

Board Games (Eurogames): Game Analysis & Strategy

a

INSTRUCTOR

Jan Sigvartsen PhD

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AGE

10 -18

FORMAT

In-person

HOURS

16 hours (Berrien Springs
Partnership Students)

18 hours (Niles Virtual
School Students)

*Make up
classes available*

CLASS OVERVIEW

Build small empires in this board gaming class that teaches you critical thinking, analysis, and strategy using civilization-building board games from Germany and Europe. Learn what goes into building a successful nation, community, city, or infrastructure using historical settings. Learn alliance strategies and resource sharing to build your infrastructure. You will also learn how to be a good sport and master screen-free social gaming, where you can see and develop strong friendships with your fellow players. To add ambiance, this class is held at a historic setting, the Berrien County Courthouse, which is the oldest courthouse in Michigan.

Some of the games we have available to learn to play include: Settlers of Catan (plus expansions), Ticket to Ride (plus variations), Carcassonne, Goa, Pirate's Cove, Alhambra, Caylus Magna Carta, Prince of Florence, In the Year of the Dragon, Attika, Tikal, Java, Mare Nostrum, China, El Grande, Puerto Rico, Tigris and Euphrates, St Petersburg, Patrician – Towering Glory, Ark of the Covenant, Louie XIV, Yspahan, and Thurn and Taxis.

A parent or guardian over 18 can accompany you if they would like to, but it is not required. Friends or siblings under 18 must be registered with the Parent Partnership in order to participate.

“German/European Style” board gaming (Eurogames) is an exciting game genre that developed in the late 1970's. Eurogames are a class of complex board games that teach strategy and critical thought (more on the level of chess), but are also designed to be highly social, engaging, collaborative, and suitable for those aged 10 and upwards. Eurogames are very popular globally because they are not simple party games heavily built on luck, nor are they highly adversarial, where players are eliminated. Rather, there are multiple ways to earn points, games are shorter (30-90 minutes), and all players are engaged and use teachable strategies based on critical thought to play until the unpredictable end. Players do not have to be in conflict with others – they can build alliances and are resource or strategy-based (not conflict-based) making them ideal social games.

CLASS TIMES

Week 1 – Orientation – January 6 or 8 at 6pm – 8pm (at the Berrien Springs Old Courthouse)

Then (also at the Old Courthouse)

- Tuesday 6pm – 8pm (8x 2-hour classes, starting January 13 until March 3)
- Thursday 6pm – 8pm (8x 2-hour classes, starting January 15 until March 5)

REQUIRED MATERIALS

You bring a positive attitude, we'll bring the games and the snacks!

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1, January 6 or 8	ORIENTATION – OLD COURTHOUSE – August 26 <u>or</u> 28
Berrien Springs History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs August 26, 2025 - 6-8 pm <u>or</u> August 28, 2025 – 6-8 pm	All students undertaking Dr Jan Sigvartsen's six Parent Partnership classes this semester are required to attend orientation. There are two scheduled orientation times – you only have to attend <u>one</u> of these scheduled orientations
WEEK 2, January 13 or 15	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 3, January 20 or 22	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 4, January 27 or 29	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 5, February 3 or 5	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 6, February 10 or 12	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 7, February 17 or 19	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 8, February 24 or 26	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE (last week for Berrien Springs Partnership)
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.
WEEK 9, March 3 or 5	BERRIEN SPRINGS OLD COURTHOUSE (for Niles Virtual School students)
Berrien County History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	Learn a new game that the group would like to play from the list on page 1.

YOUR PROJECT

You may like to research one of the game creators and why they created this game. You may also like to investigate strategies that have Dr Jan has proposed for winning a particular game, or look online to see what other strategies you can discover for winning or collaborating in this game. You may also like to investigate how "German/European Style" games differ from games from other regions.

ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTORS

Dr Jan Sigvartsen PhD (Dr Jan) has taught Archaeology and Ancient Religion classes at Andrews University, Michigan, and the Theologische Hochschule Friedensau, Germany, where he was also their PhD Programs Coordinator and Associate Director of their Institute of Biblical Studies and Archaeology. He has participated in archeological digs in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and currently directs the *Tarragindi Archaeological Dig* in Berrien Springs. He is a board gaming collector and enthusiast (like many of the people in the ancient, prehistoric, and historic periods that he studied academically). He believes you can learn a lot about a culture by the games they play. Dr Jan even came third in the Michigan state finals for an international tournament for *Settlers of Catan*.

Leanne Sigvartsen (Ms Leanne) originally trained as a psychologist in Australia and spent many years as a counselor and academic advisor for teens and young adults. She then transitioned to research project management, working on a number of projects, most recently as the Research and Special Projects Director at the Chicago-based *Center for Collaborative Study of Trauma, Health Equity, and Neurobiology*. She is a triple citizen of the United States, Australia, and Malta, and has lived in the United States, Australia, and Germany. She wants to see young people succeed, be happy, and grow into thriving adults - especially those who have experienced trauma and adverse childhood experiences.