

The Friendly Creatures Game

An Interdependence Game for Primary Grade Children with rules extensions for all

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

To Have fun!

To cooperatively solve a problem in interdependence.

In order to approach the theme in an age-appropriate way, *The Friendly Creatures Game* refers to fanciful material resources, rather than life energy, as the coin of interdependence.

PREPARATION:

•Make twelve name badges on lanyards according to the chart on page 2 with the player's species and languages spoken on one side, **Haves** and **Needs** on the other. 3" diameter sapling slices with two holes for the twine do the job nicely.

TO PLAY:

•Each of twelve players receives a badge on a lanyard. Make sure that all twelve badges are given out, since all players are needed to complete the puzzle - some players may have to take two badges. Teacher, the Whale has the easiest task; you can assign that role where it is needed.

•From the front of the badge, find out your animal and the languages that you can speak.

Wear this side facing outward.

•On the back of your badge, find out what you **Have** to share and what you **Need** to obtain.

•Players may only speak to other players who share the same language.

•You win as an individual when someone gives you your **Need** (a verbal agreement).

•You win as a team when all players have obtained their **Needs**.

•You may find it helps to have one person (teacher) act as a recorder of each creature's progress. Teacher, the Answer Matrix is on the back of this sheet. Make copies to keep score on.

•For a harder game, cut out the **Have** cards, matching the **Have** on your badge. Allow the creatures to trade the cards even if they don't **Need** that **Have**. To ensure that everyone can win if you cooperate, give out only one **Have** card per player. For a much harder game and to model some basic economic principles about resource flow, give out more **Have** cards. Charging fees for message translation & services is allowed!

•For a harder game with a different message, randomly assign **Haves** and **Needs** by passing out one **Have** card and one **Need** card instead of using the notes on the back of your badge. There is no guarantee that everyone can win.

•If you combine randomly assigning the **Haves** and **Needs** with multiple **Have** cards and allowing fees and bartering, this game could take a *long* time - for example, over the course of a whole weekend Youth con.

THANKS:

To my play-testers at the UUCUV Sunday School, Vermont Law School, and Taigh Connlaich.

Dedicated to the two wee beasties.

Undertaken in service to the Spirit of the Birch.

A Friendly Creatures Lesson (for Primary grades. Older players, adapt or create your own ritual!)

Warm Up On entering, let the children find a coloring station with maps of Earth. Nice downloadable maps can be found at: <http://www.eduplace.com/ss/ssmaps/index.html>

Opening Circle Light your chalice with these or similar words: We light this chalice in fellowship with all our sister and brother creatures with whom we share this spinning Earth.

Sharing Passing a globe around the circle, each child introduces her or himself and says one wish for the world. If it is your custom to light candles of joy and concern, do so now. Be sure to extinguish all flames at the end of circle, before people begin moving around.

Activity Play *The Friendly Creatures Game*.

Game Extensions Vary the length or complexity of the game in various ways.

- creatures which are natural predator and prey must keep a neutral animal between them.
- marine creatures must carry a spoon full of water, refill if you spill.
- to Have their 'win' recorded, each player must do an imitation of their animal.
- Coyote is allowed to lie, steal, cheat, and play tricks.

Wrap Up

-Discuss the game. Which animals had advantages? What was difficult or frustrating? What was fun? What was necessary for everyone to win?

-Closing song: "We've Got the Whole World In Our Hands"

Lesson Extensions If you have more time together, use these activities.

- if you need a little winding-down time, draw and color your animals
- read together. I recommend: *From a Distance*, by Julie Gold, Illustrated by Jane Ray, and *Pass the Energy, Please!* by Barbara Shaw McKinney.

Answer Matrix for the Teacher: this only applies to the beginning-level game.

Animal	Languages	Have	Need
Fisher	LongTail & Atlantic	quartz rocks	songs
Scorpion	Desert & Arthropod	maps	quartz rocks
Sea Turtle	Atlantic & Reptilian	mud	fish dinner
Dragonfly	Arthropod & AirSpeech & Pond	good luck	sand
Frog	Reptilian & Pond	clean water	anchovies
Whale	Pacific & Mammal	songs	krill
Seal	Arctic & Atlantic	anchovies	maps
Seagull	AirSpeech & Pacific	rain cloud	mud
Polar Bear	Arctic & Mammal	fish dinner	good luck
Coyote	Pacific & LongTail	toys	clean water
Camel	Mammal & Desert	sand	rain cloud
Dolphin	Atlantic & Mammal	krill	toys

Have: good luck	Have: good luck	Have: good luck	Need: good luck
Have: clean water	Have: clean water	Have: clean water	Need: clean water
Have: songs	Have: songs	Have: songs	Need: songs
Have: anchovies	Have: anchovies	Have: anchovies	Need: anchovies
Have: rain cloud	Have: rain cloud	Have: rain cloud	Need: rain cloud
Have: fish dinner	Have: fish dinner	Have: fish dinner	Need: fish dinner
Have: toys	Have: toys	Have: toys	Need: toys
Have: sand	Have: sand	Have: sand	Need: sand
Have: krill	Have: krill	Have: krill	Need: krill
Have: quartz	Have: quartz	Have: quartz	Need: quartz
Have: maps	Have: maps	Have: maps	Need: maps
Have: mud	Have: mud	Have: mud	Need: mud