

Intended for Grades: 4-12 **Estimated Time:** 30-40 min. **Date:** August, 2023

Lesson Title: HUMAN JAN KEN PO

Lesson Purpose: Students will:

- * Learn about different forms of communication
- * Become aware of personal leadership styles through play interaction
- * Build relationships within a group by having fun

Materials & Preparation:

- * Open space for groups to huddle, then line up across each other

Background Information:

If you ever had to make a small decision with friends, you've probably played the fist game commonly called "Rock, Paper, Scissors". In Hawaii, this game is called *Jan ken' a Po*. Paper beats rock, scissors beats paper, and rock beats scissors. The fist game chant goes:

"Jan Ken a Po (show hand sign) I canna' SHOW!" (show hand sign)

Or long version: "Junk an' a monk an' a socka socka PO"! (show hand sign)

Our Human Jan Ken Po version has teams using their whole body and corresponding sounds to show their chosen animal, instead of hand motions. As a class, the students can identify three animals and how they win over each other, or you can use these local animals:

1. **Mo'o** (Lizard, Gecko) The mo'o beats the makika.
2. **Makika** - (Mosquito) The makika beats the 'Īlio.
3. **'Īlio** (Dog) The 'Īlio beats the mo'o.

Steps:

1. As a class, select three animals (or insect, reptile, sea life) that you would like to use for this game, or use those we have selected. Then as a class, develop their body movements and sounds to "show" their chosen animal, and "who wins over who"?
2. Create 2 or more teams of students, with a minimum of 2 per team, up to 8 per team. The activity difficulty increases with larger groups. *Option:* You can assign students to start the activity, along with a few other students to observe the activity. The observers, or teacher, will observe and note how the teams made decisions.
3. Facilitate rounds, giving teams a very brief time (count down 5-2-3-2-1) to huddle and pick their animal before counting "'ekahi, 'elua, 'ekolu" (then "show"), or alternatively, "jan ken'a po" (then "show").....I canna show (then "show").
4. After playing a few rounds, instruct students to do this activity again, but without any speaking. They will need to come up with other ways to communicate when they huddle to decide which animal they will "show". To up the challenge, try larger groups.

5. After playing the game, facilitate a discussion about the process of this activity.

- Help students identify roles people naturally played, including: Leader, Co-Leader, Suggestion Maker, Listener, Observer, and Follower.
- Discuss communication skills and what's important when working with others.
- Point out that there are no "right or wrong" roles in a group, just preferences.
- Share that role preference can also change, depending on the activity.

Once students know their group participation style, they can use this knowledge to understand their role in leadership groups and how best to utilize their preferred style and talents.

Reflection Questions:

- * *How did you feel while doing this activity?*
- * *What did you like or dislike about this activity?*
- * *What did you notice about your own participation role?*

Resources:

Many websites share about the history of this activity and the current game in Japan.

HUMAN JAN-KEN-PO

