

The History of the Book: The Game

Rules

Amy H. Chen

Description

The year is 1450. Johannes Gutenberg is printing a book, one of the first in the world. When he is finished, the printed book is born. Follow the history of the book through the next six centuries, through technological advancements, scientific breakthroughs, artistic triumphs, shifts in the socio-political climate, and the fluctuating financial market.

Each player represents a national library aiming to collect the most valuable printed books of Western civilization. Choose to be:

- England
- Germany
- France
- Spain
- Italy
- Americas

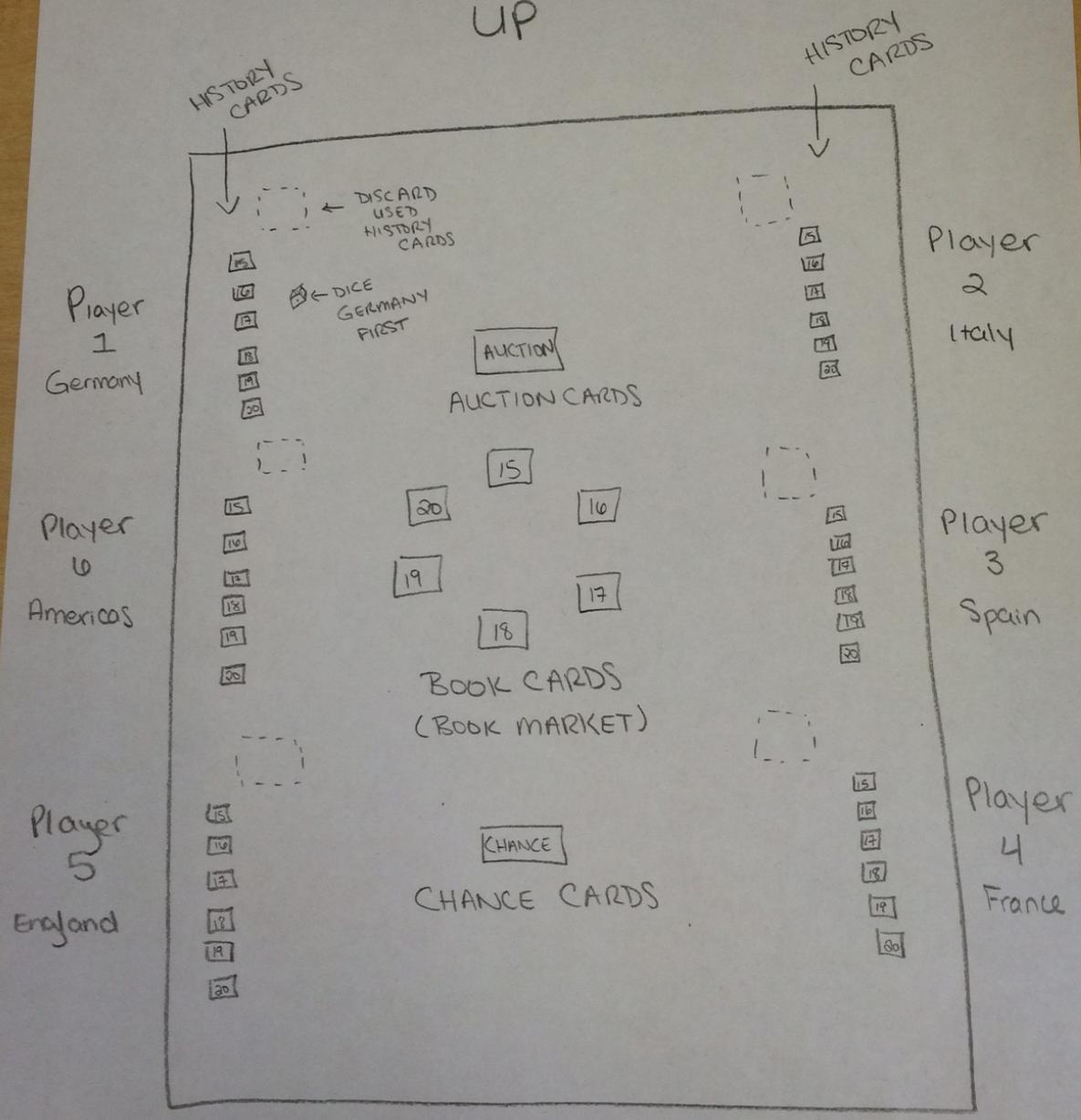
As each century passes, your country will gain and lose power. When you gain power, you will be issued more credits with which to build your collection. When you lose power, you will lose credits – and you might even have to sell your books to stay financially afloat. So be strategic when you decide to buy and sell.

