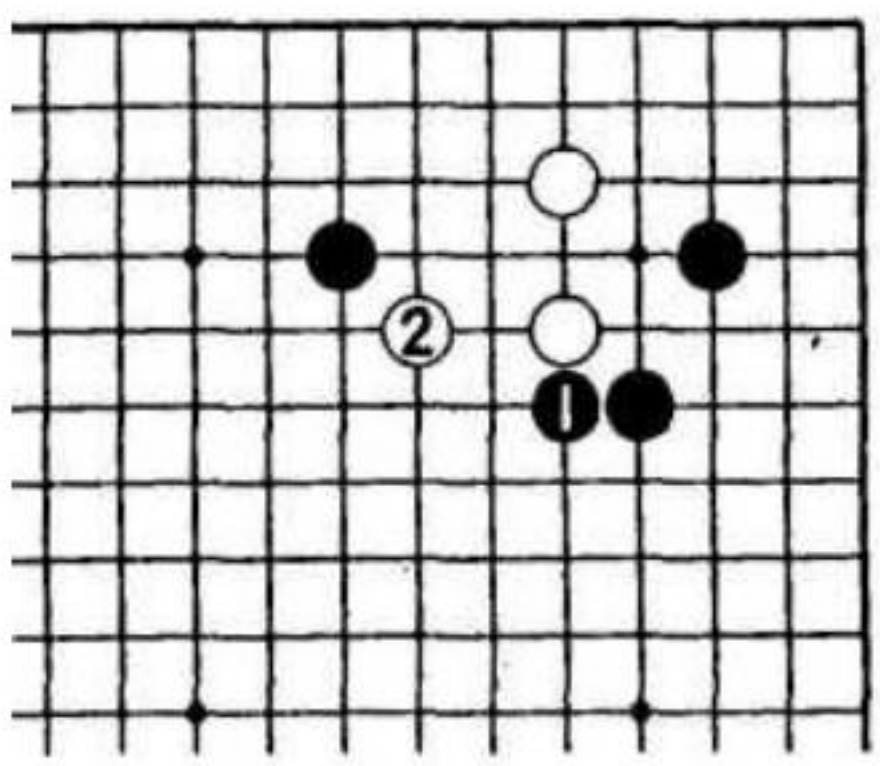
This problem is similar to *Dia. 18*. How should Black attack the white stones?

Dia. 22: good shape for White

If Black pushes along with 1, White escapes in fine style with 2. Black 1 can't be a good move if it lets White make such nice shape.



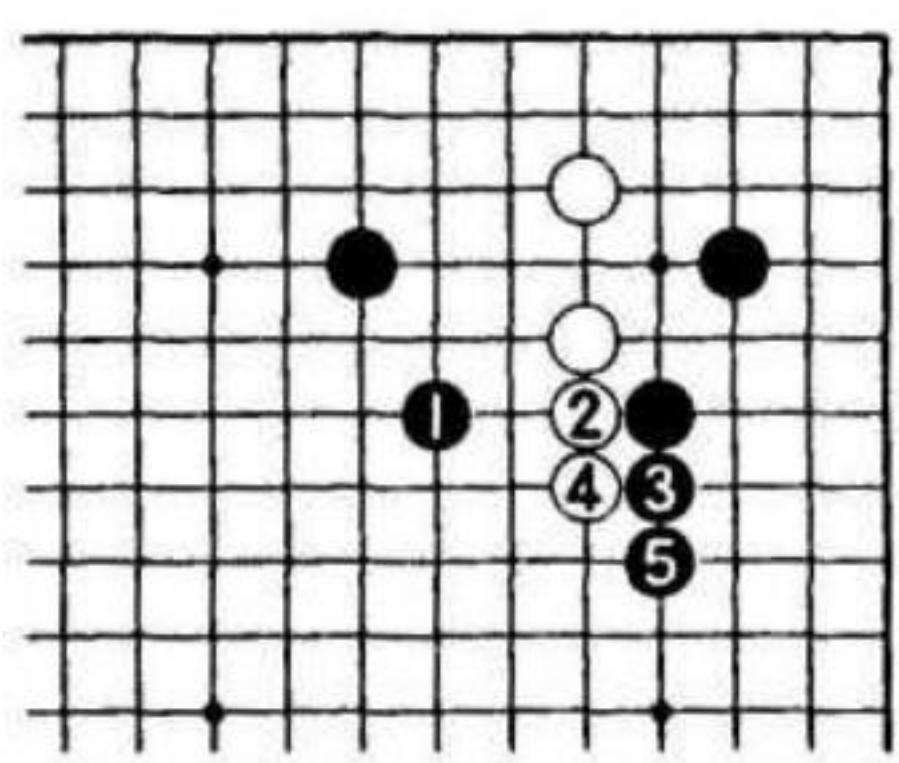
Dia. 21



Dia. 22

Dia. 23: the intelligent move

Black 1 shows more signs of intelligent thought White won't want to be sealed in, so he will have to push down with 2 and 4. Black is very satisfied to lead the way with 3 and 5. Black 1 has forced White to push the cart from behind.

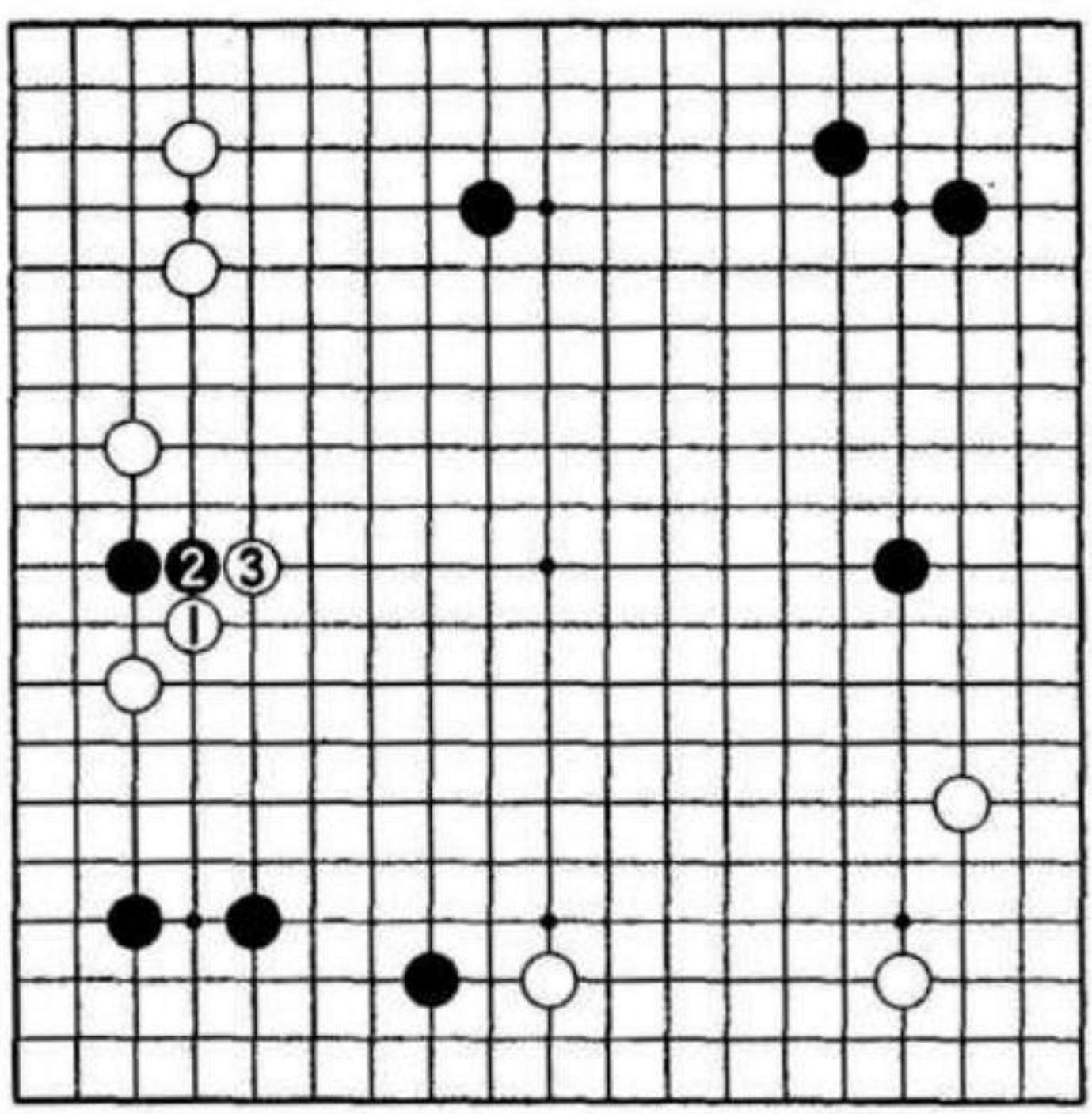


Dia. 23

Principle 11
The empty triangle is bad shape

Clumsy and inefficient shapes are labeled 'bad shape' in go. A 'bad shape' stone is like a worker who won't pull his weight. From the point of view of the player, it's an inefficient use of his resources. The empty triangle is synonymous with bad shape. The problem is that you find yourself playing it before you realize what you're doing. We would like to look at how and why this shape comes up.

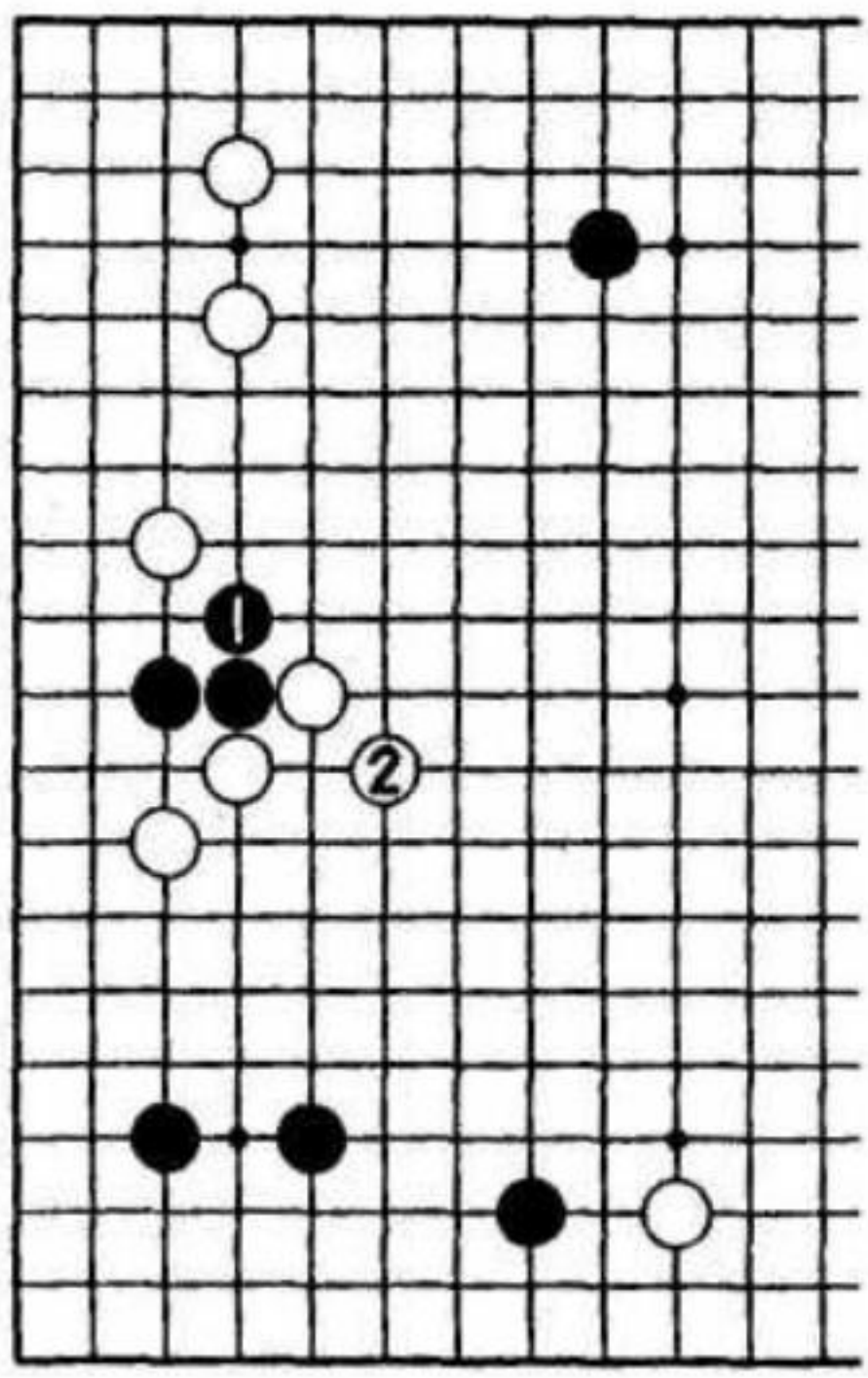
What should Black do after White has made the hane at 3 in the theme diagram?



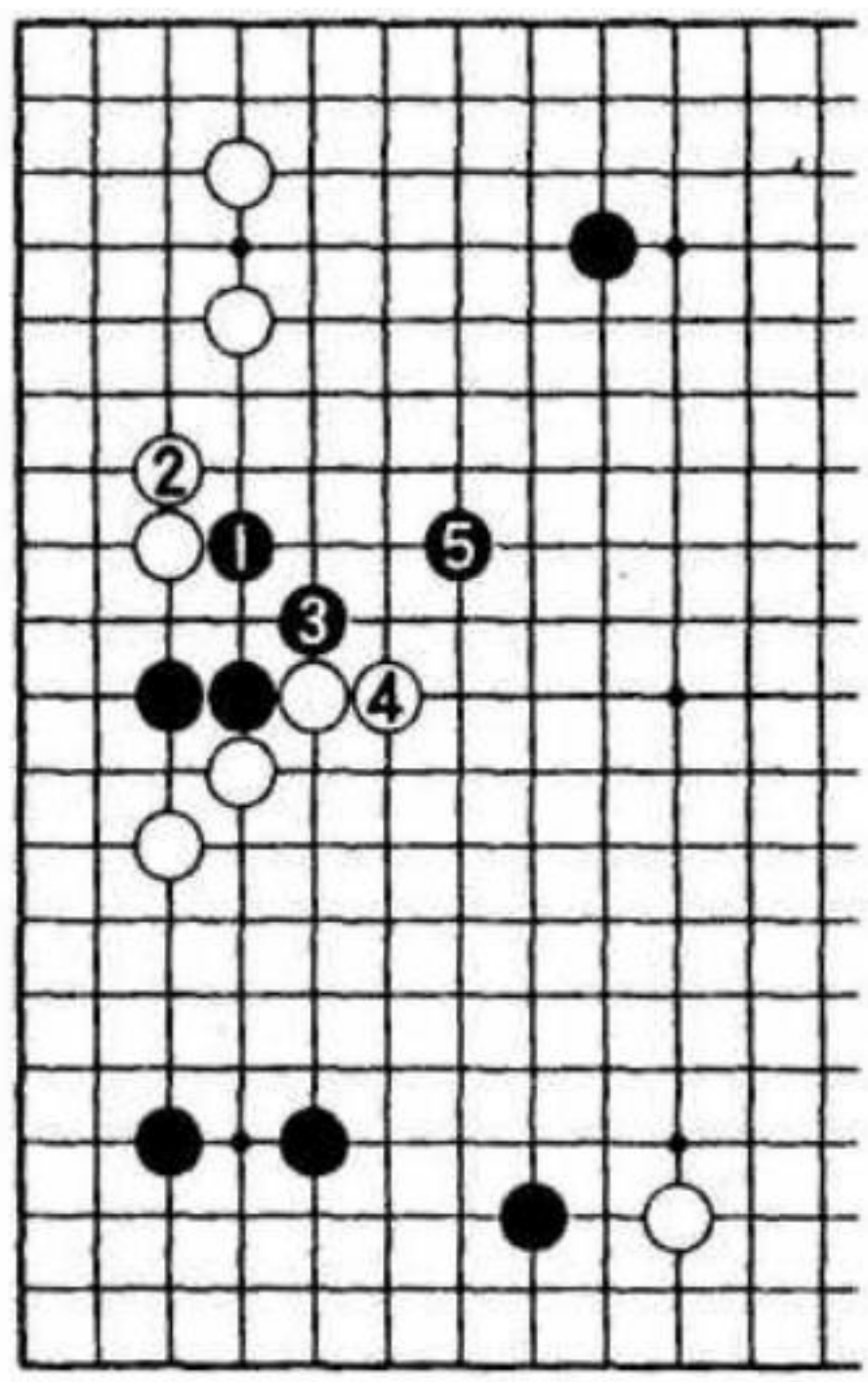
Theme diagram
How should Black escape?

Dia. 1: a perfect target

It may seem as if Black 1 is the only move, but this makes proverbial bad shape in the form of the empty triangle. The solid little dump of black stones lacks all flexibility and potential for development. After 2, they will be a perfect target for White to aim at.



Dia. 1



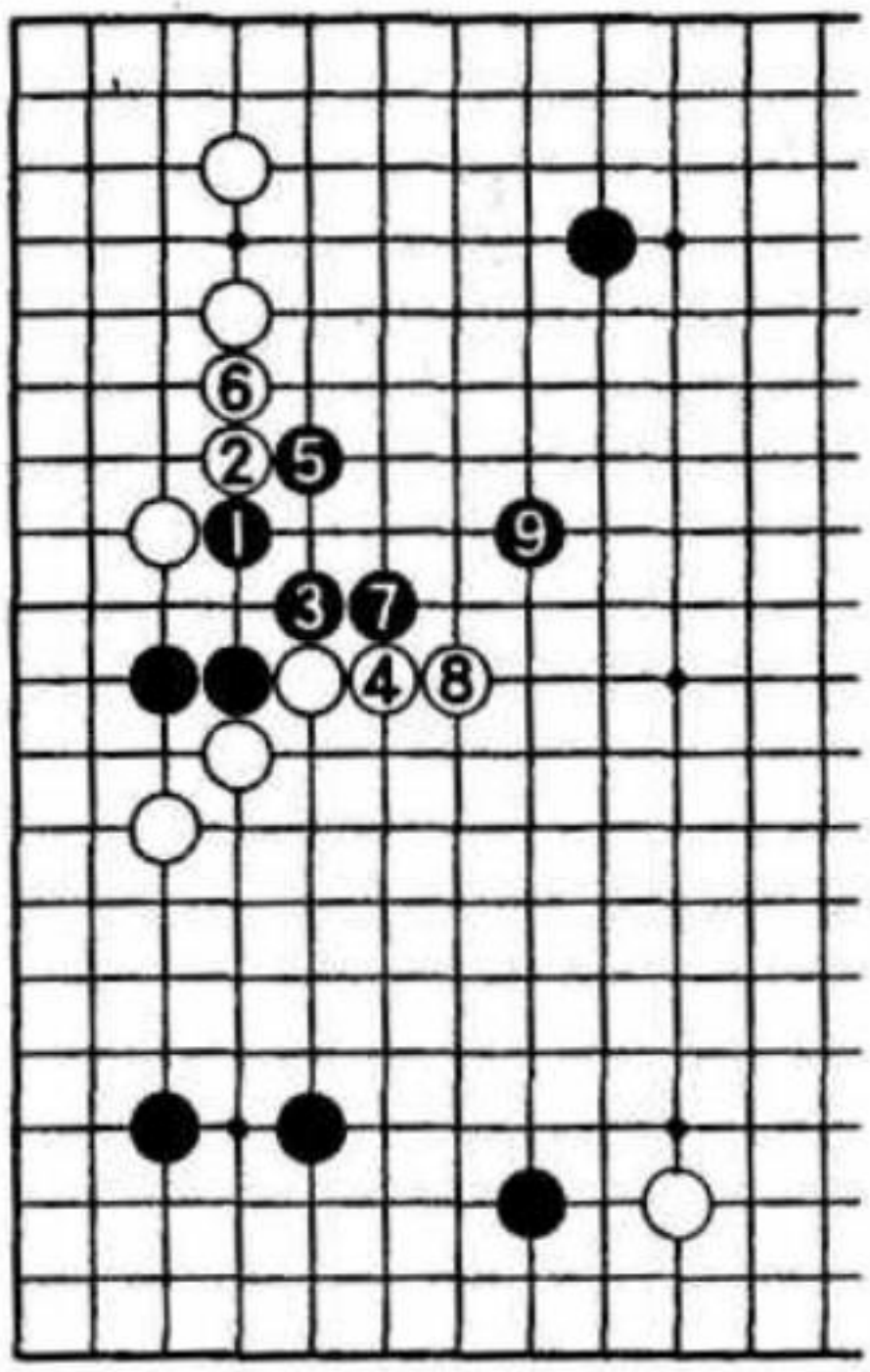
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: good shape

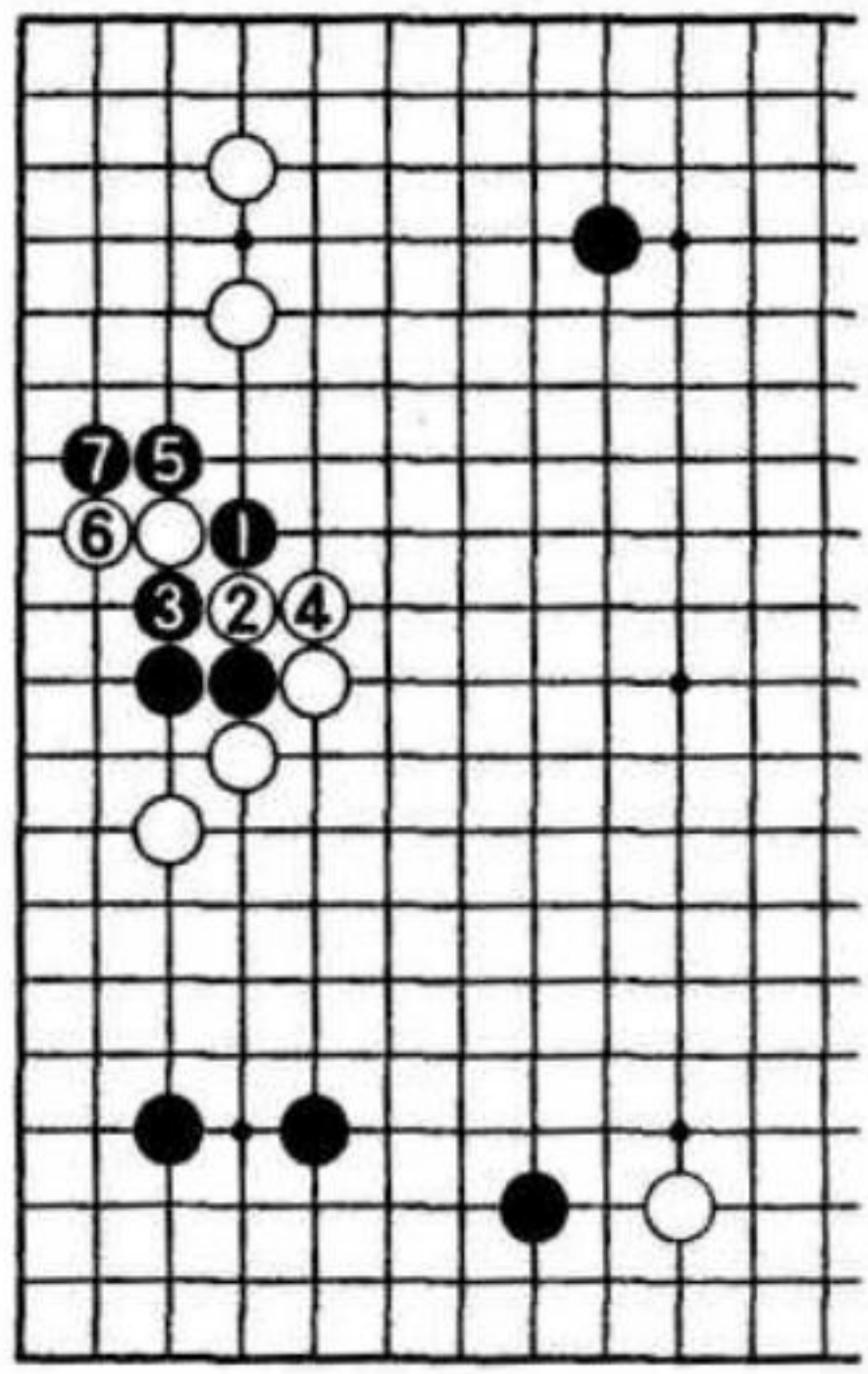
Black should be able to attach at 1. If White 2, he makes good shape with 3, then moves out with 5, effecting a rapid escape. This is incomparably better than his cumbersome shape in *Dia. 1*.

Dia. 3: variation

If White answers 1 with a hane at 2, Black still continues with his own hane at 3. He can next hane at 5 in sente, so he has no trouble moving out with 7 and 9. Black now has nothing to worry about.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: unreasonable

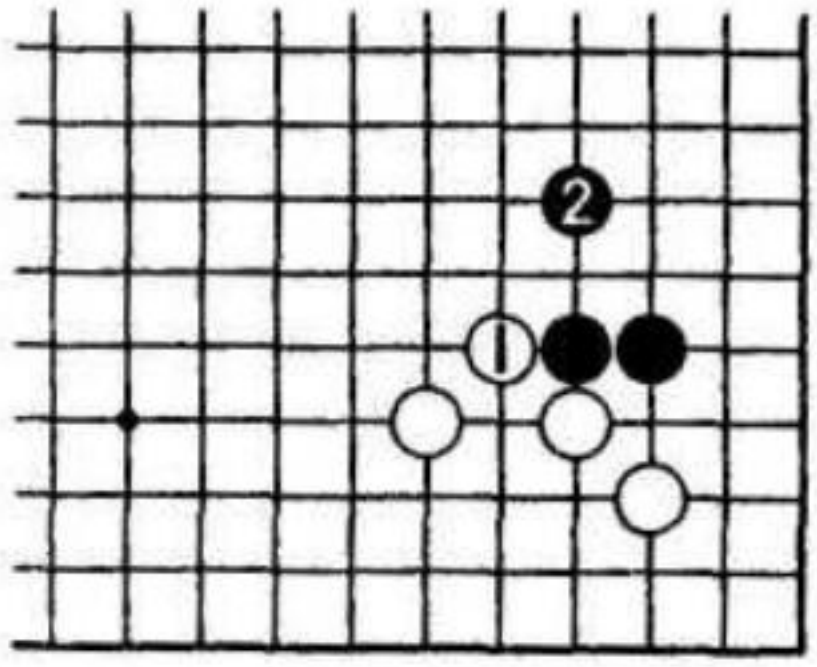
The only counter Black does have to worry about with the contact play of 1 is White's immediate cut at 2. However, he can capture two stones after 7, so the cut looks unreasonable. It's nothing to worry about.

Dia. 5: the standard move

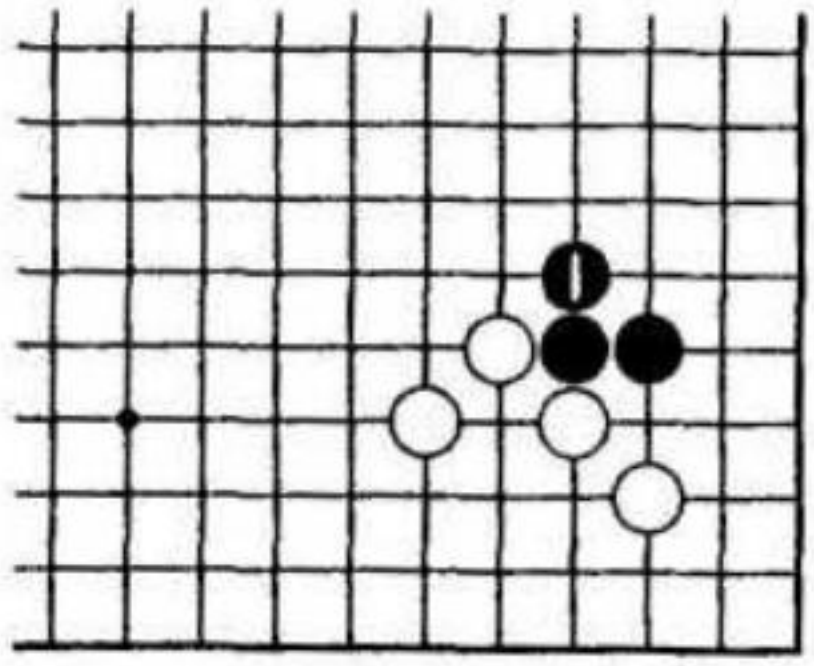
Jumping to 2 is the commonsense move in this position.

Dia. 6: too slow

I am sure my readers will accept that holding back at 1 instead of jumping is a slow, stolid move. In contrast -



Dia. 5



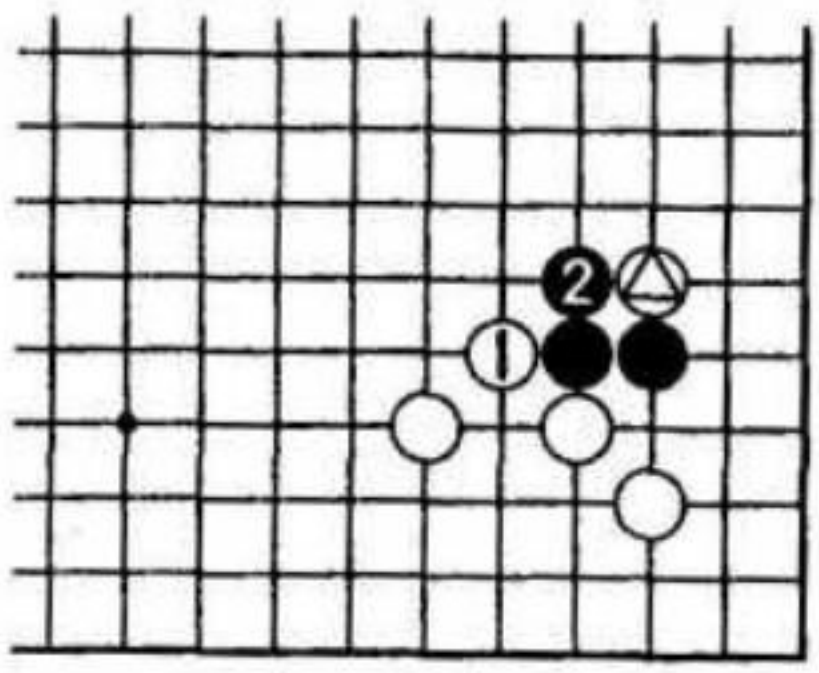
Dia. 6

Dia. 7: necessary

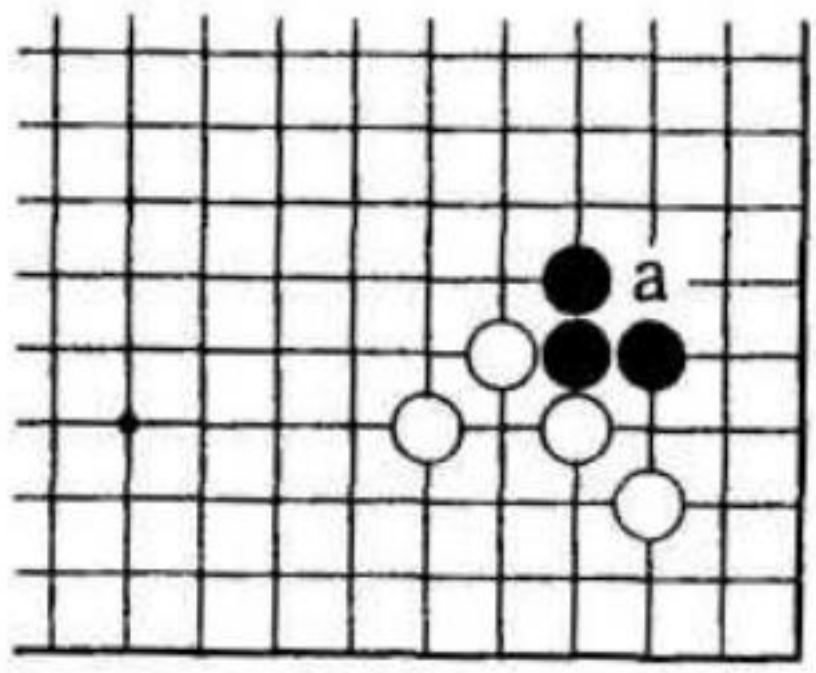
When White has the marked stone in place, moving out slowly is essential. This shape is not called an empty triangle.

Dia. 8: definition

The shape in which there is no white stone at 'a' is the empty triangle. Black had to make the triangle shape with 2 in *Dia. 7* - here there is no reason for it.



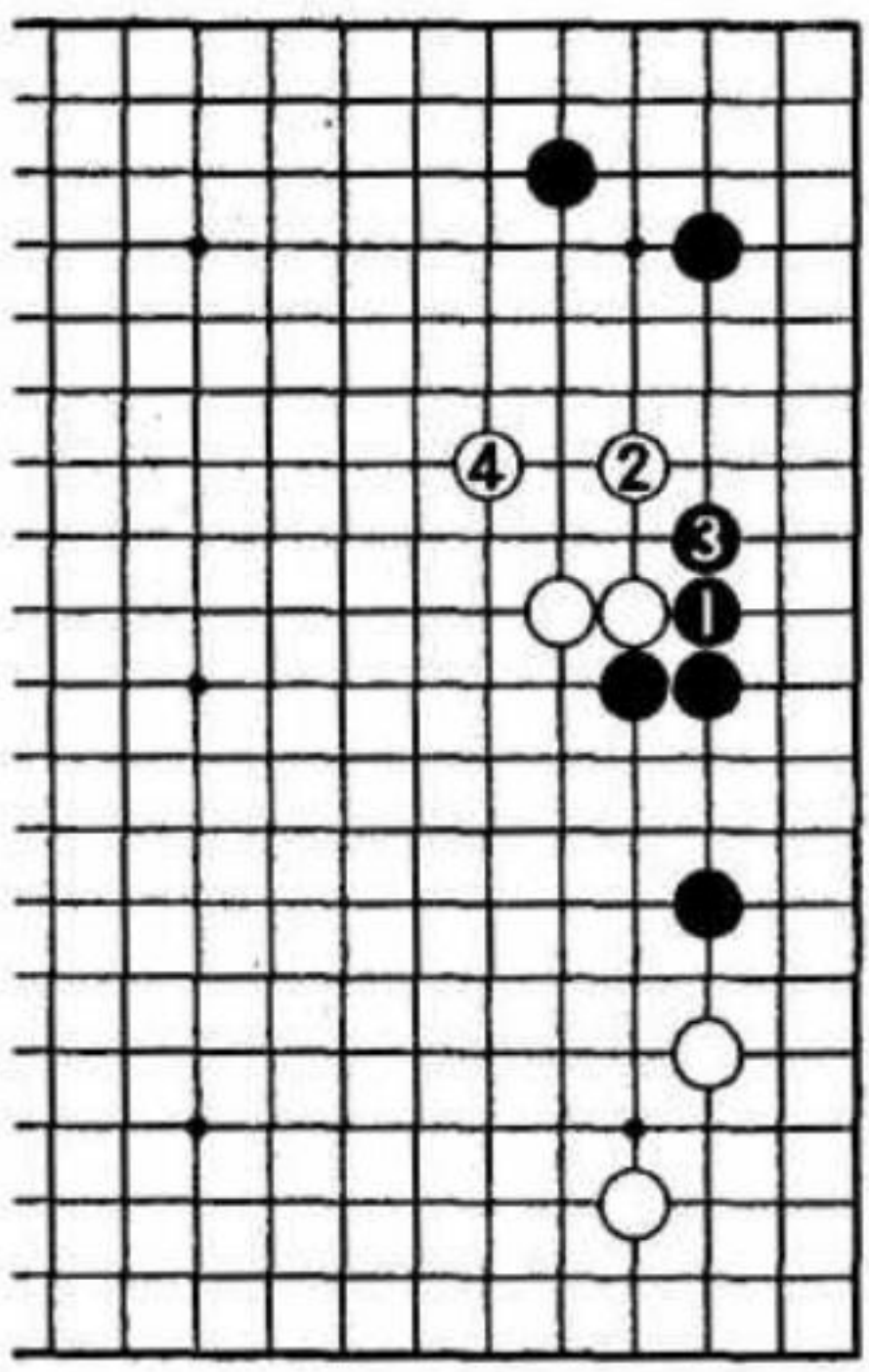
Dia. 7



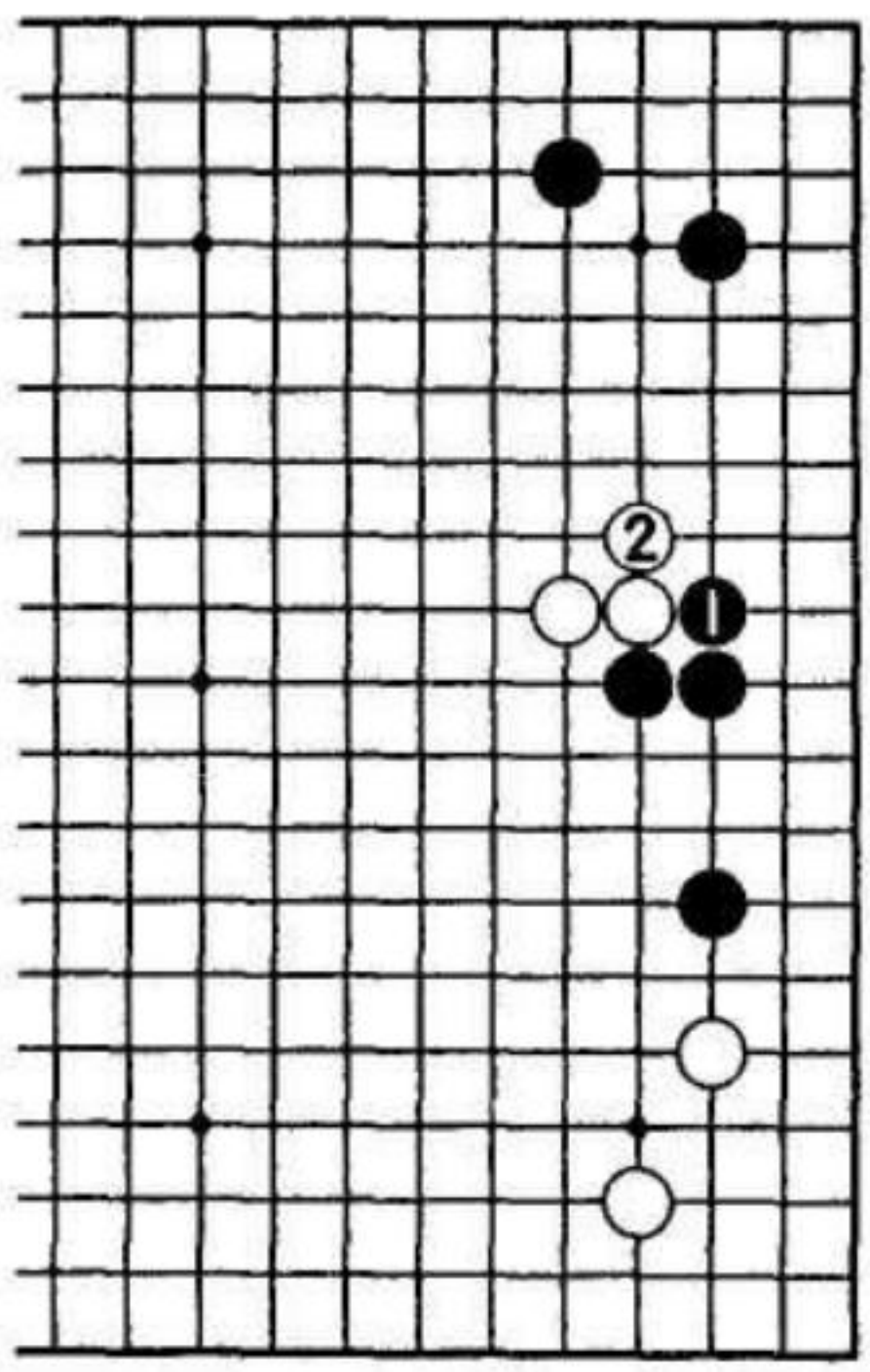
Dia. 8

Dia. 9. can't be attacked

Jumping to 2 is an efficient answer to Black 1. For any player who has progressed beyond the beginner's level, it is the natural move. White 4 in response to Black 3 is another flexible move. White develops quickly and makes a strong shape; it won't be easy for Black to mount an attack on this group.



Dia. 9



Dia. 10

Dia. 10: no potential

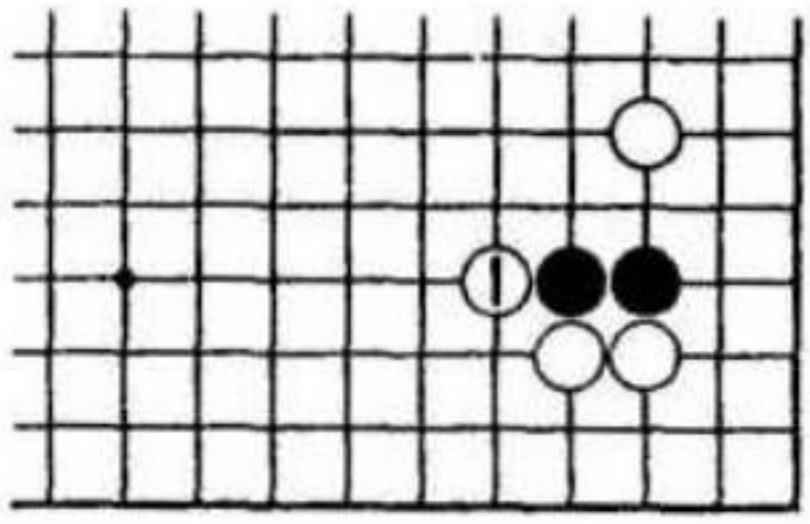
What about the answer of White 2? This, of course, being an empty triangle, is a heavy, inefficient shape. White's group has little potential for development, which makes it quite weak.

Dia. 11: bad start

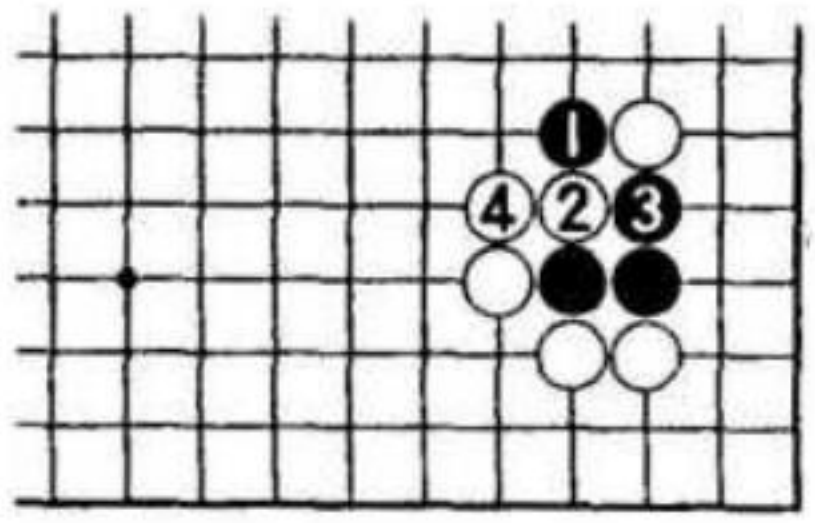
Often it's not the move that completes the empty triangle that is bad but the moves that came before it. Black gets a terrible position here when White hanes at 1.

Dia. 12: terrible

Attaching at 1 won't work when Black has so few liberties. Black is almost helpless after White cuts at 2. Any move he makes after this will help White.



Dia. 11



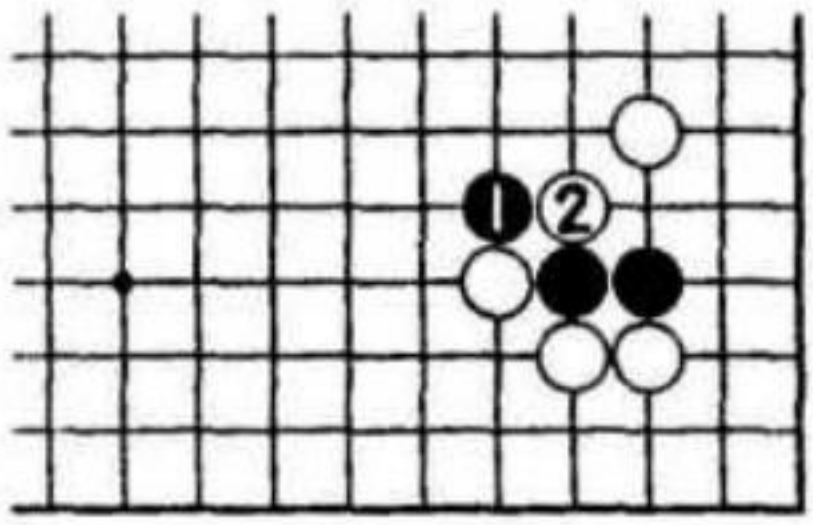
Dia. 12

Dia. 13: caught

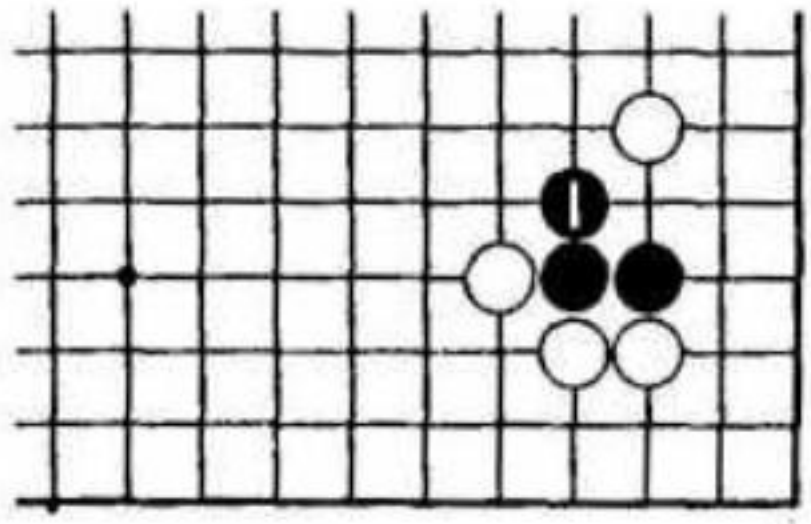
The hane of 1 also leads nowhere.

Dia. 14: heavy

It's in this kind of position that you find yourself making an empty triangle, because it's the only move that isn't immediately cut to pieces. Even so, it makes a heavy, cumbersome shape, but the blame has to be ascribed to Black's earlier moves.



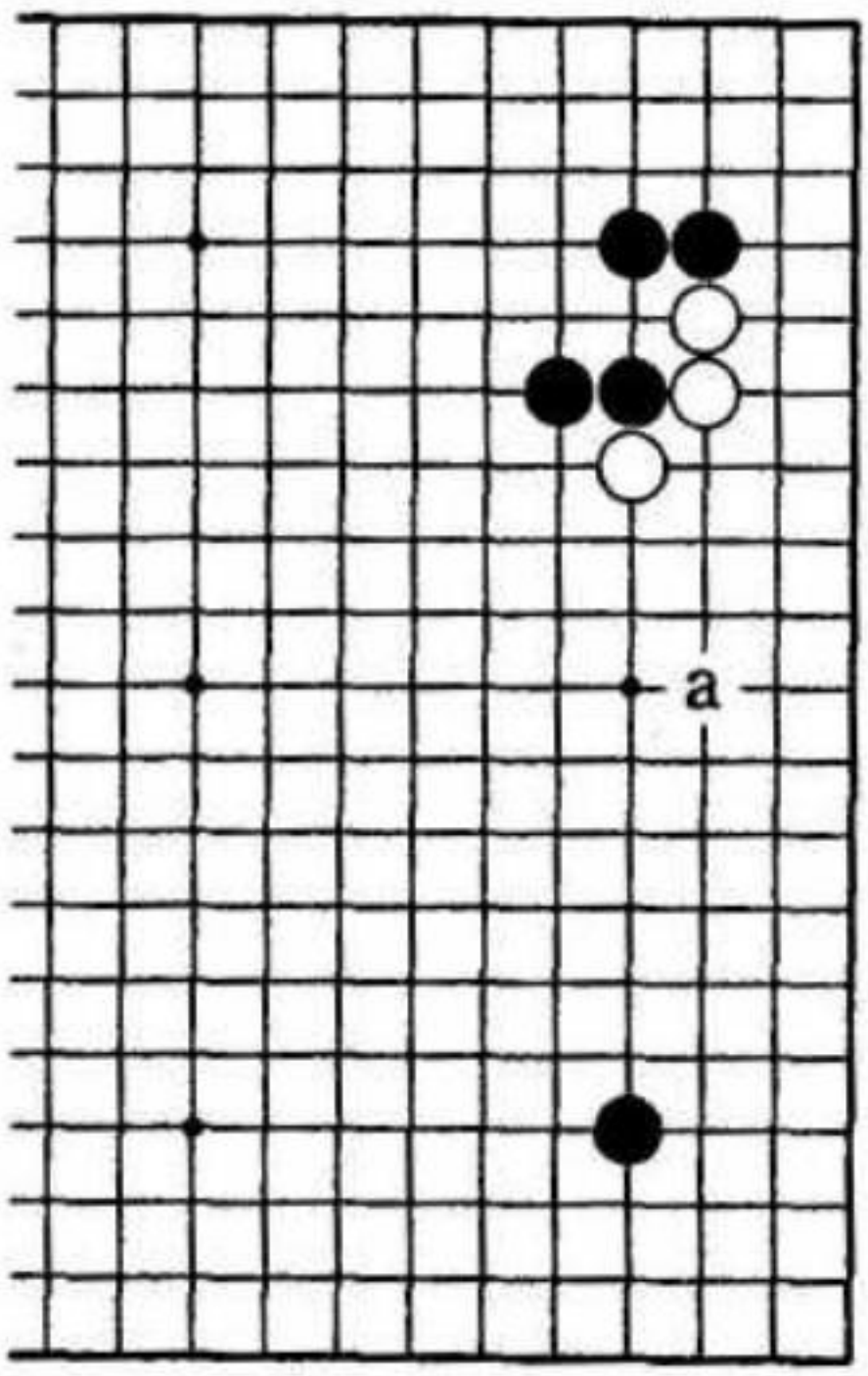
Dia. 13



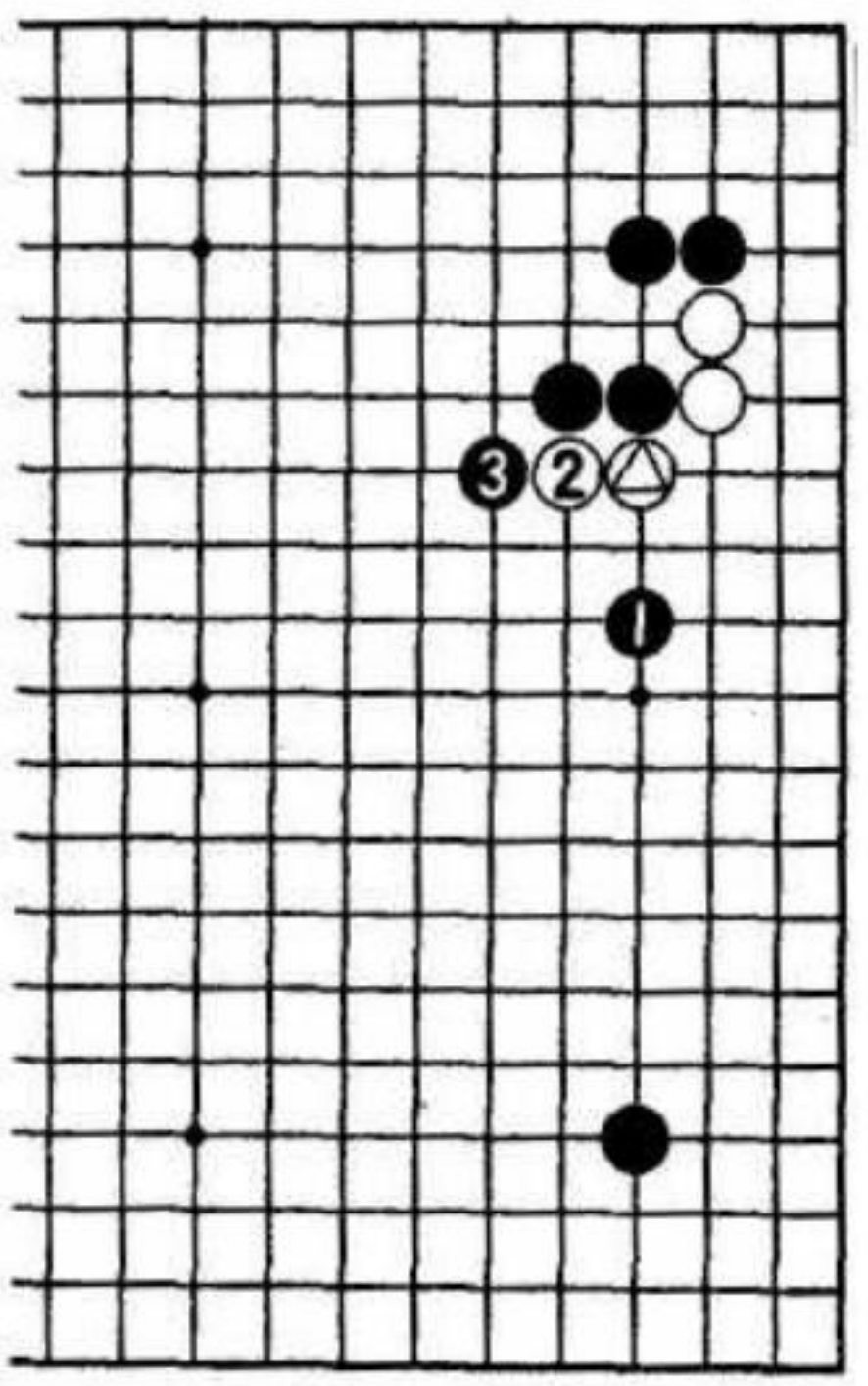
Dia. 14

Dia. 15: Black to attack

Let's assume that White has neglected to make the exten sion to 'a' needed to stabilize his position. What is the best way for Black to attack him? There is a vital point here that every player should be aware of.



Dia. 15



Dia. 16

Dia. 16: a severe attack

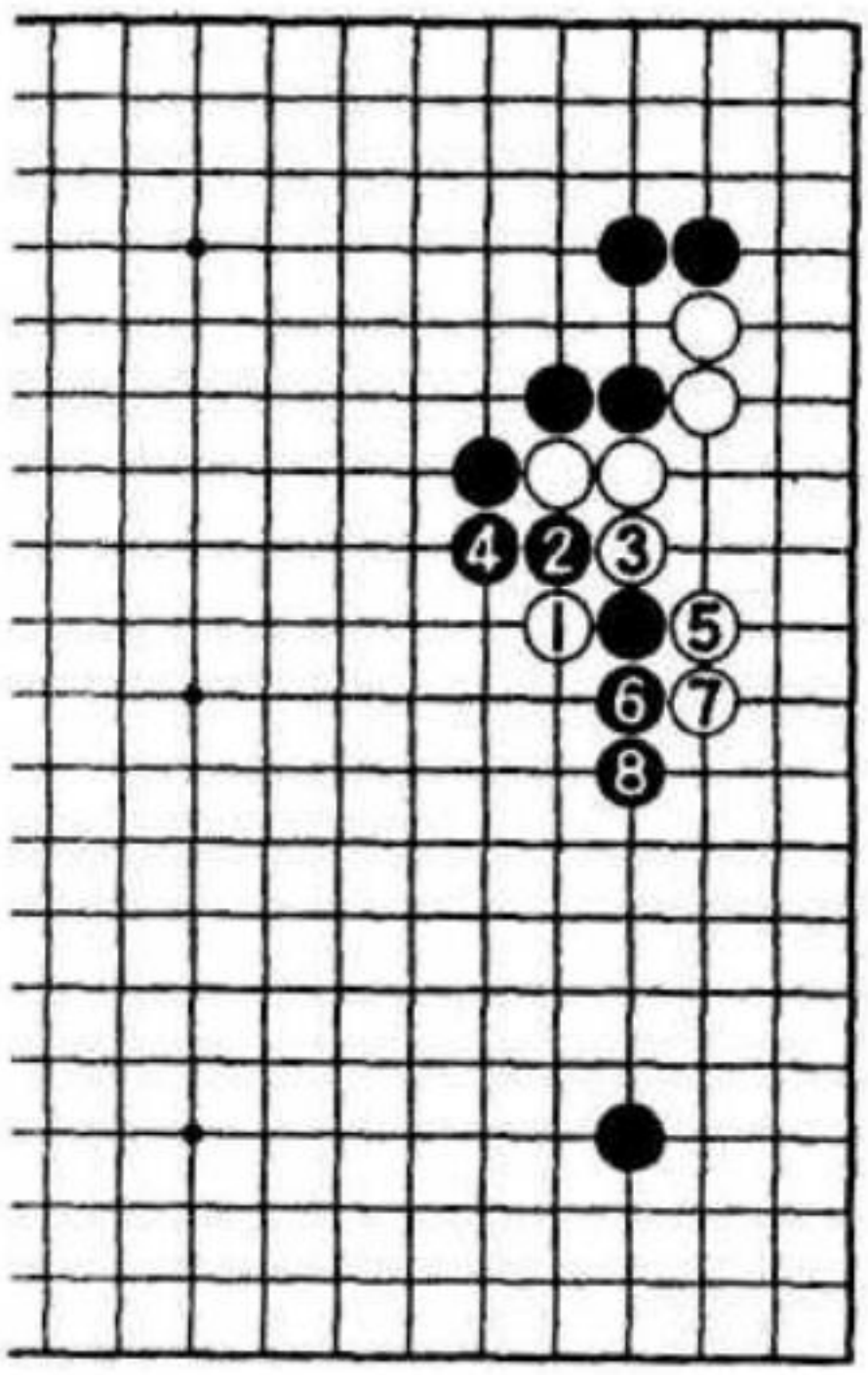
Black 1, right on the vital point, is severe. It attacks one space away from the marked stone. If White 2, the hane of Black 3 works perfectly. White is in trouble.

Dia. 17: bad for White

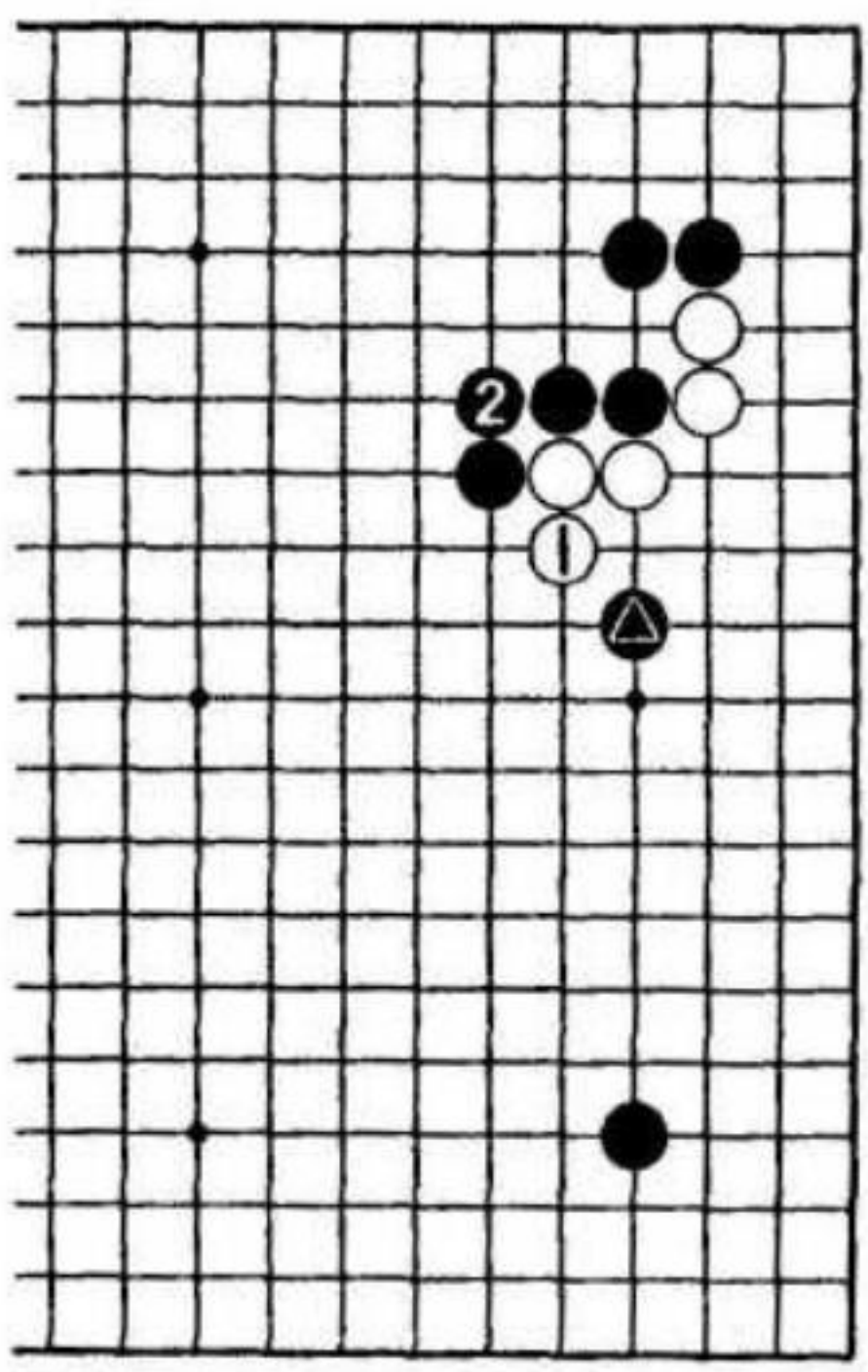
White would like to continue after *Dia. 16* by attaching at 1, but Black can cut at 2. In order to get a living shape, White will have to push the cart from behind with 5 and 7, which helps Black If White 1 at 4, Black again cuts at 2.

Dia. 18: bad shape

That means that White has no choice but to make an empty triangle with 1 in order to move out. Black connects solidly at 2 and looks forward to continuing his attack. It is thanks to the effectiveness of the marked stone that Black has been able to force White to make bad shape.



Dia. 17

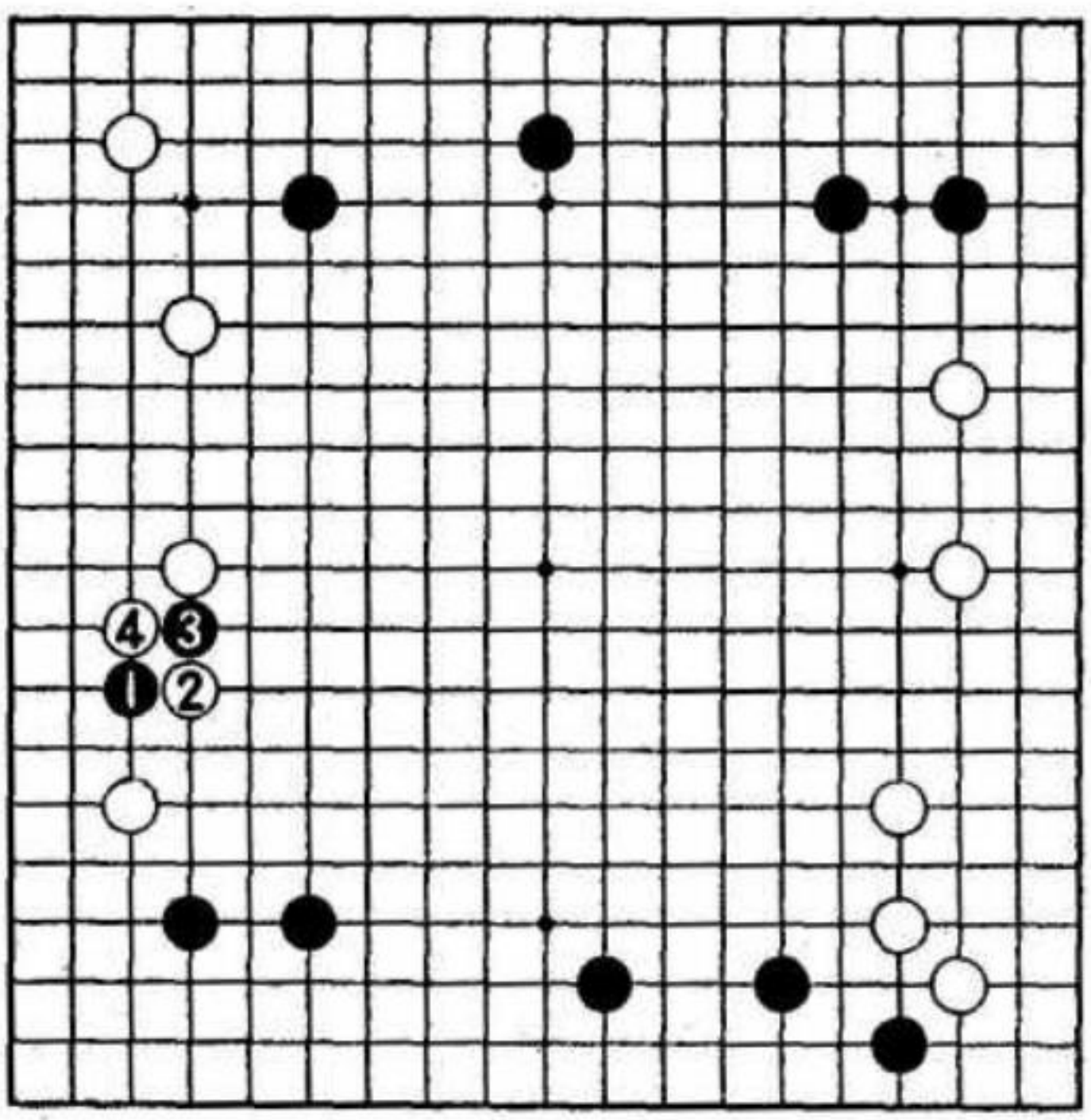


Dia. 18

Principle 12
The ponnuki is worth 30 points

This is one of the most famous of the go proverbs. 'Thirty points' need not be taken literally - the largeness of the figure is meant to emphasize the fact that a ponnuki, which is the ideal shape in go, is much more valuable than it may appear on the surface.

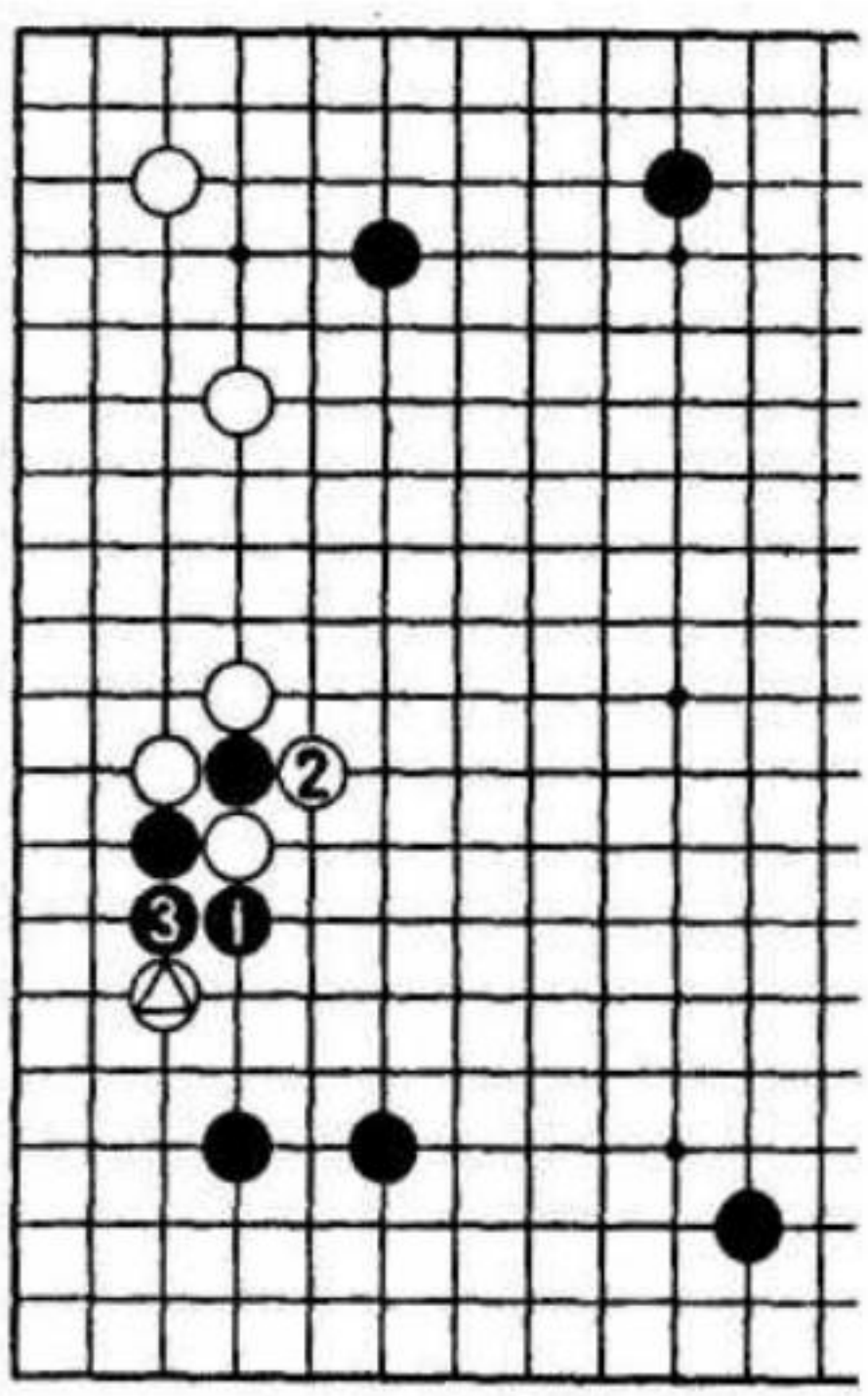
A safe rule is that you should nearly always jump at a chance to make a ponnuki; at the same time, you should almost never give one to the opponent.



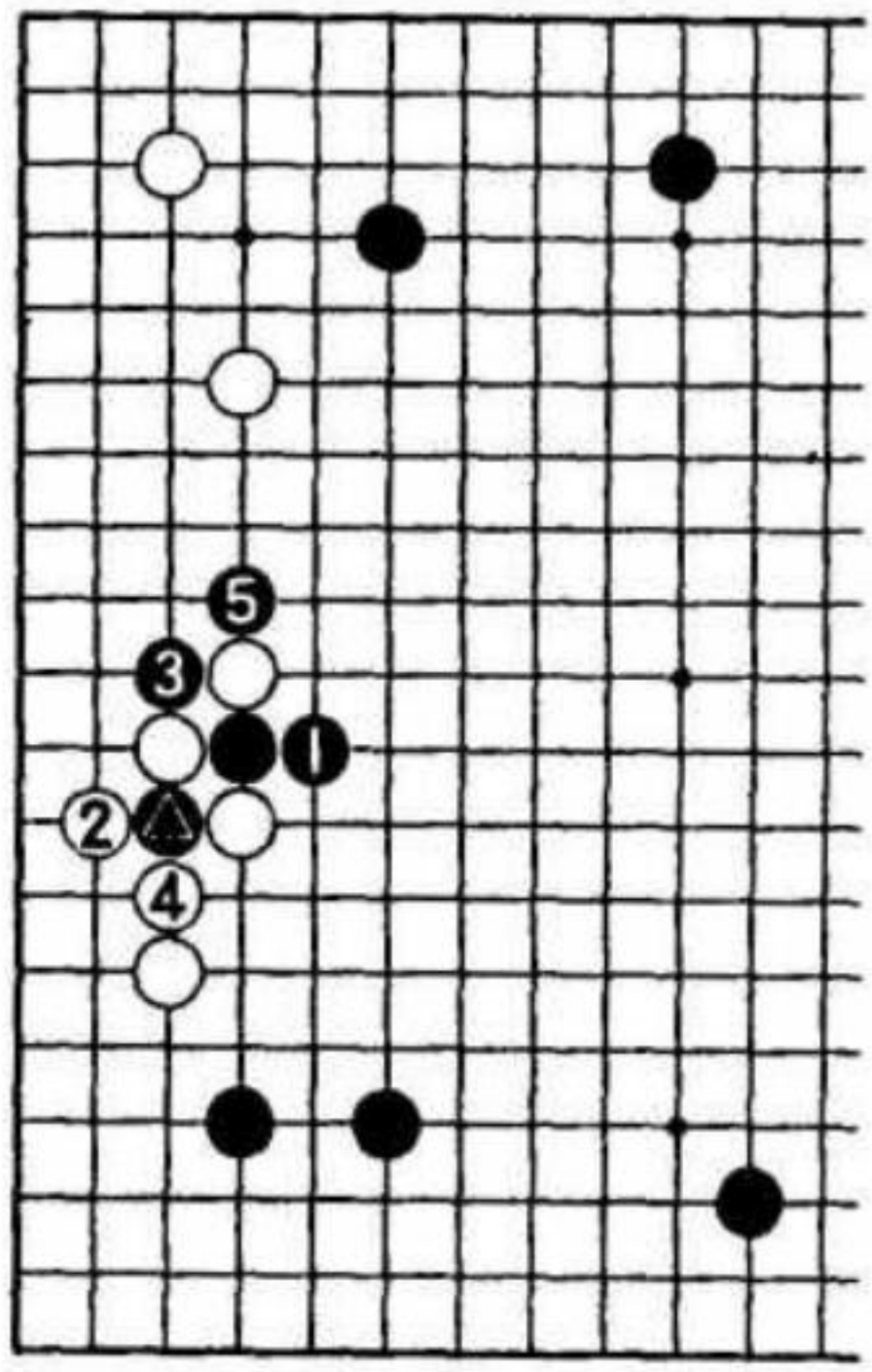
Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: the power of the ponnuki

Capturing the marked white stone with Black 1 and 3 may appear to be the simplest strategy, but the ponnuki of 2 gives White power that radiates its influence over a wide area of the board. This exchange is very favourable for White.



