## Setup:

Chairs arranged in a circle/oval + 1 deck of cards: Split the deck so that there is one card for each player. If playing with a whole class (24+), designate multiple cops and two mafia families. King = cop, there should be 1 cop per 12 villagers, rounded down. Spade Mafia family and Club Mafia family, there should be 1 mafia member per 4 villagers, rounded down with an equal number in each family. E.g. In a class of 24, there will be 2 cops (Diamond Cop and Heart Cop), 3 Spade Mafia, and 3 Club Mafia. In a class of 36, there will be 3 cops, 4 Spade Mafia, and 4 Club Mafia.

## Game Basics

The teacher assumes the role of the moderator (at least for the first time the game is played). The basic concept is that members of the dreaded mafia have infiltrated our community and we, as concerned citizens, need to root them out. So every day we hold a town meeting and lynch someone we suspect of being a member of the mafia (it's not as bad as it seems: we vote first). Then, every "night" the mafia secretly meet and pick a townsperson to kill; the townspeople learn about it in the morning. There is also an undercover cop (or 2 or 3) floating around somewhere who can help the townspeople. The game ends when the townspeople successfully eliminate all mafia members, or the mafia take over the town.

## Card Distribution & General Rules

Give each person a card, being very careful that no one sees what anyone else gets. If someone sees, collect the cards, reshuffle and re-deal; it's important that it be secret. The players with the spades are the mafia, the player with the king is the cop, and everyone else is a townsperson (also known as an innocent bystander). Be sure to explain this to everyone several times -- there is nothing worse than having a mafia ask in a loud voice "what does a spade mean again?"

It's important that no one reveal their cards until they are dead. The one exception to this is the cop who may reveal his/her card at any time -- this is an important power of the cop (one of the few) and so should be emphasized. To increase participation, the game will be played with a variant in which the dead, although they cannot vote, accuse, or exercise any other powers, can still talk. This means that the dead, like the living, must keep their eyes closed at night. Have people keep their cards face down in front of them and dramatically flip them up when they die (either defiantly or sheepishly as the case may be).

## Nights -- Secret Deeds

Only the moderator may talk during the night (or the mafia and cop will be revealed) and he or she must be careful not to talk "to" anyone; that is, the moderator should not speak in any particular direction lest s/he give out information as to the identity of the mafia or the cop. It's pretty obvious even if you have your eyes closed when the moderator is talking to someone.

## The Mafia Kills

The moderator will have everyone close their eyes. Then they will have the mafia open their eyes and kill someone (wake up the mafia according to family). They must note who the mafia is and who the mafia kills -- it will be on the test (I swear that some people find this challenging). Then they have the mafia close their eyes. (If playing with families, wake up the other family and have them select a victim).

## The Cop Accuses

Now they have the cop open his or her eyes and make an accusation (if you have more than one cop, call out cop by suit, e.g., Diamond Cop). If the cop is right, they silently indicate an affirmative otherwise they indicate a negative (I would call this a "nod" and a "shake" of the head but I've heard people use the opposite meanings). There is an odd case in which the cop is killed before he or she makes an accusation; it doesn't matter what you do because they're dead and can't use the information anyway. Then the cop closes his or her eyes (if you have more than one cop, repeat the process). Everyone opens their eyes. The moderator announces who was killed during the night and it's now day again.

## A Script

"Everyone close your eyes." (Check that everyone's eyes are closed.)

"Spade Mafia, open your eyes." (Identify the mafia and verify that the correct number.)

"Spade Mafia, make your kill." (Identify the victim, silently point to him/her and get it confirmed with a nod.) If the mafia don't agree, this is not your problem; just wait until they decide (this can be quite entertaining, watching a silent argument).

"Spade Mafia, close your eyes." (Verify that they have closed their eyes.). Repeat for Club Mafia.

"Diamond Cop, open your eyes." (Find the cop.)

"Diamond Cop, make your accusation." (Verify who the cop is accusing and then indicate whether he/she is right.)

"Diamond Cop, close your eyes." (Verify that he/she has complied.). Repeat for Heart Cop.

"Everyone open your eyes."

"So-and-so is/are dead."

## Days -- The Lynching

During the day, the townspeople (including the mafia and the cop, since no one knows who they are) have a meeting. The goal of the meeting is to lynch a mafia member. Lying is permissible. Cops may reveal their identities, but are advised not to since this is a surefire way to get killed. No player, though, under any circumstances, may display their card to another player, unless the player turning his card over is dead.

