



DATA SHEET

5

Marvin's Snakes & Ladders

A game for reflecting on healthy and egalitarian relationships



Number of players

2 to 4 players

(for a larger group, form teams)



Supplies

- Marvin's Snakes & Ladders play mat
- Any object that can be used as a game token (hair elastic, paper clip, pinecone, etc.).
Imaginative ideas welcome!
- Playing dice (can be found in lots of other board games)



Instructions

- The first person to roll a 6 starts the game.
- The players take turns rolling the dice and moving their game token to the corresponding square.
- The adult reads out the question that corresponds to the colour of the square on which the token has landed.
- A correct answer means the player's token can stay on that square (and to climb the ladder if possible). An incorrect answer requires the player to move their token back to its previous position.*
- **Snake square:** a correct answer will avoid the usual snake penalty, and the token can remain on the square. But an incorrect answer will make you slide all the way down the snake!
- The first person to land on the Finish square wins the game.

* Since discussion questions are intended to develop children's critical thinking skills, we recommend that you don't make them go back to their previous position if they give a wrong answer to this type of question. Simply correct them by adding certain key messages.

* * For Setting the scene questions, a child who helps another answer a question may move their token ahead by one free square.

QUESTIONS: AGES 6-9 VERSION



Yellow squares:

questions about gender roles and stereotypes

• **Thinking question:** Are there trades or professions that are meant just for girls and some that are just for boys? Explain your thinking.

• **Thinking question:** A gender stereotype is a misconception about the things girls and boys should like, be able to do or not, or how they should behave. These ideas put adults and children into little boxes from which it can be hard to escape because people can feel great pressure to stay in their boxes. These labels do not accurately reflect the world's diversity. They can even prevent us from being free and being our true selves. Name a stereotype you have already heard someone mention. Do you agree with that stereotype? Explain why.

• **True or false?** Each person is unique.

• **True or false?** Boys can give each other hugs.

• **Quiz question:** Boys can...

- A. cry
- B. play basketball
- C. wear nail polish
- D. paint
- E. all of the above

• **Quiz question:** Girls can...

- A. like math
- B. play volleyball
- C. wear makeup
- D. be assertive to get what they want
- E. all of the above

• **True or false?** We can find out if we like new things by trying them out.

• **True or false?** Boys need to be more physically active than girls.

• **Who am I? question** (famous woman): I am an author and illustrator. I write books about monsters, farts, and gender stereotypes. Some of my books have been banned in the United States.

Answer: Elise Gravel

• **True or false?** All children experience fear, anger, sadness and many other emotions.

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- **Thinking question:** Some people say boys shouldn't cry or wear the colour pink. Why do you suppose people say those things?

Suggested answer: Maybe because they learned them from their own parents or from culture in general, which has always pushed the idea that boys should be strong and not show emotion. Obviously, this is a misconception. Crying is a natural reflex! Also, marketing has done everything in its power to convince the world that the colour pink is only for girls -- although oddly enough, this wasn't even true in bygone times; blue was the "feminine" colour. Once again, a misconception. In fact, in some cultures elsewhere in the world, men wear skirts!

- **Setting the scene.** It's a special day at school. To celebrate the end of the school year, the teachers have organized a bunch of activities and students can choose whatever interests them. Ali wants to attend "Hairdresser for a Day" because he will have the opportunity to do his teacher's hair and makeup. But he's hesitant, because his male friends laughed when he expressed an interest in that activity. In the end, Ali signed up for the soccer game with his friends. He didn't really enjoy it and was sorry he hadn't followed his heart. Why do you think Ali chose an activity that he didn't really want to take part in?

Suggested answer: It's not always easy to be yourself when others don't support you and even make fun of you and your choices. It can affect self-esteem and self-confidence. To avoid this happening, it is important to never make fun of other peoples' choices and to let them be themselves (live and let live!)

- **Model.** Name a movie, a TV show or a book about a brave, strong and determined girl. See the References section of the Atlas for suggested reading.

- **Model.** Name a movie, a TV show or a book about a boy who is sensitive, gentle and kind. See the References section of the Atlas for suggested reading.

- **Model.** Name someone in your entourage who has an unconventional profession (a job that is not traditionally associated with their gender).

- **True or false?** A girl can have short hair.

- **True or false?** A boy can excel at figure skating.

