

Puffin Project: Games with [Puffin Cards](#)

Materials needed:

1. A set of puffin cards for every pair or small group
2. Pencils and post-its for recording
3. A place to lay out the cards (table, or floor)

Game 1: Getting Acquainted with Puffins by Organizing the Cards

Spread out the puffin cards so you can see all of them. The cards are a *dataset* with real data from the National Audubon Society. Take a few minutes to find out some interesting things about the individual puffins. Be sure to look at the photos!

What do you notice about these puffins?

Things to think about:

- How do they look similar or different?
- What islands are they from?
- How old are they?
- What do they eat?
- How warm is the sea surface temperature where they live?

Once you have looked at the cards, organize them or put them in order so that you can see something interesting about the whole group of puffins. (Hint: For example, you might organize them by putting all the ones from a certain island together.)

When you have finished organizing puffins, talk about what you see.

Then, another person in your group takes a turn reorganizing the puffins in a different way.

When they have finished organizing the puffins, talk about what you see.

If you are playing alone, you can keep organizing the puffins in different ways.

Game 2: Guess My Puffin

This game works best with 3–5 players.

The **goal** is to figure out the secret puffin by asking yes/no questions.

Start: The person who's "It" looks over the puffin cards while holding the deck. Then, "It" secretly chooses one puffin card without saying anything. It is important to keep a poker face! "It" writes down the name of the puffin on a post-it and keeps the post-it private. The selected card is then returned to the deck and all of the cards are arranged for everyone to see.

Next, the remaining players take turns asking questions that can be answered by yes or no. For example, a person could ask, “Was your puffin born before 2015?” “Does your puffin have orange on its beak?” Important: You can use the photos as well as the other data!

“It” can only answer yes or no. No hints are allowed. After “It” has answered, the rest of the players remove all the puffins that are no longer contenders.

Now the next person asks a yes or no question, using only the cards that are still contenders. They might ask, “Was your puffin born on X island?” The person who is “It” answers yes or no, and the players remove the cards that are no longer contenders.

Continue taking turns asking questions until one player thinks they know the identity of the secret puffin.

The person who identifies the correct puffin on their turn is the winner. “It” can reveal the winner by dramatically showing the post-it note with the puffin’s name.

Strategy suggestions:

1. Think about ways to get rid of a reasonable number of cards on each turn.
2. How long should you wait before you guess?
3. You might get lucky, but it is usually not a good strategy to simply ask, “Is **this card** your Puffin?”

Game 3: Guess My Rule

This game is best with 3-5 players.

The **goal** is to figure out a rule that “It” has chosen to categorize the puffin cards.

Start by arranging all the cards so you can see them. Leave room to move the cards around. In the empty space, put down one post-it that says “Fits the rule,” and another that says “Doesn’t fit the rule.”

The person who’s “It” looks over all the information on the puffin cards—including the photos—and decides on a secret “rule.” For example, a rule could be “All puffins whose diet is at least 50% herring” or “All puffins born on X island.” The rule can’t just be about one puffin---it needs to be about at least a few of them. “It” writes down the rule, so no one can see, on a post-it note.

Next, the remaining players take turns choosing a puffin card and asking “Does this puffin fit your rule?” “It” answers by either placing the card near the post-it that says “Fits the Rule” or “Doesn’t Fit the Rule.”

Players take turns choosing cards and “It” places the cards in the category of “Fits” or “Doesn’t Fit.”

As you play, think about what the rule might be. When a player thinks they know the rule they say “I want to guess your rule.” They say what they think the rule is, and “It” either tells them they’re wrong, or shows them the post-it saying that they’ve correctly guessed the rule. If it **is not** the rule, the player who’s guessed incorrectly misses a turn.

Keep going until the rule is guessed correctly!

Suggestions

1. The rule should be about something everyone can see from the cards. “It” can’t make a personal rule like “puffins that are the cutest,” because that’s an opinion--not data that everyone can see.
2. The game’s more fun when the rule is “just right”--not too obvious and not too hard.
3. When you’re trying to guess the rule, make sure to look at the cards that **don’t** fit the rule as well as the ones that fit.