Your objective is to create as many of the following collections as you can by the end of the twentieth century:

- National Canon: Collect six books from a country;
- Most Valuable Books: Collect four of the most valuable books in the game;
- Specialty: Collect six books within a single genre.

At the end of the game, complete collections are worth double their credit value. All other books that are not part of a completed collection are worth only the credit value on their card. The player who holds the most valuable collection as designated by the amount of credits their collections cost at the end of the twentieth century wins!

SET UP



* Each player has an Order of Operations and Objectives card to remind him or her how to play and how to win!

Example of Set Up

To Play

Set Up

The game can be played with a minimum of three and a maximum of six players. Players can also be groups, with a group representing one player.

To choose countries, all players roll the dice. The player with the highest number becomes Germany. If players score a tie, keep rolling until one player wins. The German player begins the game. In clockwise order from Germany's sitting position, players become: Italy, Spain, France, England, the Americas. If less than 6 players are playing, then go through as many countries in this order as possible. Italy becomes the banker, receiving the BANKER notepad to track debt. All countries receive ORDER OF OPERATIONS and OBJECTIVES cards (located in the CHANCE box) to remind them of how to play – and how to win!

All EVENTS should be sorted according to their country first and then their century. Each player places their country's EVENTS in front of them face down in six piles: the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th century. Players should shuffle each century's EVENTS for their own countries.

All BOOKS should be organized by their century (marked on the back of the card), but not split up by country. Shuffle each century's BOOK cards. Lay out the BOOK cards in a circle in the center of the playing space. Centuries should go clockwise from 15th to the 20th century.

Shuffle the CHANCE cards. They do not have a designated order. Place the shuffled CHANCE cards face down on the side of the playing space within easy reach.

CREDITS stay in their designated bag. Credits are distributed as each player takes a turn at the DICE. Pull the DICE out of the bag to start the game.

Rules

This game can be played with a minimum of three players or up to the recommended six. Players can choose either a quick play or long play option: quick play requires one round per century; long play mandates two rounds per century.

Countries take turns in the following order: Germany, Italy, Spain, France, England, and the Americas. All players roll the dice to see who has the highest number. Roll until one player wins; the winning player becomes Germany. Then, players take an identity in the order in which they sit clockwise from Germany: Italy, Spain, France, England, Americas. Germany always takes the first turn, because Johannes Gutenberg was from Germany. Italy always is the banker, because the Medici dominated Europe's banking system.

The game begins in the 15th century. The order in which game play unfolds is designated by the order of numbers below. Non-numbered items are events that occur occasionally.

Grow Your Economy

1. A country rolls the dice. The number on the dice corresponds to the amount of credits the country gets in order to start its collection, so that country can receive anywhere from 2 to 5 credits. On the first turn, a roll of 1 or 6 requires a re-roll to achieve a number between 2 and 5.

After the first turn, a roll of 1 or 6 requires selecting a CHANCE card. See the subheading *Gamble with Chance*.

Cope with World Events

2. Once a country learns the amount of credits they will receive following rolling the dice, they must select an EVENT from their country's century. EVENTS correlate to the relative power of that country during this particular century. Once EVENTS have been used, they should be placed face down in a discard stack.

Each EVENT has positive, negative, or both positive and negative signs. Positive signs indicate that country can gain that number of CREDITS from the market. Negative signs mean that country must either give that amount of CREDITS or that credit amount of BOOKS to the country listed as positive. The victorious (positive) country can specify whether to accept CREDIT or BOOKS from the losing (negative) country. If the winning country wishes to accept books from the losing country, they also get to choose which BOOK or BOOKS they would like to acquire. If the specified BOOK or BOOKS exceed the amount of debt owed to the victor, the victor must compensate the loser with change: either the equivalent amount of CREDITS or BOOKS. The victor gets to determine how to compensate the loser with change. (See: *Become a Creditor or Debtor*)

Italy, the banker, should take notes as need be to track debt.

Bid at Auction

One event per century triggers the release of an auction: a set of four AUCTION BOOKS on the same topic, all worth 1 CREDIT. As these books must be purchased as a unit, the auction has a reserve price of 4 CREDITS.

Players can bid competitively for the AUCTION BOOKS; a purchasing player must meet the minimum reserve price of 4 credits to buy. If no one bids for the AUCTION BOOKS, they go off the market permanently. If multiple players wish to buy the AUCTION BOOKS, they must bid against each other for the set, inflating the amount of CREDITS the books cost.

Players can subdivide the AUCTION BOOKS after purchase in side deals with other interested countries, but only one country can purchase the set at a time.

Collect Books

3. At the start of each century, the stack of BOOKS associated with that century are turned over. As the game moves through time, remaining stacks of BOOKS from earlier centuries remain turned face-up to indicate they are still available on the market. Future centuries should have their BOOK stacks remain face-down.

