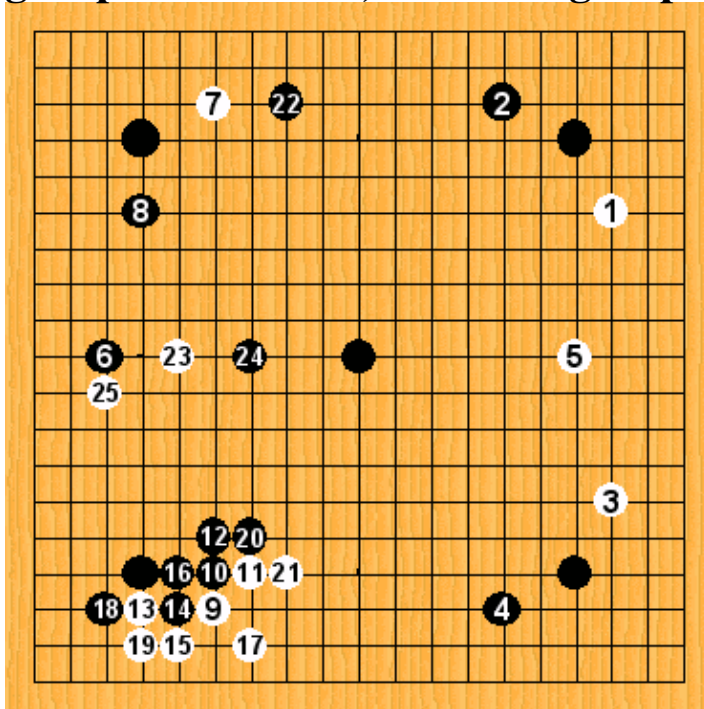


The Magic Principle to Improve

Translated by Aki & Victor

If opponent's position is vulnerable, you should break it into groups. Vice versa, maintain grouped formation.



Subject Diagram 1

This is a 5-stones handicap game.

White 23 'cap' is normal means to reduce the thickness of black. Then black 24 'counter-cap' is aggressive against white 23. White 25 initiated contact plays against black. What should black do?

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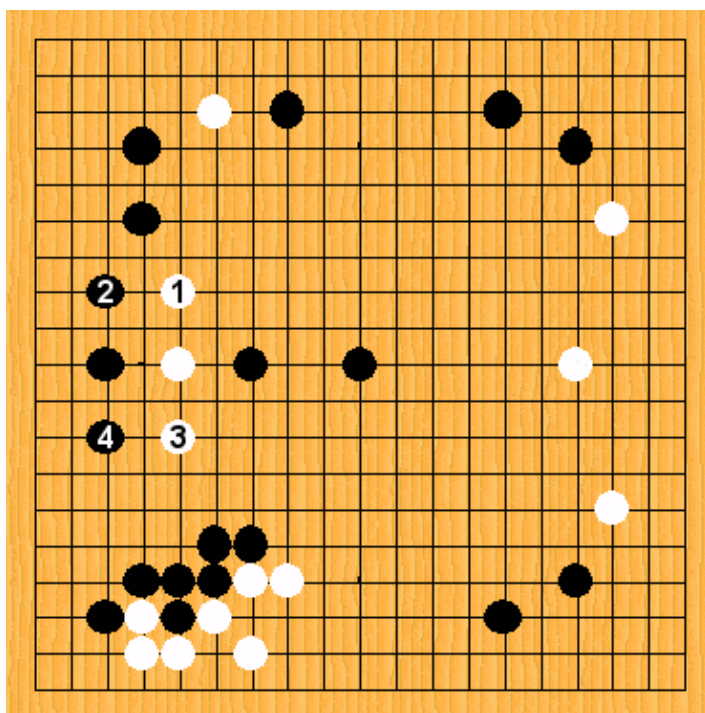
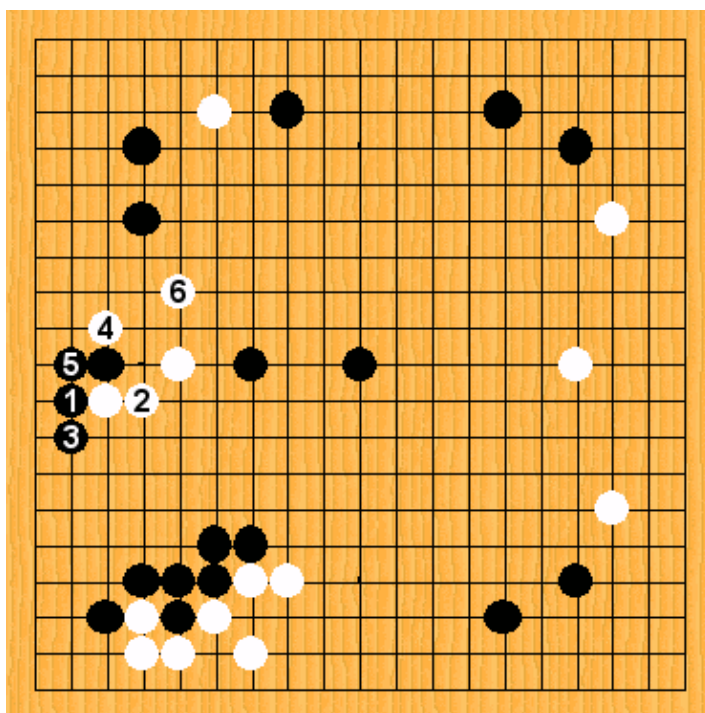


