



The Orange Trading Game





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Introduction

The aim of the game is for players to understand some of the pressures facing poor farmers in the developing world; that many factors are completely out of their hands and that it is still possible to be poor even if you work very hard. The game leads naturally on to introducing the concept of fair trade and how this makes a difference to producers.

The game is set in a rural area of Imaginique (an imaginary country) where families grow oranges for export.

- 1 or 2 members of the group should be market traders.
- 1 member of the group should be the cost-of-living collector.
- 1 member of the group should be the money-lender.
- The rest of the group should be split equally into 3 or more 'farming families'.

The aim is for each 'farming family' to sell enough oranges to pay the cost of living, send their children to school and cover costs of any illnesses.

There is a cost-of-living collector who goes round the families each week collecting a set amount, which covers the costs of their food and other basic needs. There is also a money-lender, who may be used if families wish.

Oranges must be presented in piles of four to the market trader who will pay families the going rate for them. How much s/he pays for them may vary. Fewer than four oranges cannot be accepted at any one time. If the quality of oranges is not good enough they will not be accepted or only a minimal amount will be paid for them.

Unforeseen circumstances may occur throughout the game and these must be factored into families' decision-making process. If children are at school then they are unable to participate in orange-growing. They may go to the market, however. It is also possible to buy extra 'tools' at the market. The costs of these may be obtained at the market.

Each 'family' is provided with:

- an orange template,
- a black pen,
- 2 orange colouring implements,
- a pair of scissors
- a pile of paper (not too large).

Families should decide at the start of the game which member of the family each represents, and preferably wear name labels. A family will consist of a mother, father and at least 2 children. Grandparents may be included if participants wish.



Rules

Use your imaginations and initiative BUT

- No one may use any equipment not provided. This will be confiscated and a fine may be incurred.
- The game-leader's decision is final! If you are told that a member of your family has died or been otherwise incapacitated, they may no longer participate in orange-growing.

- A copy of the 'Farming Family' sheet should be given to each family.
- A copy of the 'cost-of-living collector' sheet should be given to the person playing this role.
- A copy of the 'market-trader' sheet should be given to the person playing this role.
- A copy of the 'money-lender' sheet should be given to the person playing this role.

Setting up the game

This game requires a minimum of 11 participants, plus the game leader. There is not really a maximum number, although it may become difficult to control with more than about 30.

You will need to print out the game pack.

- If there will be more than 3 'farming families', print out an additional sheet of 'oranges'.
- Stick these onto cardboard, cut them out and colour them orange with a black stalk. These are the orange 'templates'.
- Photocopy the 'farming family' info sheets so that each family will have one.
- Photocopy and cut out the money. You will need at least 30 copies. If you have more than 4 families you may need more than this.

- Prepare for each family

- 2 colouring pens (orange highlighters work well)
- 2 pairs of scissors
- 20 sheets of paper
- A black pen
- An 'orange' template
- 3 100 Peels notes
- 5 50 Peels notes
- 5 10 Peels notes
- 5 5 Peels notes

Families do not have to begin with exactly equal amounts of money/equipment – uneven distribution of resources just makes it all the more life-like!

You will need extra pairs of scissors, colouring pens and sheets of paper for sale at the market, and a pencil sharpener for 'hire'! The market and the money-lender will both also need some money.

If you find that you run out of any equipment as the game goes on, don't panic! A shortage of resources can be built into the game. Families in poor countries often travel to market/hospital only to find that what they want is not available.



Explaining the game to participants

This game should help participants understand something of what it feels like to be a poor orange farmer living in the imaginary country of Imaginique. You will find that you are faced with pressures from many different directions and it will be difficult to survive.

The game will go on for at least 30 minutes, and each five-minute slot represents a week in the life of the orange-growers.

Each week, the 'cost-of-living collector' will come and collect a set amount from you. That covers the cost of your food and other basic needs.

