

Sleeping Coconuts Game



Description:

A board game illustrating John and Bonnie Nystrom's journey as part of a Bible translation team and the challenges they faced, especially after a tsunami totally destroyed the village where they had lived and worked

Aims:

- Students will recognize the importance of God's Word in cross-cultural ministry.
- Students will understand some parts of the Bible translation process.
- Students will pray for the work of Bible translation.

Audience:

Grades 2–6

Minimum Time Requirements:

25 minutes, with the game taking about 18 minutes to play

Scripture:

Matthew 14:19–21

Materials:

- Bible marked at Matthew 14:19–21
- One copy of the game board from page 6 for each group of three students
- A different set of game cards from pages 7–12 for each student
- Optional: paper clips to hold sets of game cards
- Game pieces, bits of colored paper, or other small items to mark each child's place on the game board
- Tables, or have children sit around their game boards on a clean floor

If you have any questions or problems related to this lesson, please contact Wycliffe's Children's Communications team at kids@wycliffe.org.

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More curricula to engage children in Bible translation are available at www.wycliffe.org/kids.

Pre-class Preparation:

- Make one game board from page 5 for each group of three students.* Print on card stock, if possible.
- Print three sets of game cards, front and back, from pages 6–11 for each group: Nystrom Journey, Arop Journey, and Malol and Sissano Journey. Cut apart each of the game card sets. (It takes about three minutes to cut out a set.) Each student in a group will receive a different set. Put the card sets in numerical order with instructions facing up. Paper clips can hold the sets together until it's time to play.
- Have game markers for each child to move along the game board. For example, you may use coins, buttons, three different kinds of wrapped candy, or different colored pieces of paper.
- Place a game board, three different game pieces, and three different sets of game cards on tables (or the floor) for each group of three children.

Class Time:

Instruct groups of three children each to gather around their game boards either on tables or on a clean floor. Then say,

In our game today you will be following the Nystroms through their translation journey. They will encounter roadblocks or difficulties along the way. Sometimes God uses what seems like roadblocks to us as part of His plan to further His Kingdom.

One person in your group represents either John or Bonnie Nystrom—a translator working with the Arop people who lived on a tiny sand spit in Papua New Guinea. That person will draw his/her cards from the set called “Nystrom Journey.”

Another person in your group represents the Arop people. Their village was completely destroyed by a tsunami, which is a group of huge waves. In spite of this roadblock, God had a plan to bring His Word to more people in a quicker way. That person will draw his/her cards from the set called “Arop Journey.”

The third person in your group represents a language still waiting for God’s Word. That person will draw his/her cards from the set called “Malol and Sissano Journey.”

*Divide the children into groups of three. Pass out the card sets in each group so that each student receives a different set.



Game Instructions:

Explain to students,

You will each receive a set of cards. To play this game, you take turns picking up the card on top of your stack and reading it aloud. After you read it, move your game piece forward one place, unless the card tells you to do something else. Place the used card face down beside your unused cards.

When you reach a roadblock card, you will still read your card out loud, but do not move forward that turn unless the card says to do so*. If a non- roadblock card doesn't tell you how many spaces to move, move only one space. Some cards tell you to move multiple spaces. Do you have any questions?

Answer any questions, and then say,

When everyone in your group has read their card number 20, quietly raise your hands until I indicate that I have seen you.

You may begin!

Circulate around the room to answer questions and encourage the students. When all groups have indicated that they have finished, gather everyone together for a discussion. Say,

Let's discuss what happened during the game.

Discuss the following questions.

1. What were the most difficult challenges on your journeys?
2. Which "journey" was the hardest? Why? **
3. What got you through the hard times on your journey?
4. How did the Arop people and the other languages work smarter with John's help? (*They joined together to form a cluster project and learned how to use computer programs that helped with the translation process.*)
5. Did you notice that only one person reached the end of the game board? Can anyone guess why? (*The West Aitape Translation Project continues today. It will take several years for them to finish their translations.*)

Open your Bible, read Matthew 14:19–20, and say,

In this passage Christ taught His disciples to trust Him when He fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish. John Nystrom kept coming back to this passage as he asked God to show him if he should work with more than one language group at a time. God finally made it clear

*Note: There are a few roadblocks where the student will move one space instead of losing a turn. These instances show that even when they encounter a roadblock or lose a turn, this can be the start of positive change—turning a roadblock into victory if they desire to follow God's path. Recognizing this can be the first step towards change.