Figure 1 (black has initiative)

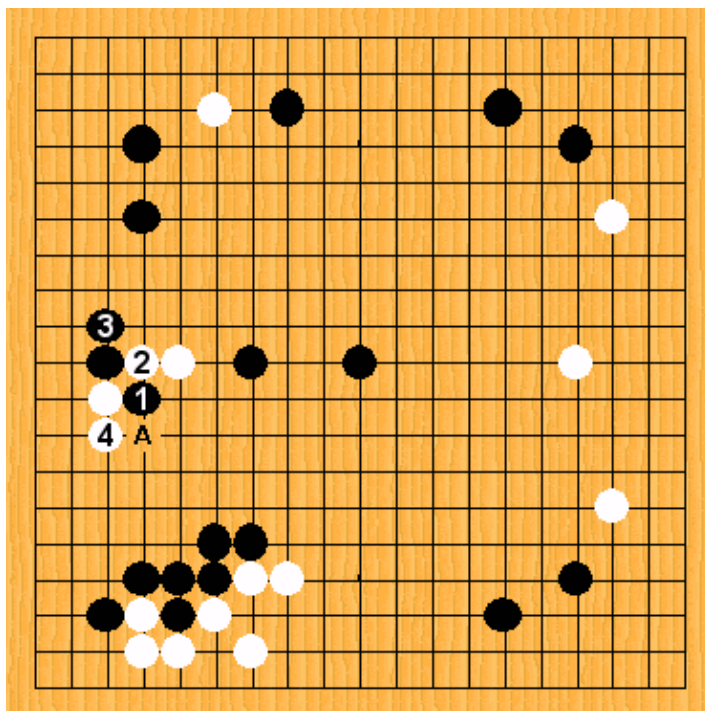
White 25 overlaid in Subject Diagram 1. White usually plays jumps at 1 and 3; but this group is under attack on both sides after black answers at 2 and 4, as in Graph 1. Black 2 and 4 are very important as they not only take white's root away but also connect the black groups.



Graph 2 (attack overcautious)

