Roleplay Academy

Become a better Roleplayer, Improviser, Storyteller
This is a collection of games and exercises that will help you practice skills that will make you a better roleplayer, improviser, storyteller, level up your GMing skills, become more creative, and come up with interesting ideas for your games and stories.

How to Play
Pick 3-4 games, read through their rules to get ready to explain them to other players, gather a group of 2-5 friends, and start playing!

Come play with us!
Join our community to play with us and practice roleplaying and improv skills with other friendly and creative people:
https://rpgadventures.io/discord

More games are coming soon!
Send feedback and game ideas to **lumenwrites** on Discord. Join our community to participate in playtests and get updates on new games.

Yes, Let's!

Practice the fundamental concept of good improv - embracing your friends' ideas, and building on top of them by adding your own ideas.

Player A: Suggest an activity
Suggest an activity by saying *"Let's do x!"*.

> Let's go defeat the dragon!

Player B: Build on top of this idea
Say *"Yes, let's do x, and..."*, and builds on top of Player A's idea - expands on it or adds something new.

> Yes, let's go defeat the dragon, and let's take his treasure and use it to overthrow our evil king.

Players keep taking turns
Continue saying "Yes, let's..." and adding to each other's ideas.

> Yes, let's use his treasure to overthrow our evil king, and become kings ourselves.

> Yes, let's become kings, and use our kingly powers to build a castle made out of cookies.

One Word at a Time

In this game we will collaboratively tell a story, players taking turns, saying one word at a time. This game will help us to practice two important concepts:

- Listening - paying attention to what other people are saying, instead of being in your head. You won't be able to continue the story unless you were focused on everything people were saying before you.
- Being spontaneous, and holding ideas lightly - you won't be able to plan ahead, so you'll have to quickly respond in the moment.

How to play
Players take turns, tell a story one word at a time:

> Once...
> upon...
> a...
> time...
> there...
> was...
> a...
> beautiful...
> princess...
> who...
> ....

Base Reality

Practice establishing the key elements necessary for every scene:

1. **Who** are the characters and what is the relationship between them.
2. **Where** the scene takes place.
3. **What** the characters are doing, the action in the scene.

How to Play
Two players play a three-line scene (Player A says a sentence, Player B responds, Player A responds with the final sentence).

- The goal is to establish who, what, and where in these 3 lines.
- If you manage to establish the who, what, and where faster (in the first 1-2 lines), use the remaining lines to establish the relationship between the characters, or the emotion they're feeling.

Try playing scenes set in our normal reality, in a high-stakes reality of a movie or a TV show, or in a fictional (fantasy or sci-fi) world.

> **Player A**
> Arr, matey, charge the cannons!
> **Player B**
> Sir, yes sir, let's plunder that galleon and get us some treasure!
> **Player A**
> That's the spirit boy, keep it up you'll be the first mate in no time!

DESCRIPTIONS

ESTABLISH THE SCENE

Practice being a Narrator and quickly establishing evocative scenes.

Any Player
Suggest an interesting location where the scene takes place.

> Floating pirate island.

Player A
Set up the scene in 3 sentences, describe the most interesting details:
- The location the heroes find themselves in.
- Characters, creatures, or objects they see.
- Things they sense (hear, smell, touch, feel, the emotions this scene evokes in them).
- Some activity that's happening in the scene (can be anything from a fire burning in a fireplace, to huge robots fighting or a court trial taking place).
- Obstacles, dangers, and opportunities the scene presents.

You can start with a large establishing shot and then zoom into the details, or start with a small detail and zoom the camera out to describe the whole scene.

> A pirate island floats, ropes creak, and planks groan. Pirates hustle, barter, and brawl, filling the air with sharp laughs and curses. You sense the smell of gunpowder, promising adventure and danger.

Then give a location prompt for the next player.

> Abandoned amusement park.

ZOOM OUT, ZOOM IN

Build a setting, from small details to large ones, and vice versa.

Zoom Out
Start by describing a small detail, and then build a scene around it.