**The Malol and Sissano languages waited for a long time before translation began. Let the children know that there are more language groups that still wait—under 2,000 language groups. Children can help by praying for them. For more information, go to www.wycliffe.org/BPPP

that He wanted John to do this, even though John didn't feel he could do it. The Arop translators were willing to slow their own Bible translation progress down and put the spiritual needs of the Malol and Sissano people ahead of their own. Every time that John and Bonnie thought that their "baskets" were empty, God filled them up.

Now that we know a little bit about the challenges of giving God's Word to those who still don't have it, let's ask God to give His Word to those who still wait. Let's also pray for those who are working to share God's Word with different language groups around the world. Ask God to give them strength, wisdom, and courage to continue working at their big task.

If you used wrapped candy as game pieces, let the children eat them after the prayer time or take them home.

Close in prayer or ask for one or two volunteers to pray.

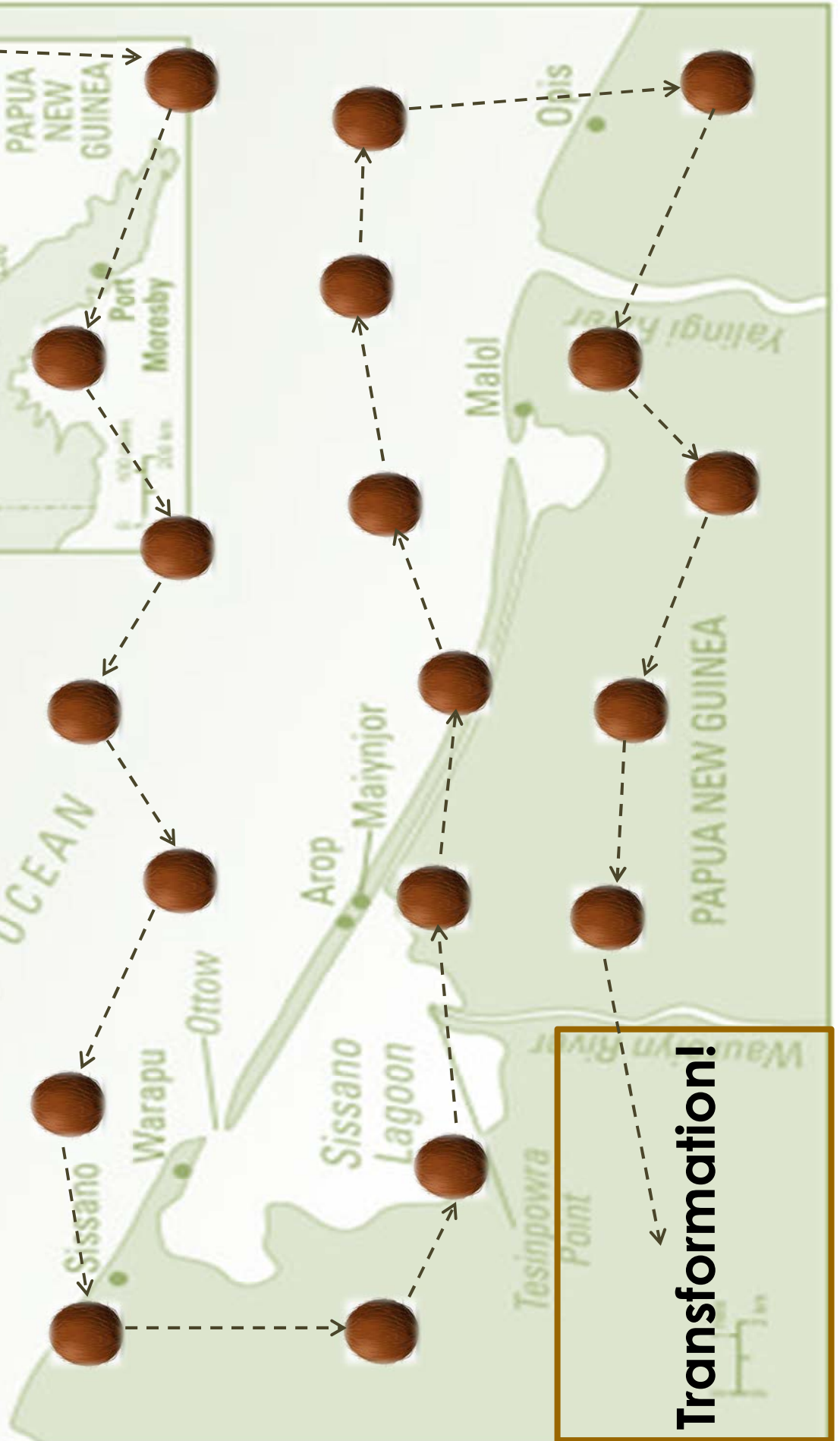


This page is intentionally left blank so that when printing in duplex (both sides of the paper), the game board will not have cards on the back side and the two-sided game cards will be printed on both sides.

START

Place your game pieces here until it's your turn.

Transformation!



Nystrom Journey Game Cards (front and back)

<p>1. Call: Before Bonnie and I (John) met, God called each of us to Himself. He also called us to serve Him in some kind of ministry.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>2. Training: God separately led Bonnie and me to learn how to study languages at a University in North Dakota in 1982. That's where we met.</p>	<p>3. More training, marriage, and family: We married, joined Wycliffe, and attended the linguistic school in Dallas, Texas, for two years.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>4. Building a team: In one year we moved twice, had a baby, raised a partner team, packed, and moved to a new country—Papua New Guinea.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>
<p>5. Pacific Orientation Course, August 1987: We learned how to survive in locations far away from cities, how to make drinking water and food safe, treat some illnesses, and speak Tok Pisin.</p>	<p>6. Roadblock: Spiritually empty, we realized that we needed an attitude adjustment to really live well and not just survive.</p>	<p>7. Trusting God: Just as our daughter let go when she learned to walk, we had to let go of what we thought we needed, trusting God to supply all our needs.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>8. Where in the world would we work? Our wish list: stable government, ability to train translation team, beach for Bonnie, river for my canoe. Arop fit our wish list.</p>
