Trinidad
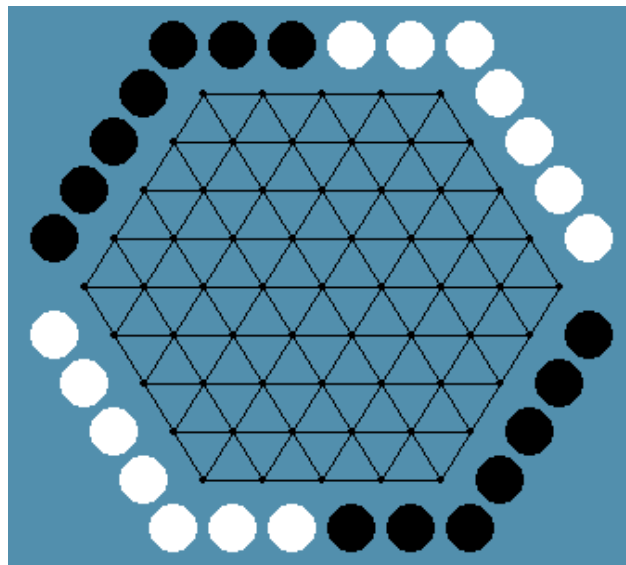
c.2002, Tijs Krammer

https://web.archive.org/web/20130414070704/https://www.krammer.nl/hex/trinidad.htm

Trinidad is an abstract board game for two players. It is based on the well-known game Hex. The goal of Trinidad is, like in Hex, to make a connection between opposite sides of the board. In Trinidad, unlike in Hex, pieces may be moved during the game. If you're not familiar with it, you may want to learn Hex first. The board of Trinidad

The board and the pieces

Trinidad is played on a board made up of hexagons, which itself is a large hexagon. Pieces are put on the crossing edges of the lines. The regular board size has seven fields on each border, but for learning a board with only five fields on each border (as shown to the right) may be used. The border of the board is divided into four parts, two opposite sides are marked white, the remaining two are marked black. One player uses white pieces, the other uses black pieces.

The basic idea of the game

Both player try to make a connection between the opposite sides of their own color. For example, the black player has won when the black pieces make a connection between the opposite black sides.

Both players in turn add a piece to the board and move pieces of their own. At the initial phase, both players add three pieces to the board. Thereafter, both players are allowed (1) to add a piece on a empty field adjacent to one of their existing pieces and subsequently (2) to move one of their rows to empty fields, as far as the length of the row.
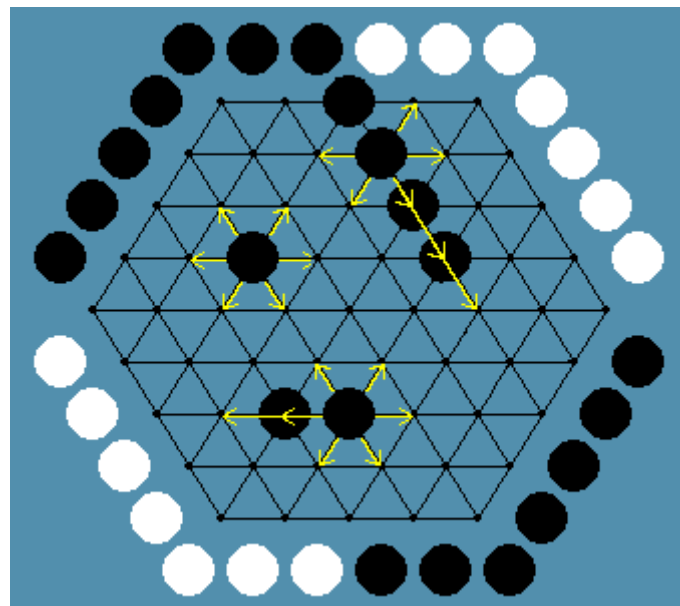
Start of the game

In the first phase of the game both players in turn put one of their pieces on any empty field. The pieces may not be moved yet. This is repeated three times, until both players have three pieces on the board. (If the game is played on the smaller learning board, this is done just once, so both players have a single piece on the board.) The white player begins. Legal moves

The remainder of the game

After the initial phase, the player is allowed to perform two action in each move:

(1) First, the player is allowed to add a piece to the board. This must be done on an empty field which is adjacent to one of his existing pieces on the board.

(2) Then, the player is allowed to move a row of his pieces. A row is formed by a number of adjacent pieces on a single line. A row may only be moved in the direction of the row itself, the row may be moved as far as the length of the row itself, and the row may only be moved to unoccupied fields. That is, a row of two pieces may be moved either one or two fields. A row of three pieces may be moved one, two or three fields. A single piece also forms a row, namely a row of length one, which may be moved a single step. It is allowed to move a part of a row. For example, if a row has length three, two of the pieces may also be moved, as far as two fields. In the image above, legal moves are indicated with arrows. Winning situation

The end of the game

The player who succeeds in creating a closed chain between his opposite sides of the board has won. The connection does not have to be a straight line, but it has to be connected. For example, in the situation shown here, black has won.

Often made mistakes

To avoid confusion, here is a short list of illegal moves:

- After the initial phase, you cannot add add pieces on a field of choice. Rather, it must be put on a field that is a neighbor of a field with one of your pieces.
- You cannot remove or strike pieces from the board.
- You may not move a row in another direction than the direction of the row itself. (However, a piece may be a member of more that one rows. As a matter of fact, a piece is always member of exactly three rows.)

Remarks on the game

One of the charming features of the Trinidad, as in Hex, is that it cannot be a draw. When the board is completely filled with pieces, one of the connections will be completed. Any connection with one color will block the connection of the other, and there is just one way of completely blocking the enemy, and that is to make a complete connection yourself. Try to check this fact for yourself. If you have fully grasped it, your understanding of the game will be better.

If an illegal move is pointed out to you (by another player or by the computer), don't be disappointed. Any player will make that kind of mistakes in the struggle to get through to the game. If you have played a couple of games, the moving will get to feel very naturally.