> **Player A**
> A beautiful gem is set into an ancient stone.
> **Player B**
> A gem is part of a crown that rests on the head of a skeleton.
> **Player C**
> The skeleton lies under an ancient oak tree, with spider webs between its branches.
> **Player D**
> The oak tree is on a lone island in the middle of a bay, surrounded by sharp reefs. Hulls of many ships crashed upon the shallows…

Zoom In
Start by describing a large-scale setting, and imagine the camera gradually zooming in to see the details.

> **Player A**
> You see a small village nestled in the shadow of a mountain.
> **Player B**
> We zoom in to see a church in the center of the village.
> **Player C**
> Inside the church we see a stone statue of a gargoyle whose eyes are glowing with sinister green color.
> **Player D**
> A rat runs up to the statue and places a chunk of moldy cheese in front of the gargoyle, as an offering to its "God".

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

Practice vividly describing characters and locations.

Player A
Come up with a suggestion for a location or a character, in the format:
[Adjective] [Noun]

> Abandoned space station, wizard's tower, bottomless chasm. Rebellious princess, broken robot, unlucky viking, old wizard.

Then name an interesting specific detail:

> In the wizard's tower, an old spellbook is lying on the floor.

Player B
Describe this detail in a couple of sentences. Paint a vivid picture in people's imagination, use specific details, engage multiple senses.

> The dusty, spider-covered spellbook, its pages wrinkled from a spilled, tangy-smelling potion, lies abandoned on the cold, stone floor of the tower, whispering ancient secrets in the silence.

Then come up with a detail for the next player to describe:

> An old owl sits on the windowsill.

ACTION SCENES

Practice vividly describing interesting and creative action scenes.

Come up with an exciting action scene
Players take turns, each establishes one element of an action scene:
[Location] [Characters] [Action]

> Detective chases a criminal through the big city's rooftops
> Ninja steals a diamond from the magic vault
> Pirates fight inside of a fancy ballroom
> Pilot lands a burning plane

Player A
Name one specific action that happens inside this scene.

> Pirate dodging a crossbow bolt.

Player B
Improvise a vivid cinematic description of that action. Try to make it exciting, aim for creative or unexpected use of the environment.

> The pirate leaps over a fallen table just as a crossbow bolt slams into its surface. With a quick glance, he spies a silver candelabra perched on the table's edge. With a flick of his sword, he sends it spinning towards his assailant, the candelabra's sharp edges slicing through the air with deadly precision.

Then come up with an action for the next player to describe.

> One of the pirates swings from a chandelier to attack him.

Improvising Characters

Take turns, each player describing one aspect of the character.

Player A: Adjective + Occupation

To quickly improvise a simple character, often all you need is an **adjective** and an **occupation** (e.g. Friendly Pirate, Creepy Doctor).

> Creepy Emperor's Advisor

Player B: Appearance

Name a few physical characteristics, details that stand out the most.

> Long thin mustache, piercing green eyes, clothes that accentuate his height, adorned with golden patterns.

Player C: Personality

Think of an actor or a famous character you could cast in this role.

> Cold and calculating (like Moriarty from Sherlock).

Player D: Motivation

What do they want, why do they want it, what will they do to get it?

> Wants power. Will lie, cheat, steal, and betray to get it.

Player E: Contradiction

To make your characters more interesting and three-dimensional, you can create a contradiction between their outward traits/appearance/behavior, and their true inner nature.

> Despite his imposing statue, deep inside he's a paranoid coward desperate for people's approval.

Backstory from a Detail

Develop a character by improvising their backstory.

Any Player

Come up with a character suggestion

> Mad scientist.