Dia. 1



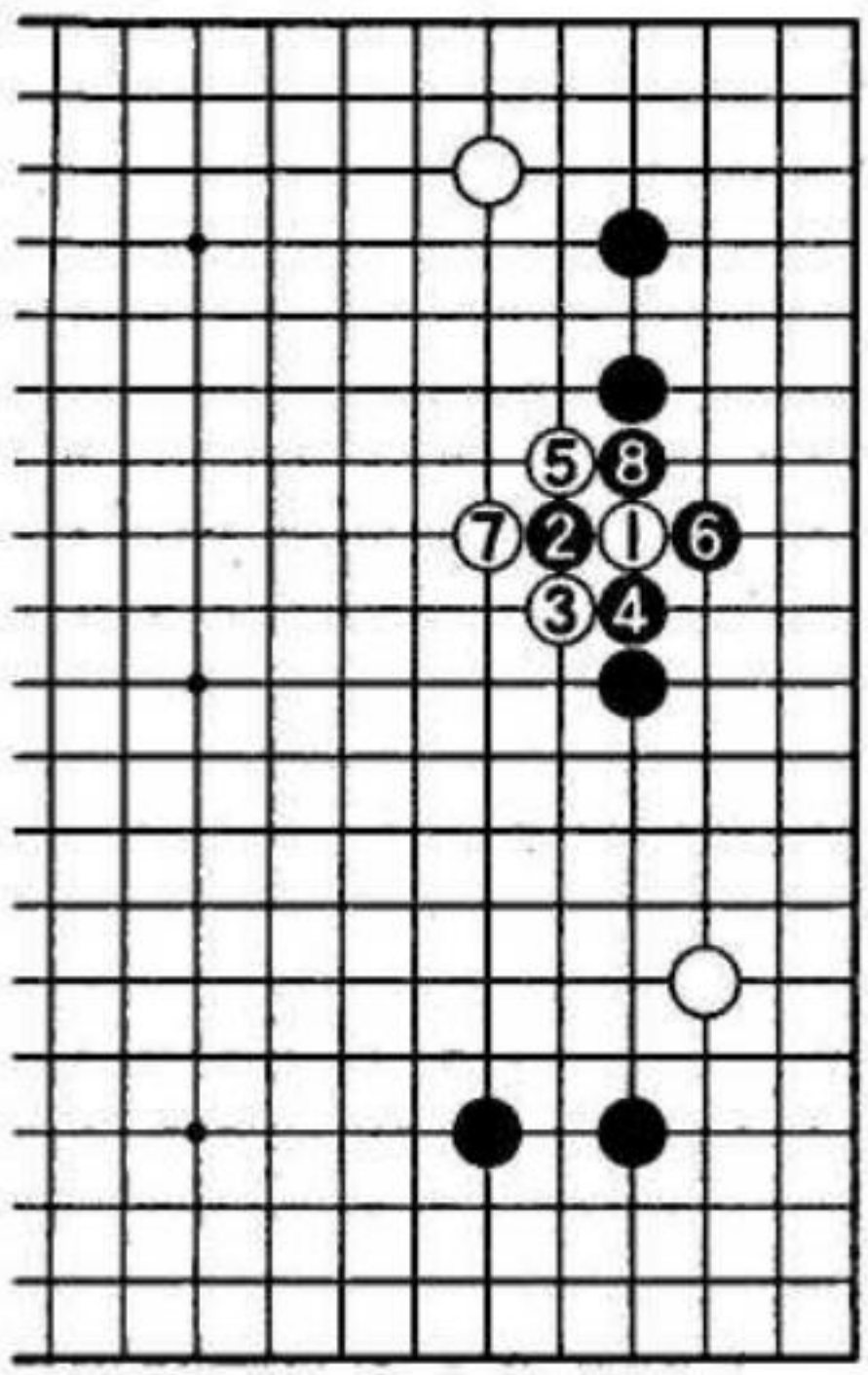
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: ladder

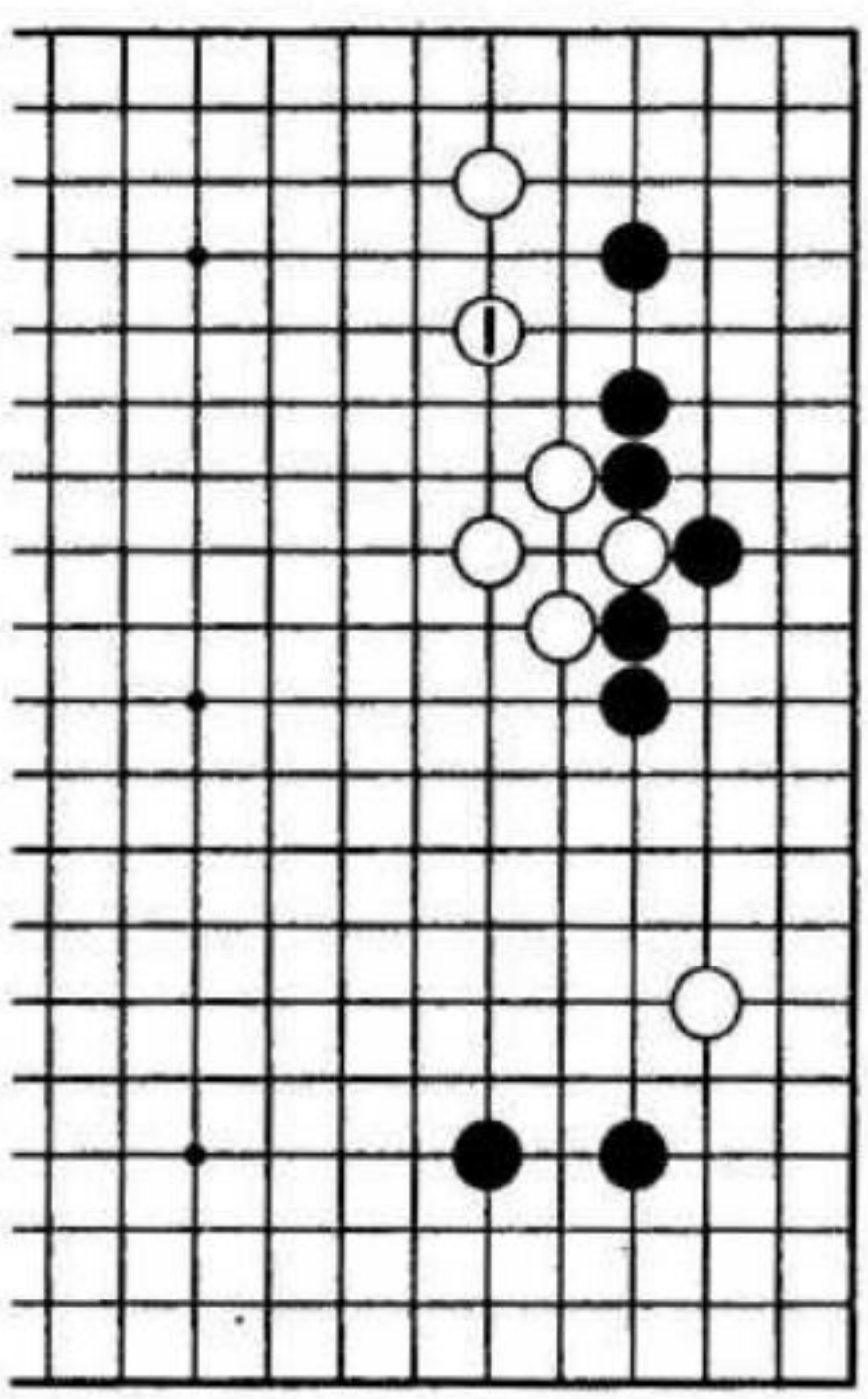
Black must avoid giving White a ponnuki by extending to 1. If White 2, he can set up a ladder with 3 and 5. Black does lose the marked stone, but his own capture gives him more than enough compensation.

Dia. 3: sacrifice

White's invasion of 1 came up before, in the discussion of Principle 8. Black 2 here is another move that beginners often play. The aim is to link up by using 2 as a sacrifice, but giving White a ponnuld makes him too strong. Black's strategy cannot be recommended.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: strong influence

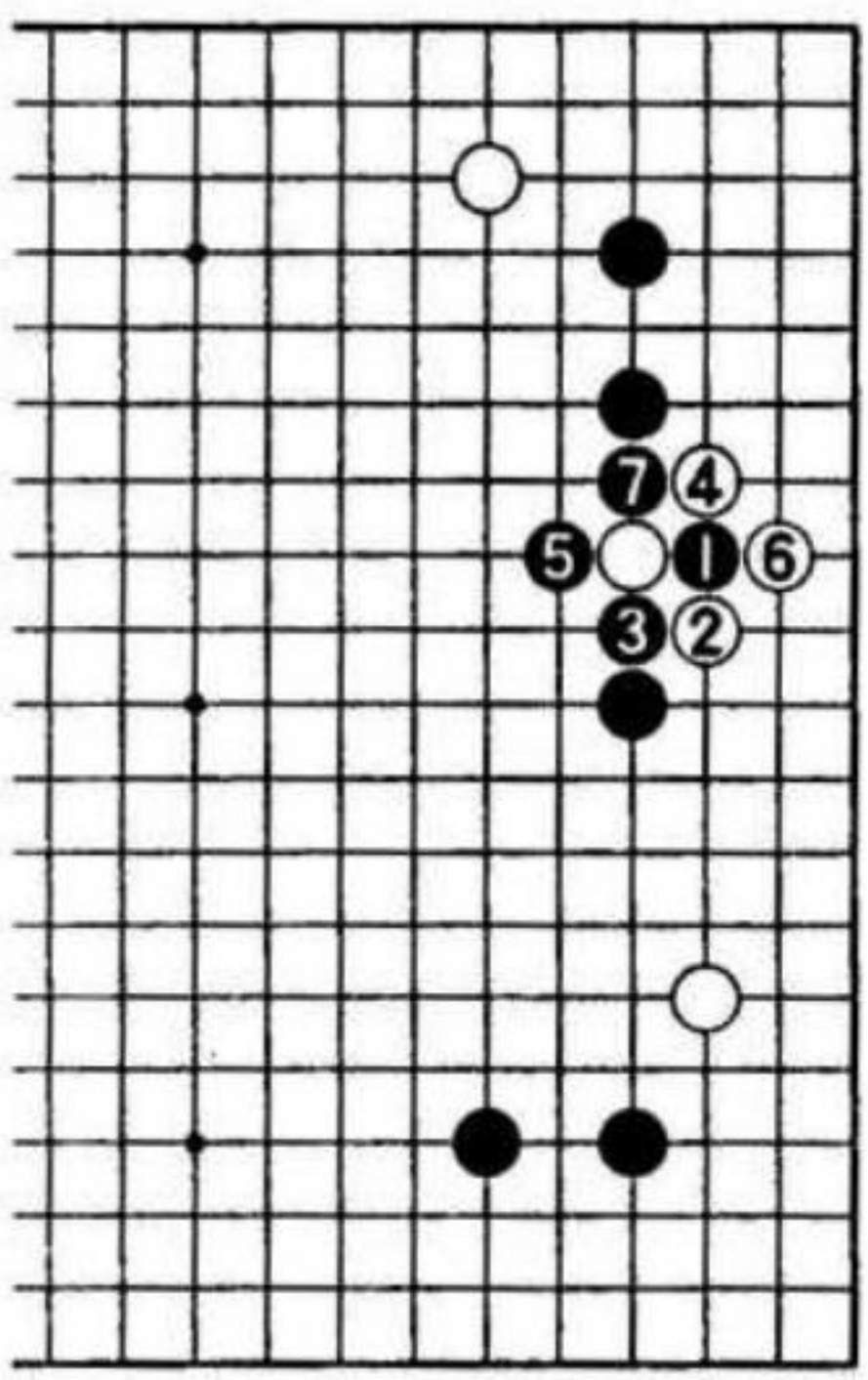
To give you an idea of just how strong White's influence is, let's assume he continues by playing 1. His top position is now so powerful that Black will not be able to come near it.

Dia. 5: a dubious blockade

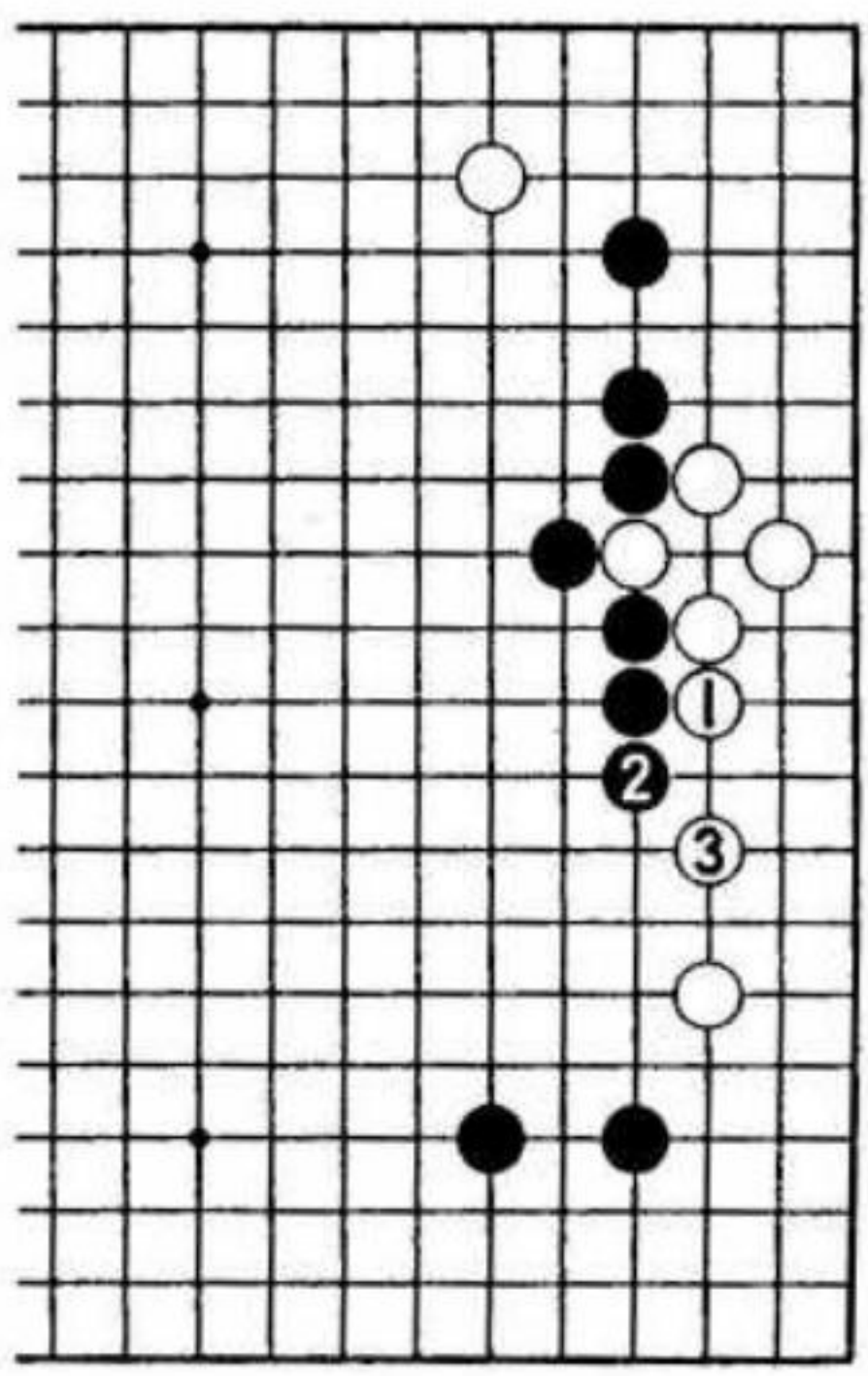
This time Black tries the opposite tactic, attaching underneath with 1 so he can build the outside wall with 3 to 7. The drawback is that the ponnuki makes it easy for White to live. One can't recommend this method of sealing White in.

Dia. 6: connected

If White continues with 1 and 3 after *Dia. 15*, he links up all his stones on the side. The reason why Black's strategy can't be recommended is that White shouldn't be able to get away so easily after his invasion at 1 in *Dia. 3*. Please refer back to *Dia. 16* on page 69.



Dia. 5



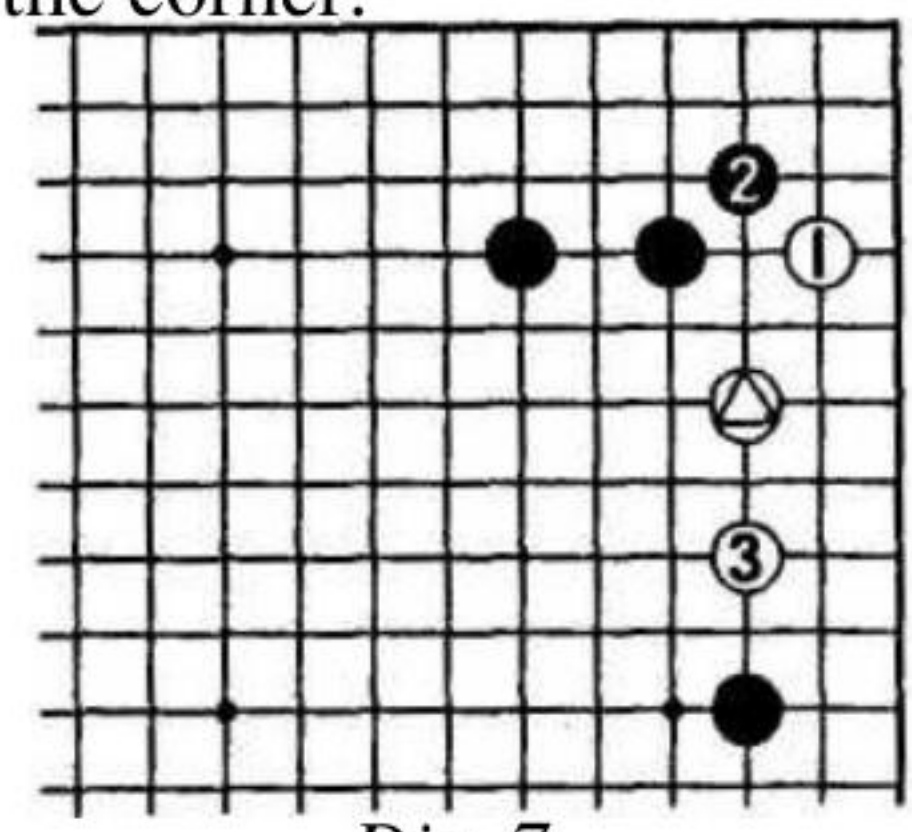
Dia. 6

Dia. 7. satisfied

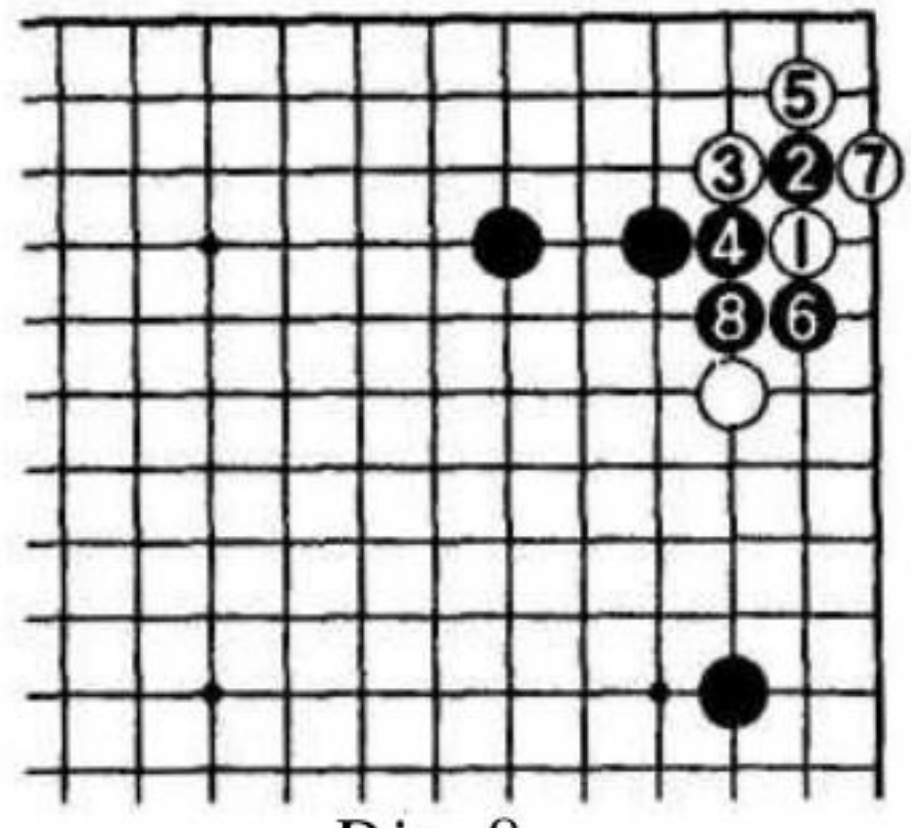
In order to settle the marked stone, White may play 1 and 3. White 3 is a narrow extension, but that can't be helped This result is quite satisfactory for Black, but -

Dia. 8: too easy for White

Some players think that attaching at 2 is a good answer to 1. Don't believe it. White gets a sente ponnuki and lives easily in the corner.



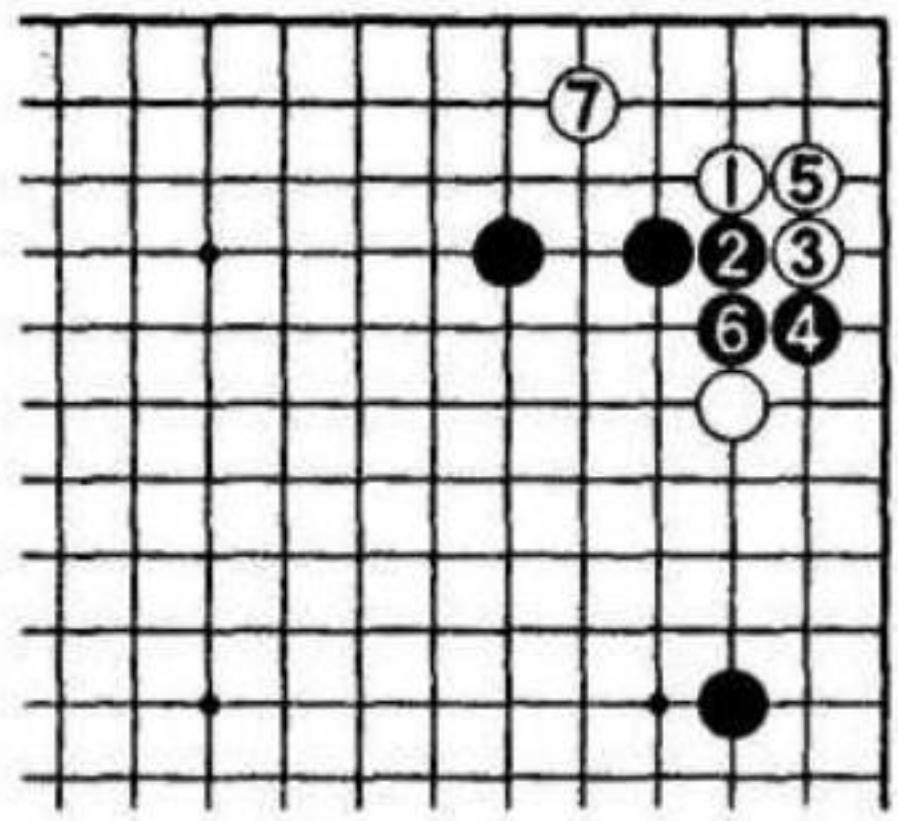
Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 9. standard result

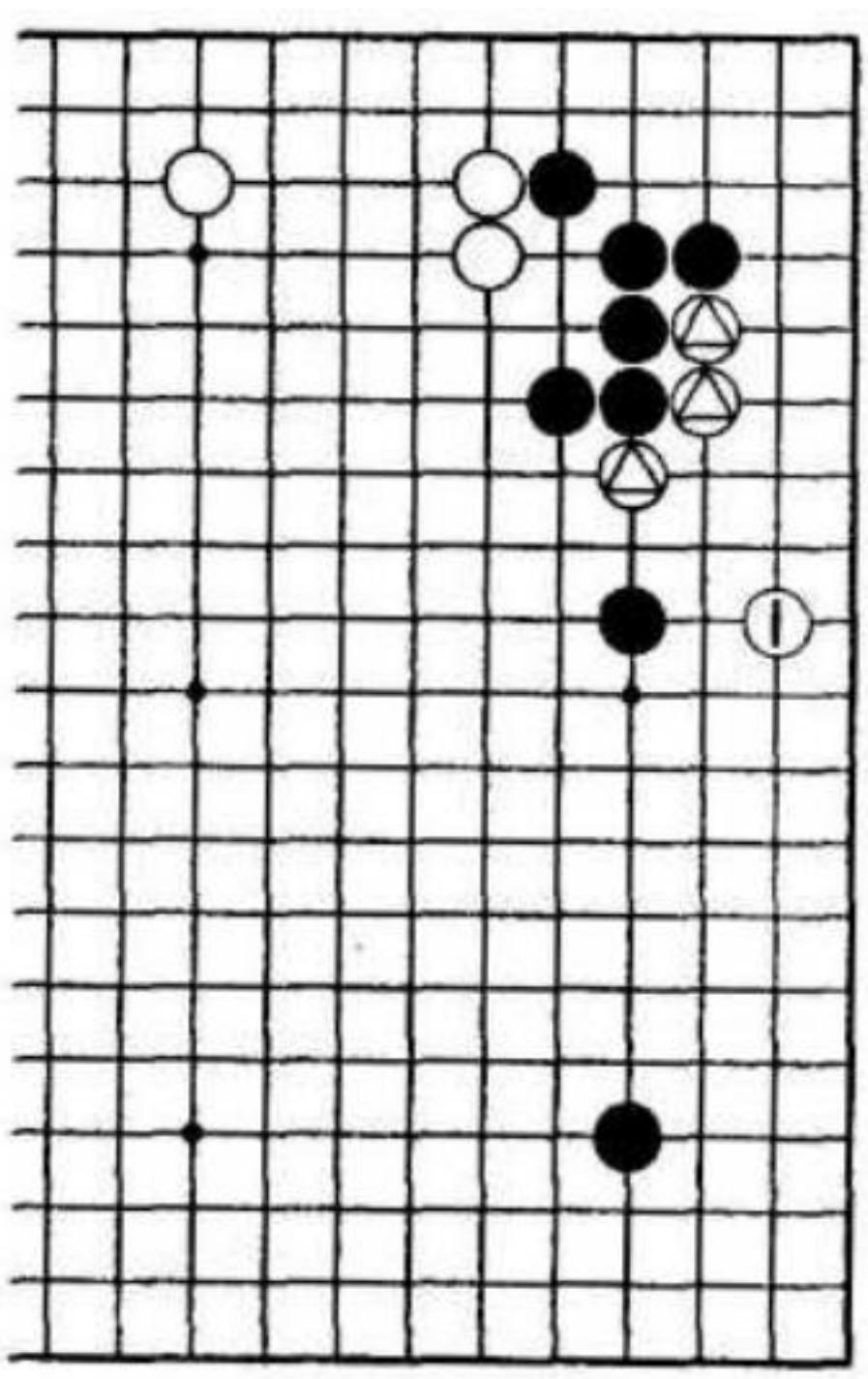
Compare *Dia. 8* to the result in this standard joseki. Here White ends in gote, but in *Dia. 8* he got sente. That's why the result there was favourable for him.



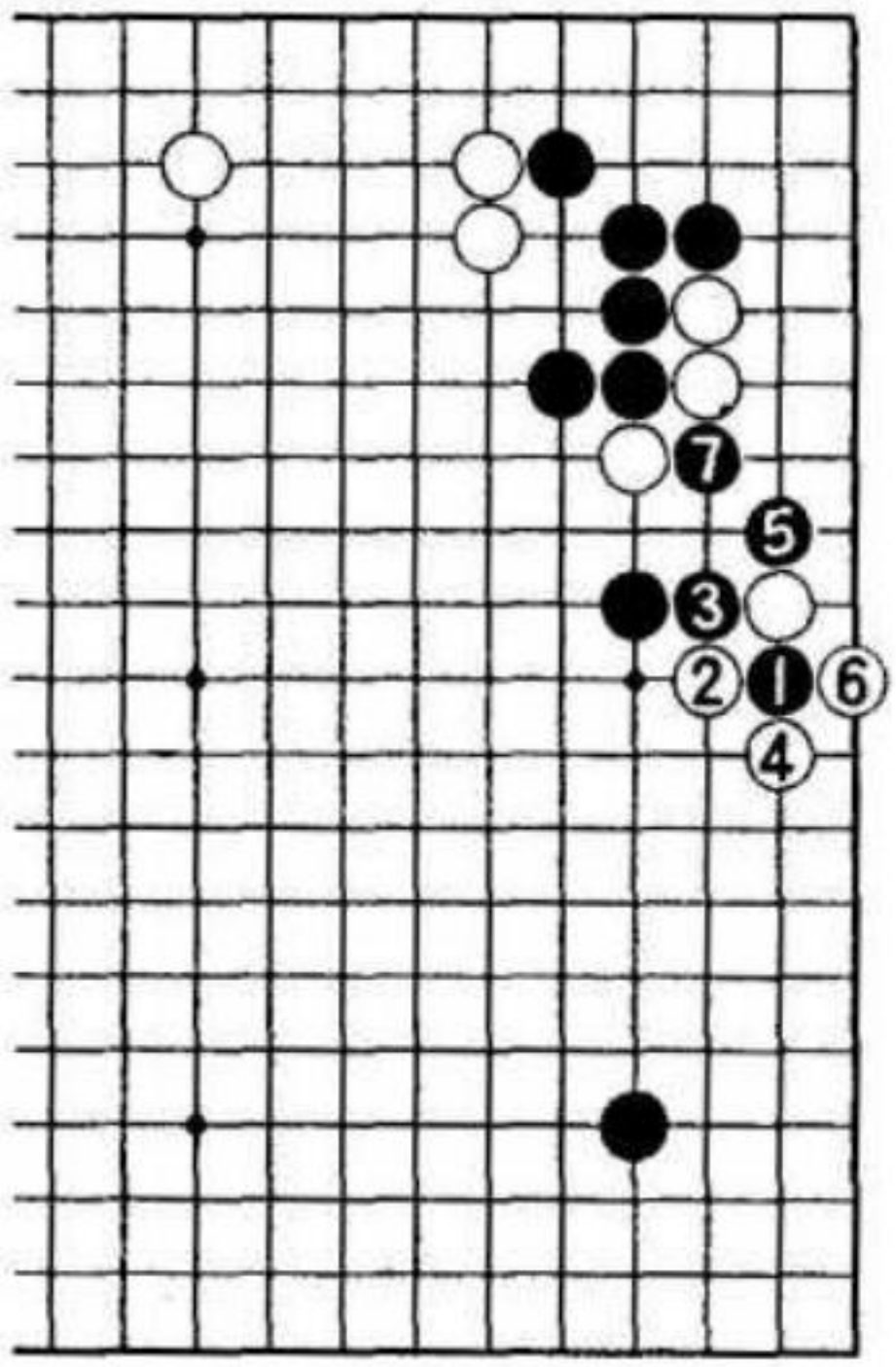
Dia. 9

Dia. 10: help us!

White 1 is an attempt to rescue the three marked stones clinging to Black's strong position. For his part, Black must not be too greedy about trying to capture them or he may go wrong. Where do you think Black should play?



Dia. 10



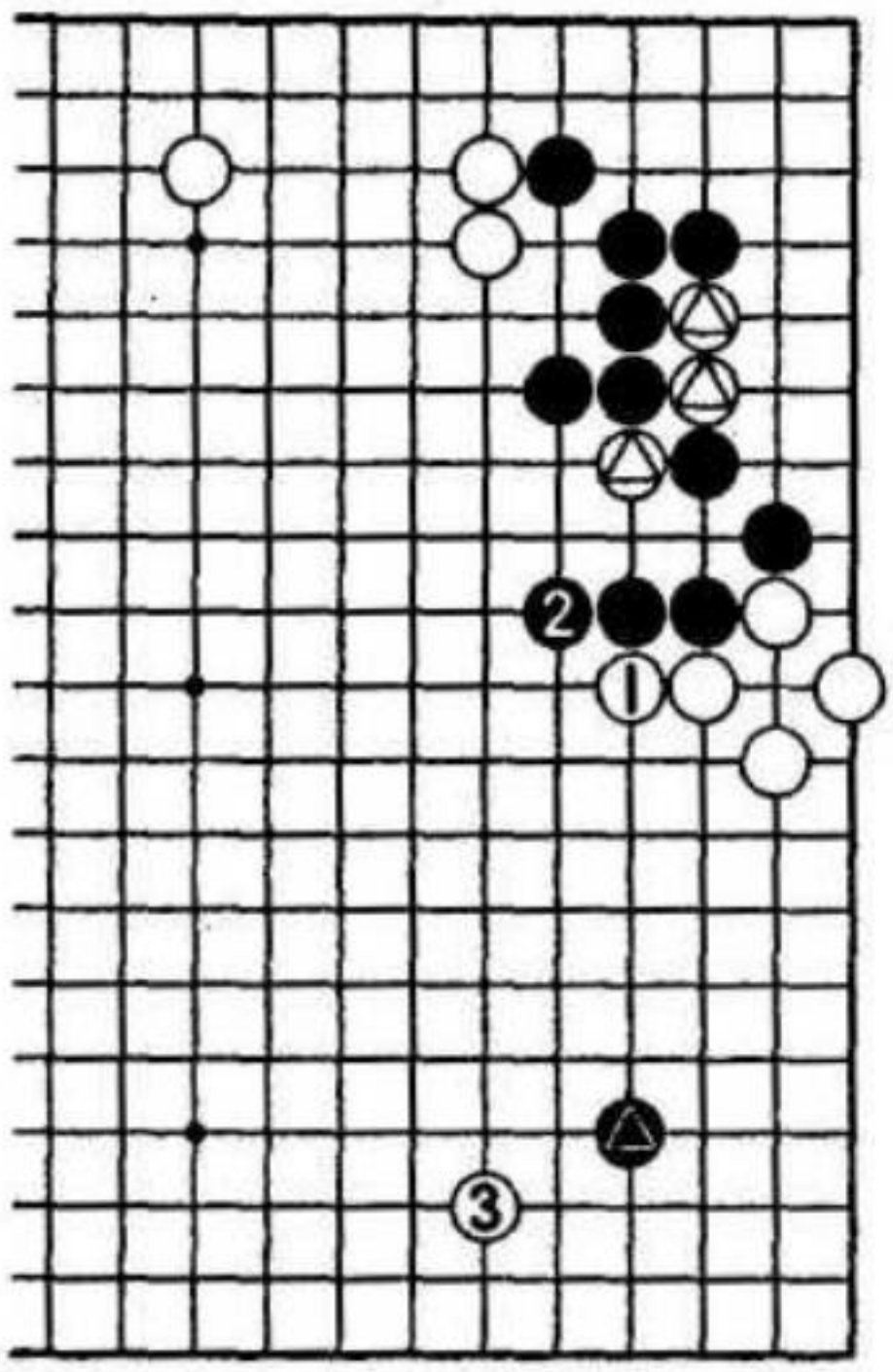
Dia. 11

Dia. 11: success?

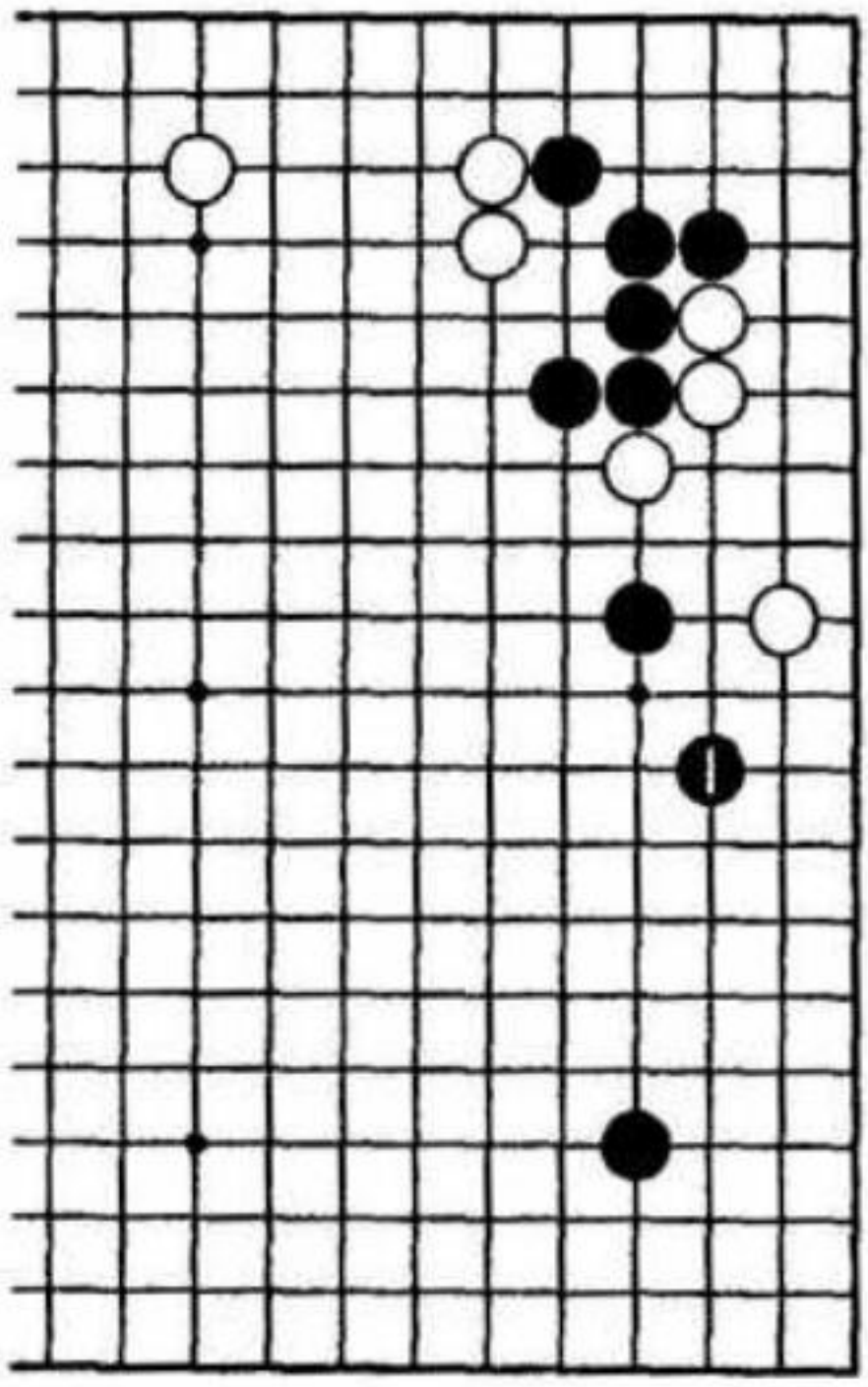
Black plays 1 as a sacrifice to enable him to capture the three stones. His strategy is rewarded with 'success' up to 7. The truth is, however, that this is not an impressive result for him, as White makes good shape with his ponnuki. To show just how good -

Dia. 12: excellent thickness

Let's assume White continues with 1 and 3. The ponnuki makes White very strong, whereas the marked black stone now looks quite weak. The three marked white stones were weak to begin with, so they are not much of a loss.



Dia. 12



Dia. 13

Dia. 13: a wiser policy

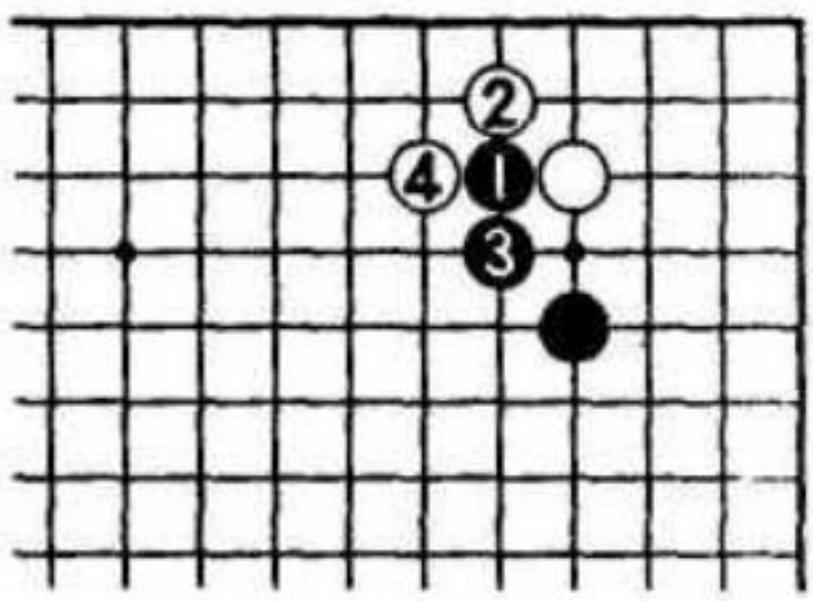
To go back to the start, answering peacefully at 1 is a wiser policy. White is not yet alive, and any attempt to secure life will help Black to strengthen his outside thickness.

Dia. 14: standard pattern

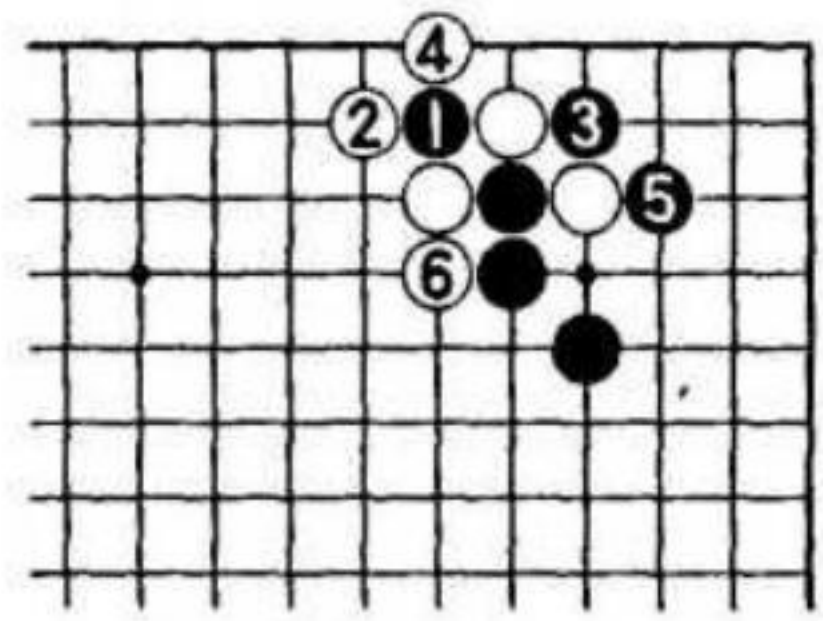
We have already shown the pattern here. Now we would like to look at the continuation.

Dia. 15: capture the cutting stone

If Black cuts at 1, simply capture with 2. As the proverb advises, capture the cutting stone. Black may get the corner, but White builds a strong shape.



Dia. 14



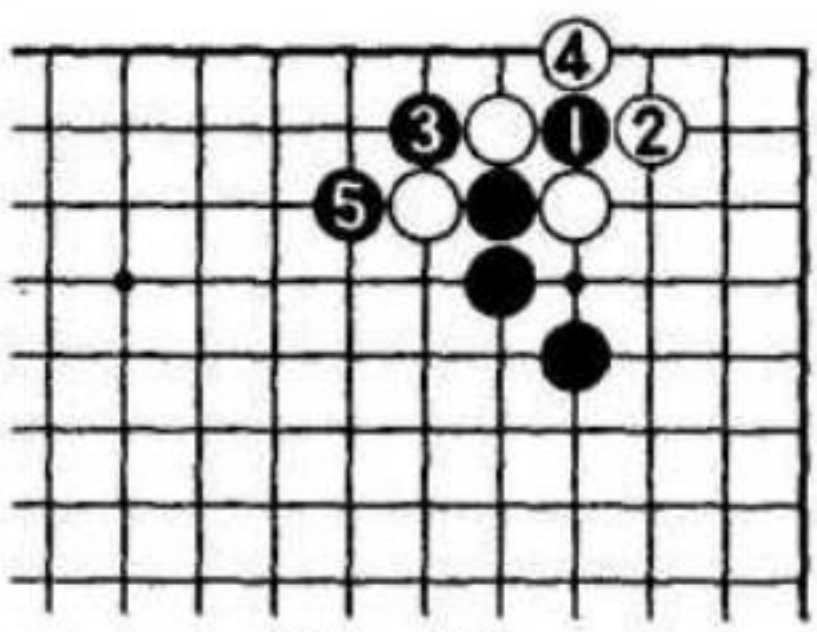
Dia. 15

Dia. 16: efficient

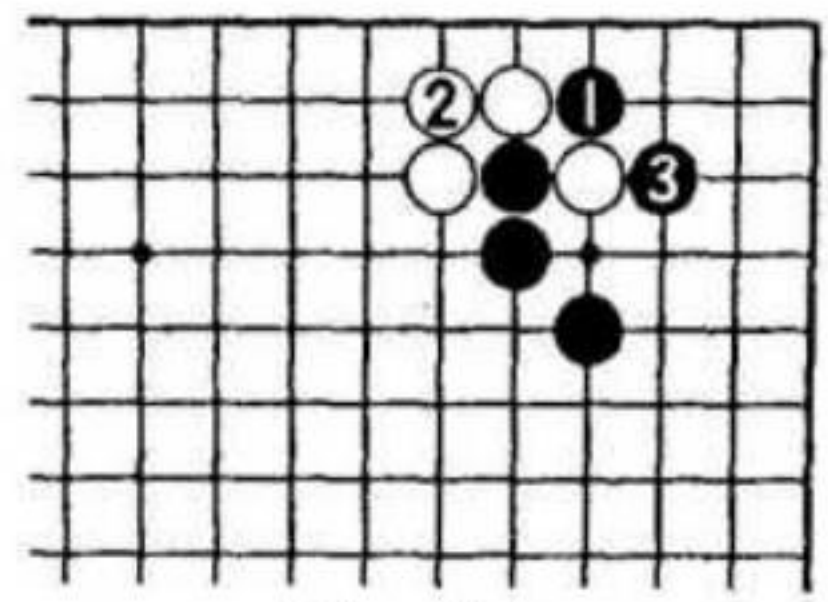
If Black 1, capturing the cutting stone is again correct. The result is the reverse: White gets the corner, Black gets the out side. The point is that White has lived efficiently in the corner

Dia. 17. heavy

Connecting at 2 is bad. White's three stones are heavy, a they have no eye shape.



Dia. 16

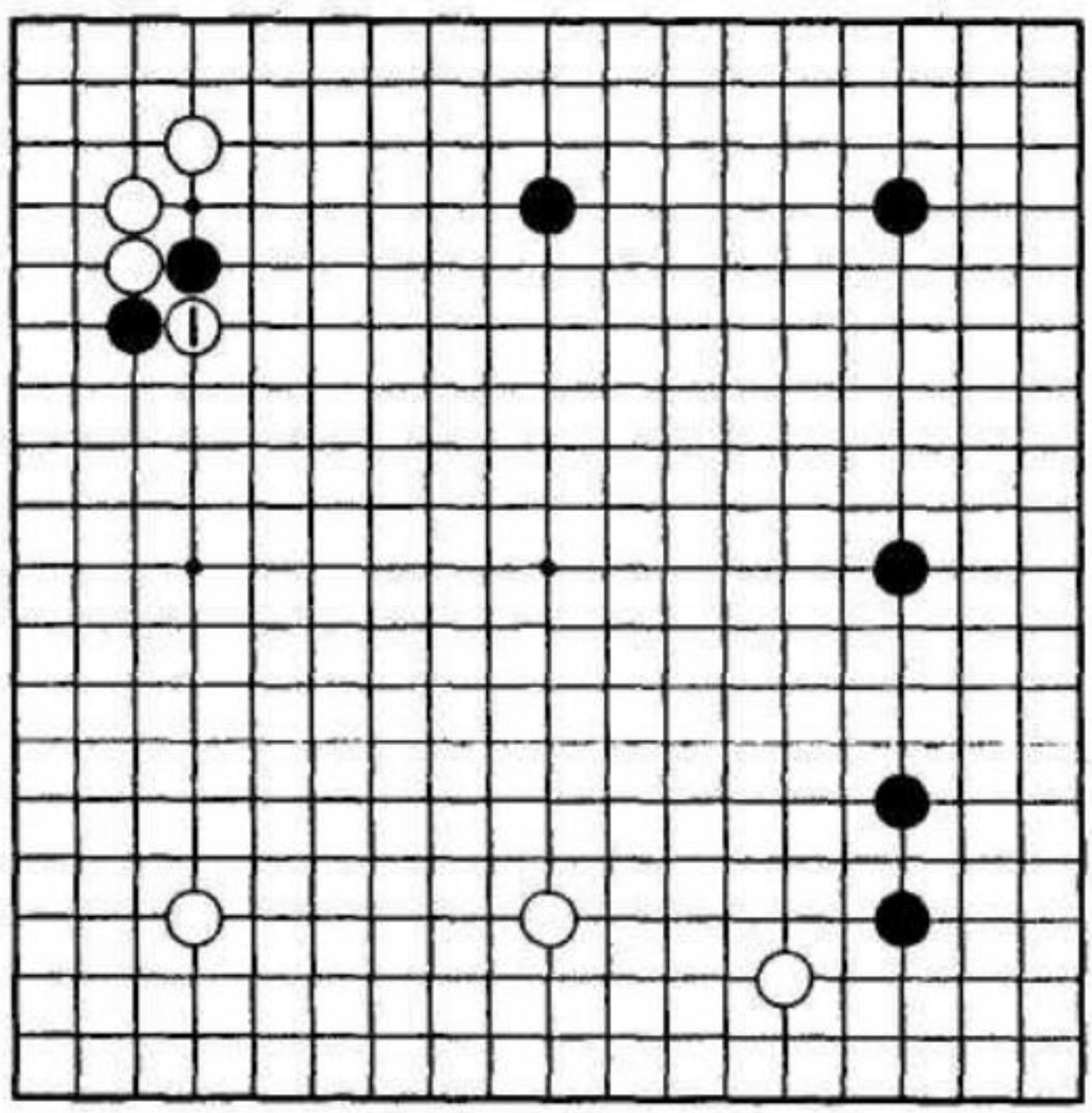


Dia. 17

Principle 13
Don't atari automatically

Like a check in chess, an atari is not always a good move. On the contrary, an atari played unthinkingly is often a bad move. It may even benefit the opponent more than yourself.

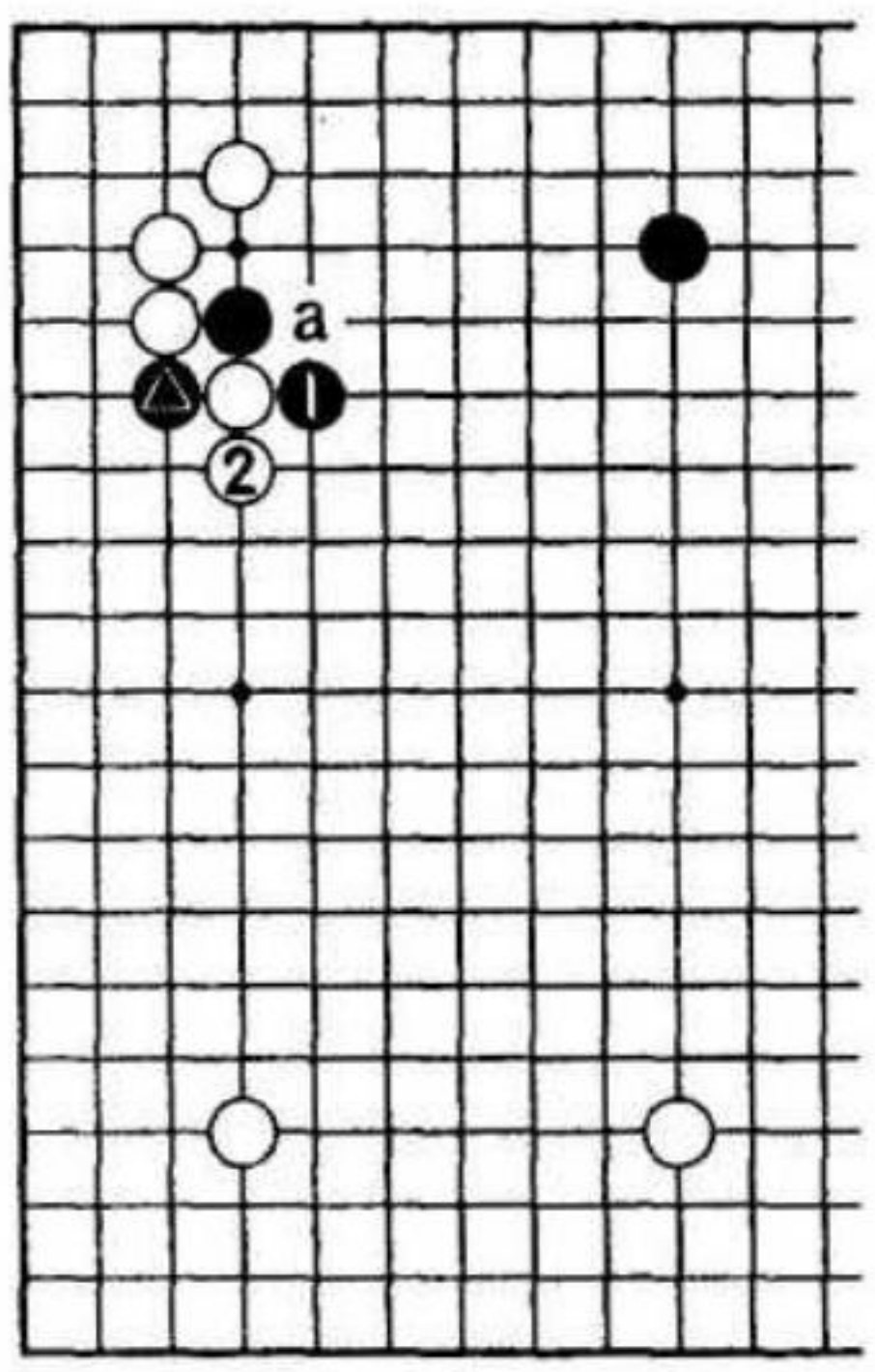
When White cuts at 1, ignoring him is feasible, but if Black decides to answer 1 directly, how should he play? In this position his only choice will be to sacrifice one of his stones.



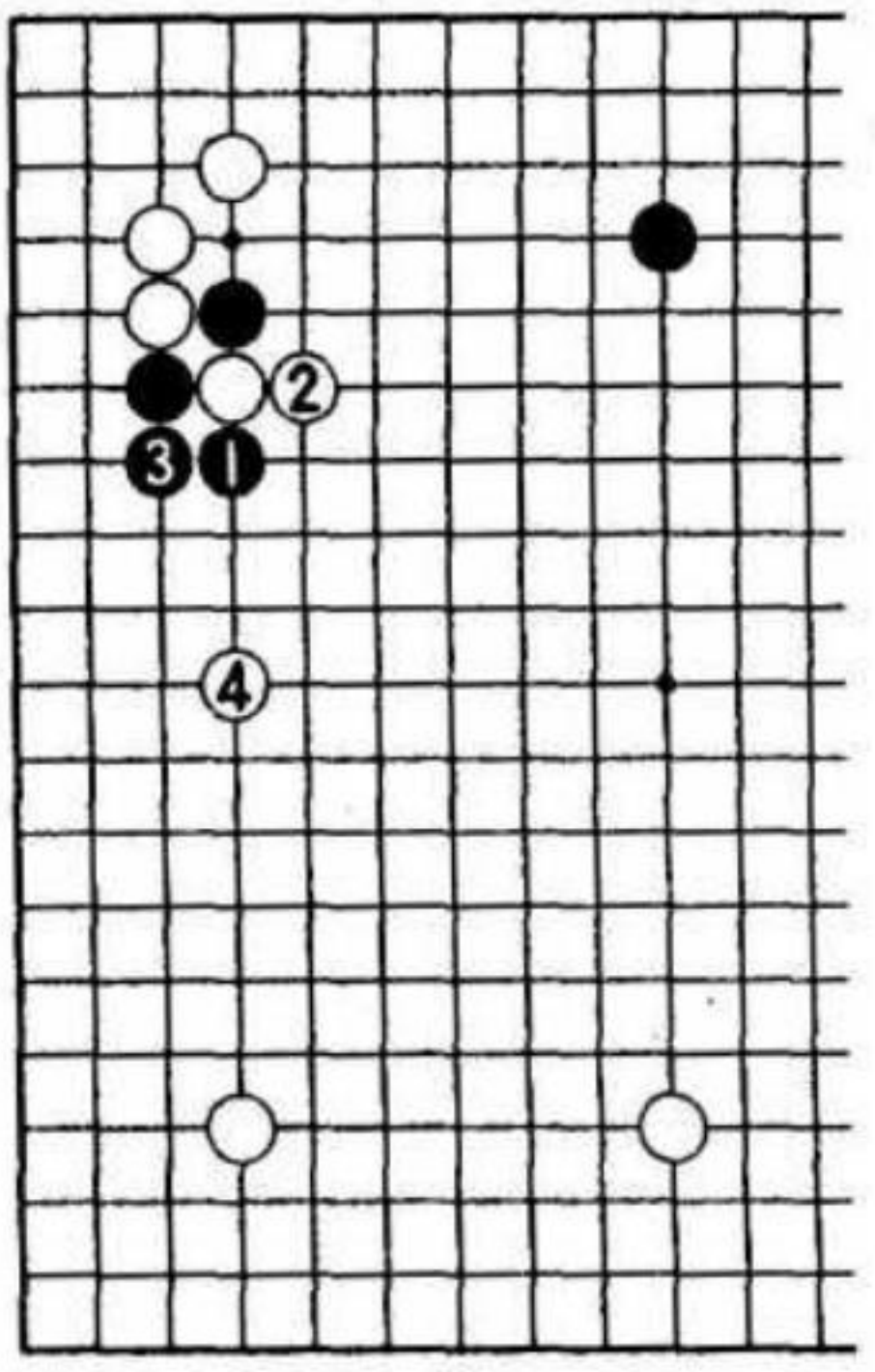
Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: profitless

What if Black ataris at 1? After White 2, he is left with a defect at 'a', while his marked stone is greatly weakened. Black gains virtually nothing from this atari.



Dia. 1



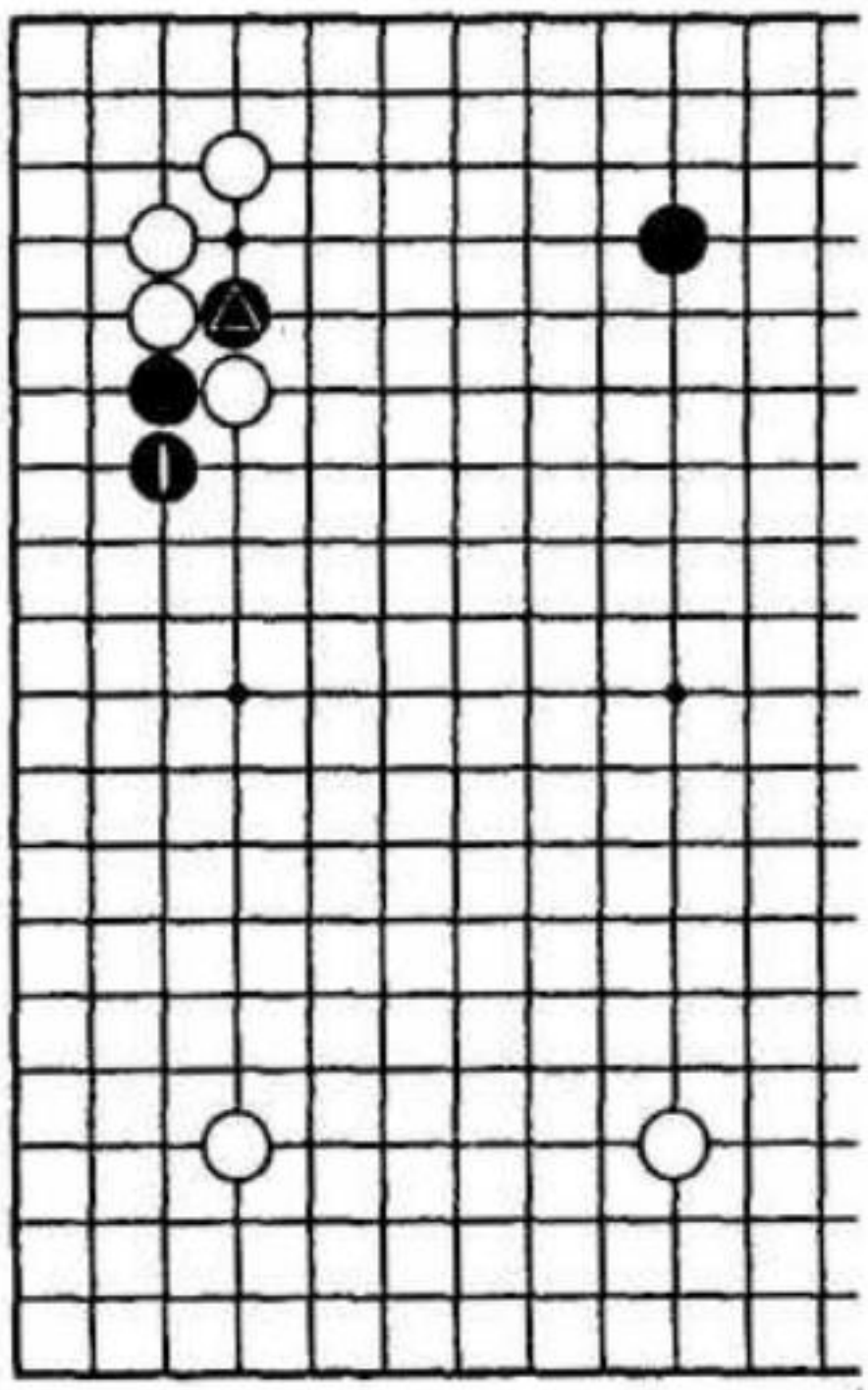
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: open to attack

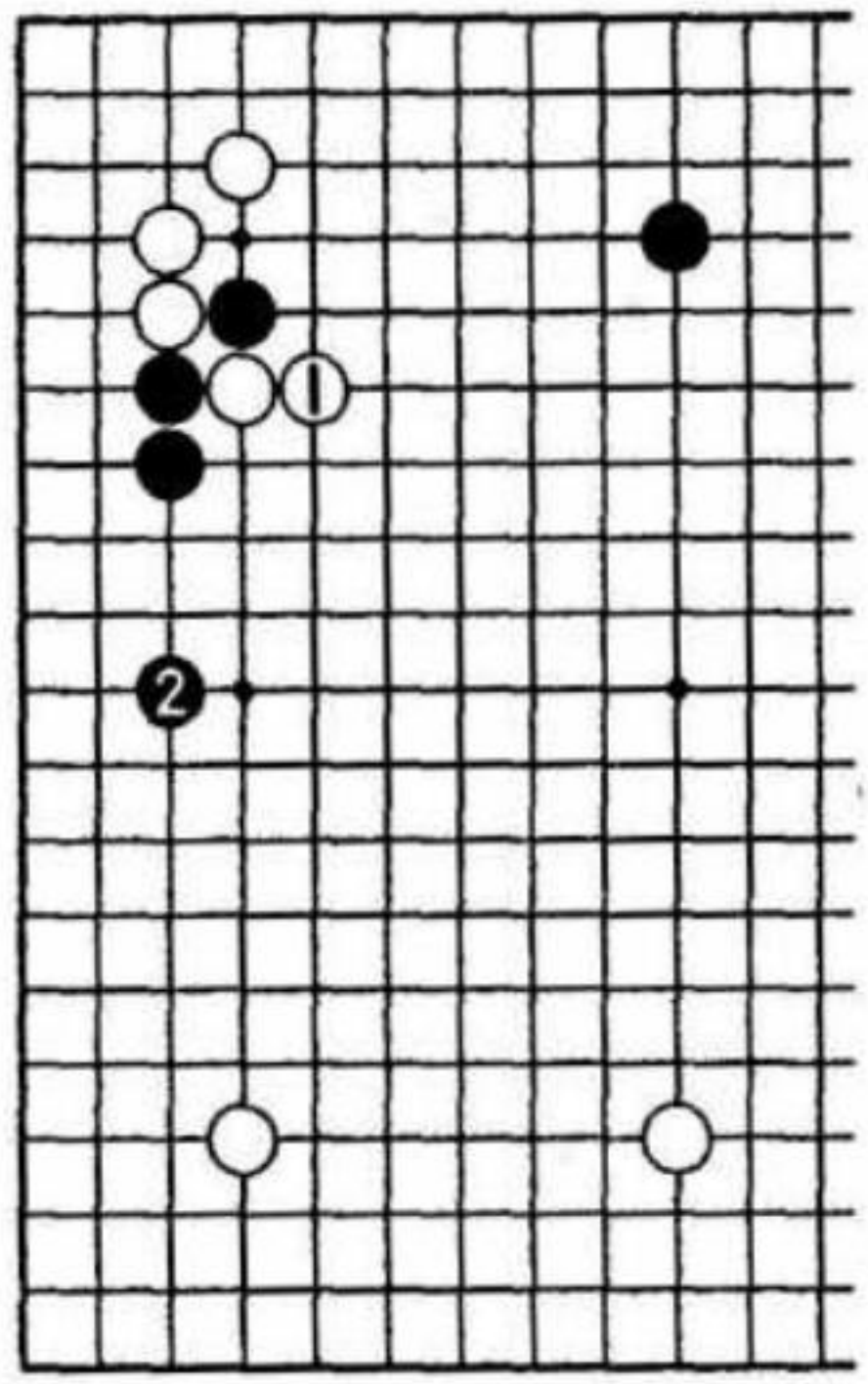
Let's look at the other atari then. After 2, Black has to connect at 3, but then White attacks the whole group with the pincer of 4. This atari also has little to recommend it.

Dia. 3: simply extend

The best strategy here is simply to extend without playing either atari. The reason is, as we have seen, that the atari helps the opponent more that it helps one's own side. Black plans to sacrifice the marked stone. Next -



Dia. 3



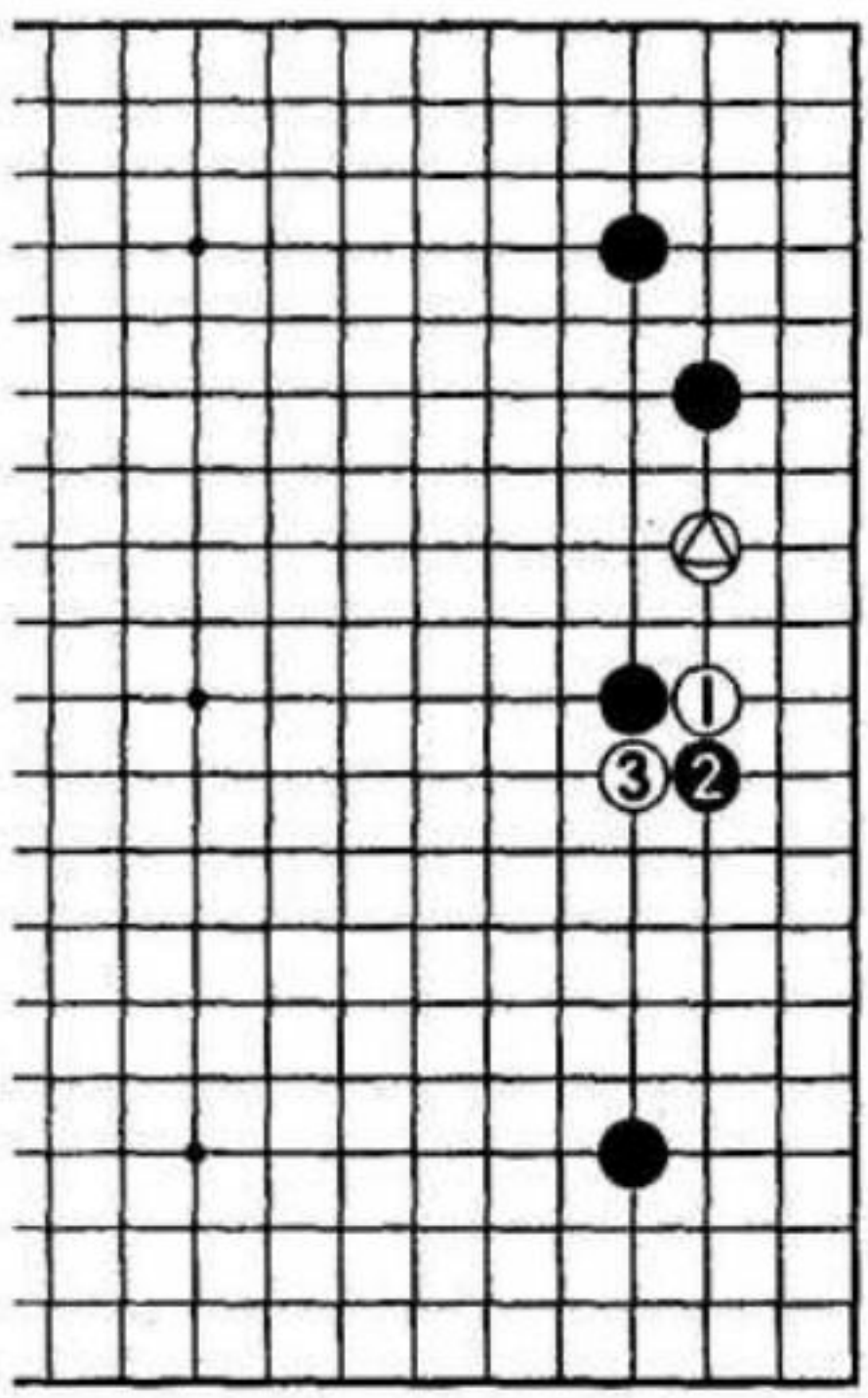
Dia. 4

Dia. 4: no defects

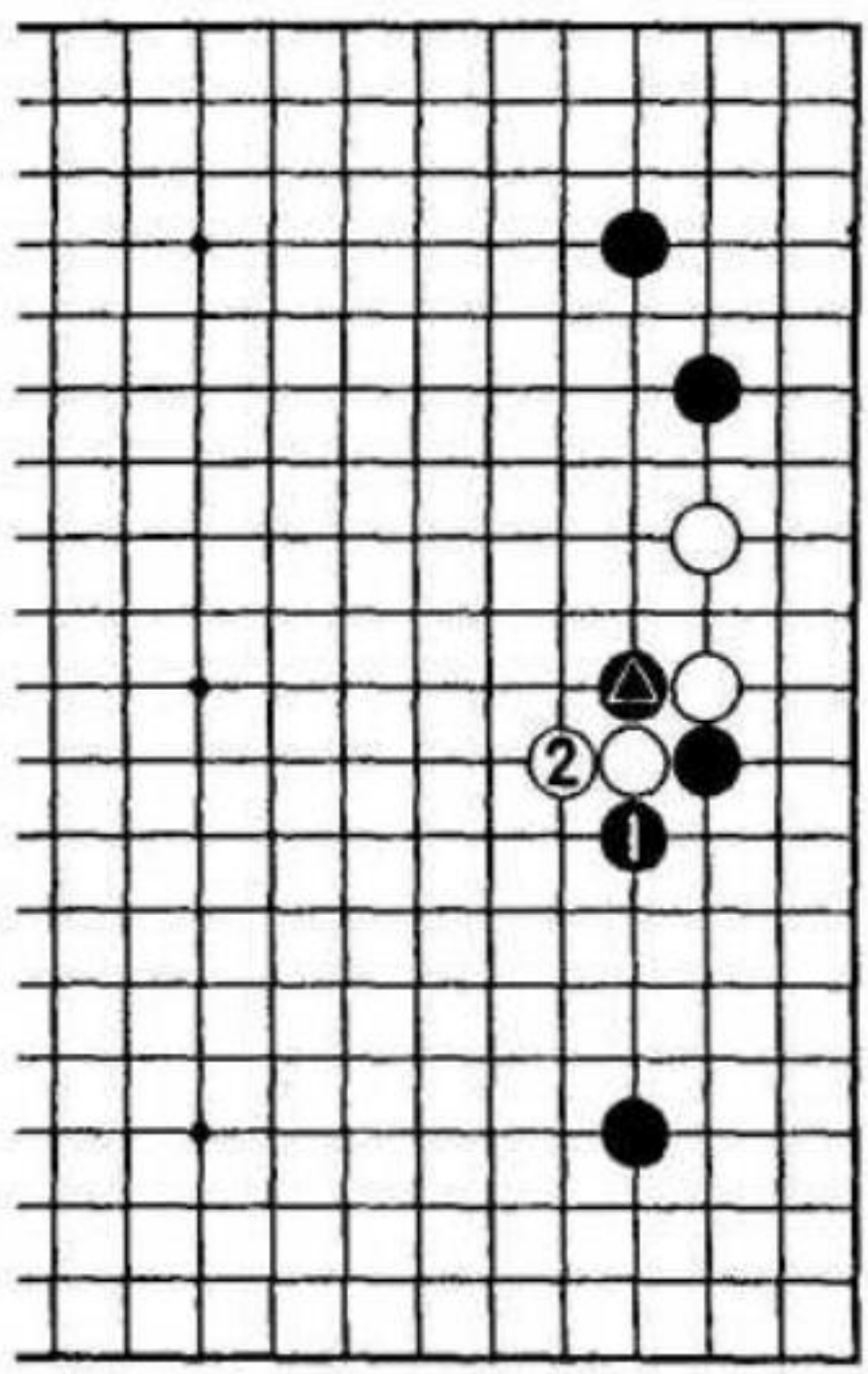
White will probably extend at 1. Black then stabilizes his group with 2. By not playing an atari, he has avoided creating defects in his own position.