- **Riddle** "I'm a big word with a tricky sound, I'm often what's believed but wrong all around. People think I'm true, but I'm not quite right, to know my truth requires insight! I twist the facts, cause confusion and disarray, but my real name clears the gray. What am I?" Answer: Misconception.

Turquoise squares:

relationships (love, friendship, etc.)

- **True or false?** An adult can never fall in love with a child.
- **True or false?** Signs of affection, such as hugs, are best kept for people I know well and feel comfortable with – for example, family and friends.
- **Thinking question:** What would you say are the qualities of a good friend?

Possible answers: Common interests, shared fun, complicity, honesty, trust, the ability to listen, mutual aid, support, reciprocity, mutual affection, open-mindedness, respect, acceptance.

- **Thinking question:** Is it possible to fall in love at 6, 7, 8 or 9 years old? Explain your answer.
- **Quiz question:** It is often said that for a friendship to be healthy, it must be reciprocal. What does that mean?

Possible answer: There is a mutual attachment between the two people; each counts on the other and is there for the other.

- **Quiz question:** Which of these actions help you get along more easily with other people?
 - sharing my things when we play together
 - listening when the other person talks to me
 - trying to settle conflicts by finding new solutions
 - always being myself
 - all of the above
- **Setting the scene.** Leon often plays with his best friend, Lily. Jason, another friend of Leon's, doesn't like Lily very much. Today Jason is playing at Leon's house. Lily rings the doorbell. Jason tells Leon to not answer and to pretend they're not there. He makes fun of Lily. Through the open window, Lily can hear Jason and Leon laughing. She starts to cry and runs home. How do you think Lily was feeling? What about Leon? How do you think Leon could have handled the situation? What should he do now?
- **Riddle.** I'm what everyone seeks, I'm bright and light, I make you smile from morning till night. You'll find me in moments both big and small. Can you guess my name, that's cherished by all? **Answer:** Happiness

- **Thinking question:** Taking care of yourself also means showing love to yourself. Name three ways you can take care of yourself.

Suggested answers: to rest when you are tired; go to bed early; keep yourself clean; brush your teeth; eat healthy foods; stay active; do things that make you happy; spend time with people you like and who like you; accept that you aren't perfect and are allowed to make mistakes; forgive yourself; listen to your head and heart when things aren't going well; get help when needed.

- **Thinking question:** Some people think that when a boy and a girl play together, it's because they're in love. What do you think? Explain your answer.
- **Setting the scene:** For some time now, Jasmine and Mika have had fewer interests in common and less fun together. Jasmine knows that enjoying a friendship means having mutual interests, so she pretends to like the same things as Mika, when in fact she isn't having a good time at all. Do you think this is a good path to take? What consequences might someone experience when they pretend, rather than being open and honest with friends?

Orange squares:

Questions about diversity

- **Riddle.** I'm in every face and voice. I am the range of colours, cultures and stories that make up the world. In my differences, we find our strength. What am I?
Answer: Diversity.

- **True or false?** All bodies are beautiful!

- **Thinking question:** As people grow up, their bodies change. There are times when we find our body less nice-looking, or we like it less. That's when it's good to remember and appreciate everything the body helps us achieve. What are you proud to be able to do thanks to your body?

- **True or false?** All private parts look the same.
Answer: False. They are all different and they also change as time goes by.

- **True or false?** Your body changes all through your life, even when you're an adult.

- **Setting the scene.** It's Mother's Day, and the class is making personalized cards for their mothers. Sami asks the teacher for two cards to decorate instead of just one. Why? Is it possible to have two moms? Can you tell me about diverse families?

- **Setting the scene.** Your friend Chloe is feeling sad today. She said that boys in her class made fun of her during gym class. They made nasty remarks, made jokes about her body, said she was so heavy she'd break the trampoline. What kind of effect can words like these have on Chloe? What would you do to help Chloe in a situation like this?

- **Quiz question:** What is diversity?

1. a mushroom that grows in the Amazon jungle.
2. a word that describes the many differences between individuals. Diversity is something that should be celebrated.
3. the name of a constellation

● **Quiz question:** Discrimination is treating someone differently (excluding, preferring or differentiating) due to their personal characteristics, such as age, culture, gender, skin colour, love preferences, etc.). When I witness discrimination, I can...

