

## THE RIVER

Picture a valley. The year is 8 000 B.C. A river that tumbles from a distant range of mountains feeds life in this valley. Along the banks of this river, five villages have developed. Each village has its own customs, leaders, and religious beliefs. The villagers have little contact with each other, often mistrust their neighbours and seldom speak. In a normal year, the river provides an ample supply of water to irrigate the fields of grain that surround each village.

In an ideal year, each village is able to easily feed every member and to gradually increase its population. This, however, is not a normal year. A drought has descended on the valley and the river has been slowed to a trickle (a drought is a very long spell of dry weather). The villagers understand the danger that this drought poses to their survival. If any village tries to take from the river the amount of water that it would ideally need to water its fields, the impact on the other villages will be immediate



and severe. The villages range in size from 110 citizens up to 300 citizens. Each village is led by a single male leader who was chosen for his position because of his age and the wisdom gained during his life in the village. The leader is responsible for maintaining peace and harmony in his village, and has two diplomats to assist him. The diplomats are young men who travel to the other villages to negotiate and trade information. The remaining village members work to provide for themselves, their village, their leader, and their diplomats.

In the valley, a severe drought means that there will be many deaths. This stark reality has compelled the leaders of the five villages to call an emergency meeting. At this meeting, a leader from each village will eventually declare what his/her village plans to do in order to respond to the drought. There are many strategies that might be followed. Not all of these strategies are peaceful. Some people in the valley think that one or more villages may combine and declare war on their neighbours. Rumours about secret deals are already circulating. Others think that the villagers will be able to work out a peaceful strategy to resolve the problems created by the drought.

Fill in the following chart below

<b>Category</b>	<b>8,000 B.C.</b>	<b>Today</b>
The methods used to choose leaders		
Characteristics of the leader		
Size of government		
Government responsibilities		
The way the government deals with problems		
Your own point of comparison		