Dia. 5: getting settled quickly

This pattern often appears in handicap games. White attaches at 1 and crosscuts at 3 when he wants to settle the marked stone quickly. In theory, Black is on the offensive, but he keeps it only if he makes the right answer.



Dia. 5



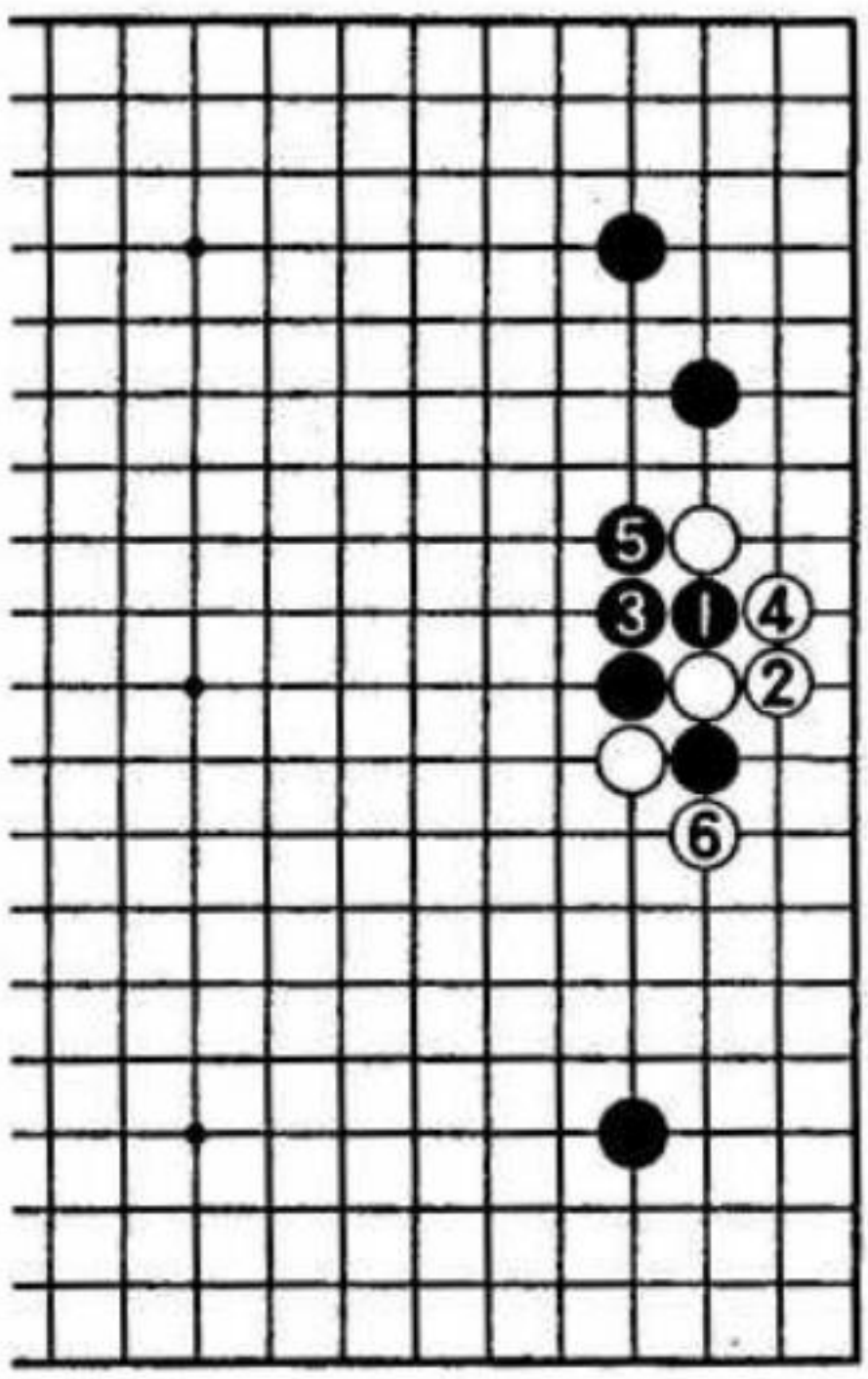
Dia. 6

Dia. 6: bad for Black

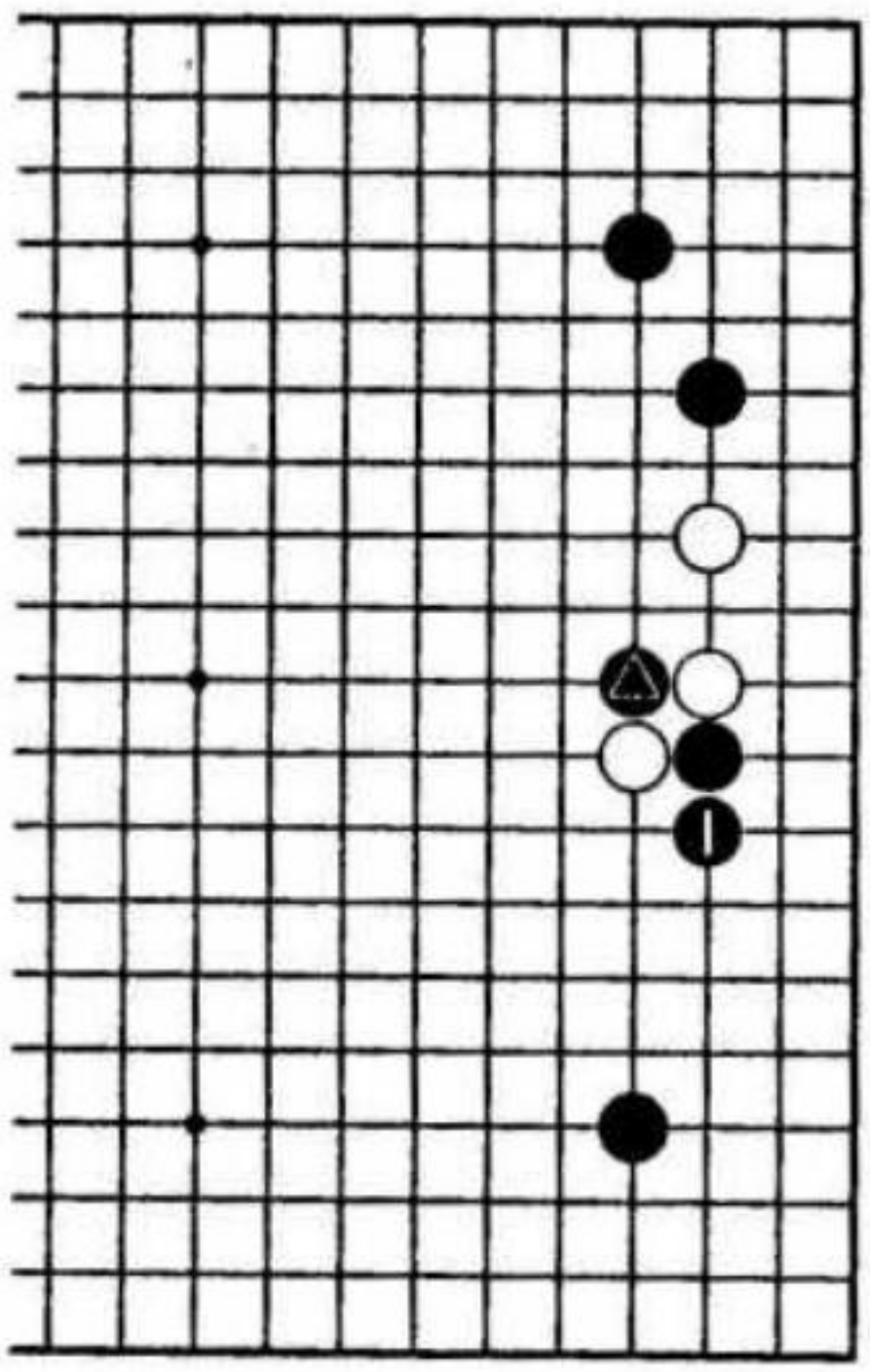
The atari of 1 doesn't help Black's attack White's extension at 2 greatly weakens the marked stone, while Black also has the cutting point below. He can't expect to get a good result out of this.

Dia. 7: White satisfied

Black can also try the atari of 1. After 2, he has to connect at 3. Black 5 is also necessary, so White settles his group with 6. One has to conclude that the initial atari was bad.



Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 8: not helping White

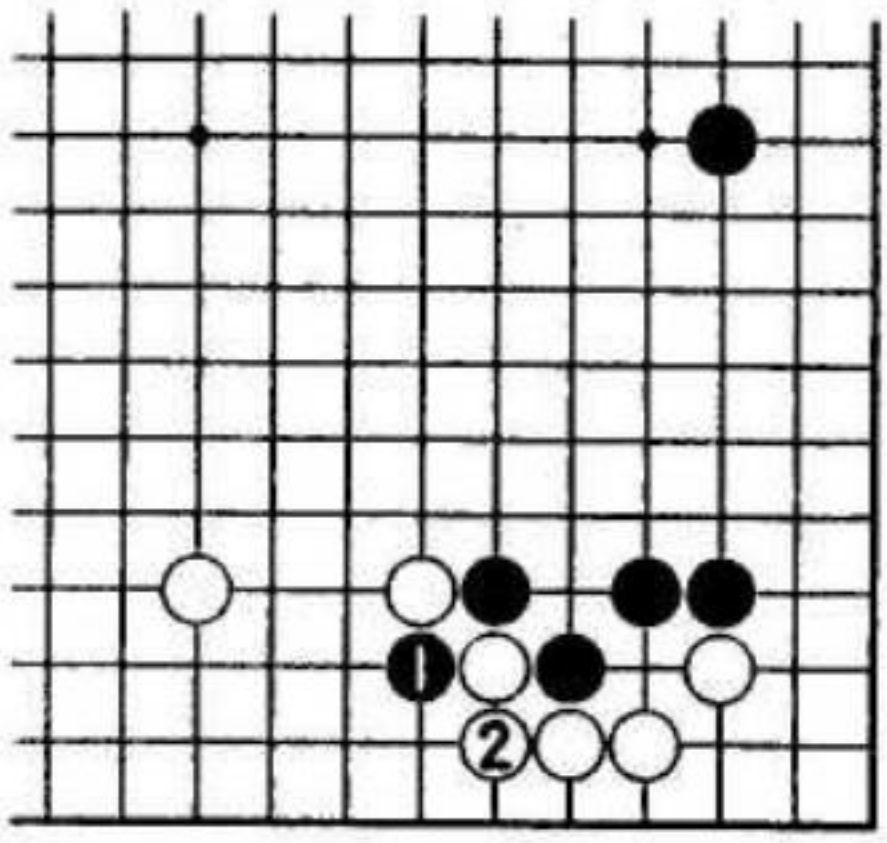
Simply pulling back at 1 is the strongest move. It strengthens one's own position without helping the opponent to strengthen his: that's the knack of fighting. So long as his marked stone is not captured, Black should hold the advantage in the ensuing fight.

Dia. 9: follow-up?

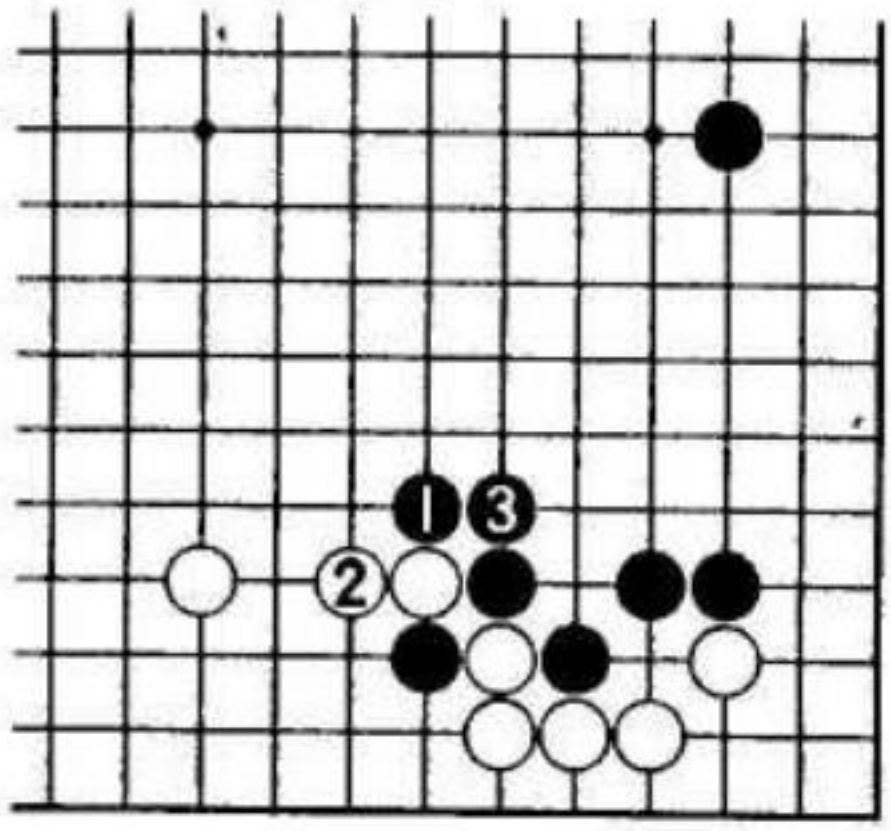
There is nothing wrong with the atari of 1. The problem is what to do after White connects at 2.

Dia. 10: taking gote

If Black ataris at 1, he will be forced to take gote to connect at 3, so -



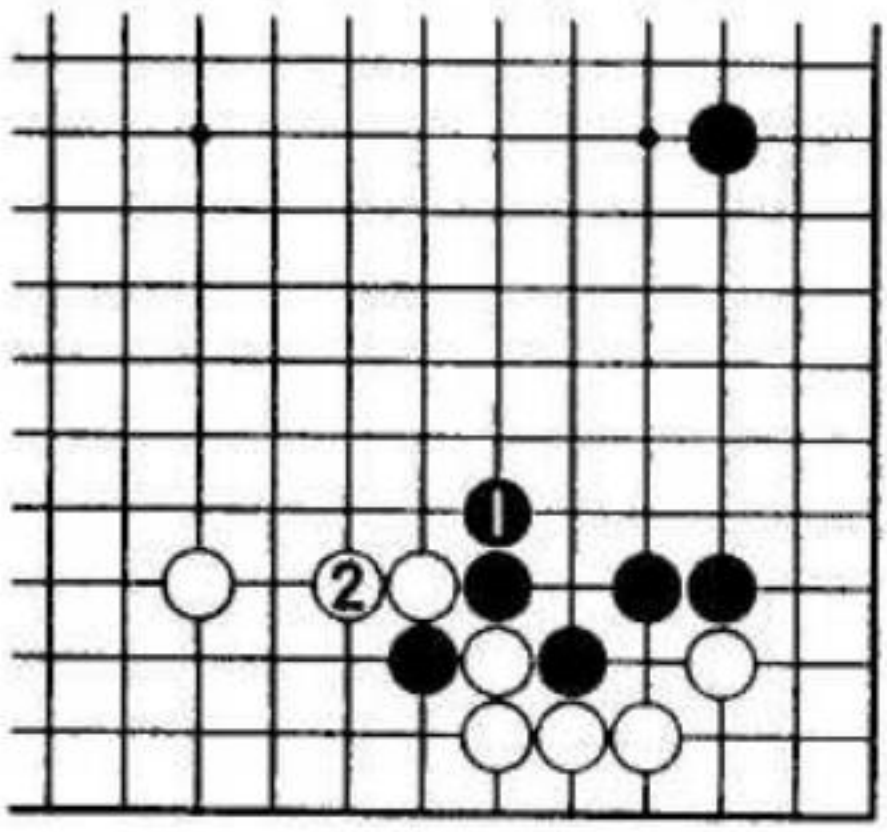
Dia. 9



Dia. 10

Dia. 11: sente

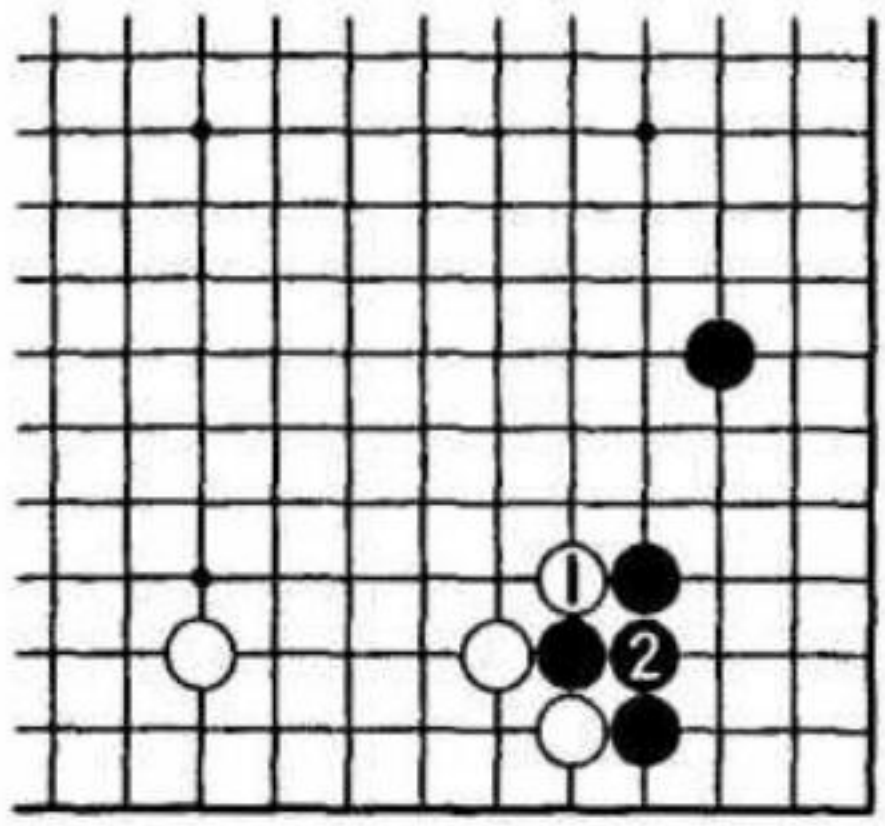
Simply extending at 1 is best. This way White has to defend at 2, letting Black switch elsewhere. A comparison with the previous diagram makes it apparent that Black 1 there only helped White to play a move he wanted to play anyway.



Dia. 11

Dia. 12. temptation

It's very tempting to atari at 1 in this position. You must realize, however, that White 1 helps Black to solidify his corner



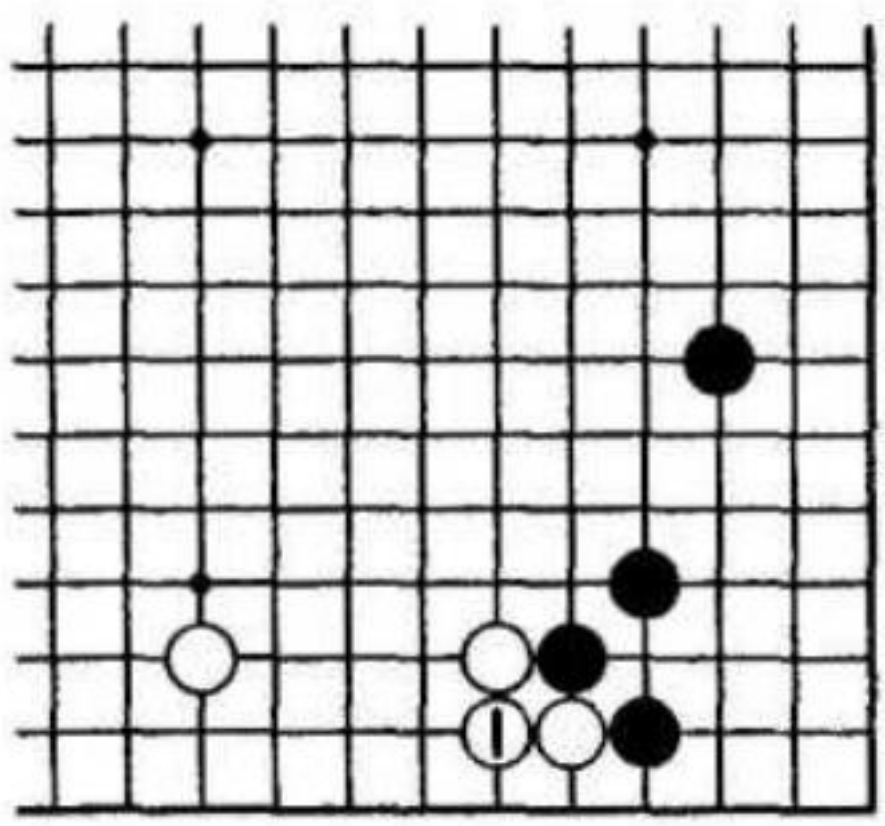
Dia. 12

Dia. 13: White's aim

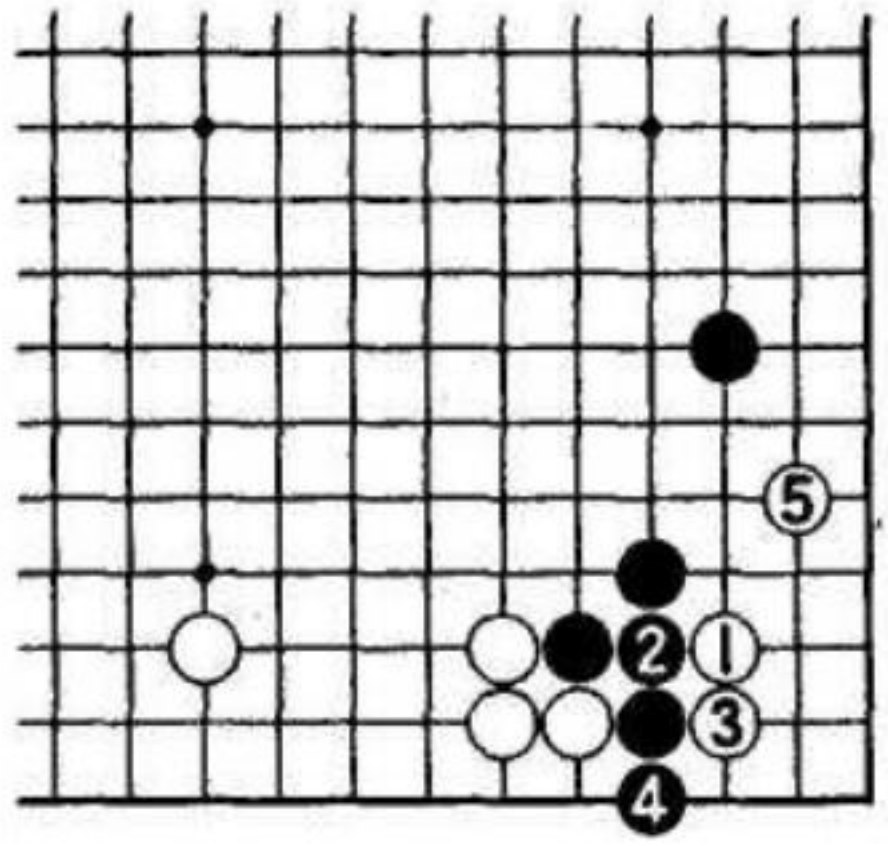
White should simply connect at 1, keeping the atari in reserve. Now he can aim at attacking the corner later.

Dia. 14. corner aji

White has the threat of 1 to 5. Trying to kill White will probably be unreasonable, so Black loses all his corner territory.



Dia. 13



Dia. 14

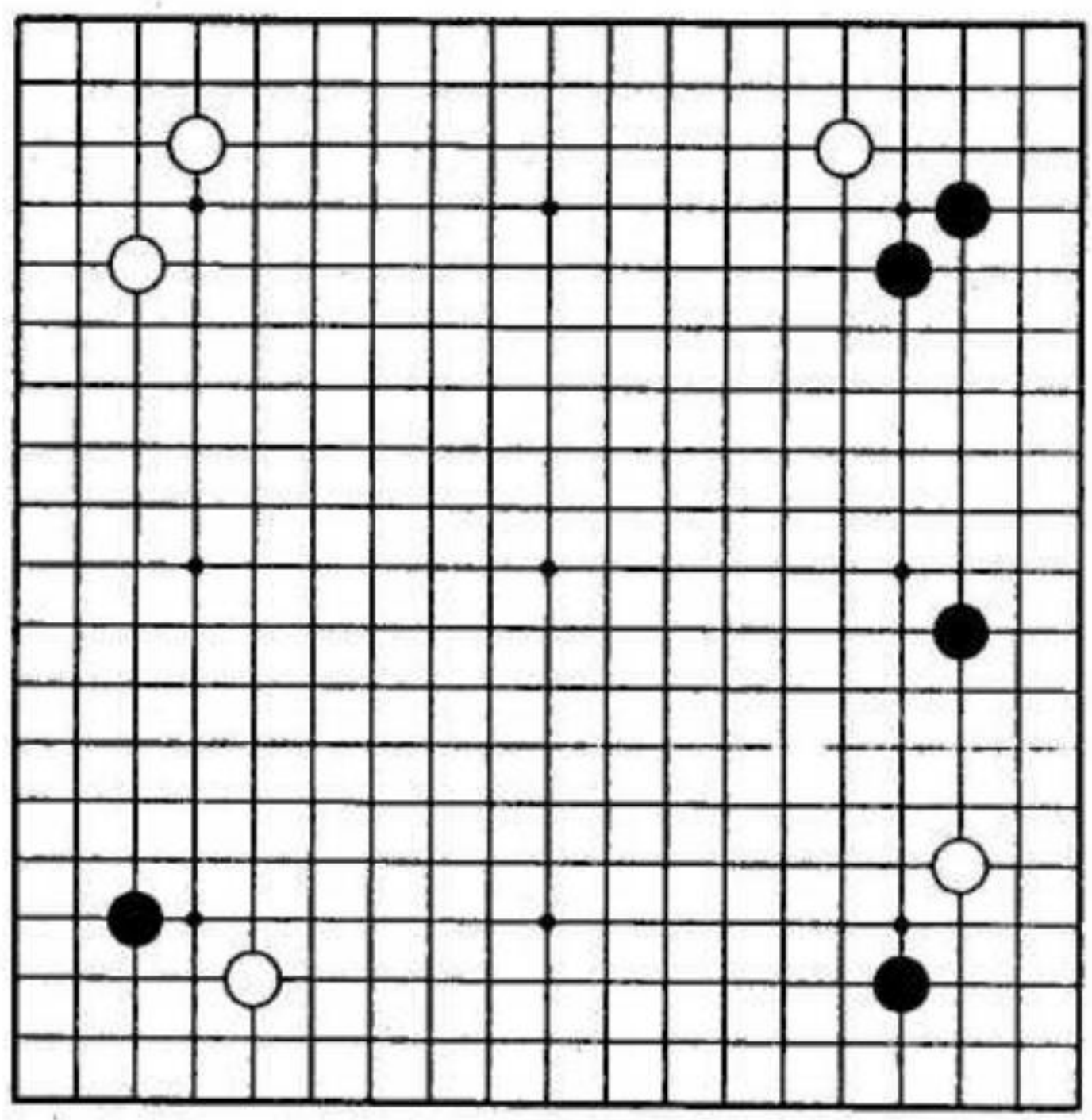
Chapter Three
Strategy

In an actual game you can't isolate local positions: they all have a role to play in your overall strategy. The merits of your moves, the value of outside influence, your tactics - the evaluation of all these elements will depend on their contribution to your whole-board strategy.

Principle 14
Attack the opponent by stealing his base

The question of stability plays a big part in handling groups of stones. You must be careful not to create too many weak groups, as the opponent can seize the initiative and take profit by attacking them. From the attacker's point of view, you must plan your attacks carefully so that you make effective use of your opportunities.

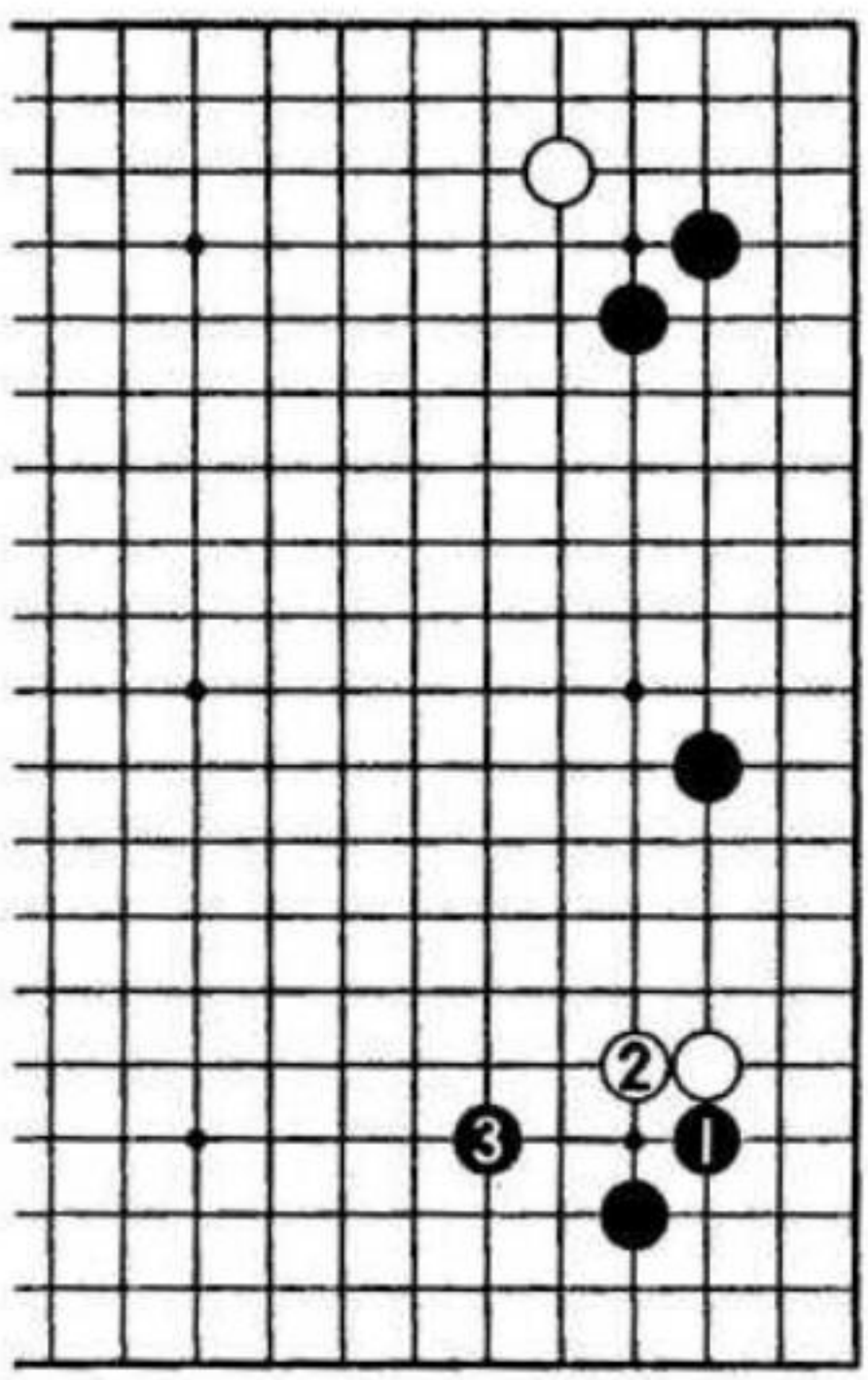
How should Black attack the solitary white stone on the bottom right in the theme diagram?



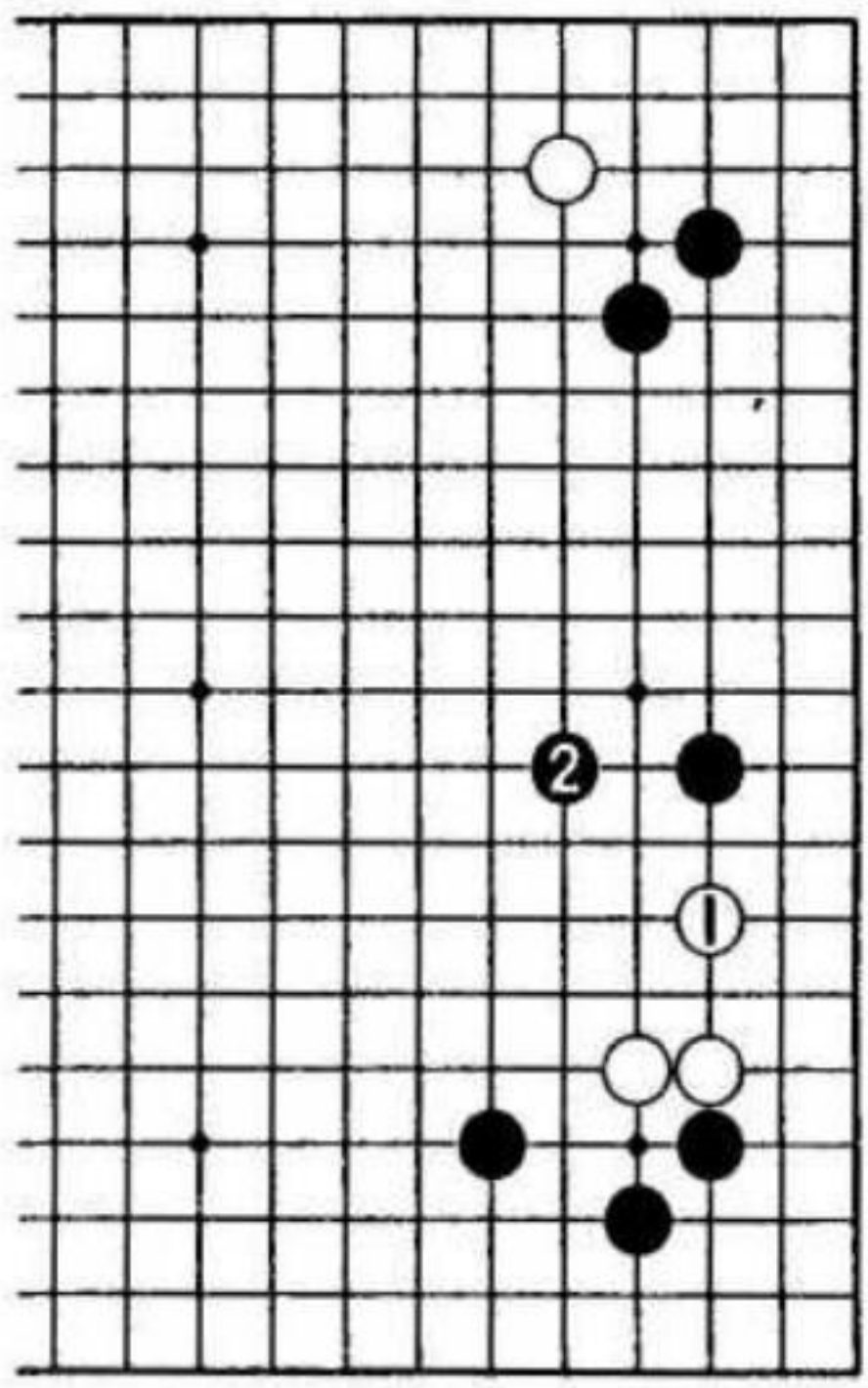
Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: standard attack

Black 1 and 3 are a skilful combination. Black first attaches at 1, preventing White from making a base on the side, then continues his attack with 3.



Dia. 1



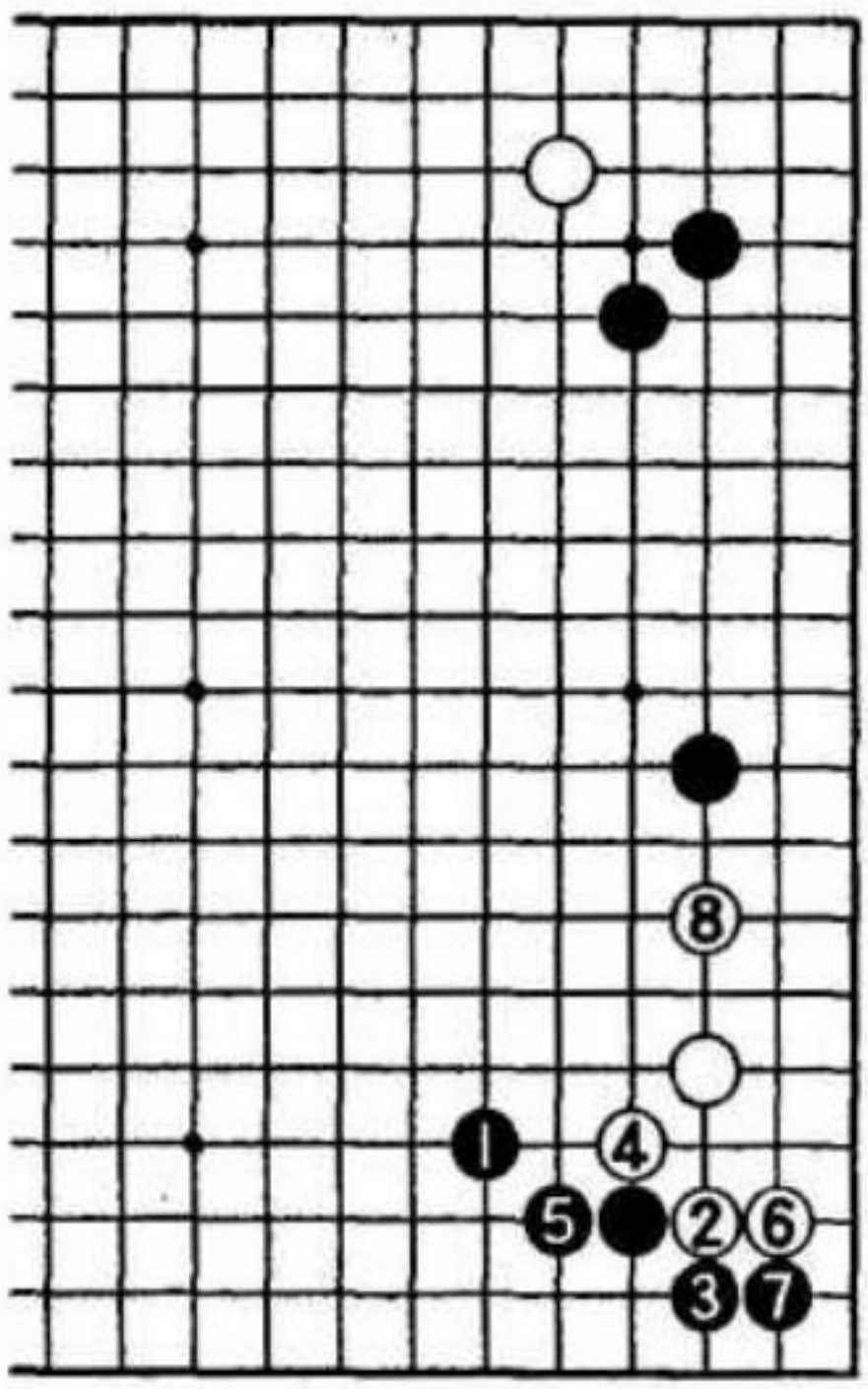
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: insecure

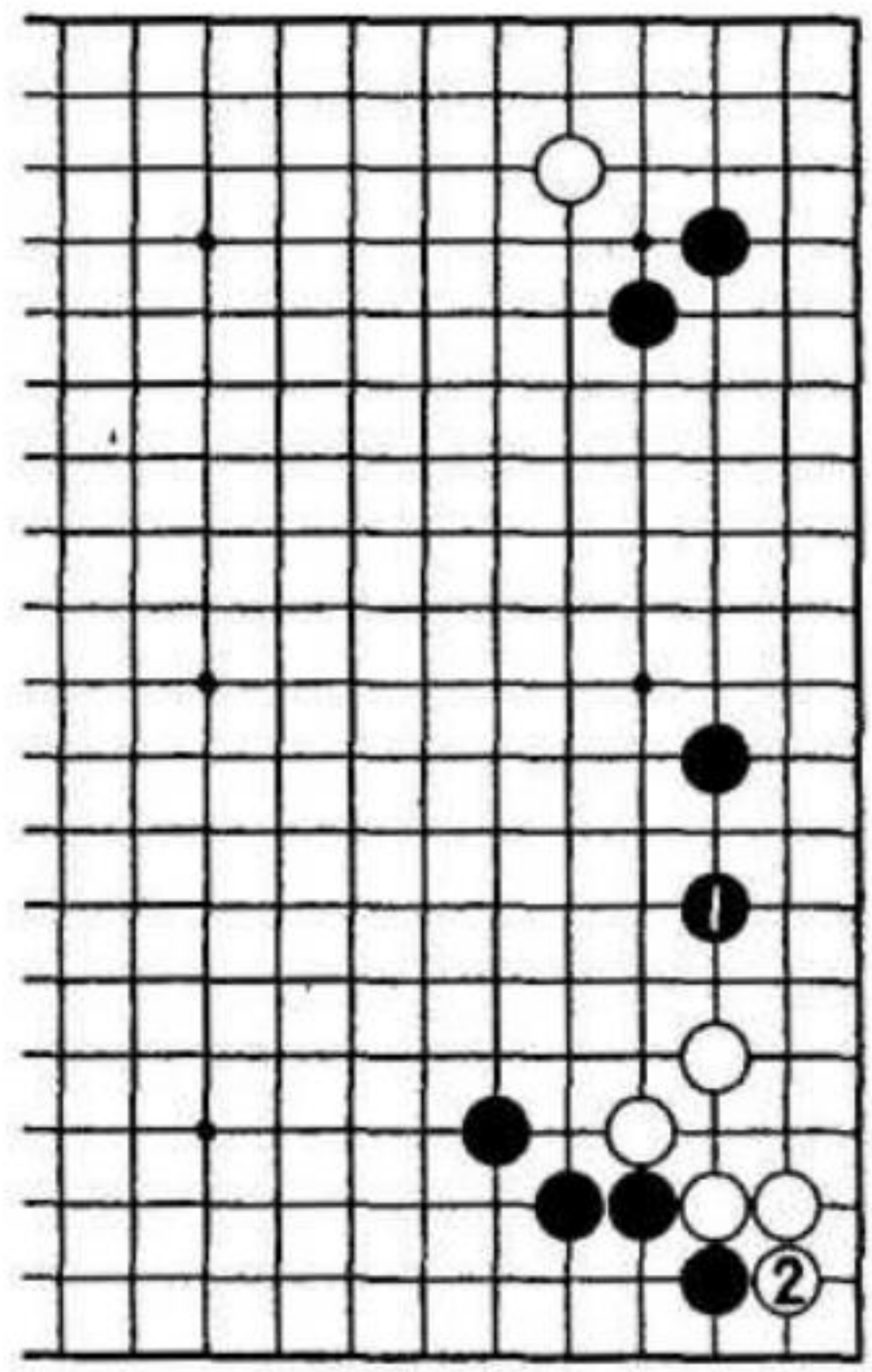
White may hastily try to secure a base with 1, but this is not wide enough to build two eyes. Black continues his attack with 2 and at the same time looks like building a big territory on the upper right side.

Dia. 3: settled

Let's suppose Black neglects to attach and starts with 1. White now has room to build a base in the corner with 2 and 4. Up to 8 his group is more or less settled. It is now immune to attack, so Black will be dissatisfied. Instead of 7 -



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: easy to live

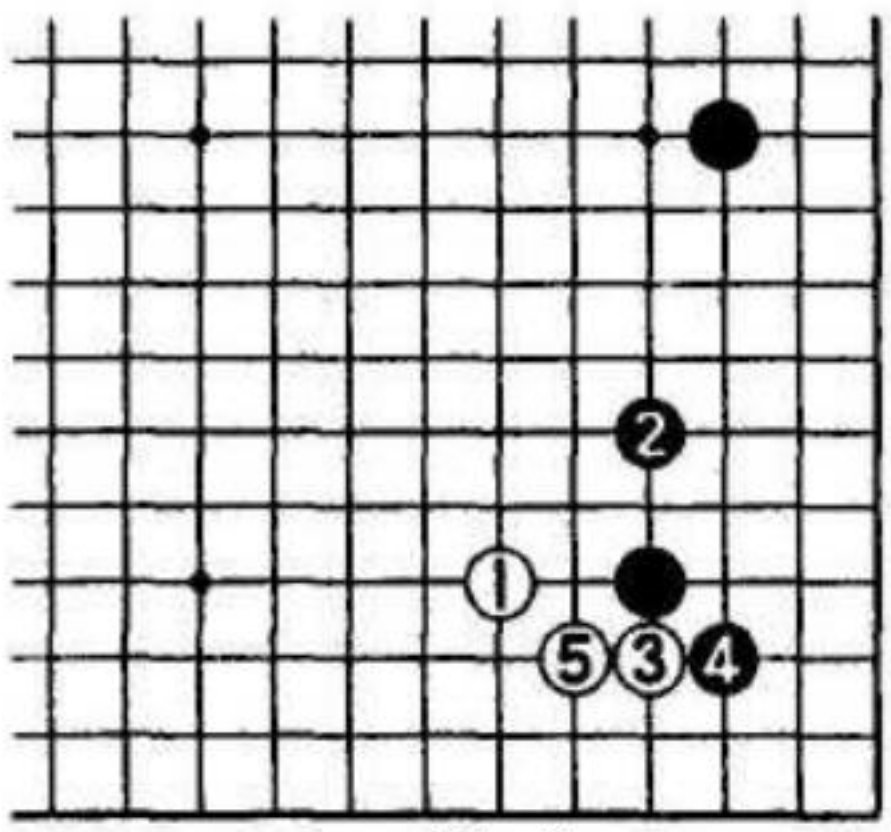
Black might forestall White's extension by playing at 1, but it will be easy for White to make eyes after 2, so Black, can't hope to continue his attack Black has to start by locking up the corner as in *Dia. 1* if he wants to launch a serious attack.

Dia. 5: getting settled

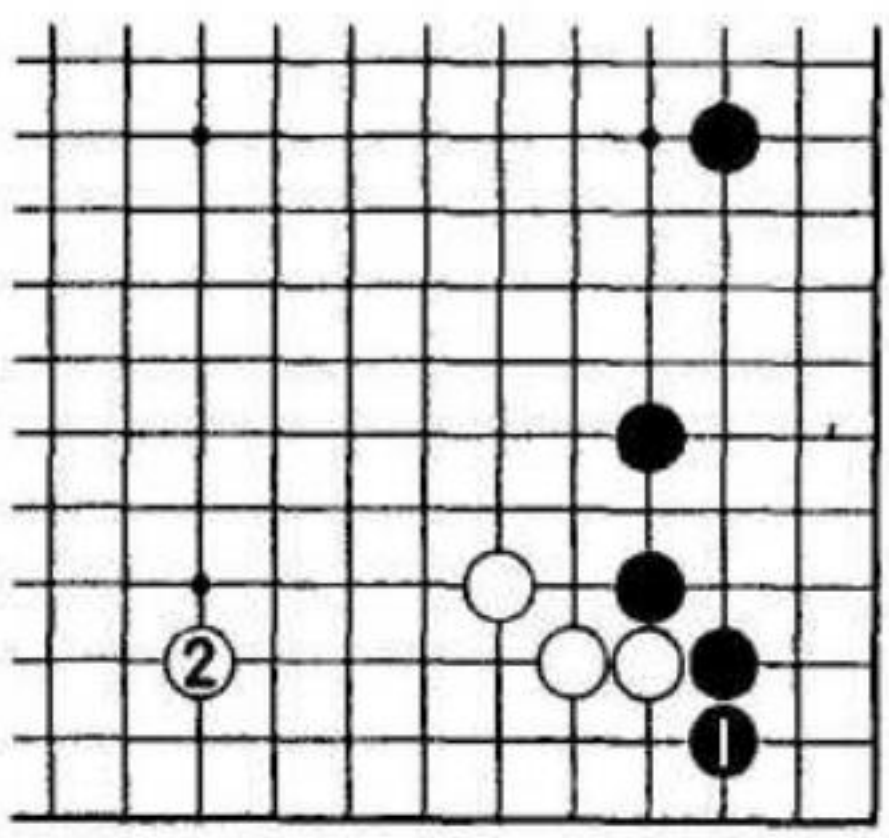
White attaches at 3 when he wants to settle his group. After 5 -

Dia. 6: essential

Descending at 1 is essential. White settles his group by extending to 2. These moves are natural. Instead -



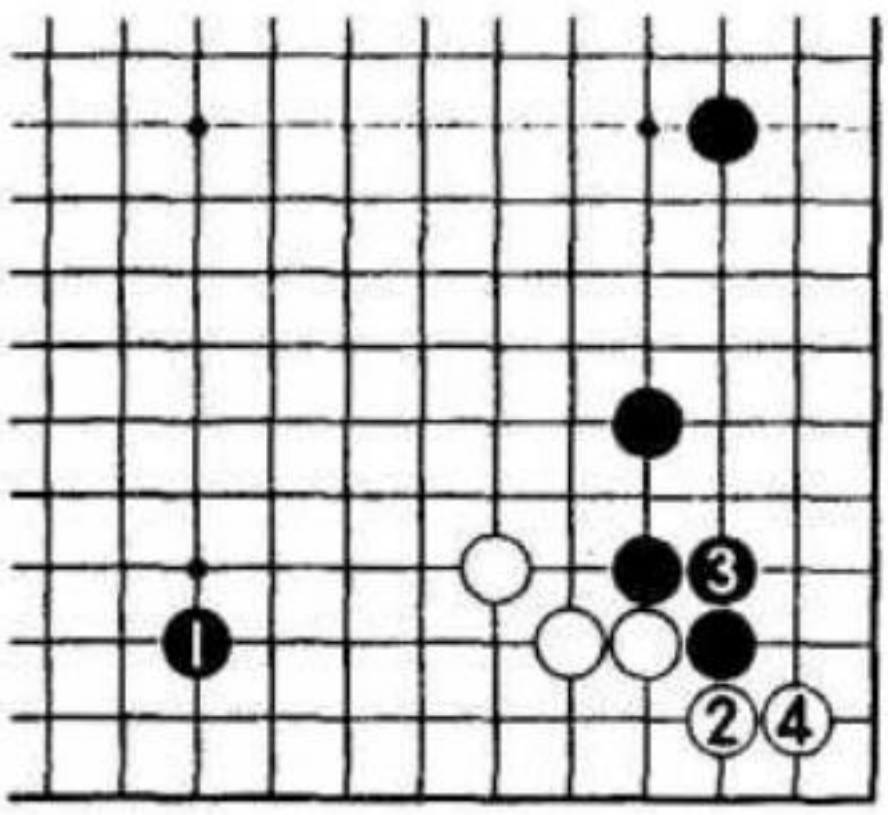
Dia. 5



Dia. 6

Dia. 7: not an attack

What if Black tries to prevent White from extending by playing at 1? This does not constitute an attack White not only secures a base with 2 and 4 but also takes what could have been black territory.



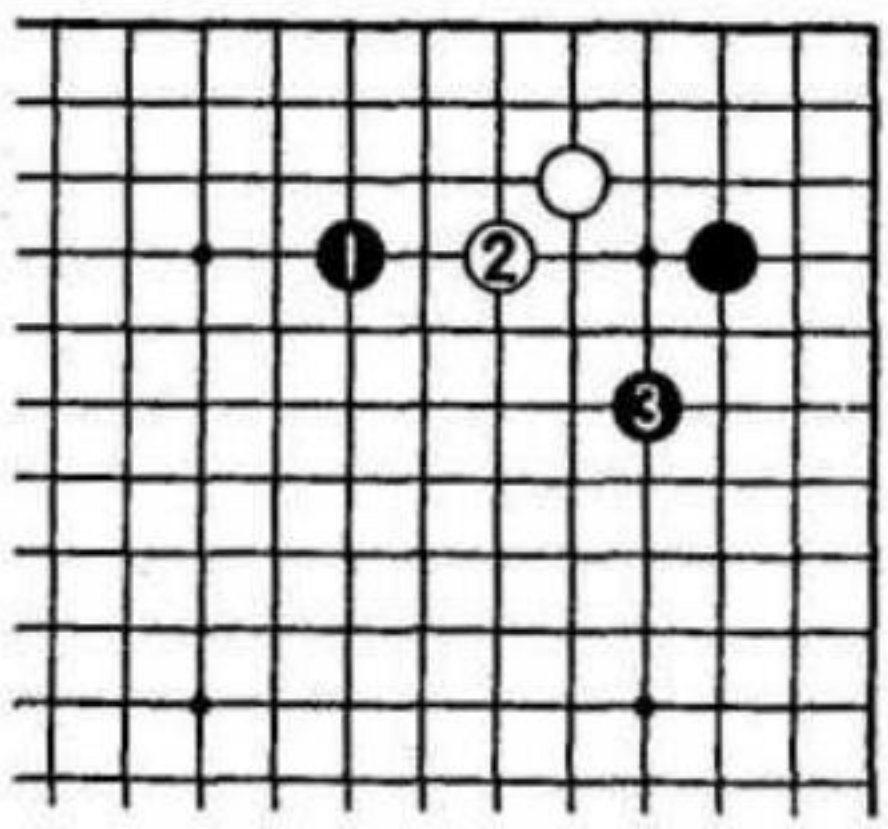
Dia. 7

Dia. 8: an essential move

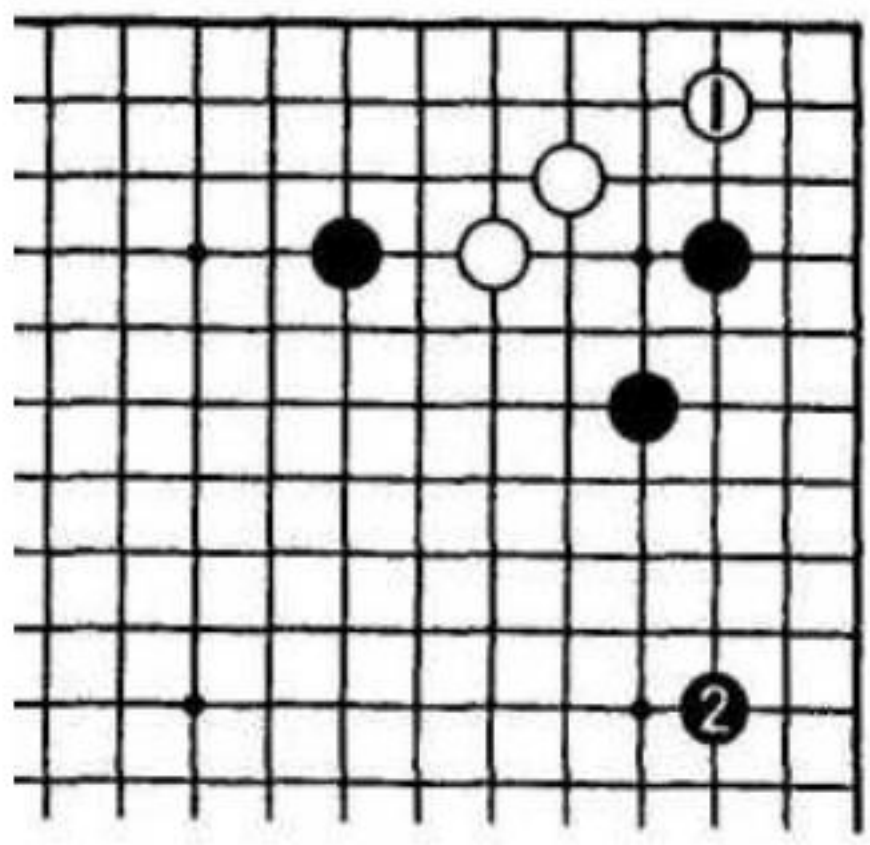
When Black plays 1 and 3, there is a move that White jus
has to make.

Dia. 9: securing a base

Sliding into the corner with 1 stabilize's White's group
The fight comes to a pause when Black extends to 2:



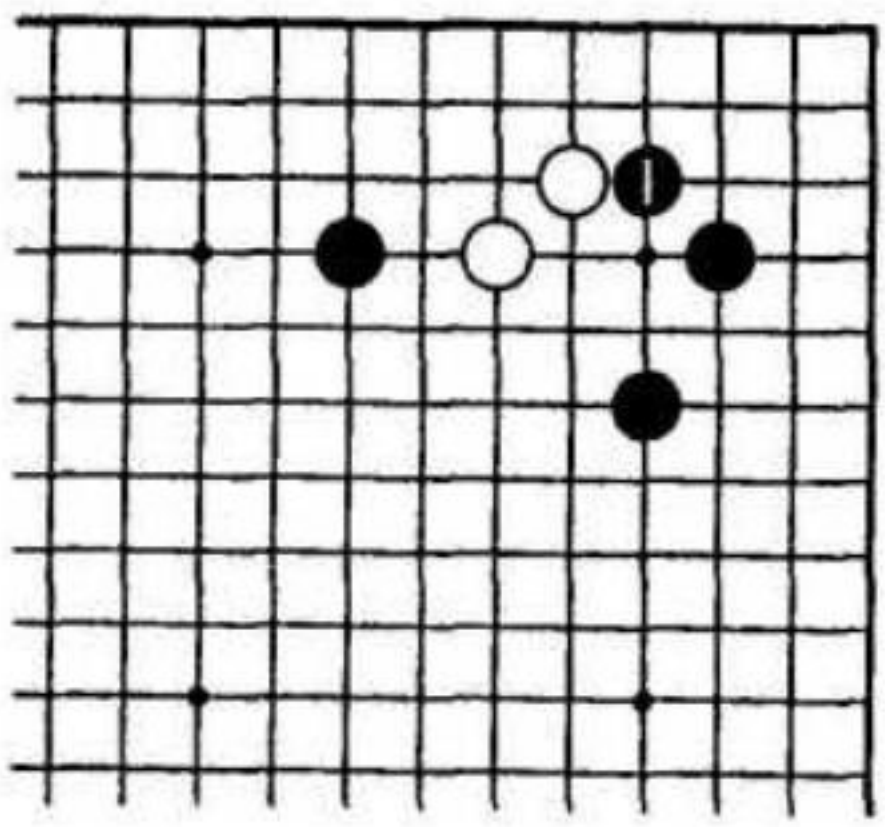
Dia. 8



Dia. 9

Dia. 10: a tough fight

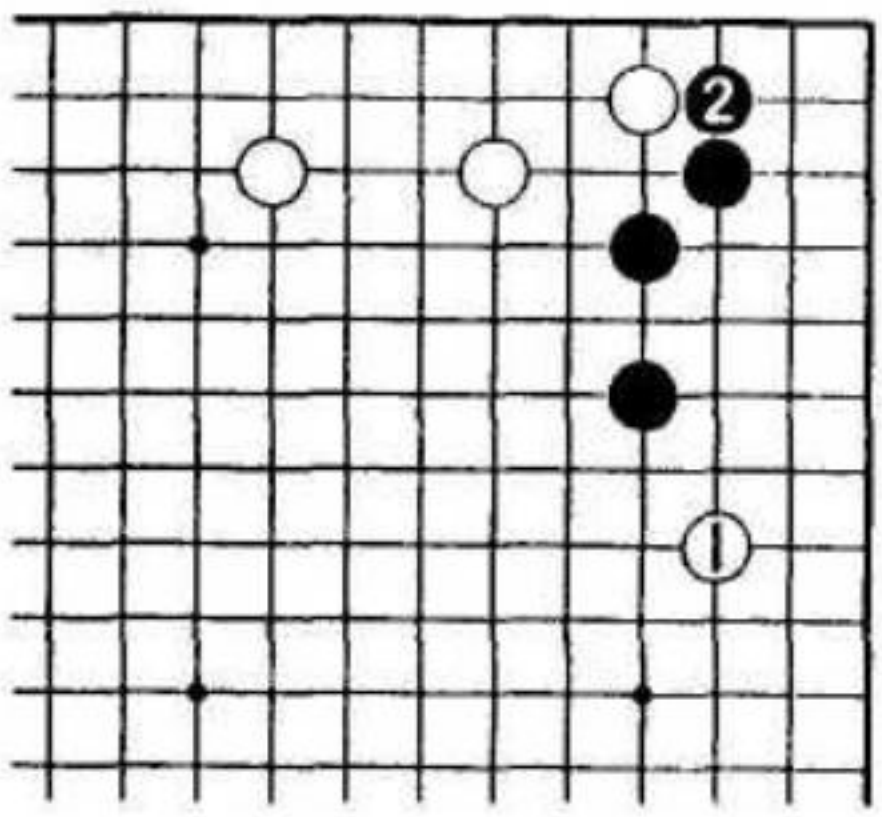
If White omits 1 in *Dia. 9*, Black 1 is severe. Black 1 is
perfect move: it builds territory while robbing White of hi
base.



Dia. 10

Dia. 11: an important block

This shape comes up often in actual play. When White plays 1, blocking at 2 is an important move. The black group is now quite safe.



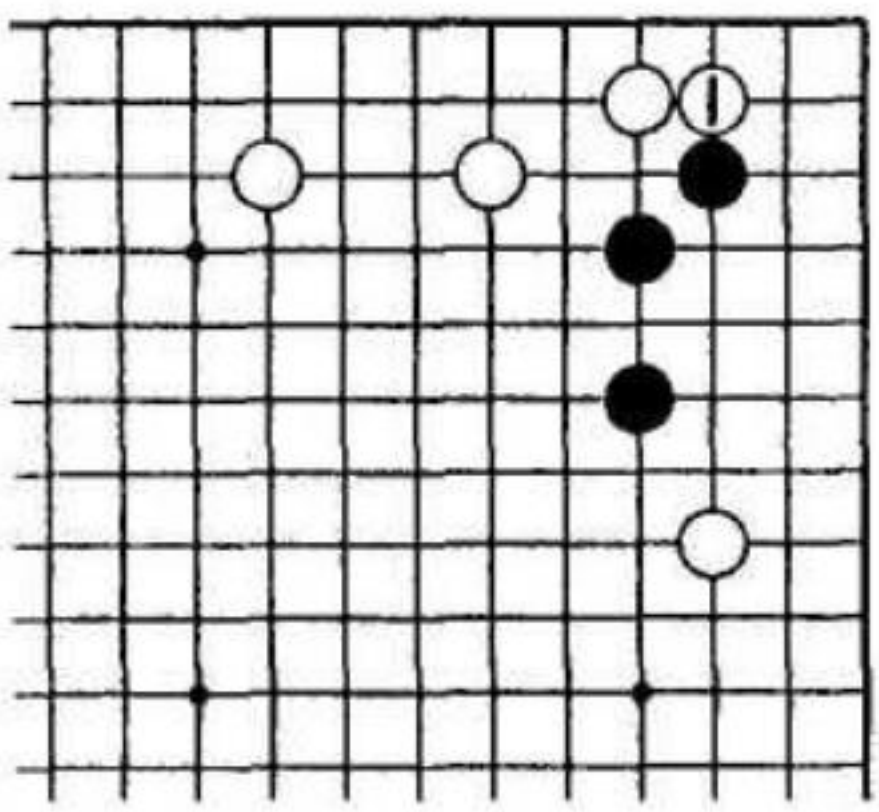
Dia. 11

Dia. 12: floating

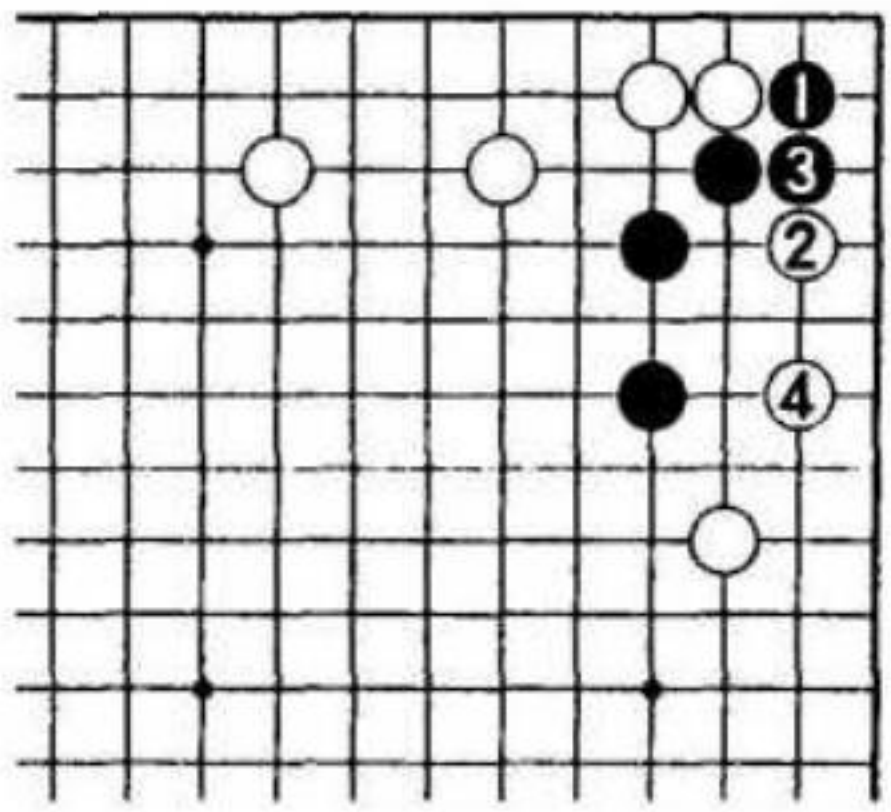
If Black neglects to block in the corner, the room he has to build a base will be severely reduced by White 1. His group is now floating.

Dia. 13: too late

Blocking at 1 is now too late: White can attack with 2 and 4, so Black can't secure a base.



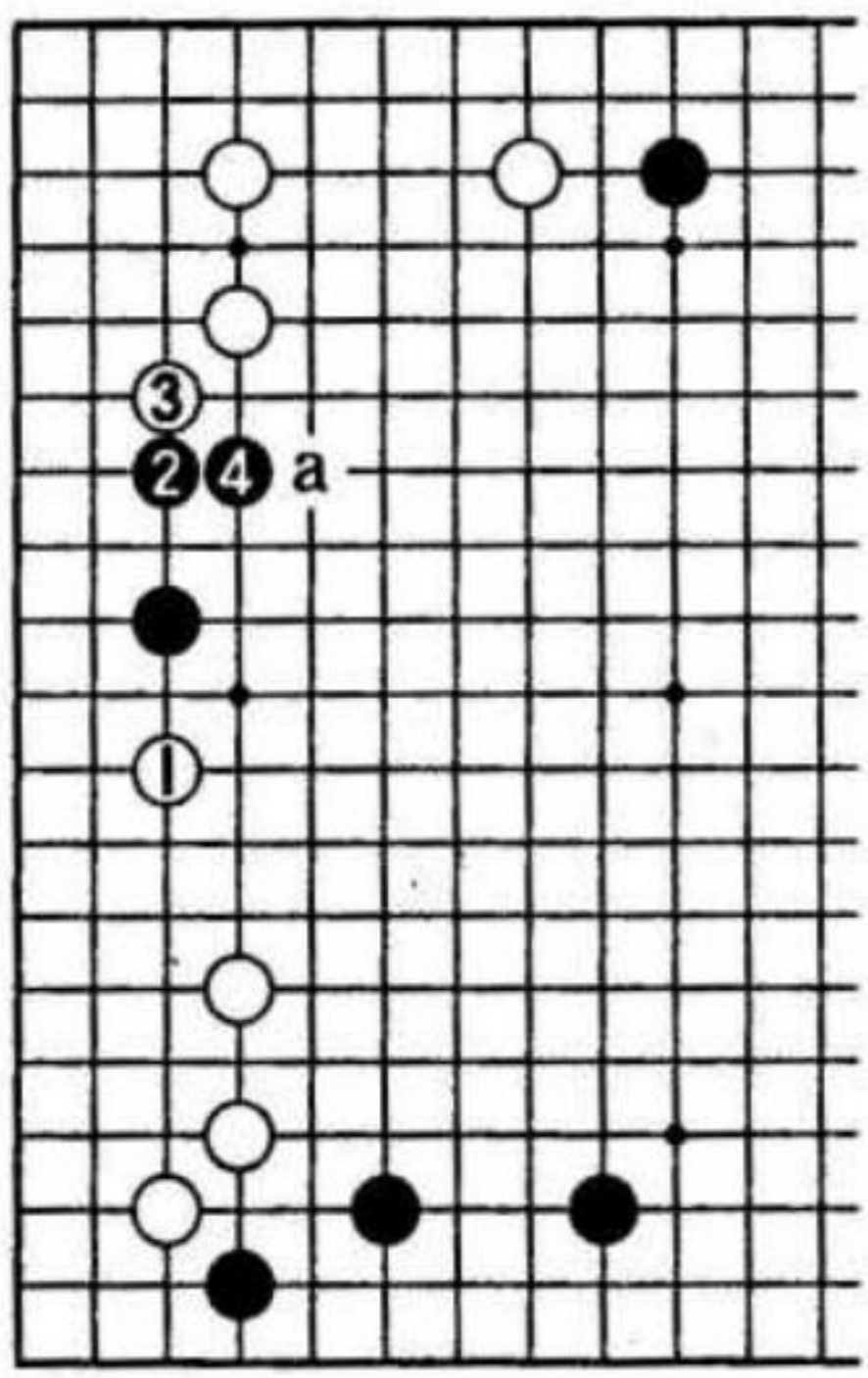
Dia. 12



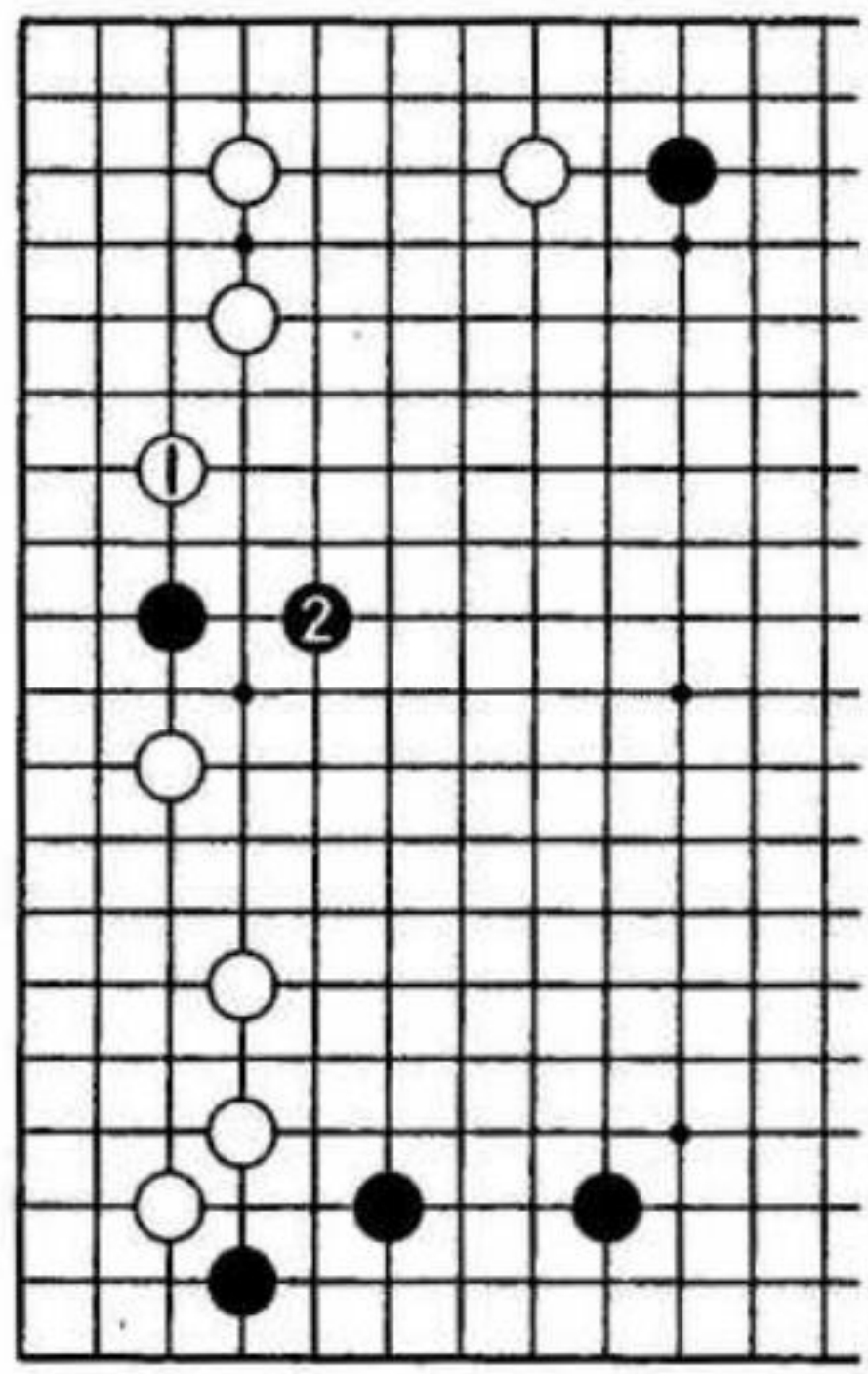
Dia. 13

Dia. 14: narrow, but ...

