

## Circus Fun Game

*Adapted from The Maharajas' Tasks – Creative Publications*

Students play a movement game to explore “sharing” and “measurement” division, as well as the concept of remainders. Students develop understanding of the relationship of multiplication and division.

Tell students they are going to play a circus game. Explain that they will make believe that they are animals in the circus. Invite students to recall animals that they might see in a circus and describe movements they might use to act like the animals.

Identify the boundaries within the classroom or outside. Also, designate a place for a holding pen. The holding pen will be for students who are leftover.

Provide one or two practice rounds. (Make up some reason why students should not try to be in the holding pen.) Give students time to practice moving quietly like a jungle animal.

Tell students you will call a number and they are to form groups with the designated number of animals in each group. For example, if I say “Groups of 4”, then there can only be 4 animals in each group. If all groups have 4 students and 1, 2, or 3 students are left over, those students go to the designated holding pen.

Sometimes I will give you a number for the animals in each group. Sometimes, I will give you a number for the number of groups. You will need to listen carefully. Practice before recording.

Teacher records so everyone in the class can assist with completing the chart.

**Variation:** Students can play the game by using cubes to represent the animals. Students record on recording sheets.



## Circus Fun Questions

- 1. When I called out 4 for the size of the groups in the Circus Fun game, there were never 5 animals in the holding pen. Why?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. How is getting into three groups different from getting into groups of three?  
Explain your thinking.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. Suppose another class played Circus Fun and the teacher called for the animals to get into equal-sized groups. After the animals formed groups, there were 3 in the holding pen.**

**How many animals do you think there were in all?**

- 4. A group of monkeys has found 20 bananas.  
Each monkey gets 4 bananas.  
How many monkeys are in the group?**