

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>



Max

1. The animals start on the tree stump, and Max starts on his porch. Put Max's treats beside the board near the porch.
2. Players decide who goes first.
3. Players take turns rolling the dice and deciding how to move.
 - Two black dots: Move Max 2 spaces
 - Two green dots: Move one animal 2 spaces OR move 2 animals 1 space each.
 - One black dot and one green dot: Move Max one space and move an animal one space.

Players decide which animals to move on their turn, but they can ask other players for help. Animals are caught if they land on the same space as Max, or if Max lands on their space.

4. **SHORTCUTS:** Each animal has a shortcut. If an animal lands on its shortcut space, it can take the shortcut. If Max lands on a shortcut space, he must take that shortcut.
5. **TREATS:** Players can call Max back to the porch by putting a treat on the porch space before the player rolls. Once the 4 treats have been used, Max can't be called back to the porch.
6. If Max gets to the last space, he stays on that space. An animal can get by him by hopping over Max if the player rolls 2 green dots.
7. The game is over when the animals either get home (on an exact roll of the dice) or are caught by Max. If the animals get home safely, everyone wins. IF they do not get home safely, Max wins.

