

THINKING BRIDGE (7)

East deals, with neither side vulnerable:

North (Dummy)

♠ 7 6
♥ J 7 6
♦ K J 10 6
♣ Q J 10 8

East (You)

♠ A K 4 3 2
♥ A Q 10 5
♦ 9 5
♣ 7 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	2NT	1♠ All Pass	INT

Bidding commentary: Considering that he passed North's invitation to game, South likely has a minimum for his overcall, in which case he should have a double stopper in spades. North's 2NT bid shows 8-9 HCP.

Lead commentary: As East, it should be clear to you that partner has led from shortness. With ♠9 x x, an unsupported suit, partner leads low.

Defensive commentary: As East, you should infer that there is no future in spades, so turn your attention to hearts. Assuming declarer has the king, the proper card to lead is the queen, a surrounding play. You have the jack surrounded with the queen and the 10 plus a higher unequal honor, the ace. Declarer takes the king, but if and when partner gets in, his heart return gives your side three hearts tricks to go along with the top spades for down one.

When the dummy to your right has the J-x-x and you have A-Q-10-(x), attack with the queen. If you lead low and declarer has K-x-x, declarer plays low and takes two tricks in the suit. If you lead the queen, declarer gets one. When dummy to your right has the 10-x-(x) and you have A-J9-(x) or K-J-9-(x), attack with the jack. When dummy to your right has the 9-x-(x) and you have K-10-8-(x) or Q-10-8-(x), start with the 10. The common denominator of these three surrounding plays is having the dummy's jack, 10 or 9 perfectly surrounded by a higher and a lower card plus a higher non-equal honor.

The full deal:

	♠ 7 6	
	♥ J 7 6	
	♦ K J 10 6	
	♣ Q J 10 8	
♠ 9 5		♠ A K 4 3 2
♥ 8 4 3		♥ A Q 10 5
♦ 8 7 3 2		♦ 9 5
♣ A 6 4 3		♣ 7 5
	♠ Q J 10 8	
	♥ K 9 2	
	♦ A Q 4	
	♣ K 9 2	