

Facilitator's Guide to Zombie Apocalypse

Created by Emily Menzies and students in Shoreline Middle School's Sustainability Exploratory Classes

Educational Purpose of the game: to engage diverse learners in building physical, emotional, mental and ecological literacy, agency and resilience through experiencing cause, effect and adaptation in an outdoor wide game. Depending on the levels played, students can also learn about personal health, decolonization, Indigenous ethnobotanical knowledge, climate change and sustainability. This is basically an inclusive and decolonized alternative to games such as "manhunt," "capture the flag" or "survival."

Students' Goals during the game:

1. To survive (and thrive!) as a human during the Zombie Apocalypse (Find and use plants sustainably to protect your health and secure food, water, shelter and other necessities.)
2. Once infected, your goal is to become the most powerful zombie you can be – live your best zombie life! (The more humans you catch, the faster and more infectious you become.)

Types of Zombies:

Zombies who have infected and stolen the brain power of more humans have greater abilities than zombies who have not tagged any humans. All zombies can infect humans, unless the humans have protected themselves against infection by finding sources of medicine (see level "Supplies" and up).

Types of Zombies are marked by the amount of gory / gangrenous bandages they have:

- 1 bandage = "Walkers"- only can walk and must follow the orders of a commander zombie
- 2 bandages = "Shufflers"- can shuffle; try to stay within 20 feet of another zombie ("herd")
- 3 bandages = "Runners"- can run and be independent
- 4 bandages / Red Pinny = "Commanders"- Can run and can command other zombies

Levels of the game:

1. **Outbreak:** each round can take less than 30 seconds.
2. **Escape:** each round can take between 1 - 5 minutes, depending on the speed, agility and determination of the Commander Zombie
3. **Supplies:** each round can take between 5 - 15 minutes, depending on whether the students learn to heal the zombies. Debrief how vitamin-rich food keeps humans healthy.
4. **Resources:** each round can take between 10 - 20 minutes, depending on whether the humans hoard or share and coordinate their use of resources to protect themselves and heal the Zombies. Debrief the difference between resource exploitation and sustainable management.
5. **Reconciliation:** each round can take between 15 min - 45 min, depending on the physical fitness, plant knowledge and engagement level of the students, as well as the strategies they choose. Some may hide indefinitely, so length of game is ultimately the choice of the Facilitator / Game Master. Plan for time to introduce and debrief about the value of the cultural knowledge First Nations have fought to keep about how to thrive in their ancestral lands. Ask students if respectfully seeking out and supporting Indigenous knowledge of how to cultivate sustainable life ways (let alone survive the colonial apocalypse) might help all of us survive and thrive.

6. **Climate Chaos:** Plan on at least 45 min as this level requires 4 rounds to cover each of the climate calamities: summer drought, forest fire, “snowmageddon” and rising sea level, with a debrief after. Ask students if there are things we can do now and learn to prepare to survive and thrive despite Climate Chaos.
7. **Sustainability:** Infinitely variable, so length of game is ultimately the choice of the Facilitator / Game Master. Debrief: What happened? Did you survive and thrive over time? How was the game in any way like real life?

Supplies Required:

It varies by level. See “Zombie Apocalypse Game Components” for the underlined, printable supplies. At minimum, you need three strips of red cloth per student and a whistle. At most, you need the following:

1. Clean whistle, stopwatch, clipboard with lined paper and pencil
2. Chair if a student(s) has mobility challenges, so it is easier for them to be included
3. Bag with 3 Zombie bandages per student as well as 3 red pinnies
4. Set of cut strips of paper with “Supplies” listed on them
5. Set of laminated 8” x 11” colour pictures of each plant on the school grounds that is edible, medicinal or useful for making or dyeing clothing, tools, shelter, or locating water.
6. One “Game Card” and pocket sized, washable marker per human player
7. Whiteboard marker and Knowledge Keeper Clipboard with Game Map that is filled in, plus:

A set of place-based plant cards with Indigenous uses listed, such as Pacific Northwest Plant Knowledge Cards from Strong Nations: https://www.strongnations.com/store/item_display.php?i=7484

