

Objective

By the end of this lesson, the student will understand the rules of Mancala, develop strategies for playing the game, and improve their critical thinking and problem-solving skills through gameplay.

Materials and Prep

- A Mancala board (or a homemade version using any container with holes)
- Small stones, beans, or any small objects to use as game pieces (preferably 48 pieces)
- Paper and pencil for keeping score (optional)

Before the lesson, make sure to explain the basic layout of the Mancala board and how to set it up for play. Familiarize the student with the concept of "sowing" and "capturing" in the game.

Activities

• Setup the Game:

Have the student set up the Mancala board with the small objects. Each player should have a row of 6 holes with 4 pieces in each hole, and the larger holes (Mancalas) at the ends should be empty. This will help them understand the initial game state.

• Learn the Rules:

Go through the rules of Mancala together. Explain how to take turns, how to sow the pieces, and how to capture. You can make it interactive by asking the student to explain the rules back to you.

• Practice Game:

Play a practice game together, focusing on following the rules and discussing strategies as you play. Encourage the student to think ahead and plan their moves.

• Strategy Discussion:

After the practice game, have a discussion about what strategies worked and what didn't. Ask the student to think about how they can improve their gameplay in future matches.

• Challenge Round:

Let the student play a competitive game against you or against themselves. This will give them a chance to apply what they learned and see how their strategies evolve.

Talking Points

- "Mancala is a game of strategy, just like a chess match. You have to think ahead!"
- "When you sow your pieces, try to plan your moves so that you can capture your opponent's pieces!"
- "Remember, the goal is to collect more pieces in your Mancala than your opponent. Every move counts!"
- "If you run out of pieces in your holes, don't worry! You can still win by capturing pieces!"
- "Think about the best way to use your pieces. Sometimes it's better to play defensively!"
- "Always look for opportunities to capture your opponent's pieces. It can change the game!"
- "Don't forget to keep track of how many pieces are in each hole. It helps you plan your next

move!"

- "Playing against different people can teach you new strategies. Every player has their own style!"
- "It's okay to lose! Every game is a chance to learn something new!"
- "Have fun while playing! The more you enjoy it, the better you'll get!"