

BEFORE THE STORM: A GAME OF FORECASTS AND ACTION

RULES:

Before the Storm is a decision-making game designed to introduce the weather forecasts and possible actions to take against natural disasters through different roles.

MATERIALS:

Game cards. Materials can be printed from the templates provided. It is preferable to print on heavy card stock. Cut each card out with a paper cutter or scissors.

NOTE: There should be some blank cards. This is part of the game!

TIME:

The entire experience takes about 45 to 90 minutes, depending on how much time is dedicated to discussion.

Players: This game can be played in a group of 4-7. It is possible to run multiple tables of the game (up to 60 or more players) in “tournament style” as described at the end of this document.

GAMEPLAY:

1. Place the time cards (12h, 48h, 10 days) in chronological order on the table from left to right. These represent the lead-time of a forecast: how much time is expected to elapse between the issue of the forecast and the actual occurrence of the forecasted event.
2. Shuffle the forecast cards and place one in front of each time card.
3. Shuffle the action cards and distribute four cards to each player. Some cards might be blank, this is ok!
4. Select one of the players as the Decider for the first round.

Decider - Each person in the group takes turns acting as the Decider. The eldest person acts as the Decider first. Each round the Decider chooses which action card (pre-written or player-generated) they think is most appropriate in each time slot. This role rotates clockwise at the end of each turn.

Advisor - The players not acting as the Decider. Each round the advisors must select which action cards are most appropriate for each time slot from their hand, or use blank cards to write their own actions.

5. Advisors must recommend a plan for disaster preparedness in response to the forecasts. For each of the time cards, advisors select a pre-written action card from their hand or write their own action card (if they have a blank card) to respond to the forecast in each time slot, and place them in front of the respective time cards, face down.

IMPORTANT: when a player writes their own card, they must only write down one action (not multiple actions).

6. Each round, the Decider looks at all the recommended action cards, and chooses one (pre-written or player-generated) s/he thinks is most appropriate in each time slot, given the probability and severity of the forecast. The Actors whose cards are chosen receive 1 point for each pre-written action card and 2 points for each player-generated action card.

7. Challenge! Actors may challenge the Decider's choice. The challenging Actor then advocates for his/her action, and the Decider defends his/her decision. All other players except for the player with the winning card may vote to either uphold the Decider's decision, or overturn the decider's decision and award 1 point to the challenger. If the challenger loses the vote, they lose 1 point.

NOTE: there can only be one challenge per round (due to time constraints inherent in planning disaster preparedness measures.)

8. At the end of each round, shift the forecast cards to the left, drawing a new forecast card for the 10-day time slot. Deal out one more card to each player. The role of the Decider passes clockwise.

SCORING

The game is over once each player has played the role of the Decider once (or, you may choose twice for a longer game). The player with the most points wins!

VARIANTS

TOURNAMENT OPTION (for large group/workshop setting)

For the first round, play proceeds as normal. Once all teams have finished the first round of play, each team will select a person to represent them in the second round. The cards that were chosen by the teams in the first round will serve as their draw pile for the second round of play.