

The Dictator's Game

The Dictator Game is a commonly used experimental economic game that explores decision-making and fairness. In this game, one player (the dictator) is given a sum of money/tokens/tokens/candy and has the right to decide how much, if any, to share with another player.

Here are the instructions for conducting the game with the dictator using paper and pencil:

Material needed:

Pencil and paper for each participant.

Envelopes for each pair of participants.

Play money or real money for the initial endowment (optional).

Introduction:

Explain to the participants that they are going to play a simple economic game known as the dictator game.

Emphasize that their decisions will be confidential.

Random pairing:

Randomly pair participants. Each pair will consist of a "dictator" and a "receiver".

Initial endowment:

Provide each dictator with a sum of money (real or play money). This amount represents the dictator's initial endowment.

Decision-making:

Instruct the dictators that they have the sole authority to decide how much (if any) money to give to the recipient.

Dictators can decide whether to keep the entire amount for themselves or to share some or all of it with the recipient.

Recording decisions:

Give each dictator a sheet of paper. Ask them to write down the amount (if any) they have decided to give to the recipient.

Remind them that their decisions are confidential and no one else will know about their choices.

Collecting decisions:

Collect the dictators' written decisions without revealing the amounts to the other participants.

Distributing the money:

If the dictators have decided to divide, distribute the designated amount to the recipients accordingly. If not, the dictators keep the entire original allocation.

Evaluation:

After the game, conduct a debriefing to discuss the decisions made and their motivations.

Invite participants to share their thoughts on fairness, altruism, or self-interest.

Optional: Data Analysis:

If you conduct multiple rounds or with a larger group, you can analyze the data to identify trends in giving behavior.

Ethical considerations:

Remind participants that their decisions are part of the experiment and there are no right or wrong answers.

Emphasize the importance of maintaining confidentiality and not discussing individual decisions outside of the experiment.

Be sure to adapt these guidelines based on the specific goals of your experiment and the characteristics of the participants.