Player A

Point out an interesting, unexpected detail about the character (can be a physical detail, an item or piece of clothing, a behavior, a manner of speaking, etc.)
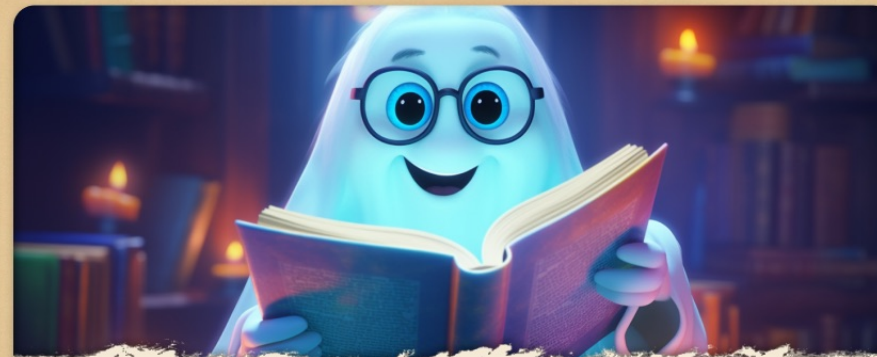
> He has a peg leg.

Player B

Tell a backstory explaining how this detail came to be.

> He was trying to train a gargoyle to fetch him papers, it got mad when he didn't give it a treat, so it ate his leg, and he had to invent himself a new one.

Come up with a detail for the next player to describe

> He has a beautiful locket around his neck with a picture of a robot.

But this one...

Practice a simple method of making your characters more interesting.

Any Player

Come up with a character suggestion

> A pirate.

Player A

Take one of the character's aspects, and replace it with something surprising, very different from what you'd normally assume or expect. You can reverse an aspect, exaggerate it, replace it with an out-of-place detail, or apply an aspect from an entirely different character. Try to create a surprising internal contradiction.

> **[Characters]** *are usually* **[an expected aspect]**, *but this one in particular is* **[surprising aspect]**.

> Pirates are usually scary and rowdy, but this one in particular acts very gentlemanly and polite.

Player B

Explain why this character is so unusual.

> Because he fell in love with a fancy lady and is trying to impress her.

Then come up with a character prompt for the next player.

> A vampire.

Hidden Emotions and Desires

Interesting characters have secrets, interesting dialogue has subtext - the characters don't say what they mean, they have hidden desires and emotions underneath the things they're saying. In this game, we will practice creating subtext.

How to play

Before the scene, each player picks a secret desire - a single verb like:

> Deceive, impress, lure, sneak by, gain favor, humiliate, befriend.

And a secret emotion, like:

> Excited, scared, angry, envious, grateful, guilty, suspicious, in love.

Then the players play a short (1-2 min scene), aiming to clearly communicate and convincingly portray their secret desire/emotion, without stating it outright. Ideally, the things you're doing and saying shouldn't be about your actual hidden desire at all (imagine a scene where a guy and a girl are changing a flat tire, and are talking only about the tire, but the audience gets a clear impression that they are in love, and both are too scared to confess their feelings).

After the scene, we try to guess what desire and emotion each player was trying to portray.

Expand our Acting Range

Practice portraying believable and grounded, as well as cartoony and exaggerated characters, and expanding our acting range.

Two players play short (1-2 minute) scenes. Your goal is to establish the base reality (who, what, where), the relationship between the characters, and play out a brief fun interaction between them.

We'll play 3 different types of scenes/characters:

Ordinary Characters

Play realistic characters who are similar to yourself. Scenes take place in our world - normal, ordinary, boring reality. The goal is to practice acting in the most believable and realistic way.

Exaggerated Characters

Play cartoony, exaggerated, over-the-top characters in extreme situations (e.g. cartoon supervillain's last monologue before they fall into a volcano). Make big, bold character choices. Bring as much enthusiasm and energy as you can. The goal is to get comfortable with being bold and playing ridiculous and absurd characters.

Believable Fictional Characters

Play characters who are very different from yourself, in the scenes set in a fictional reality (fantasy, sci-fi, action movies, drama, etc). The goal is to play a serious and dramatic scene with the characters who are as realistic and believable as possible. Avoid introducing any absurd elements, aim for a grounded, believable scene that you could see in a serious movie.

Dramatic Conflict

Conflict is an essential ingredient of a good scene, it makes the scene interesting to play, and gives the characters something exciting to do.