When White attacks at 1, Black has room for only a one-space extension, so he is dissatisfied. Even so, this is a big move, as it helps to stabilize the group. If White 3, Black plays 4 or 'a' and more or less has a base.



Dia. 14



Dia. 15

Dia. 15: target for attack

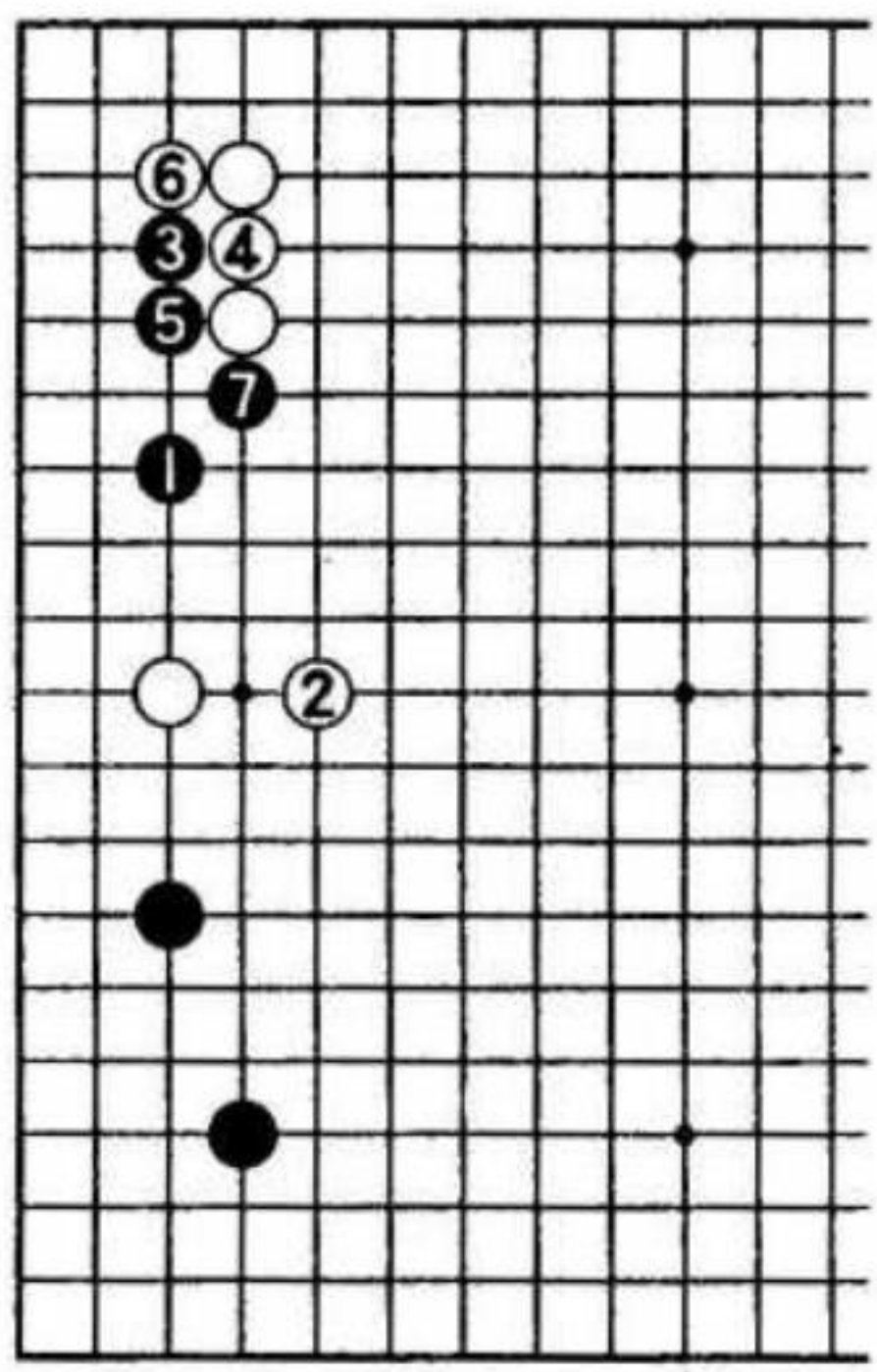
If Black lets White play another move, then he can't get any base at all on the side. His floating group presents White with a good target for attack It will be quite a burden to look after.

Dia. 16: slack

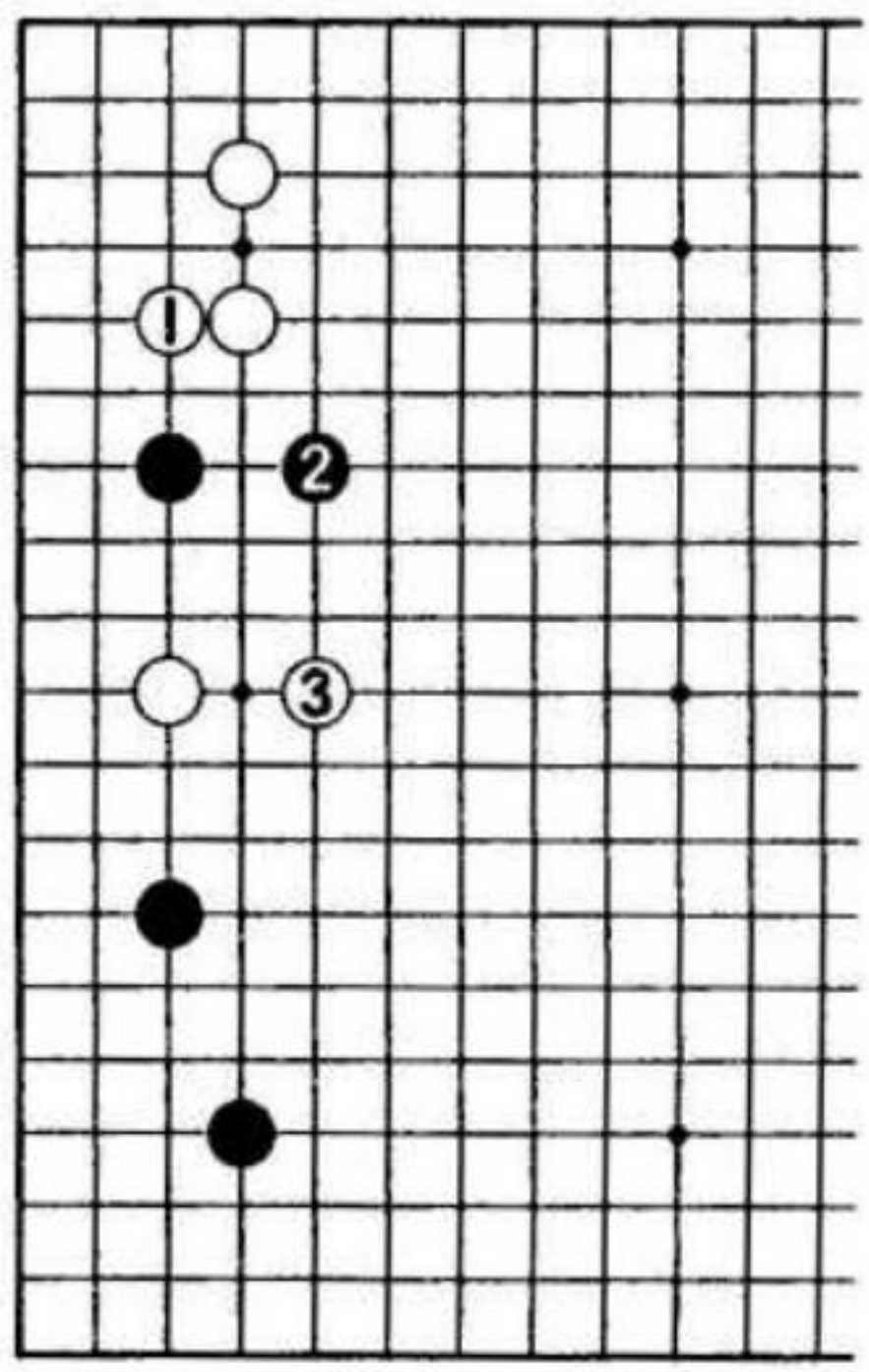
White 2 is a peaceful answer to Black's invasion at 1, but it looks a little slack Black burrows into the corner with 3 and builds a base up to 7. Instead of 2, White should look for a more attacking move.

Dia. 17: attack

White descends at 1 in order to prevent Black from building a base. This is not a defensive move but an offensive one. After 2, White 3 now becomes an attacking move, in contrast to 2 in *Dia. 16.*



Dia. 16

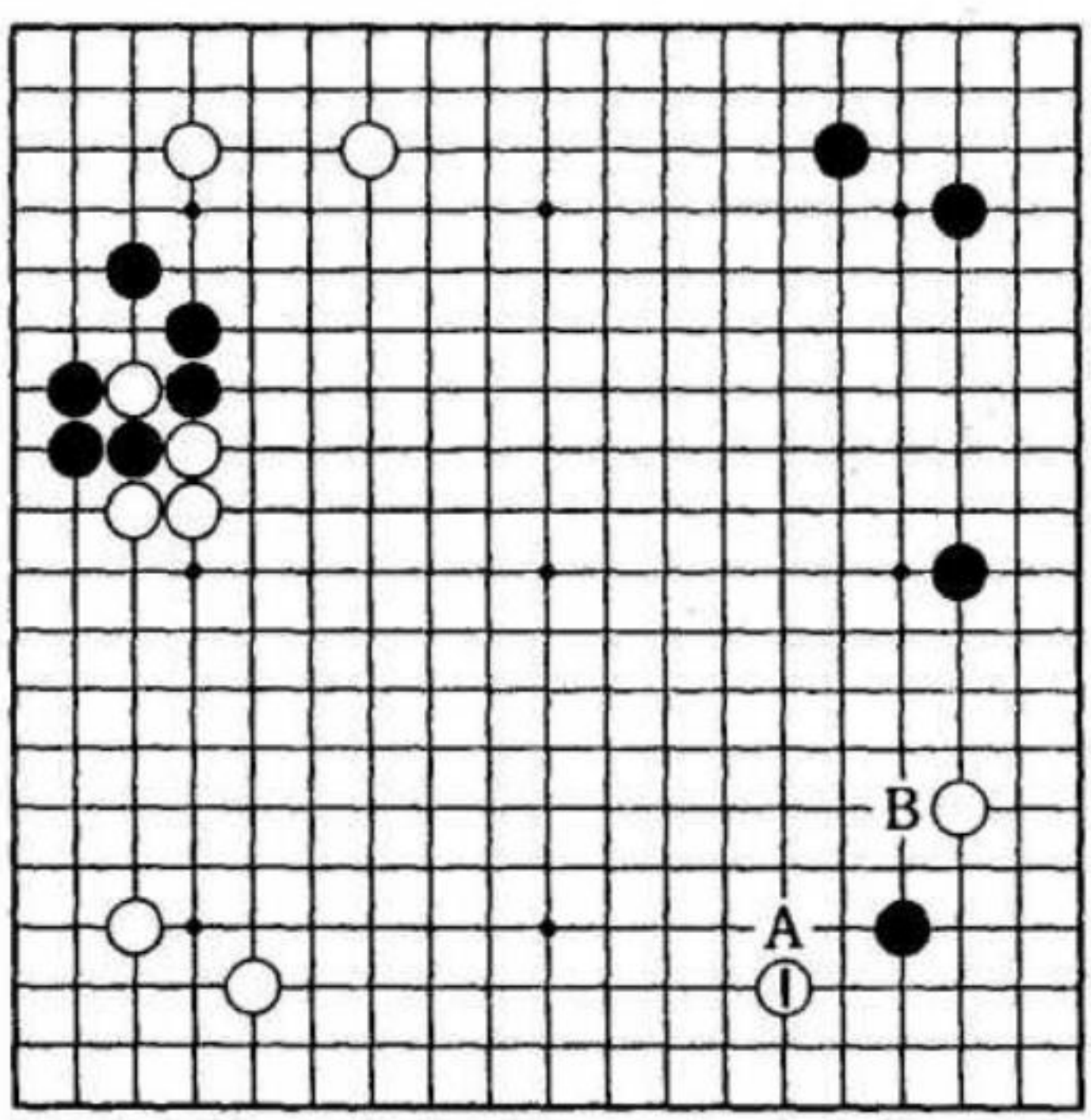


Dia. 17

Principle 15
Don't attach against weak stones

Contact moves make one's own stones stronger, but in the process they also help the opponent to strengthen himself. It therefore makes sense to attach against the opponent's stones when you have a weak group yourself, but when you are attacking it is counterproductive.

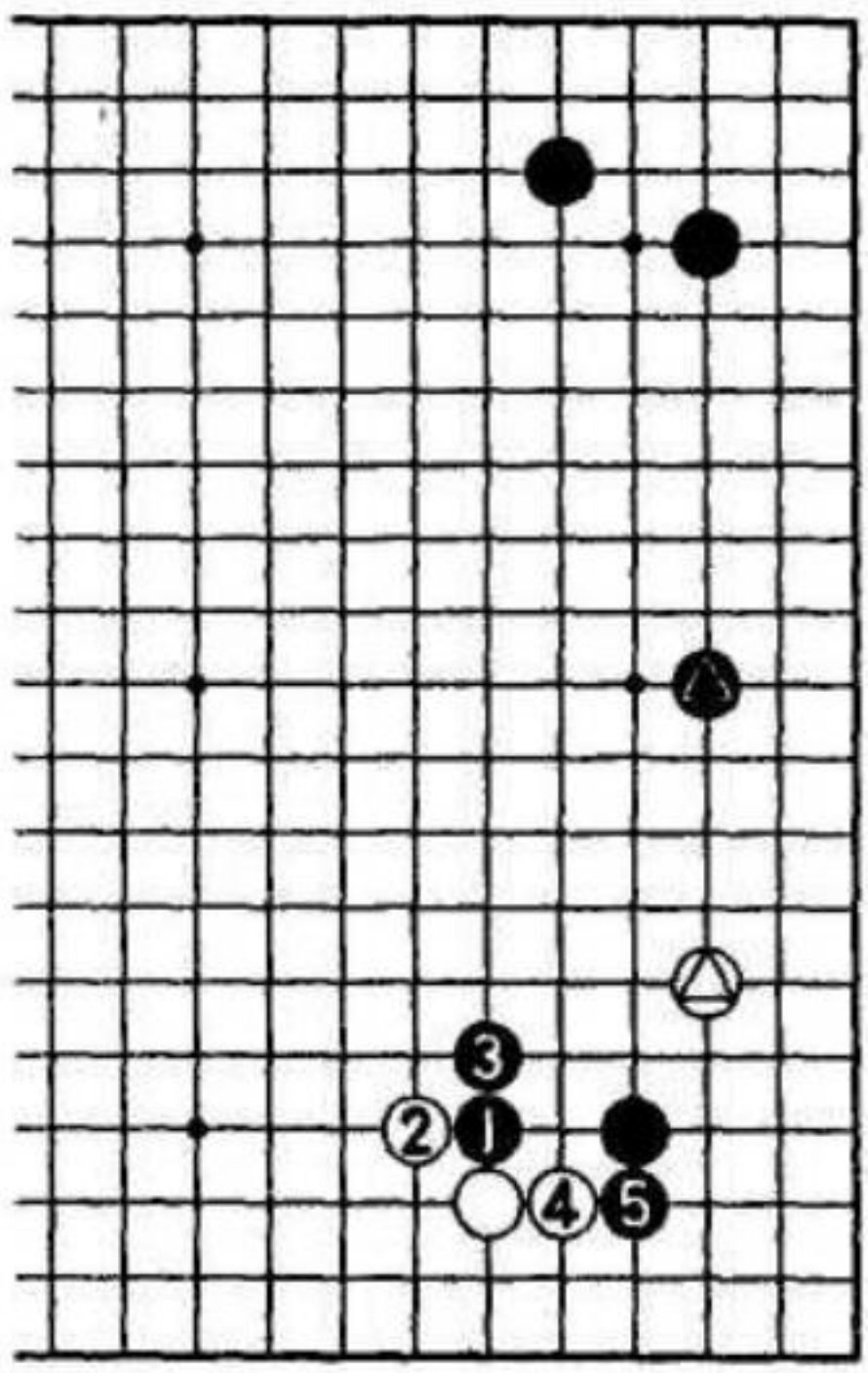
White had just played the double approach move of 1. Where should Black attach, A or B, if he wants to strengthen his star-point stone?



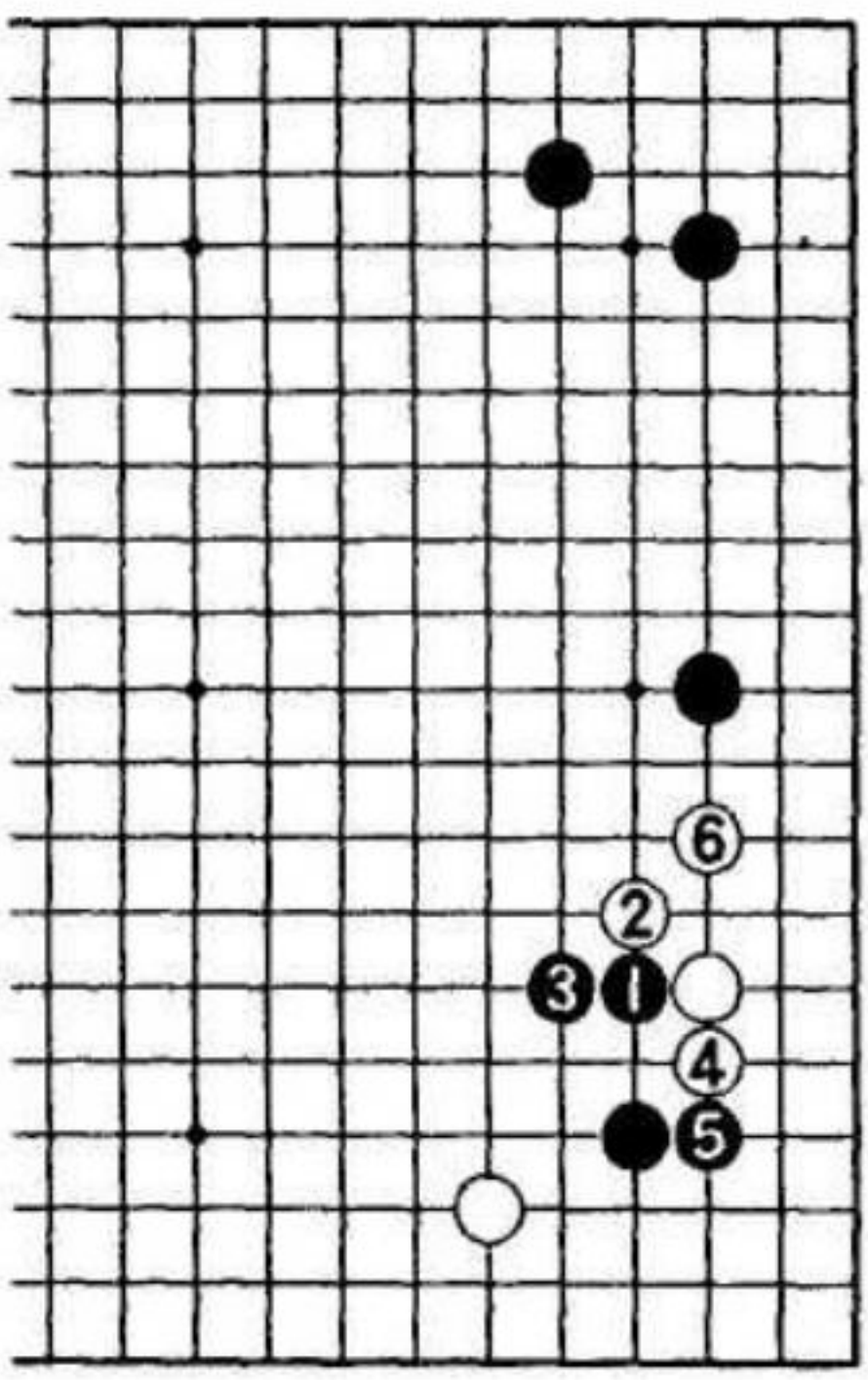
Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: attach against the stronger stone

When Black has the marked stone in place, he wants to attack the marked white stone. He therefore attaches at 1, which avoids strengthening the stone he wants to attack. He strengthens his own group up to 5 and hopes to direct this strength against the marked stone.



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2: wrong direction

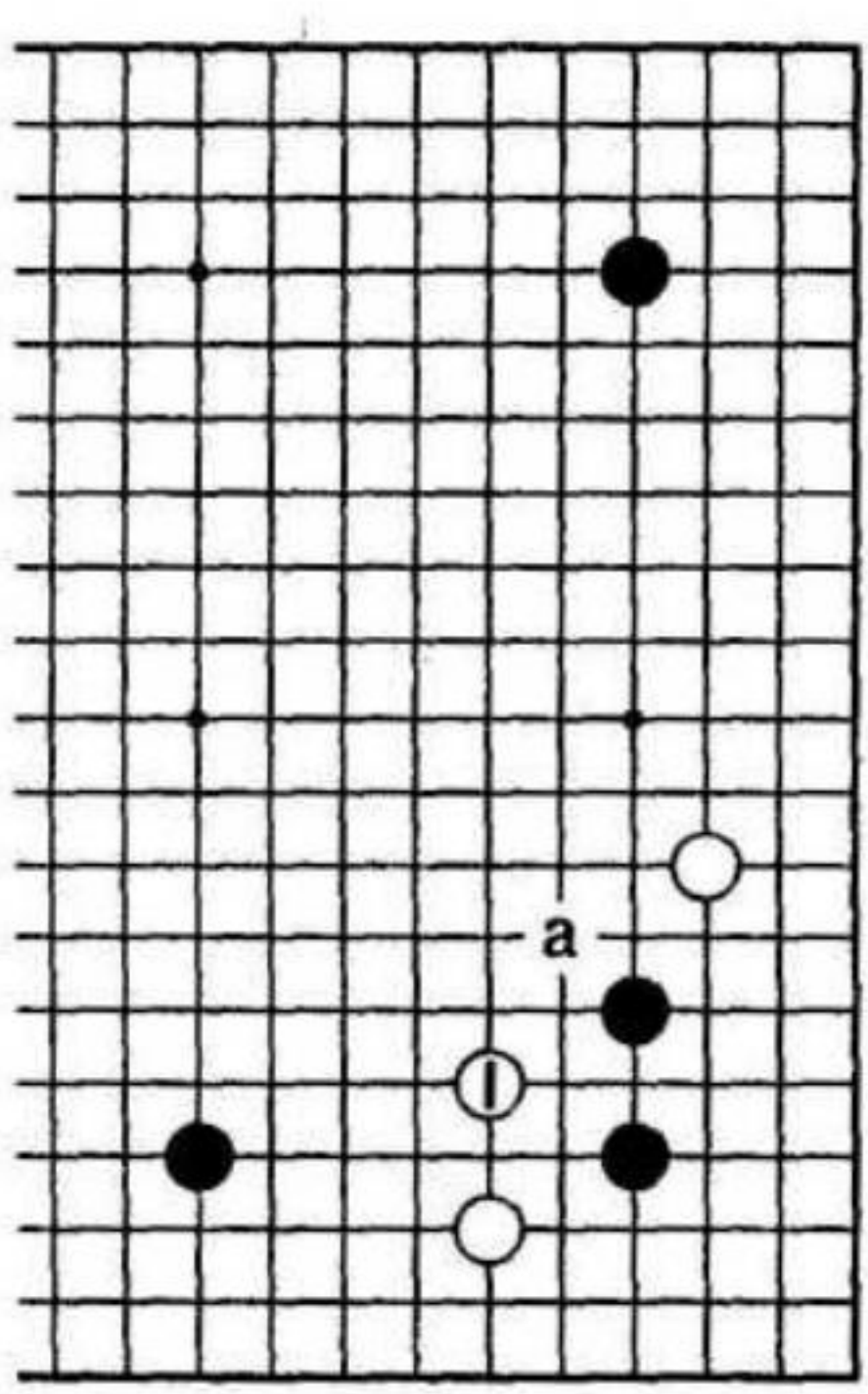
Black 1 is a mistake in direction. Attaching against this weak stone helps White to strengthen it with 2 to 6, which secure a base on the side.

Dia. 3: keep White separated

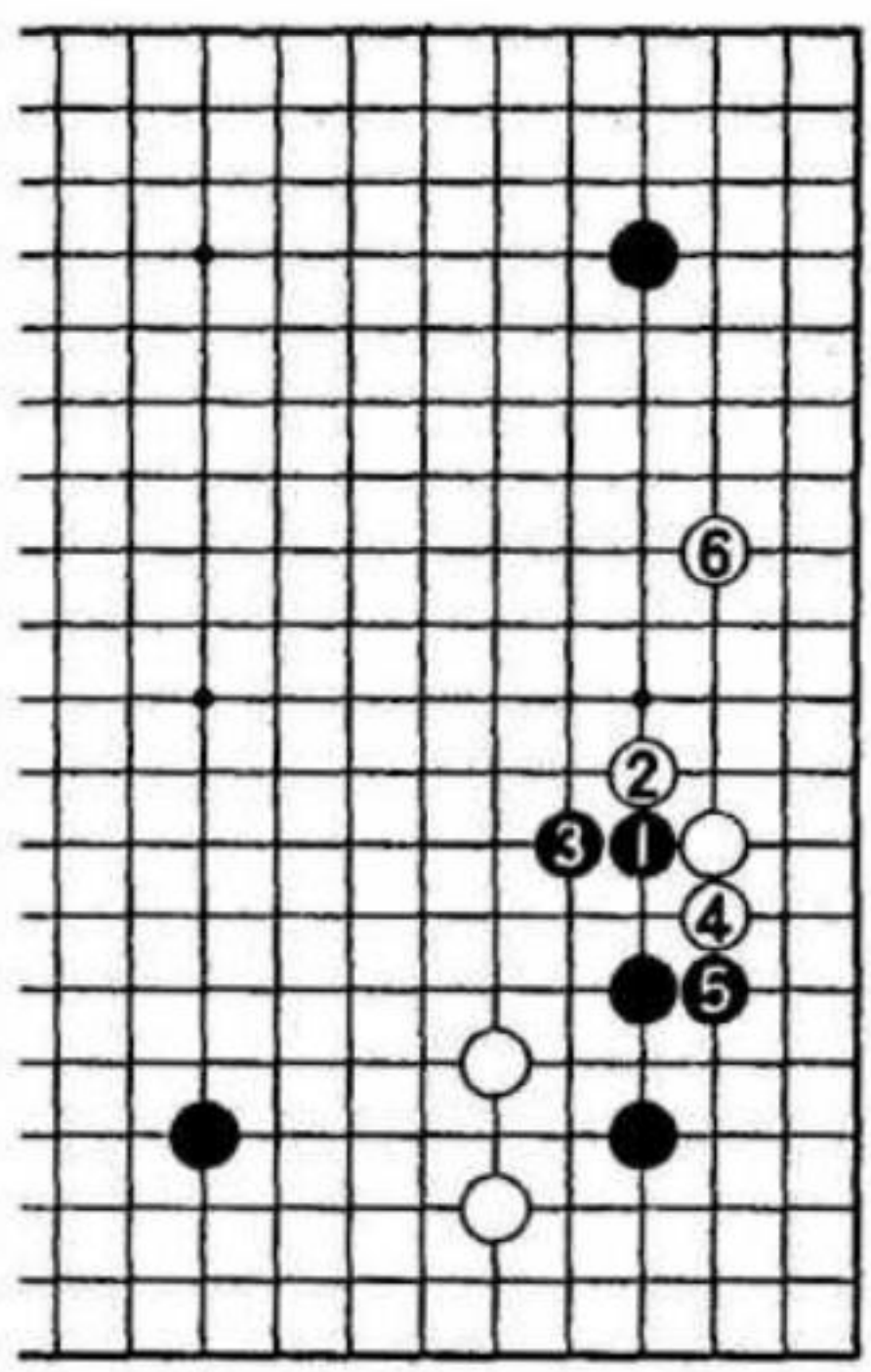
White has just jumped to 1. Permitting White to seal him in with 'a' would be unbearable, so Black has to do something. What is the best way of keeping White's forces separated?

Dia. 4: giving White good shape

Black 1 and 3 certainly keep the opposing forces split up but at the cost of giving White good shape on the side. This is dubious. Black will have to continue with a really effective attack against the two white stones at the bottom to make the books balance.



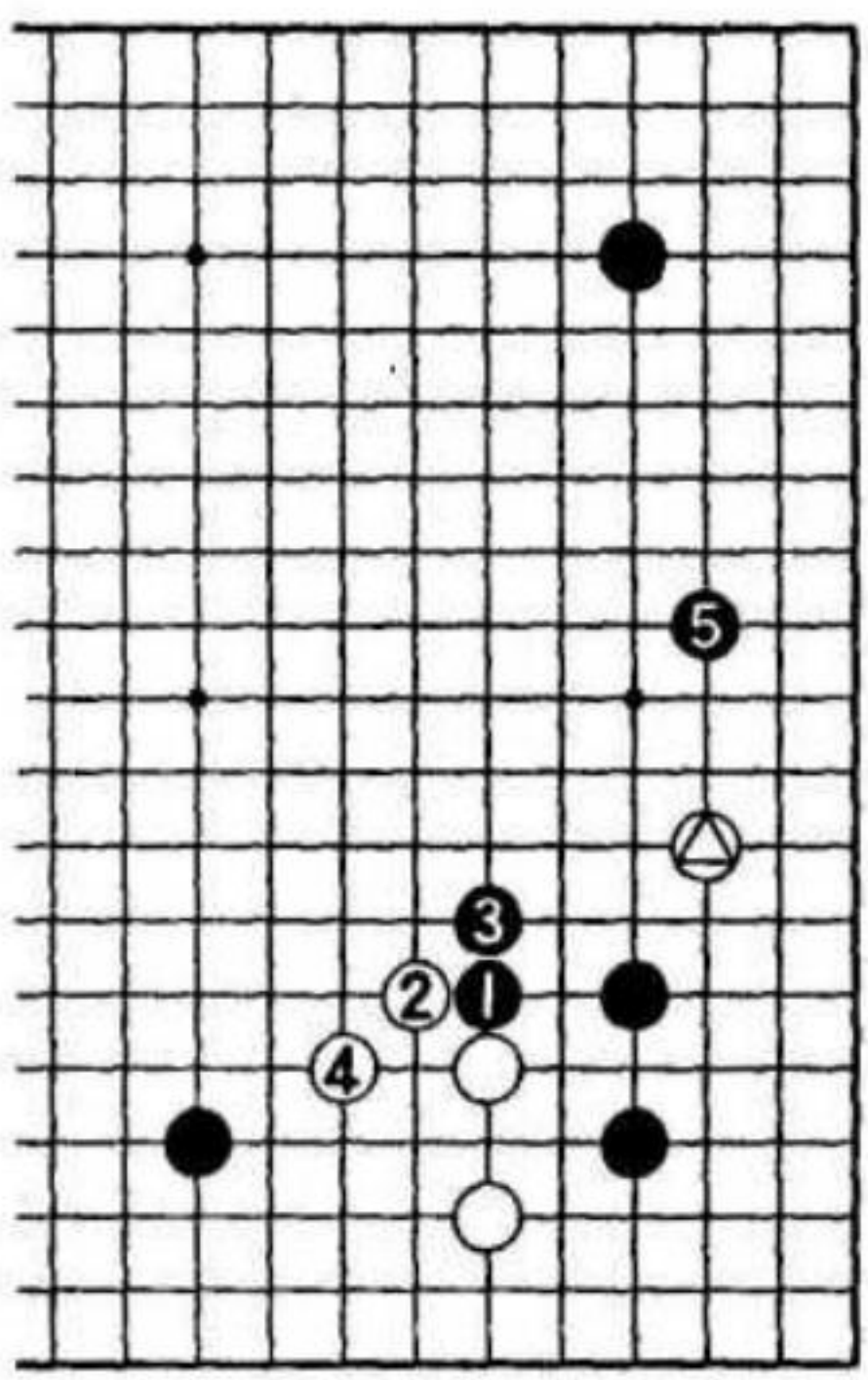
Dia. 3



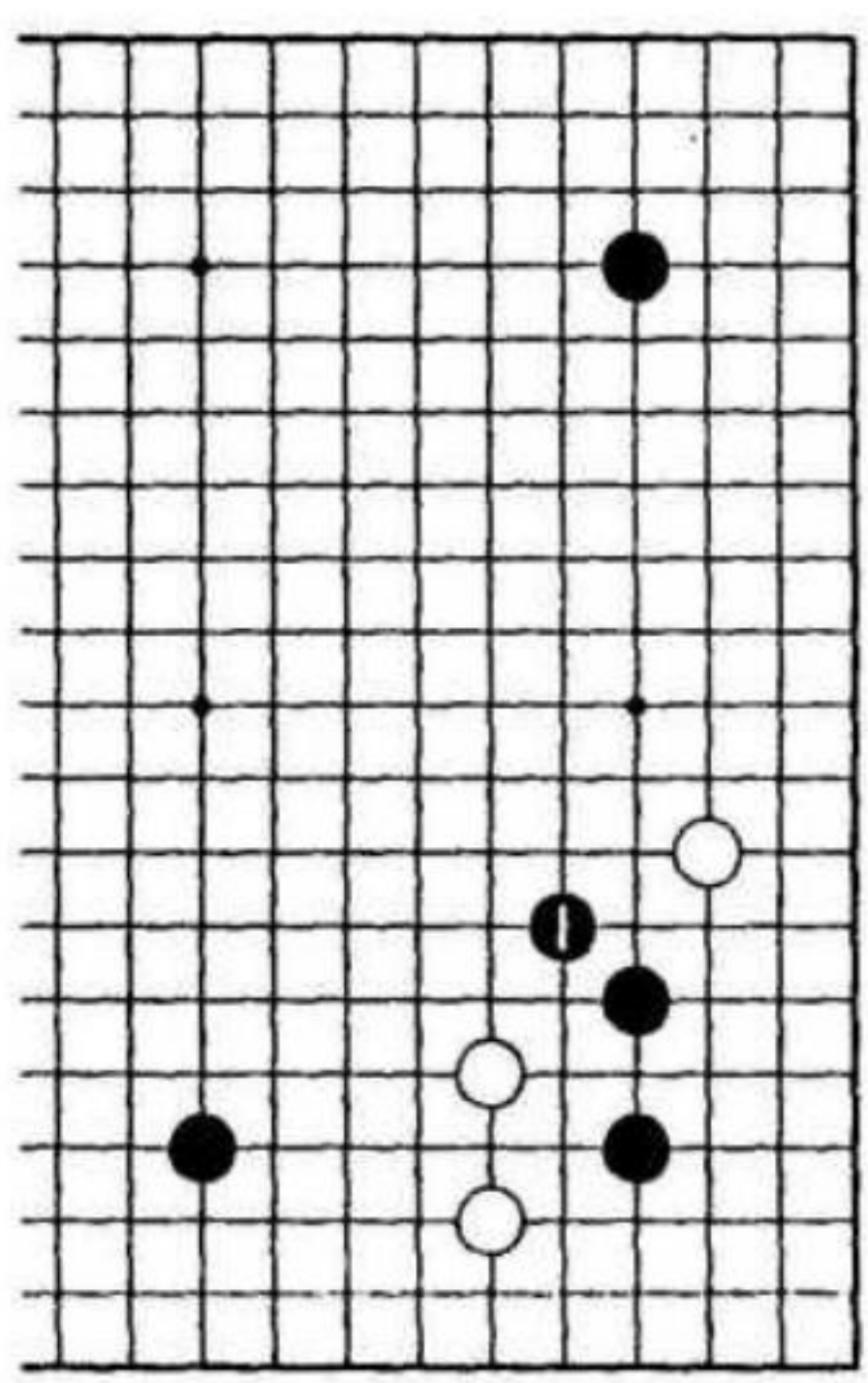
Dia. 4

Dia. 5: going the other way

Black 1 follows the principle of not attaching against a weak stone. After extending at 3, Black attacks the marked stone with the pincer of 5. That's fine as far as the right side is concerned, but it is a pity that Black has to strengthen the other white group. His attack with 5 will have to go very well to get compensation for this.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

Dia. 6: don't attach at all

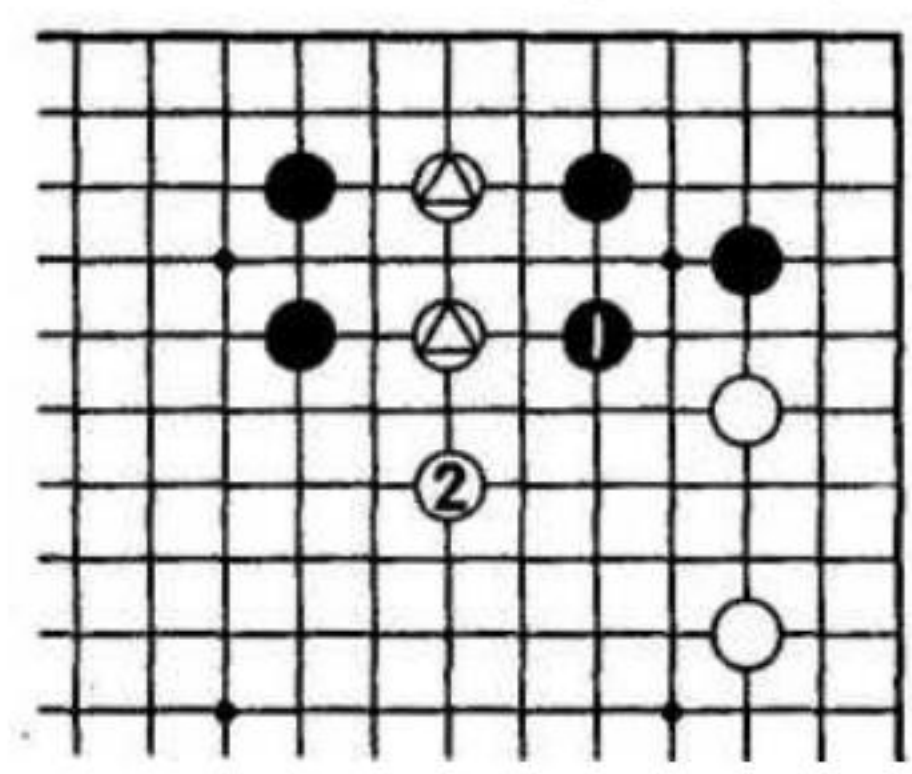
Actually White would like to keep open the option of attacking both white positions. In that case, the answer is not to attach against either. Simply moving out with 1 is correct. This quiet-looking diagonal move is actually the strongest move.

Dia. 7. commonplace

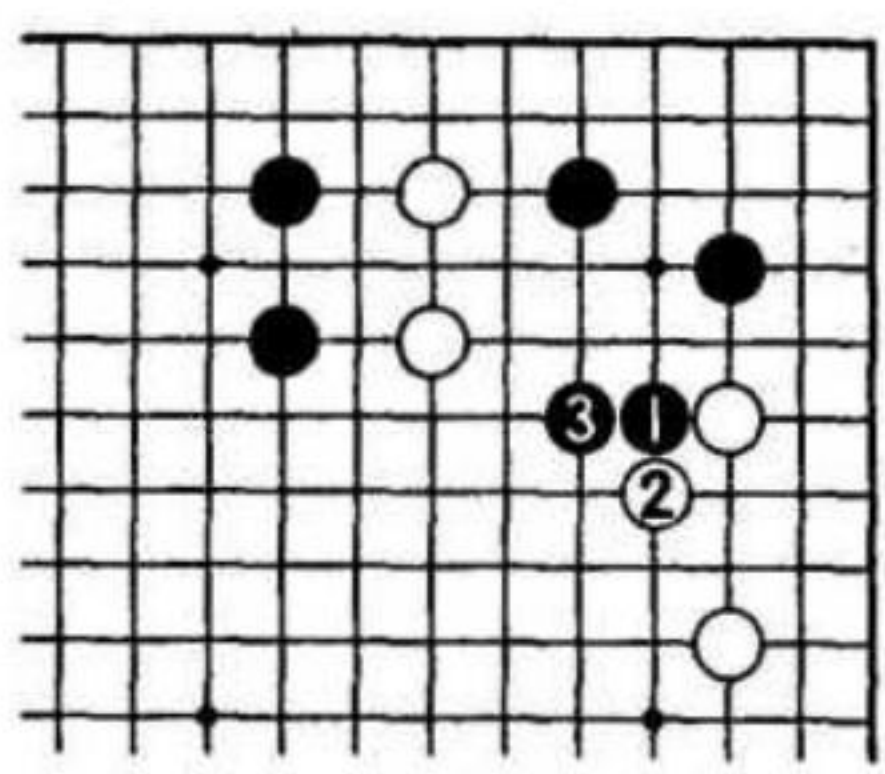
When Black wants to attack the marked white stones, Black 1 is not a bad move, but it is certainly unimaginative.

Dia. 8: a leaning attack

Attaching at 1 shows that Black has acquired the knack of fighting. This kind of diversionary attack is known as a leaning attack': you lean' on a group that is not your target in order to build up strength to attack your real target.



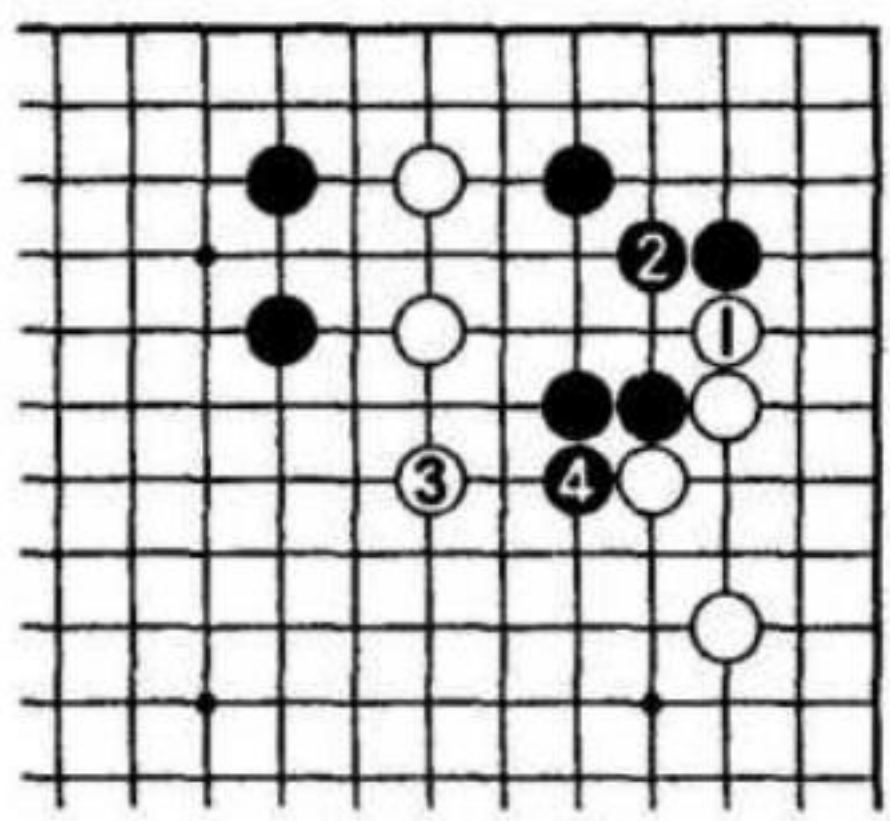
Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 9: a powerful attack

This is the continuation that can be expected after *Dia. 8*. Compared to *Dia. 7*, you can see that Black has a much more powerful attack.



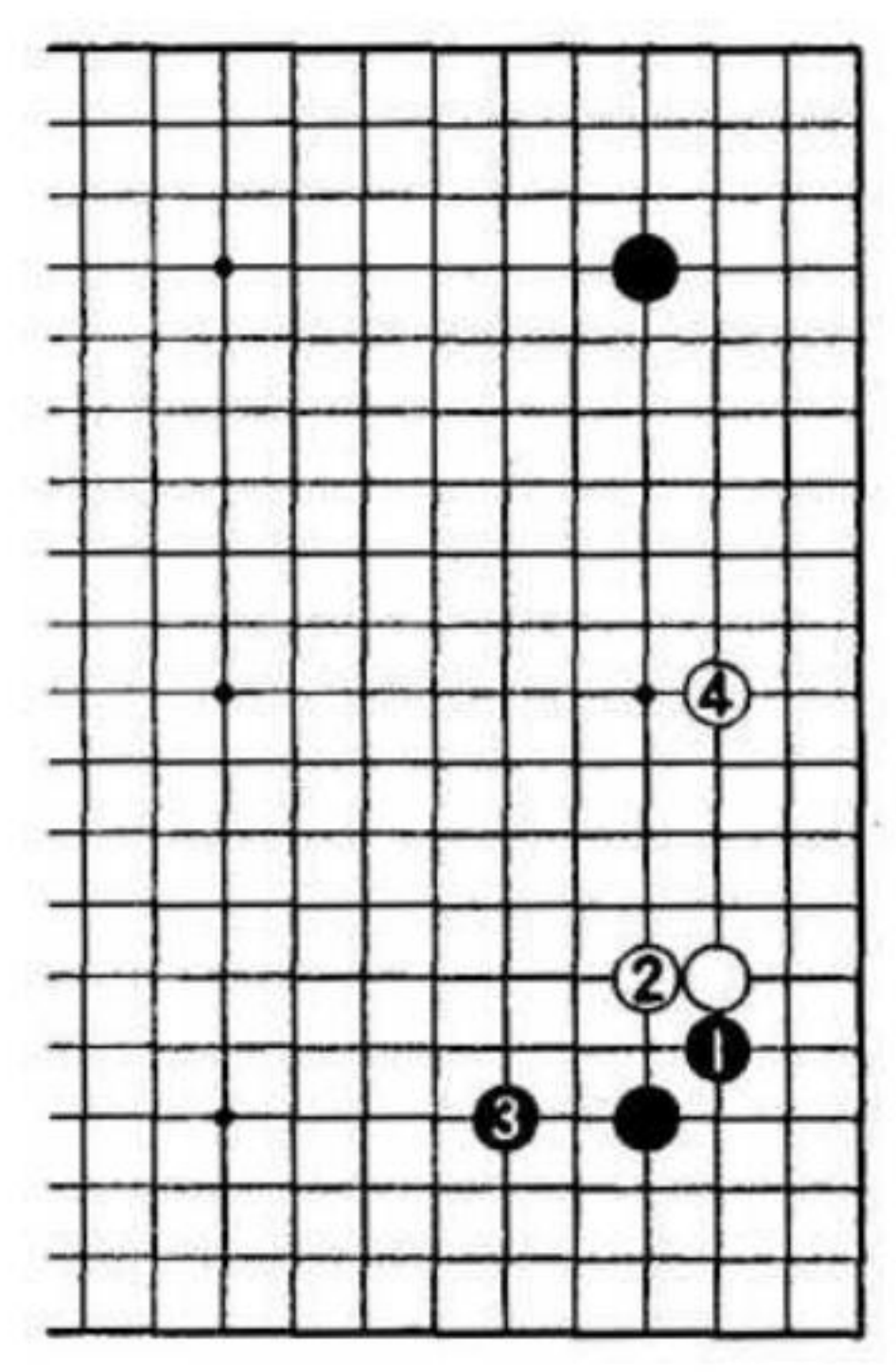
Dia. 9

Dia. 10. diagonal attachment

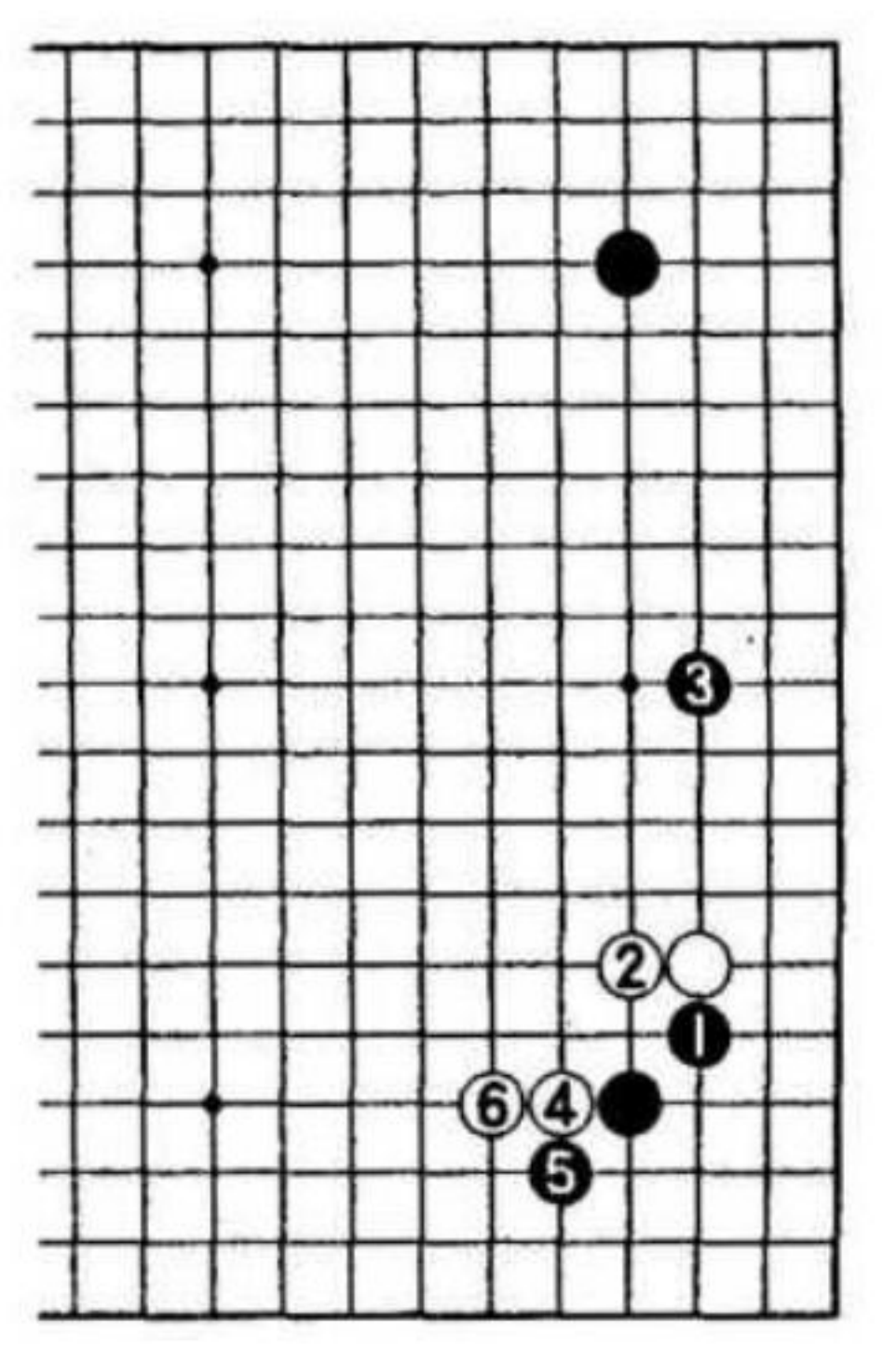
The diagonal attachment of 1 is a very popular move, but you must be careful not to overuse it, as it does help the opponent to strengthen himself. Here White gets an ideal extension to 4 (following the proverb, 'extend three spaces from a two-stone wall'), so this is an unfavourable result for Black

Dia. 11: the attack backfires

What if Black pincers immediately at 3, to avoid giving White that good extension? White will counter by attaching at 4, forcing Black 5, then extend at 6. His group is now too strong for Black to attack it effectively. It's dear that Black 1 is a bad move.



Dia. 10



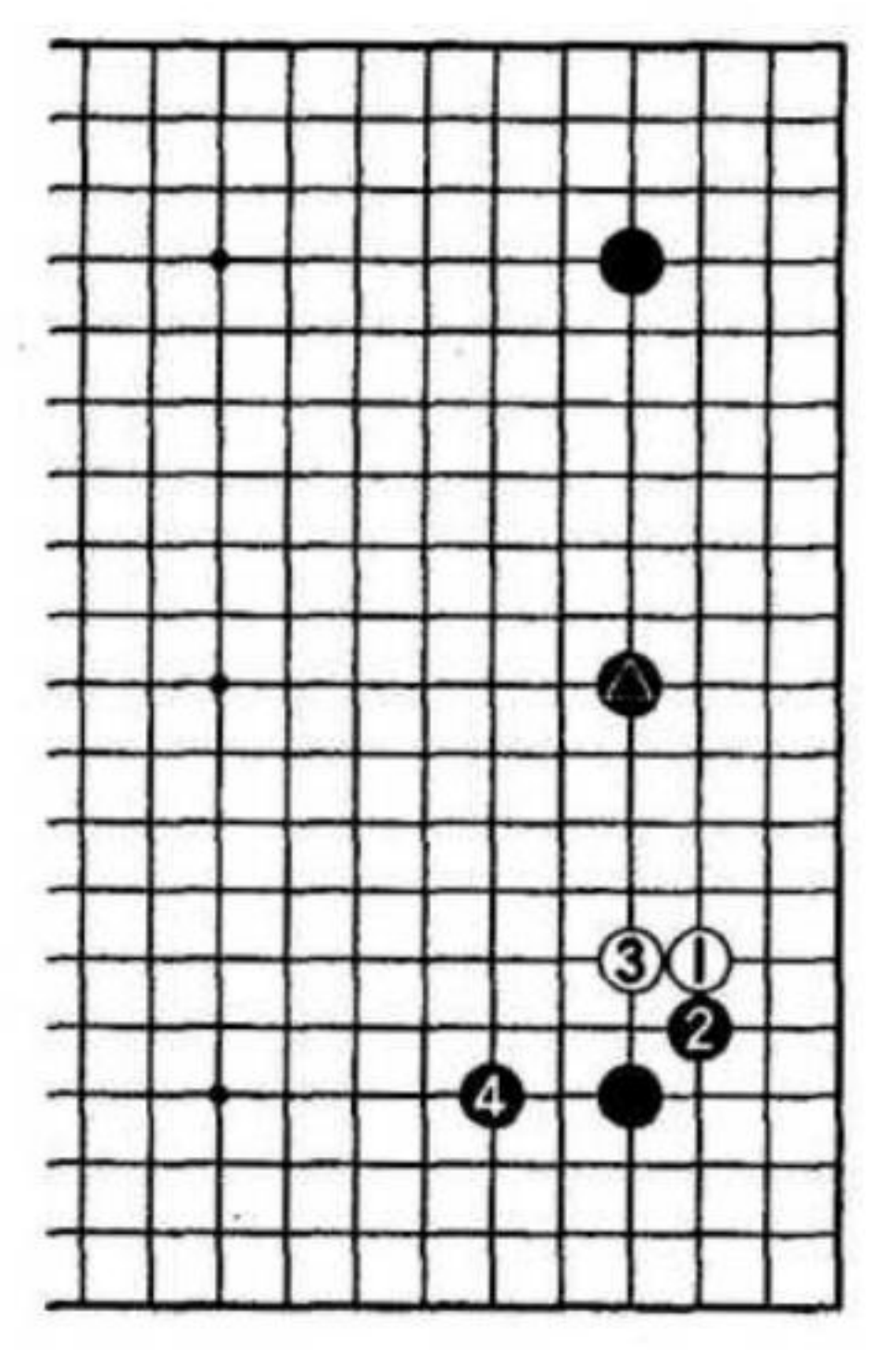
Dia. 11

Dia. 11 appropriate

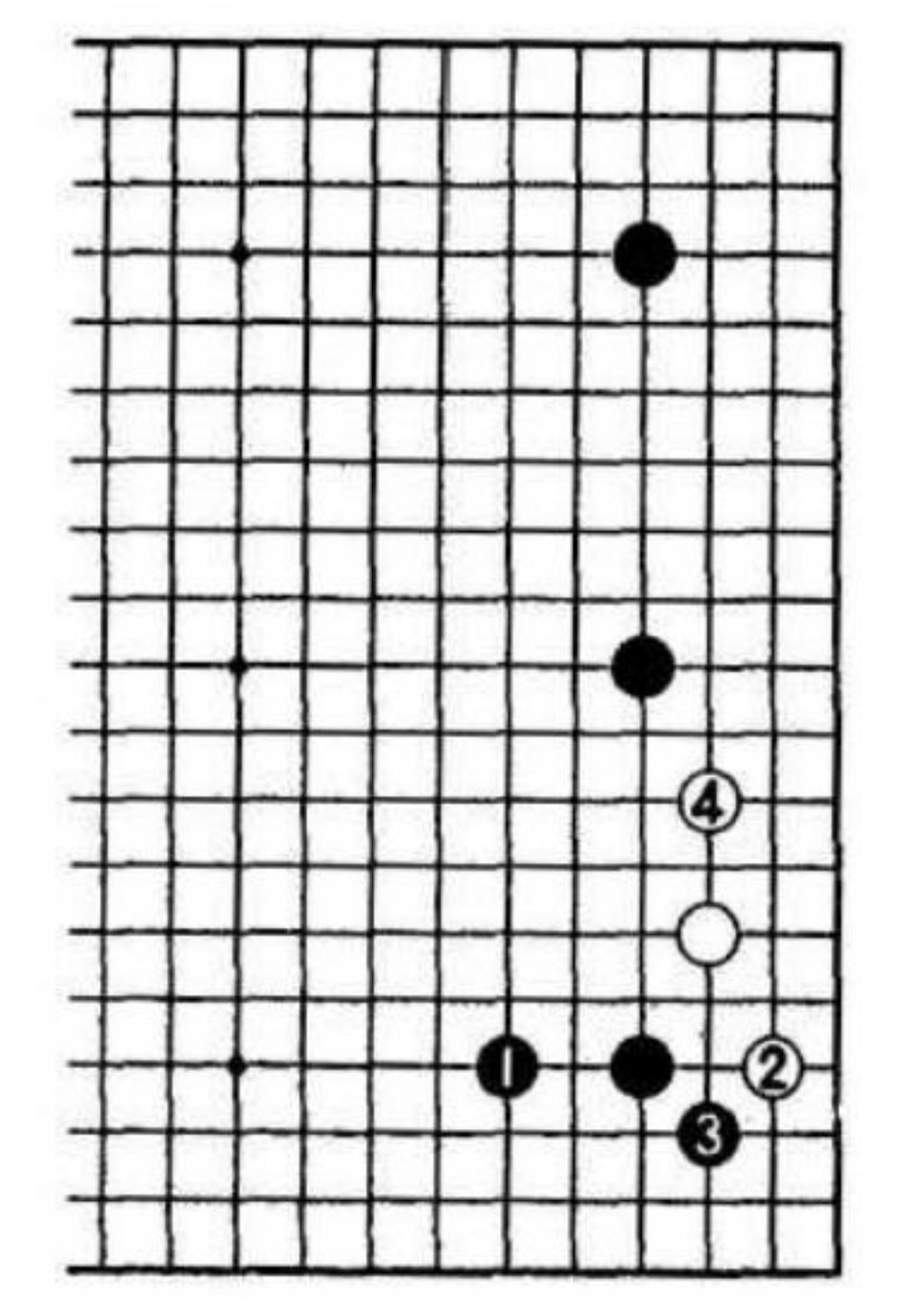
In this position the presence of the marked stone, which functions as a pincer, makes Black 2 an appropriate move. Black 2 and 4 are severe: they deprive White of room to make a base.

Dia. 13: too easygoing

Simply answering at 1 lets White secure a base by sliding to 2 and extending to 4. The latter may be narrow, but getting a base is good enough for White. Black 2 in *Dia. 12* stops White from settling himself so easily.



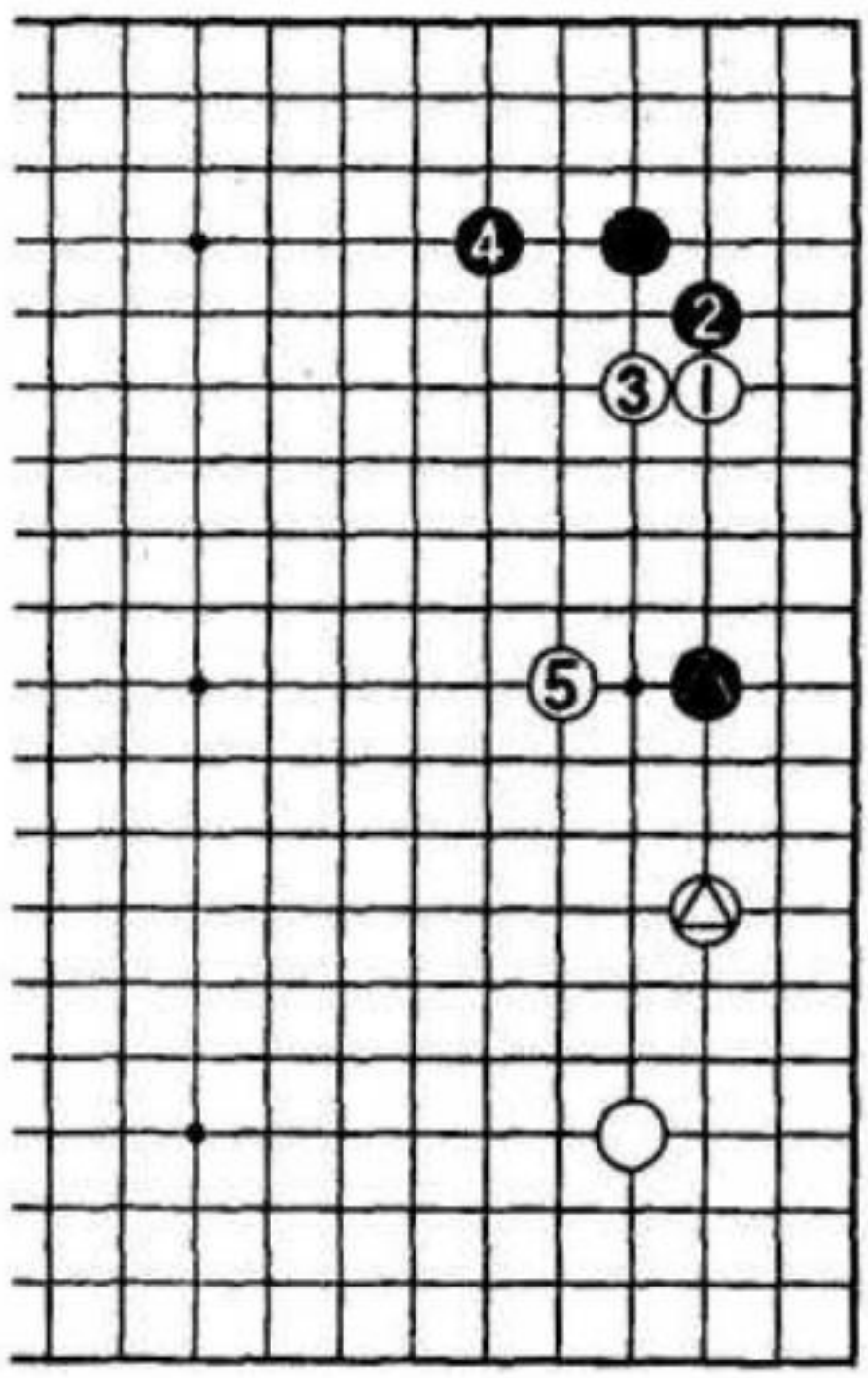
Dia. 12



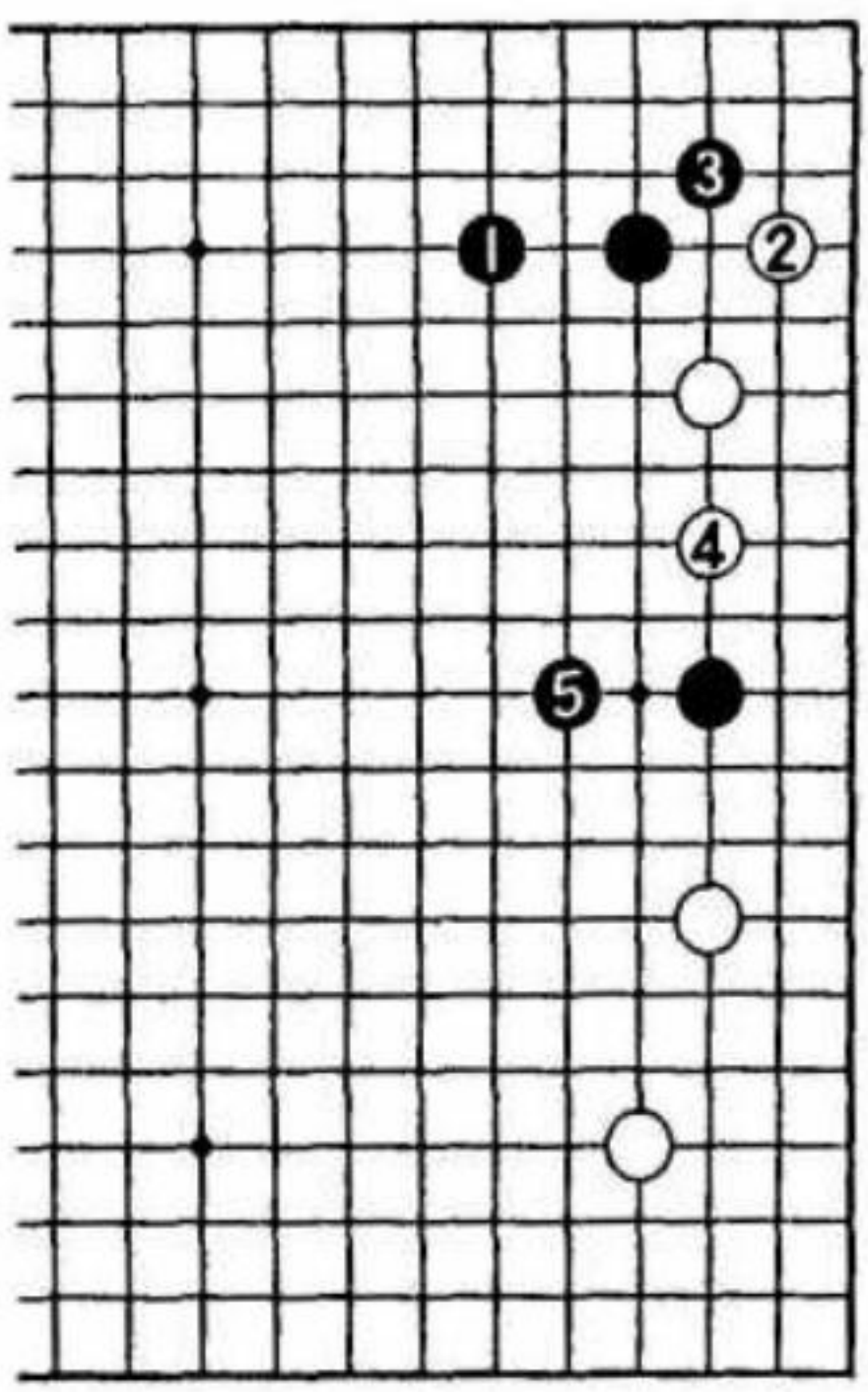
Dia. 13

Dia. 14: counterattack

Here, however, it's a delicate question whether Black 2 and 4 are good moves. The reason is that the marked black stone, which started out as a pincer, is no longer a strong stone, as it's nullified by the marked white stone. White now counterattacks with 5. Permitting this is why 2 is bad.



