SOBEK

Bruno Cathala

A game for 2 to 4 players
Ages 13 and up
Approx. 40 minutes

INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE GAME

The construction of the temple dedicated to Sobek is in full swing. A whole economy has set up next to the construction site: there's a new market, and the feluccas sailing up and down the Nile are constantly bringing goods of all sorts. Competition between merchants is naturally fierce and some are prepared to become corrupt beyond reason in order to amass glory and riches. Mainly the riches, in fact...
You too are part of the local merchants' guild and are prepared to do whatever it takes to beat your rivals...

You have **3 rounds** in which to acquire more money than your rivals, but try not to become too corrupt!

GAME COMPONENTS

1 gameboard

4 scoring markers

12 event tokens

Back

4 corruption tiles

54 goods cards

6x Ivory

7x Ebony

7x Marble

9x Cattle

10x Fish

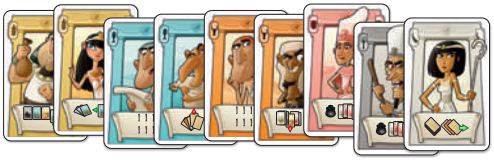
10x Wheat

5x Amulets

Back

9 goods cards have a different back. These form the starting hand for each round.

9 character cards

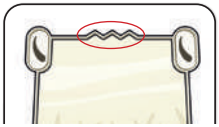


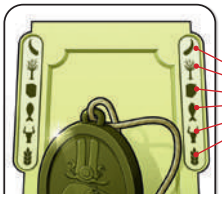
Back

CARDS IN DETAILS

A goods card in detail:

There are two types of card for each good: those with a trade value, and those without.The ivory card below has no intrinsic value. The 3 points on the border are a reminder that cards in this family with a trade value have 3 scarabs.





Amulets are used as jokers, which is why they have all the goods icons on them.

A character card in detail:

Each character card also belongs to a goods family. In addition to the colour of the card's border, this is also shown by the appropriate icon (here, ivory).

Each character has a special power whose effects are explained in detail at the end of this rulebook.

The power is shown in the papyrus at the bottom of the card.

During a round, a character card can be played either as a goods card or as the character using their special power, but never both.

A character has no trade value.

SET-UP

1 Place the gameboard in the middle of the table.

2 Players choose a colour and take the corresponding marker, placing it on the zero space of the scoring track...

3 ..as well as the corruption tile with the same colour seal, which is placed in front of them.

4 Shuffle the cards with a green back and deal 2 to each player. These form the starting hand. The remainder of the green cards are not used in the current round and can be returned to the box.

5 Shuffle the goods and character cards together face down and put them next to the scoring track as a deck. NB: With 2 players, remove the first 9 cards from the deck. These 9 cards are not used in the current round and can be returned to the box.

gameboard

7 Shuffle the 12 event tokens face down. Choose 5 of them at random and place them in a pile next to the board. The remaining tokens are not used in the current round and can be returned to the box.

6 Fill the 9 spaces along the Nile (the quays), always following these 3 rules:

1. start with the space next to the temple;
2. goods cards (BEIGE back) are placed face up;
3. character cards (ORANGE back) are always placed face down.

Randomly decide who will start the first round.
You are now ready to start playing.

GAME TURN

On your turn, you must choose one (and only one) of the 3 actions shown opposite.

After which, your turn ends and it is now the player on your left's turn to choose one of the 3 actions, and then the next, etc.

The 3 different actions possible are:

TAKE A CARD **OR** PLAY A CHARACTER

PLAY A SET

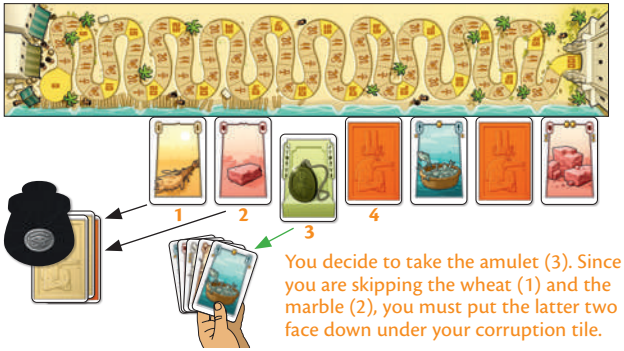
TAKE A CARD

- When you take a card, you must choose one of the 4 available cards and add it to your hand.
- By available, we mean one of the first 4 starting with the card nearest to the "0" space. Example:

- NB: the choice is more restricted when there are fewer than 4 cards:

CORRUPTION

- Taking the first available card has no consequences since the order of arrival of the feluccas is respected. However, taking one of the other cards comes with a price... corruption!
- The corruption rule is simple: all the cards that you skip end up under your corruption tile.



The corruption rule applies regardless of the type of card taken (goods or character).

PLAY A CHARACTER

- Play one (and only one) character. To do this, play it face up on the discard pile (next to the deck) and apply the power shown on its papyrus.
- All the character powers are explained in detail on the last page of the rules.

PLAY A SET

- A set is a group of goods cards of the same type.

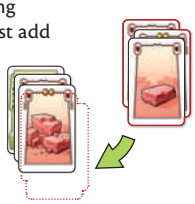
- To play a set, you must place at least 3 goods cards face up in front of you.
(You can, of course, play more.).

A few notes:

- A set can include one or more amulets (joker).
- Each character, being associated with a goods type, can therefore be included in a set of that same goods type.

Note, though, that when a character is played as part of a set, its power is ignored!

- it is possible to add cards to a set that has already been played (in order to earn more points during scoring), but the same rule still applies: you must add a **minimum** of 3 new cards.



EVENT TOKENS

As long as at least 1 of the 5 tokens hasn't yet been played, playing a set immediately triggers an event.

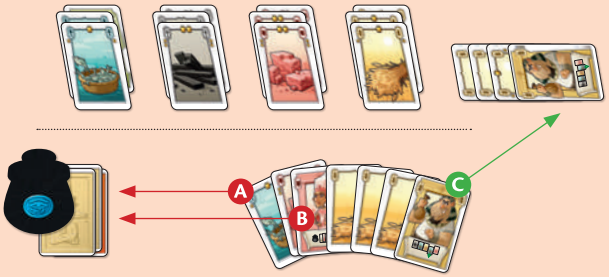
- When you play a set, take all the remaining tokens, choose one, and immediately apply its effect. The token is then discarded.
- In order to prevent another player from taking advantage of a token, you may choose a token whose effect cannot be applied or which has no effect on you. In that case, you simply discard it.
- All the tokens are explained on the last page of the rules.

GOODS DELIVERIES

- When a player takes the last of the cards along the Nile, he must prepare a new set of cards for the following player: he draws 9 cards from the top of the deck and places them according to the set-up rules.
- During a round, therefore, there will be 6 deliveries of goods and characters (5 in a 2-player game).

END OF THE ROUND

- As soon as a player takes the last card of the last delivery, the round immediately ends.
- Players with sets of 3 or more cards in their hand can play them, but they must be played horizontally (they score fewer points). NB: during this phase, cards cannot be added to existing sets on the table.
- Attention, any cards that are still in your hand and that cannot be played are added to your corruption pile.



The round has ended and you still have 7 cards in your hand.

A The fish card is added to the corruption pile since it is the only one.

B The marble cards likewise since 2 cards are not enough to create a set. The character cannot be played since the round is already over.

C The 3 wheat cards and the wheat character cannot be added to the wheat set already on the table. However, since there are at least 3 cards, they can be played as a new set, horizontally (in order to distinguish them from sets played during the round).

The round is now scored.

SCORING

Each set of cards is scored separately. Each set scores points as follows:

Number of scarabs x the number of cards

Scarabs are added together for horizontal sets rather than being multiplied.

The sum of the points is your score for the round, which is added to the scoring track.

In this example you scored 23 points

CORRUPTION PENALTY

Now it's time to settle debts: each player adds up the number of cards under his corruption tile.

