CENSOR

Teacher Game Instructions

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CENSOR is designed to make students reflect on the idea of freedom of expression and the broad interpretations and actions protected under free speech. This dynamic, small group board game engages students in cooperative play as they strategize a chase around Manhattan to capture a player who has been deemed a "violator" of free speech. The game is intended to be fun and strategic, and the obvious storyline and actions of the game provide a springboard to real-world First Amendment censorship case studies.

Historical Note: This game is inspired by a true historical organization—The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, founded by Anthony Comstock, who initially advocated for laws that banned material referencing birth control and sexuality on grounds of obscenity. Comstock later engaged personally in moral vigilantism that broadened his interpretation of "obscenity" to include art. He was responsible for censoring paintings, plays, and books.

BASIC STRATEGY

Six Agents are on a mission to catch a rogue Artist attempting to publish three separate artworks of purportedly questionable taste. It is set up as a board game where only the Agent's movements are visible as they try to detect the Artist's trail. Both Artist and Agents use decoys to mask their paths on the board.

IMPLEMENTATION NOTE

There are multiple board game pieces to assemble before playing. For maximum playing time, allow ample time to prepare the game in advance. Since only eight students take part in each game, you may need to divide the class into multiple groups, each requiring a set of game components.

GAME COMPONENTS

Print, cut, and assemble as many sets as needed. The following are required for each game:

1   Game Board (4 sheets matched at edges and taped to create larger board)
6   Agent Tokens (4 Real Agents and 2 Decoys). Color code Agents with markers to differentiate the players.
1   Agent Trail Tracker form (optional)
5   Artwork Tokens (3 Real Artworks and 2 Decoys)
1   Artist Map
20 Footprints (cut into separate squares)
1   Game Master Script and Night Tracker form
3   Pen/Pencils

GAME TIME
approximately 30-40 minutes

PLAYERS
1 student is Game Master
1 student is the Artist
6 students are Agents

GAME SET UP
(Student will act as Game Master.)

- Assemble 8 students around the game board.
- Assign one student to act as a Game Master.
- Game Master will assign one student to play Artist role and 6 others to play Agents.