Dia. 14



Dia. 15

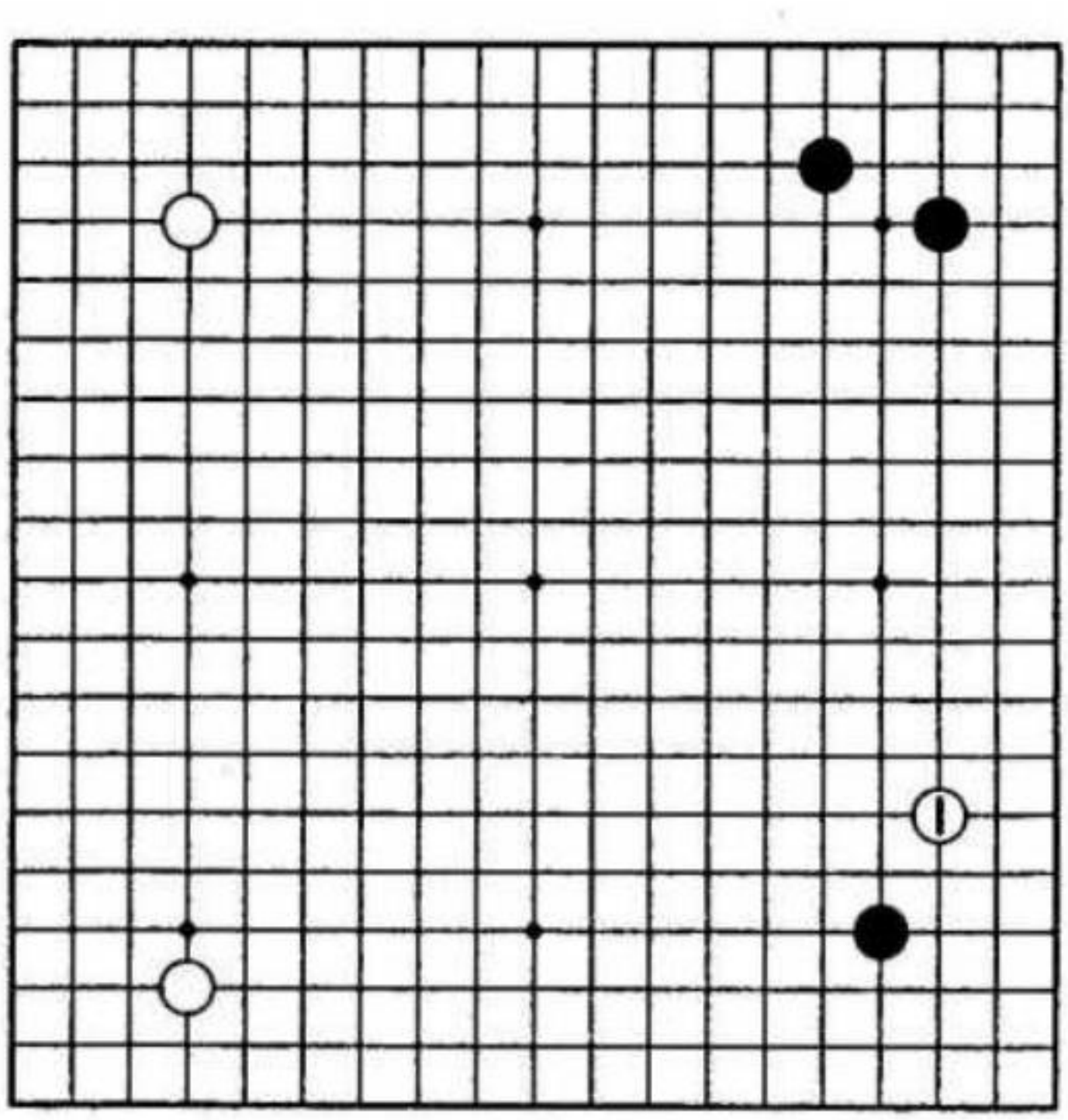
Dia. 15: compromise

Compromising with Black 1 is appropriate here. After White settles himself with 2 and 4, jumping out at 5 looks reasonable. In other words, when you have a weak stone yourself (the marked black stone in *Dia. 14*), you can't play strongly as with 2 there.

Principle 16
Try to kill two birds with one stone

This is another way of saying: 'look for multi-purpose moves.' Usually one's play is a mixture of offensive and defensive moves. Being able to combine the two in one move makes for efficiency. To find these multi-purpose moves, however, you must look closely at the board.

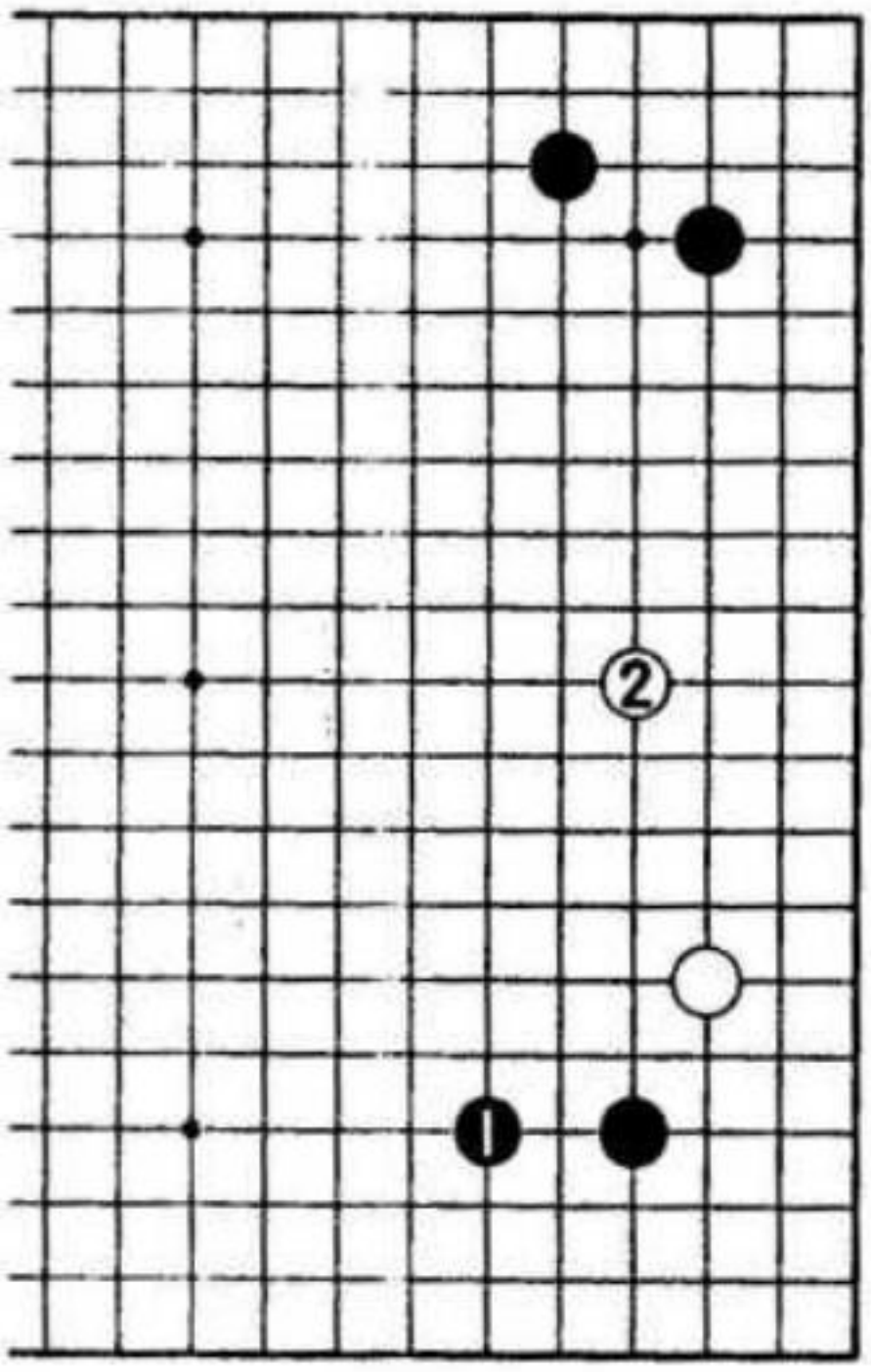
How should Black respond when White plays the approach move of 1?



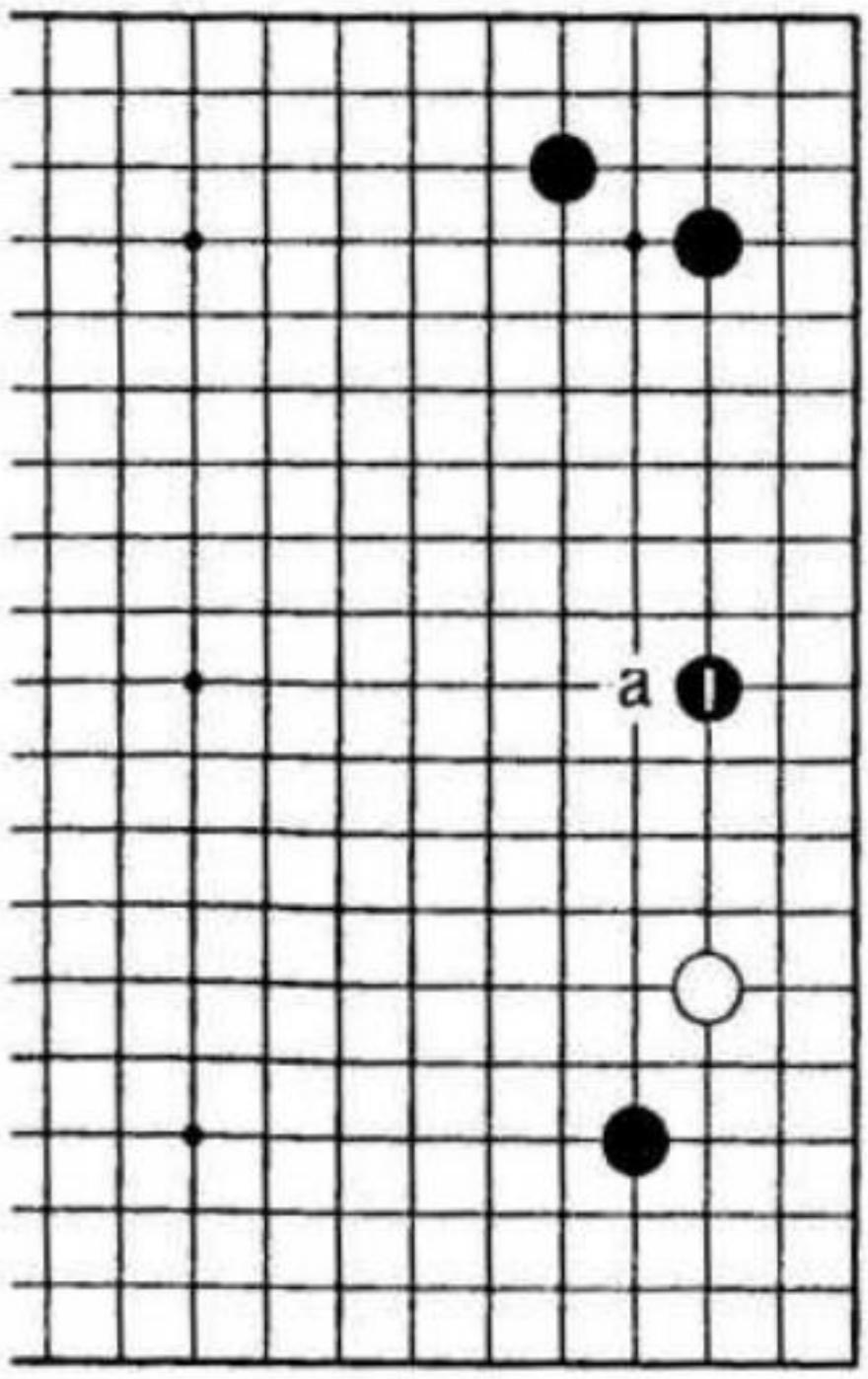
Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: dissatisfied

In the local context, Black 1 is a conventional, common-sense move. When you take the whole right-side position into consideration, however, it is seen to be dubious. Black is dissatisfied, because White 2 blocks the primary direction for an extension from Black's enclosure in the top right corner.



Dia. 1



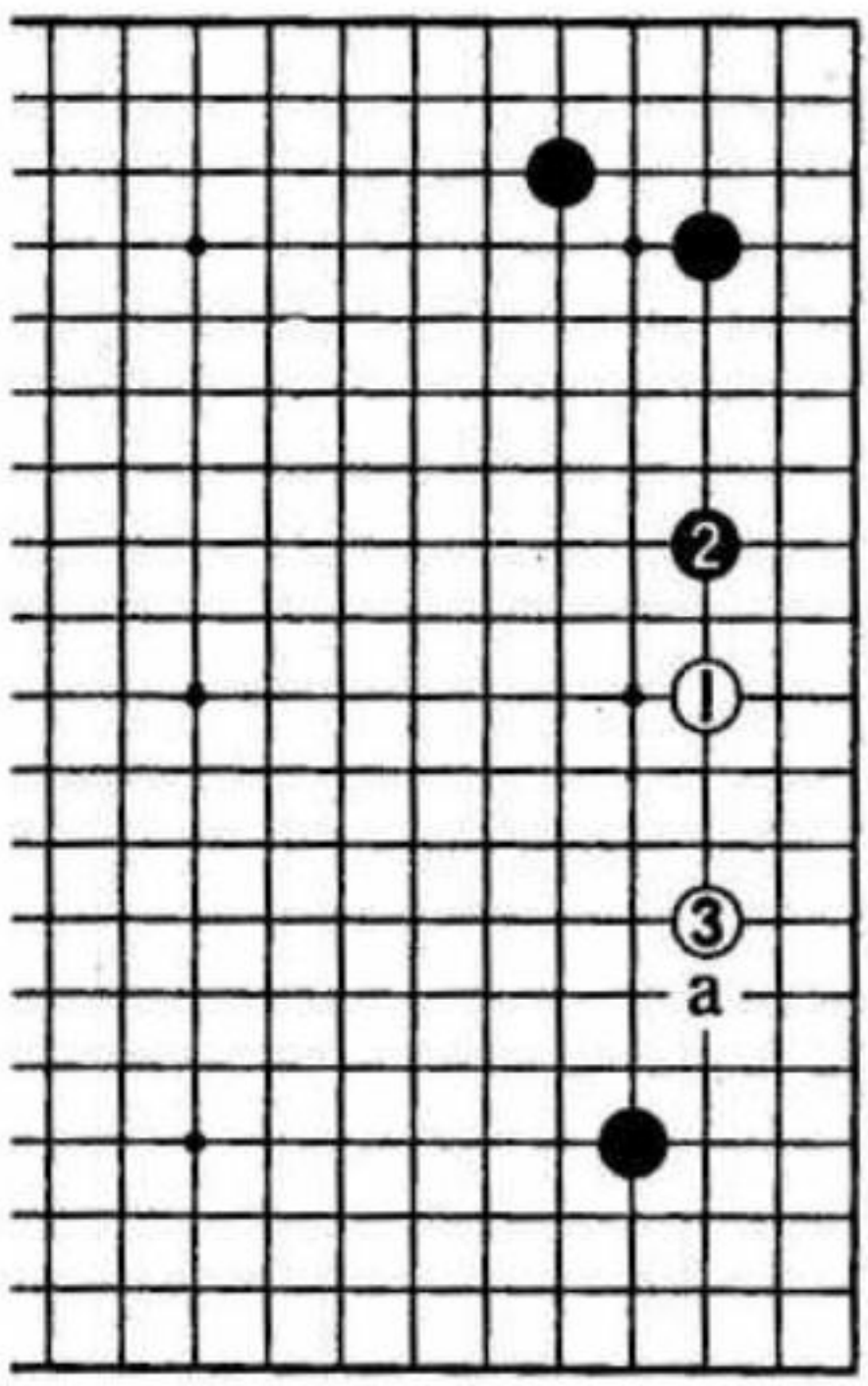
Dia. 2

Dia. 2. better strategy

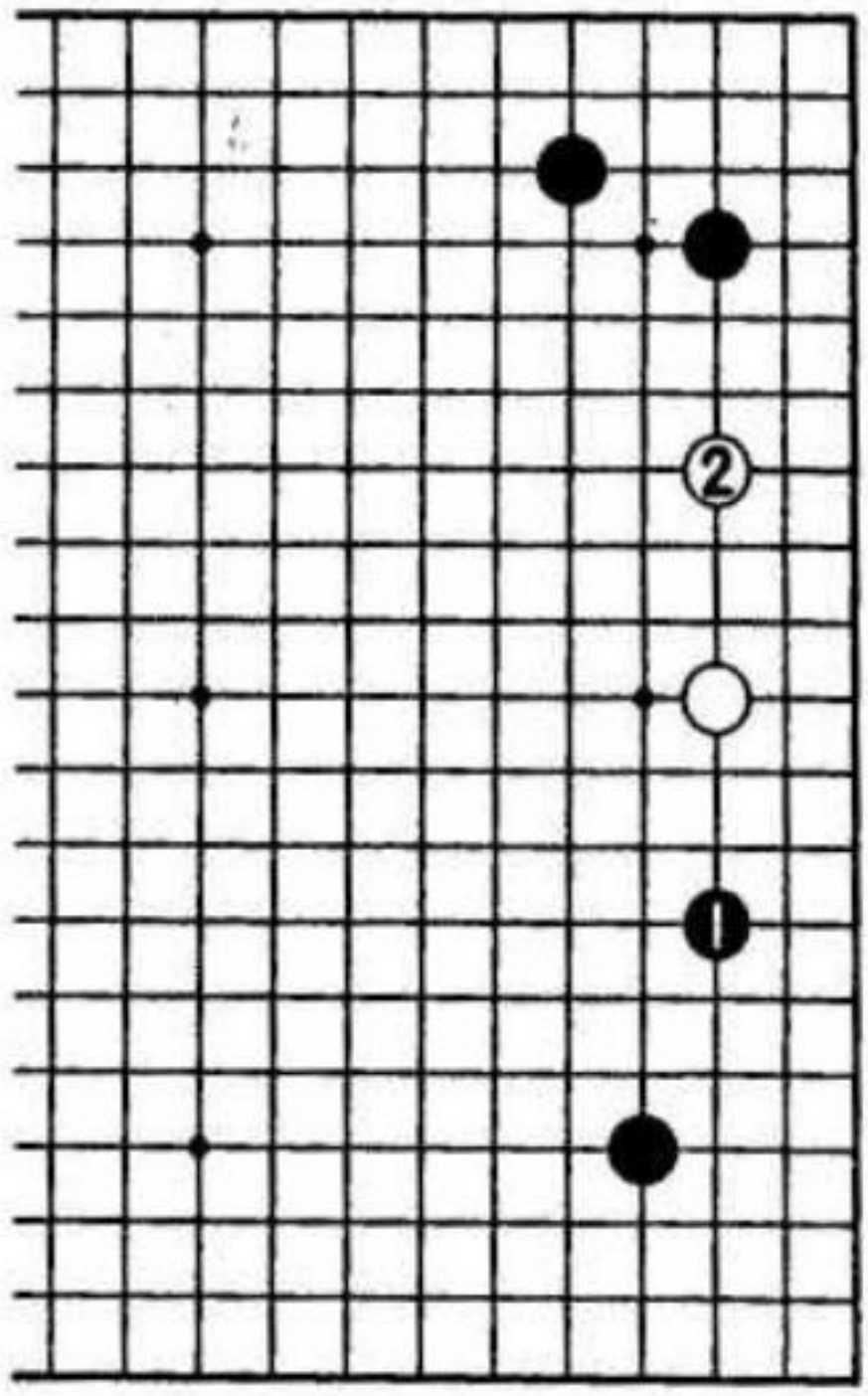
Here one wants to pincer at 1. This move kills two birds with one stone: it is a pincer and an extension, that is, it serves the dual purposes of offence and defence.

Dia. 3: better for White

To go back one step, White can also improve on his strategy. The approach move of 'a' plays into Black's hands by giving him a good dual-purpose move. Therefore, playing in the centre of the right side with 1 is feasible. If 2, White extends to 3 and is not vulnerable to attack. This White 1 is known as a 'splitting move'.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: can go either way

If instead Black plays 1, White can again stabilize himself with a two-space extension, this time up the side. This is the feature of a splitting move: there is room to extend in either direction

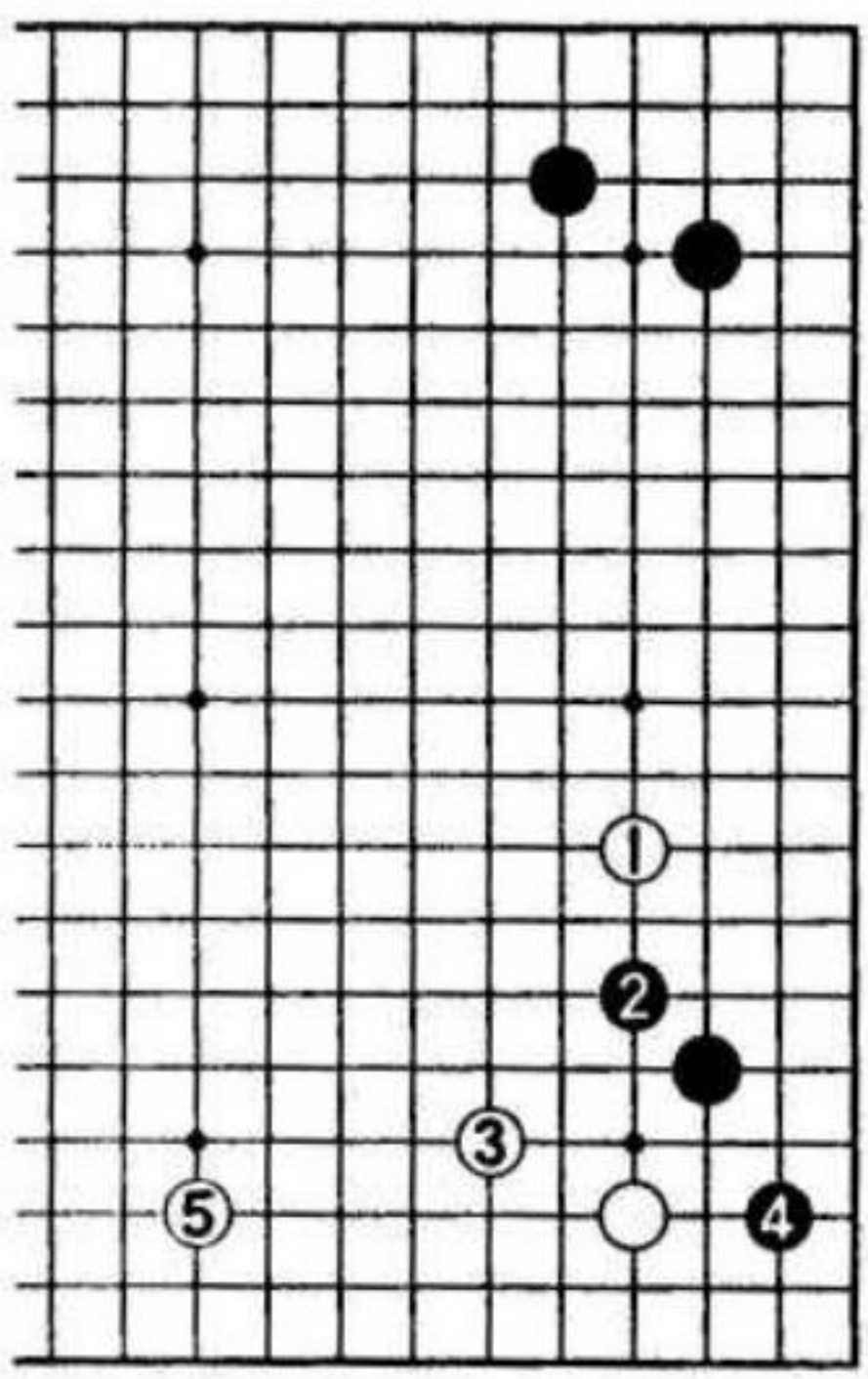
White achieves his aim of not giving the opponent a move that kills two birds with one stone.

Dia. 5: after the joseki

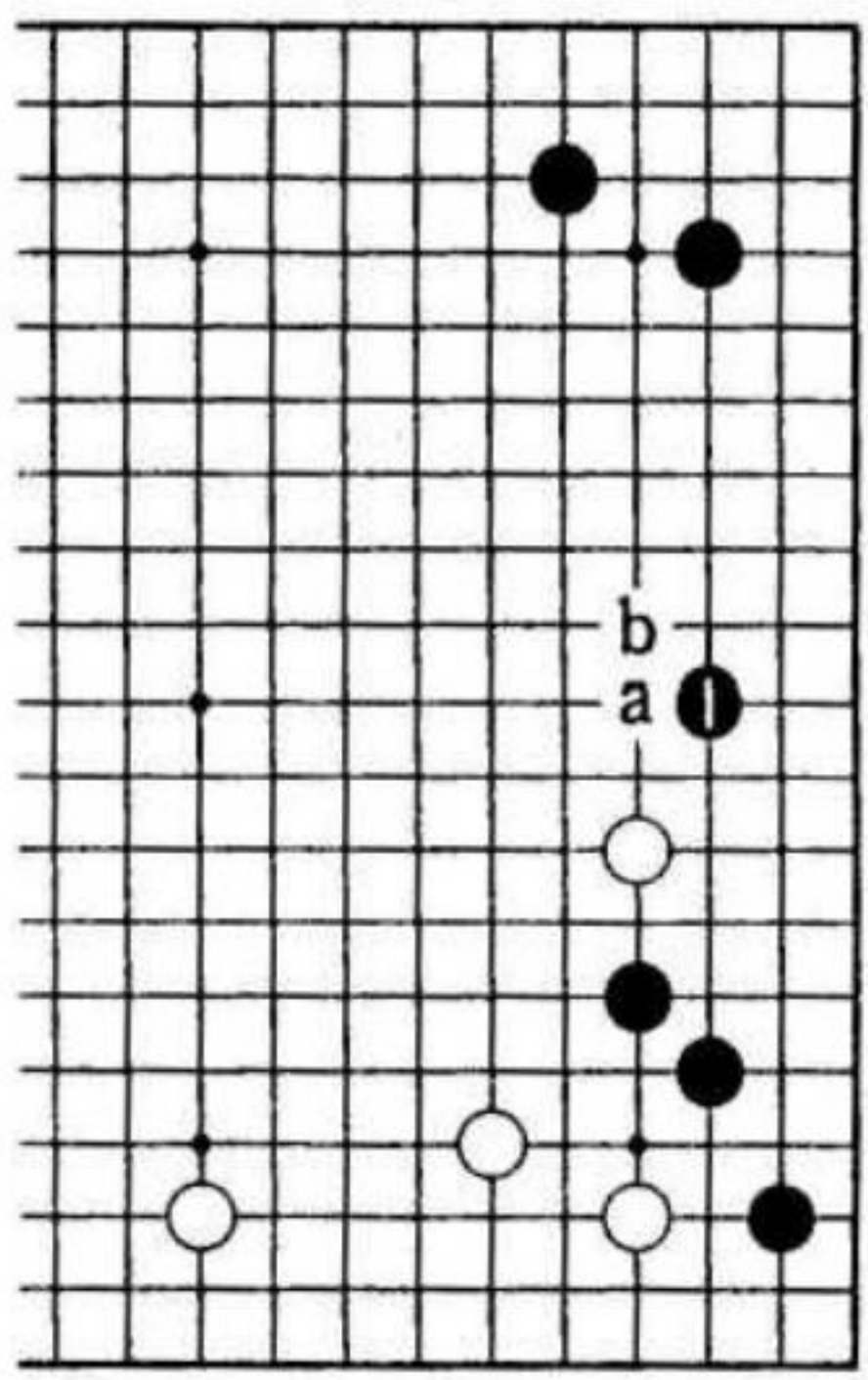
The sequence to 5 is a standard joseki with the two-space high pincer of 1. Next Black has a move that kills two birds with one stone. Can you find it?

Dia. 6: dual purpose

The pincer of 1 is the move: it is also an extension from the enclosure at the top. Alternatives are Black 'a' and 'b'. If Black neglects to play 1, White 'b' becomes a good defensive move.



Dia. 5



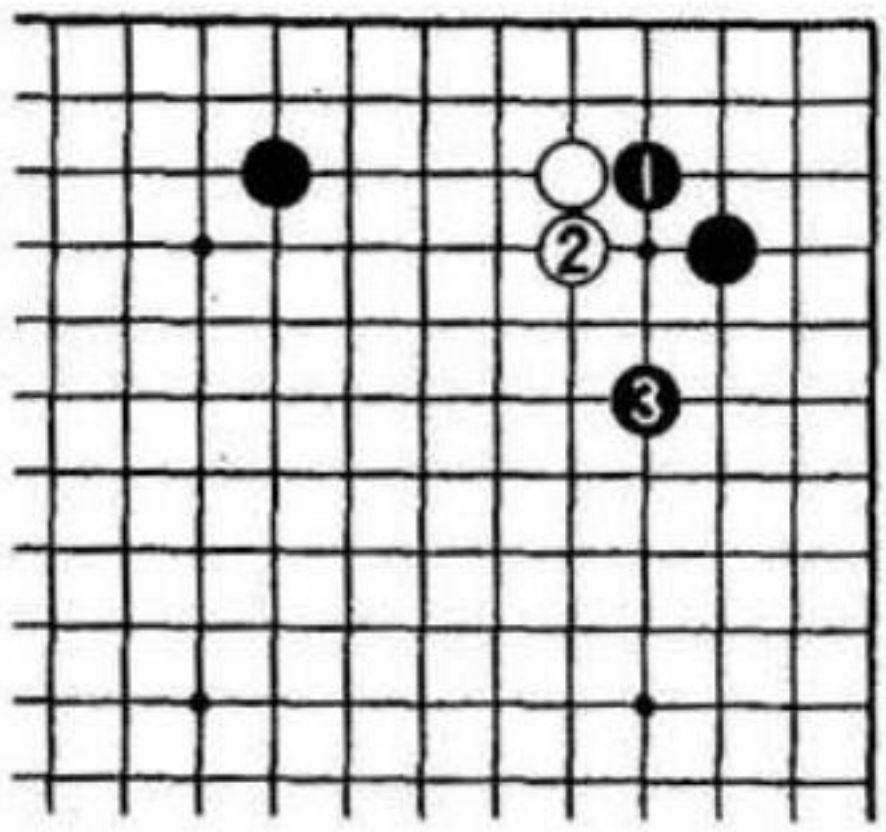
Dia. 6

Dia. 7: dual purpose

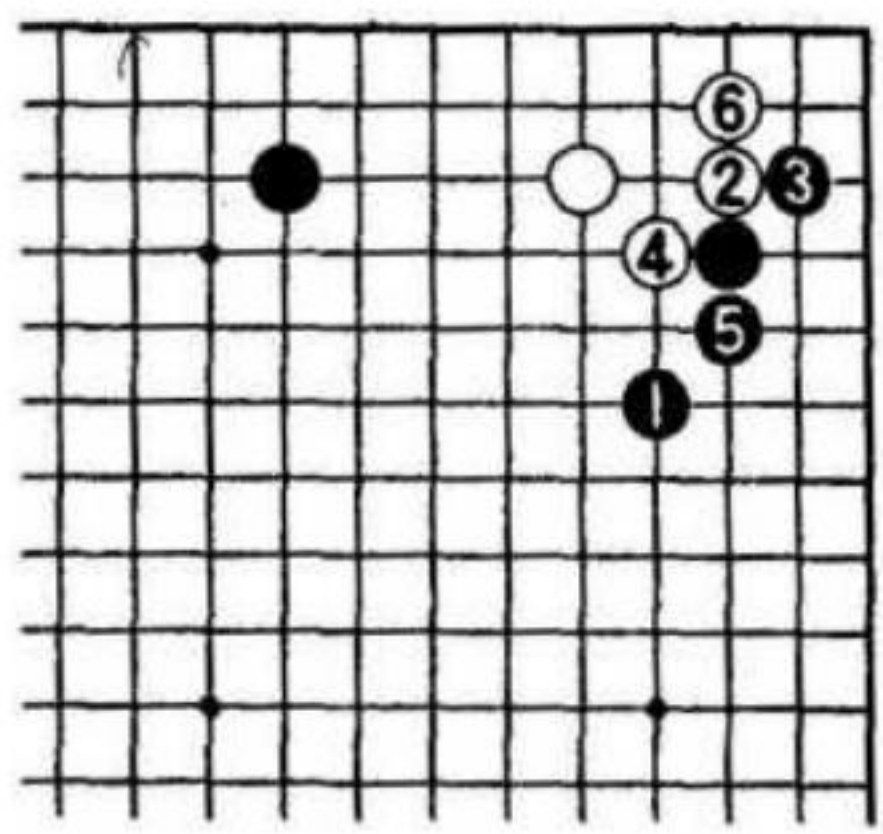
We have already looked at the attacking combination of 1 and 3. This kills two birds with one stone, attacking White while securing territory.

Dia. 8: not enough

Simply playing 1 lets White secure a base with 2 to 6. As an attack this doesn't get off the ground.



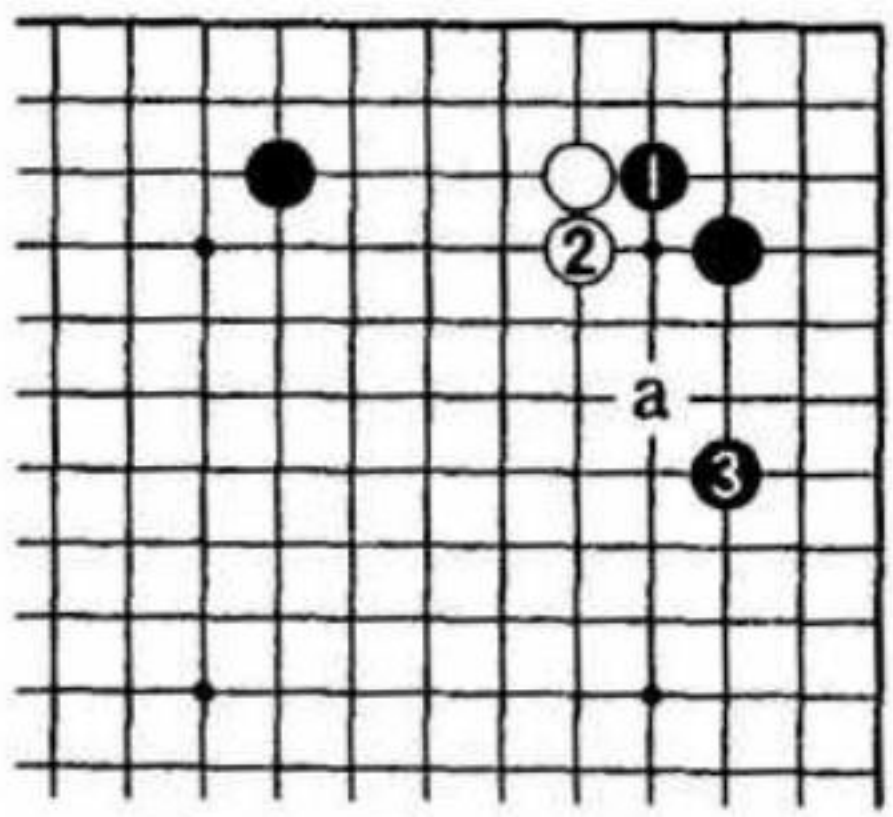
Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 9: too passive

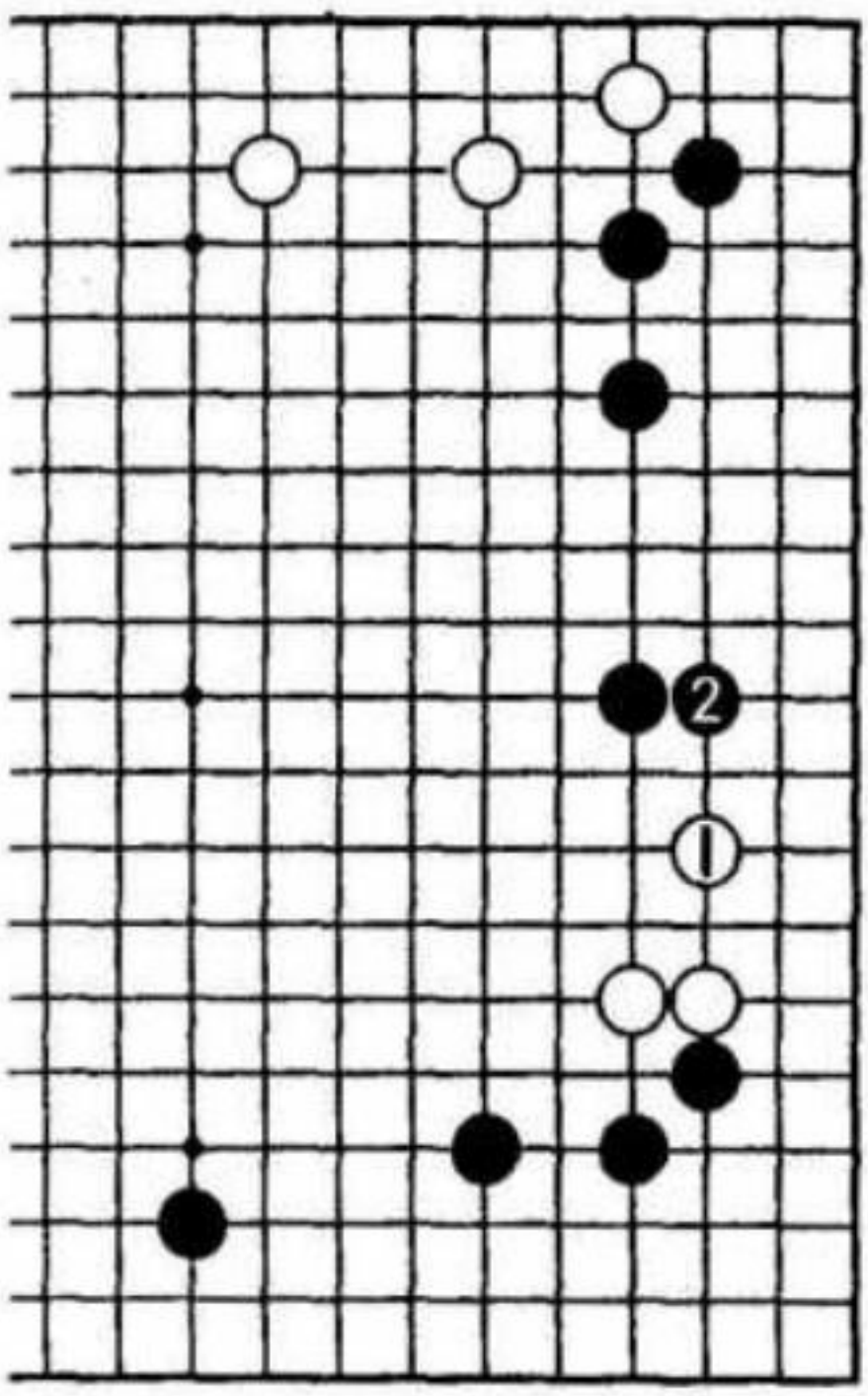
Black 3 is too biased towards defending territory. Black has to play at 'a' to make a forceful attack.



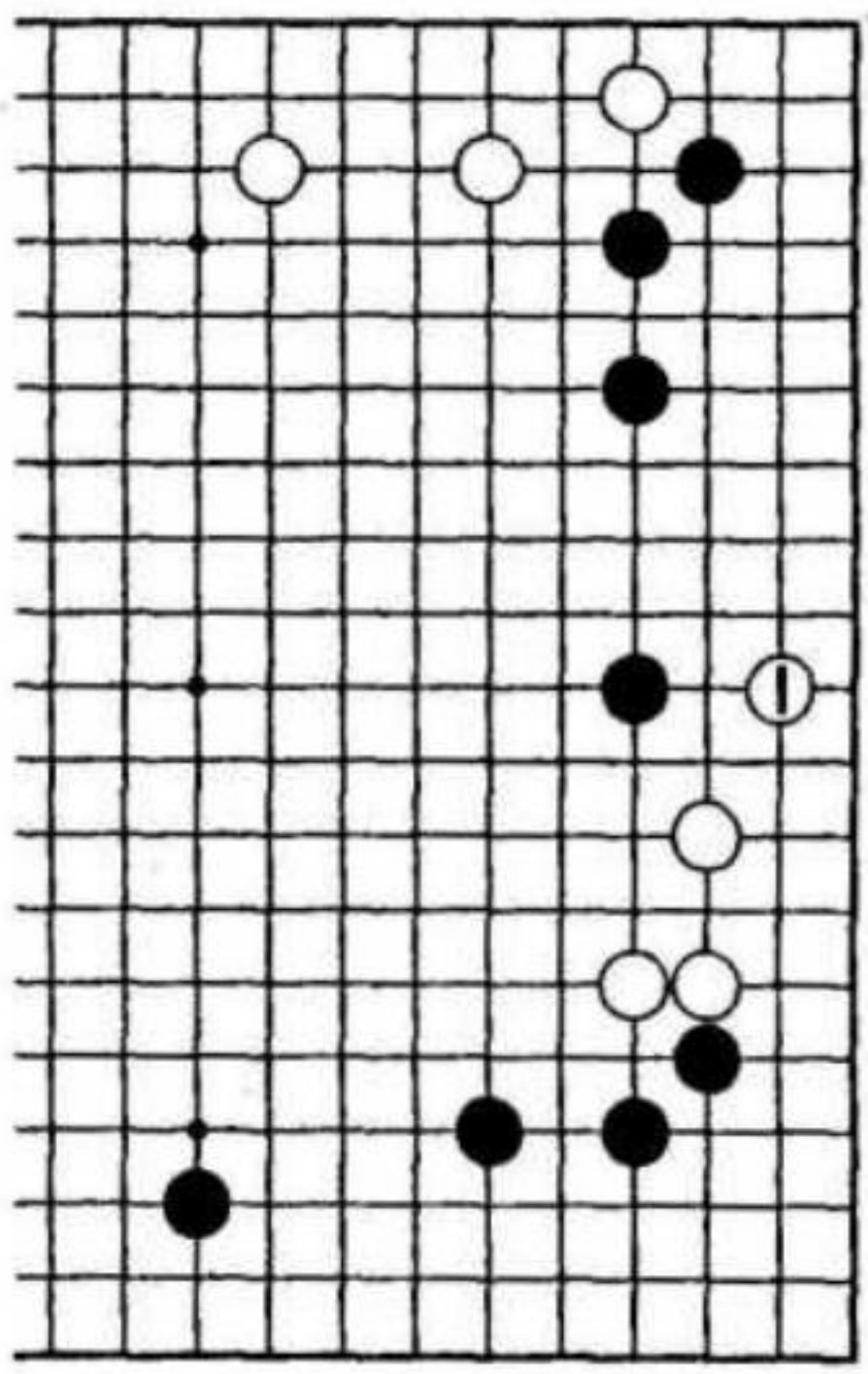
Dia. 9

Dia. 10: stronger than it looks

At first sight Black 2 here may seem slow and stolid, but it kills two birds with one stone, combining attack with defence. If Black omits 2 -



Dia. 10



Dia. 11

Dia. 11: too good for White

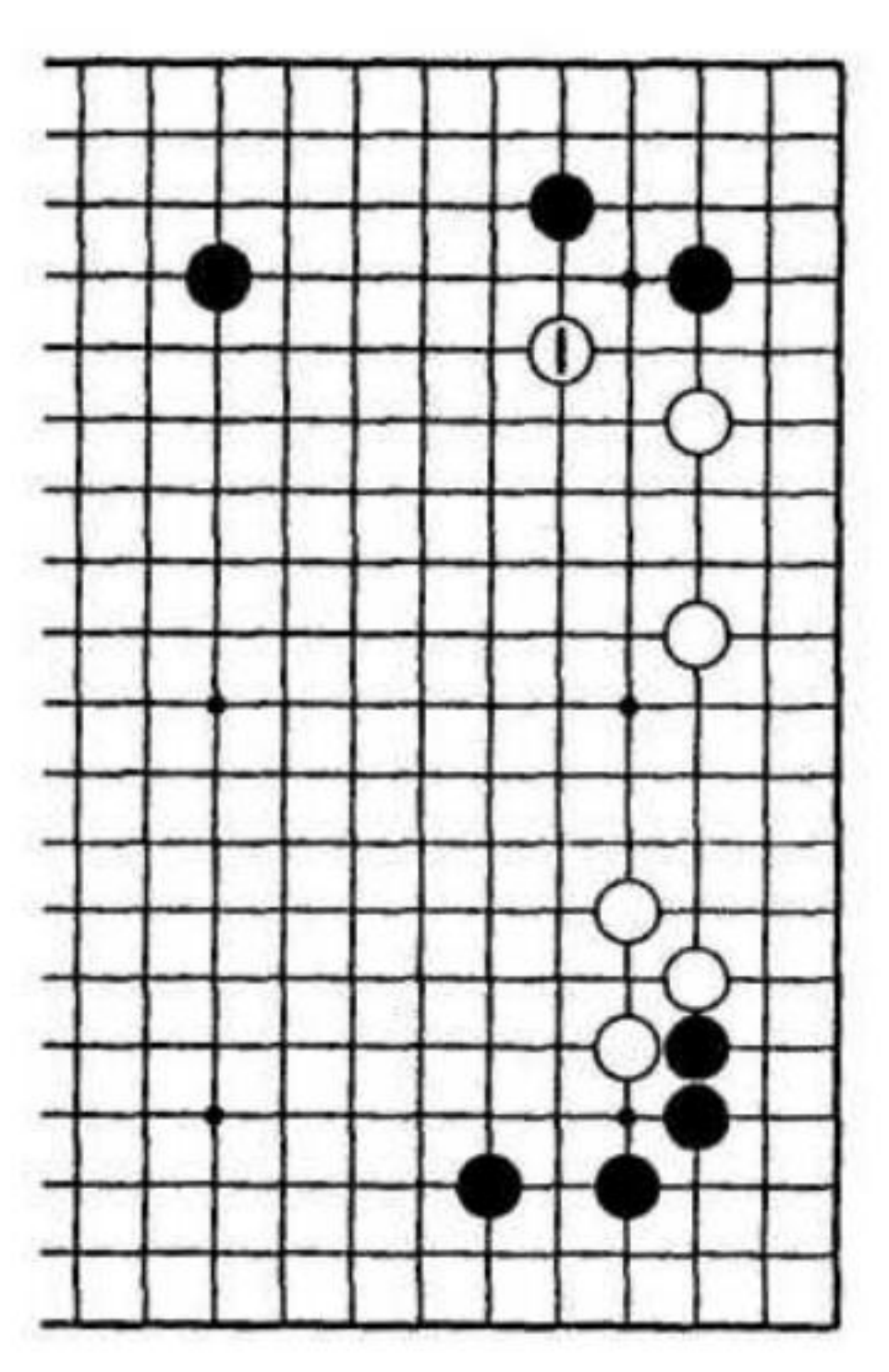
Sliding along the side at 1 becomes an ideal move for White. Not only does he stabilize his own group, he also makes a major reduction to Black's side territory. Permitting this means that Black's play must be criticized as slack.

Dia. 12: moyo

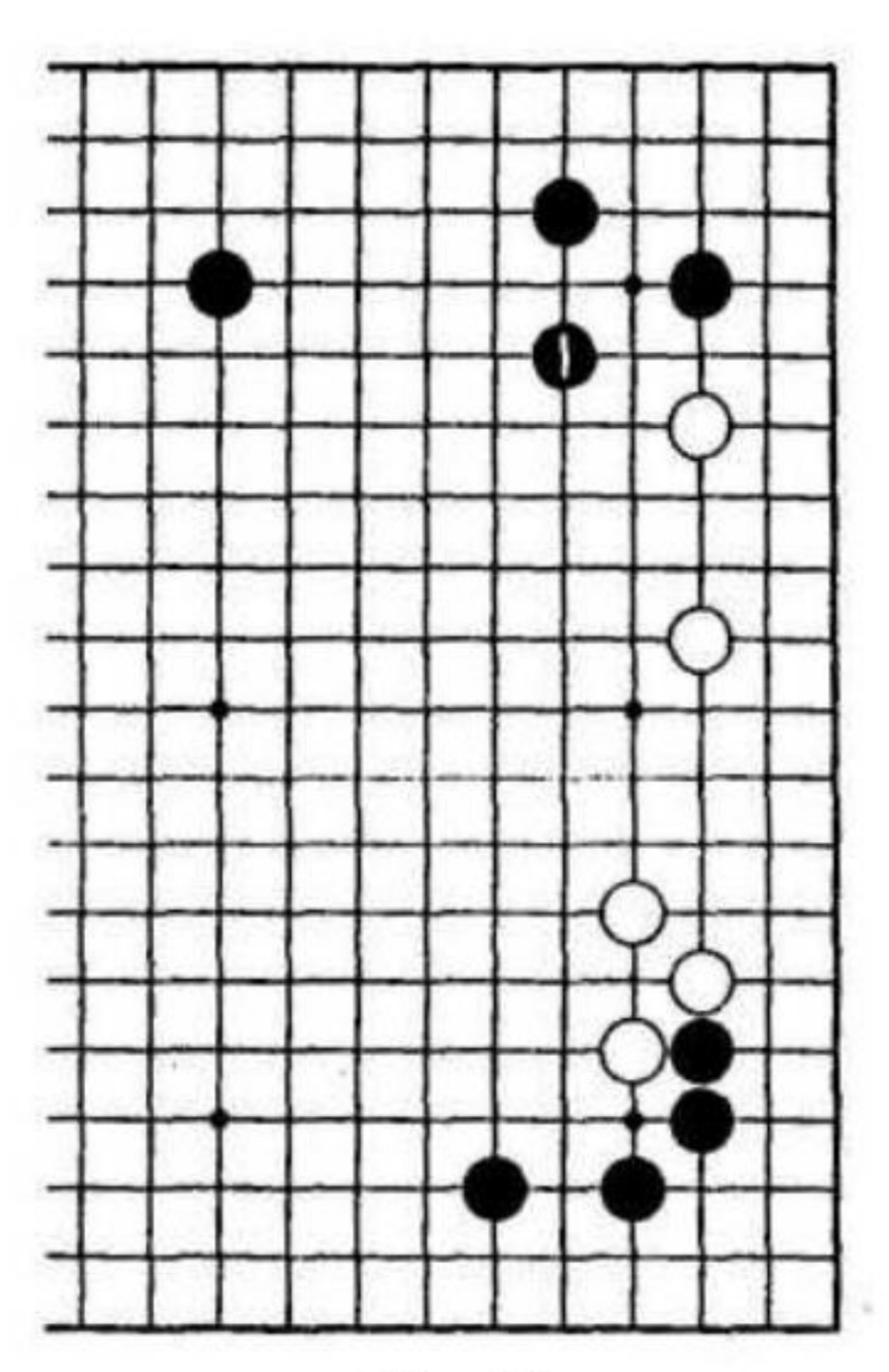
The two birds to be killed are not just attack and defence White 1 here, for example, expands White's territorial moyo while forestalling the expansion of Black's.

Dia. 13: the difference of a stone

Look at the difference if Black gets to play at 1 first. His top position, which had become thin in *Dia. 12*, is now thick and strong, while at the same time White finds that the potential for expansion of his right-side moyo has been severely limited. The conclusion is that 1 is a key point for the competing moyos.



Dia. 12



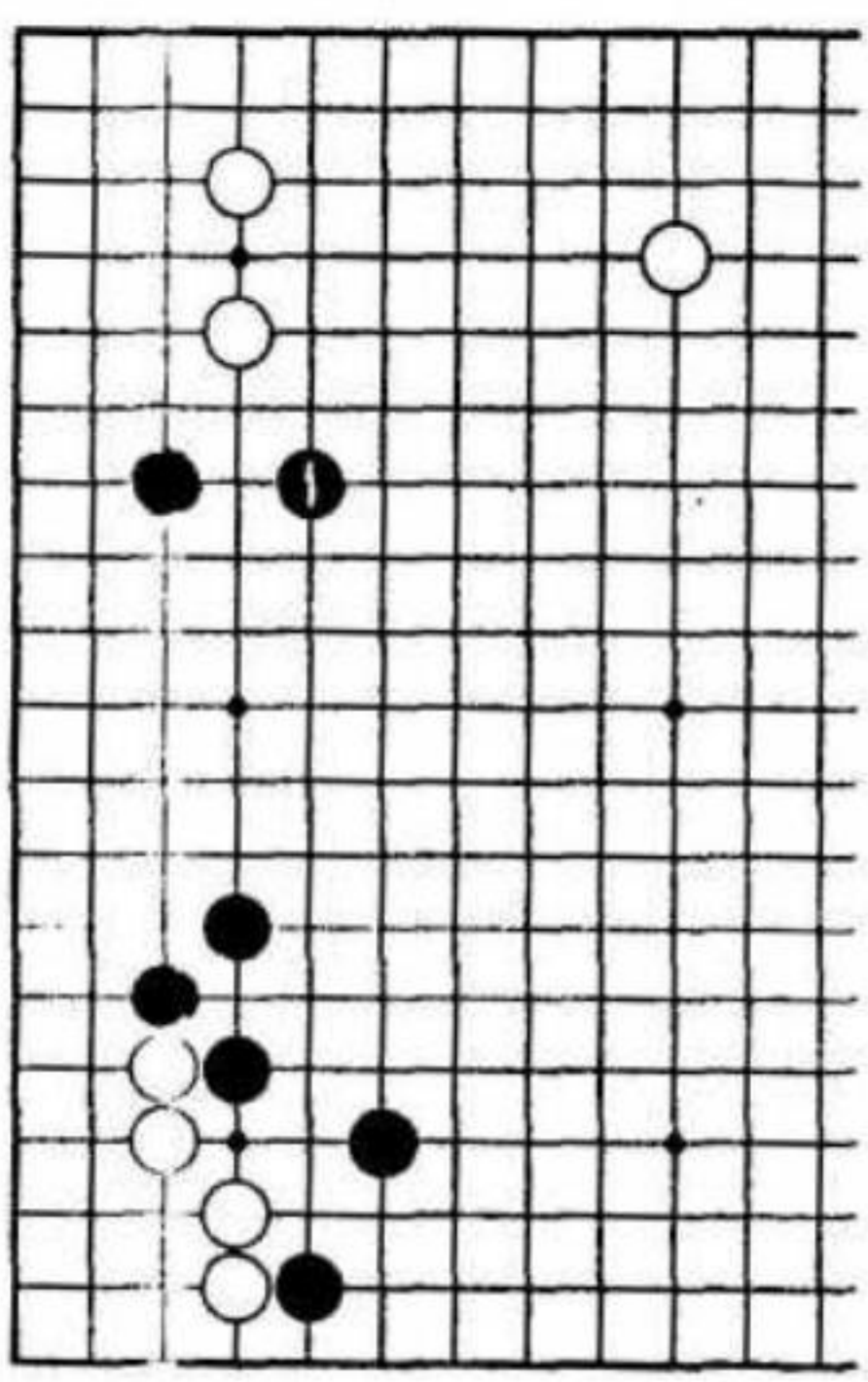
Dia. 13

Dia. 14: the key point

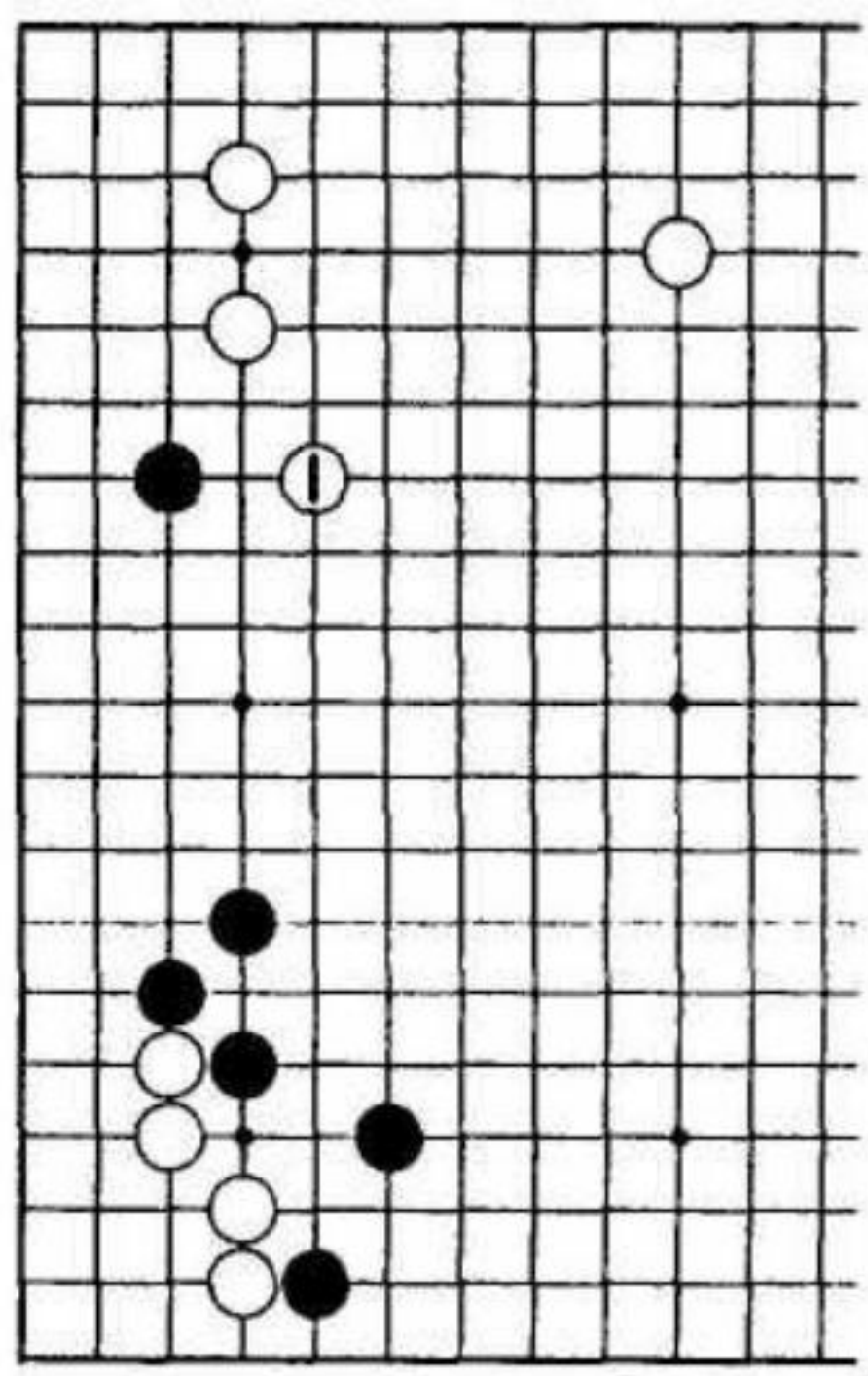
Black 1 is a good move: it performs the same dual functions as 1 in the previous two diagrams.

Dia. 15: a crucial difference

White 1 is dearly also a good point for White. I am sure that the reader can see what an important point this is for both sides without further explanation.



Dia. 14



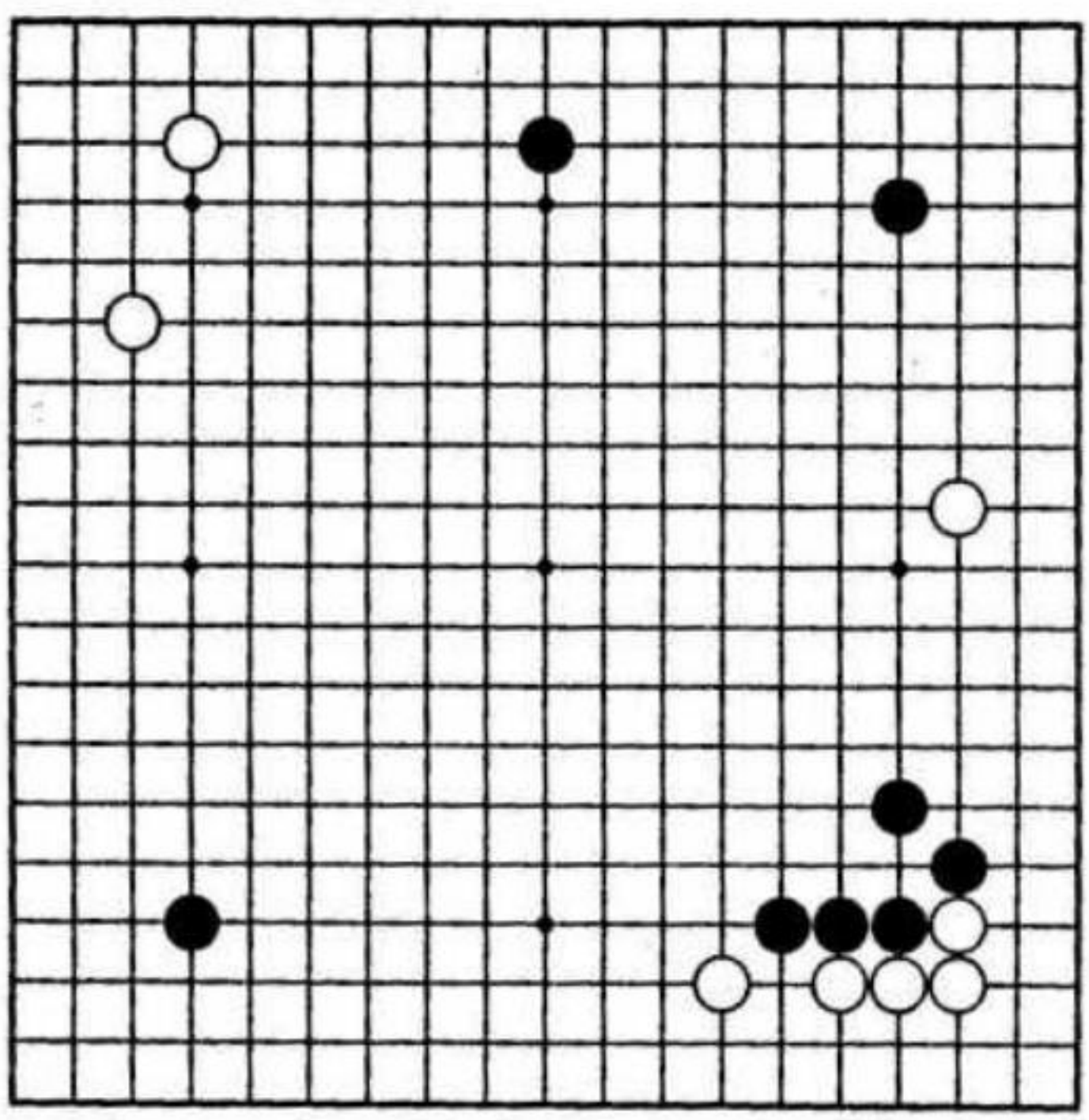
Dia. 15

Principle 17
Use thickness to attack

Learning how to use thickness, in particular, thickness in the form of strong outside influence, is an important step in getting stronger in go.

Thickness should be used to attack. That's all you have to remember. If territory is cash in the bank, thickness is an investment in the future. Used wisely, it will generate long-term profits.

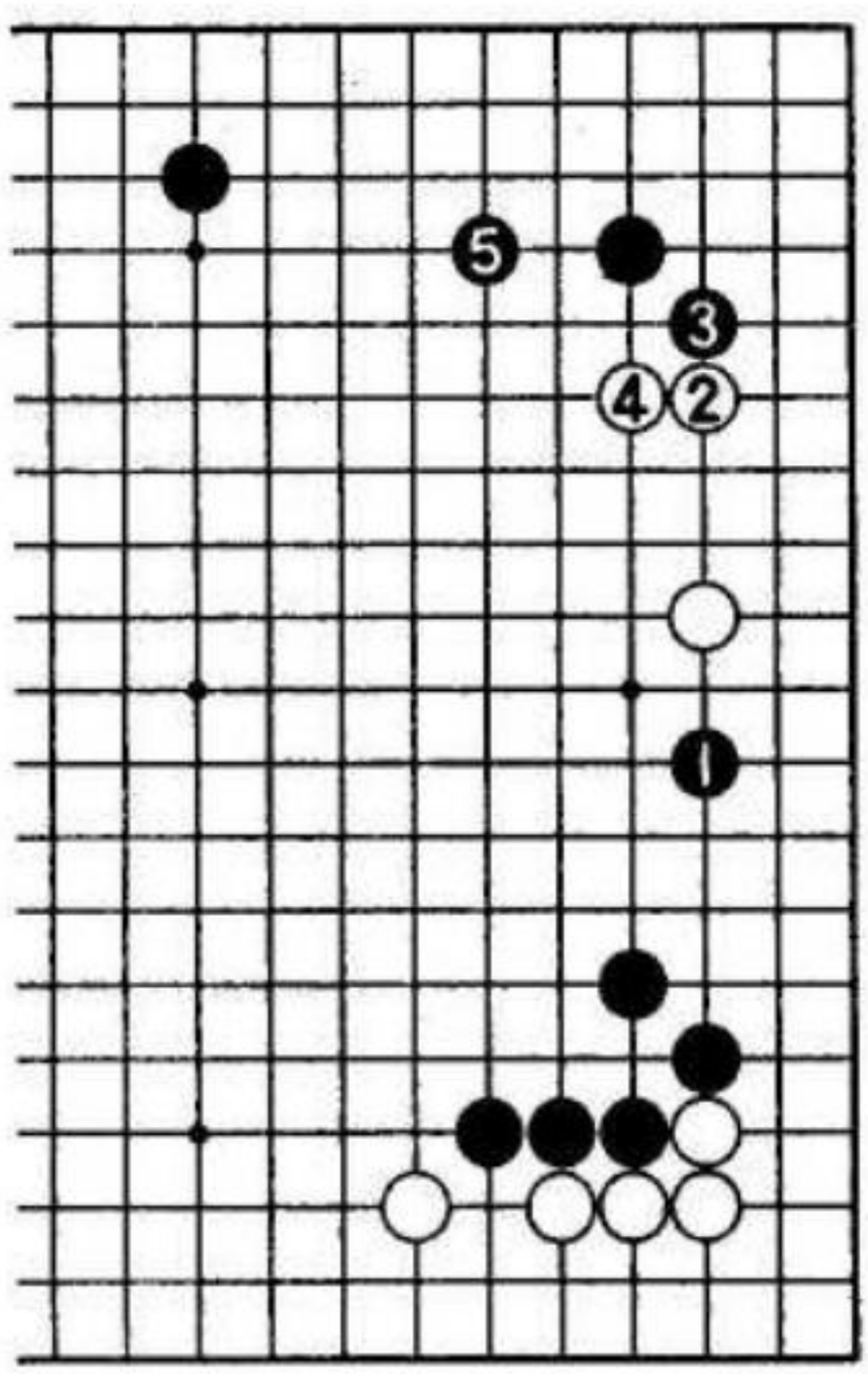
Your task here is to find the best way to attack the solitary white stone on the right side.



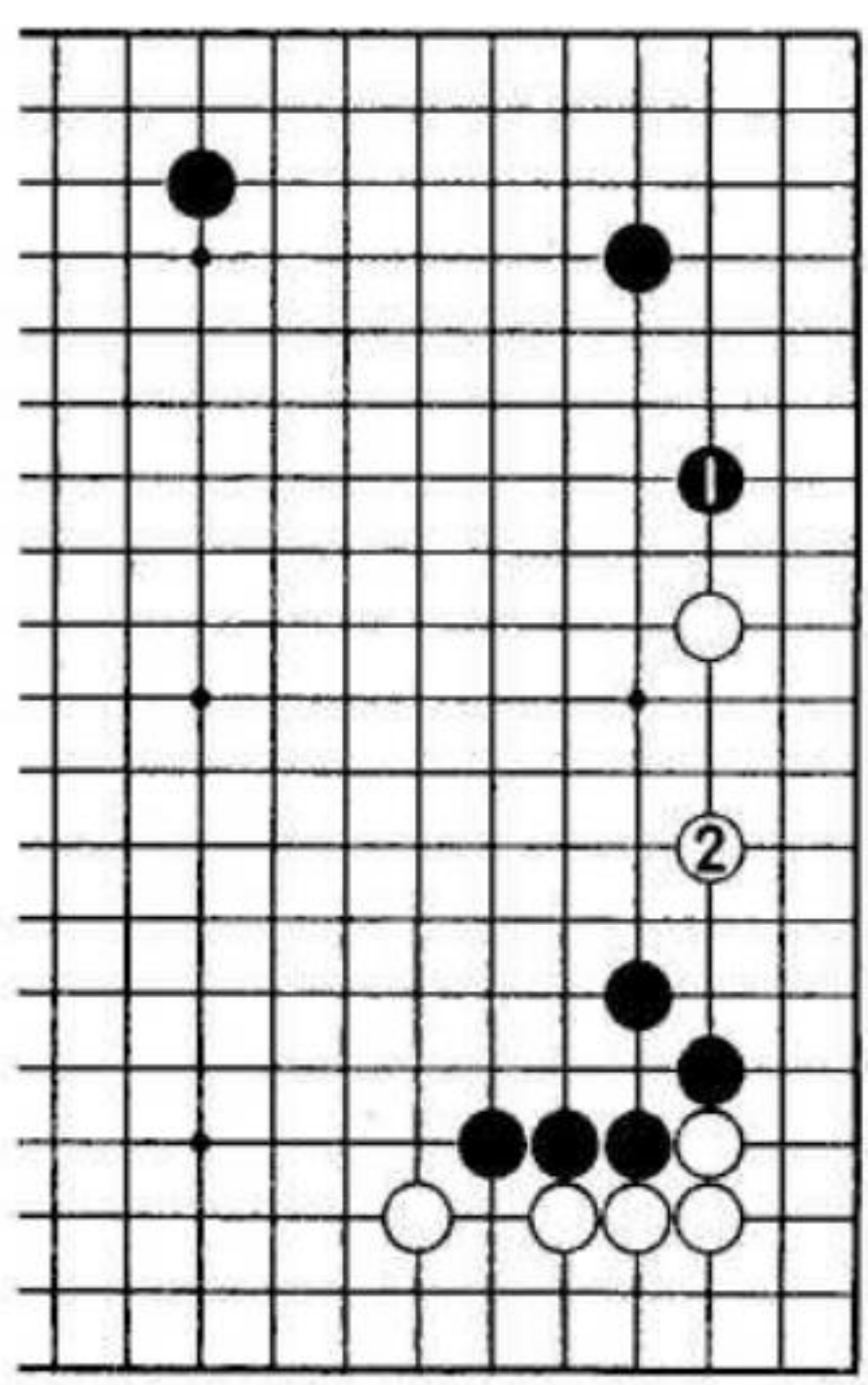
Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: misusing thickness

Black's bottom position represents thickness. Extending to 1 may look promising, as it converts the area adjacent to the thickness into territory, but giving White the extension to 2 is dubious. After 4, Black can't expect to make a strong attack on this group.