- A. offer my support to the person being victimized
- B. ask the perpetrator to stop the inappropriate behaviour or remarks
- C. report the situation to a trusted adult
- D. all of the above

● **Quiz question:** Name two or more forms of diversity.*Make sure you have asked the quiz question, “What is diversity?” **Suggested answers:** The diversity of bodies, families, languages, religions, romantic relationships, skills, personalities, etc.

- **True or false?** Differences are beautiful! Explain why.
- **True or false?** Demeaning comments or making fun of someone, if the person is not even there, isn't serious and has no impact.
- **True or false?** Sometimes it takes courage to show our difference (or our uniqueness) because there are times when we just want to be like everyone else.

Purple squares:

Miming. The player can stay in that space if someone guesses what is being mimed.

- Drawing
- Playing hockey
- Ballet dancing
- Playing chess
- Playing baseball
- Painting
- Figure skating
- Building with LEGO blocks
- Meditating
- Skipping
- Playing with dolls
- Talking on the phone
- Playing video games
- Singing
- Practising karate
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Reading
- Playing pear ball
- Building something
- Studying

QUESTIONS: AGES 10-12



Yellow squares:

questions on gender roles and stereotypes

- **Quiz question:** What is a gender stereotype?

Suggested answer: A gender stereotype is a misconception people can have about what girls and boys should like, be able to do or not to do, or how they should behave. These ideas put children and adults into little boxes from which it can be hard to escape. These labels do not accurately reflect the diversity in the world. They can also keep us from being free or being our true selves.

- **Quiz question:** What is sexism?

Suggested answer: Sexism is a form of discrimination based on gender and on the idea that women are inferior to men. Discrimination is not treating people as equals because of their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, skin colour, origins, skills and many other aspects. Discrimination runs counter to human rights.

- **Thinking question:** What effect can stereotypes have on people?

Suggested answer: They can prevent us from being free or being our true selves. They can influence our choices in many spheres: career, style of dress, interests, sports, fields of study, etc. They can also influence our behaviour: how we assert ourselves, the place we take in a group, the expectations others have of us, etc. Stereotypes can also affect the way we see ourselves, our body image, and our self-esteem.

- **Riddle.** What word sums up the notion of ensuring that all people, regardless of race, creed or gender, are treated the same way and are equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities? **Answer:** Equality

- **Quiz question:** Stereotypes can have negative impacts on children, making it hard to be free and their true selves. Can you name other examples?

Possible answers: Choice of career, how we express emotions, preferences and interests, self-esteem, well-being, etc.

- **Who am I? question (famous woman):** I am an author and illustrator. I write books about monsters, farts, and gender stereotypes. Some of my books are banned in the United States. **Answer:** Elise Gravel

- **Who am I? question (famous woman):** This woman discovered the radioactive elements polonium and radium and won two Nobel prizes. **Answer:** The scientist Marie Curie.

- **Who am I? question (famous woman):** This female politician is the only woman who was Premier of Québec. **Answer:** Pauline Marois was the province's premier from September 2012 to April 2014. She was the first woman to hold this position.

- **Who am I? question** (famous women): In the early 1900s, these women protested for women's equal rights. What were they called and which right did they achieve for women? **Answer:** The suffragettes were instrumental in obtaining women's right to vote -- in 1918 in Canada and in 1940 in Québec.
- **True or false?** Men and women with the same jobs earn the same salary. **Answer:** False. According to the Conseil de statut de la femme, men earn on average 9% more than women for the same job. There has been some improvement in this gap over time, but true equality has not been achieved in our society.
- **True or false?** As many men choose to become teachers as women. **Answer:** False. According to the provincial department of education, in the field of pre-school and primary education, 88% of teaching personnel are women. Women are more likely to be employed in occupations involving caring for others. Gender roles and stereotypes do, in fact, start to teach girls in early childhood to take care of others, when they are given dolls to cuddle and care for.
- **Setting the scene.** Lianne goes to the store with her mother to buy a hammer because she's building a treehouse in her backyard. She finds a pink hammer that looks to be the right size. When she compares it to a blue hammer, however, she notices that the pink one is priced at \$5 more. Why do you suppose the pink hammer is more expensive? **Answer:** There is such a thing as a "pink tax." It is a commercial practice that inflates prices of women's products compared with the same products for men. This practice is widespread in women's hygiene products, for example.

