

Lahal

Lahal is a guessing game or game of chance that involves two teams seated across from one another. Lahal is also called *the Bone Game* because the game pieces that are hidden in the player's hands were traditionally made from small animal bones that were carved or marked in some way.

Materials required:

*A Traditional hand drum

*5 to 7 sticks per team. The sticks are painted 2 different colors (one color for each team) One extra stick (the King Pin) is painted both colors – one color at each end.

*4 short sticks –'bones'. There are 2 unpainted sticks and 2 painted sticks (one of each team's colors)

To play the game:

Lahal is played with two teams of six or more players. The object of the game is to get all the long sticks from the opposing team. There are an equal number of sticks on each side to start off the game, except for the *King Pin* which one of the teams will win at the beginning the game.

Four short sticks or 'bones' are used in the game. They are usually small enough to be hidden in the hand and not be noticeably different except in colour. The 'bones' are either plain or marked with a stripe.

Team A and Team B arrange themselves in two lines facing each other with their set of sticks laid out in front of them. Each team has one set of short sticks or 'bones' – one is marked and one is plain.

To start the game, 2 players from each team are chosen. One player will hold set of the short sticks or 'bones' and a player on the other team will guess which hand the marked stick or 'bone' is in. The first team to correctly guess where the marked 'bone' is wins the right to start the game. *They also win the King Pin, which can be used at the end of the game. If the team that won the King Pin is losing, then it is like having an extra stick.*

The team who has won the right to start the game (Team A) starts with their pair of 'bones'. Their team has the drum to play and sings a lahal song while the team member who is the chosen player puts his/her hands behind their back and mixes up the bones. The drumming and singing are meant to distract the other team who is guessing which hand the marked stick or 'bone' is hidden in.

When ready, the Team A player brings their hands to the front. The drumming and singing immediately stops. The Team A player holds his/her hands out to the guesser on Team B who then guesses where the marked 'bone' is by pointing to one hand or the other.

If Team B can correctly guess where the marked 'bone' is, Team B wins a stick from Team A and a turn to hide their set of short sticks or 'bones'.

If Team B guesses incorrectly they must give one of their sticks to Team A. Team A will begin drumming and singing and continue the game by hiding the 'bones' once again. Team B will have another chance to guess which hand the marked 'bone' is in.

The game ends when one team has won all the sticks from the other team.

- When this game is played by students, teachers can arrange it so that different students have a chance to play the drum or be the guesser or the one who hides the 'bones'. Teachers can also reserve sets of drums from the Learning Resources Center and distribute them equally among the 2 teams so more students have the opportunity to play the drums and sing while the 'hider' and the 'guesser' are playing that part of the game.

Instructions adapted from

www.firstnationstreatment.org/lahal.htm (this link does not work anymore)

http://secwepemc.sd73.bc.ca/sec_village/sec_lahal.html