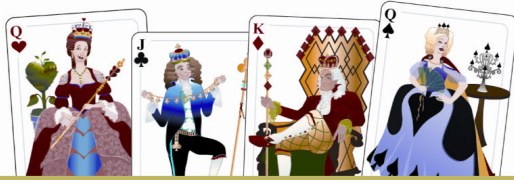


Fifth Chair



Short SAYC Test

QUESTIONS:

In each question you are requested to explain the bid(s) marked with the question mark, mostly what does it show concerning distribution, strength or other information important for the specific auction. The questions will be somewhat random without a strict pattern, just as they will appear at the tables. Some questions are not referring solely to the stated rules in the SAYC booklet but address the (common?) understanding of some bids that aren't covered but can be logically used in the proposed way (the question II, for example).

I. 1D P 1S P

2S P 5NT?

II. 1D P 3D P

3H?

3S?

III. 1NT P 2D DBL

2H?

IV. 1NT DBL 2D?

V. 1NT P 2S?

VI. 1S P 3S P

4NT 5D P?

DBL?

5H?

VII. 1C P 2NT?

VIII. 1NT P 3H?

IX. 1NT P 2H P

2S P 3C?

X. 1NT P 2H P

3S?

XI. 1NT P 2C P

2H P 3C?

XII. 3NT P 4C?

4H?

XIII. 1D 1S P 2D?

2H?

XIV. 1H 1NT P 2C?

2D?

2H?

XV. 1H 2H P 2NT?

XVI. 1D DBL 3D?

XVII. 1H P P 1NT?

XVIII. 1D 1H DBL?

XIX. 1S DBL RDBL?

XX. 1D P P DBL

P P RDBL?

XXI. 1H 1S 2NT?

XXII. 2C DBL 2D?

XXIII. 1H P 2NT P

3C?

3H?

3NT?

4H?

ANSWERS

I hope all of my answers will concur with the valid system, however even so all things are not to be taken for granted. Even if the system (or its interpreter) suggests one solution, this might not always be the best one for you and it definitely isn't the only one. As most of you have your mentors (or novices), you can consult with them whether you would prefer another option for some of the bids. I know I would. But the following should be right for those partnerships that are established on the "Sayc ok?" basis at the tables. Hope you got all of them right!

I. 5NT is, of course, Grand Slam Force. It means holding a hand like Qxxxx AKQxx AK Void where the only concern is losing a trump trick. It requests partner to bid 7S with 2 of the top 3 trump honors and 6S otherwise (yes, it is possible that opps hold both A and K of Spades, but it's a small risk worth taking).

II. A minor suit is the trump suit, so if opener knows slam is very unlikely he would like to play 3NT rather than 5D (easier to make and worth more). As opener knows the pair doesn't have an 8 card major fit (he denied holding 5, responder 4 in either H or S), 3H and 3S can well be put to use as asking for help in the respectful suit - in this case a stopper for NT game. 3S asks for help with spades, if responder has a stopper in this suit he should bid 3NT, otherwise return to 4D. 3H is a bit trickier as it doesn't promise a S stopper, so responder should bid 3NT only if he has both suits stopped, but 3S if only hearts. Without a heart stopper (even if he has one in spades) he should return to 4D.

This conventional use requires some discussion with partner, my interpretation isn't golden - just something to think about and put to use!

III. 2H promises 3 hearts (or 4 with a weak hand), opener passes to show only 2 - it's the opp's double that enables him to do so.

IV. After a double of 1NT all conventions are on, therefore Jacoby transfers as well - this is a transfer to hearts.

V. It's a minor suit bust that responder can use when he has a long minor suit and very few points - so that it's better to play the hand in 3 of his long minor than in NT. 3S is a transfer to 3C that responder will either pass or correct to 3D that opener must pass, depending on whether his suit is clubs or diamonds.

VI. Wondered what DOPI means? Well, this is it. When opps interfere over Blackwood, normal bids aren't available to show the number of Aces (or Kings), so different ones have to be used. DOPI means: Double with O, Pass with 1 (hence DOP1 or DOPI), bid the next suit with 2 and so on...

VII. This is a natural 2NT bid (unlike Jacoby 2NT after a major opening, which shows trump support and extra values). The awkward truth about it is that in the official sayc 2NT response shows 13-15 HCP (and 3NT 16-17).

This is exaggerating it a bit and most players play it as showing 11-12 HCP (and 3NT as 13-15 or so) - discuss this with your partner.