Conflict = **Desire** + **Obstacle**. Establish what do the characters want (from the world or from each other), and why is it difficult to get.

A scene is about the heroes trying various tactics to get what they want, and actively striving to overcome obstacles in pursuit of their goal. Their attempts progressively escalate the conflict and raise the stakes.

Establish the Base Reality (who, what, where)

Two players improvise a scene. Establish who the characters are, where does the scene take place, and what the characters are doing.

Establish the Conflict

Player A's character wants something, Player B's character opposes them: refuses to give it to them, wants the opposite thing, stands in their way, or competes for the same thing.

Escalate the Conflict

Player A's character should try at least 3 different tactics in an attempt to get what they want, opposed by the other character, each attempt raising the stakes, intensity and tension.

Player B's objective is to help Player A to create a dramatic scene by supporting their choices. Player B will put obstacles in their way, helping them to escalate the conflict.

Resolve the Conflict

Play the scene until the conflict is resolved (Player A's character gets what they want, or suffers a setback taking them farther away from it).

Emotions

Practice playing characters who are experiencing strong emotions.

One trick to creating very fun and engaging scenes is to choose to care strongly about what's going on in the scene, to emotionally invest in the imagined reality, to be emotionally affected by things happening in the scene, treat what's going on in the scene as important. Play characters with commitment - avoid being ironically detached.

We'll improvise short two-player scenes. Start by establishing the base reality (who, what, where), and then:

Choose an Emotion

At the beginning of the scene, choose an emotion your character feels, and then justify why you feel that way.

Heighten the Emotion

Progressively heighten the emotion and make it more intense.

Change Emotions

Play the scene until your character undergoes a change from one strong emotion to a completely different one.

Try playing two versions of this game - in one you'll play the cartoony over-the-top version of the emotions, and in another one you'll play the most grounded and believable version that you can.

Status

Experiment with playing high-status and low-status characters.

Exercise 1: Playing High and Low Status Characters

Play a series of short (1-2 min) two player scenes.

In the first scene, **Player A** acts high status, **Player B** acts low status.

In the next one, **Player B** acts high status, **Player C** acts low status.

Keep taking turns until everyone had a chance to play both high and low status characters.

Tip: Try playing typically high status characters (king, priest, business owner, etc.) as low status, and playing typically low status characters (janitor, kid, intern, etc.) as high status.

Exercise 2: Gradually Change Status

Two players play a scene, one starts as high status, the other one starts as low status, and their goal is to gradually change their status to the opposite one by the end of the scene.

Exercise 3: Switch Status

Two players play a scene, one as a high status character another one as low status. The third player occasionally says "switch", and the players continue the scene, switching their status.

SUBVERT EXPECTATIONS

Practice coming up with unusual and creative ideas.

Any Player - Come up with the initial prompt

It should be a **Location**, a **Character**, or an **Action**. Examples:

> **Location**: Zoo, Spaceship, Desert, Metropolis.
> **Character**: Vampire, Inventor, Troll, Space Pirate.
> **Action**: Knight fighting a dragon, thief stealing a painting.

Player A - Subvert the idea

Say what you'd normally assume or expect to see, then make your idea wildly different: introduce a weird, interesting, surprising detail, reverse or exaggerate a key characteristic, make an absurd statement about it, create a surprising contradiction. The stupider - the better.

> Knight fighting a dragon ➜ Knight rescuing a dragon.
> Spaceship ➜ Spaceship piloted by vegetables.
> Inventor ➜ Posh gorilla-inventor.

Player B - Justify the subverted idea

Invent an explanation for the weirdness, describe how it came to be, make it make sense. If this unusual thing is true - why is it true?

> The knight is rescuing a dragon because an evil princess has captured it to fight other monsters for the public's entertainment.

Then subvert the idea in a different way, for the next player to justify.

> The knight is fighting a bunny.

OUT OF PLACE

Collaboratively improvise an interesting and unique setting.

Any Player

Come up with a suggestion for a location.

> An ancient desert.

Player A

Name a weird, surprising, absurd, or an out-of-place detail. Think about what you'd normally assume or expect to see here, and add something wildly different, something that doesn't belong here.

