

TAPATAN

A sliding NIM game from the Philippines. I learned this game from Dr. Constance Kamii at the NCTM annual conference. The game also appears in Dr. Kamii's book, *Young Children Reinvent Arithmetic* (1985). It has been part of my reasoning task repertoire ever since I played it in that session. It's a winner! ☺

Tapatan is pronounced TAP-uh-tan.

It is a three-in-a-row game, where one player tries to get three of his or her counters in a row on the board. There are many different versions of three-in-a-row games from around the world.

You will need:

- A copy of the game board (attached)
- Two players
- 6 counters – three of one color for each player

How to play

1. Each person takes three counters.
2. The game is played on the nine points where the lines cross (on the circles). Players take turns placing their counters on the board on empty points, alternating until all the counters are on the board.
3. The goal of the game is to place your counters in a row of three, either three across, three down or three on the diagonal.
4. After all the pieces have been placed on the board, take turns sliding a piece to an empty circle.
5. You may block the other player from making a row.
6. A counter cannot jump over another counter.

Assessment/Accountability: Write about it in your math journal. Explain the rules of the game to someone who has never played it. Tell about your strategy for winning the game.