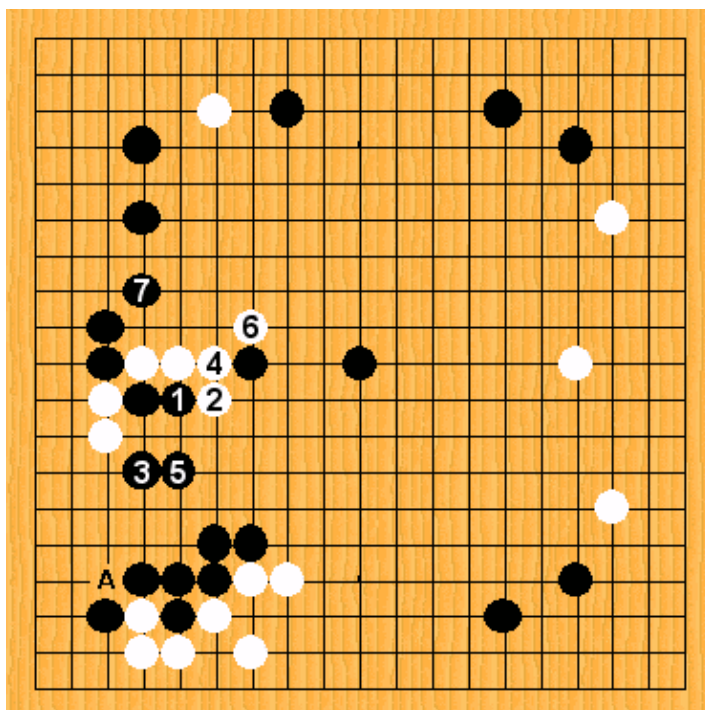
Black 1 is a normal move. Until 6, although black still takes away white's root and are attacking white continually, but comparing with Graph 1, black is flattened. White's shape is improved in comparison to 1 and 3 in graph 1.

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Graph 3 (right answer: storming attack with severe cut)

Black 1 is right answer. In black dominating area, as stated by the principle, white will be suffering after the cut. Due to the ladder at A is in black's favour, white can only play the extension at 4, and thus pass the initiative to black in the local fight. Black has many strong continuations here.

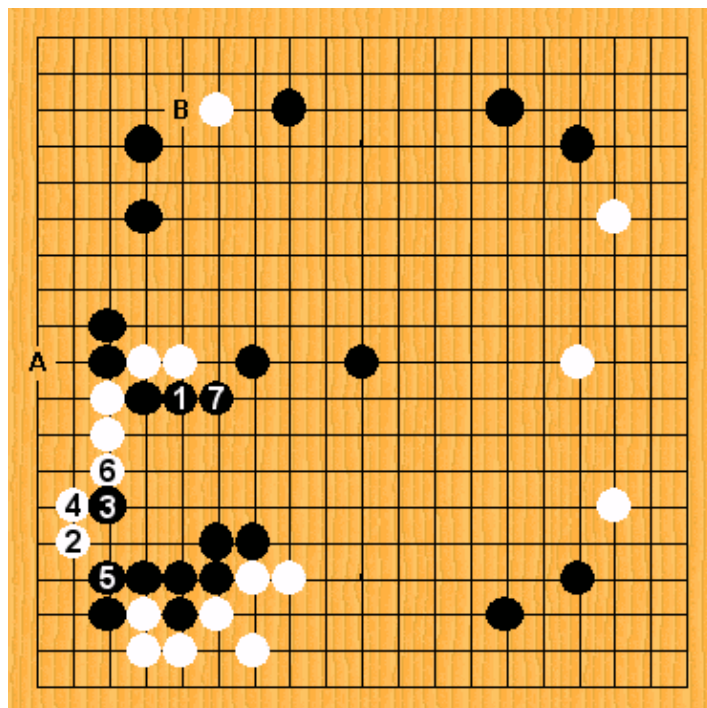


Graph 4 (black profit significantly)

The two white stones on left side are more valuable than the two white stones in centre. In this situation, black 1 should be played opposite to the side which he wishes to take. Also black 3 is good shape. Black 5 and 7