- **Setting the scene.** Grizzly really enjoys helping his two fathers take care of his little sister. He decides to accompany one dad to a coffee meeting for new parents at the municipal library. When they get there, Grizzly notices that his father is the only man in attendance. The rest are all moms. This is sad to see, but at the same time he is proud of his dad. Why do you think Grizzly's dad is the only man attending the parent-baby meeting?

Suggested answer: Nowadays, the mother is still the primary person associated with the care of a baby. The idea persists that a mother is the person who knows her child best and can properly meet its needs. Furthermore, the mother is the first parent to whom information about the child is conveyed. Teachers and childcare workers deal most often with the mothers, even in cases where the father drops off or picks up the child from daycare. This prevents dads from fully assuming their parental responsibilities. Furthermore, for the many families that aren't made up of a mother and a father, this practice seems illogical!

- **Thinking question:** Do you know the difference between gallantry and courtesy?

Suggested answer: Gallantry is an eager politeness towards women, or remarks or compliments intended to flatter (Larousse). Although gallantry is well intentioned, it sends the message that women deserve special attention, being more fragile, more sensitive to compliments or weaker than men. Courtesy, on the other hand, can be applied to everyone; it's about being considerate towards others, regardless of gender.

- **Setting the scene:** Jake's aunt is expecting a baby. When he accompanies her on errands, people often mention her pregnancy. They ask her if she's going to have a boy or a girl. Why do you suppose people ask that question?

Suggested answer: Because it gives people an idea of what to expect of the child. When people know a child's sex and gender, they start imagining its interests, tastes, personality, character traits... it's an example of gender stereotyping.

- **Thinking question:** We often see adults choosing children's toys on the basis of the sex assigned to a child at birth. For example: female babies get dolls, while male babies get building blocks and toy trucks. Do you think this pattern can influence a child's future? How? And what does it teach them?

Suggested answer: When we give dolls to girls, we are reinforcing their ability to take care of others. When we give trucks and blocks to boys, we are furthering their logical, mathematical and motor skills. The problem is, offering only these types of gifts narrows future possibilities for the children. We're sending the message that these are their domains and that this is their destiny... which limits their full potential.

- **Role model.** Name a movie, a TV show or a book that features a girl who is brave, strong, and determined. See the References section of the Atlas for suggested reading.
- **Role model.** Name a movie, a TV show or a book that features a boy who is sensitive, gentle and kind. See the References section of the Atlas for suggested reading.

- **Role model.** Name someone in your entourage who has an unconventional job.

- **Quiz question:** What day is celebrated every year on March 8? **Answer:** International Women's Rights Day. The special day was established in 1977 by the United Nations (UN) to promote equality between men and women and to continue the battle to have women's rights recognized around the world.

- **True or false?** New fathers in Québec have always had paid days off work for the birth of a child. **Answer:** False. Paid paternity leave has existed only since 2006.

- **True or false?** Social and cultural norms and religious beliefs are factors that influence gender roles. **Answer:** True. Social and cultural norms are often tied to deeply rooted values as well as the things we learn from our family and community, often passed along from one generation to the next. These values and norms influence the perception of sex and our gender expectations of other people.

Turquoise squares:

relationships (love, friendship, etc.)

- **Thinking question:** What is the difference between love and friendship?
- **Quiz question:** Is it possible to be in love with someone of the same gender as you?
- **Thinking question:** In kids' TV shows, it is quite common to see teens preoccupied with being in love or dating. Do you think this reflects the reality of all young people? Is it possible to not want a boyfriend or girlfriend?
- **Quiz question:** Name a physical sensation you might feel when you're in love (see the discussion Love and Sexual Awakening).
- **True or false?** In preadolescence, it is normal to feel less close to our parents and shyer about talking to them, preferring instead to be with our friends and keeping our private thoughts for talks with them.
Answer: True. But we mustn't forget that when a problem pops up, our friends cannot help us the same way as an adult can. It is important to talk to a trusted adult.
- **Quiz question: A healthy relationship includes...**
 - A. Respect, listening, trust and mutual aid
 - B. Respect, listening, trust and a bit of jealousy
 - C. Respect, listening, trust and control

- **Quiz question:** The four following statements are about healthy and egalitarian relationships. Which ones are false?

