



LEARNING WITH: CATAN

ABOUT THE GAME

of Players: All **Grade:** 6th-7th grade **Time:** 60-90 min
Subject: Social Studies

In Catan (formerly The Settlers of Catan), players try to be the dominant force on the island of Catan by building settlements, cities, and roads. On each turn dice are rolled to determine what resources the island produces. Players collect these resources (cards)—wood, grain, brick, sheep, or stone—to build up their civilizations to get to 10 victory points and win the game. Points are accumulated by building settlements and cities, having the longest road and the largest army (from some of the development cards), and gathering certain development cards that simply award victory points. When a player has gathered 10 points (some of which may be held in secret), he announces his total and claims the win.

WHAT THE GAME TEACHES

Catan can be used as a tool to show several educational standards in social studies as well math. We will be focusing on a social studies aspect in this

lesson plan. Catan can show students what trading resources looks like as they use their own resources and ones they have traded for to build their own settlements, cities, and roads. With supply and demand being a key component of the game play, students will be able to see how trading is one of the only ways to acquire some of the resources they need. The “Robber” in the game can also act as a sort of disaster in whatever area it is put. This will show students how a shortage in supplies for everyone can work to their benefit as well as their detriment. Throughout the game, students will value certain resources differently. At the beginning of the game, brick and wood are highly valuable, as they are required to build roads. Building roads leads to building other settlements. There is a turning point in the game, where students will then value stone and wheat more than bricks and wood, due to stone and wheat being needed to replace their settlements with cities. This value system is indicative of what happens when civilizations begin to settle and produce more on the land they are occupying.

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Please contact us if you have any questions about this game, or if you would like to know about more games that can help make learning fun!

EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Prep Time: Prep time can vary depending on the amount of immersion you want in the classroom.

Material Usage: Catan board game.

Standards and Learning Objectives: Standard 6-1 Early Cultures to 1600. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the development of the cradles of civilization as people moved from a nomadic existence to a settled life.

Standard 7-1: Contemporary Cultures: 1600 to the Present. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the growth and impact of global trade on world civilizations after 1600.

Initial Instruction: Explain to students that their groups will be acting as settlers on a new continent called Catan. They have already settled in two locations and need to expand due to their growing populations. There are other settlers in Catan they can trade with (their fellow students in other groups), and this will most likely be necessary to expand their own people group. You can go a step further and have them come up with a name for their group and have a designated place in the room for trade agreements to take place.

Further instruction and other insights: Students do need a solid understanding of how to play the game, and what it takes to win. 10 victory points are necessary to win, and some of these victory points can be hidden until the end of the game. The “Robber” can be used as a deterrent or as a political pawn when a seven is rolled. Using this piece can be considered a show of force and can likely cut ties between two people groups, until a trade is absolutely necessary. Playing in groups allows students to have conversations about what the best options are and can add to the political nature of the game.

Suggestions During Play with the work sheet: Speed is the key for an engaged audience. No one wants to wait while someone goes all the way to the front of the room to pick up resource cards. Have the cards in a central location so that students can access them easier. Our worksheet makes each turn a season. This makes a year pass each time every group has gone. Tracking the game this way can show how long it takes some civilizations to reach certain points. It could take some civilizations longer to create a city than others and so on.

Assessment: Have the students write a report about their experience as a settler in Catan. Do they feel that they did well as a civilization? What could they have done better? Did any disaster strike really affect them in a measurable way? Students can use their worksheet to look back on certain events and explain how their civilization was affected by them.

Extended/Optional Learning: If you are looking to make this engaging as possible, you can use actual bundles of wheat, wool, wood, and a brick for students to use as actual resources. Creating the feeling of an actual trade agreement each time a trade occurs could be fun as well! Writing terms to an agreement for not putting the robber on their soil for a predetermined amount of turns would add to the political nature the game. Immersion is key to having students engaged in all the aspects of Catan.

The worksheets can be taken home and used for a creative writing experience. Students can tell the history of their people group and their expansion on the continent of Catan.



Catan Through the Years: ECONOMY

Group Name: _____

Student Name: _____

End of Year	What was traded	What was built	Any disasters?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			

Handy Codes for Easy Tracking (Example: 2W:2Br means 2 Wood for 2 brick)				
Wood	Wool/Sheep	Brick	Stone	Wheat
W	Sh	Br	St	Wh

Catan Through the Years: RESOURCE COLLECTION

Group Name: _____

Student Name: _____

End of Year	What was gained	What was lost	Any development cards bought?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
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22			
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24			
25			