Info sheets on local plant uses, such as First Nations Traditional Foods Fact Sheets by the First Nations Health Authority: https://www.fnha.ca/documents/traditional_food_fact_sheets.pdf



Facilitator's Guide to the Seven Levels of Zombie Apocalypse

1. Outbreak!

- a. Location: Takes place in a small enclosed space such as gaga ball court
- b. Goal: introduction to game play and game sense:
 - i. learn how to tag safely, avoid falling when running, and how to play fair.
 - ii. learn when and how to tie on bandages, and master understanding of difference in abilities between walkers, shufflers, runners and commanders
- c. Scenario: Students imagine they have been playing gaga ball as a class and all of a sudden their teacher and/or classmate comes back from a water break as a Zombie!!!
- d. Supplies Needed:
 - i. 1 red pinny for Commander Zombie
 - ii. 3 Fabric bandages per student (in red and/or pale green that are long enough to be tied around arms and legs but small enough to fit in a pocket)
 - iii. bag for supplies, clean whistle, stopwatch, clipboard with lined paper and pencil
 - iv. Chair if a student has mobility challenges, so it is easier for them to be included
- e. Alternate roles for Inclusion: (These roles can be one or three people, or the Educator)
 - i. Game Master: gives out and collects supplies
 - ii. Referee: blows whistle to start and end each round, or to adjudicate a disputed tag (rock, paper, scissors)
 - iii. Timekeeper: Uses stopwatch to determine when class has earned the ability to move on to the next level.
 - iv. Score Keeper: keeps track of who survives (the longest) on a clipboard
- f. Criteria to pass Outbreak Level:
 - i. At least one human must survive longer than 35 seconds, and there can be no disputes or injuries during the round.
 - ii. Zombies should master transition between walker, shuffler and runner modes
- g. Tips for Facilitators:
 - i. End each round and game with 3 whistle blasts... When students hear this, they all come in for instruction / feedback / scorekeeping in a designated area. Build this habit now when it is easy to see and control them - it is very important to have this habit firmly established before moving onto levels with a larger area.

2. Escape!

- a. Location: Takes place in a larger fenced area such as basketball court
- b. Goal: develop self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, communication and defense / offense skills
 - i. Zombies learn how to corner and trap groups of humans
 - ii. humans learn how to dodge, split the offense etc
 - iii. students work towards volunteering to be Commander Zombie to start the game
- c. Supplies Needed: same as Outbreak
- d. Alternate roles for Inclusion: same as Outbreak
- e. Criteria to pass Escape Level: At least 5 humans need to survive for 5 minutes.
- f. Tips for Facilitators: Freeze students with 3 whistle blasts and ask how many are still human (hands up) to assess where the game is at, then unfreeze them to keep playing. Call in students between rounds to encourage them to share ideas on how to work together to trap Humans and / or get away from Zombies.

3. Supplies!

- a. Location: Takes place in a larger fenced area such as basketball court
- b. Goal: to develop an awareness of what humans need to survive on a personal level: food, water, shelter, and the types of vitamins and medicines that can protect them against infections... such as the Zombie Infection!!
- c. Scenario: human collect supplies from a drugstore that has been overrun by Zombies, but is well-stocked (slips of paper listing specific items such as tarp, bottle of water, canned salmon, vitamin C etc.)
 - i. If a human finds one source of medicine, they are immune to a “Walker”
 - ii. If a human has two different medicines, they are immune to a “Shuffler”, and can heal a “Walker” if they tag them instead (they have to give up one medicine to the Walker in order to do so, and the healed zombie human gets a 10 second head start before another zombie can tag them)
 - iii. 3 medicines protects against a “Runner” and enables a human to heal a “Shuffler” (again, they have to give up one medicine to do so)
 - iv. 4 medicines protects against a “Commander” and heals a “Runner” etc
- d. Supplies Needed: same as Outbreak, plus set of cut strips of paper with supplies listed on them, scattered around the ground in the game area
- e. Alternate roles for Inclusion: same as Outbreak, plus Supplies Distributor: puts out and later collects strips of paper (can be done with support of an Educational Assistant or peer, as other Inclusive Roles)
- f. Criteria to pass Supplies Level:
 - i. At least 1 human needs to actually survive: not only avoid getting infected by the Zombies, but also have at least 1 strip of paper with a source of water, food and shelter at the end of the game / round. Humans are not just surviving but thriving if they have other supplies, such as clothing, tools etc.

