

*Objective:* To demonstrate the difficulty of compromise and cooperation across cultures.

**TIME REQUIRED** About an hour

**RISK LEVEL** Moderate

**PARTICIPANTS NEEDED** At least 10 students, plus one facilitator

**PROCEDURE** Please take the following steps:

1. Divide into four teams of five people each so that each team has one area of obvious similarity (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity).
2. Pair each team with one other team as opponents. The objective of the game is for each team to maximize its own score, regardless of how the other team does. The game has 10 rounds. The teams sit separately and are not allowed to communicate with one another unless otherwise instructed.
3. Give each team 3 minutes to choose X or Y after mentioning that X means cooperation and Y means refusal to cooperate.
4. After 3 minutes, ask the teams to present their decisions. If both teams independently select X—in other words, decide to cooperate—award each team three points each. If one team selects Y and the other selects X, the noncooperative team wins six points and the cooperators lose six points. If both teams defect by selecting Y, each team loses three points.
5. At the end of each round, inform each team of the other's decision so they can tell how their strategy is working.
6. Rounds 5, 8, and 10 are bonus rounds in which the points won and lost are doubled.
7. Allow the teams to negotiate in direct communication before rounds 5, 8, and 10 through a designated representative for 3 minutes to see if they want to change their strategy.

8. At the end of the game, tally up each team's accumulated points.
9. Discuss the choices each team made in the various rounds and how they obtained the score they did.

#### DEBRIEFING

The Prisoners' Dilemma experience is well-known in game theory and demonstrates the consequences of competition and cooperation in a group. This version of Prisoners' Dilemma has been modified to focus on multicultural issues of competition and cooperation. Although the game is not complicated, the insights gained from this experience are considerable. The game's structure imitates life, where there are both benefits and risks in choosing to cooperate. Some questions for discussion include the following:

1. Did you prefer to cooperate or compete?
2. Would you have been more cooperative if you felt you would not be taken advantage of?
3. Did the opportunity to speak face to face with someone from the other group result in more cooperation?
4. Which cultural groups might prefer to cooperate rather than compete?
5. Does our educational system promote competition or cooperation?

#### INSIGHT

It is difficult to develop trust across cultural boundaries.