

Notes Concerning *Max*

Level: Intermediate (kdg, 1st, and 2nd grade)

Recommended # of players: 2-6

Materials: *Max* game board; 3 animals, Max, 4 treats; 2 dice (with one green dot or one black dot on each face)

Relationships: One-to-one correspondence; simple probability

Notes:

This cooperative game is very simple to play, and can be played by children as young as 5 years of age without adult supervision. Preschoolers tend to need adult help in playing the game. Although any number of children can play, it is best to limit the number so that children get frequent chances to roll the dice and move the animals.

In order to get the animals home safely, children must anticipate the next roll of the dice and think about what could happen on each roll. This is fairly simple because there are only 3 possibilities on each roll: 2 green dots, 2 black dots, or 1 green dot and 1 black dot. Although calculating the odds of each roll is beyond young children, they are capable of recognizing when one of the animals is in danger of being caught by Max, and therefore, when it makes sense to call Max back to the porch.

Because of the way the dice are designed, children move only one or two spaces on each turn. When children roll one green dot and one black dot, they move an animal one space and Max one space. This helps children overcome the commonly-made error of counting the space that is occupied as one, and therefore moving one fewer spaces than the number rolled. This error is common among preschoolers and kindergartners who genuinely believe that this is the way to count spaces. Although telling children that they are wrong is generally ineffective, giving them many opportunities to move only one space seems to help.



Max is made by Family Pastimes.
<http://www.familypastimes.com>