4. Resources!

- a. Location: Takes place in unfenced outdoor area with diverse terrain and some blackberry bushes (not just a sports field - an area with a few trails, stairs, bushes, trees, etc, such as the area including the Causeway, Basketball Court and Playground at Shoreline Middle School)
- b. Goal: to develop awareness that natural resources can provide an ongoing or renewable source of what humans need to survive on a personal level: food, water, shelter, and the types of vitamins and medicines that can protect them against infections... as long as they don't harvest and hoard them all!
 - i. Zombies learn how to corner and trap humans in a large and uncontrolled environment

- ii. humans learn how to hide, communicate and plan, evade being tagged in an uncontrolled environment
 - iii. Humans learn to identify growing and renewable sources of food, shelter and water, as well as how to hoard or share resources with other humans so they can protect each other and heal the Zombies
 - iv. students earn the right to start the game as Commander Zombie if they become this role in a previous round
- c. Supplies Needed:
- i. Same as Escape level: Bag with Zombie bandages, 3 red pinnies for Commander Zombie(s), clean whistle, clipboard with scoresheet and pencil to award points to Human Survivors and Zombies who become Commanders, along with chair if a student has mobility challenges, so it is easier for them to be included
 - ii. New supplies: a set of laminated "Resource Cards" which are pictures of Blackberries (source of food and medicine - vitamin C) and Douglas Fir (source of shelter, water and medicine - vitamin C)
- d. Alternate roles for Inclusion: same as Outbreak, plus Resource Manager (puts out and collects the Resource Cards)
- e. Criteria to pass Resources Level: At least 5 humans survive for 20 minutes, with a full set of resource cards each that supply them with a source of food, water and shelter.
- f. Tips for Facilitators: Call students in with 3 whistle blasts after 10 minutes and ask how many are still human (hands up) and who has the resources they need to survive to assess where the game is at, then unfreeze them to keep playing. Call in students between rounds to encourage them to share ideas on how to work together to trap Humans and / or get away from Zombies.

5. Reconciliation

- a. Location: boundaries expand to all visible school grounds (including a forest area if available). Only the Commander Zombie has the brain power to navigate the forest however - the other zombies are not allowed in the forest, making the forest a safe haven for the humans and a good place to get to know the Knowledge Keeper and their Apprentice.
- b. Goal:
 - i. Zombies learn how to plan, coordinate and trap humans in natural bottlenecks
 - ii. humans learn how to respectfully seek out Knowledge Keepers who are willing to share ancestral knowledge of how to survive and thrive in this place over time through identifying and understanding the uses of a wide variety of local plants. Humans demonstrate the need to conserve, share and appreciate these plants and this knowledge by thanking and protecting Knowledge Keepers from Zombies.

- iii. students work towards volunteering to be the Knowledge Keeper and the Knowledge Keeper's apprentice, as well as earn the right to be the Commander Zombie to start the game
- c. Supplies Needed: same as Outbreak, plus new supplies:
 - i. one game card and pocket sized, washable markers per human
 - ii. Knowledge Keeper Clipboard with Game Map that is filled in with the options of numbers and a whiteboard marker, along with:
 - 1. Set of place-based plant cards with Indigenous uses listed, such as Pacific Northwest Plant Knowledge Cards from Strong Nations: https://www.strongnations.com/store/item_display.php?i=7484
 - 2. Info sheets on plant uses, such as First Nations Traditional Foods Fact Sheets by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA): https://www.fnha.ca/documents/traditional_food_fact_sheets.pdf
 - iii. Set of laminated 8" x 11" colour picture of each plant on the school grounds that is edible, medicinal or useful for making or dyeing clothing, tools, shelter, or locating water.
- d. Alternate roles for Inclusion: same as Outbreak level, plus a new role: Knowledge Keeper (and Knowledge Keeper Apprentice, if desired). The Knowledge Keeper and Apprentice go out ahead of time and place the laminated plant pictures beside the real plants in locations around the school grounds that correspond to the white squares on the Game Cards. During the game, these students then verify the accuracy of the locations and uses marked on the game cards of respectful humans, and give them additional knowledge about these plants if they are comfortable doing so.
- e. Criteria to pass Reconciliation Level: Students must Heal all the Zombies. In order to do this, students will need to learn from the Knowledge Keeper and play the game until they know the plant locations and uses well enough to become immune in the first few minutes, and then work together to trap and heal even the Commander Zombie.
- f. Tips for Facilitators: Call in students between rounds to encourage them to share ideas on how to work together to trap Humans and / or get away from Zombies in the new and enlarged boundaries, especially in how they interact with the forest.