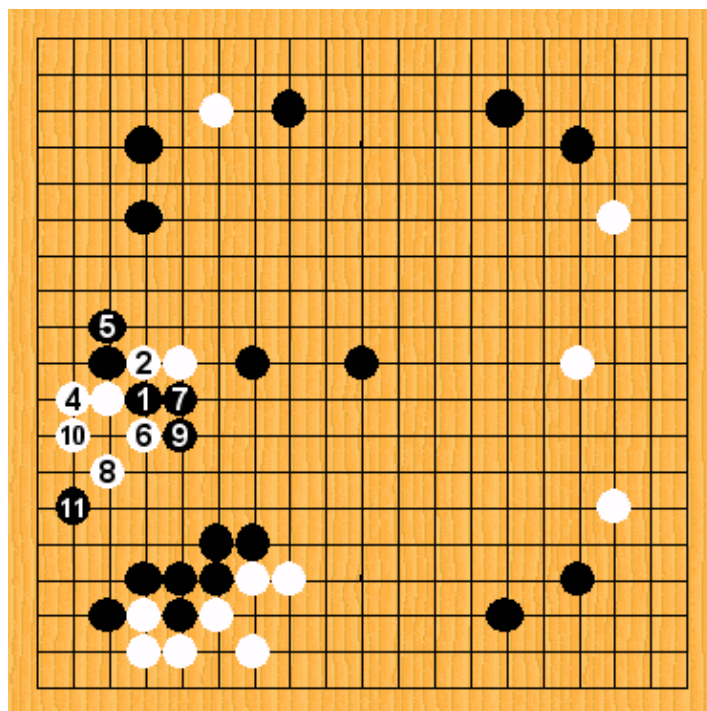
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defend left-side territory solidly. In addition, white can't cut at 'A' any more.



Graph 5 (black succeeds)

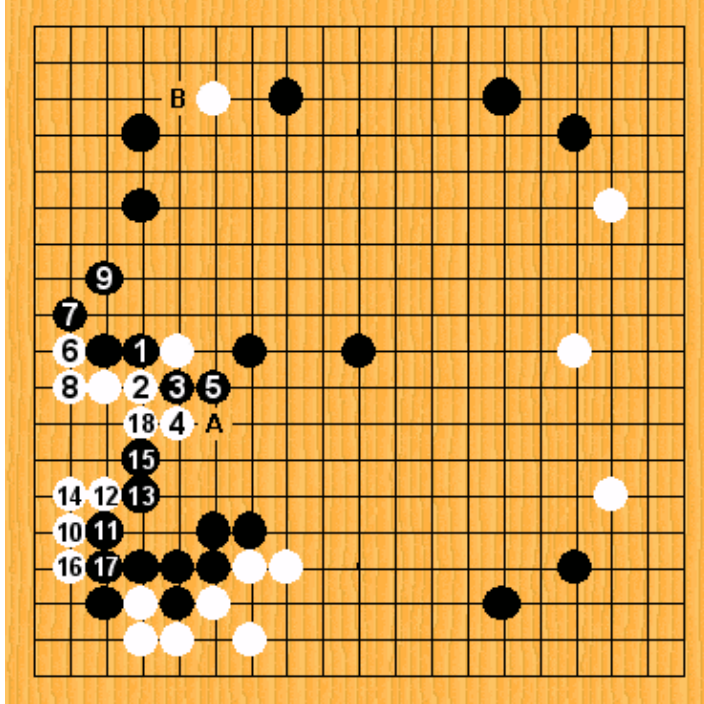
If white want to save two left stones, black has an advantage by simply answer it. Until black 7, white still need to settle left group, else it would be captured by black 'A'. After the battle, black gets sente and switches to attack the white stone on top side by playing 'B'. Thus, white falls into defensive situation, and black's lead extended.



Graph 6 (unorthodox attack, in special situation only)

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Many players will be tempted to atari at 3 which is a vulgar atari move. As after the sequence till 8, black 3 has been captured. However, black 11 can launch a new attack to destroy white's eye shape. This unorthodox attack works in very limited situations, and thus to be played with great degree of cautiousness.