<p>9. Language and Culture: We spent months in Arop village to learn language and culture. The village sat on a sand spit 100 yards wide and 3 miles long.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>10. Roadblock: I got sick. The doctors couldn't figure out what was wrong. I was so tired that some days I could only work for an hour.</p>	<p>11. Victory out of a roadblock: My tiredness made me see that I had to train Papua New Guineans how to do translation and use a computer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>12. Roadblock: After we spent 10 years learning the language and translating in Arop, a tsunami destroyed the village, and a third of the 2,400 people died. What now?</p>
<p>13. Roadblock: The Arop people couldn't go back to their homes on the sand spit. The tsunami wiped out the village. They moved closer to similar language groups.</p>	<p>14. Literacy: The people from Arop wanted to continue their reading and writing classes. Why? So they could read God's Word and write their stories about the tsunami.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>15. Roadblock: Other people groups with languages similar to Arop wanted God's Word in their languages. Translators could only work in one language at a time, right? Wrong.</p>	<p>16. God's Word gives wisdom: I kept remembering that Jesus fed 5,000 people with just 5 loaves and 2 fish. Would He help me do the same if I worked with more than one language?</p>
<p>17. Good out of tragedy: Two Arop men plus two men from each of other nearby languages formed a cluster project—working smarter to do more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>18. Roadblock: Empty baskets: Lack of money, computers, and translation and training materials, plus my illness, all seemed like "empty baskets" that only God could fill up.</p>	<p>19. Roadblock or Victory: My illness was still a problem, but it had a good side. The Papua New Guinean translators now did the translation. I assisted them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>20. Transformation: The Arop men put the spiritual need of other language groups ahead of their own, knowing that their translation would now take longer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Move 2 spaces</p>

<p>Sleeping Coconuts</p> <p>Nystrom Journey</p> <p>Card 4</p>	<p>Sleeping Coconuts</p> <p>Nystrom Journey</p> <p>Card 3</p>	<p>Sleeping Coconuts</p> <p>Nystrom Journey</p> <p>Card 2</p>	<p>Sleeping Coconuts</p> <p>Nystrom Journey</p> <p>Card 1</p>
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Arop Journey Game Cards (front and back)

