

Victorian Parlour Games

Here is just a small sampling of some **Victorian Parlour Games** to try with your family. Have fun!

Twenty Questions: In this game, one player thinks of a person, thing or a place and the others try to guess what it is by asking questions that can only be answered with a “yes” or “no”. The game ends if the twenty questions are asked or if a player discovers what the player was thinking of.

The Minister’s Cat: In this game, players sit in a circle and everyone begins to clap their hands in unison. The first player says the phrase “The minister’s cat is a () cat”, describing the cat with an adjective beginning with the letter 'A' (for example, "The minister's cat is an *adorable* cat"). Without breaking the rhythm, the next player describes the cat with an adjective beginning with the letter “B” and so on. If a person hesitates, they are out of the game and the game continues on for each letter of the alphabet. The last player remaining wins.

I Have a Basket: Similar to The Minister’s Cat, the players sit in a circle and the first player says “I have a basket with an (object beginning with the letter “A”) in it. The next person has to name something beginning with the letter “B” and so on. A person must leave the game if they cannot think of a word that begins with the letter they have.

Pass the Slipper: One person stands in the middle of the circle of players and closes their eyes. The circle of players passes a slipper (or other small object) around the circle behind their backs. The players stop passing the object as soon as the centre player opens their eyes. This player must then guess who’s holding the slipper. If they guess correctly, that person swaps places and becomes the middle player. If they guess incorrectly, they have to close their eyes and play commences.

Wink murder: In this game, one player of the group is secretly assigned the role of "murderer" (perhaps by handing every player a playing card with a particular card signifying that the recipient is the “murderer”). The “murderer” has the ability to "kill" other players by making eye contact and winking at them. If a player is winked at, they must count silently to five before faking sudden death (by either lying on the floor, or silently leaving the playing area).

If a player suspects they know the identity of the “murderer”, they may raise their hand and announce "I accuse", without naming their suspect. At this point, the game pauses and the accuser asks for somebody to second their accusation, again with neither naming a suspect. When they have a seconder, both of these players simultaneously point to their suspect; if they are both pointing to a player who admits to being the murderer, the game ends. Otherwise (if they are pointing to different players, or to an innocent player) the accusers are both eliminated as if they had been murdered. Players may not talk to each other about who they

think the “murderer” might be and only the “murderer” is allowed to wink. The objective is to “kill” as many people as possible without being caught.
