

ART 380 Assignment 3

Chibolas

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In Nicaragua, Chibola means marble in Spanish. Chibolas is a game played in Nicaragua by children of ages between 7 and 10. Games typically involved 4 to 6 people, but can be played with as little as 2. This game is very popular with children in Nicaragua. Kids usually decide when they are going to play. Everyone comes with a bag of marbles to play with. The game is played outside in a place with dirt or sand. It is played by shooting marbles into holes. The game itself is similar to golf, but with marbles. Several games are usually played in one sitting.

An area with dirt or sand is chosen as the playing field. 3 small holes are dug into the dirt. These holes can be placed close to each other or far away. They can be in any kind of arrangement such as a straight line or a triangle. A line is drawn in front of the holes that the players start behind. The player who is taking their turn sits behind the line to make their first move. The other players sit around the playing field and watch. This game can be played as every man for himself or it can be played in teams.

Whoever wins the game wins all of the marbles that their opponents played with. Sometimes kids would play for money but this was rare. When they did play for money it was usually only for 1 Cordoba (currency in Nicaragua) which is not much, but it could buy you a lot of candy. Winning and getting everyone else's marbles is a great feeling. You could even make fun of all your friends because you took their marbles. Losing marbles however, is an awful feeling. Some kids would go home crying, and ask their parents to get them some more marbles. When you hit someone's marble into their hole they have to start over. This can cause a lot of fights and arguments.

The game only requires that each player have one marble and that the players

and find a suitable patch of dirt or sand to play on. Some words are used to describe different elements of the game.

Hole holes in the ground players are trying to shoot into.

Shoot This game involves shooting marbles. To shoot, you first place your knuckles onto the ground and flick the marble with your thumb.

Set Each time you get your marble into all 3 holes, you have completed a set. The first player to complete 3 sets wins.

First the 3 holes and the starting line are dug into the dirt. Each hole is numbered 1, 2, and 3. Once the playing field is set up, the order each players turns has to be determined. Each player shoots their marble, from the starting line, at the first hole. The player to get their marble either closest to, or into the hole goes first. If 2 players tie then they will repeat this process until a winner is found.

Each player takes turns, one after the other. During a players turn, they start from the starting line and try to shoot their marble into the first hole. You only get one shot per turn. If you do not make it into the hole, then it is the next players turn. Once you get your turn back, you must resume from wherever your marble was left on the previous turn and try to get it into the hole. Once you get the marble into the first hole, you take it out and place it next to the hole and shoot again, this time going for the second hole. Every time you make it into a hole you get another turn and must try to get the marble into the next hole.

To win, a player must make 3 sets of 3. That is, the player must get their marble into all 3 holes, 3 times. Once a player gets their marble into the third hole they restart at the starting line. It is theoretically possible for one player to make all 9 holes in their first time, but very unlikely. Usually the winner gets to keep all of the losers marbles. Sometimes the game can be played for money or some other material. In rare cases the game is played tournament style, where the person who was the most behind gets eliminated.

Players can hit other players marbles. Then, the other player will be forced to start their turn from that new position. If one of your opponents marbles is close to the hole they are going for, you can try to hit their marble into the hole. If their marble goes in they have to restart the set they are on.

Chibolas can also be played in teams. For a team to win just one player in the team has to win. At the end of the game the winning team gets all of

the marbles of the losers. The person who actually won gets first pick of which marbles they want to keep.

There are no ways to cheaply win. The only real way to cheat is to try to move your marble closer to the hole when nobody is looking and it is not your turn, but this is usually very hard to do. You could also try to move your opponents marbles further away when they aren't looking. Players often accuse each other of cheating, especially when they are losing.

Since multiple games are usually played at one time, players should all come with a bag of marbles. It is also good to have a bag to carry your winnings out of the game. When playing, you should always use the ugliest marble that you have, because there is a chance it will be lost. One risky tactic is to try to knock your opponents marble way out of the playing field. No matter how far away their marble lands, they have to play from that position. In order to do this however, you have to hit your marble pretty hard, and if you miss then you will potentially have to start from far away to catch up. If you are losing and the opponent is about to finish a set, it may be worthwhile to try to hit their marble into the hole to make them start over. Repeatedly using underhanded tactics like these could piss off your friends and cause problems outside of the game.

Another thing to consider is the terrain. If there are pebbles or other obstructions in the way, you may need to find a way to shoot around them. Marbles may roll better on some kinds of dirt than on others.

When playing teams, there is a little more strategy. Only one person on the team has to win. One person could play offense, where they try to score holes and win, while the other player plays defense. The defensive player will try to knock the opponents marble into the hole causing them to restart or knock them away from the partners marble so they cannot make your partner restart.

The game creates meaning from the competition. Whenever you play with against other people anything can happen, and all players have different level of skill. It is never too easy to or too hard to play, if you can shoot a marble. Meaning also comes from the consequences of winning and losing. Every player has something at stake in this game. Everybody wants to win more marbles but nobody wants to lose any of their own. The risks and rewards create more motivation to try to win, and as a result it makes the game more exciting.

In the long term, this game has left fond childhood memories for the people that have played it. In the short term, it leaves sore thumbs and purple finger nails. For the parents, it usually means that they have to go out and buy more

marbles, if they can afford them. Parents who have played this game pass it on to their children.

I got all of the information on this game from Cristina Happel. She was born in Nicaragua and played this game as a child.