## Accusations

The moderator, after allowing for a period of discussion shall ask for accusations. Any player (except for the dead) may accuse any other player of being mafia. If an accusation is lodged, the accuser shall be allowed to explain the reason for his accusation. Then, the moderator shall ask for a second.

## Defense

If the motion is seconded, then the accused shall be allowed to state a defense. Other players may comment briefly on one side or the other. Their defense should be one or, if they are longwinded, two sentences -- short and to the point, we haven't got all day. "I'm innocent!", "Dave is the guilty one", "I heard John make a noise last night," and (my favorite), "I was mafia last game!" are all valid defenses. "I'm just a terrorist," is also legal but probably won't save your life. Common decency dictates that everyone should listen respectfully and not make rude comments during the defense statements but I've never seen it happen that way and, in any event, there's no way to stop them. But remember that the mafia would really like to manipulate the townspeople into lynching other townspeople so you want to watch for that.

## Vote

Then, the moderator shall take a vote. If a majority of the surviving members vote to convict, then the convicted player turns their card face up-- they have been put to death and may no longer participate in the game. If there is no majority in favor of conviction, the accused is acquitted and may not be accused again in the same turn. Getting people to agree on someone to lynch is all part of the game. Some people refuse to vote. There is no rule against this but may I suggest that you lynch such people at the earliest opportunity as they are simply not being helpful in the War Against Crime. Again, participating in the game is what the game is about.

The day ends when:

(a) Someone has been convicted and killed, or

(b) The moderator determines that no more accusations are going to be (or can be) made.

The moderator shall allow sufficient time for accusations to be made, but shall not allow the game to drag on unnecessarily (consider setting a 5-minute time limit). At the end of the day, the moderator shall terminate discussion immediately. Then, night falls and the moderator shall ask everyone to close his eyes.

## End of Game -- The Showdown!

## The game shall be won by the mafia if there are no more civilians left, or if the number of civilians left is less than or equal to the number of mafia left, in which case the civilians will never be able to muster a majority to kill a member of the mafia. The civilians win if all of the mafia are convicted and killed.

## Strategy

I've seen some amazing things in this game. The winners are the ones who can convince others that they are innocent or ignorant ("What do the cards mean again? I can't remember.") when they are really totally on top of the situation. The losers are usually the people who are simply asleep at the switch ("What do the cards mean again? I can't remember."). It's a pretty interesting dynamic. Pay attention & watch what works. Being the guy who is trying to direct the party will get you lynched but not knowing what is going on is pointless.

The key to staying alive is to stick to the middle of the road. The person who tries to accuse someone every turn will draw attention to himself. The person who tries to stay perfectly quiet will also draw attention to himself. Since every turn the players are trying to find someone to lynch, drawing attention to yourself is generally a Bad Thing. Likewise, it's also important that you not make any noise at night, not disrupt the game too much and generally try to go with the flow.

Dying isn't all that bad. You might find it more fun to be dead than to be alive because you know who the mafia are; certainly you will learn a lot to die early one game. Consider nominating yourself. But maybe you shouldn't vote for people who nominate themselves since they probably aren't mafia -- unless of course the mafia has caught onto that point of view in which case you should lynch a few.

As the mafia, kill any player who might be the cop or who might suspect you. If the cop reveals himself be sure to take him out that night without hesitation. Do not kill people only because they accused you, however, as that's a bit obvious. A good trick is to viciously accuse your fellow mafia -- when people discover he really was mafia you're in the clear (unless of course he denounces you). At the end, don't be eager to shake hands -- real townspeople are very reluctant to commit themselves.

As the cop, when you find out who is the mafia, try to get them lynched. Keep in mind, however, that admitting you are the cop will get you killed for sure. So you have to be persuasive and subtle. Make the argument that people who accused the mafia were killed or that the mafia player is accusing a lot of people. Try observing for a few turns to see if you can get some outward indications. Remember to reveal your card if you are about to get lynched. This will get you killed but at least you get to tell people what you know, first.

As a townsperson you're pretty much at the mercy of random events. Nominate people who make noise at night, are trying to avoid being noticed or who seem to have an agenda. In the unlikely event that you make it to the end of the game, don't shake hands with anyone who is too eager. But also watch for the person who is trying to appear reluctant and suspicious. If this advice doesn't leave you much choice pick someone at random.