VIII. This shows a strong 5+ heart suit and slam interest - it should show at least around 15 total points (not just HCP) as opener promises 17, rarely 18 (if he holds a useful doubleton). With less responder can simply use the transfer.

IX. With this sequence responder again shows an interest in slam, showing his other suit so that opener can re-evaluate his hand accordingly, especially if the hands prove to be a double fit. With no slam interest responder has no reason to go searching for another possible fit as the major suit or no-trump game are a much better prospect than a minor suit one.

X. This bid show a super-accept - opener not has excellent 4-card support for responder's spades and a maximum hand (17 HCP). With 4 spades and a minimum it is better to pretend you only hold 3 spades and bid 2S.

XI. This also shows slam interest and a good 5+ suit (in this case clubs). 2C is still Stayman, of course, so responder should hold one 4-card major suit, although it is not the same as the one opener shows in his response. If responder does have a 4-card major he can show it after opener's rebid, who can do the same if he showed hearts the first time and also has spades.

XII. Some players don't play it so, but under the official sa-yc both Stayman and Jacoby transfers are still on over 3NT. A thing to be discussed with your partner.

XIII. The trick in this question is that only the cuebid of opponent's suit is forcing. So if you hold a powerhouse with a strong heart suit don't simply bid 2H over your partner's 1S overcall as he can pass that with, let's say, a weak hand with 5 spades and 3 hearts.

XIV. Only Stayman is still on if your partner overcalls 1NT, both 2D and 2H are natural bids showing the respective suits.

XV. If you know what 2H is, 2NT shouldn't be a problem. 2H is a Michaels cue-bid, in this case showing spades (the other major) and one minor suit. As the minor suit is not known yet, 2NT asks for a rebid of this minor.

XVI. Without a double this bid would show 10-12 points along with diamond support and would most likely lead to 3NT contract (responder practically denies holding a 4-card major so a major suit game is very unlikely). Over a double 3D takes on a pre-emptive meaning - responder will normally have quite a few diamonds but a very weak hand and will try to disturb the opponents' bidding.

XVII. This is an overcall in the pass-out seat, so the range for the 1NT overcall is lowered - it shows 10-15 HCP. Why? Because your side is known to hold quite a few points as opps wouldn't stop on 1 level otherwise, so without a good suit bid it is right to reopen the auction with a balanced bid.

XVIII. This is a negative double, showing exactly 4 spades - with 5 responder would bid 1S. They are perhaps even more useful when opps bid spades, as they are a cheap way of showing hearts. In official sayc these negative doubles are used up to (and including) opps' 2S bid, but many players play it higher (through 3S) - another thing to discuss with your partner.

XIX. This is a point showing Redouble - it simply shows 10 or more HCP and doesn't say anything particular about the suit opener bid.

XX. This is a different story, responder denied 10+ points, he even denied 6 when he passed the first time - this is an SOS Redouble, asking partner to think again about the trump suit. It is typically used when responder is very short in the suit bid and can support at least two others, so if opener rebids his other good suit the partnership will likely be at a better spot to play.

XXI. Without the overcall this would be Jacoby 2NT, showing heart support and requesting opener to bid his short suit or show strength. With the overcall this bid resumes its natural meaning and shows a balanced hand with invitational values (and preferably a spade stopper).

XXII. 2C is another of the forcing bids. Without intervention responder would have to bid something and 2D would be a negative response, saying "sorry pd, I don't have anything worth mentioning". When opponent interferes, however, responder isn't obliged to bid and can pass with a minimum. His voluntary

2D bid is therefore bearing a message "partner, even though the opponent took me off the hook, I DO have something worth mentioning, and it's a nice diamond suit". Bearing in mind, of course, that such a response shows also possession of three controls (an Ace and a King) or 8+ HCP.

XXIII. Following Jacoby 2NT, opener is required to bid his short suit if he has one - in this case, if he bids 3C this is it. If he doesn't hold a singleton or void in a side suit, then he shows his strength. As responder guarantees game strength with his 2NT bid, opener bids 4H to show that's the limit as far as he's concerned. 3NT shows a minimum hand (holding somewhere around 16-18 HCP), whereas 3H shows the strongest of the hands he can hold (19-21 HCP). In this way the partnership has plenty of room for cue-bidding if they know they have values for slam and goes to 4H quickly if slam seems out of the question.