- A. Being kind, listening, open-minded and respectful of others is the foundation of healthy and egalitarian relationships.
- B. It is impossible to be friends with a person of a gender other than your own.
- C. A real friend would never try to make you feel guilty or manipulate you into doing what they want
- D. If a friend insults me, I should just accept it because that's what friends do.

- **Quiz question:** What is empathy?

- A. a region in southern Italy
- B. the ability to put oneself in another person's shoes and understand what they are feeling
- C. A rare illness you can catch while travelling

- **True or false?** When I'm in love with someone, I must avoid voicing an opinion if it differs from my boy/girlfriend's. This helps us avoid arguments.

- **Setting the scene.** Your friend Art is the most popular kid in class. Everyone thinks he's funny, and he has creative ideas. The problem is, Art is also disruptive in class and talks back to the teachers. Today, you have a substitute teacher, and Art tries to convince other classmates to hide her shoes during recess. You don't feel right about this, and you don't want to be part of this "joke." But everyone else wants to. What can you do?

- **Setting the scene.** Nick and Jason have been friends since kindergarten. They spent all their time together and play video games at night when their parents make them stay in. Since going into grade 6, however, Nick has been acting oddly toward Jason. At school, Nick plays with other friends and ignores Jason at recess. For the past two weeks, he has also been spending time with a girl he likes. He only hangs out with Jason at night, when they're both online. How do you think Jason feels in this situation? What could he do?

- **Quiz question:** There are many ways to express an attraction to another person. Which of the answers below is unsuitable?

- Through behaviour like smiling when your eyes meet, sitting next to the person, holding their hand, pleasing them with thoughtful little gestures, spending time with them.
- Verbally, by saying things like, "I feel good when I'm with you" or "I appreciate you" or "I love you."
- With questions like, "Can I sit next to you?" or "Can I hug you?"
- By acting in a demeaning manner, making fun of them, pushing them, attracting their attention in negative ways

Orange square:

Diversity

- **True or false?** Every human being is unique.

- **Thinking question:** Being different and unique has advantages. What do you think they are?

Suggested answers: being able to help others according to our strengths, learning from others and teaching others, discovering the world, developing new ideas, not being like everyone else, etc.

- **True or false?** All human beings are equal.

Suggested answer: True and false. All human beings are equal, have the same fundamental rights and similar needs: to live in safety, to be loved, to feed and shelter themselves, to be clothed, to be accomplished, etc. When we look at how things are in society, however, we soon see that not everyone is born with the same privileges. Some people have better access to healthcare, for example. Some are able to find a job more easily. Unfortunately, human rights are not respected to the same extent in all of the world's societies, even though they should be.

- **Quiz question:** Homophobia is the fear and hatred of homosexual people or those we assume are homosexual. When you hear a friend utter a homophobic slur, you can:

- Remind them that those kinds of remarks are unacceptable and homophobic
- Go find a trusted adult who can do a benevolent intervention
- Apologize to the targeted person for the slur, saying you disagree with those kinds of sentiments and words
- All of the above.

- **True or false?** All of these items could belong to a single person: a pair of soft leggings with a pastel print; a colourful hoodie with rabbit ears; black running shoes; pyjamas with a video game pattern; a baseball cap with surfboards on it; denim overalls; leather booties; a sequined dress; a hockey jersey...
- **Setting the scene.** Farid has just arrived with his family from Afghanistan. He doesn't speak English very well and often finds himself isolated at recess. What could you do to help him fit in?
- **True or false?** All private parts look the same.
Answer: False. They are all different and they change their appearance as time goes by.
- **Quiz question:** Name two or more forms of diversity.
- Suggested answers:** Body diversity; family diversity; cultural and religious diversity; sexual and love diversity; functional diversity; neurological diversity; etc.
- **Riddle.** "When we stand together, we're strong as can be, helping each other from sea to sea. In unity and support, we find our might. What am I?"
Answer: Solidarity.

Purple squares:

Miming. A player can stay on this space if someone else correctly guesses what is being mimed.

- Drawing
- Playing hockey
- Ballet
- Playing chess
- Playing baseball
- Painting
- Figure skating
- Building with LEGO blocks
- Meditating
- Skipping
- Playing with dolls
- Talking on the phone
- Playing video games
- Singing
- Karate
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Reading
- Playing pear ball
- Building something
- Studying
- Skateboarding