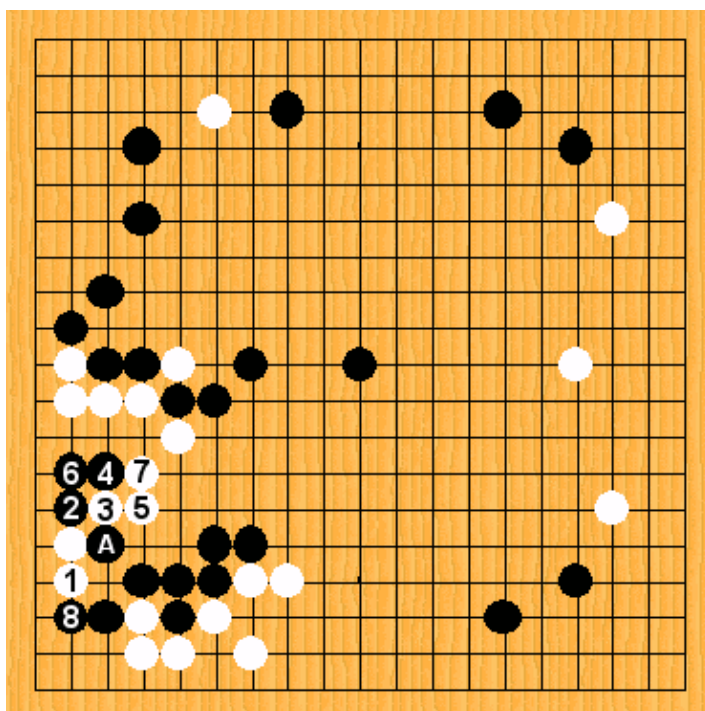
Graph 7 (The real game continuation)

Black played the gore move at 1, which is a bad shape as it is appeared to be *hane* at two stone's head. Black captures only one stone in centre but gives white breathing space to settle on the side.

White 10 is a *tesuji*, and black 11 is an even better counter move. But up to 18, white has settled without paying much cost. 'B' is attractive to black but the weakness at 'A' is a major concern. If black play 'A' to connect his stones, white will save the white stone on top side; if black play 'B' to take white root away, white will cut black stones' connection with central stones by playing 'A'.

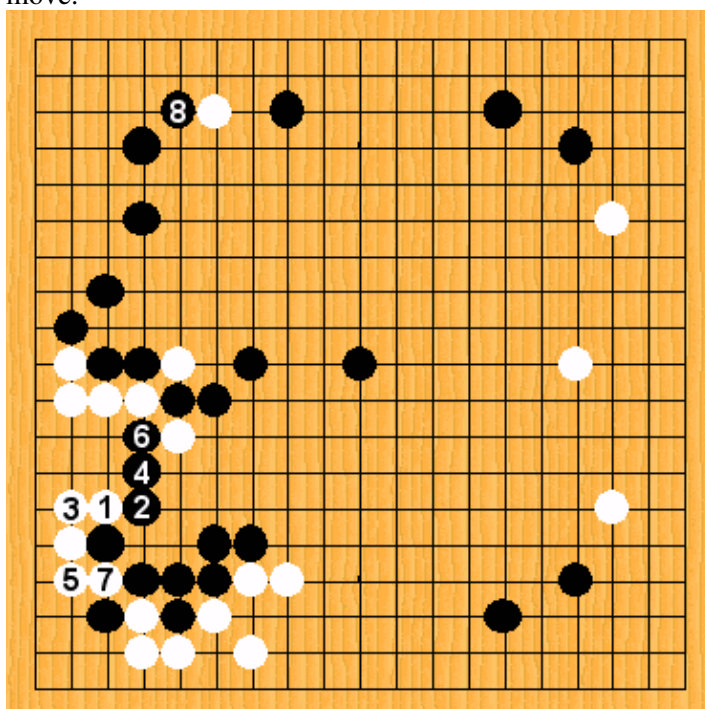
Thus, black must have played a bad move in the process, but which one?

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Graph 8 (white overplay)

If white 12 on Graph 7 play as white 1, black 2 is severe. Although white 3 cuts off black, but black can capture white left-side two stones with the sequence in this graph. That's why black's stone at A is a good move.



Graph 9 (the correct move: let white two strong groups connect)

On Graph 7, black 17 is a bad move. The correct move is to play at 6 'cut'. Even though white 7 take about 10 point value in the corner, it only connects two strong groups. Black stones have connected by *sente* and switch to play the big move at 8. Black is still keeping the lead in this position.

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The guide line cut off opponent's groups is that:

1. if both groups are weak and unsettled, the efficiency is 100%
2. if one group is weak, the efficiency halved
3. if both groups are alive, then it is a waste

Hope this lesson is useful for you. - Aki & Victor