

Necessary Materials:

- 1) Split and Steal card for each student (i.e. labeled index cards, printed paper, etc.).
- 2) Prizes to be won – some examples include candy, dollar store toys, or intangibles such as bonus points on a quiz or other assignment, it's up to you.

Some background to share with the class:

The “Split or Steal” activity occurs at the end of the *Golden Balls* game show. The game begins with 4 contestants. During the first two rounds of play two contestants are eliminated and a pot of potential prize money is accumulated (the final amount is highly variable). In the final round, the two remaining contestants engage in the “Split or Steal”. They each have two golden balls, one with the word *Split* written inside and one with the word *Steal* written inside. If they both choose *Split*, they each get half the total jackpot. If they both choose *Steal*, then neither contestant wins any money. If one chooses *Steal* and one chooses *Split*, then the one who chose *Steal* gets the entire jackpot and the one who chose *Split* gets nothing.

Activity:

- 1) Have students pair up – encourage them to pair with someone they do not know well.
- 2) Describe the prize(s) to be won and explain how Splits and Steals work.
- 3) Give the pairs a few minutes to discuss and debate as needed. Their job is to convince their partner to split with them (this doesn't mean that they both actually plan to split!).
- 4) When everyone is ready, have the students display their choice of Split or Steal. Depending on the size of the class you can have some, or all, of the pairs discuss their experience. What did they pick and why? If possible, have two groups with different outcomes compare their experiences.
- 5) Have the class brainstorm factors that might influence their behavior. Depending on class size they could do this as a think-pair-share, in small groups, or as a whole classroom discussion.

Some suggestions to get them started include:

- a. Does it matter if/how well you know the person you are paired with?
- b. Does the size of the prize matter? Would you act differently for 1 point on a quiz than you would for 1 point on your class average? How big would the prize have to be for you to steal?
- c. How might the discussion portion of this task influence you? Would you act differently if you didn't talk before your split/steal choice? Does it matter if others can see your choice?
- d. How might your own personal moral code play a role here? How often do we follow our morals? Why don't we always follow our morals?
- 6) Wrap-up by having the class discuss how this relates to their everyday lives or to more serious world events. Why might we not always do the “kind” thing and cooperate? How might we encourage cooperation with others?
- 7) In class, or as a homework or extra credit opportunity, you can have students respond to an unusual example of *Golden Balls* with contestants Nick and Ibrahim. You can hear about it on an episode of *RadioLab* or you can watch it on YouTube (see below). Students should consider what Nick's novel strategy was, and why it might have been so effective.

Abumrad, J. & Krulwich, R. (Presenters). (2014, February 5). *The Golden Rule* [Audio podcast]. In S. Lechtenberg (Executive Producer), *Radiolab*. Retrieved from <https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/golden-rule>.

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0qjK3TWZE8>