

Are You a Cylon?

A Mafia/Werewolf/Etc Variant of Murder, Betrayal, Intrigue, and especially Paranoia

Are You a Cylon is a game based on the Mafia/Werewolf rules. You'll probably want 12 or more people to play it.

Setup

You'll need a deck of cards, and one person to be the Moderator. There are four different roles: Cylons, Sympathetic Cylons, the Scientist, and the Colonials. I recommend using Kings for the Cylons, Queens for the Sympathetic Cylons, a Jack or Joker for the Scientist, and numbers for everyone else.

Start with one Cylon card, one Sympathetic Cylon card, the Scientist card, and enough Colonial cards for everyone. Shuffle them up, and have the Moderator deal everyone a card. Everyone looks at their card without revealing it to anyone else.

The Moderator will now ask everyone to go to Prepare For Jump! Everyone should close their eyes, clap their hands, and at their option, make space noises. If someone is moving around, you don't want to see or hear them.

The Moderator will ask the Sympathetic Cylon to Report for Duty. The Sympathetic Cylon should clearly, but silently indicate themselves to the Moderator. The Moderator should state that the Sympathetic Cylon may be a Cylon, but they win with the Colonials, and want to eliminate the other Cylons infiltrating the fleet. The Moderator will now ask the Sympathetic Cylon to Return to Your Duty Station.

The Moderator will now ask the Cylon to Report for Duty. The Cylon should clearly, but silently indicate themselves to the Moderator. The Moderator should clearly indicate the Sympathetic Cylon, and state that this person is another Cylon, but is misguided. You win if there are only Cylons of any kind left in the game. Ask the Cylon who they would like to murder. The Cylon should clearly indicate a person to you. The Moderator will now ask the Cylon to Return to Your Duty Station.

The Moderator will now ask the Scientist to Report for Duty. The Scientist should clearly, but silently indicate themselves to the Moderator. The Moderator should state that the Scientist has an experimental device that can detect Cylons, though its accuracy is not certain. Ask the Scientist who they would like to test. The Scientist should clearly indicate a person to you. The Moderator will share the results of the test. (see below). The Moderator will now ask the Scientist to Return to Your Duty Station.

Now the game is ready to begin! Someone has been murdered!

Turn Order

At the start of each turn, the Setup process is largely repeated- the Moderator will ask the Cylon(s) to Report for Duty, and the Scientist to Report for Duty. After the start of the game, the Sympathetic Cylon(s) do not have to Report for Duty.

When the Cylons Report for Duty, they indicate another player to Murder. They may not indicate a Sympathetic Cylon player, no matter what! The Moderator notes their choice.

When the Scientist Reports for Duty, he indicates another player to Test. The Moderator will nod if they are a Cylon or Sympathetic Cylon, or shake his head if they are not. No further disambiguation is given (you do not get to look at their card.) The Moderator reveals this information immediately.

Next the Moderator will say that the Fleet Has Jumped! Everyone, Report for Duty. Everyone should open their eyes and stop making space noises. Now the Moderator will impart some sad news- during the chaos, someone was murdered! The Moderator should be standing behind that person now. That person now reveals their card and is out of the game. They still get to watch, but should remain silent and not impart any information to those who are still playing.

Now, everyone has a decision. Who are they going to Airlock? Every turn, the Colonials must Airlock someone. The players (including Cylons) may debate at their leisure, but eventually the Moderator should ask for a vote if the discussion seems to be stalemated. Everyone should point at whoever they wish to Airlock.

If it is unclear how many votes a given player has, the Moderator should ask everyone pointing at that player to raise their hand. Once it is known how many votes each player has, the player receiving the most votes is Airlocked. They reveal their card and are out of the game.

In the event of a tie, hold a runoff vote with the only the tied players. If it is still tied, the Moderator should allow for some short debate. There cannot be a tie.

Now that someone's been Airlocked, humanity is safe for now, right? No, it's time to Prepare For Jump! Everyone should close their eyes, make noise, and otherwise Return to their Duty Stations. The Moderator should start the turn over.

The Sleeper Phase

Once the first Cylon is killed or when about a third of the players have been eliminated, whichever happens first, the Moderator should prepare another stack of cards, containing another Cylon card, a Sympathetic Cylon card, and one Colonial card for each remaining player. Shuffle the cards and deal one to each player. Make sure the Scientist gets a Colonial card, but don't be too obvious about it.

Deal these out and ask everyone to look at their card, and then to Prepare for Jump.

The Moderator should ask the Sympathetic Cylon(s) to Report for Duty, and indicate the Sympathetic Cylons to each other, and remind them of the Sympathetic Cylon victory condition: they win if the Colonials win, then ask them to Return to Their Duty Stations.

Next, the Moderator should ask the Cylon(s) to Report for Duty, and indicate the Cylons to each other, and the identities of the Sympathetic Cylon(s), and remind them of the Cylon victory condition: they win if there are only Cylons and Sympathetic Cylons left in the game, ask them to pick someone to Murder, and then ask them to Return to Their Duty Stations.

Next, the Moderator will ask the Scientist to Report for Duty, and inform them that they have fully

refined their Cylon Detector, and it is now 100% accurate! Ask them who they would like to test.

Proceed with the game as normal.

Victory

The Colonials (including the Scientist and Sympathetic Cylons) win if the Cylons are all killed.

The Cylons win if there are only Cylons and Sympathetic Cylons left in the game. If this happens, yes, the Sympathetic Cylons lose.

If there are only Cylons and an equal number of Colonials, they Cylons automatically win. Don't let this happen!

More Players and Variant Roles

If you're playing with a lot of players, like maybe 18 or something, throw another Cylon and Sympathizer from the start of the game, but just add one of each halfway through. If you're playing with a huge horde of people, like 25 or 30 or something, do that, and then add another Cylon and another Sympathizer (for a total of 4 of each over the course of the game). Or whatever your group thinks is fun.

Here's two variant roles to spice up the game:

The Research Assistant: If the Scientist is killed before the Sleeper Phase, add a card to the mix for the Research Assistant. They stumble upon the Scientist's lab and have access to the Cylon Detector.

The Plucky Engineer: The Plucky Engineer can try to peek when the Cylons Report for Duty. I'm sure that will end well.

Game Design Notes and Such

Are You a Cylon? was designed for Game Chef 2009, a game design contest. The theme of GC 2009 was Intrigue, making a BSG-themed game compelling. Some of the other ingredients pointed me in that direction, to various degrees.

Are You a Cylon? qualifies for the following Design Medals:

Campaign Medal: 7 Days: Written Before 9/7/2009

Theme Badge: Intrigue

Ingredient Badge: Star

Brevity Award: Rules are 4 Pages or Less