You are provided with the following equipment to get you going:

- An orange template
- One or more pairs of scissors
- One or more oranges
- One black pen
- colouring implements
- Some money
- A pile of paper

You will use this equipment to 'grow' your oranges.

You may buy further equipment from the market. Prices will be displayed on the market stall, but they may be subject to change as the game progresses.

Once you have 'grown' 4 oranges, you may sell them at the market. You may not sell fewer than 4 oranges in one go, and only oranges of an appropriately high standard will be accepted by the market trader.

As the game progresses, unforeseen events may occur, and you should adapt as best you can. Use your initiative and think creatively, but:

- You may only use equipment provided. Any forbidden equipment will be confiscated and a fine incurred.
- The game-leader's decision is final! If you are told that a member of your family has died, or been otherwise incapacitated, they may no longer participate in orange-growing.

The following facts should be made available to all participants and possibly written up if you wish:

- School fees cost 20 Peels per term.
- Transport to hospital, should you require it, costs 30 Peels.



Game Leader

It is your job to preside over the game, making announcements either to the whole group or to individual families. Every five minutes an announcement should be made, a bell rung or whistle blown to indicate the start of another week.

As the game progresses, you may announce the following 'circumstances' to families of your choice:

- The mother in your family has fallen ill. She is unable to participate in orange-growing for at least 1 week (5 minutes), and so is your oldest daughter who is caring for her. Medicine will cost 80 Peels.
- An uncle on the other side of the country dies. Pay 50 Peels for a member of your family to travel to the funeral (non-negotiable. It is an unthinkable offence not to attend the funeral.) This family member may not participate in growing for 2 minutes.
- Your children need new shoes for school
 - give 50 Peels to the market-trader or remove a child from school.

If families fall behind in their cost-of-living payments:

- Make sure the money-lenders know so that they can encourage the family to take out a loan
- Send in the bailiffs to remove key equipment (some of the scissors/pens)
- Notify the family that since they haven't bought food for x weeks, so-and-so has died, and must no longer participate. Moreover, they must all take a day (a minute) off to mourn and attend the funeral.

The following announcements may be made to all participants at appropriate moments in the game as you choose.

- Due to over-production in Europe the world price of oranges has slumped. (Market-trader should amend prices accordingly).
- The rains didn't last long enough. Production will be reduced. Remove a crayon from all but one family's table.
- To pay interest on international debt the government has removed food subsidies
 - cost of living doubles.

Farming Family

You are a family living in Imaginique and growing oranges on your own farm.

You have certain 'tools' which help you with your work. If you need more materials you may buy them from the market at the current prices. **USE ONLY MATERIALS BELONGING TO THE GAME.** If you want to know what is available and the prices for buying and selling, you may ask at the market. However, due to rapid inflation prices are subject to change.

To grow the oranges you cut out paper oranges using the template, add the stalk in black and colour the whole thing orange.

The market will only accept oranges of good quality and in 'bags' of 4 and will pay you according to the current price for oranges.

Every 'week' you have to buy food etc for your family at the current prices. (For the purposes of this game, a week is five minutes.)

A 'Cost-of-Living Collector' will come every five minutes to collect this money. The money you pay covers all your basic needs: food, clothing, shelter etc. If you need to borrow money to pay bills or buy extra materials, money lenders will be available. Watch out for an announcement as this may indicate a rise in inflation or a special announcement. On hearing this signal, please stop what you are doing and listen.

Your objectives are:

- To make enough money to feed and clothe your family
- To make some extra to send your children to school, pay for medical bills, build a house etc.

If any of your children are at school you must pay school fees for them and they may not assist with farming. They may participate in trade at the market, however.

Money-Lender

You lend money to people who need it, at high rates of interest. Your objective is to make as much money as possible. Be persuasive!

You might need to offer very favourable terms to begin with, to encourage people to borrow e.g. low interest for the first 5 minutes. Insist on loans being repaid. If they don't pay you back, raise the interest – keep an eye on inflation at the market and remember you need to charge enough to make a profit. Be ruthless!