Dia. 1



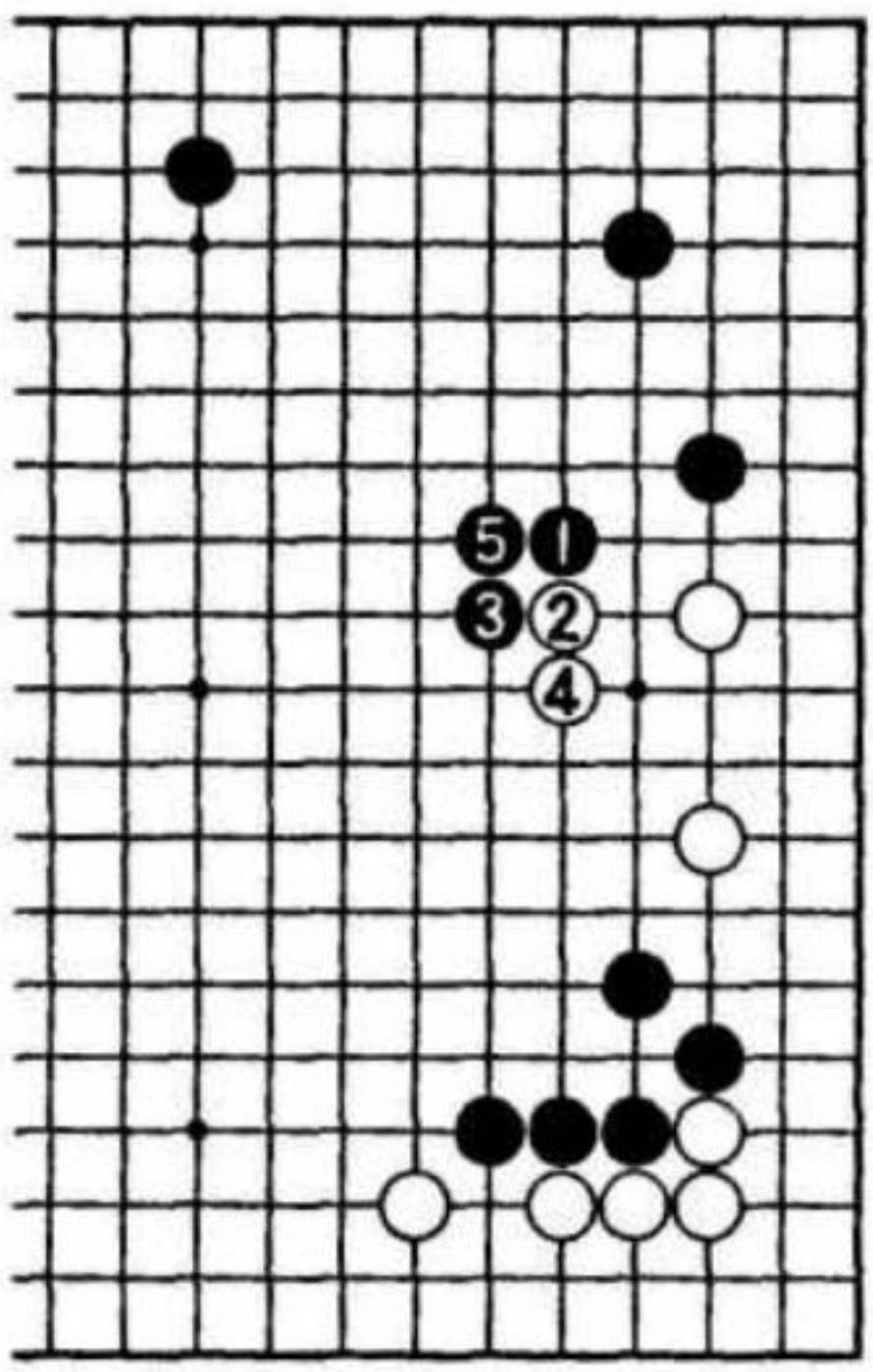
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: enticing White in

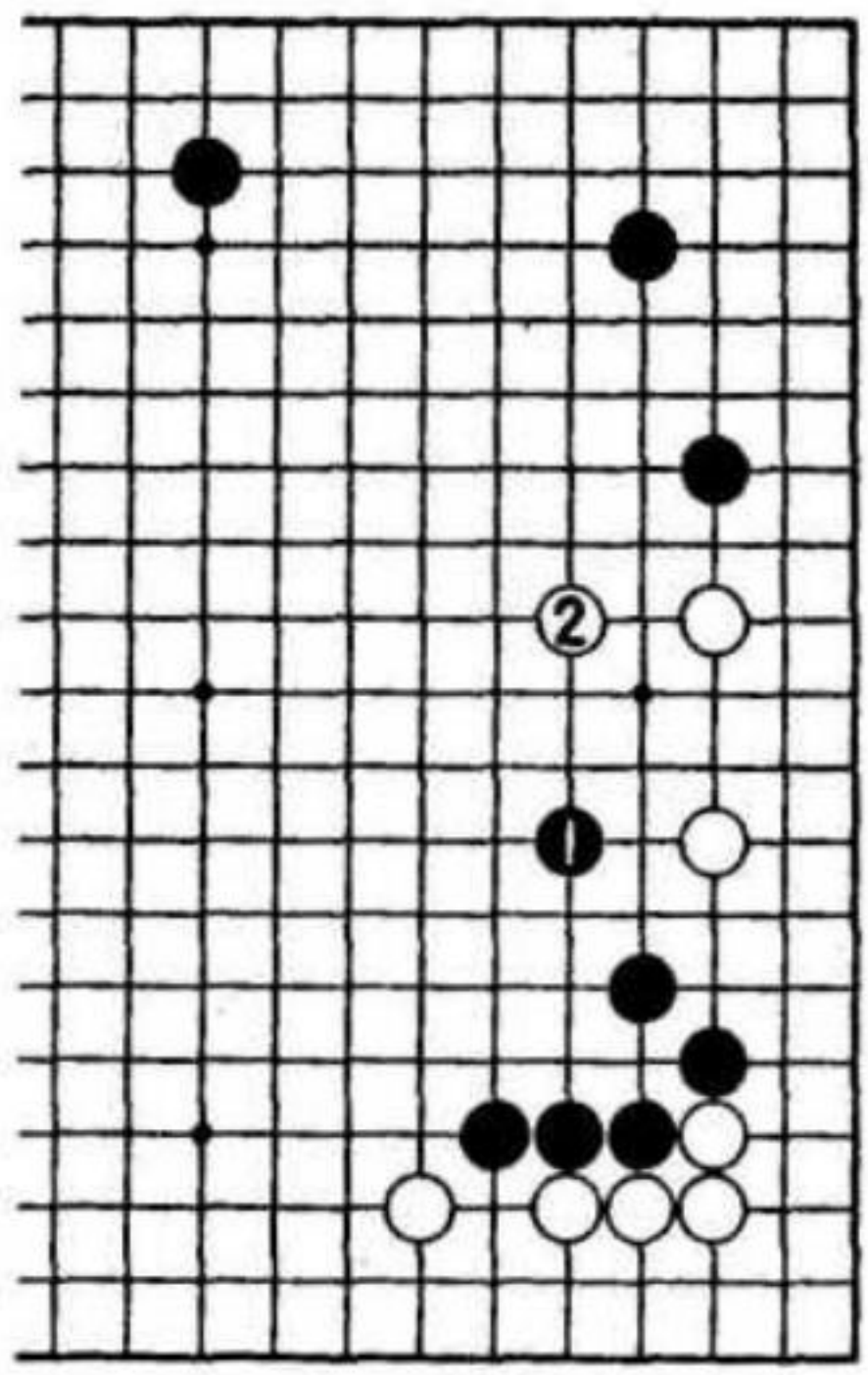
Black attacks at 1, inviting White to extend towards Black's thickness with 2. This is the right way to use thickness to attack White's position is still very thin, so Black can look forward to making a severe attack.

Dia. 3: building a moyo

Black will not necessarily attack immediately, but let's look at one way he might set about it. When he attacks from above with 1, White has to defend with moves like 2 and 4 but he finds himself helping Black to build a large moyo at the top. Typically, the profit gained from thickness is secured in another part of the board.



Dia. 3



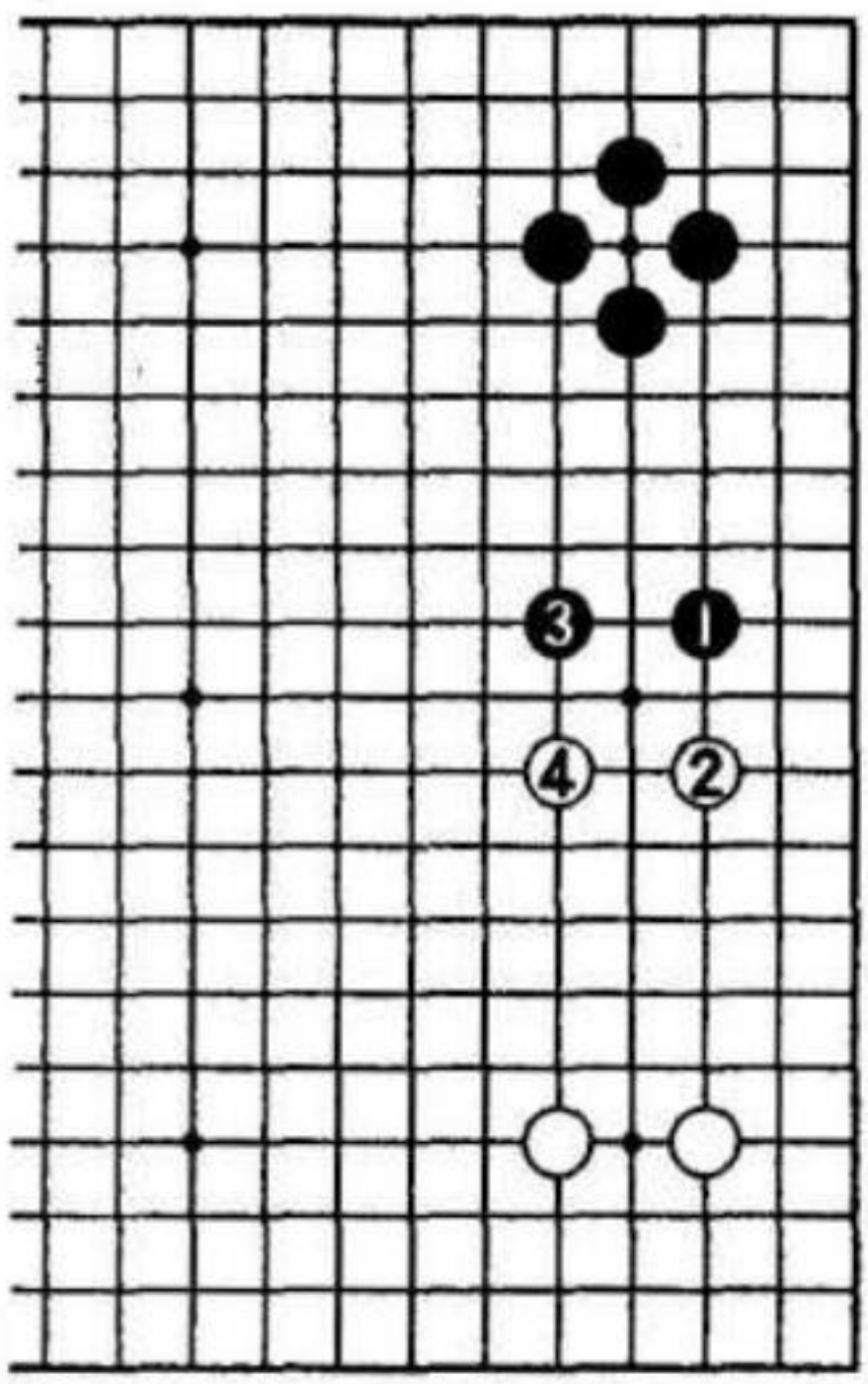
Dia. 4

Dia. 4: wrong direction

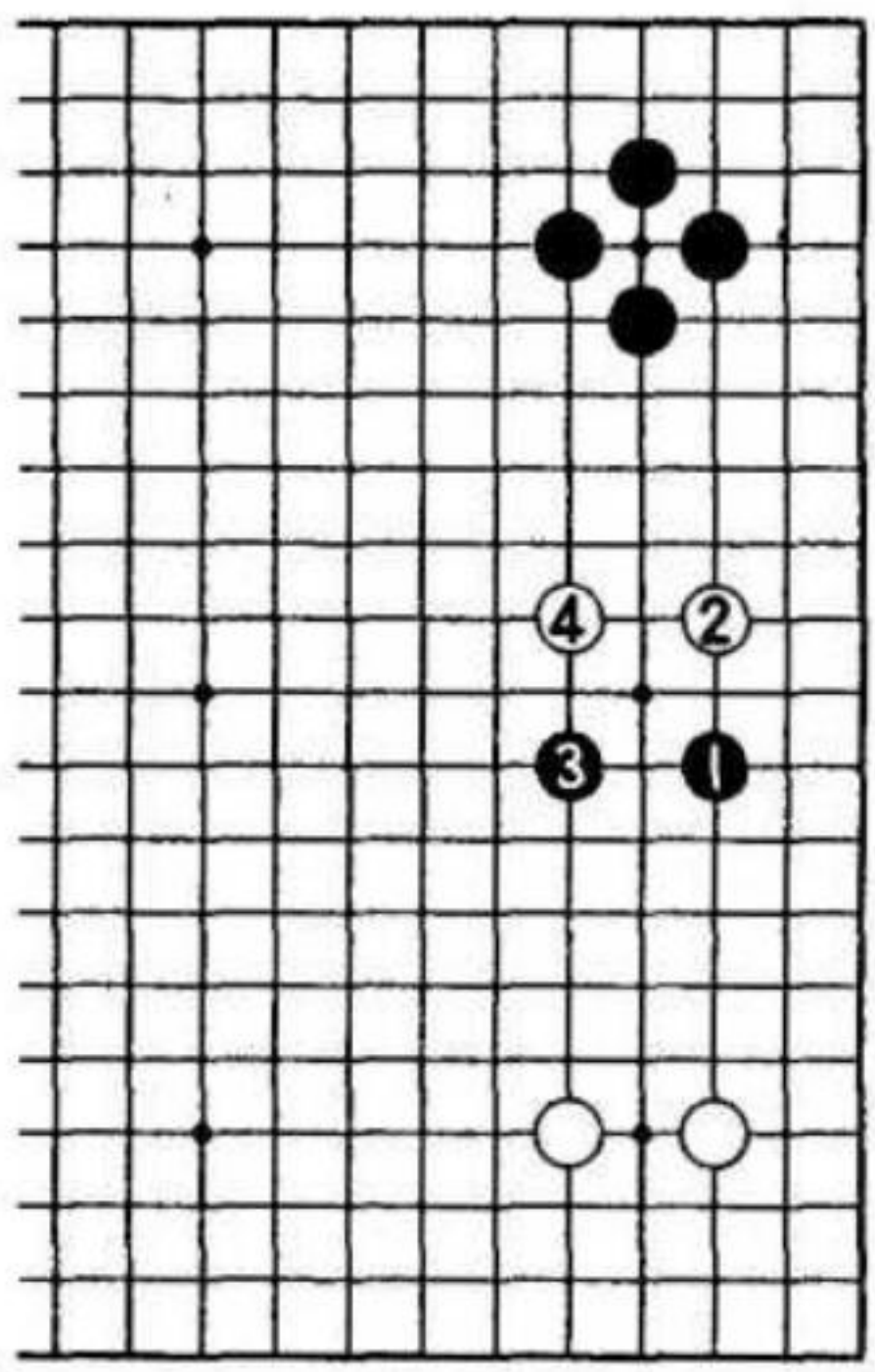
Attacking with 1 is a mistake in direction. When White jumps to 2, it is not dear where Black is going to take his profit. Compare the respective contributions to Black's position made by 1 here and 1 in the previous diagram. Note that inducing White to play towards one's own thickness is the best way to use it.

Dia. 5: an experiment

Let's try an experiment. Black has got thickness at the top, but let's suppose that both he and White make extensions of equal length with 1 and 2. If the game were to proceed peacefully and both players secured these areas as territory, then it's easy to see that White's stones are working more efficiently than Black's.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

Dia. 6: Black attacks

What if Black looks for a fight by extending further with 1? If White invades at 2 to stop him from getting too much territory here, Black attacks with 3. This way Black is using his thickness to attack: Black has the initiative.

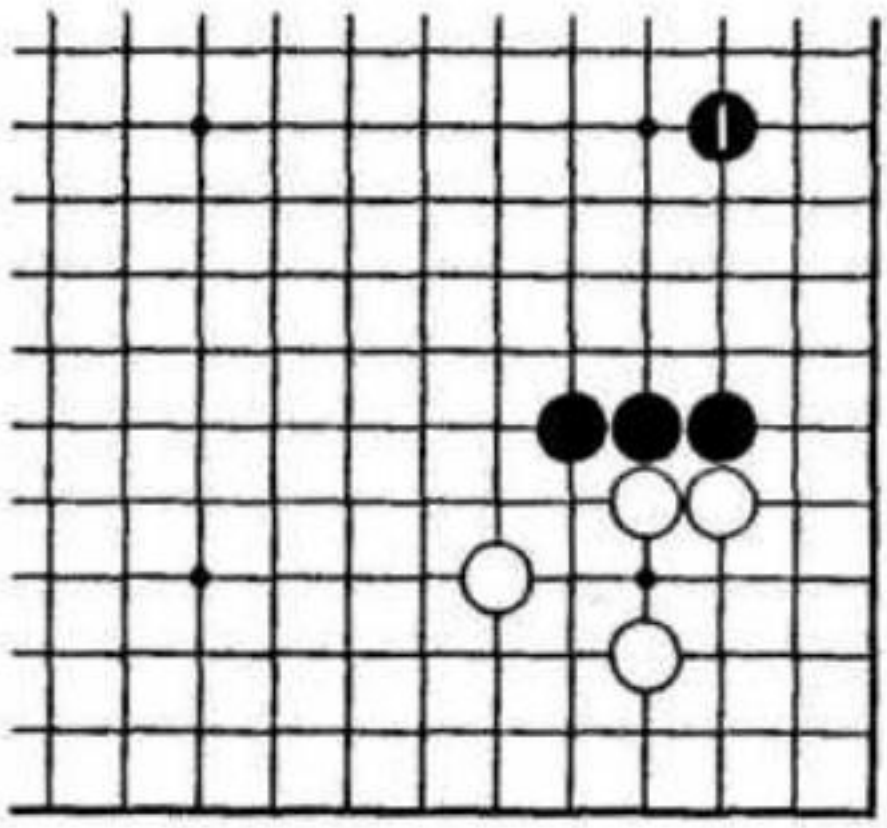
This is the correct way to use thickness.

Dia. 7. not so strong

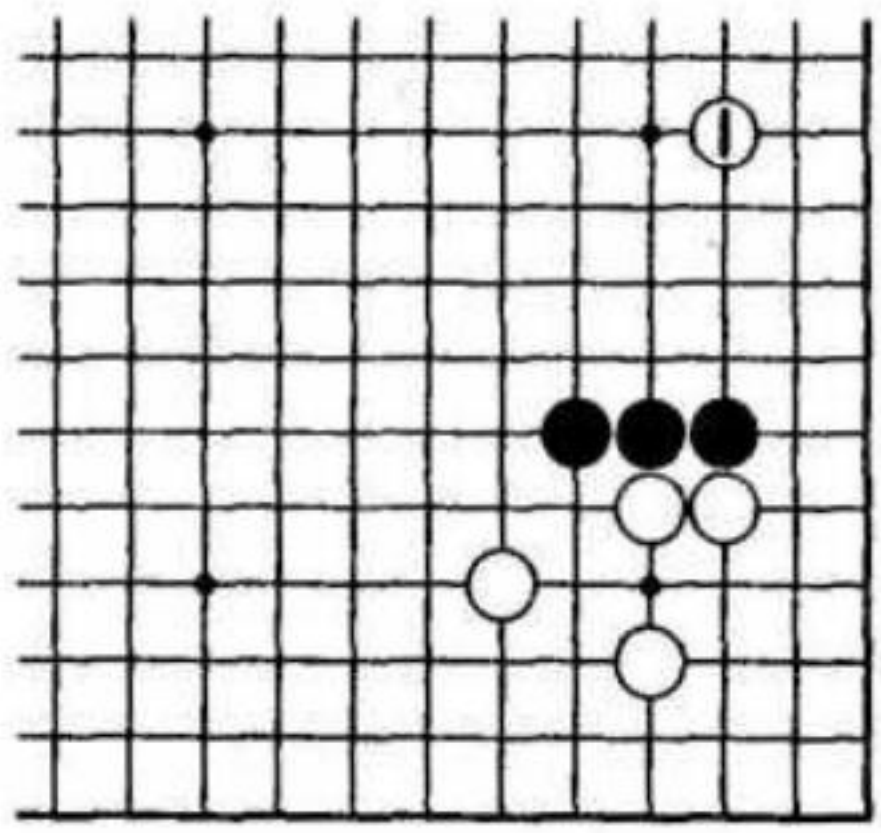
Outside influence does not always equal strength. In this position White has taken the corner profit and Black has built outside influence, but by themselves the three black stones are not very strong. Here the most appropriate strategy will be to use Black's strength to secure territory with 1.

Dia. 8: open to attack

If Black does nothing, his three stones will come under attack when White plays 1.



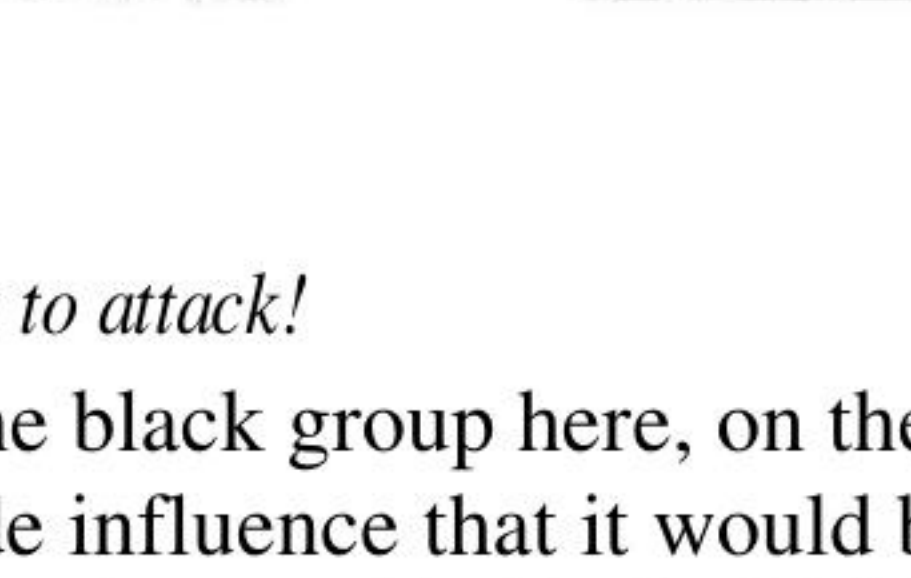
Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Dia. 9: use thickness to attack!

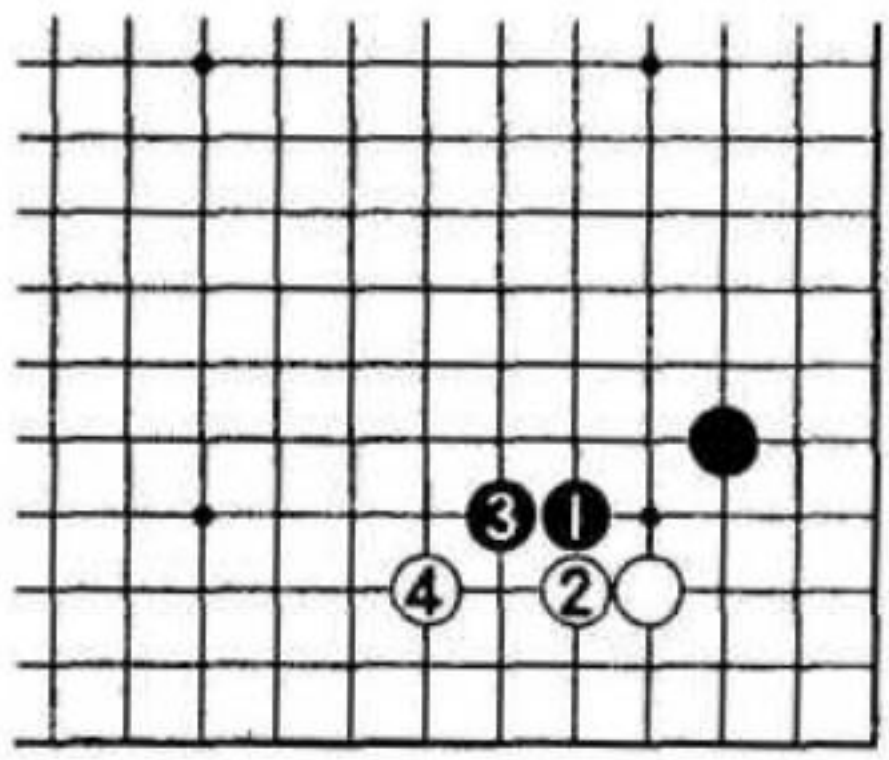
A group like the black group here, on the other hand, has such strong outside influence that it would be a waste to use it simply to take territory. This kind of thickness should be used for attack.



Dia. 9

Dia. 10: wall-like influence

We have seen the sequence from 1 to 4 a number of times already. This kind of outside influence, shaped like a wall, is poor in eye shape, so it is not very strong.



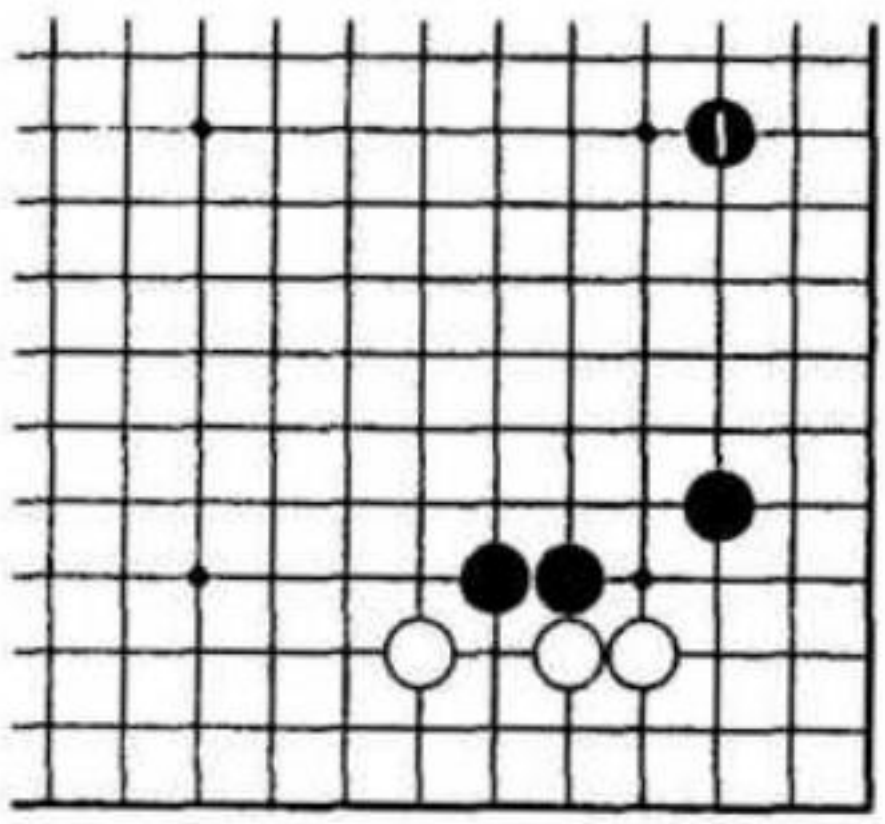
Dia. 10

Dia. 11: extension desirable

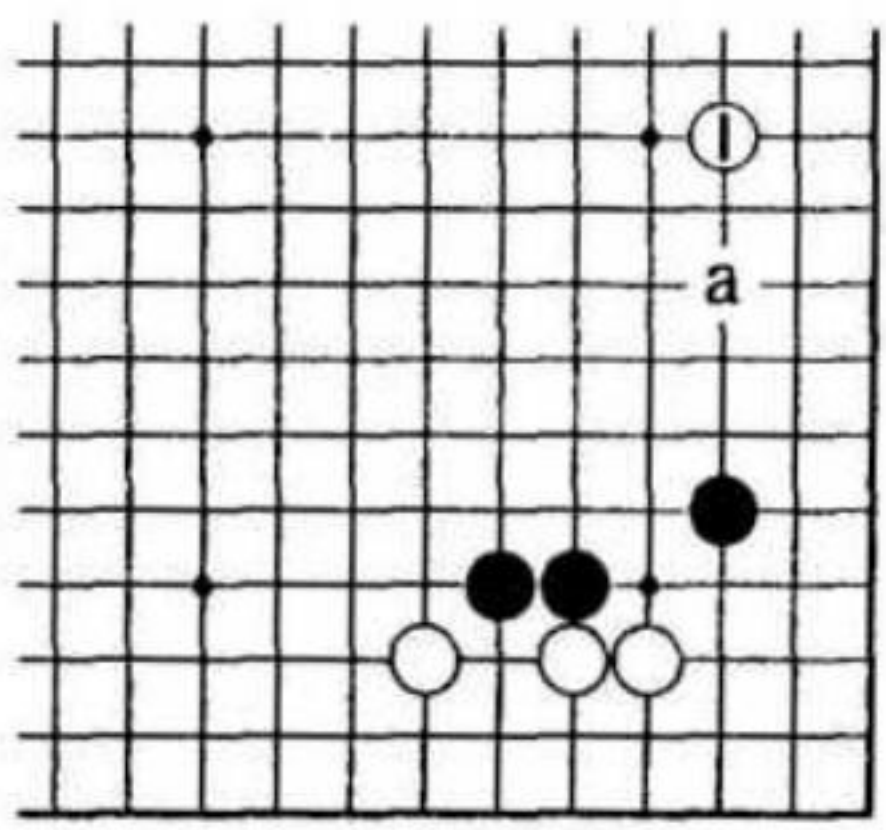
Consequently, in order to make use of this influence, it is usually desirable to stake out territory with an extension to 1.

Dia. 12. ineffective

If White is allowed to play a move around 1, Black will find himself unable to make effective use of his thickness. Extending to Black 'a' would be too narrow.



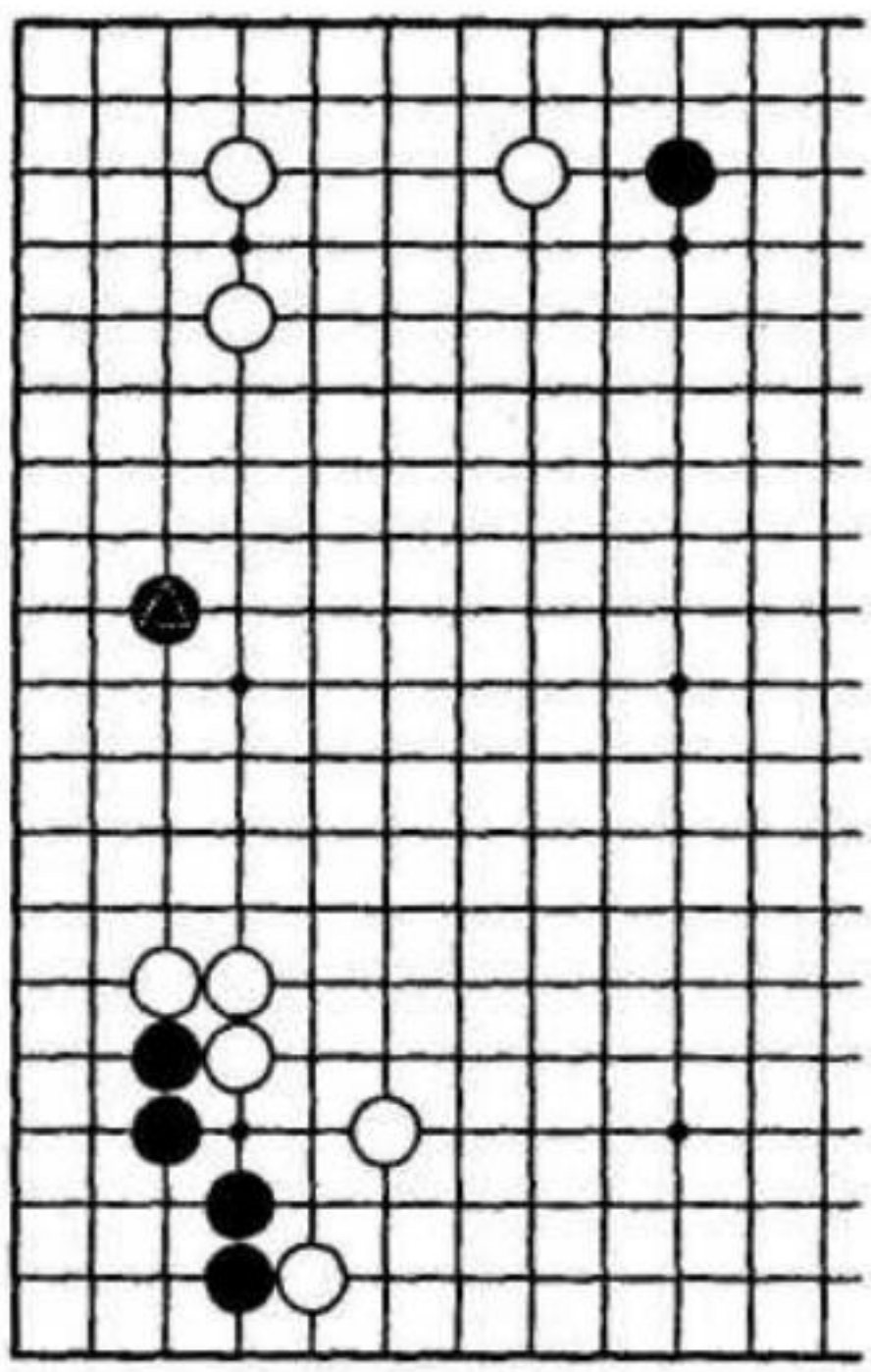
Dia. 11



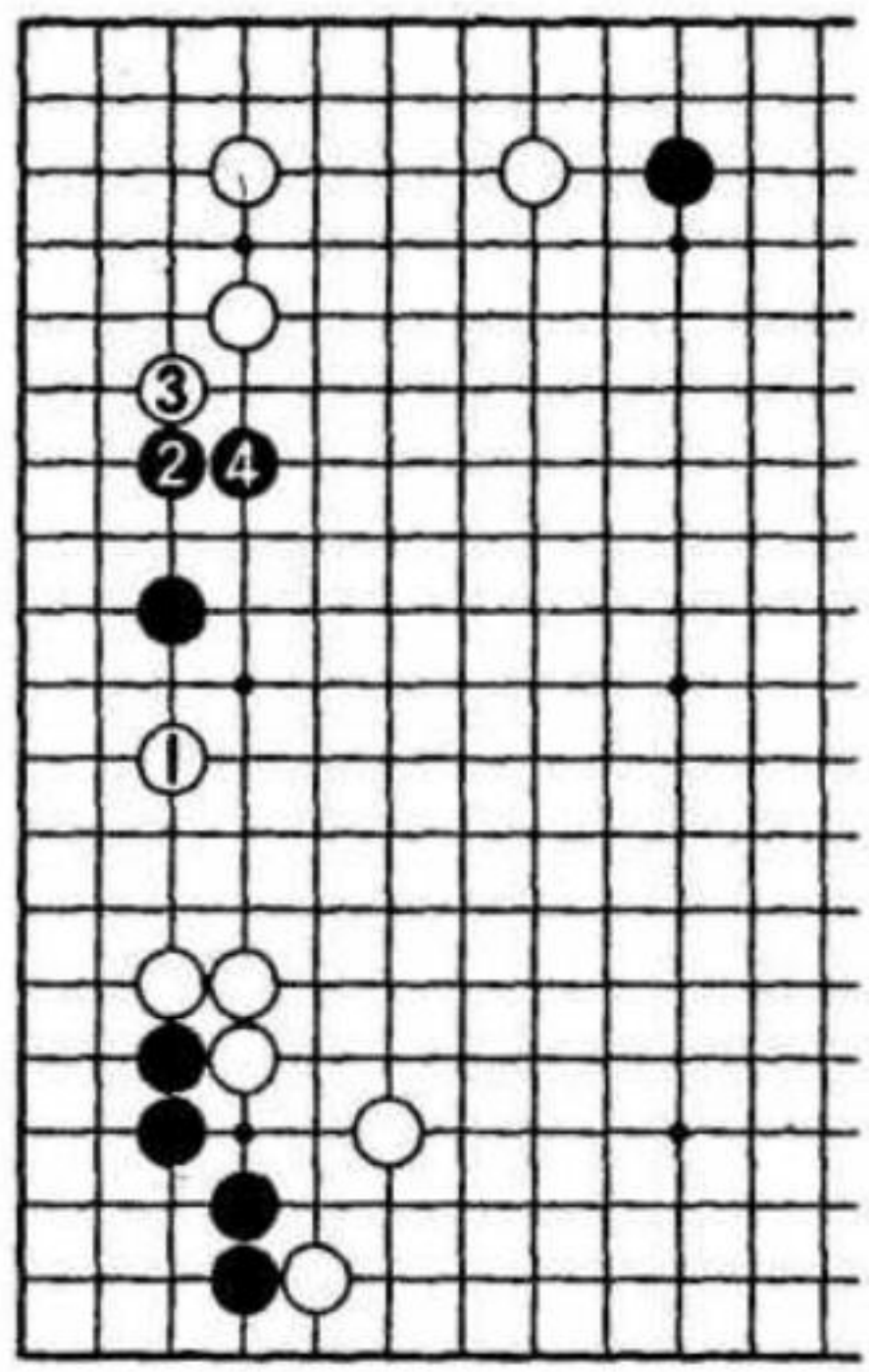
Dia. 12

Dia. 13: how to attack?

The problem here is to find the best way for White to attack the marked black stone. The white position on the bottom left can be regarded as constituting thickness. How you view the white enclosure at the top will affect your decision.



Dia. 13



Dia. 14

Dia. 14: Black gets settled

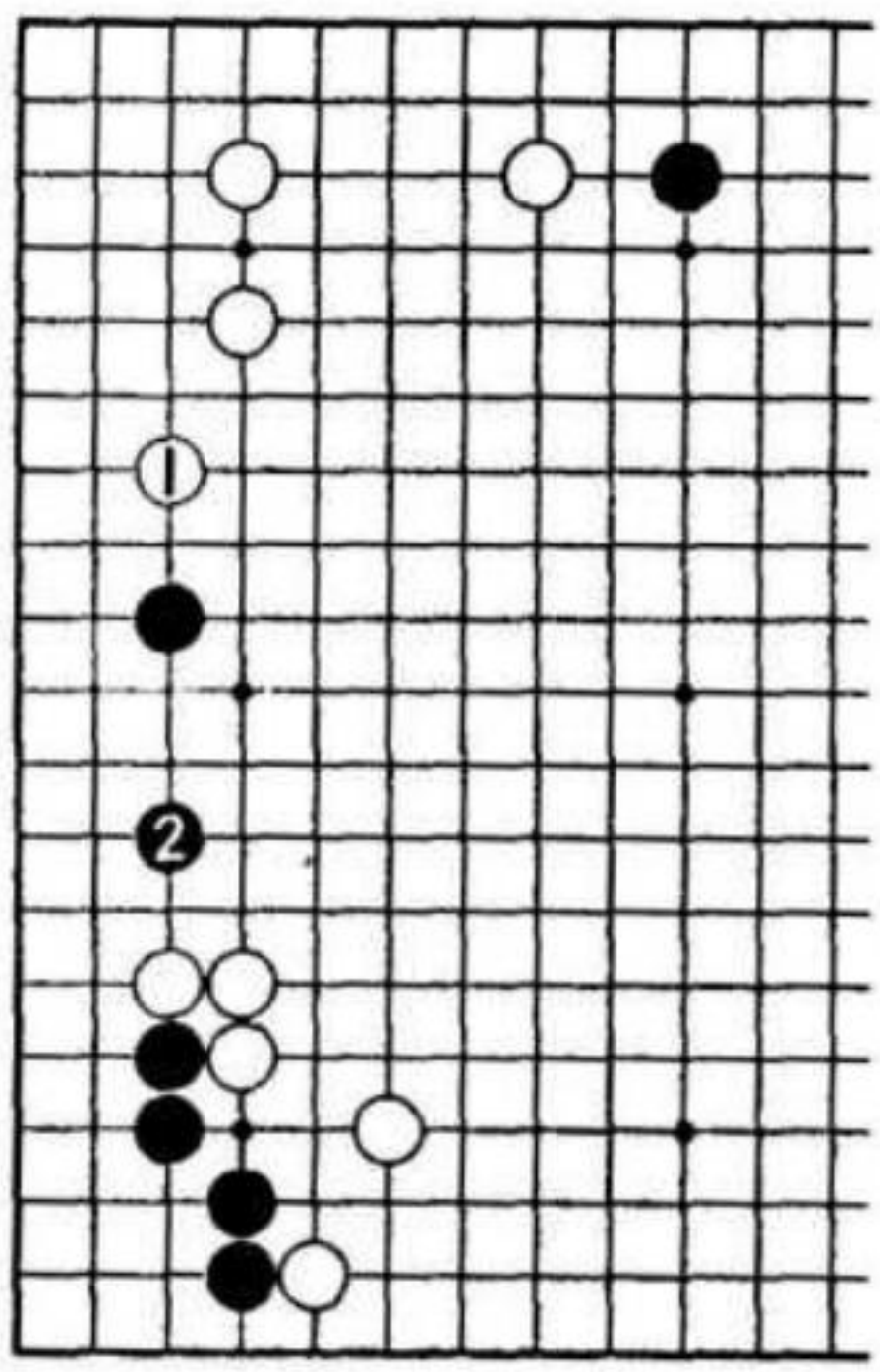
Attacking with 1 may look good, as it forces Black to make a narrow extension to 2, but actually this 2 is a better move that it looks, as it takes aim at the open side of White's enclosure. If White defends the corner with 3, Blacks group is fairly secure after he plays 4. White 1 is therefore not necessarily a good move.

Dia. 15: attack from above

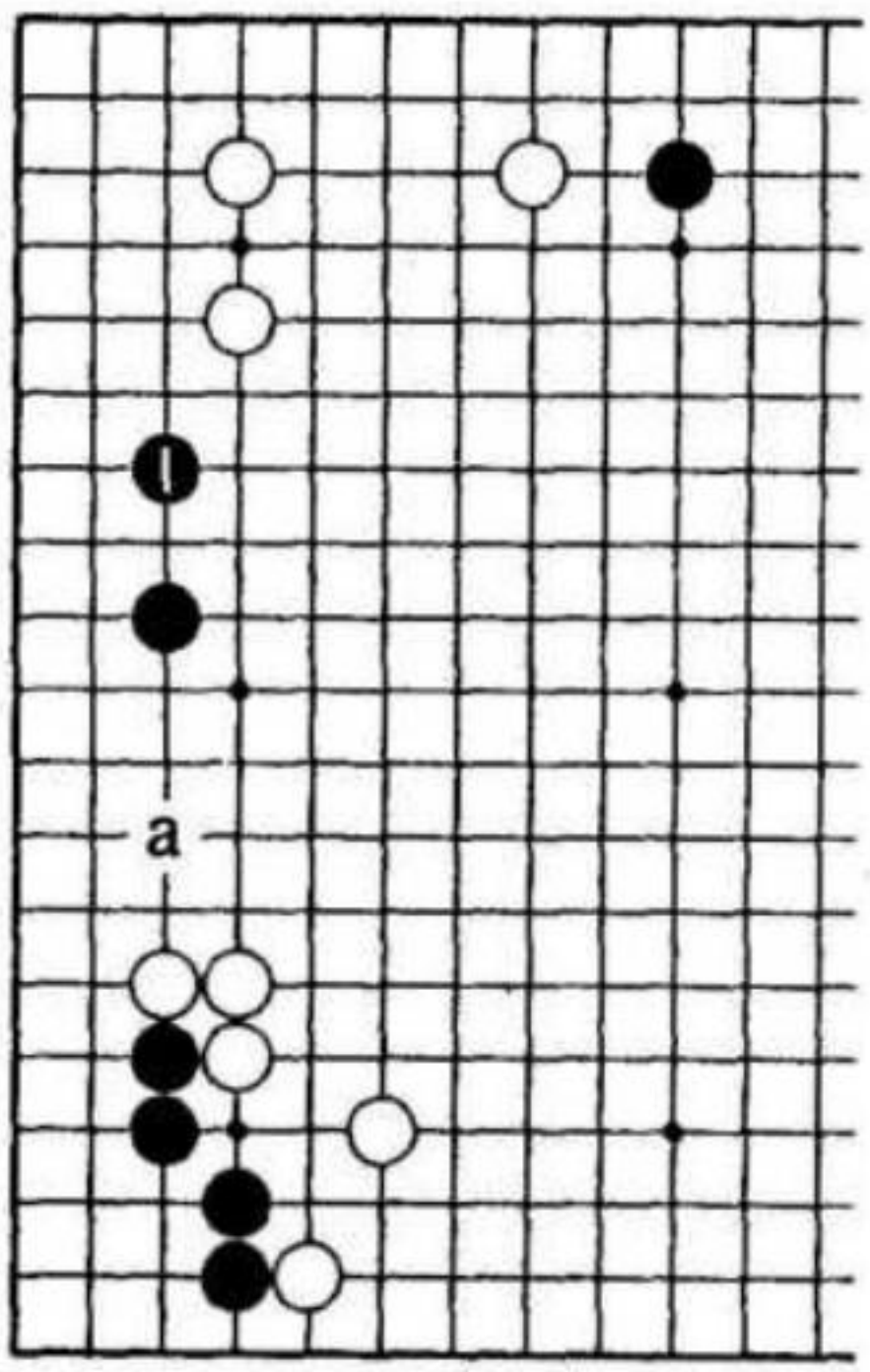
Attacking with 1, which invites Black to approach White's thickness below, is a better strategy. Black's two-space extension remains weak, while White has eliminated the weak point of his one-space corner enclosure and looks like getting a big territory on the top left.

Dia. 16: if Black plays first

Where will Black play if it is his turn to move: 'a' or 1? Black 1 actually looks like the better move. Black 'a' approaches a strong enemy position, whereas Black 1 aims at exploiting a weakness. For that reason, Black 1 gives Black more stability.



Dia. 15

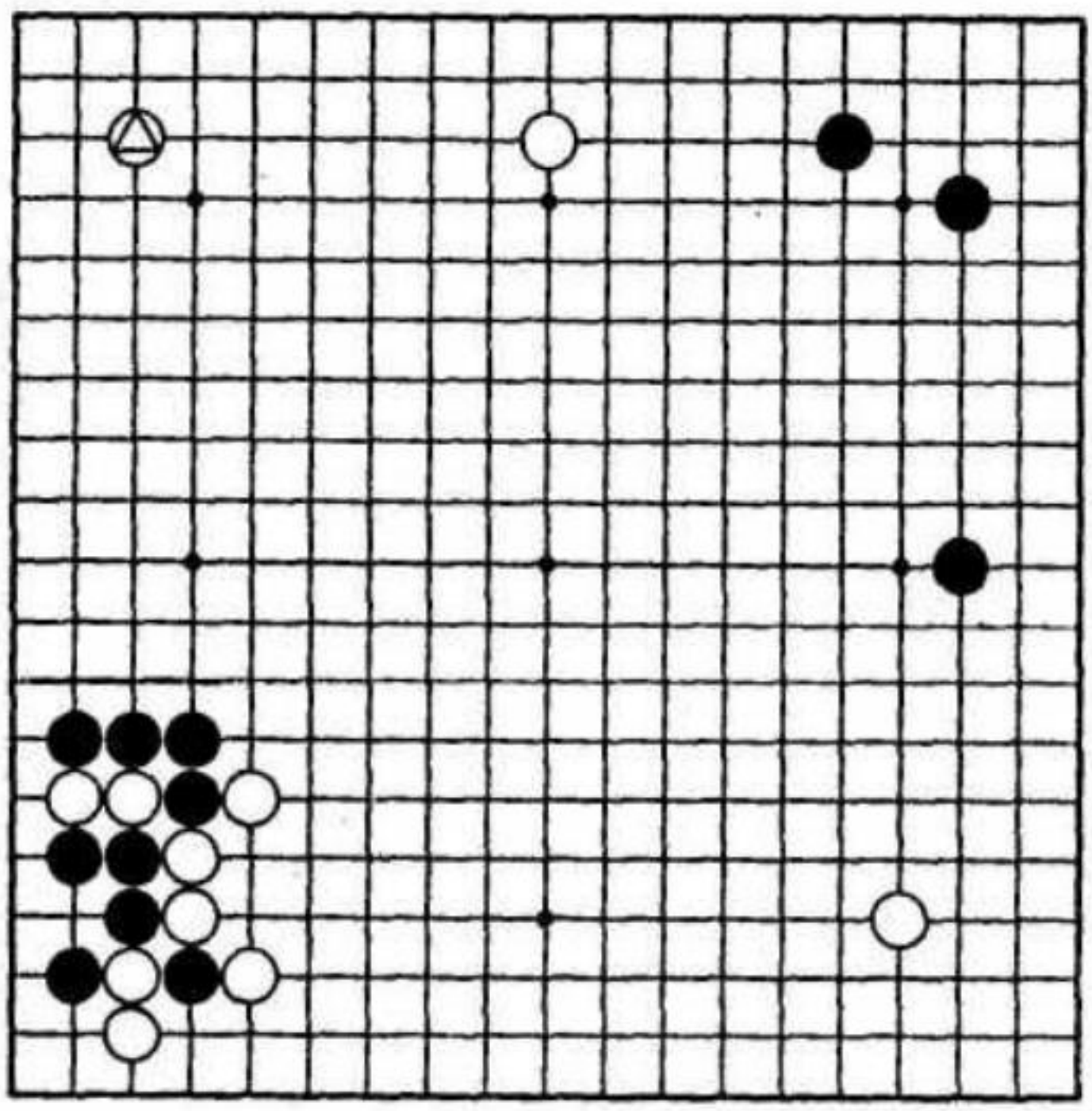


Dia. 16

Principle 18
Keep away from solid positions

Approaching the opponent's solid positions not only has no effect on him but also exposes one's own weaknesses. The principle of keeping away from solid positions is related to the previous principle of using thickness to attack.

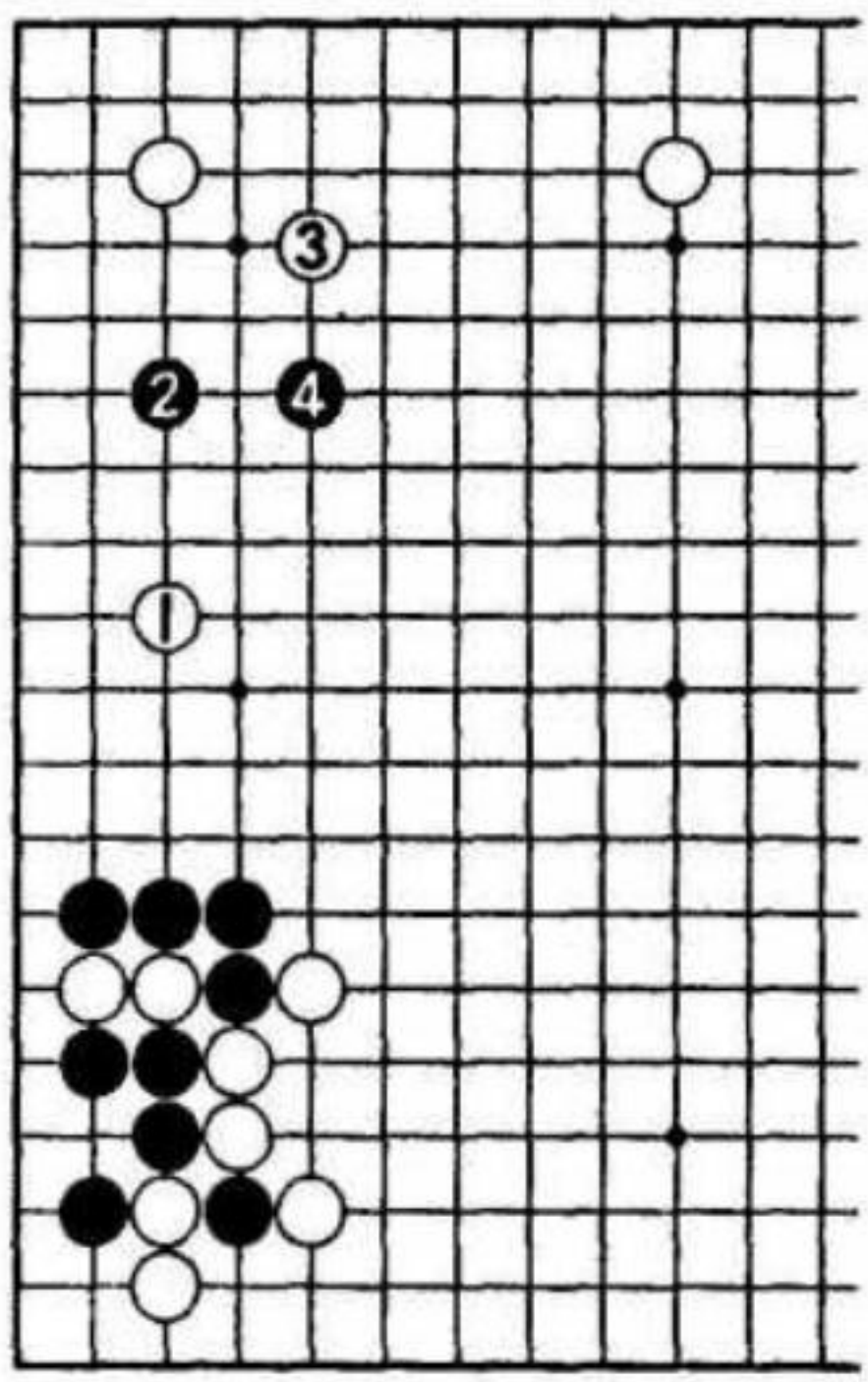
In the theme diagram it is White's turn to play. He must take into account the relationship between his marked stone and the black thickness on the bottom left.



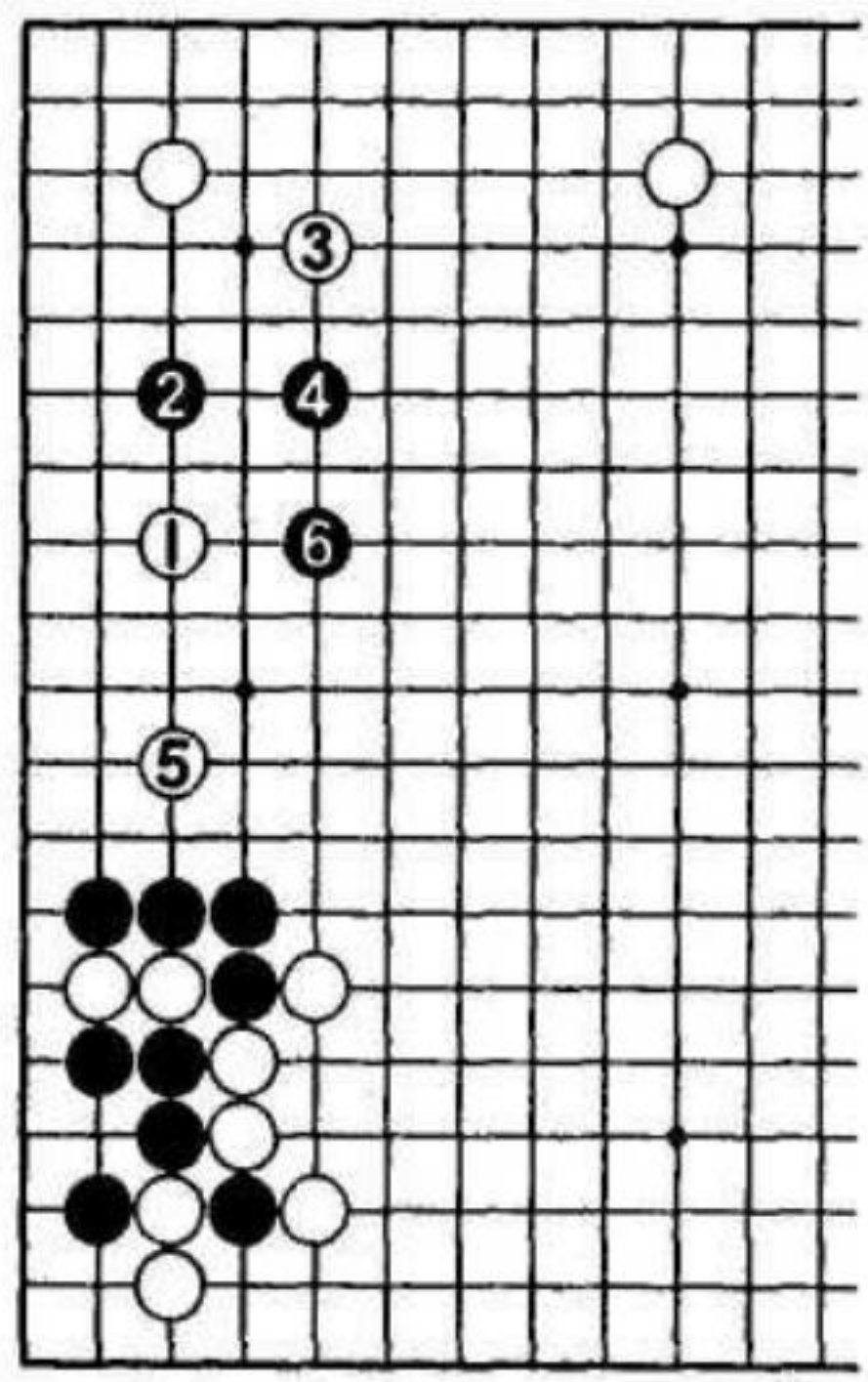
Theme diagram
White to play

Dia. 1: overextending

Extending down the left side looks big, so White tries the long extension of 1. However, if Black invades at 2, leading to the 3-4 exchange, then White 1 has dearly been weakened. White 1 is definitely too close to Black's thickness below.



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

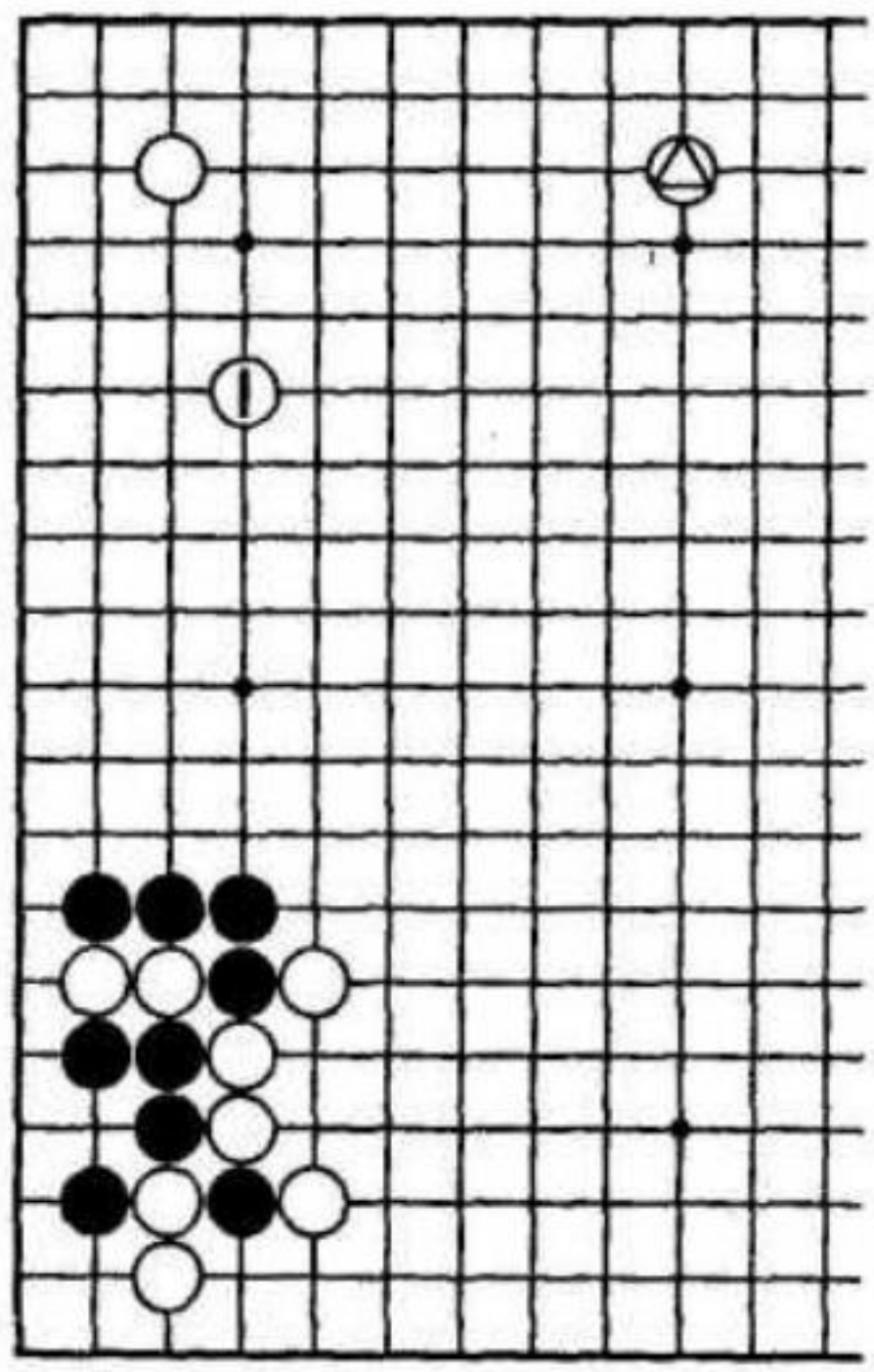
Dia. 2: holding back

Even if White holds back one line, Black can still aim at invading at 2. White may have room to extend to 5 after the same 3-4 exchange as before, but his group is still in a lot of trouble. White 1 may be an improvement on 1 in Dia. 1, but it is still an overextension.

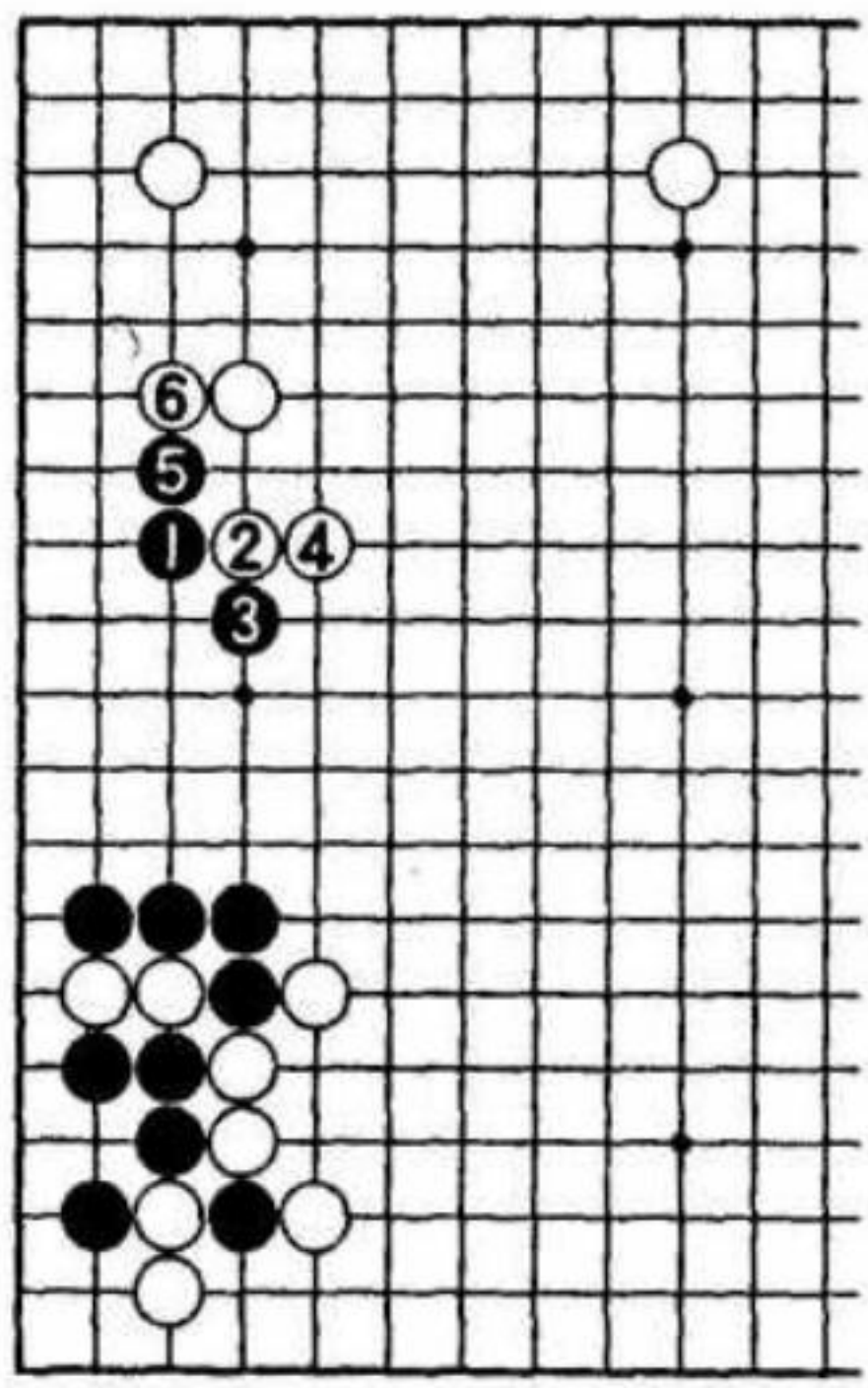
Dia. 3: appropriate

As far as possible, it is best to avoid approaching the black thickness below. Here the most appropriate strategy is to work with the marked white stone to build a defensive position. A move around I look's best.

In playing 1, most players will probably be concerned about the prospect of Black 1 in the next diagram.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4: give Black territory

Black 1 certainly looks like a big move. However, White can be content to answer with 2 to b, letting Black take territory. When you consider just how solid Black's thickness below is, he will have reason to be dissatisfied with getting no more territory than this.

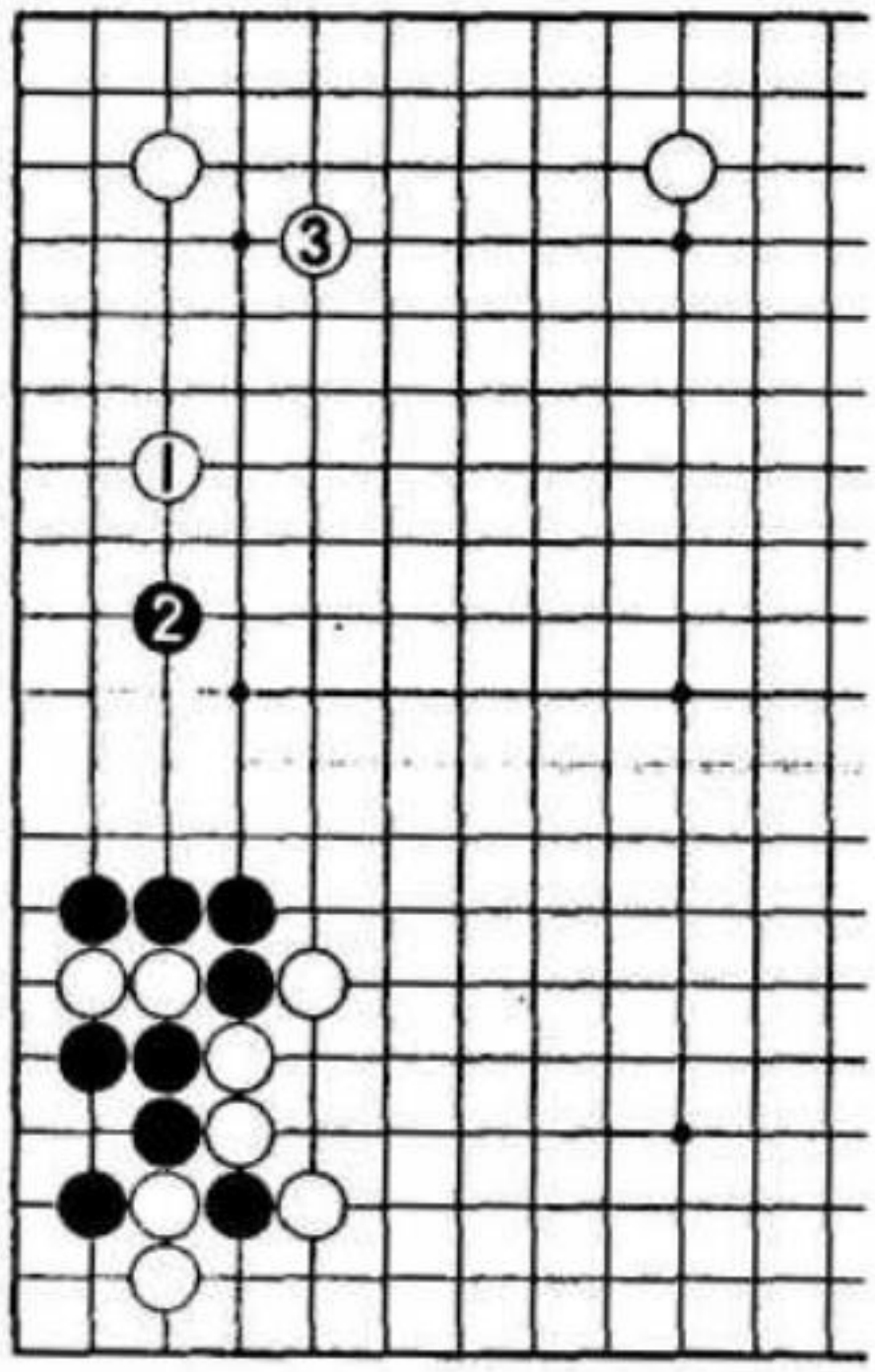
Dia. 5: envious

How about the three-space extension of 1? White may feel that he has held way back, but you can see he doesn't want to give Black more left-side territory than he can avoid. White 1 shows an envious spirit.

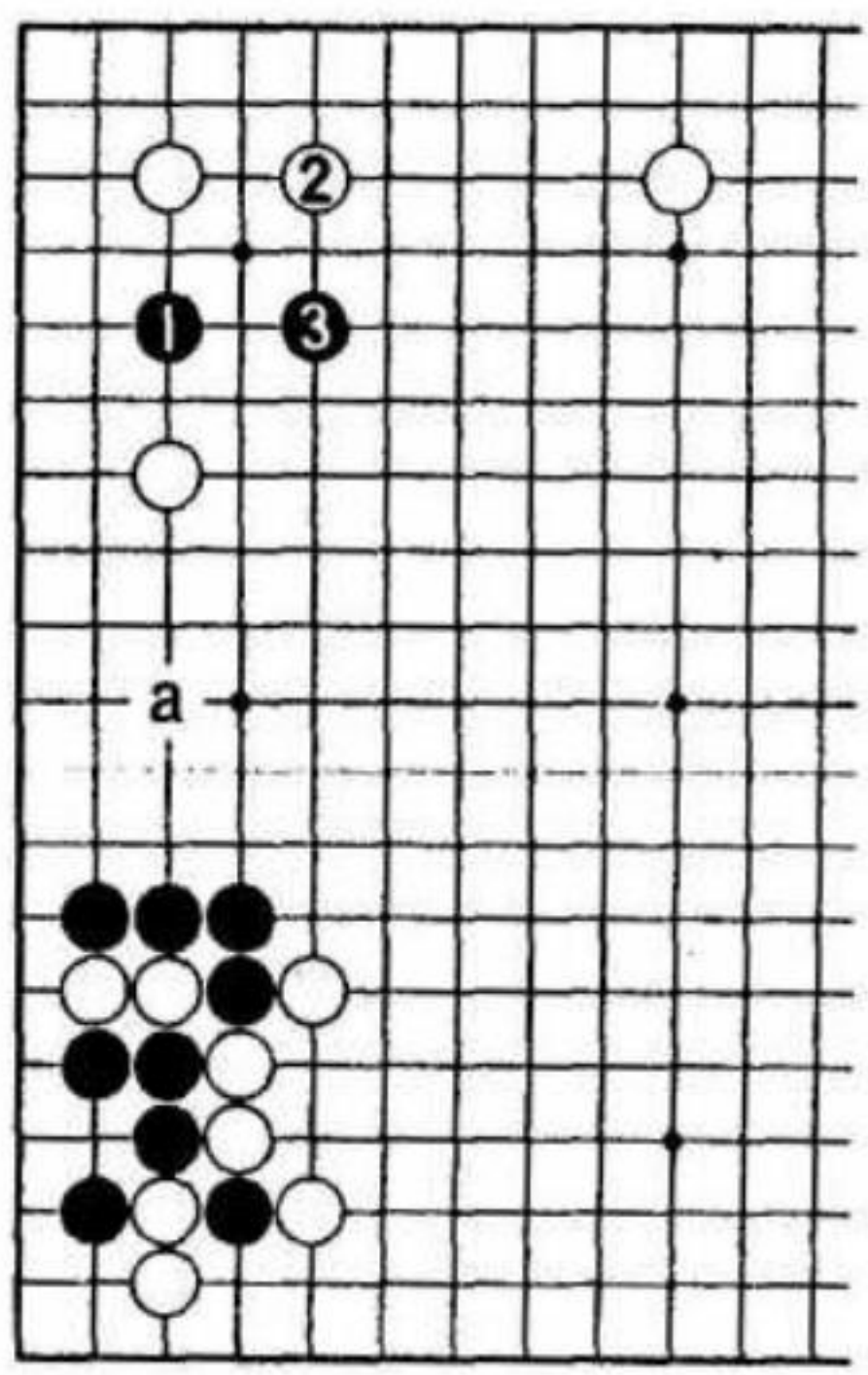
If Black is kind enough to extend to 2, White defends at 3 and achieves his objective, but -

Dia. 6: invading still possible

Though he may not go ahead with it immediately, it is still possible for Black to aim at invading at 1. After the exchange of 2 and 3, White 'a' will be too close to Black's thickness. Black will welcome this fight more than White.