<p>1. Hooray! Steve and Cathy Whitacre came to translate the Bible for us! (1980)</p>	<p>2. Our first Scripture: The book of Genesis would soon be printed.</p> <p>Move 3 spaces</p>	<p>3. Roadblock: Loss of translation team: The Whitacres moved away and took another assignment. Who will come to help us with the translation?</p>	<p>4. Hooray! John and Bonnie Nystrom visited our village. They plan to come help us translate.</p>
<p>5. Roadblock: The Nystroms needed to learn the language before they could translate God's Word for us.</p>	<p>6. Roadblock: The Nystroms' administrative assignments meant that they couldn't give all their time to language learning.</p>	<p>7. Roadblock: We asked John when he would start translating. He kept saying, "I'm not ready yet." We're still waiting.</p>	<p>8. We're ready: Even though John says he's not ready, we are. On Monday we are going to start work on the book of Mark!</p> <p>Move 2 spaces</p>
<p>9. Starting: Each man in our group made a first draft of a different chapter in Mark. John had chapter four, which contained a parable about planting.</p>	<p>10. Roadblock: John didn't know enough about Arop gardening terms and traditions. He gave his chapter back to us. He said that he would help, but we would do the first drafts.</p>	<p>11. And so it continued: We created drafts that were natural sounding and clear in our Arop language. John made sure they were accurate.</p> <p>Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>12. Roadblock: Tsunami hits! The tsunami completely destroyed the Arop village. Many people died. Our houses and possessions were all gone.</p>
<p>13. Praise God! John had just backed-up our latest translation work. We only lost part of a dictionary draft.</p> <p>Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>14. Where would we (Arop) live? We moved inland, near people who spoke languages similar to ours.</p>	<p>15. Literacy: After the tsunami, we really wanted to learn to read and write so we could read God's Word and write our tsunami stories.</p> <p>Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>16. Others want God's Word: The Malol and Sissano groups wanted the Bible in their languages too. But John couldn't work with three languages, could he?</p>
<p>17. Roadblock: How would it work? We didn't know. That was John's job. We just knew that we had to do it, even though it meant our translation would take longer.</p>	<p>18. Becoming a cluster project: We Arop speakers worked together with the Malol and Sissano speakers to translate God's Word.</p> <p>Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>19. More language groups want training. Now 11 language groups are translating God's Word. All of us make up the Aitape West Translation Project.</p> <p>Move 2 spaces</p>	<p>20. Transformation: An Arop pastor's wife, Leonie, read Ruth, the first Scripture in her language while she fed her daughter Bonnie. Both were satisfied.</p> <p>Move 3 spaces</p>

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Malols and Sissanos Journey Game Cards (front and back)

<p>1. Roadblock: We want God's Word but no one comes to translate it into our languages. We're waiting!</p>	<p>2. Roadblock: We're waiting for someone to come translate the New Testament into our languages.</p>	<p>3. Roadblock: We're continuing to wait for someone to come translate the New Testament into our languages.</p>	<p>4. Roadblock: We're still waiting/</p>
<p>5. Roadblock: We're still waiting.</p>	<p>6. Roadblock: We're still waiting. The Arop people have a translator. Why don't we have a translator?</p>	<p>7. Roadblock: We're still waiting.</p>	<p>8. Roadblock: We're still waiting.</p>
<p>9. Roadblock: We're still waiting.</p>	<p>10. Roadblock: We're still waiting.</p>	<p>11. Roadblock: We're still waiting. Why does no one come to translate God's Word for us?</p>	<p>12. Roadblock: The tsunami hit. Our village washed away, and many people died.</p>
<p>13. Roadblock: Where will we live?</p>	<p>14. Roadblock: We moved farther away from the ocean, near the Arop people. We want to learn to read and write our language and write our tsunami stories too.</p>	<p>15. Roadblock: We're still waiting.</p>	<p>16. Roadblock: We're still waiting. Why does no one come to translate God's Word for us? Move 1 space</p>
<p>17. Roadblock: We saw John Nystrom helping the Arops translate God's Word into their language. We want that too. We asked if John could help us too. Move 1 space.</p>	<p>18. Finally: Arop translators agreed to include us in their translation workshops. We're learning to put God's Word into our own languages. We are now a cluster project. Move 3 spaces</p>	<p>19. Leaving: John Nystrom left, but we're still translating because John taught us how. Our translations aren't done yet, but we will keep working to the end. Move 3 spaces</p>	<p>20. Transformation: One day one of the Malol translators told us, "I read some of the translation to my kids. They said, 'Daddy, this is so delicious. Can you bring us some more?'" Move 3 spaces</p>



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