

Minibridge 4 to 9

Minibridge in Class

Promotion & Information Pack Year 2010/2011



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Contents

Welcome	3
Key Stage Elements for the Curriculum	4 - 6
Summary Curriculum plus Transferable Life Skills	7
Educational Comparison: Minibridge versus Chess	8
Report on staff training, Manchester, June 2008	9 - 10
Testimonial of a Primary School teacher	11 - 12

Introducing Minibridge 4 to 9 for Primary Schools

Dear Head / Maths Department / English Department

The English Bridge Union (EBU) has launched an **independently funded scheme** to bring Minibridge into the school classroom. Minibridge is a simplified version of Bridge and has been found to be of particular educational value to children.

Minibridge 4 to 9 is aimed at children in **years 4 to 9** and sometimes below (i.e. those aged from 8 to 13 years, and possibly age 7). The beauty of the game is that it can be taught by teachers who are non-bridge experts (and in many instances are new to the game themselves) following some in-service training and by using the easy-to-use instructional CD provided. It includes all the aspects of point count, play and defence.

The various skills attained by children learning and playing Minibridge 4 to 9 have been fully mapped to the National Strategy targets in English and Mathematics in the National Curriculum up to and including Level 4. Please see: www.ebu.co.uk/minibridge to view this document.

Training sessions are about 3 hours. (Two sessions of about 80 minutes are required with a short break in between). The ideal minimum participation is 40 pupils and two qualified staff members. Sessions are great fun and intensely practical. Most of the time is spent learning to play Minibridge while “discovering” its educational potential. Children usually want to play on for far longer than three hours such is its all-round appeal!

We have already had success in the North West, Yorkshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, North London, and more.

An all-party Parliamentary Bridge Group has just been formed, chaired by Baroness Henig of Lancaster, to oversee the progress of Bridge and Minibridge and to help place them on the political and educational map.

If you are interested in this initiative, please contact Matt Betts at the English Bridge Union on 01296 317 200 or minibridge@ebu.co.uk.



Matt Betts
Press & Communications Officer,
English Bridge Union

Summary Educational Implications

- Patterns and sequences
- Probability and certainty

Maths

- Working with unknown numbers (basic algebra)
- Adding/subtracting, single & two figure numbers

- Working memory
- Handle key data
- Problem solving

Thinking Skills

- Focus and concentration
- Apply strategic reasoning
- Deductive and inferential logic

English Language and Communication

- Justify actions
- Ask relevant questions
- Challenge others appropriately
- Contribute effectively to group discussion
- Listen and respond appropriately to others
- Explain a problem or a solution to a problem

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

- Negotiate
- Take turns
- Handle pressure
- Comply with rules
- Cope with competition
- Cooperate with a partner
- Respect others' boundaries
- Show patience and tolerance
- Cope with winning and losing
- Trust partner's decisions and actions
- Sit still and allow others time and space
- Resolve conflict with partner or opponents

Compare Minibridge and Chess

Minibridge and Chess Checklist		
Chess		Minibridge
√	Brain Exercise	√
√	Fun Activity	√
X	Counting Practice	√
√	Focus and Concentration	√
√	Logical Analysis	√
√	Strategic Planning	√
X	Teamwork	√
X	Language and Communication	√
X	Inter-Personal Skills	√
√	Data Handling/Retention	√
√	Setting and Achieving Goals/Targets	√
√	Level Playing Field	√
X	Improve Behaviour in Group	√

Testimonial of a Primary School Teacher

My name is Melanie Rankin and I am a senior teacher at Fairway Primary School in Offerton, part of Stockport Local Authority. I have been teaching for ten years and in that time have taught from Reception up to year 6 children. My school has a mixed catchment area and is a single intake school. We currently have 190 children on role.

Around spring 2006 I heard about the benefits of Minibridge as a way of developing mental maths and social skills. As a student of Bridge myself, I could see immediate opportunities – taking turns, making decisions, working as a team, counting, developing strategies.

I asked David Adelman, my then Bridge Teacher, to bring Minibridge to my school. As a school we decided that we would play for 1 hour a week. Some classes timetabled it as a class maths session others putting it in specially. The children liked the variety in their class activities and not having to write and only the children who didn't really get it during the teaching sessions needed encouragement to play. This was generally down to the listening skills first time round! I found that the younger children (I was in year 3 at the time) soon became quicker at mental addition and they embraced the taking turns' side of the game. The older children soon started to develop strategies and revising their game play and you could quickly see who was thinking the cards through and considering probability.

Over the summer of 2007 we discussed the impact of Minibridge informally amongst staff. Some staff felt that the children speaking and listening skills had improved as the children were often asked to explain certain decisions, other staff commented on how children were developing their ability to be logical about their play and to try out different ways if they didn't initially succeed. A new member of staff commented on how different some of her children were when playing Minibridge to how they were in other class situations - they were often easily distracted in other classes but appeared to be concentrating and focused when playing Minibridge.

I asked the children what they thought and I wanted to share their comments with you

Year 3 thought:

I like Minibridge because I can work with a friend.

I thought it was really hard at first but then I saw patterns.

I like it when I am playing because if I have high cards and put them down at the right time I win.

Year 4 thought:

I like it because everyone is quiet in the room and I can concentrate.

I like being in control and choosing the cards I can put down.

I have got better at counting 1s, 2s, 3s and 4s quickly.

I like it when I know that I will win a trick if somebody plays the suit I have got.

Year 5 thought:

I like Minibridge because I can work with a partner.

I thought it was really hard at first but then I saw patterns.

I like it when I am playing because if I have high cards and put them down at the right time I win.

Year 6 thought:

Minibridge is good we play it every Friday and I like to play with Josh, Edward and Sam because they have good strategies. They try to force you to play your good cards.

I have taught my family and we play at home too.

I like it because if you make a plan to win the tricks and you win them you feel good inside and your partner is proud of you.

To keep Minibridge going in school I have had to make sure that it is timetabled into the curriculum, work with the maths co-ordinator to put Minibridge into the school's mathematics policy and have run parent sessions to support their child but it has been worth it.

Melanie Rankin, Fairway Primary School, Stockport (June 2008)

Further Information

For further information on this project or to put your primary school forward, either visit, www.ebu.co.uk/minibridge, email minibridge@ebu.co.uk, or call Matt Betts on 01296 317 200.