Dia. 5



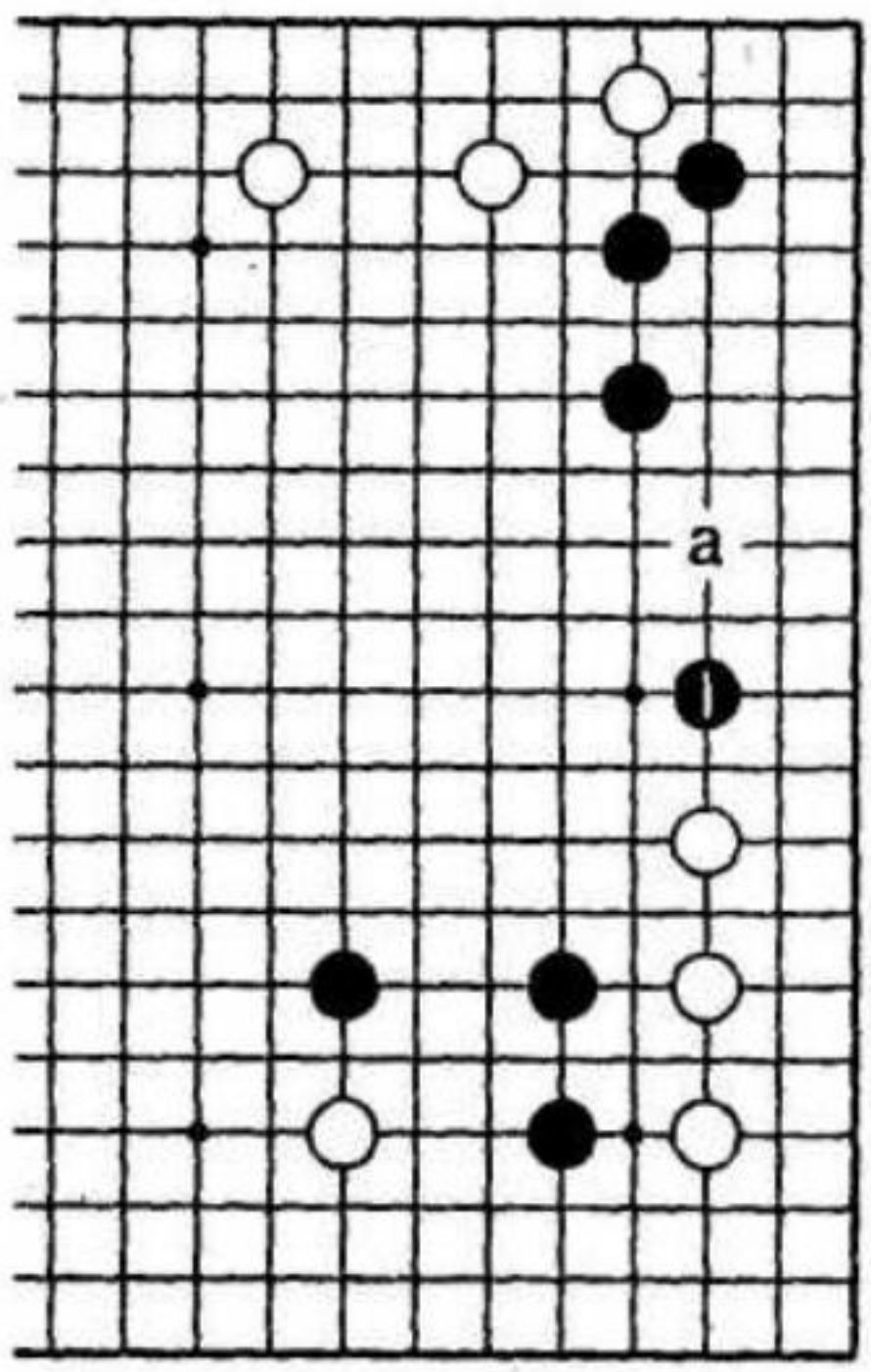
Dia. 6

Dia. 7: common sense?

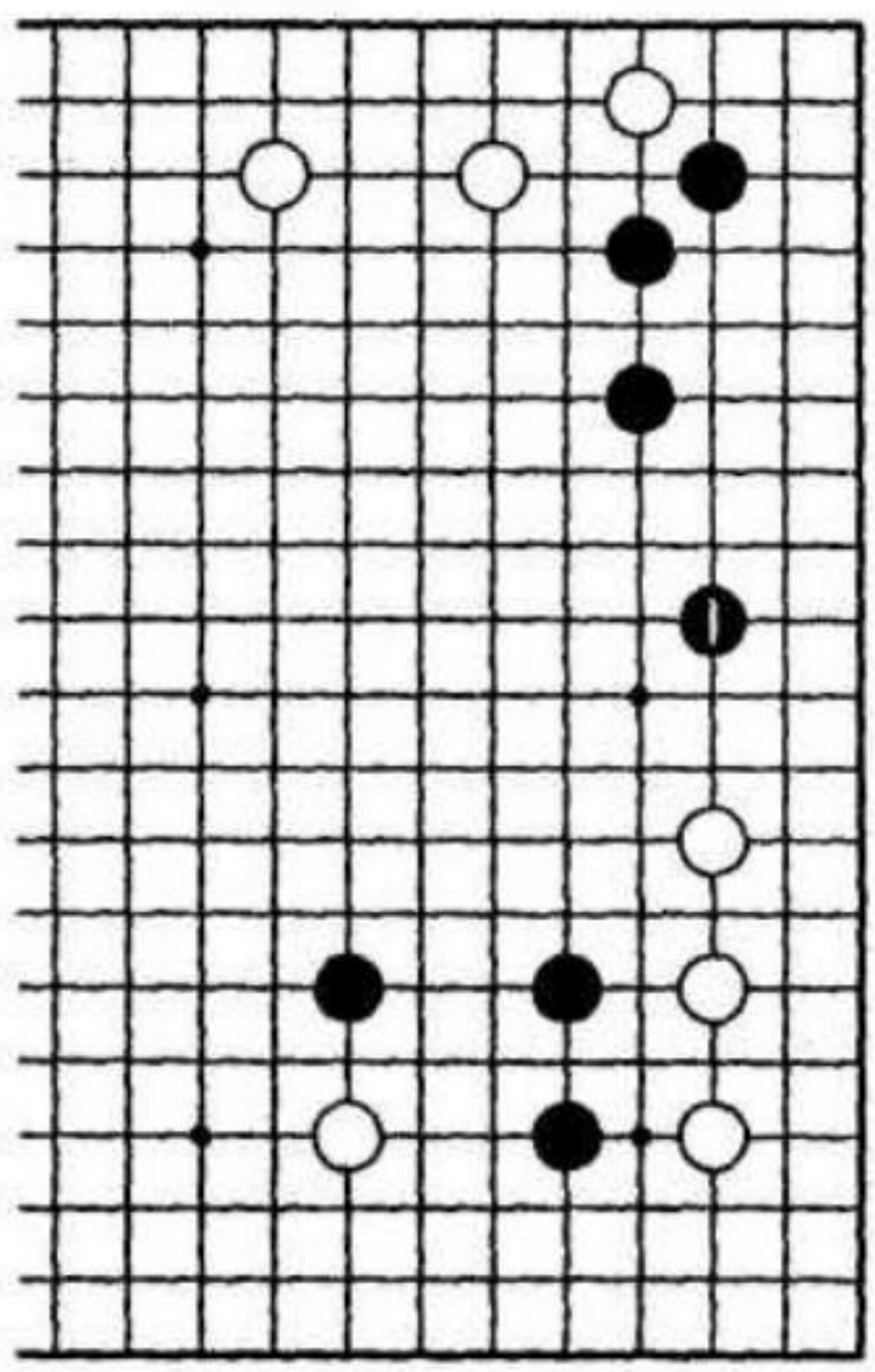
Black 1 is the commonsense extension from Black's top right position, but how does it work in relation to White's position? White not only has a low position but has made solid one-space jumps. Approaching so dose to such a tight position only invites White to counter with an invasion at 'a'. Black 1 is dubious.

Dia. 8: holding back

If Black is going to make an extension here, he should hold back at 1. Even this extension, however, has virtually no effect on White's solid group, so Black 1 is a purely territorial move. It fails to kill two birds with one stone.



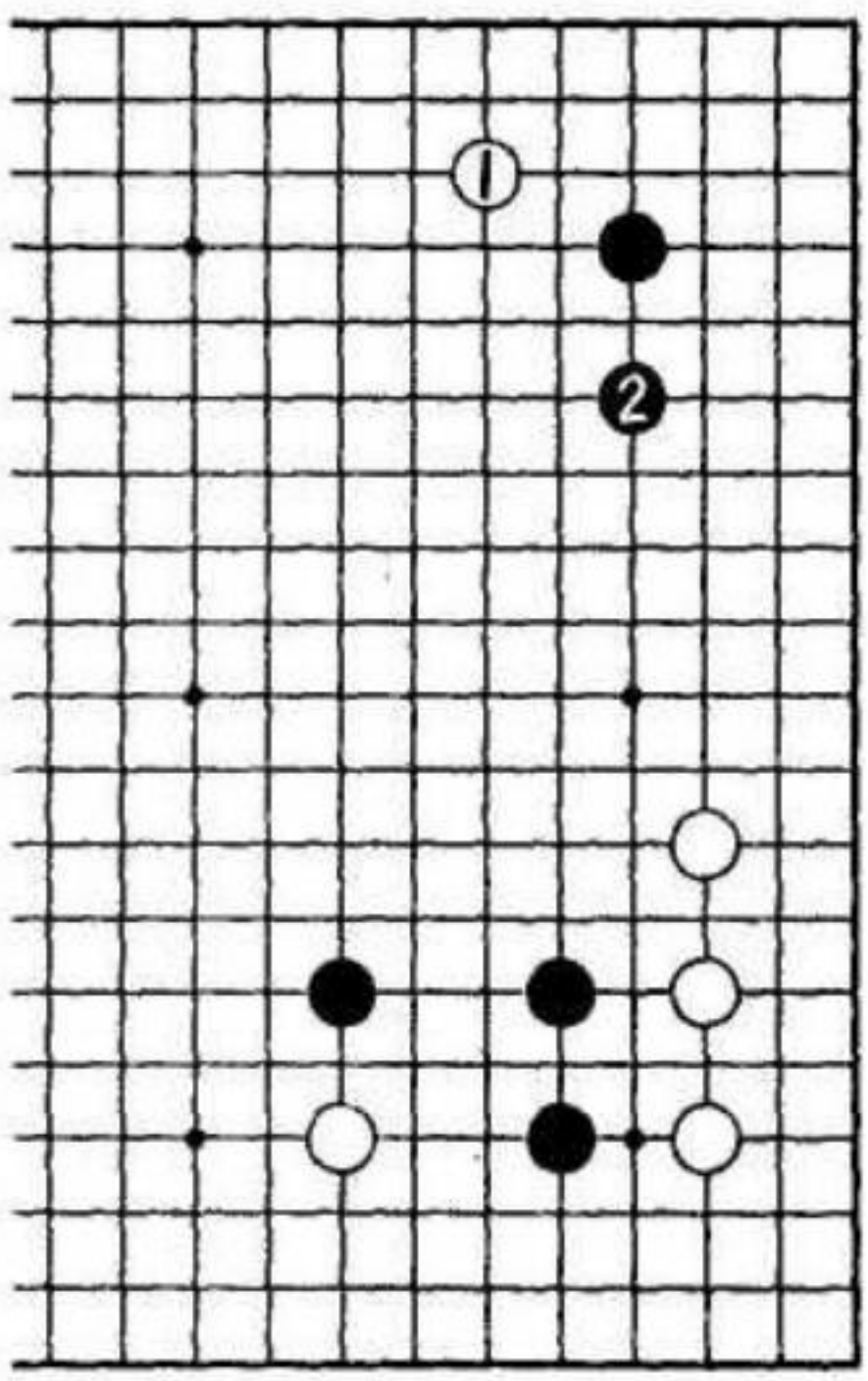
Dia. 7



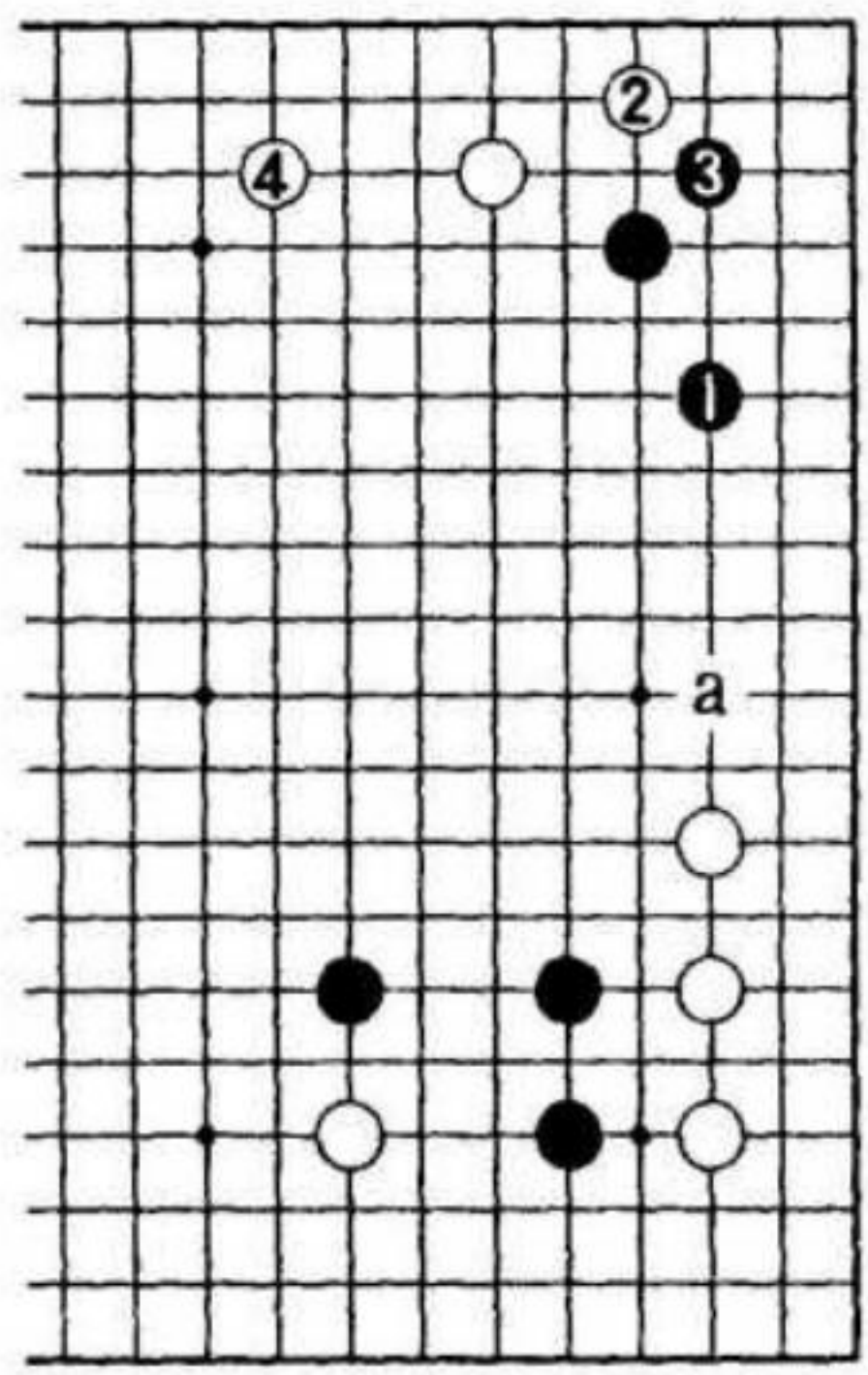
Dia. 8

Dia. 9: dubious

To go back a few moves in the position in *Dia. 7*, answering White 1 with the high move of 2 is probably dubious. The high enclosure implicitly aims at continuing with an extension (see Principle 6), which is inappropriate when White has a solid position below. Instead -



Dia. 9



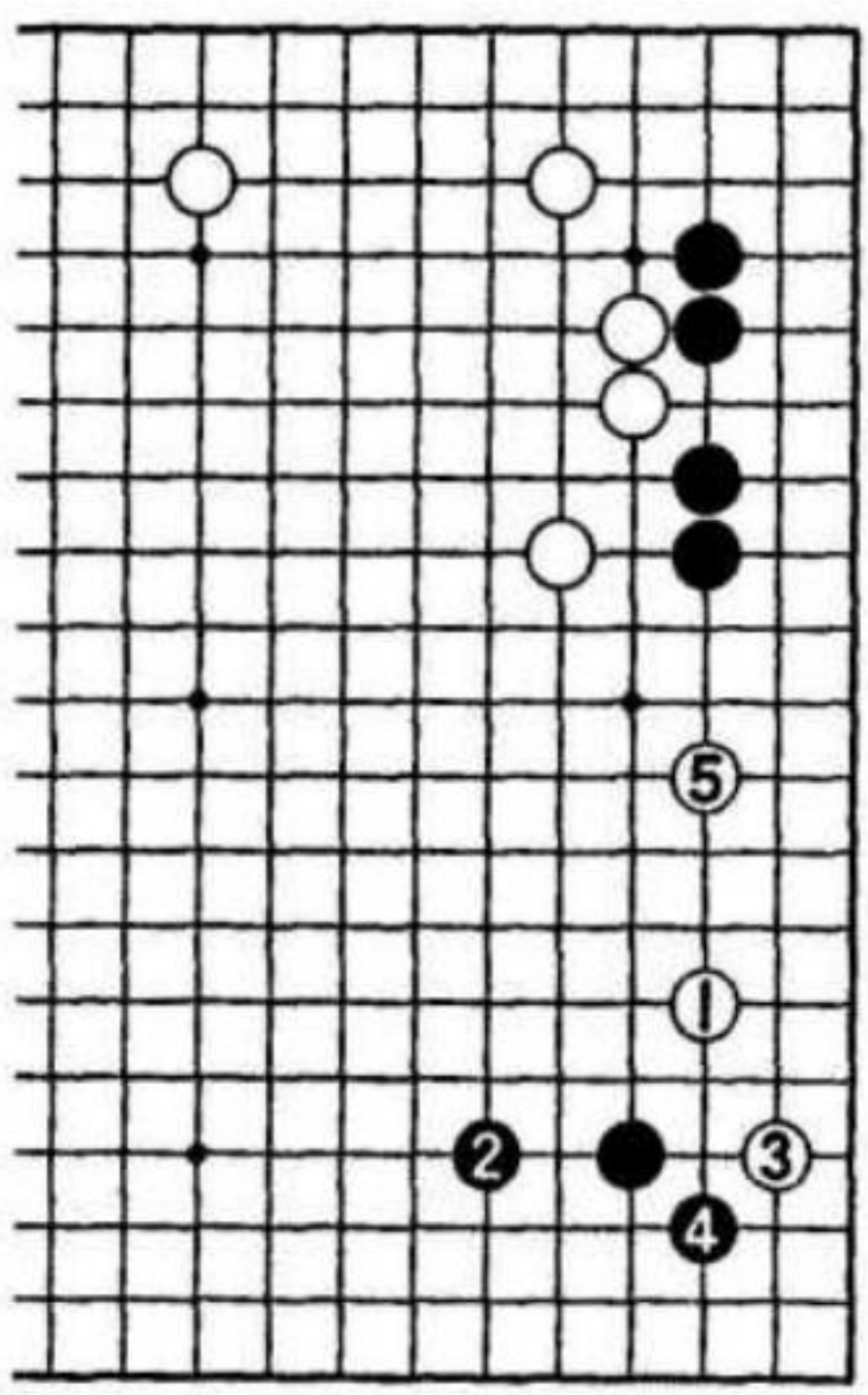
Dia. 10

Dia. 10: secure the corner

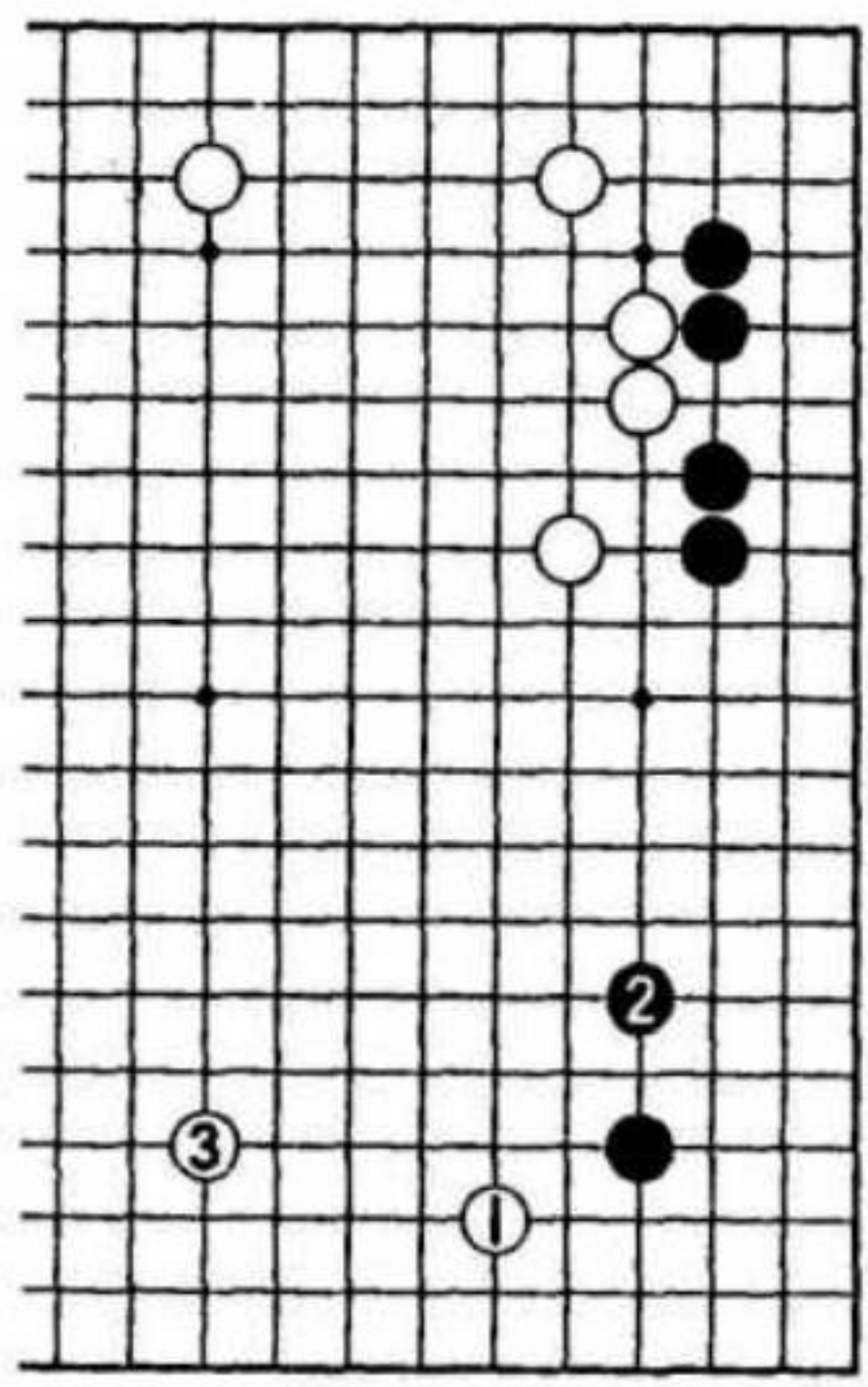
Black should concentrate on securing his corner position with 1 and 3. Now there is no need for him to make an extension to 'a'. Black now has a better balanced position.

Dia. 11: wrong side

The approach move of 1 is bad. If Black simply makes the usual answer of 2, White finds that he has to approach a solid black position with 5. White's position may be secure, but it is cramped and has no potential for development.



Dia. 11



Dia. 12

Dia. 11 correct direction

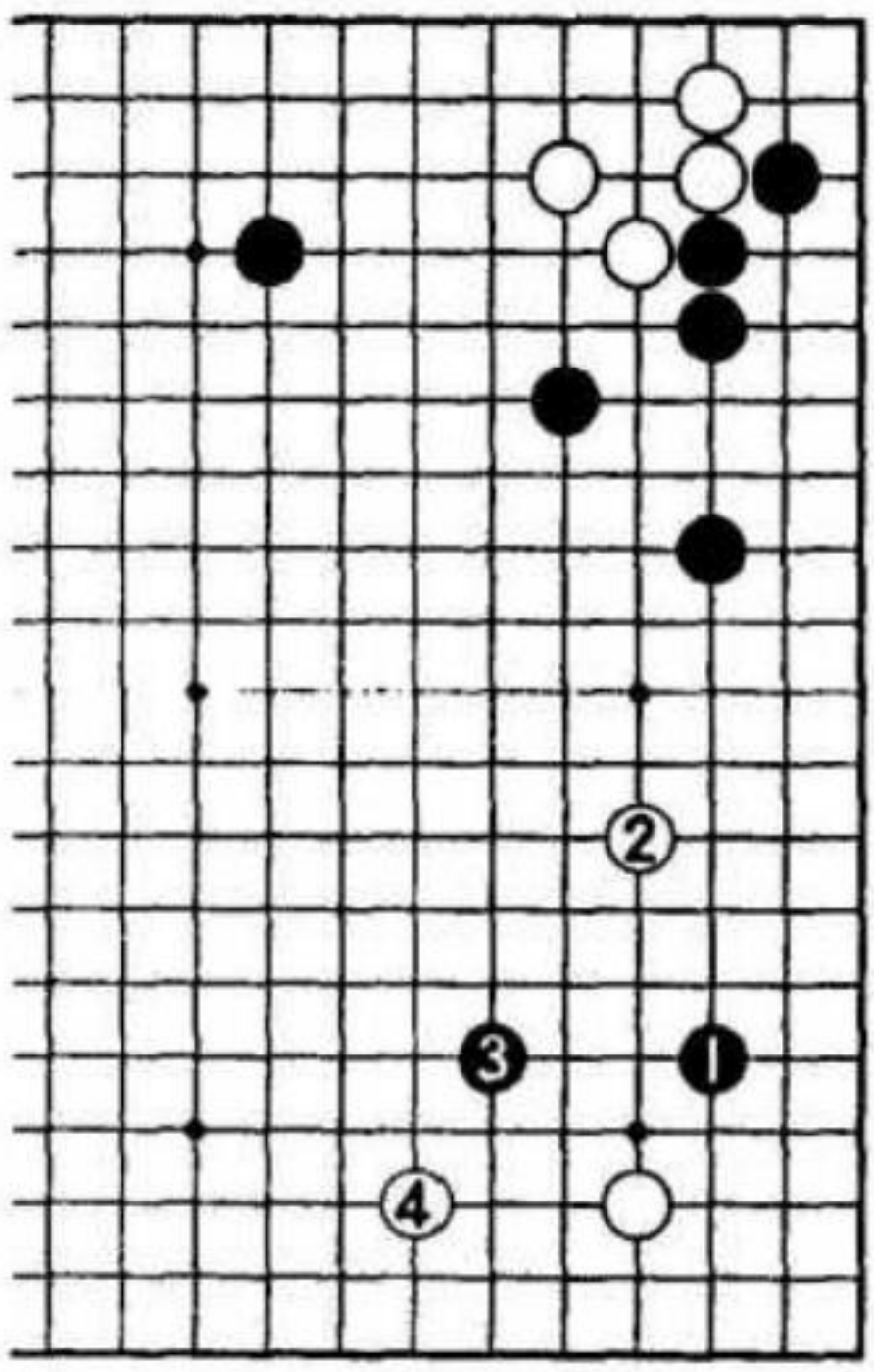
White 1, steering dear of Black's solid position, is the correct direction of play. Black may look as if he is going to get a big side territory when he defends at 2, but that is quite ac ceptable. White can be satisfied with the future potential of his bottom position after 3.

Dia. 13: aggressive?

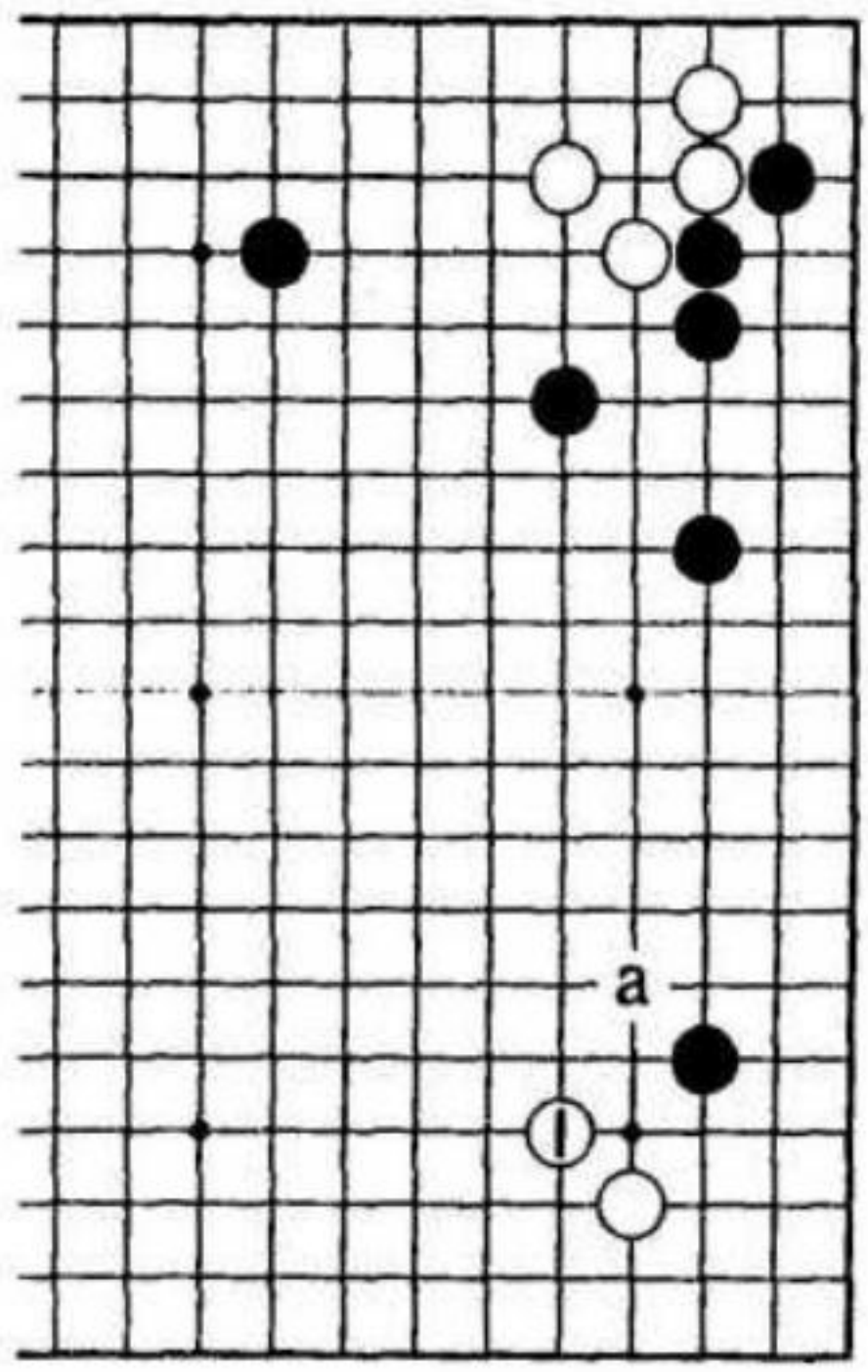
How should White respond to Black's approach move at 1? The pincer of White 2 may seem aggressive, but after Black 3 it becomes dear that this is not a good strategy. White 2 is quite weak because of the black thickness above, so this stone will come under attack.

Dia. 14: calm

Once again White should avoid approaching Black's strong position. The diagonal move of 1 is a calm response: he avoids creating a weak group. If White is allowed to force Black into a low position by pressing at 'a' next, he will get an ideal development.



Dia. 13



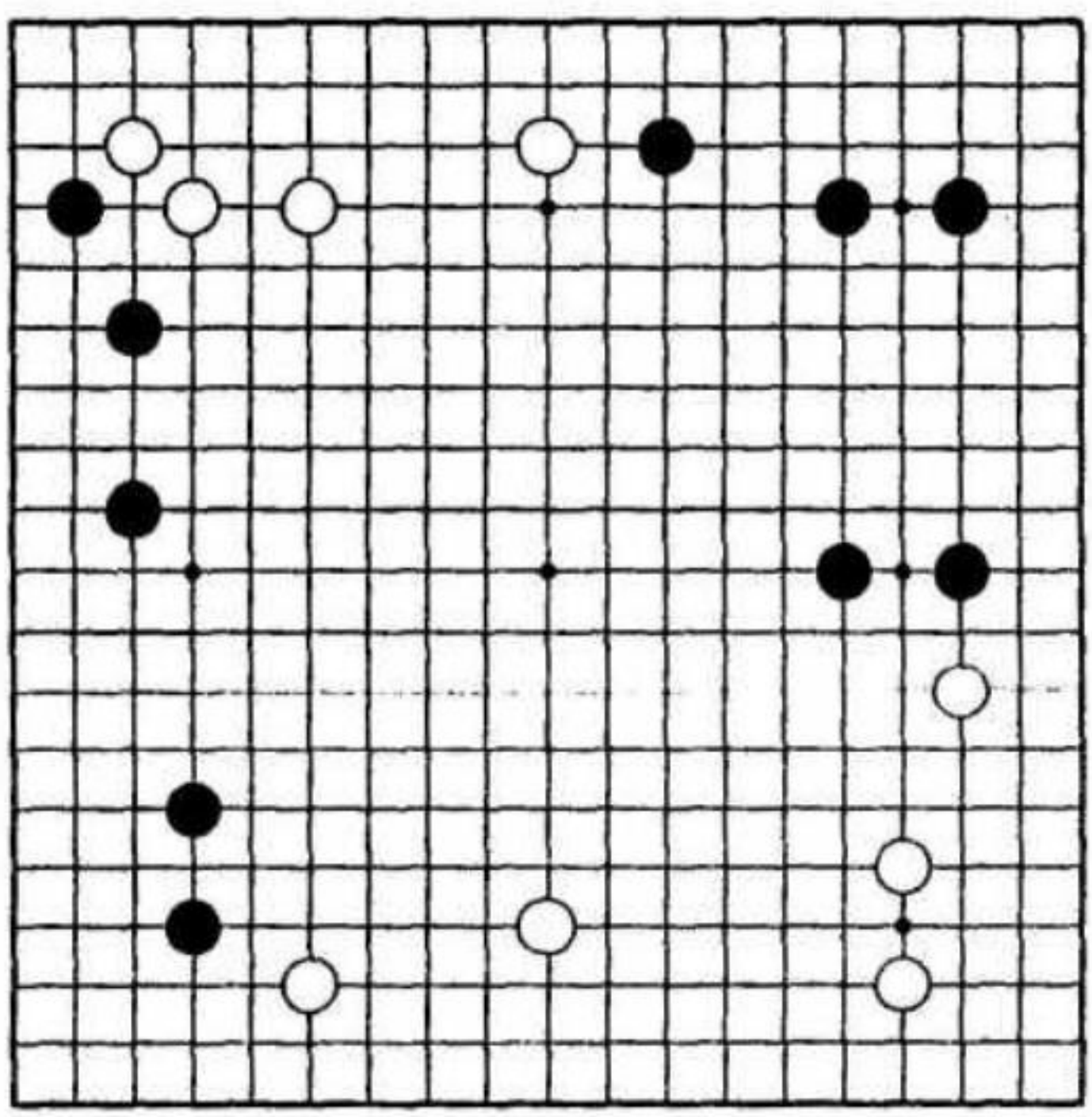
Dia. 14

Principle 19
Reduce a large moyo lightly

Don't be envious of the opponent's territory

Weak players are inclined to be preoccupied with the opponent's territory, so they make risky or unnecessary invasions and thus burden themselves with weak groups. In the worst case, the group is captured and so makes the opponent's territory much larger than he could have made it by himself.

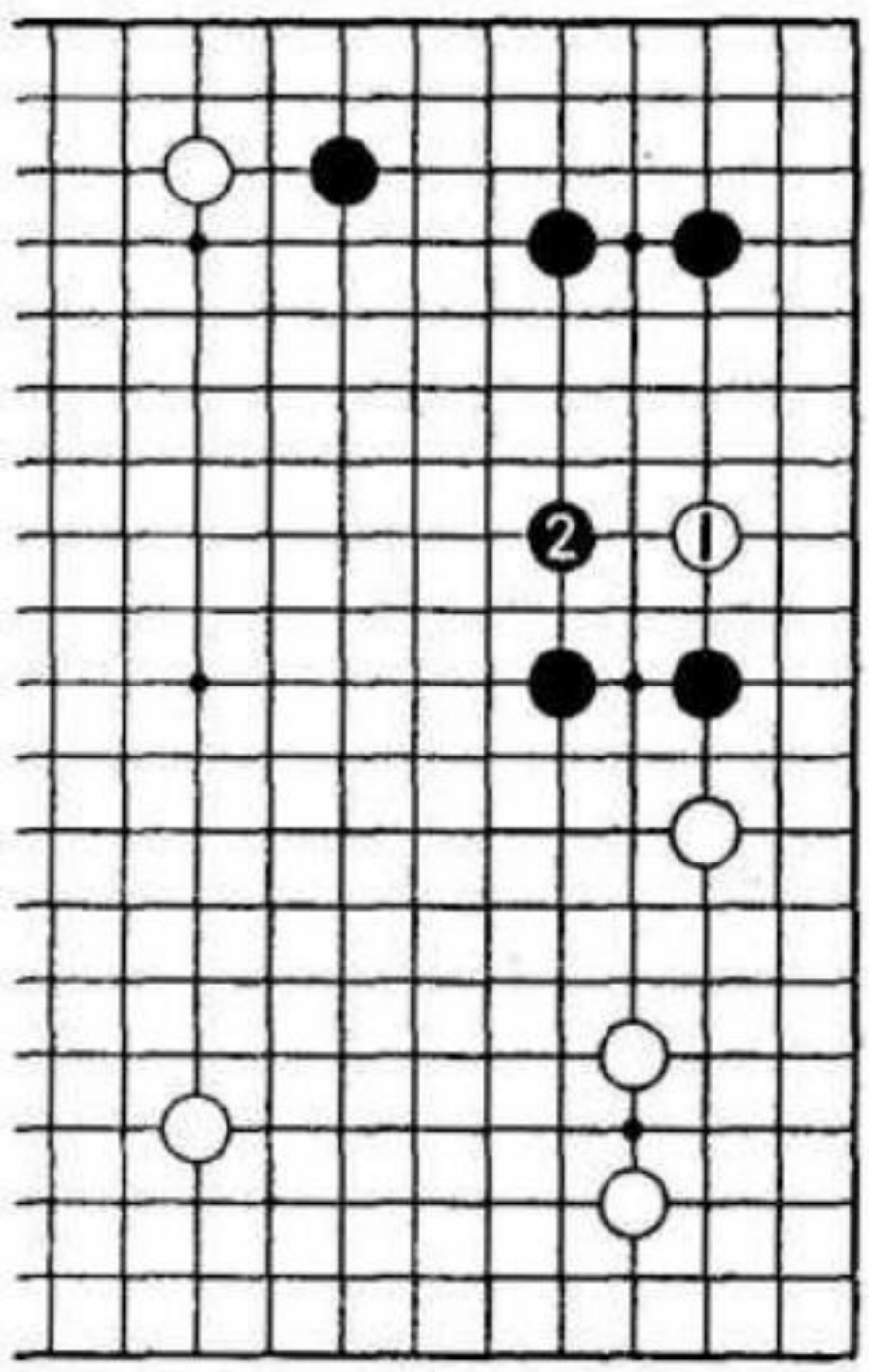
When you become more experienced, your judgement of how to deal with a moyo improves, especially your judgement of whether an invasion is even necessary.



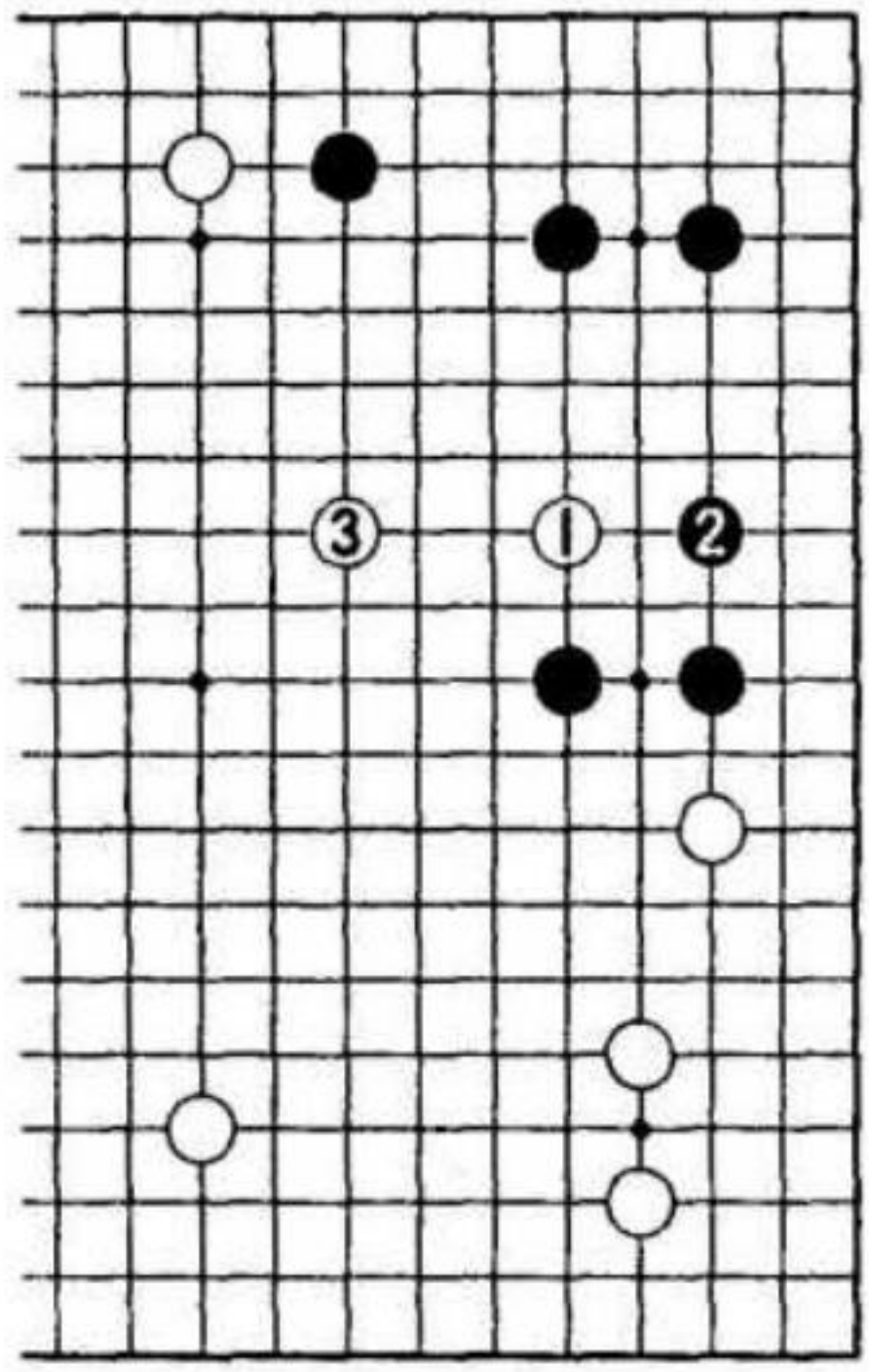
Theme diagram: White to play.
How should he deal with Black's top right moyo?

Dia. 1: too deep

White 1 is too deep an invasion. When Black caps at 2, White will have a lot of trouble living with this stone. Even if he does live, it will be at the cost of giving Black strong outside influence, so a good result for White is out of the question.



Dia. 1



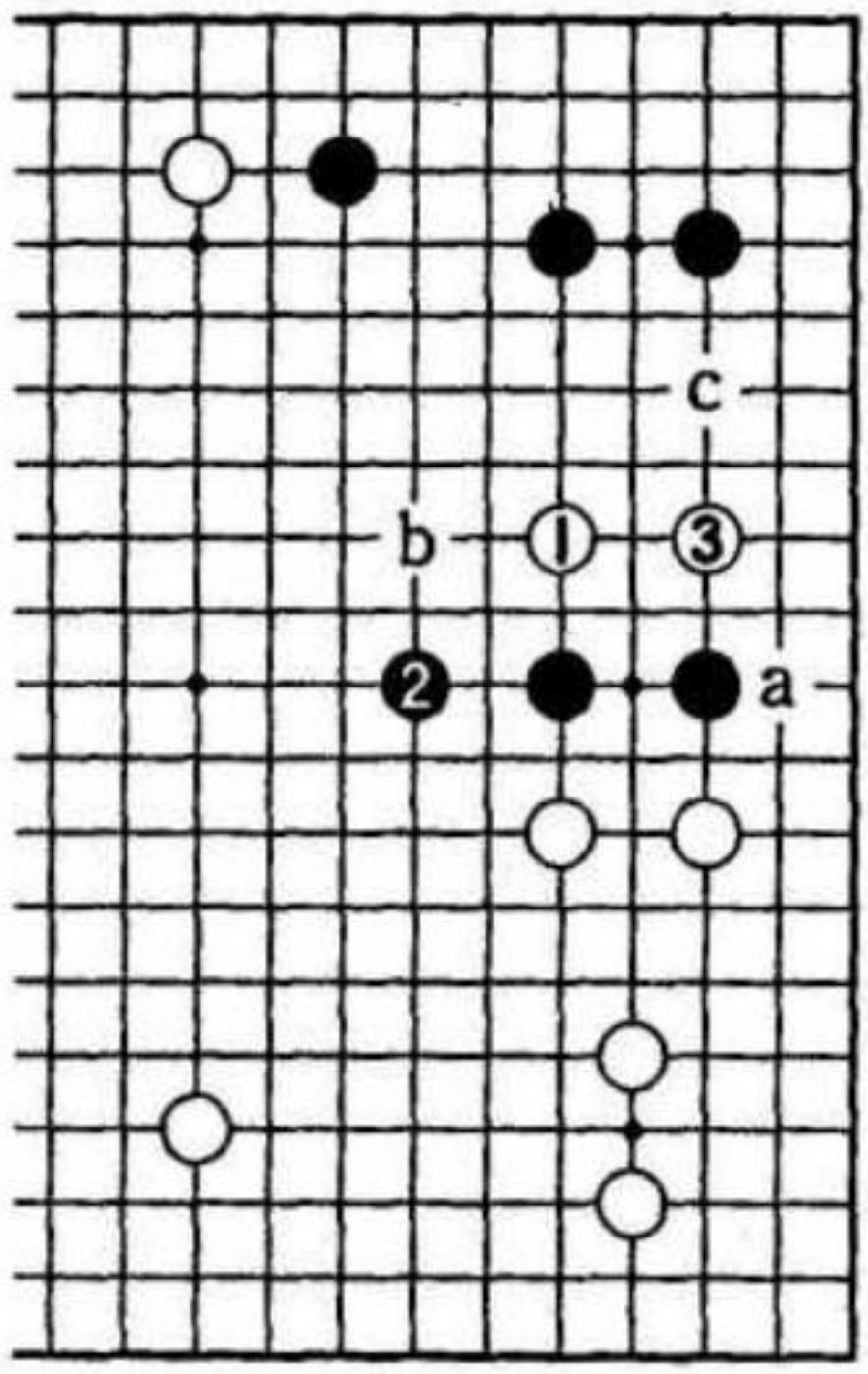
Dia. 2

Dia. 2: shallow

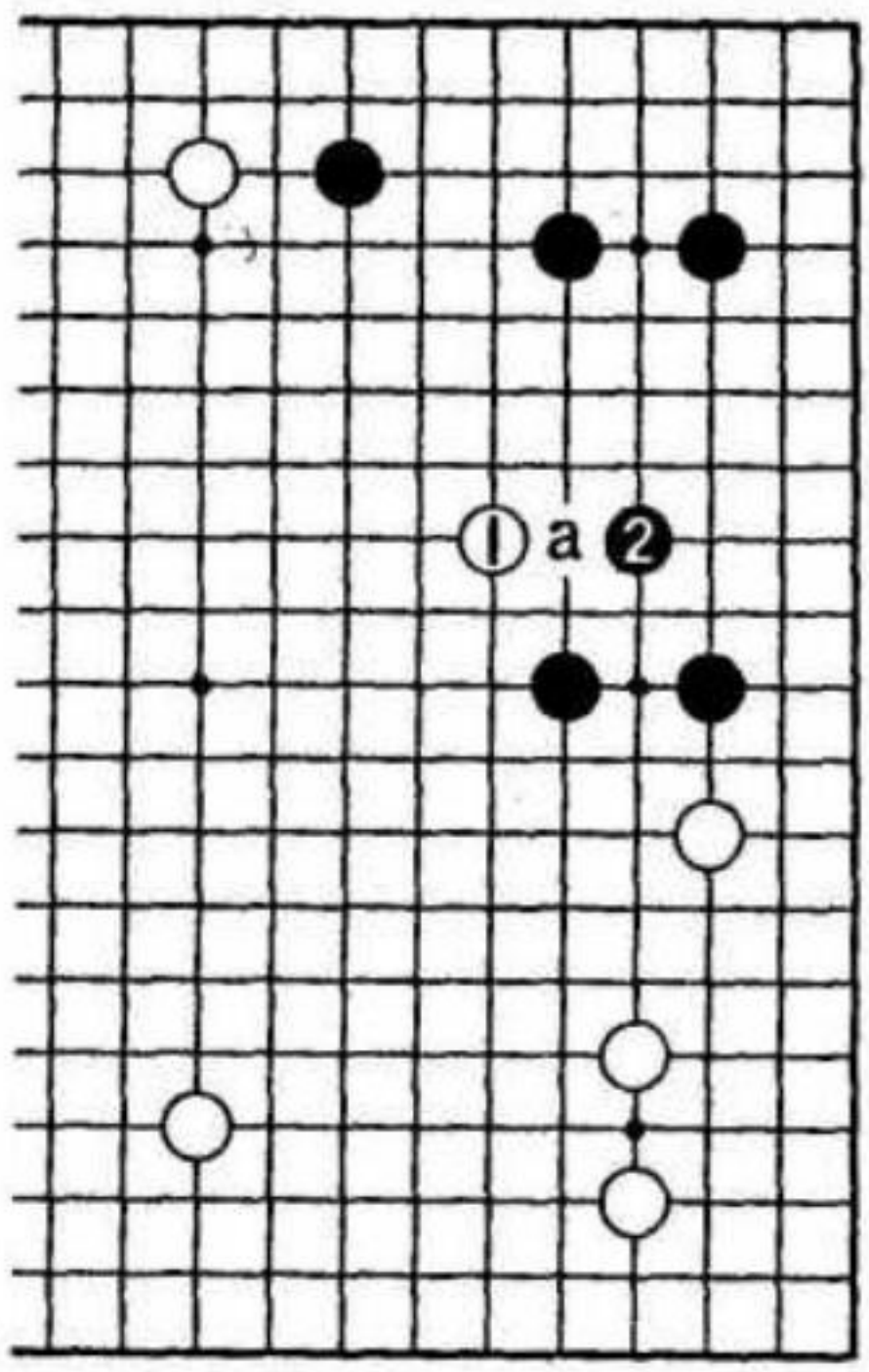
White plays lightly with 1, limiting the potential expansion of Black's moyo. This is not an invasion but a reducing move. Because 1 is shallow, it's safer than 1 in *Dia. 1* : Black won't be able to play on top and seal White in. Black is allowed to secure some territory with 2, but that can't be helped. White flees with 3 and is safe.

Dia. 3: now invade

Black 2 is a strong answer, but now invading at 3 is possible. It won't be easy for Black to kill this group: White can attach at 'a', jump to 'b', extend to 'c'. Black 2 is probably dubious.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4. unsatisfying

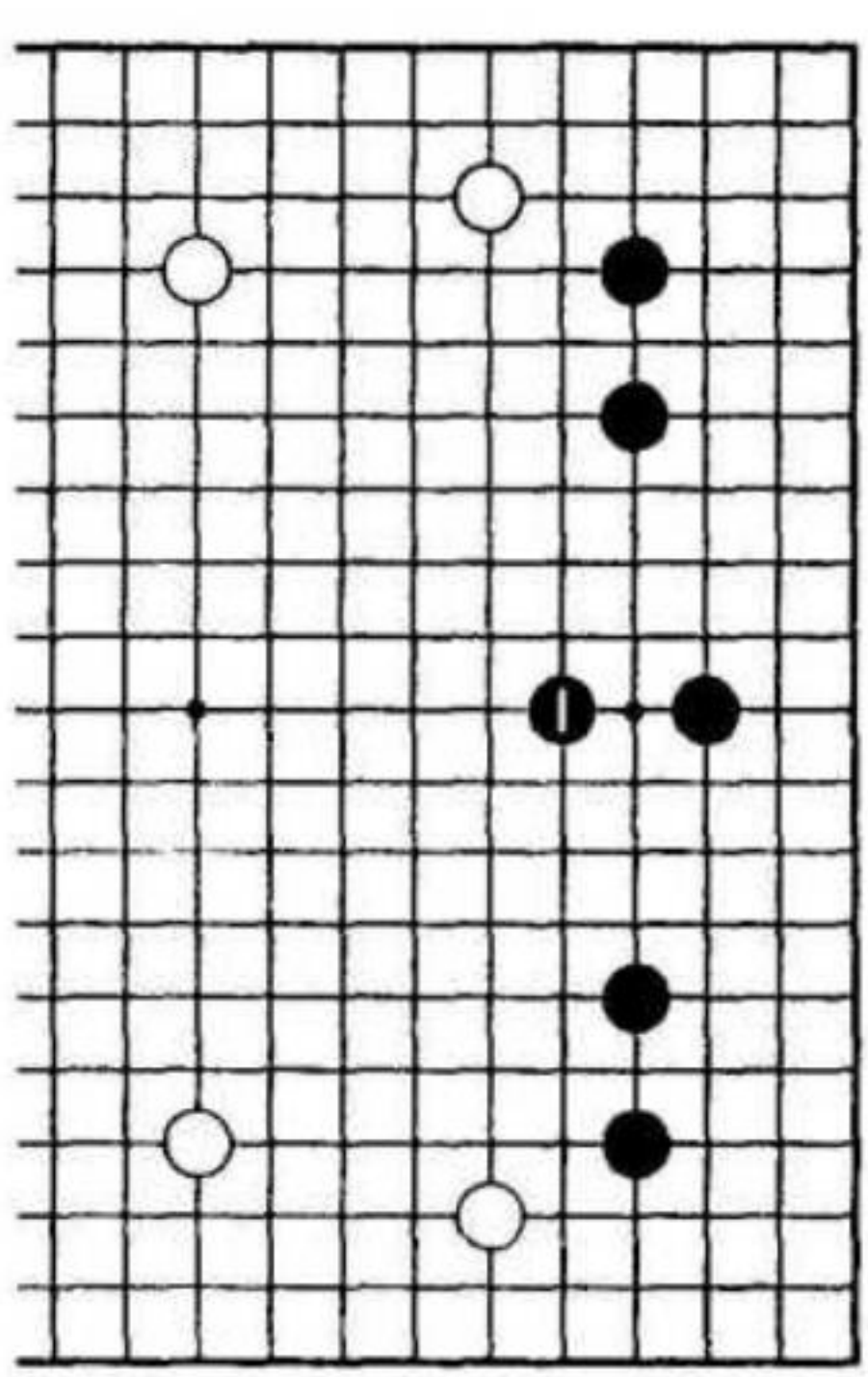
White 1 is an even lighter reducing move. It is of course much safer than 'a', but White will have cause for dissatisfaction when Black defends with 2, as this is better than 2 in Dia. 2. However, White 1 is of course several degrees better than the deep invasion in Dia. 1.

Dia. 5: strengthening the moyo

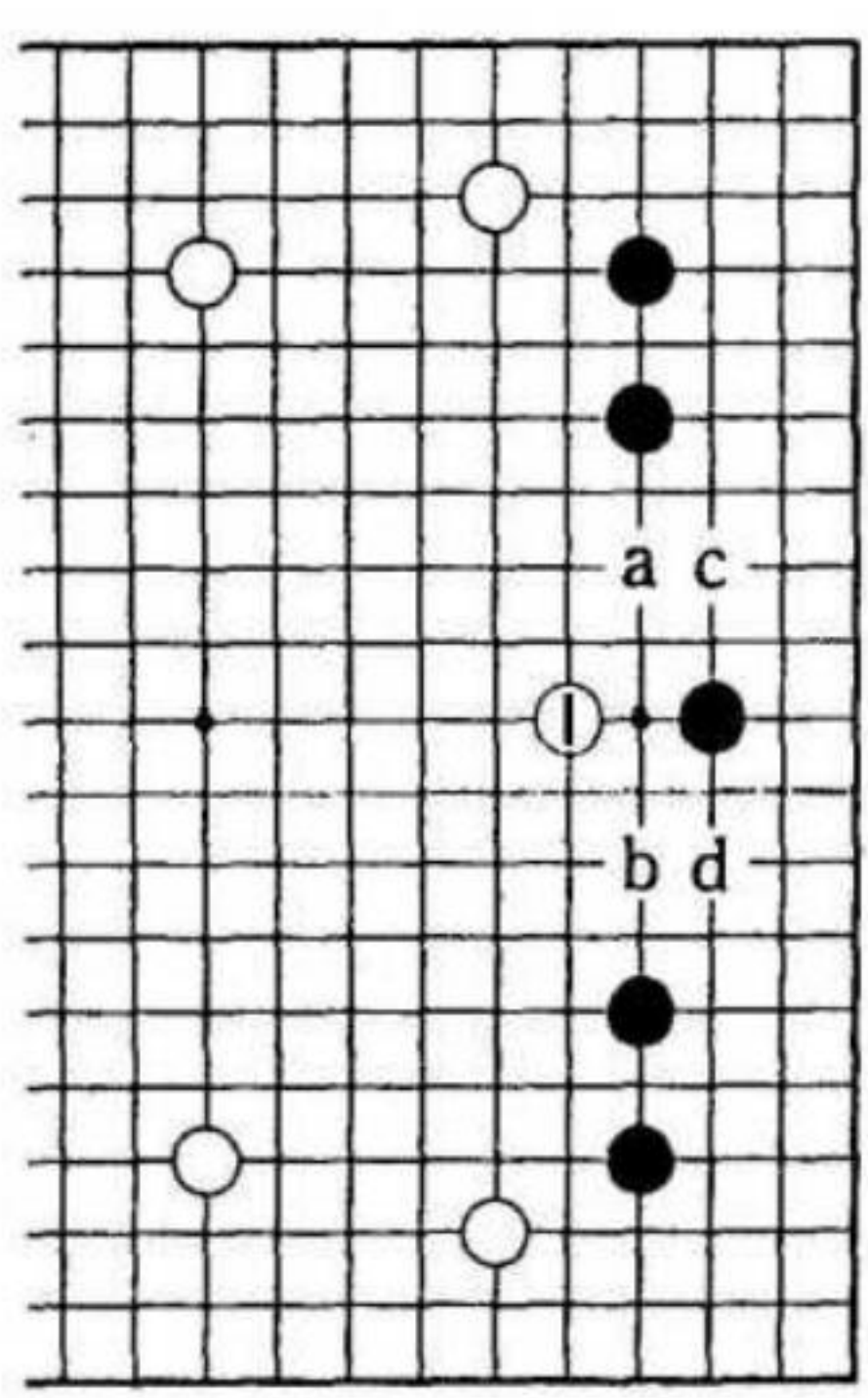
We gave this position earlier (Principle 7, *Dia. 8*). Black 1 is a very effective move for strengthening the right-side moyo. If White gets a chance to reduce this moyo before Black plays 1 —

Dia. 6: the vital point

Capping at 1 is the key move for keeping the moyo in check. Either 'a' or 'b' will secure a certain amount of territory for Black, but not enough to worry about, compared to Dia. 5. Using 1 to invade at 'c' or 'd' would be risky.



Dia. 5



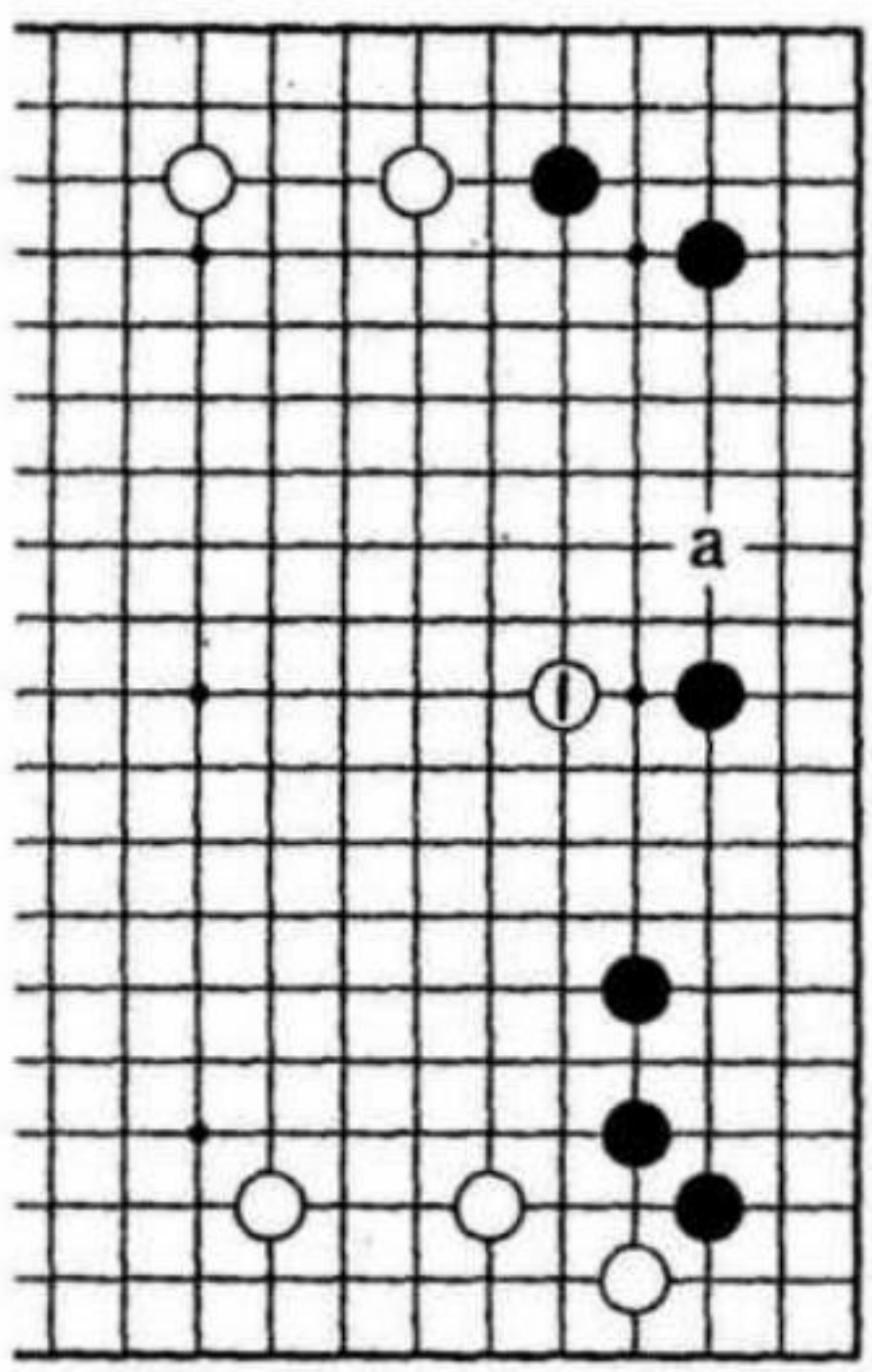
Dia. 6

Dia. 7. a perfect move

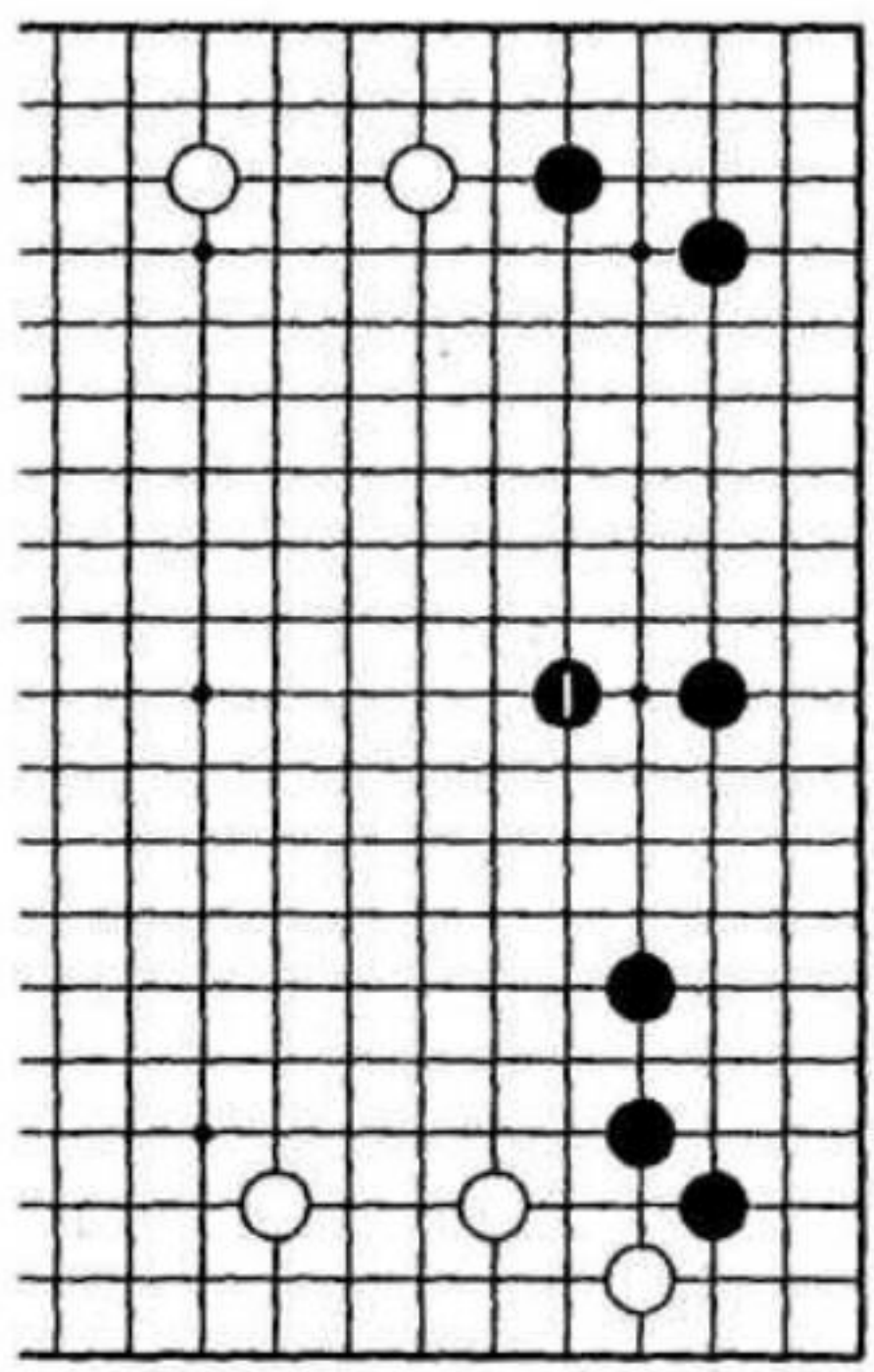
Capping at 1 is the perfect move for nipping Black's moyo in the bud. Black can't hope to get a really large territory after this. Invading at 'a' would be risky: Black would jump to 1 and launch a severe attack.

Dia. 8: the vital point

I f Black gets to play first on the side, jumping to 1 is a good move. Black's moyo swells up and it becomes more difficult for White to find a way to reduce it.



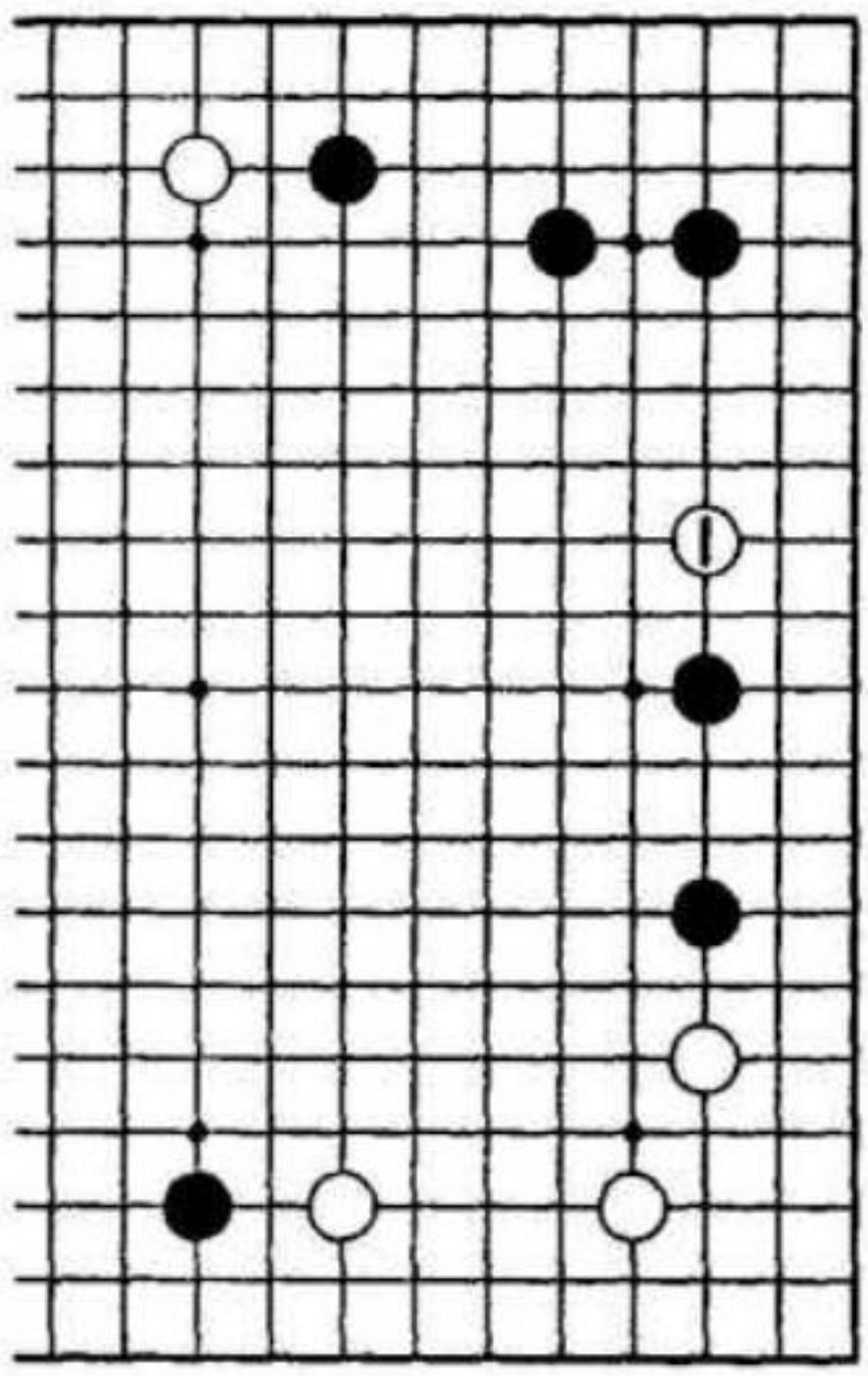
Dia. 7



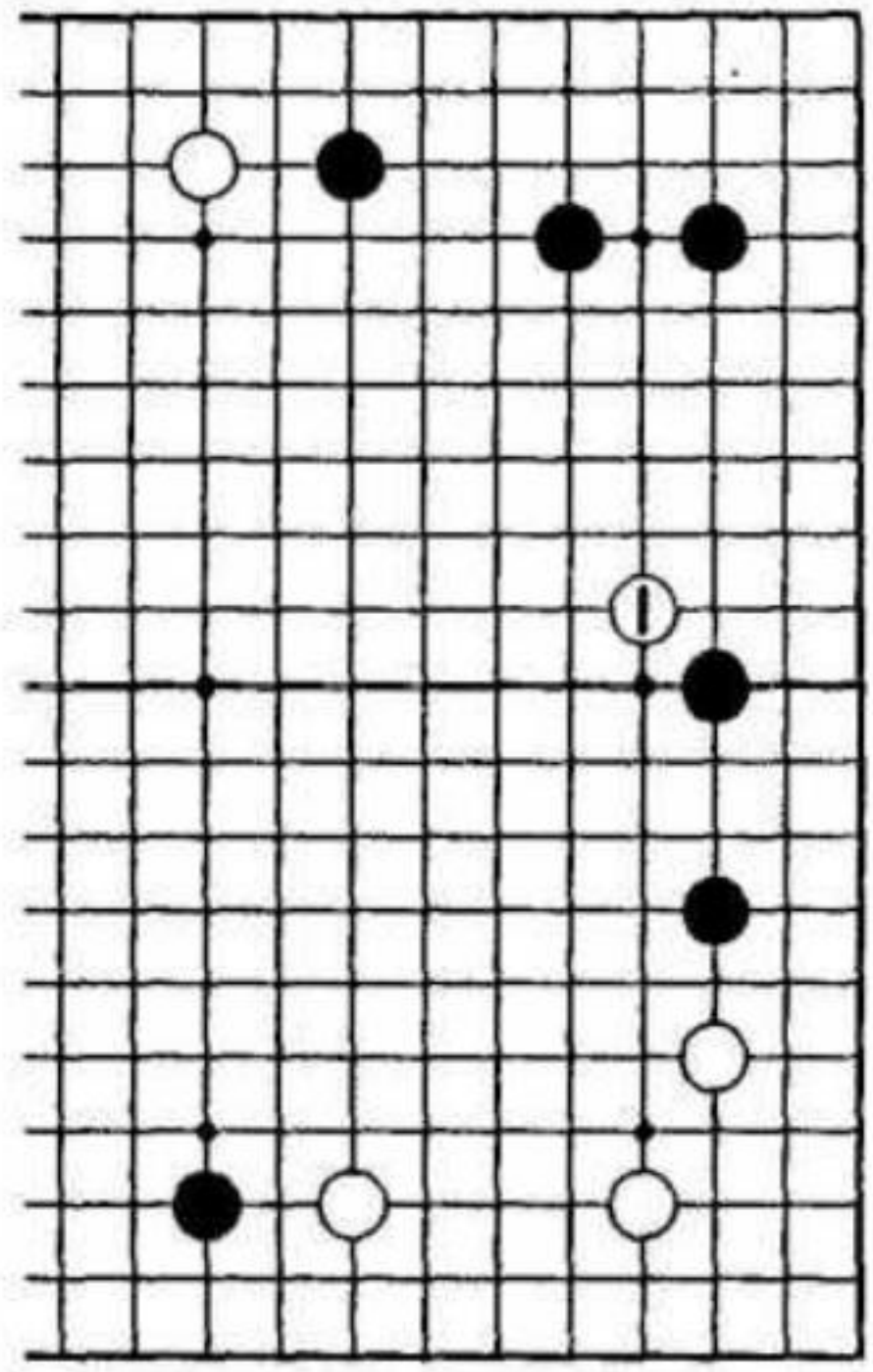
Dia. 8

Dia. 9: inviting attack

Black's moyo here is a little flatter, but even so White 1 is too deep. This invasion is risky. The black position below is already fairly stable, so White will come under a one-sided attack. The invasion gives him little to look forward to.



