

Game and Activity Instructions

Forbidden Word

At the beginning of the meal, pick a word as your “forbidden word”. Everyone should try to completely avoid saying that word. All throughout the meal, everyone should try to catch others saying the forbidden word and point it out if they do—just don’t say “the word”! Choose a common mealtime word, like “yes” or “pass”.

One Word Game

Player one says a word. Consecutive players add to the word to form a sentence. It is best to say the first word that comes to mind. For instance, player one may say, “Monkeys”. Then as play continues, you get a sentence like “Monkeys eat green waffles.” This could be the end of the sentence and a new starting word could be chosen. Or, the next player could have the choice to add on to the sentence further in this manner, “Monkeys eat green waffles while...” The sentence could go on for a really long time if desired. It is interesting to play with young players. They often put in words that don’t really fit with the way a sentence should go. For example player one may say “monkeys” and the four year old may say, “green”. If this happens, player three could use it as a way to insert a list like this, “Monkeys, green grapes ...” *Game Variation: Play the game using alliteration where each word must start with the same letter.*

Pass-a-Face

The first person starts by making any kind of face and then looking at the person next to them. That person has to adopt the look of the first person onto his own face, turn to the next person while holding that face and then slowly morph that face into a different look that the next person then has to hold and until he passes a look to the next person.

Twenty Questions

One person thinks of something. It is up to everyone else to ask questions until they are able to discover what that something was. Questions must be able to be answered with a “yes” or a “no”. After 20 questions have been asked, the person can reveal the something and declare himself the winner of that round.

Story Dice

For this game, player one will roll the dice and start a story based on the picture they rolled. The next player rolls the dice and continues the story. Play continues until someone decides to bring everything together for the awesome ending. Then, start a new story, or be done for the day. (Either make your own, or purchase our dice. More instructions and variations are included in the package. Since the dice are made from paper, and are printable, you won’t think twice about discarding them if food gets on them.)

Good News, Bad News

One person starts by saying something like, “The good news is that Fred the Farmer got to take an airplane ride.” The next person adds on to that by saying, “The bad news is that Fred fell out of the plane.” Then someone might add, “The good news is that the plane was on the ground at the time.” This keeps going on and on as you all think

up more good news and bad news that could happen in the story. If you have an even number of people at your dinner table, you can skip one person each time around the table. Doing this will make it so that each person can have a chance to do “good news” one round and “bad news” the next.

Going on a Picnic

Player one begins the game by saying, “I’m going on a picnic and I’m going to bring...” He says an item that begins with the letter “A”. He might say he plans to bring apples. Player two then says, “I’m going on a picnic and I’m going to bring apples and baklava.” Player three then has to say those two items and one more using the next letter of the alphabet. “I’m going on a picnic and I’m going to bring apples, baklava, and crunchy carrots.” This keeps going on until you get to the letter “Z”. It gets a little difficult to remember all 26 items, but it definitely can be done!

Don’t Laugh

This game is a simple one. Choose a volunteer to be “it”. This person has the goal of holding a serious face. Everyone else has the goal of making “it” laugh. If the slightest giggle escapes, “it” is out and someone new becomes “it”. *Game Variation: Make it a little harder and don’t allow “it” to even do so much as crack a smile.*

Extreme Manners Dinner

For this activity, you can doctor it up as much or as little as desired. Explain matters of etiquette prior to the meal. Offer a family reward for after full participation from all family members. Here are some ideas for your dinner. Use your best dishes. Have several courses to a very nice, delicious meal. Use cloth napkins and multiple forks. Invite everyone to come in their finery. Use place cards. Have a centerpiece. Serve a seldom served fun beverage (ie-sparkling cider).

Do NOT Eat at the Table

Now and then, decide to do something differently than to sit at the kitchen table. Here are some ideas. Have a picnic in the backyard. Build a huge blanket fort in the living room and eat in the fort. Watch a movie while eating. Eat out, especially someplace you haven’t been to before. Take dinner to the park, the woods, the beach, the lake, etc. Spread a blanket on the floor for a meal.

Cooking—Not Just for Mom (or the same person every time)

Here are some ideas. Have older children cook the meal on a repeating night each week. Cook with a buddy—assign a pair of family members to cook one night. Have different people help decide what will be for dinners for the week. Ask one person to fix an appetizer, side, or dessert to supplement the meal. Fix something for dinner that involves the whole family—someone can chop, someone can stir, someone can sauté, someone can slice, someone can taste test, etc. (Find some tasty, family do-able recipe ideas in this cookbook found on our website.)

More game and activity instructions are found in the book. For more details go to