After the dice lands on a number between 1 and 5 and the corresponding number of credits are withdrawn from the bag, a country can choose either to purchase a BOOK with their available credits or save their credits for future use. Countries can buy as many BOOKS as they want, as long as they have enough CREDITS to make the purchase. If the country chooses to purchase BOOK or BOOKS, they must select from among the BOOKS available in the current century. As the game moves through times, players can choose from either the current century's BOOKS or from any BOOKS left in the market from previous centuries.

Gamble with Chance

4. After the first round, if a country rolls a 1 or a 6, that country must choose a CHANCE card. Chance cards may be either positive or negative; they represent a historical events that can occur to libraries at any place, at any time. Follow the CHANCE card's instructions completely before moving to the next country's turn.

Become a Creditor or a Debtor

If the losing country cannot compensate the winning country according to their preference, the loser goes into debt. The losing country must balance their debt through one of the following means:

- Compensating the winning country in a subsequent turn with BOOKS of equal or greater value or CREDITS. (Debt must be paid off as soon as possible). The winning country has the right to specify whether a debt will be paid in BOOKS or CREDITS.
- Trading with a third party country for the benefit of the winning country. These trades can be in the winning country's preferred currency, so victors may receive either CREDITS or BOOKS. Note that trades also permit clearing debt with one country and gaining it with another.

The banker (whoever is Italy) should track debt through taking notes on the debt amount, who is owed the debt, and from whom the debt should come.

Trade with Other Countries

Trading can occur between the country currently taking a turn and any other country. Trades are most likely to occur when a country goes into debt. However, trades can originate for any reason.

Trades may involve exchanging either CREDITS or BOOKS or both. When BOOKS are exchanged between countries, the owning country now determines the CREDIT value of that BOOK; the BOOK may be worth the same, less, or more than its original market value. But, if BOOKS are to be sold back to the market, they retain their original value.

Compete to Create Collections

5. When a collection is complete, it is “locked” in: future game play does not affect books in a completed collection. Therefore, players should attempt to create as many collections as possible to increase their final credit total as finished collections are worth double and finished collections cannot be affected by events or chance.

Build a World-Class Library

6. The game continues until the end of the twentieth century. Whoever has the most valuable set of collections of BOOKS, measured by the total number of CREDITS required to purchase the collections, wins.

Complete collections of BOOKS are worth double their CREDIT value at the end of the game, whereas BOOKS not forming a complete collection are worth only their original CREDIT value.

Countries with CREDITS remaining at the end of the game must complete their collections by buying BOOKS left on the market before collections are compared. Countries with credits remaining get to go in the order of their respective BOOK collections’ value. In other words, the richest country goes first, then the next richest country, on down. If two countries have collections of BOOKS of equal value, roll the dice to determine who goes first, with the highest dice result wins.

Cards

DICE

The dice is used to distribute CREDITS or determine the use of a CHANCE card. The dice used is a standard, 6-sided die. If the dice lands on a number between 1 and 5, countries get the according number of CREDITS. If the dice lands on a 6, the country must choose a card from the CHANCE pile.

CREDITS

CREDITS function as a replacement for money. The number of CREDITS each country holds is dependent on their roll of the dice as well as the dictates of the EVENT cards. Every country begins with zero CREDITS and must build their economy over time as they take turns rolling the dice and choosing EVENT cards.

CHANCE

CHANCE cards are reshuffled after each draw and remain continually at play throughout the game.

Countries can force one another to gamble at CHANCE by spending either five CREDITS, or an equivalent value in BOOKS, which go back on the market.

EVENTS

Each country gets its own EVENTS deck, which should be split and placed face down by century in front of the country's representative player. The EVENTS cards are not in date order, only in country and century order. Each card awards CREDITS to a country or countries.

If the card represents war or colonization, the victorious country receives CREDITS while the losing country loses CREDITS. The losing country must give their lost credits (or an equivalent CREDIT amount of BOOKS) to the winning country.

Each country receives the same number of EVENTS cards per century. However, EVENTS are not equally weighted between countries in terms of their likelihood to produce positive/negative outcomes. After all, some centuries favor certain countries above others.

If a country does not have enough CREDITS in their holdings to tolerate losses, then that country goes into debt and has to sell CREDITS or BOOKS and/or trade CREDITS or BOOKS in order to compensate the victor of an EVENT.

BOOKS

Each century gets its own stack of BOOKS that include two BOOKS per century per country. Each BOOK is marked with its value, the number of CREDITS required to purchase and/or trade it.

Additionally, each century has one possible auction deck of four BOOKS whose value are all *. The auction decks may or may not be triggered into play depending on what EVENTS are chosen.