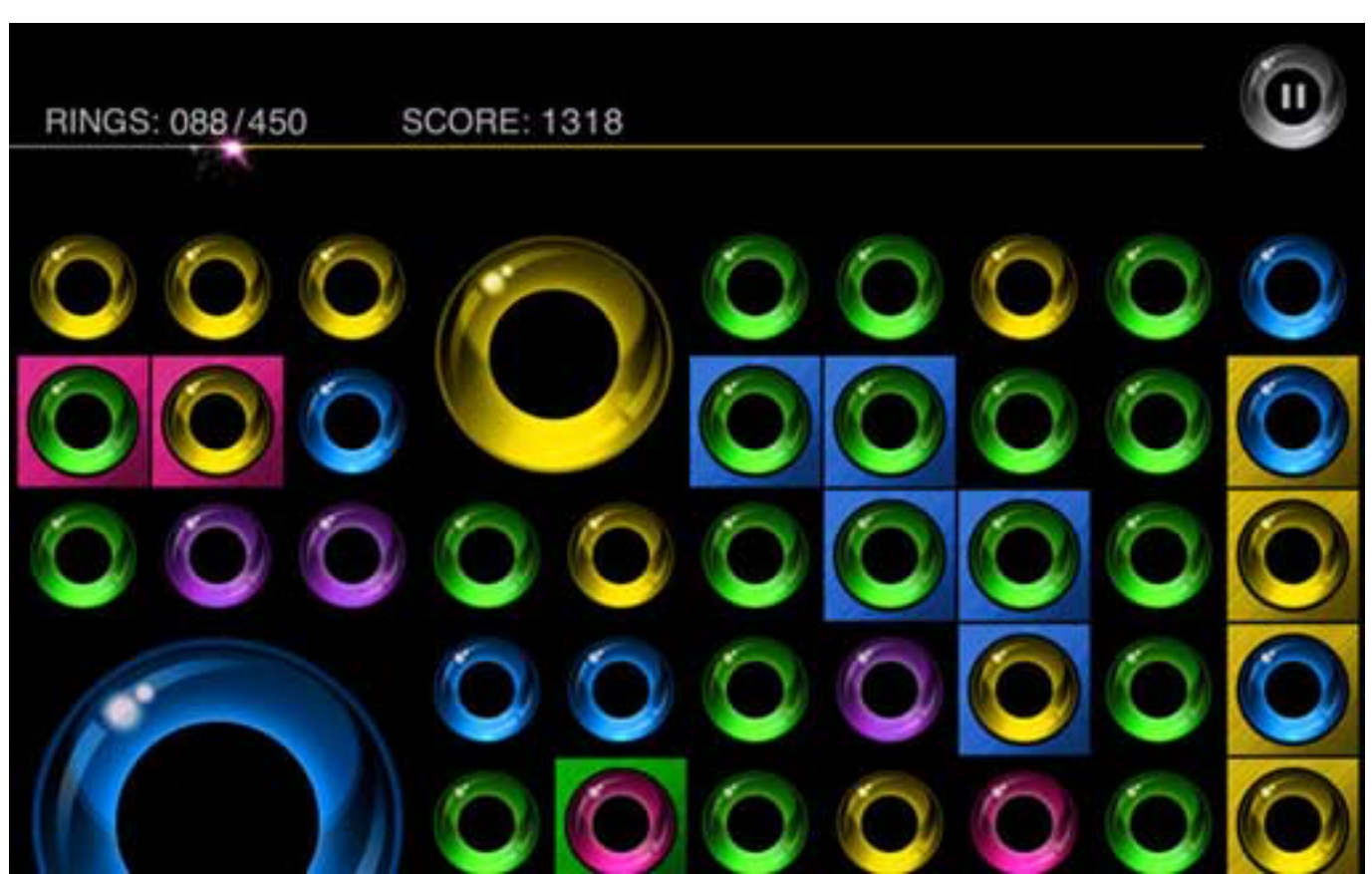


ThinkO Review

Written by Spanner Spencer



PLATFORM: iOS

If there's one game that's been cloned more than any other it has to be Bejeweled. The originator of the match-three puzzle game has seen most every variation played out in one way or another, until it's hard to image that anyone could possibly come up with a vaguely original twist on the concept.

Despite this Bejeweled-focused introduction, ThinkO for the iOS platform is actually only distantly related. It looks like a Bejeweled clone at first glance, and many of its mechanics are similar, but the objective differs in a very interesting way.

A grid of different coloured rings fills the screen, and it's your job to eliminate them before the timer hits zero. Groups of background squares are highlighted behind the rings, requiring you to arrange appropriately coloured rings over the top of them. Once the square and rings match, they're removed and your score increases. The timer also gets a boost, allowing you to keep on playing until you fail to make a match.

To position the rings over the squares, you slide the entire row or column up and down, left and right. The trick here is not to move rings that have already been positioned when sliding its row or column around, and ThinkO quickly reveals itself to be a very challenging brain teaser. This is especially true when large rings appear, which limit movement of the rows and columns, and can only be removed by matching small rings of the same colour elsewhere on the board.

Each level increases in speed and difficulty, and if you don't get rid of the large rings quickly, the screen can become gridlocked and you'll be unable to put the small hoops where they're needed. It's remarkably inventive, and is the ideal game for anyone who's stalled of swapping gems to score points.

With a speed and puzzle mode also thrown in, the universal ThinkO app offers you a lot for such a simple concept. The download size is a bit large for a puzzle game, but it works beautifully and will keep you hooked a lot longer than the nearest Bejeweled clone could ever hope to do.

RATING: 7.5/10

