

Power Play Game Instructions for Students

Imagine you live in a small country currently ruled by a military dictator. This country has two groups of people: soldiers and workers. The workers make \$10 a day and soldiers are paid by the taxes collected from the workers. Points are determined by the total amount of money each player has. While both workers and soldiers may be dissatisfied with the present arrangement, there is no mechanism by which to vote-out the dictator. As such, the only option immediately available to members of the military is to establish a coup and the only immediate option available to the workers is to revolt. Both options, however, present risks, since an unsuccessful coup or revolt can result in one's money being erased.

The game will take place in ten rounds, with students having three seconds each round to make a decision. Decisions are made by choosing one of two cards and placing it in full view of the other students. A student can change his or her mind before the three seconds is complete based upon the decisions of others, but not afterward. In the case that no card is chosen or clearly visible at the end of three seconds, a choice will be made for the student by the instructor. The cards present different choices depending on whether a student is a worker, soldier, or dictator.

When you come to class tomorrow, the classroom will be arranged with desks facing one another. Please go ahead and take a seat, but do not get comfortable, since several students will be asked to move early on. The game begins by the instructor choosing the first dictator at random. The dictator will then select classmates to be in his/her military. The chosen soldiers will need to move to sit near the dictator in the circle. The remaining students serve as workers. It is likely that these roles will change as the game progresses.

The goal of the game is to accumulate the maximum amount of money and power. It involves quick thinking and a bit of computation, so make sure you understand these rules and that you pay attention to the diagrams provided by the instructor throughout the game. Good Luck!