The player who has the most cards is going to lose some points:

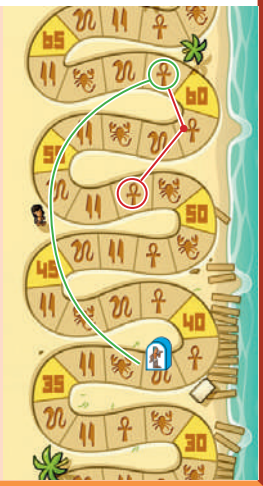
- For every 10 points scored during this round, he moves back along the scoring track to the next symbol of the same type that his marker just ended up on.

You're playing Blue. You had 38 points before this round's scoring and you have the most corruption cards.

Your sets earned you 23 points and so your score is now 61.

Since you have scored 2 "lots" of 10 (the rest is ignored), you move back 2 Ankh symbols and end up with 52 points.

Your excess of corruption has cost you 9 points out of the 23 earned in the round.
Not to be repeated too often!



NEW ROUND

- The new round uses all the cards (including those under the corruption tiles) and tokens.
- Set-up is exactly the same as at the beginning of the game.
- Once the round is set up, the player with the lowest score decides who will be the starting player. He can choose himself if he wishes.

END OF THE GAME

- The game ends after the 3rd round is scored. The player with the most points wins.
- In the event of a tie, the players concerned share the victory.
- A game finishes early if any player has more than 100 points at the end of the 2nd round (after taking into account the corruption penalty).

NOTES AND REMINDERS

- If there is a tie for the corruption, count up the number of scarabs on the cards. The player with the most is considered to be the most corrupt. If it is still tied, all the players concerned are corrupt.
- It is perfectly permissible to play a character whose power has no effect at the time in order, for example, to have one fewer cards at the end of the round or to skip a turn without having to take a card because there's nothing interesting currently available.
- Don't forget that a character can be used either for its effect or as part of a set, but not both!
- When a player takes the last card of the last delivery, the round ends immediately. It's often a good way of pulling the rug out from under the feet of your opponents if they have got rather a lot of cards in their hand that could end up under their corruption pile.
- If a player has more than 100 points, use the 0 space as 100 and so on (1=101, 2=102, etc...)

THE CHARACTERS

Queen Sobek Neferou: draw 3 cards.
if Queen Sobek is played during a round, the last goods delivery will only contain 6 cards.

High Priest/ess: discard all cards of one goods type from your corruption pile.
Characters of the corresponding type can be discarded, but not amulets.

Thief: steal a card from the hand of a player of your choice. The card is taken randomly but with the backs displayed so that the colours can be seen.

Scribe: your opponents reduce their hands to 6 cards.
The excess cards are added to their corruption pile.

Vizir: add a card of your choice to your hand from an opponent's corruption pile.
You may look through the pile to make your choice.

Courtisan: add 1 or 2 cards from your hand to a set that has already been played. The added cards must be from the same family as the set.

Merchant: add any card to your hand out of all those remaining without taking corruption or discarding ignored cards.

EVENT TOKENS

4x

Guild: move your scoring marker on to the next space with the same symbol AND move an opponent's scoring marker back similarly.

2x

Flood: immediately take another turn.

2x

Curse: to be "offered" to an opponent. It counts as 2 additional cards when calculating corruption at the end of the round. The token is therefore not discarded after being played but is kept with your opponent's corruption pile until the end of the round.

2x

Prosperity: add this token to a set of wheat, fish or cattle cards already in front of you. The value of the set is increased by 2 scarabs.

1x

Embalming: add all the cards in your corruption pile to your hand.

1x

Deceit: reveal the number of cards in your corruption pile and score that many points. Then replace the cards under your tile.

SOBEK

A game by
Bruno Cathala

Illustrations
Mathieu Beaulieu
(www.mathieu-beaulieu.blogspot.com)

Photolitho and layout
Samuel Rouge

GameWorks Sàrl
Rue du Collège 14
1800 Vevey - Suisse

GAME WORKS

All our games on:

www.gameworks.ch