

Society for American Archaeology Activity Submission Form

Hunter-Gatherer Board Game-- Justin P. Williams

A Board game which uses the pieces from Settlers of Catan to simulate what it would be like to live in a hunter-gatherer group. The instructor will need to read the instructor guidelines and buy a copy of the game.

What are the intended educational outcomes of this activity—what does it enable students to do or to know?

This activity encourages students to think about Hunter-Gatherer mobility in new ways. The best time to do this activity would be after a lecture on Hunter-Gatherer seasonal rounds and Binford's (1980) residential/forager dichotomy. This activity encourages students to think about the differences between these two mobility patterns and plan out their own seasonal round.

What kinds of courses is this activity appropriate for?

Lower-level undergraduate

Upper-level undergraduate

Graduate

For how many students is this activity designed?

2-30

How long does the activity typically take?

50 mins

What (if any) additional materials are required?

A copy of Settlers of Catan. This can be found at Game Stores and big box retailers such as Target.

Hunter-Gatherer Game

Instructor Version

Teaching Archaeological Concepts: This game allows students to experience several sets of archaeological concepts. The first set of concepts is the mobility styles outlined by Binford (1960). Students will find that a logistical mobility pattern is required to win, but will be asked how the rules can be changed to allow for victory using a residential style. Storage is also required for victory and again students will be asked how the rules could be changed to waive this requirement. This could also lead to a discussion of storage in general.

This activity does not require all of the pieces from the Settlers box. All you need is 3 light green hexes, 3 dark green hexes, 3 gray hexes, and 3 red hexes. In addition take all of the village pieces (the little houses).

Set Up

Take the Hexes provided in the Settler of Catan Box and Build a Map

- 1) Take 3 Red Hexes, 3 Dark Green Hexes, and 3 Gray Hexes and 3 light green hexes. Arrange them so that the same type of hex never touches the same type. It also helps to make sure that each hex touches at least two other hexes (if you have two copies of the game split the students into eight groups).
- 2) Split the students in to four groups (or eight if you have two copies of the game).
- 3) Give each group of students five village pieces (the little houses). In this game these pieces were represent the tents of the Hunter-Gatherers. Each group should get a different color. These represent their Hunter-Gatherers and the students will move these around the map.
- 4) Have each group choose a hex for all five of their Hunter-Gatherers to start in.

Then the game is played in a series of turns. Each Turn is a Season. The first turn is spring, the next is Summer, the next Fall, and the fourth and final turn per year is Winter. Play the game for four seasons (one year), or more if you choose.

Three different phases can occur per turn, but in Winter Only phase three occurs:

- 1) **Initial Moves:** Move each Hunter-Gatherer one time (move from one hex to an adjacent hex). *This phase does not occur during Winter.*
- 2) **Hunt and Gather:** Receive one resource for each hunter-gatherer on a hex. See the bottom section for what resources you get. *This phase does not occur during Winter.*
 - a. For each Hunter-Gatherer on a light green field hex gain a meat resource
For each Hunter-Gatherer on a dark green forest hex gain **TWO** plant resources
For each Hunter-Gatherer on a gray quarry hex gain a stone tool resource
For each Hunter-Gatherer on a red field gain a clay resource

Have each student write down what resources their group got and used on their player sheets.

- 3) **Return to Camp and Feed your People:** Move each hunter-gatherer up to two hexes each. By the end of this move all of you team's hunter-gatherers must be in the same hex, but this can be any hex they can all move to.
 - a. During this phase you must use two plant food resources and one meat food resource to keep your Hunter-Gatherers alive. If you do not have these resources one of your Hunter-Gatherers dies. Remove them from the board.
 - b. For each stone tool resource you have you may store one meat resource. For each clay resource you have you may store two plant resources. To store a resource you have to give up the necessary stone tool or clay.
 - c. Get rid of any resources that were not stored through the use of stone tools or clay pots. This includes unused stone tools and clay.

After the Game have the students write up small papers answering these questions:

- 1) Did this game require you to use logistical or residential mobility?
- 2) How could you change the rules of the game so that true residential mobility could occur (i.e. using only one hex per turn for resources)?
- 3) How important was storage in the game and why?
- 4) How would you change the rules of the game such that storage was not necessary to win?

Hunter-Gatherer Game

Player/Student Version

This is a game to simulate what it would be like to be a Hunter-Gatherer. On the back of this sheet is a form you should fill out as you play. Your instructor will explain the rules.

Three different phases can occur per turn. All three phases occur in spring, summer, and fall, but in winter only phase three occurs:

- 1) **Initial Moves:** Move each Hunter-Gatherer one time (move from one hex to an adjacent hex). This phase does not occur during winter.
- 2) **Hunt and Gather:** Receive one resource for each hunter-gatherer on a hex. See the bottom section for what resources you get. This phase does not occur during winter.
 - a. For each Hunter-Gatherer on a light green field hex gain **ONE** meat resource
 - b. For each Hunter-Gatherer on a dark green forest hex gain **TWO** plant resources.
 - c. For each Hunter-Gatherer on a gray quarry hex gain **ONE** stone tool resource.
 - d. For each Hunter-Gatherer on a red field **ONE** clay resource

Write down what resources your group got and used on your player sheets.

- 3) **Return to Camp and Feed your People:** Move each hunter-gatherer up to two hexes each. By the end of this move all of you team's hunter-gatherers must be in the same hex, but this can be any hex they can all move to.
 - a. During this phase you must use two plant food resources and one meat food resource to keep your Hunter-Gatherers alive. If you do not have these resources one of your Hunter-Gatherers dies. Remove them from the board.
 - b. For each stone tool resource you have you may store one meat resource. For each clay resource you have you may store two plant resources. To store a resource you have to give up the necessary stone tool or clay.
 - c. Get rid of any resources that were not stored through the use of stone tools or clay pots. This includes unused stone tools and clay.

GAME Results

Season	Resources Collected	Resources Stored	Hunter-Gatherers Remaining
Spring			
Summer			
Fall			
winter			

Post-Game Questions

Answer each of these questions with a well written paragraph.

- 1) Did this game require you to use logistical or residential mobility?
- 2) How could you change the rules of the game so that true residential mobility could occur (i.e. using only one hex per turn for resources)?
- 3) How important was storage in the game and why?
- 4) How would you change the rules of the game such that storage was not necessary to win?