6. Climate Chaos!

Everything is exactly the same as Reconciliation, except:

- a. There is a new additional student role, called "Climate Chaos". This student is responsible for learning and then announcing a series of three or four climate calamities, spaced every five minutes, with the first one starting as soon as it looks like the Commander Zombie is having a hard time catching any humans because they are all immune. The referee blows the whistle three times to pause the game and all students meet Climate Chaos at the Camas Meadow, who on four subsequent occasions, explains worsening symptoms of climate change. (Develop your

own calamities and the plants they impact based on your own location - these are based on our school):

- i. Summer Drought: Each summer has been getting drier and warmer, but this year it started early. The Cedar trees, Salal and Oregon Grape have turned red and are starting to die off... so any human who has been using these plants will have to find other sources of food, medicine, shelter etc.
 - ii. Forest Fire: This summer, forest fires have ravaged the interior of B.C. and have forced the evacuation of many communities. A stray cigarette butt similarly lit the Douglas Fir trees in our causeway on fire, as their bark is not thick enough yet to offer the fire protection their 800 year old elders do. Anyone relying on Douglas Fir from those locations have to find other sources.
 - iii. "Snowmageddon:" Just like last winter, this year we had a balmy fall and winter until all of a sudden, three feet of snow fell in two days and stayed all week. The tender roots, shoots and buds that confused plants had been sending out early were frozen and failed to grow any further this year. Any humans relying on Rosehips, Big Leaf Maple blossoms, Blackberries and camas meadow plants will need to find other sources of food this year.
 - iv. Rising Sea Level: Thanks to warming seas and melting polar ice caps and glaciers, the ocean level has been quietly and infinitesimally rising for the past one hundred years, but all of a sudden we had some wacky weather and a storm took out the estuary protecting the culvert that drains the runoff from our forest into the ocean. Instead, brackish water from the Gorge was able to flood into our forest, poisoning the ground with salt water. As an increase of 1 degree celsius in average global temperature is expected to cause approximately 2 meters in sea level rise, our entire forest would be flooded. Any humans relying on plants from the forest will need to find another source, as well as a new place to get clean fresh water.
- b. Debrief: Usually at this point, there are no plants left on the school grounds, so the students don't see how they can play any more, so we sit down and discuss if there are things we can do now and learn to prepare to survive and thrive despite Climate Chaos.
 - c. Criteria to pass Climate Chaos Level: Class takes on some action projects to address climate chaos. This may include planting some native plants above the 2 meter floodline, planning / planting a garden of climate-hardy edible and medicinal plants, planting trees to sequester carbon dioxide, or a myriad of other actions that can reduce the green house gas emissions our school is currently releasing.

7. Sustainability:

This level is an inquiry-based, student-driven initiative. Students take on Greta Thunberg's challenge to Protect, Restore and Invest in the future. They can remove invasive species and plant native species to enrich their chances in the game. They can use the iSEEK app on phones or ipads to help them identify, learn about and teach their classmates about other species that have not been in the game yet. They can research and create new info cards about these plants and make a team of Knowledge Keeper Allies. They can create cooperative

challenges to add to the game to build sustainable solutions, such as devices for rainwater catchment and purification, or techniques for cultivating, preparing and preserving food using renewable energy. The options are endless... and offer a great lead-in, inspiration and motivation for students to embark on personal inquiry or action projects. Have fun!!