Dia. 9



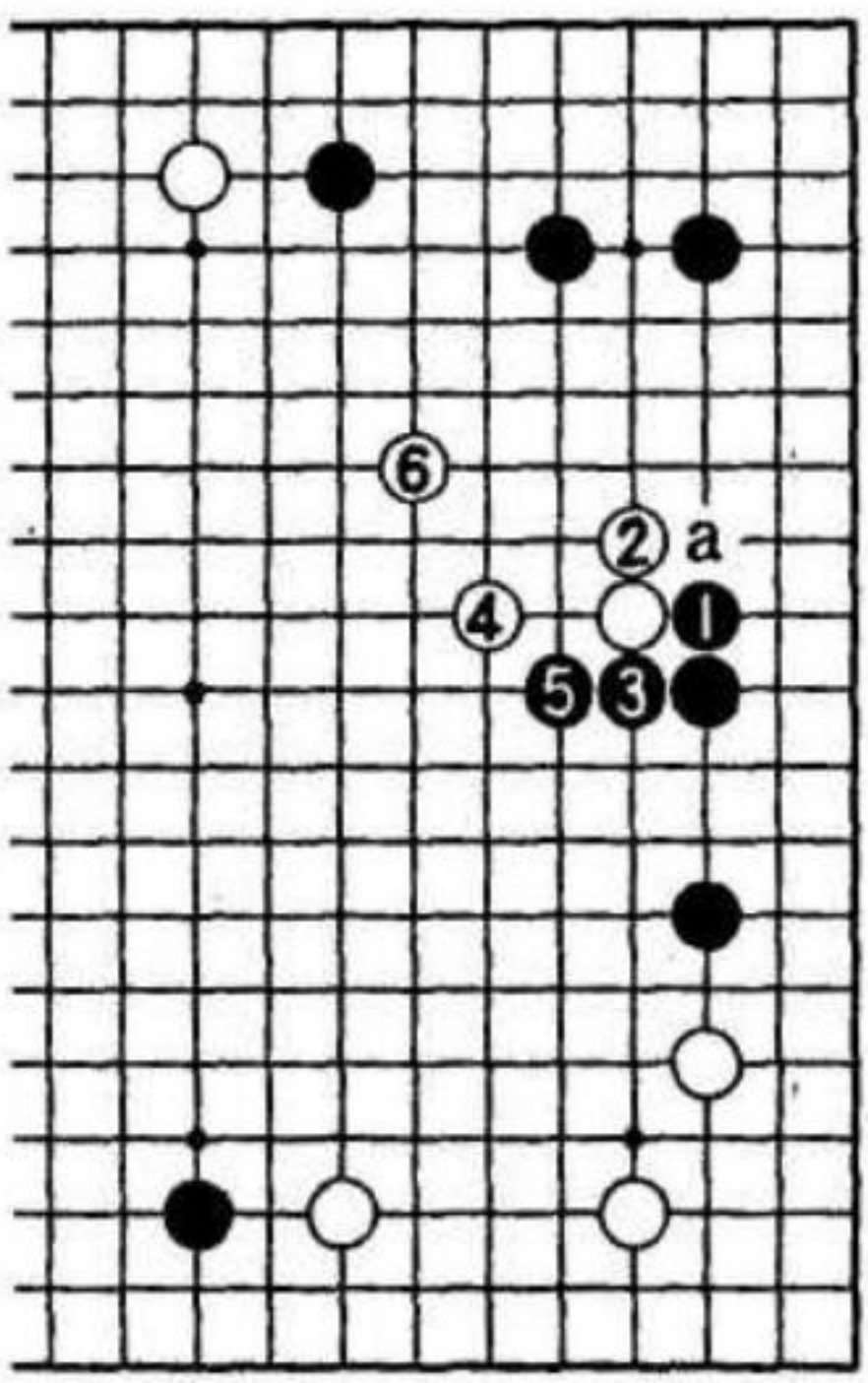
Dia. 10

Dia. 10: the wiser course

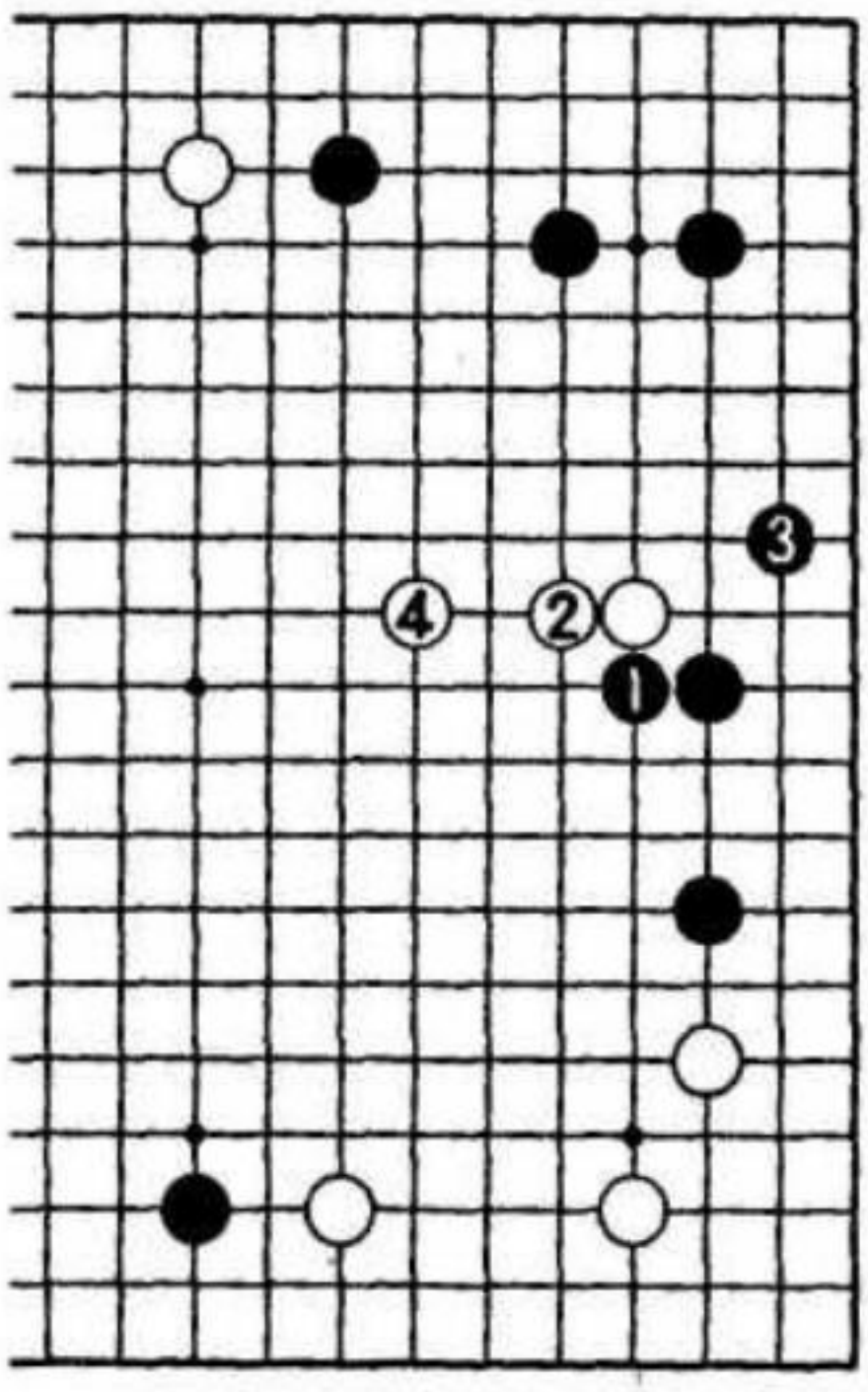
Here the shoulder hit of 1 looks good. White won't be in much danger of a counterattack. Usually either a shoulder hit or a capping more is the standard technique for reducing a moyo.

Dia. 11: skip away lightly

This sequence is one standard continuation after the shoulder hit. Take particular note of 6: White skips away lightly, avoiding creating a heavy group. Later, blocking at 'a' will be a big move.



Dia. 11



Dia. 12

Dia. 12: alternative

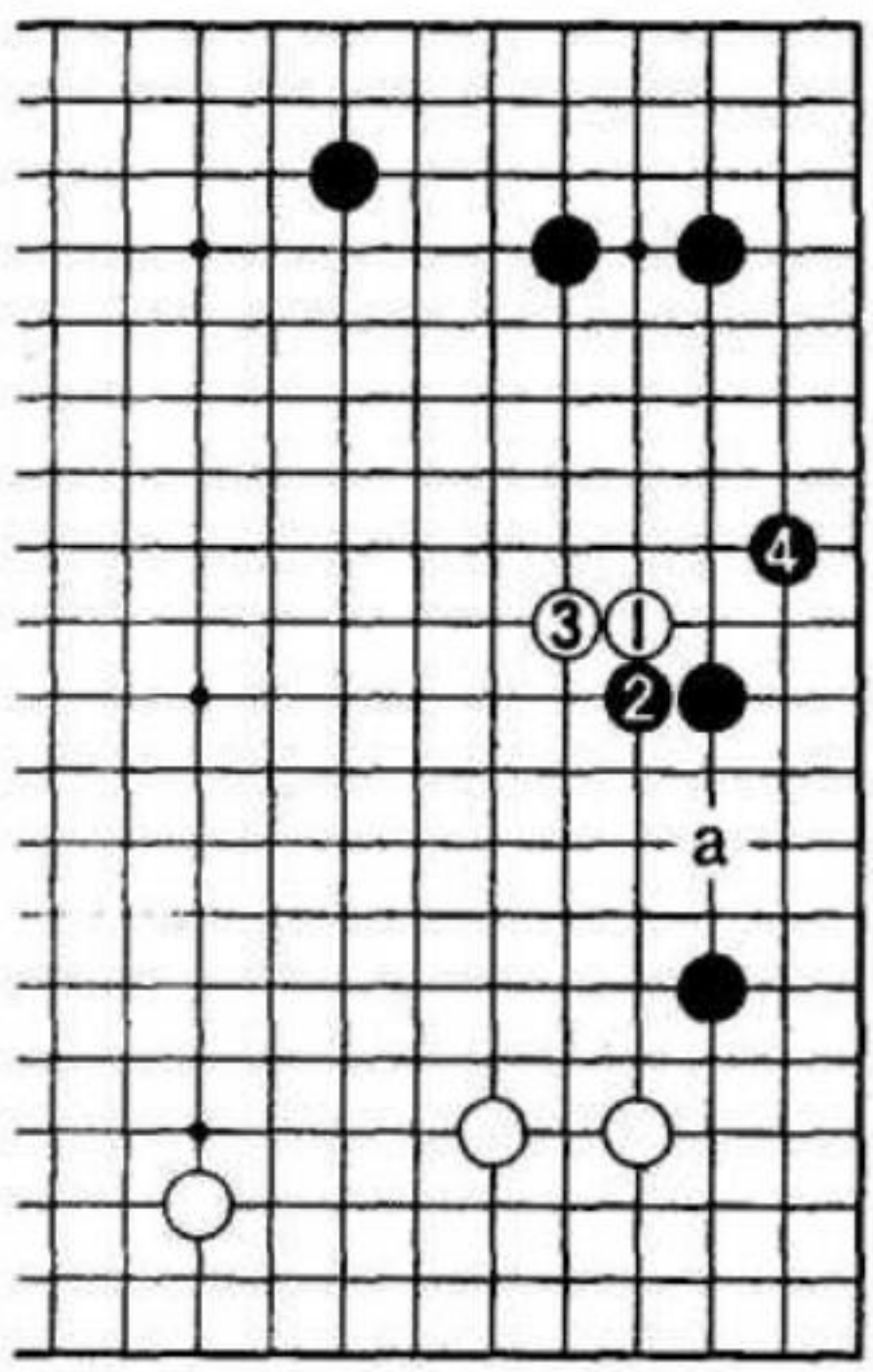
Black also has the option of pushing along at 1 before linking up with 3. The latter move not only defends Black's group but also prevents White from getting a base on the side. White will probably continue by jumping out to 4. As before, he has succeeded in reducing the moyo.

Dia. 13: destroying aji

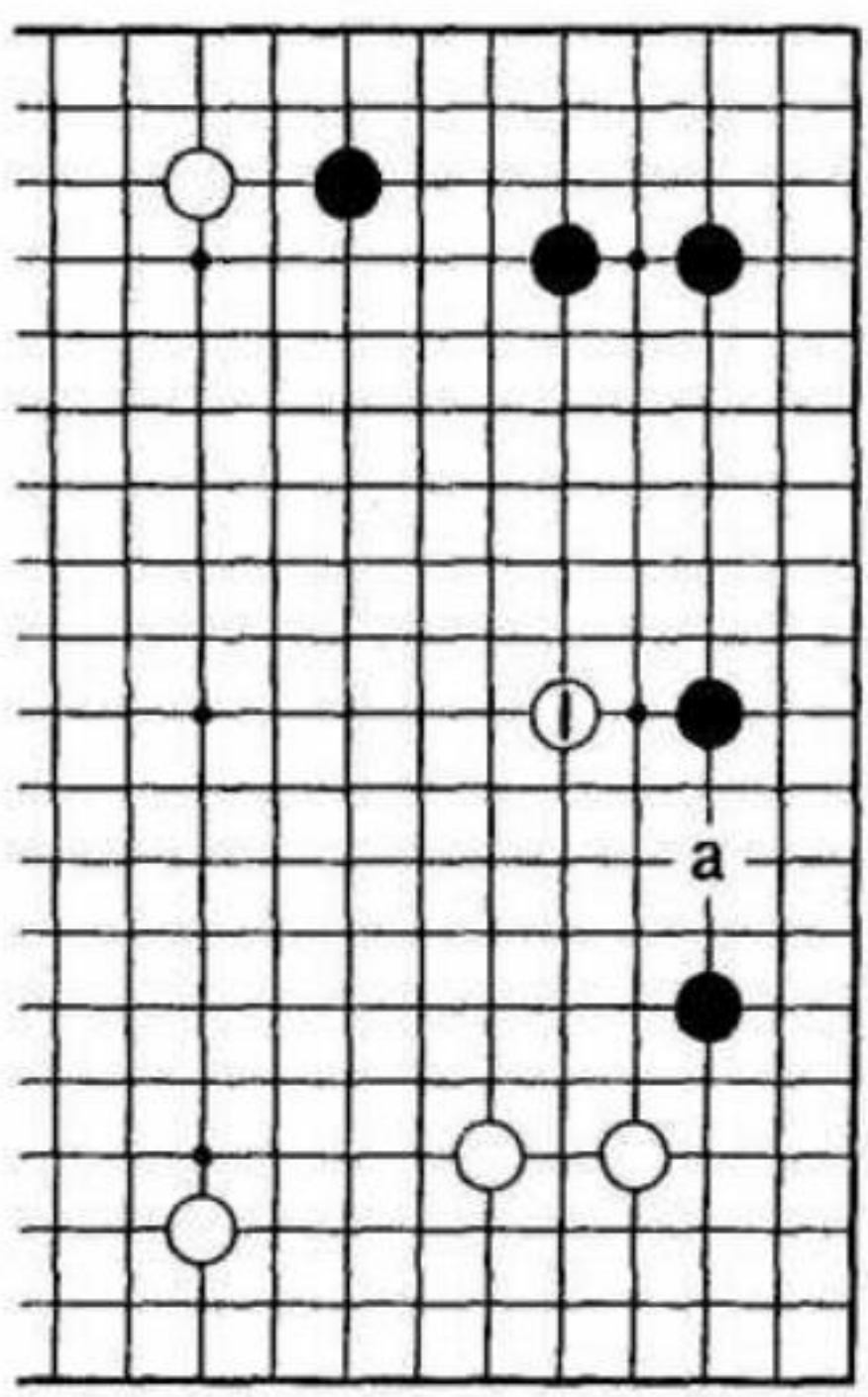
Playing the shoulder hit in this position is a mistake. When Black has made a three-space extension, White has the aji (potential) of invading at 'a, yet this threat disappears after he helps Black to strengthen himself with 2 and 4. The shoulder hit has helped the opponent to eliminate a weakness in his position.

Dia. 14: the right strategy

Capping at 1 is more appropriate, as it leaves open the threat of invading at 'a'. Using 1 to invade at 'a' immediately is another possibility.



Dia. 13

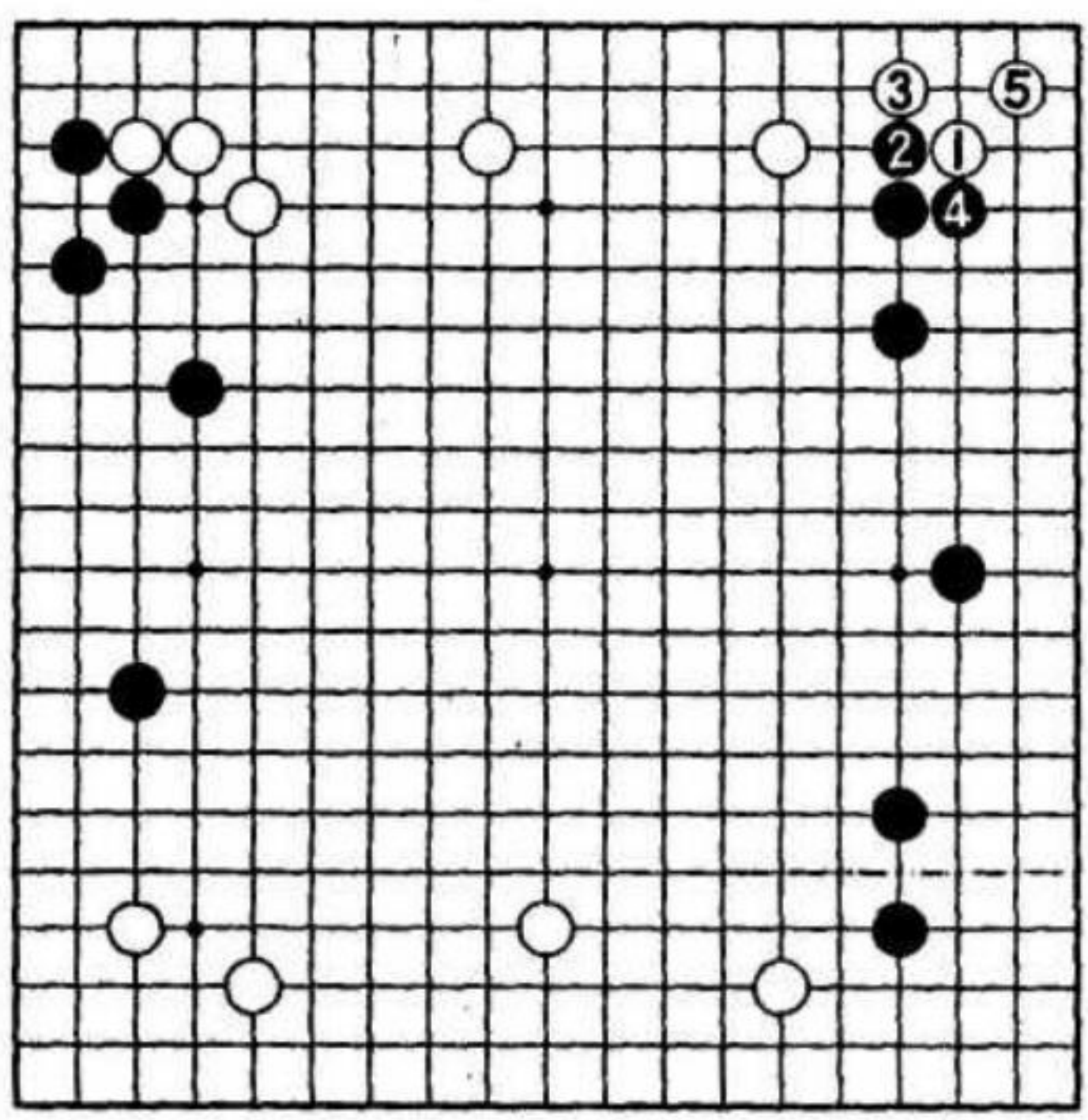


Dia. 14

Principle 20
Don't cling to stones that have served their purpose

To conclude, we would like to discuss a strategic principle that is very important but that may be a little difficult for weaker players to grasp. It has to do with distinguishing between stones that play a key role in your strategy and stones that have served their purpose. Weaker players dislike sacrificing stones, but clinging to useless stones can handicap your overall strategy.

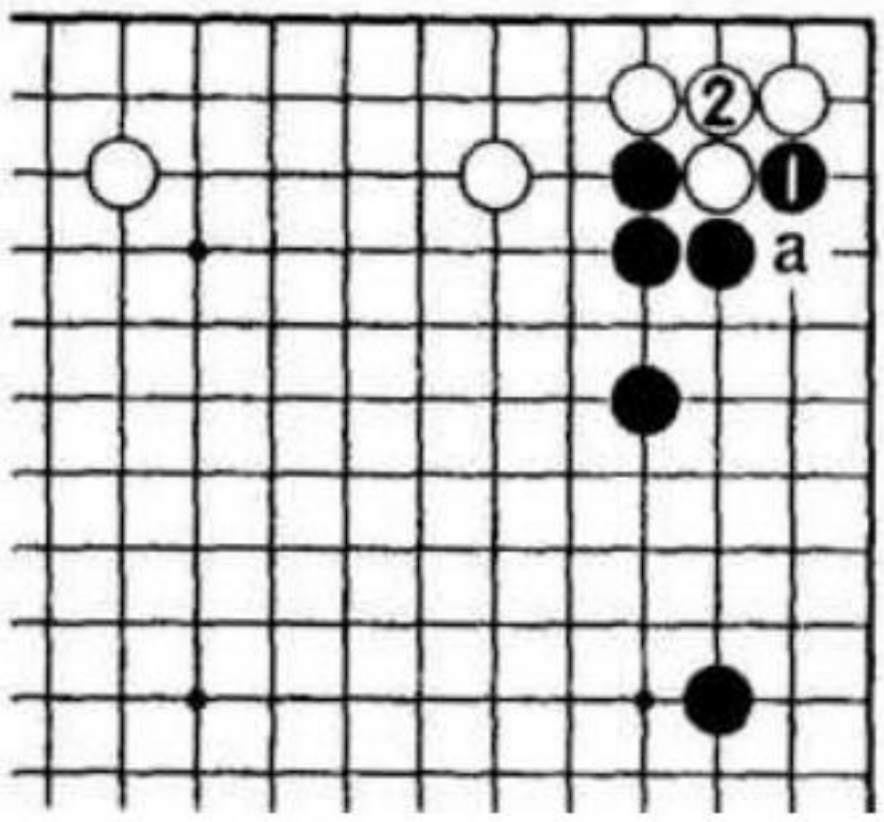
After 1 to 5 in the diagram, there is a move that Black must play.-



Theme diagram
Black to play

Dia. 1: the atari

Black naturally has to atari at 'a'. The problem is that some players don't like to atari, as later White can capture at 'a'.



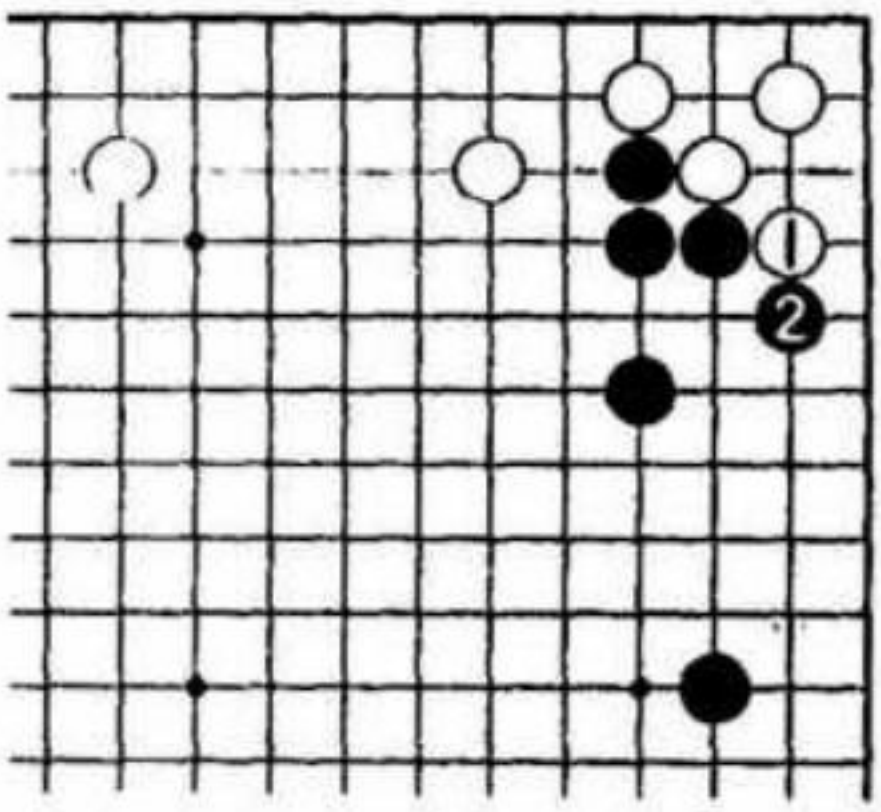
Dia. 1

Dia. 2: sente for White

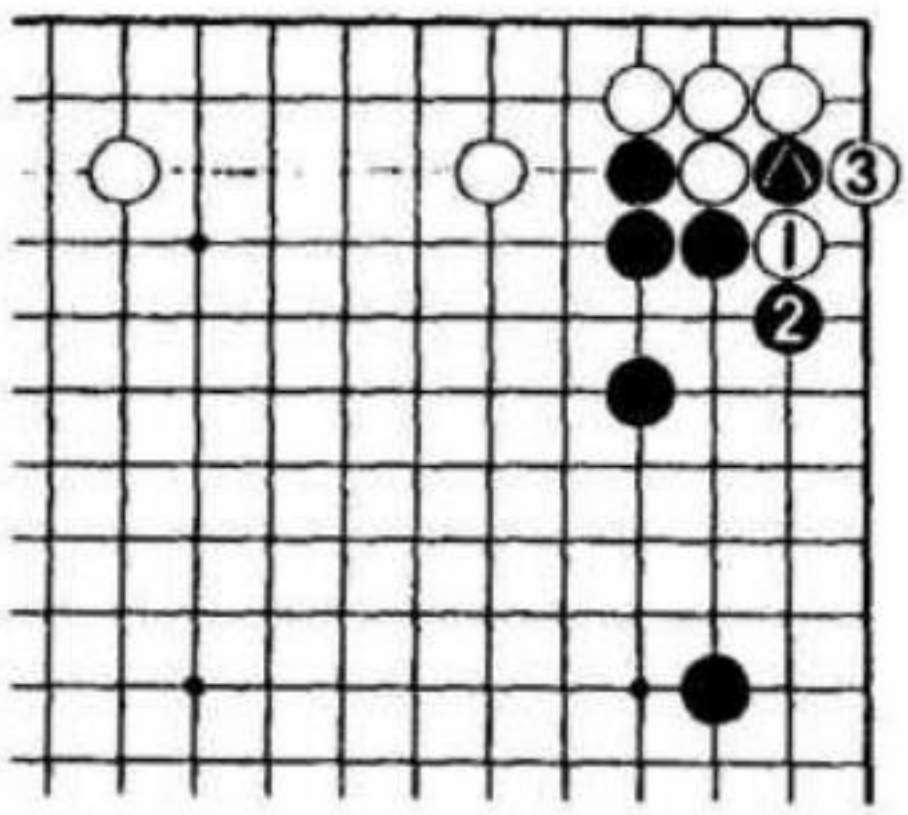
If Black omits the atari, White can hane at 1 in sente. In contrast —

Dia. 3: gote

Continuing after *Dia. 1* by capturing the black stone is gote for White. The marked black stone has already served its purpose, so Black need have no regrets about giving it up.



Dia. 2



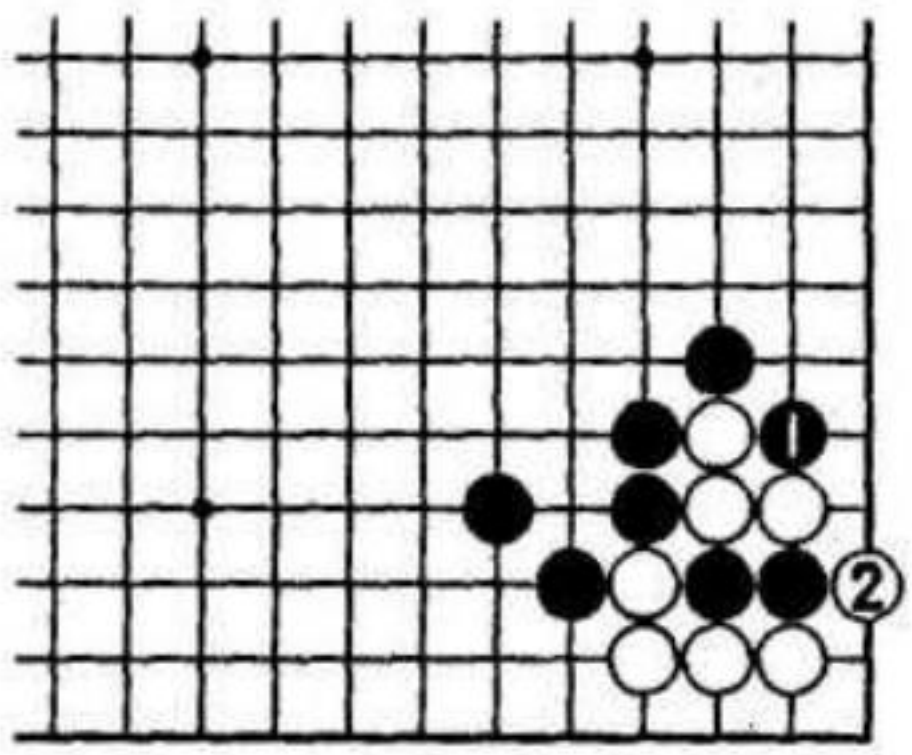
Dia. 3

Dia. 4: limited role

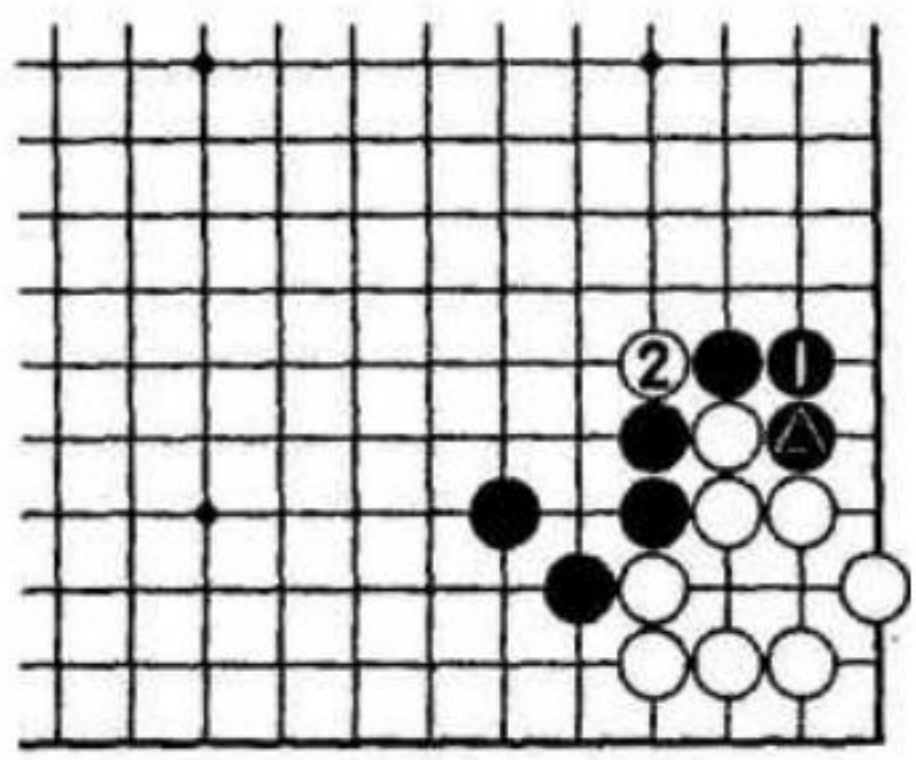
The only purpose of Black 1 is to force White to capture at 2. After that, Black has no more use for this stone.

Dia. 5. pointless

Clinging to this stone with 1 is ridiculous. Black will be faced with a tough fight after White cuts at 2. Saving the marked stone is more trouble than it's worth.



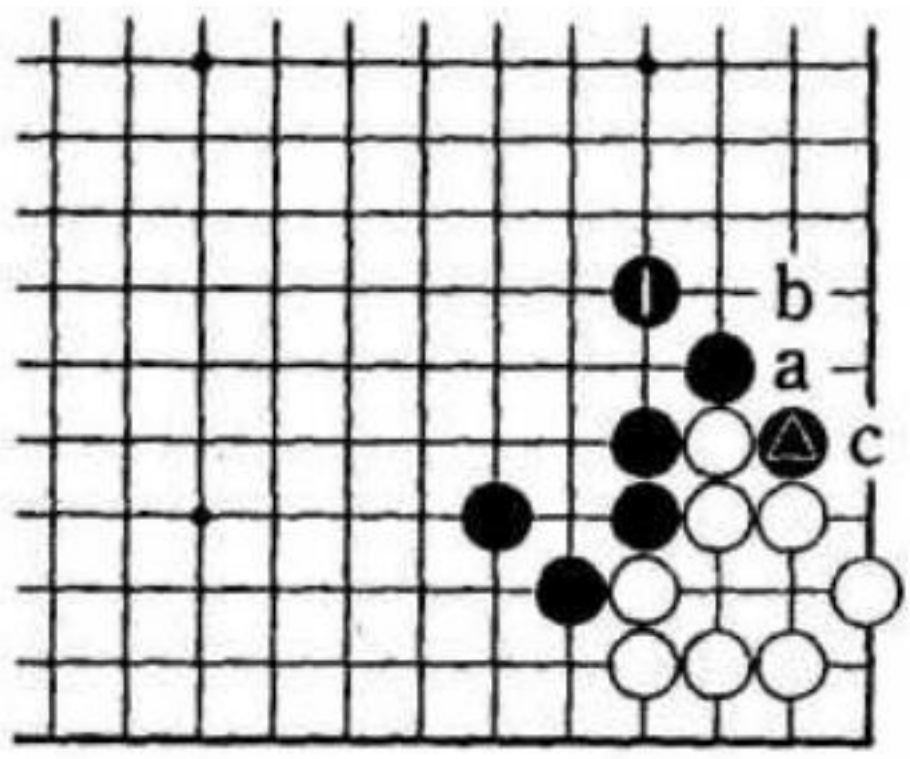
Dia. 4



Dia. 5

Dia. 6: correct

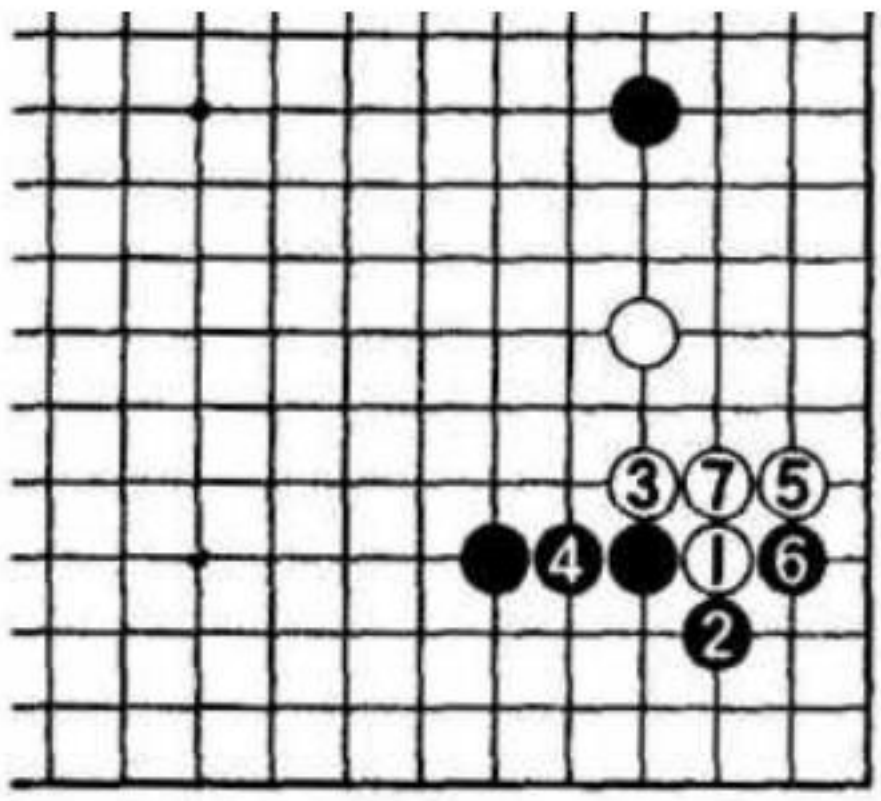
Defending the cutting point with the diagonal connection of 1 is best. Capturing a stone will be gote for White: White 'a', Black 'b', White 'c'. You could say that the function of the marked stone is to make White 'a' gote.



Dia. 6

Dia. 7: sente, but ...

The moves from 1 to 5 are a common pattern. Black then ataris at 6, intending to switch elsewhere after 7, but this strategy is dubious.



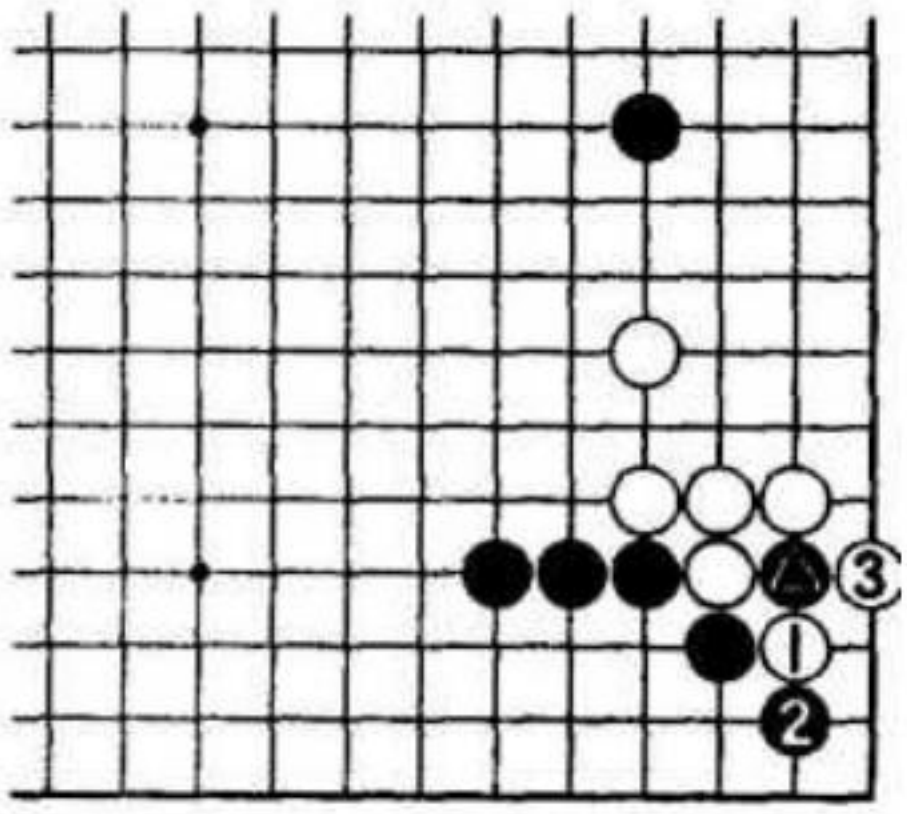
Dia. 7

Dia. 8: too big

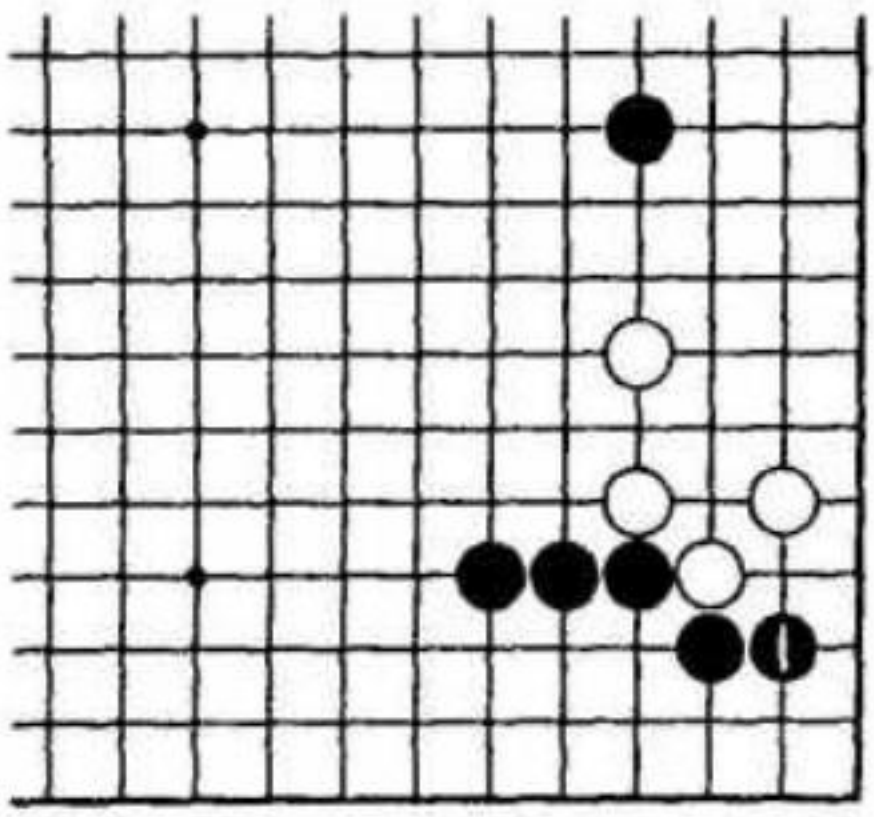
Capturing with 1 and 3 is very big, as it completely settles the white group. In other words, the marked black stone is not a stone that has served its purpose but a key strategic stone.

Dia. 9: gote, but ...

Instead of 6 in *Dia. 7,* Black should descend at 1 here. This may be gote, but it aims at attacking the white group later.



Dia. 8



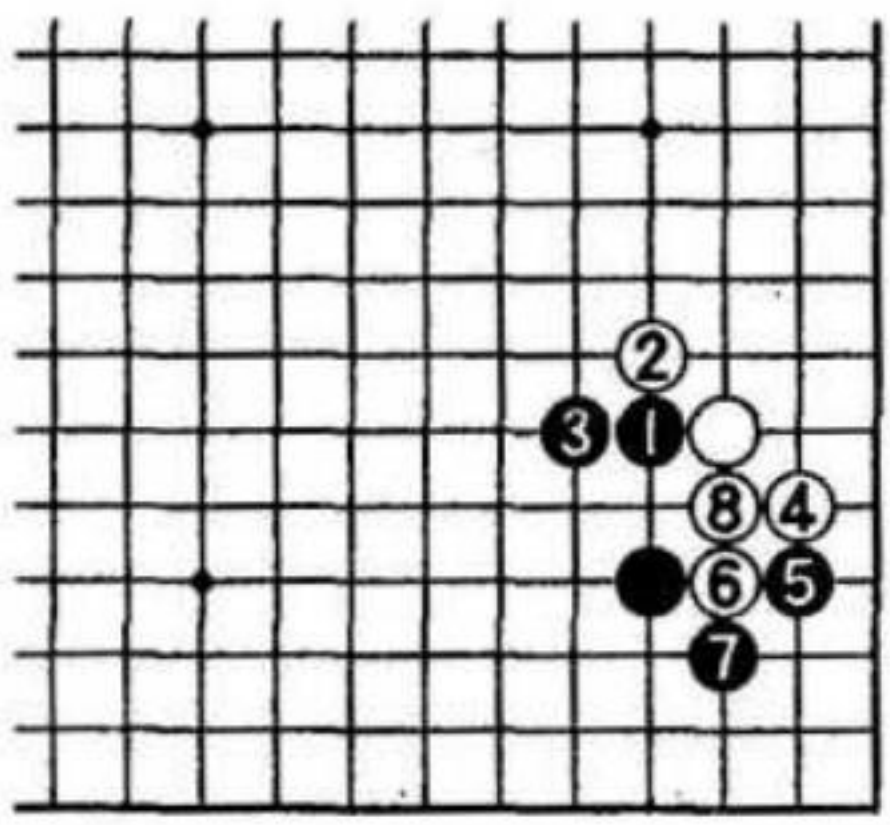
Dia. 9

Dia. 10: where to connect?

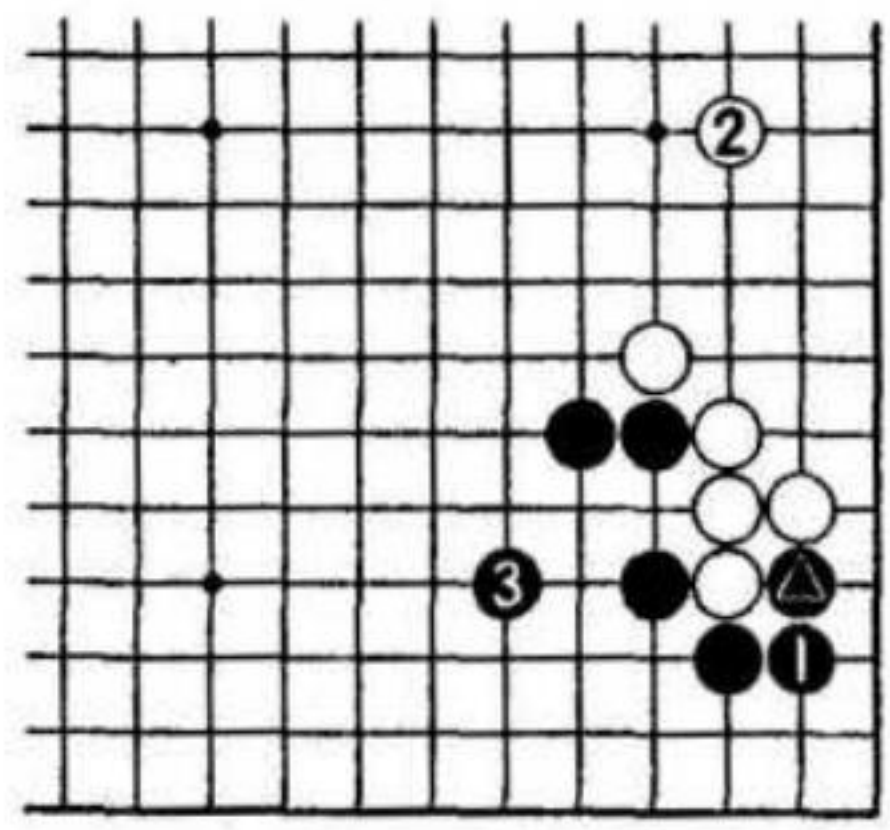
This is a similar example. The moves from 1 to 8 form part of a joseki. The problem is which of his cutting points should Black connect. Where would you play?

Dia. 11: saving one stone

Connecting at 1 shows that Black believes he can't discard the marked stone. This judgement is correct.



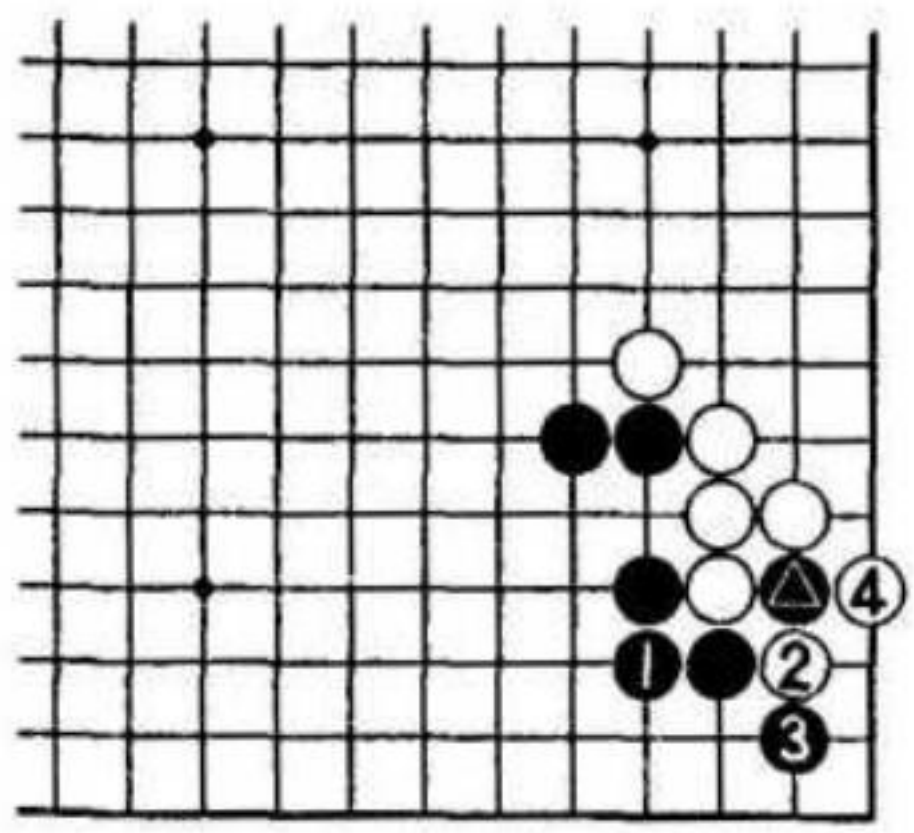
Dia. 10



Dia. 11

Dia. 11 helping White

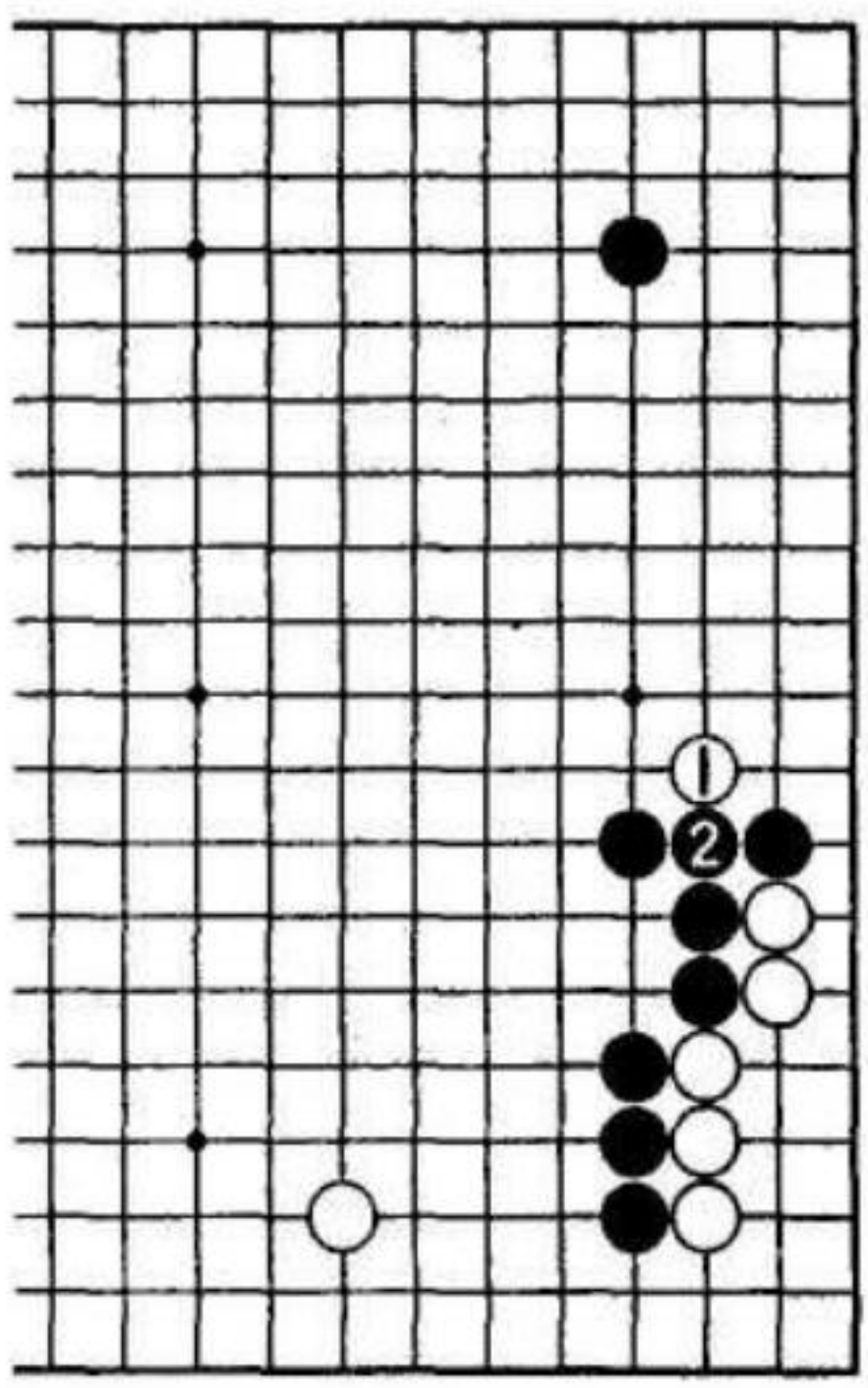
If Black connects at 1, White immediately settles his group with 2 and 4. It's obvious now that the marked stone plays a crucial role and cannot be sacrificed.



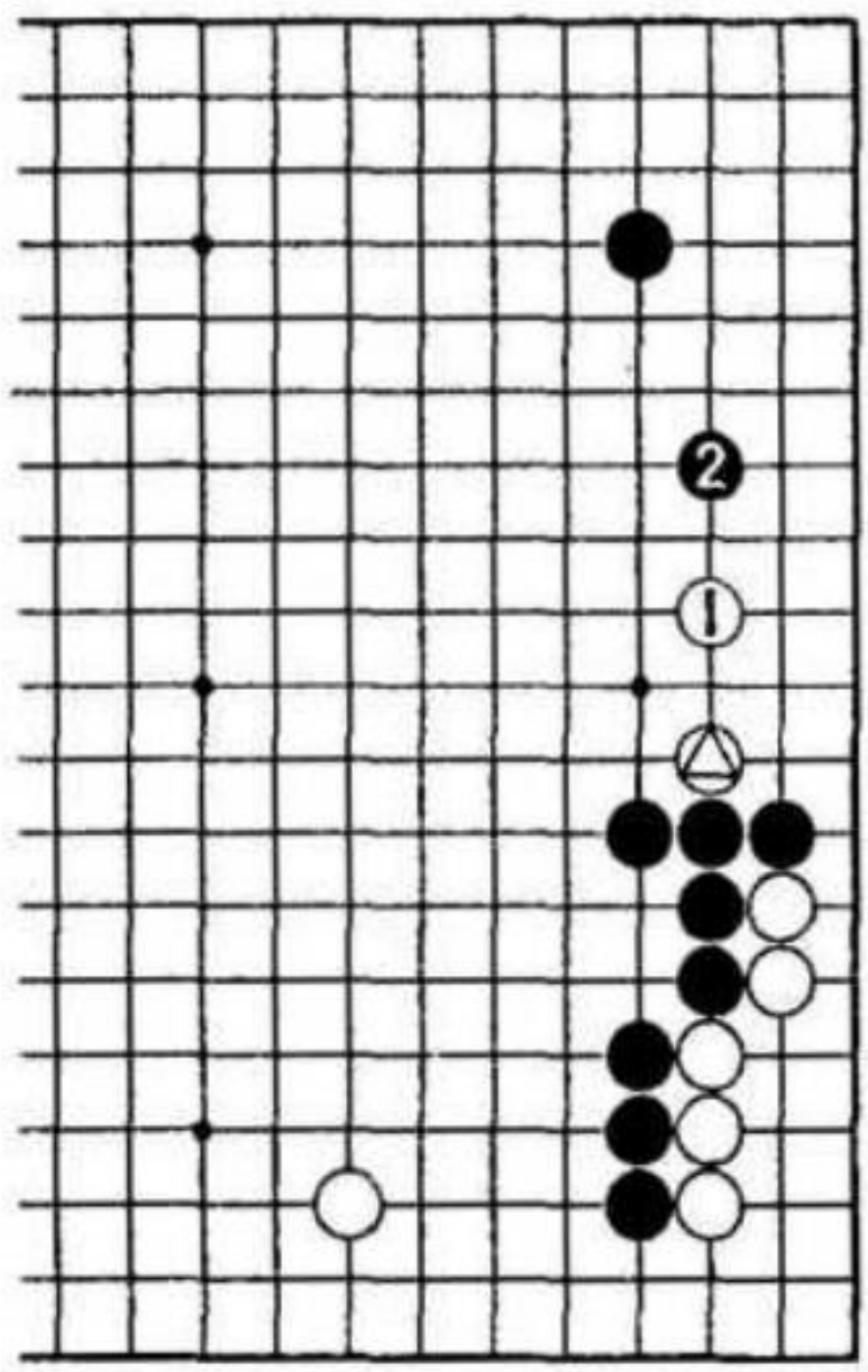
Dia. 12

Dia. 13: forcing move

White's peep at 1 is sente. Forcing moves like 1 are light stones, played in the hope that they may be useful later on. Once the opponent answers them, they have served their purpose. You should not be concerned about how weak and isolated White 1 appears.



Dia. 13



Dia. 14

Dia. 14: misguided

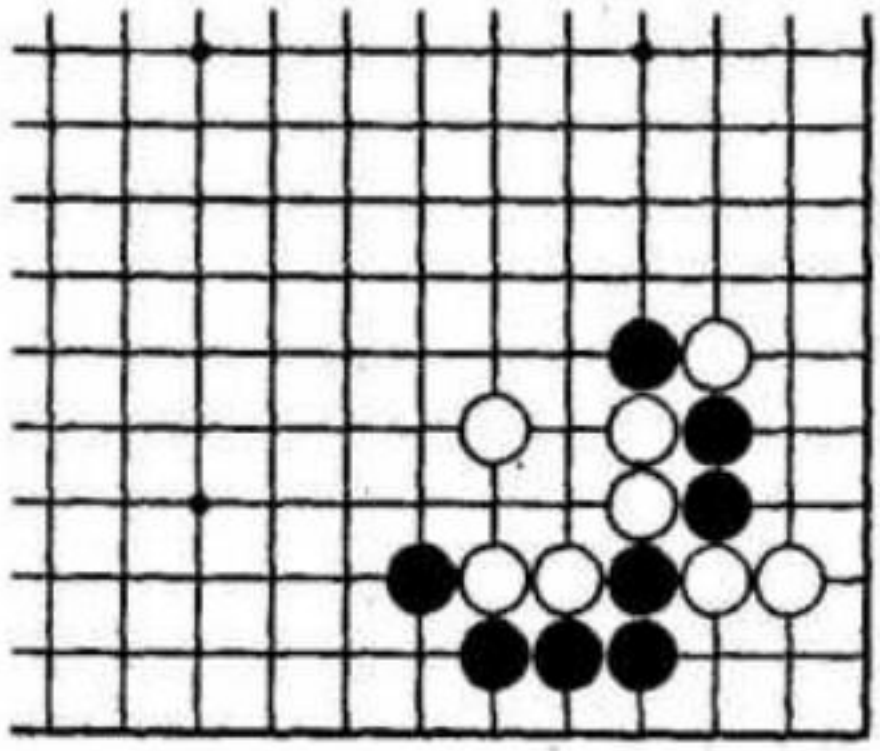
If the marked stone has served its purpose, then it can be forgotten about. What is the meaning of 1 then? White is clinging to a useless stone and creating a burden for himself. This just invites a severe attack at 2.

Dia. 15: Black to play

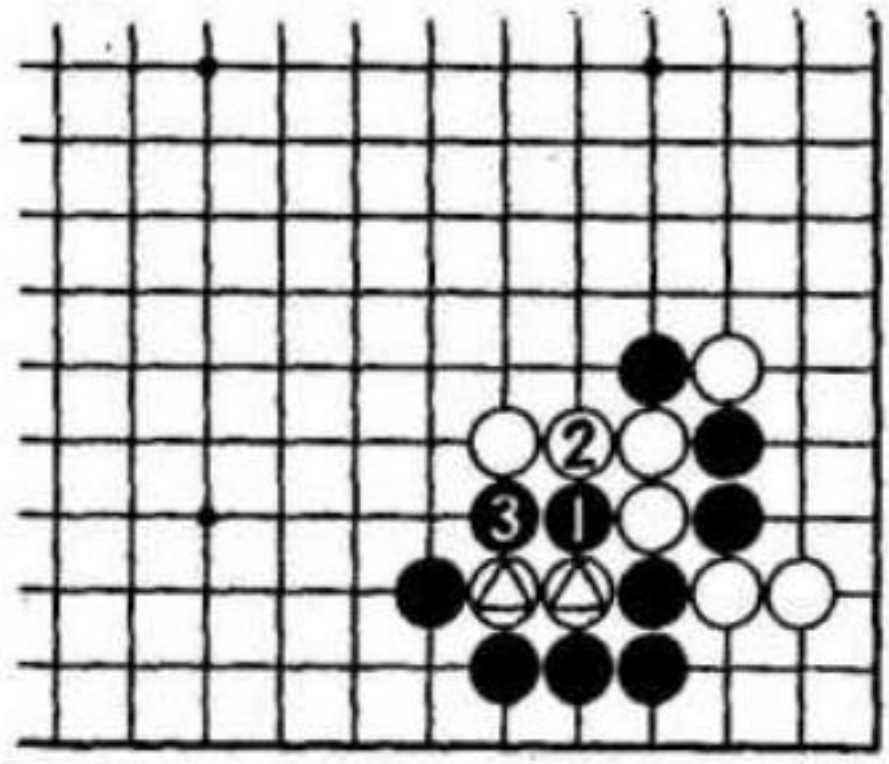
Here is a test for you. Where would you play next with Black? Make the instinctive move without thinking.

Dia. 16: wrong

The double atari of 1 is wrong. The two marked stones are not key stones, so White will be happy to discard them.



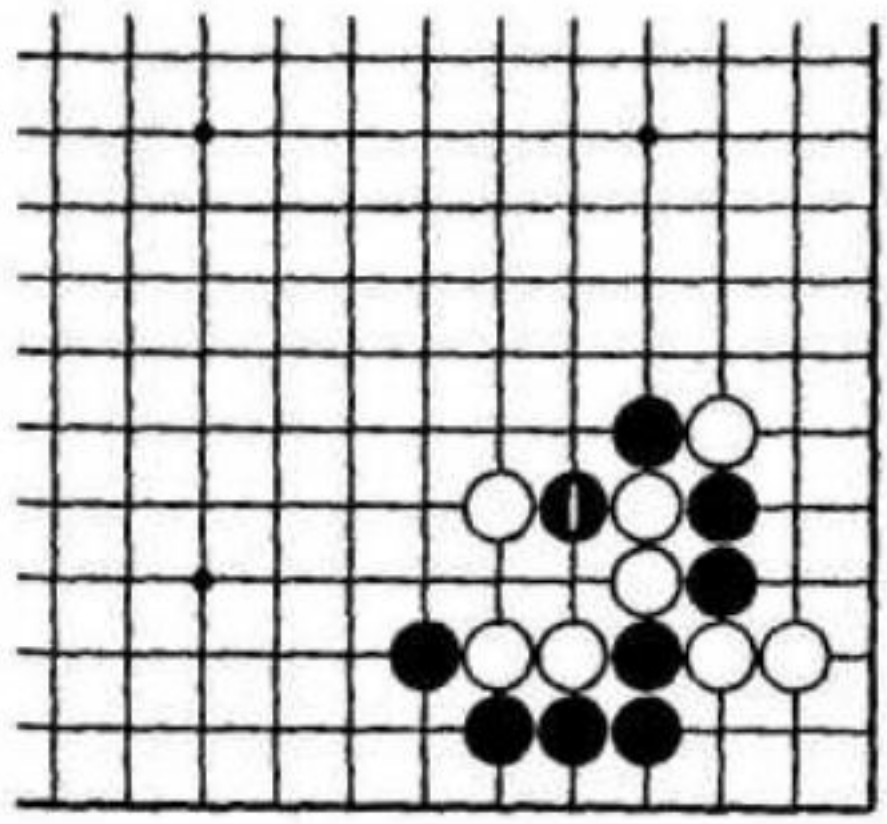
Dia. 15



Dia. 16

Dia. 17: the key stones

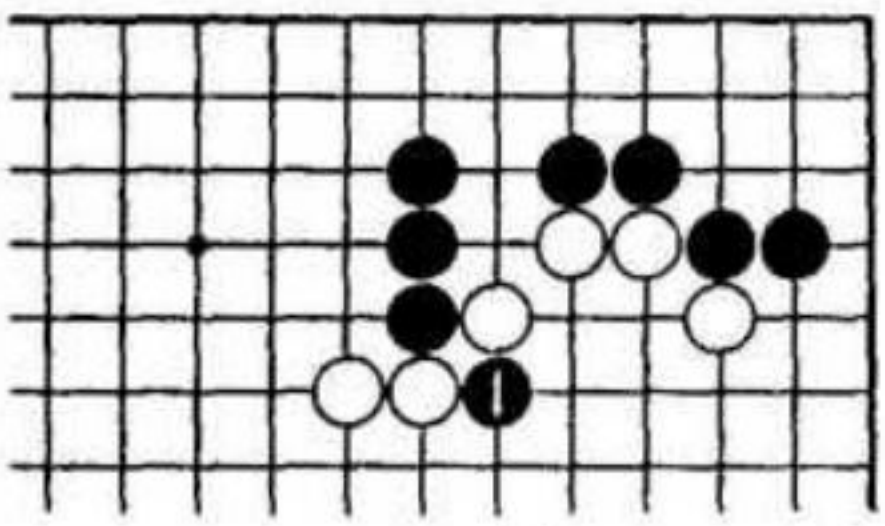
Playing atari at 1 ensures that Black can capture the key stones. This problem may seem easy, but you would be surprised how many people would follow Dia. 16 in an actual game.



Dia. 17

Dia. 18: White to play

This is a more difficult problem. How should White deal with Black's cut at 1?



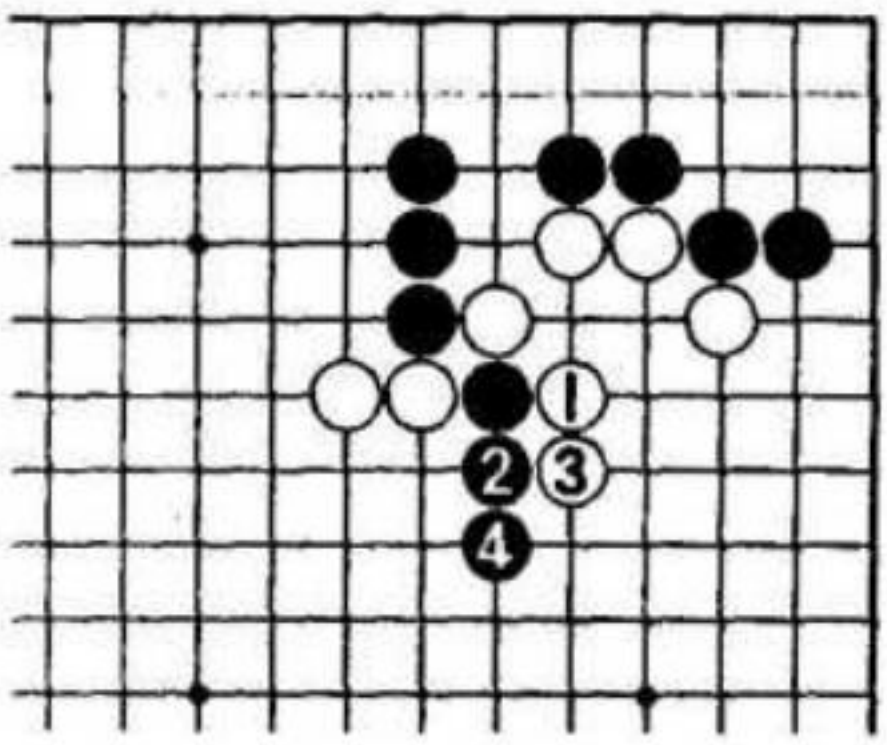
Dia. 18

Dia. 19: a tough fight

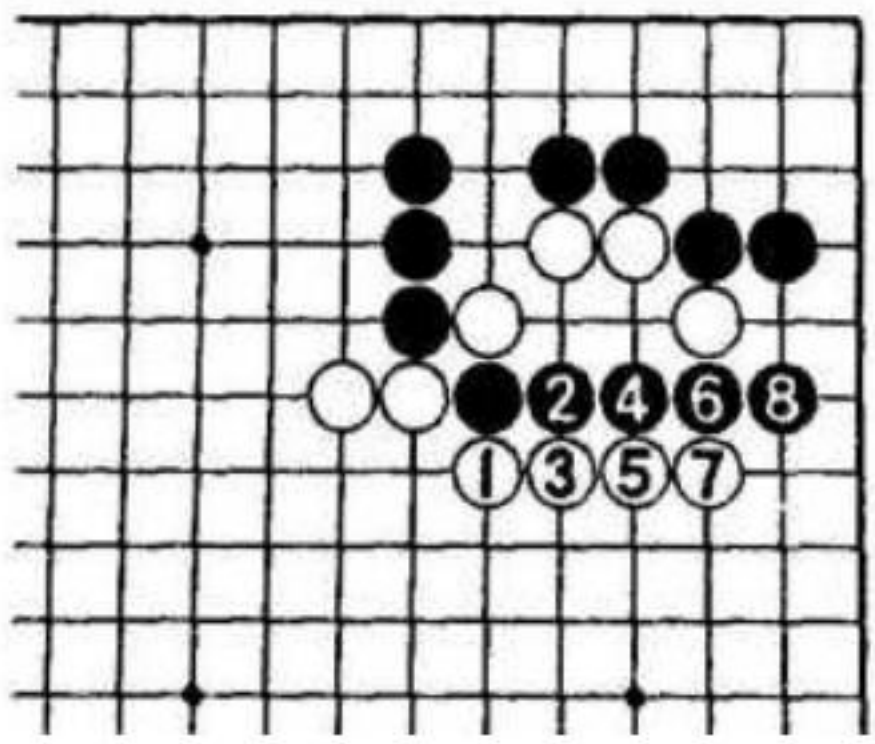
The atari of 1 is what Black wants. After 2 to 4, White finds himself faced with a tough fight, with weak groups on both sides.

Dia. 20: the wiser course

The usefulness of a group is not determined by the number of stones in it. So far we have been looking at sacrifices of single stones, but here the best course for White is to sacrifice all four of the stones clinging to the black wall. As compensation, White builds up outside influence up to 7. This is a very effective sacrifice; after 8, it's apparent that Black has gained relatively little for the number of stones he has played.



Dia. 19



Dia. 20