**Game**: *How to Catch River Crabs*

**Lesson**: PROCESS ANALYSIS ESSAY

**Principal Mechanic**: Cut-ups

**Created By**: Prof. Julie Sinn Cassidy

This filecontainsthe teaching game *How to Catch River Crabs*. It was designed by Prof. Julie Cassidy and formally categorized with directions and materials by Prof. Joe Bisz. Each page below contains a different part:

**\*Directions for Implementing the Game**

 Print out one copy of this page for yourself.

**\*Directions for Envelopes**

Print out two copies of this page, cut out each paragraph of directions, and tape each paragraph to the front of a standard-sized envelope. For a class of 30-35 students, you will only need six paragraphs on six envelopes. These envelopes will contain one copy of the game and are handed to each group of students.

**\*Full Essay**

 Print out one copy of this page and keep it for yourself. Do not show it to the students; you will only use it to check a student’s answers.

**\*Sentences for Cut-ups**

 Print out six copies of this page (for a class of 30-35 students). Then carefully cut out each sentence (including the title!) of the essay in piles, placing all of the sentences of the same kind in the same pile, so that you end up with 17 piles of paper. Leave some distance between each pile. Don’t worry about cutting the sentences too neatly. However, leave the margin white space untrimmed, so that the horizontal length of the sentences will be equal. When you’re finished cutting, gently shuffle each pile of sentences. Then draw one sentence from each pile, counting the number you’ve drawn so that you end up with 17, then place all 17 sentences you just drew into one envelope. Repeat for each envelope. This means each envelope will have a full set of 17 different sentences, which is the entire essay in cut-ups. (The reason for the shuffling of the piles is so that a smart student won’t “cheat” by lining up the sentences based upon how the cut pieces of paper fit back together.)

(**\*Directions for Implementing the Game)**

Lesson Goal

 Students will learn to identify and practice using transitions, to logically organize a paragraph, and to write process analysis essays.

According to Joe Bisz, “cut-ups” games can teach the following learning outcomes:

• IDENTIFY Transitions/Grammar/<any linear concept>

• BUILD Close Reading

When in the Semester to Play this Game

 Your students should probably have just begun **writing full body paragraphs** within a few class sessions before this lesson. On the day you play this game, it’s also good to review **transition words** quickly, so that the game serves as a drill for transition usage.

Classroom Setup

Put students in groups of no more than 4 if possible. Distribute one envelope (with the sentences and directions) to each group of students. It should take a college developmental writing group of students about 10 minutes. Keep in mind that some groups may come up with a slightly different order than the “answer”; it is up to you to judge whether their order is logical or not, but keep in mind that most of the sentences have to be ordered in a particular manner!

Follow-Up (Traditional Exercise)

 Now have them write, alone, a short process essay—perhaps just an intro and the first body paragraph. Tell them to use at least two **transition words**.

**(\*Directions for Envelopes)**

**Directions:** *(This exercise was designed by Prof. Julie Sinn Cassidy)*

In your hands is a series of sentences that forms a process analysis essay about how to catch live crabs in a river. Your task is to determine the order of the essay based on the structure of the sentences and the general structure of a process analysis essay.

Pay attention to those transitional words!

While I will not tell you how many sentences are in each paragraph, I will let you know that there are four paragraphs total.

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### How to Catch River Crabs (\*Full Essay)

by Mary Zeigler

 As a lifelong crabber (that is, one who catches crabs, not a chronic complainer), I can tell you that anyone who has patience and a great love for the river is qualified to join the ranks of crabbers. However, if you want your first crabbing experience to be a successful one, you must come prepared.

 First, you need a boat, but not just any boat. I recommend a 15-foot-long fiberglass boat complete with a 25-horsepower motor, extra gas in a steel can, two 13-foot-long wooden oars, two steel anchors, and enough cushions for the entire party. You will also need scoops, crab lines, a sturdy crate, and bait. Each crab line, made from heavy-duty string, is attached to a weight, and around each weight is tied the bait--a slimy, smelly, and utterly grotesque chicken neck.

 Now, once the tide is low, you are ready to begin crabbing. Drop your lines overboard, but not before you have tied them securely to the boat rail. Because crabs are sensitive to sudden movements, the lines must be slowly lifted until the chicken necks are visible just below the surface of the water. If you spy a crab nibbling the bait, snatch him up with a quick sweep of your scoop. The crab will be furious, snapping its claws and bubbling at the mouth. Drop the crab into the wooden crate before it has a chance to get revenge. You should leave the crabs brooding in the crate as you make your way home.

 Back in your kitchen, you will boil the crabs in a large pot until they turn a healthy shade of orange. Just remember to keep the crab pot covered. Finally, spread newspapers over the kitchen table, deposit the boiled crabs on the newspaper, and enjoy the most delicious meal of your life.

**“How to Catch River Crabs” by Mary Zeigler (\*Sentences for Cut-ups)**

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