Family Life

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Summary sheet for the Family Life board game

This is a family game with an innovative and beautiful game board and an ever-changing game flow with strategic decisions to be made throughout the game. Suitable for young and old. In the game each family member (= players) receives a To Do list with tasks to perform in the village during the day. Each task gives 1 or more stars. Lots can happen that changes your plans during the day. After each game round a clock is moved 15 min ahead and at 17.00 the game ends. The winner is the one who has reached home in time and has the most stars.

Features that stand out

- Innovative new double layered gameboard with appealing artwork.
- Each game session is different and the same game elements allow for variations how to play the game (basic game rules / alternative more advanced game rules).
- Suitable for young and old due to the versatility of the game. There are strategic options that older players will find interesting. Age range 8 to 99, younger players can participate together with an adult.

New gameboard functionality

The game board is something new on the market. It consists of 2 game boards on top of each other connected in the middle by a screw, a so called "bookbinders screw. Easy to apply. The upper one, with a picture of a village, has 18 punched openings, and the lower one has information coming up in the openings when is it turned in one of the 12 positions. When the lower board is moved in a new position it totally changes the flow of the game. Really exciting! Short video can be found here: Family Life board game - YouTube

The artwork

An important feature of this game is absolutely the artwork of the gameboard itself. For my prototype I have commissioned an artist (from Ukraine actually) to draw a picture of a beautiful small village. You can see lots of nice and funny details: cows in the field, Horrible Henry's house, a school with children, a harbour with boats and a beach with people sunbathing etc. During the game, when moving around in the village, the mind of young and old players gets food for fantasy.
The gameboard can easily be adapted to different environments for different markets; a different city (e.g., Amsterdam, Venice, New York), a zoo or a fantasy landscape.

The game

A game session takes about 45 – 60 minutes, a bit longer with 4-5 players. The game is good for 2-5 players. The game starts by setting the enclosed clock at 9.00 in the morning, and after each round the clock is moved 15 minutes ahead, and at 17.00 the game ends. This game really ends and does not go on forever!

The players are part of a family, and each family member gets tasks to perform during the day. At the start you get 3 tasks to perform, and these gives you 1 star each when completed. You may end up having AHAA task to perform giving you 2 stars each or Extra Tasks giving you 3 stars each. If you do not have time to perform a task that has been given you, you will get the same numbers of "-" stars as punishment for not doing your duty, so you have to prioritize. The winner is the one who has come home no later than 17.00 and has the most stars.

As unexpected events may occur during the day this will make each game round/session different from the ones before. Many places on the board are affected by the information coming up in the 18 openings. There are street crossings with red or green light, there are places you are to visit which can be closed for business or the inhabitant of the house is unavailable and so on. The situation can change rapidly with the 12 different positions the game board can be placed in.

Solo play, group play or play as a family are options that can easily be developed.

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Strategy, consideration of others, and ability to understand the concept of time

There are decisions you have to make during the game to maximize the numbers of stars you collect to win. This requires a bit of strategical thinking and consideration of the other players situation, when trying to maximize your stars, especially as you get the same number of penalty = "-" stars if you have not performed the tasks, you have been given or you have taken to perform during the day before the game ends.

Here are some elements you have to consider during the game:

- Wait or not wait? Sometimes the game board is in such a position that the place you were going to visit is unavailable. Now you need to decide if you wait for a new game board position to come up or if you move ahead and try to perform another task instead.
- Seek up AHAA cards or Extra Tasks or not? You can actively seek new ways to earn stars by seeking an AHAA card or performing an Extra Task. With the AHAA cards there is the option of you taking the task to perform or giving your co-family members an opportunity to perform the task. You have to consider if it Is it easier for you or for your co-family member to earn the stars and/or if you have time to perform the task yourself?
- After each game round the clock is moved 15 minutes ahead, and at 17.00 the game ends. This gives the game a nice element of stress. You have to calculate your odds to have time to collect more stars or bet safe on reaching home before the game ends.

Test players comment

This game has been test played multiple times by different people and found to be interesting starting from schoolchildren up to high level corporate executives. Shows that the game can be played in many ways and has multiple strategical levels.

Many times the obvious winner was actually not the one who actually won the game. The end of the game can be surprisingly exiting when the clock is ticking, and the time is running out.

The beautiful artwork of the gameboard itself gets lots of positive comments.

Game components

1 game board with 18 openings
1 lower game board with texts or colors visible through the openings
5 family members
1 ordinary dice with numbers 1-6 with which you move on the board
1 game board dice with 12 options to determine the positioning of the lower board
1 manual clock
35 TO Do lists
40 AHAA card
60 stars in 5 different colors (12 each)

Video of the game board

A short video of the game board can be found here: Family Life board game - YouTube

Do not be fooled to think this is merely a roll and move-game. This is so much more than that.
Enjoy!

Best regards
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