> There's an old ship stuck in the middle of the desert.

Player B

Justify the existence of this detail - explain how it came to be, come up with a backstory for it, make it make sense.

> After the sea dried out, an ancient seafaring civilization had to adapt. They attached wheels to their ships so they could sail the sands.

Then, come up with a detail for the next player to justify.

> A skull with three eye sockets is half-buried in the sand.

COMBINE INCOMPATIBLE IDEAS

In this game we will practice a fun method for coming up with creative ideas, and use it to pitch exciting and interesting scenes.

Players take turns, suggest key scene elements

Take turns coming up with prompts for: **Setting**, **Character**, **Action**.

The goal is to suggest ideas that don't belong together, that are as unrelated from each other as possible, fit together the least. What kind of character would you least expect to see in the location? What kind of action you would not expect this character to take?

> **Player A** pitches a Setting prompt:
> Sci Fi Laboratory
> **Player B** pitches a Character prompt:
> Angry ghost
> **Player C** pitches an Action prompt:
> Performing a Heist

Pitch a scene based on these prompts

A player pitches a scene (characters in a location doing something) that combines these ideas in a way that makes sense, and justifies how that happened, explains how this scene came to be.

> A sci fi laboratory is working on a hyper-advanced AI, projected as a 3D hologram (our "ghost"). A group of highly advanced thieves infiltrate the laboratory and steal this AI in order to liberate it from the scientists.

ABSURD ASSOCIATIONS

In this game our goal is to practice making surprising connections between the ideas that are not normally associated with each other.

Any Player: Suggest a topic

A topic can be a location, a character, or an action.

> Birthday party.

Player A: Make Absurd Associations

Any topic has related aspects - ideas closely associated to it, things it makes you think of. An aspect can be a character, location, thing, action, adjective, or a detail related to the suggestion.

> **Aspects**: Birthday cake, magician, clown, balloons, celebration, milestone, important event, inviting friends, presents.

Your challenge is to take an aspect of a topic, and associate it to something closely related to this aspect, but wildly different from the topic itself, not normally associated with it. Say it in this format:

> *[Topic]* makes me think of *[an aspect of the Topic]*. *[This aspect]* makes me think of *[association wildly unrelated to the topic]*.

> **Birthday party** makes me think of a **birthday magician**. **Magician** makes me think of **Voldemort**.

Player B: Combine the topic and an association

Combine the original topic with the absurd association, and justify it.

> Voldemort is hired as a magician at a birthday party, and has to attend because he fell on hard times after his defeat and really needs the money.

Comedy

Wildly Inappropriate Response

In this exercise we'll practice deliberately introducing an absurd element into the scene.

Two players play a 3-line scene:

Player A
Says the first line, trying to establish a very ordinary, normal, boring, unremarkable Base Reality.

I'm just going to take the dog out for a quick walk.

Player B
Responds with the the craziest, most absurd and surprising thing they can think of. Be bold, go wild, break expectations, make it as weird, stupid, and ridiculous as you can.

Ugh, again? Why can't we just teach the dog to drive so he can take himself for a walk whenever he pleases.

Player A
Reacts to the craziness as a normal person would.

I doubt we'll find the driving instructor who's up to the task.

Accusation

In this game we'll practice "justifying" absurd behaviors.

Player A will play the "Voice of Reason" character, and Player B will play the Comic character.

Player A
Accuses the player B of something absurd.

Why did you fill our bathtub with turtles?

Player B
"Yes And"s the accusation by admitting that they did it on purpose, and then provides an explanation for why they did it, justifies it in a way that makes sense from their character's perspective.

They're natural stress relievers, way better than rubber ducks!

Player A
Pushes back against this justification, challenges it in some way.

But how are we going to use the shower now?

Player B
Justifies that again, trying to make it more absurd and specific.

Consider it an opportunity to embrace nature! Every shower can be like a gentle rainforest experience. Plus, turtles are excellent listeners. It's like having a therapist in there with you!

