

Cookie Monster

Give me, give me, give me!



Complexity



8-13 years



40-60 minutes



6-16



Peace



Poverty



Human Rights

Type of activity

Game of group negotiation

Overview

Two groups negotiate between each other to share snacks in a series of rounds, using the game to discuss the relationship between what is 'fair', equality and human rights.

Objectives

- To explore the process of negotiation
- To discuss equality in the framework of human rights
- To explore issues relating to fairness and equality

Preparation

Print the handout at the end of the activity or write the instructions for each separate group on a board or flipchart.

Prepare snacks.

Materials

- A supply of at least 42 (healthy) snacks (e.g. cookies, pieces of fruit). Be aware of any food allergies or special diets.
- Optional – printed copies of the group instructions to hand out

Instructions

1. Divide the children into two equal groups and explain that they will play a game where they decide on how to divide snacks between each other. Give each group a copy of the instructions and 21 snacks.
2. Ask the groups to read through their instructions and clarify any questions they might have on how the game works. Run through an example of how each round will work and ensure the children understand that in each round they have two opportunities to divide the snacks and if they do not agree on the number of snacks to share within the two chances they have, then the snacks are returned to you.
3. Before you start the game, explain that each group has 21 snacks in total and that there will be six rounds – Group A will lead the first one and then Group B will lead the next one. The pattern continues until the six rounds are completed.
4. Start the game. For each round, record the results on a board or flipchart, showing the number of snacks each group received. At the end of the activity, add up the total scores of each group. The chart will end up looking something like this, depending on the results from each round:

| | GROUP A | GROUP B | FACILITATOR |
|------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| ROUND 1: A leads | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| ROUND 2: B leads | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| ROUND 3: A leads | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| ROUND 4: B leads | 5 | 6 | 0 |
| ROUND 5: A leads | 6 | 5 | 0 |
| ROUND 6: B leads | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| TOTAL | 17 | 17 | 8 |

Debriefing and Evaluation

To avoid distraction, collect the snacks received by groups at the end of each round, and explain that they will be returned for eating later on.

Use a few of the questions in each category below to debrief the activity:

- Discuss how the activity went, using questions such as these:
 - What happened during this activity? How did you feel?
 - What was most exciting? Most frustrating?
 - Did you have a strategy? How did you develop your strategy?
 - Did anyone negotiate with the other team? Was it successful?
 - If you played this activity again, would you act differently?
 - Was the final result fair?
- Discuss the implications of the activity, using questions such as these:
 - Did you trust the other team to divide their snacks with you fairly? What do you think was their aim when they made a proposal?
 - What do we mean when we say “fair”? What do we mean by “sharing”?
 - Can you think of situations in life where children need to share? Is it important that people get equal shares? What happens when things are shared unfairly?
 - Can you think of situations in life where adults need to share? What happens when adults do not share things fairly?
 - Can you think of examples in life where people do not get a “fair share” of things that they need?
 - What can we do in our daily life to make sure that everybody has a fair share?
- Relate the activity and discussion to human rights:
 - Human rights are based on what everyone needs, not only to survive but also to live a life of dignity with an adequate standard of living. What happens when people don’t have the basic things they need (e.g. enough food, shelter, education, family)?
 - Can you see a connection between having a “fair share” of necessities and human rights?

Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Capture the Castle' involves co-operating against a common 'enemy' and involves elements of strategy and negotiation between groups.

Ideas for action

Ask for examples of ways the children can improve sharing within their group, at home and in the community (e.g. sharing opportunities to speak, use of toys and equipment, adult attention, acting as a leader).

Contact local or national NGOs working on fair trade. Invite them to explain to your group what they do. Organise activities to support these NGOs.

Tips for the facilitator

The relationship between human needs and human rights is fundamental to human rights education. If this concept is not already established, you may wish to precede this activity with another activity such as 'Sailing to a New Land', which focuses on this concept.

This activity can be run a second time. In this case, use different and more desirable snacks to maintain interest.

You can have several groups playing this activity at the same time. However, be aware that the behaviour of one group can influence another. To encourage this interaction, you could make a common score board so that all groups can see how snacks are being shared. Discuss this in the debriefing.

If they wish to, allow children to re-divide the snacks after the activity.

Adaptations

To reduce the level of complexity, the total number of snacks to be divided is deliberately uneven in order to make the negotiation more difficult. However, if this is too complicated for your group, make the numbers even for both groups in every round.

To increase the complexity, include an extra rule that puts Group A in a different power position. If Group B refuses a proposal, they get nothing, but Group A gets to keep three snacks anyway. However, if Group A refuses a proposal from Group B, Group B does not get anything.

To emphasise the relationship of the activity to human rights, if you have more than one facilitator, consider breaking the children into two or more smaller groups in order to debrief about the last section, concerning the relationship between human needs and human rights. The smaller the group, the deeper the discussion is likely to be on this important topic. Conclude by bringing the small groups together to share their discussion. Add another 30 minutes to the activity for this adaptation.



Handout

Instruction cards

Group A

Your group has a total of 21 snacks that you need to divide between yourselves and Group B.

There are 3 rounds in total. Within each round, you will have the chance to share your snacks with Group B; they will then have a chance to share theirs with you. In each round you need to share the following number of snacks.

| Round 1 | Round 2 | Round 3 |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 7 snacks to divide | 3 snacks to divide | 11 snacks to divide |

You have two chances to share your snacks in each round.

- If Group B accepts your initial proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept the proposal you can make a new one.
- If Group B accepts your second proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept your second proposal then neither group receives anything and you have to give your snacks for that round to the facilitator.

Group B

Your group has 21 snacks that you need to divide between yourselves and Group A.

There are 3 rounds in total. Within each round, you will have a chance to share your snacks with Group A; they will then have a chance to share theirs with you.

In each round you need to share the following number of snacks.

| Round 1 | Round 2 | Round 3 |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 5 snacks to divide | 11 snacks to divide | 5 snacks to divide |

You have two chances to share your snacks in each round.

- If Group A accepts your initial proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept the proposal you can make a new one.
- If Group A accepts your second proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept your second proposal then neither group receives anything and you have to give your snacks for that round to the facilitator.