

Bonding Through Board Games

Leader's Guide

Lesson Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson about board games and relationship strengths, participants will understand how engaging in Euro-style board games offers participants the chance to:

- » Understand and appreciate the structure and purpose of Eurogames.
- » Develop and apply qualities that foster strong relationships, such as appreciation, communication, and trust.
- » Strengthen relational bonds through shared experiences and teamwork.
- » Create lasting memories in an enjoyable, screen-free setting.
- » Build essential life skills, including problem-solving, resilience, and social-emotional intelligence.

Potential Audiences

- » Intergenerational groups
- » Community groups
- » Veterans
- » Seniors
- » Churches
- » Families
- » Schools
- » Special needs families
- » Gaming groups
- » Social workers

What Leaders Need to Prepare for the Lesson

- » Pocket cards for each quality of a strong and successful family or any relationships (MF3403)
- » Displays to explain and showcase the program
- » Fact sheets for participants (MF3401)
- » Brochures to further promote the program
- » Board games for participants to play
- » PowerPoint presentation to promote the program
- » Time to read over the leader's guide



Introduction

Quality bonding time is essential for nurturing and maintaining close relationships, whether with family, friends, or other loved ones. A great way to foster these connections is through Euro-style board games.

Eurogames, or Euro-style games, are a type of tabletop game known for their engaging mechanics and meaningful themes. These games often use abstract components to represent a thematic setting, focusing on concepts like building, creating, or managing resources. Unlike games that rely heavily on chance, Euro-style games emphasize strategic decision-making and minimize randomness, allowing players greater control. They also reduce direct conflict between players, encouraging competition through resource management and point accumulation.

These qualities make Eurogames an excellent choice for strengthening relationships. They provide a collaborative and strategic environment that encourages communication, teamwork, and mutual respect, fostering deeper connections and a positive atmosphere for growth.

For a game night event, set up tables around the room with four to five chairs at each table. Place one table at the front of the room and spread out all board games on this table. This will allow participants to look at the games and select the ones they want to play. If desired, set up a table for non-sticky snacks on one side of the room for participants to enjoy away from the games. Take a few minutes at the beginning, or as participants enter, to explain the lesson for that night (pocket card) and how the event will run. If one chooses, use the PowerPoint presentation to explain the program.

Community Activities

- » **Mega Game Day** — An extended period of time over the course of one day to play board games while connecting and communicating with family members or game mates.
- » **Bi-Monthly Game Events** — Scheduled bi-monthly game nights for participants to come and play games.
- » **Parents/Family Events at Schools** — Board game collection taken to schools for parents or family events.
- » **Community Event Celebrations** — Board game collection taken to another community event.
- » **Holiday Event** — Games incorporated into a chosen holiday (e.g. Christmas, Hanukah, Maulid al-Nabi, Diwali, Kwanza, etc.).
 - » Santa, Easter Bunny, etc. could be invited to be present at the event
- » **Community Displays** — Display(s) set up at community settings (for example, a community center, school, religious center, etc.).
- » **Presentations to Community Groups** — Presentations on the purpose and ways to conduct a family game event.

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K-State Research and Extension educators may access the evaluation instrument on the Bonding Thru Board Games Teams channel: <https://bit.ly/ksrebondingthruboardgames>

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