Premise Lawyer

In this game we'll practice "justifying" absurd opinions and beliefs to ground the comedic scenes in reality and make the character's more relatable and believable (which only makes the absurd opinions stand out even more, making them even funnier).

Player A
States a weird belief or stance on something.

"Monkeys should replace all 5th Grade Teachers!"
"Everyone should have a prom every year of their life!"
"Sharks are really puppies stacked together in a rubber suit".

Player B
Acts as a "premise lawyer", and explains why that's a true and totally obvious and reasonable stance to hold.

Of we should replace the teachers with monkeys, why haven't we done that yet?

Monkeys are adept learners, excellent at mimicking human behavior, don't require a salary, and what better way to keep children engaged than having a teacher who can literally swing from the rafters?

Make it Weirder!

Practice improvising unusual and comedic scenes.

Establish the Base Reality (who, what, where)
Establish the normal, ordinary world for these characters.

A kid and his parents are celebrating the kid's birthday party.

Discover the Unusual Thing
Play the scene until something unusual, surprising, unexpected, or weird happens. Carefully listen for subtle, slightly unusual things. Or deliberately introduce some absurd or unusual element.

The birthday cake is made out of broccoli.

Justify the Unusual Thing.
Invent an explanation for the unusual thing, provide a rationale for the weird behavior. If this unusual thing is true - why is it true?

The parents want to help their kid to lose weight.

Heighten the Unusual Thing
Make the unusual thing progressively weirder, heighten the absurdity, take the scene farther away from the ordinary reality we've established. Play the scene until you've made it as absurd as possible.

A present is weight-watcher membership.
The only guest is the sports coach.
The birthday wish is "better parents".

Storytelling

Unscripted

In this game, we'll collaboratively pitch a fun movie idea.

Take turns, suggest 3 prompts

1. Setting where the story takes place.

> Wild west, magic library, abandoned spaceship.

2. Protagonist, the main hero of the story.

> Rebellious princess, broken robot, unlucky viking, lovesick goblin.

3. Objective the hero will pursue (a problem they'll try to solve or a goal they'll strive to achieve).

> Defeat a monster, find a treasure, deliver an item, do a heist, capture a creature, rescue someone, escape captivity, defend a location.

Take turns, pitch a movie idea together

Then we take turns, each player saying one sentence at a time.

We describe a movie trailer based on these prompts, trying to make it as exciting as possible. Describe the world of the story, the main characters, the biggest challenge the hero must overcome, and some dramatic or cinematic moments from the trailer.

After the pitch, we can ask each other questions about the story, or discuss ideas on how to improve the pitch and develop the story.

Story Seeds

Practice developing ideas for fun stories and adventures.

Any Player: Come up with a Setting Idea

Come up with the setting where the story takes place. Examples:

> Pirate ship, magic castle, colony on an alien planet, ice age.

Player A: Pitch the Story Hook

Describe the scene at the beginning of the story that introduces the problem the heroes need to solve or the goal they will strive to achieve.

> The heroes visit the King's castle, and meet the King who has been turned into a rat by an evil Vizier.

Player B: Pitch the Climax of the story

Pitch a scene at the end of the story where the heroes overcome the most important and difficult challenge and achieve their goal.

> The climax takes place at the top of the Vizier's tower, where the heroes have to fight the animated suits of armor in order to steal the wand that can turn the King back into a person.

Keep taking turns pitching the adventure hooks and the corresponding climaxes in this setting.

Micro Brainstorms

Our goal is to quickly brainstorm an outline of a complete adventure.

How to play

Players take turns. On your turn, describe the next key element of an adventure in a single sentence:

> **Setting**: Where does the adventure take place?
> **Objective**: What goal do the heroes need to achieve?
> **Character**: An interesting character the heroes will meet.
> **Hook**: Describe the scene that draws the heroes into action.
> **Challenge 1**: An obstacle the heroes must overcome.
> **Challenge 2**: An obstacle the heroes must overcome.
> **Challenge 3**: An obstacle the heroes must overcome.
> **Climax**: The final epic challenge, overcoming which resolves the story and enables the heroes to achieve their objective.