Example: Offer to lend 100 Peels for a week (5 minutes) at 10% interest (meaning they will owe 110 Peels at the end of a week). If they can't pay you back then give them another week, say at 50% interest. This means they owe you 110 Peels for the first week, plus a further 55 Peels interest for the second week - a total of 165 Peels.

Feel free to accept payment 'in kind', such as oranges or equipment if you think you may be able to sell them to the market or other families.

Keep a record of who owes what.

Suggestions: You may want to offer different rates to different families, depending on how you rate their ability to pay back. Families who are falling behind on payments may be "high risk", but others who seem to be able to make their payments could be "low risk" e.g. For 100 Peels borrowed:

Low risk - total debt is 125 Peels
for one week (25% interest)

Medium risk - total debt is 140 Peels
for one week (40% interest)

High risk - total debt is 150 Peels
for one week (50% interest)

Cost-of-living Collectors

You represent all the people who sell things to the average family: food, clothing, electricity, water etc. For their convenience they can pay you for all these goods and services. You collect from each family every week. For the purposes of this game, one week is five minutes.

There are problems of inflation in your country so keep an eye on prices at the market and adjust your charges appropriately.

Prices may also change following an announcement from the game leader.

The starting price is 100 Peels per week.

Keep a record of how much each family has paid. If a family falls behind on payments, inform the money-lender. If a family hasn't paid for two weeks or more, inform the game leader.

Market Trader

In the market there are many buyers and sellers. For the purposes of the game, all of them are represented by you. You sell 'tools' (pens/scissors) to families that need them. You also buy completed oranges from them at the going rate. To be acceptable to you, oranges must (a) be in 'bags' (piles) of 4 (b) be of good quality. (An orange not properly coloured in or cut out scrappily should be rejected.)

Suggested prices are shown on the table below. In your country inflation can be a problem. Every two weeks, the prices change according to the price list. You might want to make a price list for display to your customers,

showing the current prices in the market. Amend it each time the prices change. Do not reveal in advance how the prices will change.

If you start to receive too many oranges you may want to alter the price paid for them. The game leader can announce that the world market is flooded with oranges and they are now worth less.

Be ruthless! Change prices, refuse to accept oranges with the slightest fault, run out of crucial items etc! You are mean and nasty and want to squeeze families for all you can get!

Buying	Weeks 1&2	Weeks 3&4	Weeks 5&6
Oranges	50	60	40
Selling			
Scissors	100	150	50
Highlighter	90	120	70
Coloured pencils	40	50	30
Sharpener (hire)	60 (5 mins)	80	50

Debrief

1. Go round each of the families to find out how they fared in the game. Ask them and the Cost of-Living Collectors/Money Lenders to answer the following questions:

- How much money do you have?
- How much is owed to the Cost-of-Living Collector?
- How much is owed to the Money Lenders?

2. Did any family manage to make ends meet?

- How? (Or why not?)
- Did families help each other to survive?
- Why/why not?

3. Ask the group as a whole:

- Did you feel you had control over your livelihoods?
- Who was in control?

4. Things you might be able to draw out include:

- You can work very hard and still be poor.
- Very often people have little control over what is making them poor (e.g. international debt or terms of trade).
- That the families were being encouraged to compete with each other rather than work together, and that ultimately this may not have been in their interest
- That people are often driven to do things (e.g. steal) through sheer desperation.

How fair trade makes a difference:

- The guaranteed price means that producers are not victims of fluctuations in world market prices.
- The social premium paid to communities often pays for things like clean water. This makes illness less likely.
- If illness or other unforeseen circumstances occur, credit facilities are available at decent rates to tide people over.
- Co-operative working also makes communities better able to cope with unforeseen circumstances and support one another.
- Establishing long-term relationships between producers and buyers means that producers are guaranteed stability and are therefore able to plan for the future.

Traidcraft fruit juice, Fruit Passion, is made from oranges grown in Cuba. Information about those who grow the oranges can be found on www.fruit-passion.com.



