

IMPROMPTU THEATRE

Introduction

This game is all about spontaneity, acting out (in a good way), and having a great time. It's a friendly random-draw charades competition, reminiscent of skits from Vaudeville and live comedies. This is a great ice-breaker and time-killer, and is great for people of all ages.

Overview

Players take turns acting randomly-generated scenes and receiving a score from three Judges. The player with highest score after the designated number of rounds wins!

Components and Requirements

- 3 decks of 54 cards each (Beginning, Middle, End) | Notepad and Pencil | 3 Judge stars
- 4 or more players
- 30-60 minutes

Setup

You will need a "stage" area where players can act out scenes, as well as seats where the other players can see the whole scene play out. Separate, shuffle, and set out the 3 decks so that the Judges can reach them easily. Use the scorepad and pencil to keep track of each Actor's scores. Use any rating scale of your choice, but we recommend "out of 5 stars." Decide who the actor and the three Judges will be to start.

Hand each Judge one of the three gold stars.

Gameplay

There are three roles to fill. Everyone will get to be in all three roles. The first is the Actor. Each turn, there is only one Actor at a time. Three players act in the role of Judge. The rest of the players are the Audience. Each deck of cards contains words which form a very general - not grammatically correct - sentence. Each Judge will draw the top card from the deck before them. The Judges will use the words to create a sentence which the Actor must act out. After deciding on a sentence, the Actor's turn begins. The Actor may use words, sounds, actions, props, whatever. Their goal is to act out the sentence as best as they possibly can in order to out-act the other Actors. Once they have finished acting out the sentence, the Judges score the Actor on how well they performed. Add these scores together (*e.g.*, 2 stars + 3 stars + 2 stars = 7) for the Actor's final score. Place used words in discard piles by each draw pile.

Then, the turn shifts. The End deck Judge becomes the Actor and one of the Audience members becomes the Beginning Judge; the Actor joins the Audience. The End Judge will hand their gold star to the new Beginning Judge. Continue until each person has had a chance to act. How many times you let each person act is up to you, but we suggest 2 or 3 turns each. Because some sentences are more difficult to act out than others, Actors are permitted one re-draw. If they use this, Judges redraw from each pile, not just for one word.

Winning the Game

Once everyone has taken a turn in acting and you have finished the number of rounds you agreed on previously, add up each Actor's scores from all of their turns. The Actor with the highest total score wins the game. Now gather your friends and family together and go have some fun!

Or should I say, "Break a leg!"