

THE ASPIRATION GAME

INSTRUCTIONS



For further information on this project please contact Sally Lloyd Evans at the University of Reading - s.lloyd-evans@reading.ac.uk




PLAYING THE GAME

The Aspiration Game is based on snakes and ladders that helps players to consider what hinders aspiration and what helps aspiration.

The Aspiration Game was initiated and developed as part of the Aspiration in Whitley research project (2017 to 2018) by students at the John Madejski Academy who led key parts of the research as the Young Researchers.


The objective of the game is to be the first to reach square 100 - generating a new awareness of what helps or hinders aspiration.

PRE-PLAY GUIDELINES

- 
1. The Young Researchers added a range of symbols to the playing board. Landing on a symbol offers further opportunity for players to consider any factor – event, circumstance or incident – that has or had some impact on their aspirations.
 2. The game should be played in some context of a careers or futures guidance programme. It may be played over a course of several years to help monitor students changing preferences.
 3. It is a group game – for each board a group of six is recommended; divided into two teams each of three players. However, on game completion individual Aspiration Cards are distributed for each player to complete privately. This will require two key tasks from those managing the game – firstly to ensure that each playing group has someone present to record comments on help or hinder factors and secondly to distribute and collect the completed aspiration cards.
 4. It is important to prepare all game players prior to starting the game in a group discussion about the idea of ‘aspiration’ – what they think it means and why it’s important or useful, if at all. Posted as reminders their words – such as dreams, aims, goals or ambitions, could be captured and displayed as prompts during the playing of the game.



HOW TO PLAY

- 
1. Each board should have no more than six players – dice, shaker and counters are supplied
 2. Each team selects a different coloured counter. To start each team has a throw of the dice – highest score starts the game and teams move about the board according to the number thrown. Each team member takes a turn in throwing the dice.
 3. Landing at the bottom of a ladder moves the counter to the top of the ladder BUT the team as a group must then say what they think helps move their aspiration forward – some ladders are longer than others; perhaps the longer the ladder the more important the forward move. Landing at the head of a snake moves the counter to the tail BUT the team must then say what they believe gets in the way of achieving their aspirations – some snakes are longer than others perhaps reflecting more serious impediments to aspiration.
 4. Landing on a symbol invites the players to consider anything that helps or hinders aspiration- they interpret the symbol as they wish perhaps even suggesting new symbols and their importance.
 5. Throwing a six entitles a team to an extra throw and teams can only win by throwing the exact number required to land on square 100.



GAME END

1. The Aspiration Cards should be distributed to all players for completion.
2. A whole group discussion might focus on feedback – how the players reacted to and what they thought about the game and even how it might be improved. Overall or summative conclusions might be fed back to the players anonymously.

