

# The Wall

## 11. Polar Bears and Ice Holes

**Spatial Requirements:** Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

**Activity Type:** Object lesson

**Grades:** 2-12

**Group size:** 2 or more

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Introduction:** The object of this activity is to see that a person's limited view of the game (life) can have an impact on the motivation, opportunity, freedom, and self-respect of that person.

**Materials:**

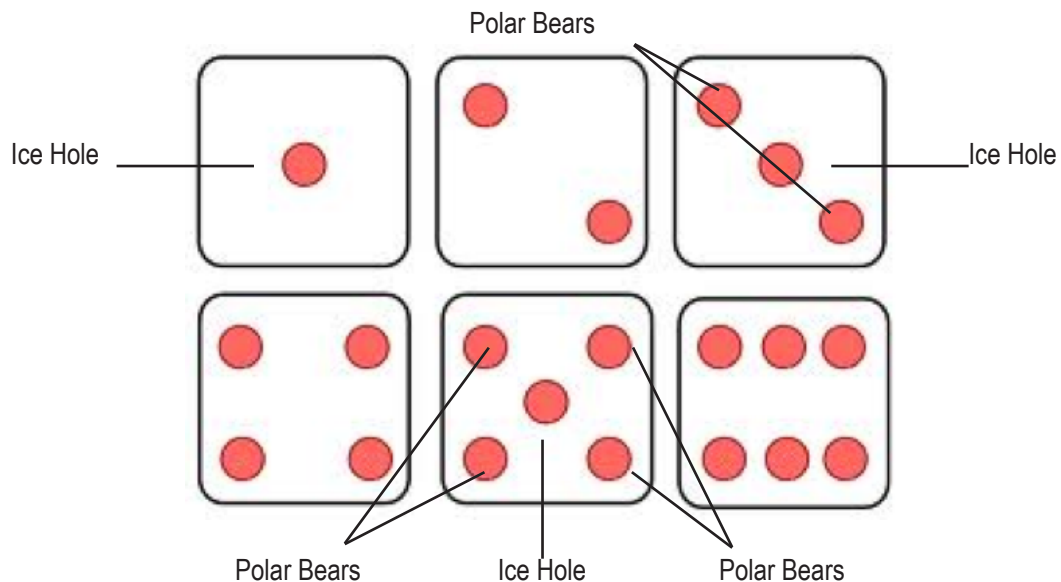
- 6 dice
- 1 table or desk to stand around
- 1 chair

**Activity:**

Invite all the students to circle around the table or desk as you explain the activity. Tell the students that this activity is challenging, and that some of them may not "get it." Ask, "Why do polar bears hang around holes in the ice?" (Answer: to look for their next meal)

Say, "I will roll all six dice and tell you how many polar bears are hanging around the ice holes." After the first shake, say, "There are \_\_\_ (number) polar bears and \_\_\_ (number) ice holes."

The secret: The dice that determine the polar bears and ice holes are 1, 3, and 5. The 2, 4, and 6 do not count. See sample below:



The ice hole is in the center of the dice (center hole on the 1, 3, and 5) and polar bears are around the ice hole looking for a quick meal. (The 1 die does not have any polar bears, just the ice hole.)

If your first shake was shown as the one above, there would be three ice holes and six polar bears. (Remember, you do nothing with the 2, 4, and 6 dice.)

You may need to give hints as you go along. If you shake all even numbers, say there are no polar bears and no ice holes. If you shake all evens and a 1 on a die say, "You have 1 ice hole and no polar bears."

As soon as one person thinks they have figured it out, shake the dice and give them a chance to give the answer. (Tell them not to tell anyone else the trick.)

Keep playing the game until most of the people figure it out, or the frustration level of the group gets high.

**Processing the Experience:**

- What was frustrating about this activity? Why?
- How did your limited view of the game affect you?
- Did any of you want to give up on the game? Why?
- How did you feel when you finally saw the big picture and figured it out?
- What does it mean to "see the big picture?" (See over the wall, more options, become a better person, more confidence, and take charge of your life)
- How does having a long-term vision help you deal with difficult challenges in life?
- What can you do in your life to see the big picture?