

## The Chip Game\* (Appendix A)

### Materials:

- A chalkboard or whiteboard and chalk or markers
- Three paper or gift bags; these should be different colors.
- A variety of colored chips/coins (120+). Their point values will be assigned as follows:
  - Gold: 50pts
  - Silver: 25pts
  - Blue: 15pts
  - Red: 10pts
  - Green: 5pts
  - White: 1pt
  - Black: -5pts

### Preparation:

- The teacher comes to class with the three paper/gift bags and the chips, and she separates the different colored chips so that the bags become stratified in their point values. One bag should contain a majority of gold, silver, blue, and red coins; another should contain a majority of blue, red, green, and white coins; and the unfortunate third bag should contain a majority of white and black coins.
- The teacher should also come up with several certain chip combinations, such as the All-American combo (1 red, 1 white, 1 blue gives the player an extra 10 points) and the Three-of-a-Kind combo (three chips of the same color gives the player an extra 5 points).
- If necessary, the teacher should rearrange desks/tables to allow for student walking and gathering. Students should be able to move around the classroom easily and have ready access to the primary chalkboard or whiteboard.
- The teacher writes the following lists on the board:
  - The different colored chips and their point values (such as Gold = 50 points, Silver = 25 points, etc.)
  - The rules for the game

### Rules:

- No talking (during the trading period)!
- No cheating!
- During each round of the game, police will hand out three chips per player. The police will collect the chips after each round and players will receive new ones at the start of the next round.
- Breaking these rules will get you thrown into the jail!
- (Any new rules that the elite team creates will be added to the board.)

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\* This game is taken from Dr. David E. Kirkland.

## Directing the Game:

- Before the game begins:
  - The teacher asks for three volunteers; these volunteers will become the “police officers” for the duration of the game. The teacher hands each officer one of the bags of chips and designates a classroom “jail” for the game.
  - The teacher splits the rest of the class into three teams. Teacher asks each team to come up with a team name, and the teacher writes the teams’ names horizontally across the top of the board.
  - One student officer is assigned to each of the groups.
  - The teacher draws students’ attention to the details on the board and announces the rules of the game: “Police officers, you will give each member of your group three chips from your bag. After each member has received their chips, you will have about three minutes to move around the classroom and trade your chips with others if you so choose. The goal of the game is to get the highest amount of points. However, you are not allowed to talk during this trading time, and you must find ways to communicate silently. If you do talk or attempt to cheat, the police officers will throw you into the jail [a designated area of the classroom] for the rest of the round and take away your chips.”
  - The teacher asks if there are any questions and then tells the officers to begin handing out the chips.
- During the game:
  - The teacher announces the game’s transitions, such as when students should begin trading with each other and when students should write their names and totals on the board. The teacher should also tell the officers when to collect the chips from the last round and when they should pass out new ones.
  - After each round, the teacher examines the team totals, which should be clearly stratified into high, middle, and low achievement groups. The teacher verbally praises the high achievers in the elite team, i.e. the team with the best bag of chips.
  - The teacher punishes the *lowest achievers* of the top and middle achievement groups by moving them down to the next lowest achieving team. The teacher rewards the *highest achievers* of the middle and low achievement teams by moving them up to the next highest achieving team.
  - As a reward to the elite team “for playing the game so well,” the teacher gives them one minute to create a new rule for the next rounds of the game. While this team is busy discussing their new rule, the teacher goes to talk to the lowest achieving group and gives them rather patronizing advice: “There’s no reason why you can’t succeed like the other groups. You need to work harder.”
  - The game continues for several more rounds, and the teams should reveal increasingly stratified and unfair results.