> **Setting**: Egypt-themed fantasy city.
> **Objective**: Retrieve the stolen amulet of the Scorpion King.
> **Character**: Jebediah, fanatical cult leader of Scorpion King.
> **Hook**: The heroes witness the cultists stealing the amulet.
> **Challenge 1**: Chase the cultists over the rooftops.
> **Challenge 2**: Capture and interrogate one of the cultists.
> **Challenge 3**: Infiltrate the pyramid guarded by cultists.
> **Climax**: In the ceremonial chamber of the pyramid, defeat the Scorpion King the cultists resurrected using the amulet.
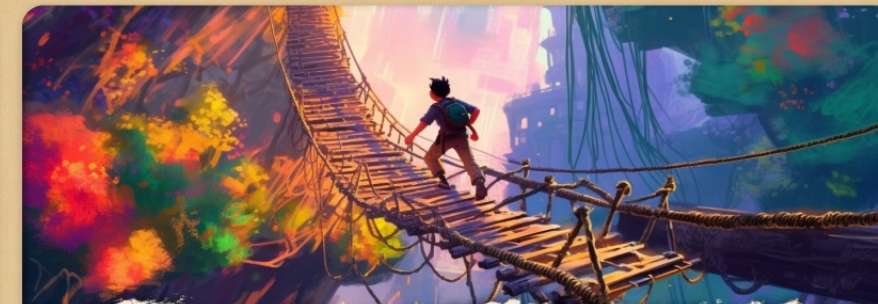
Wing it!

Use improvised creative problem solving to overcome fun challenges.

Interesting scenes revolve around the heroes striving to overcome a challenge, an obstacle or a problem they must solve in order to move closer to their goal. In this game we will practice improvising cool challenges the heroes will face throughout the story.

Any Player - Set up the Story

Come up with a character and a goal they're striving to accomplish.

> A group of rowdy pirates want to steal a flying ship.

Player A - Introduce a Challenge

Describe an obstacle the hero encounters on their journey, a challenge or a complication they face, an interesting problem they need to solve.

> The ship has already left the skyport, and the only thing fast enough to chase it down is a pegasus. There are stables of pegasi nearby, but the rowdy alpha-pegasus will throw off anyone he doesn't deem worthy to ride him.

Player B - Creatively overcome the Challenge

Describe a creative solution to this problem.

> The pirates craft a cardboard cutout of a beautiful mare to distract the alpha-pegasus while they steal some of the other pegasi.

Come up with a challenge for the next player to overcome.

> How do the pirates board the well-guarded ship?

Story Wars

Improvise an epic battle between two legendary opponents.

Take turns, establish the 4 components of the scene

1. Protagonist (with a special Power)

> Cooky inventor with a portal gun, ninja with Spider-Man powers, the pope with a sniper rifle, caveman with a pet veolciraptor.

2. Antagonist (with a special Power)

> Evil necromancer who can raise zombies, hyper-intelligent raccoon on a hoverboard, space pirate with a jetpack.

3. Battlefield

> Top of a skyscraper, desert oasis, graveyard, rope bridge, steampunk factory, subway, moon base, pirate ship.

4. Victory Condition

> Destroy their opponent, defeat the opponent without violence, defend their base, win a race, chase, an election, convince someone to go on a date, gain the most twitter followers, survive the longest in a zombie apocalypse, be the first to capture a beast, win at hide and seek.

Take turns describing the battle

On your turn, describe the actions of one of the opponents, creatively using the Battlefield and their Power to their advantage. Escalate the battle until we have a clear winner.

Improvising Challenges

The first player suggests a location, then players take turns coming up with challenges the heroes may encounter in this location.

Action Challenges
Physical conflict against other characters and creatures.
> Combat (or creative ways to avoid it), chasing, racing, riding, piloting, heists, defending castles, escaping monsters.

Roleplaying Challenges
The heroes want something from an NPC (information, item, favor, help, some action on their part, etc.), but NPC's desires and goals are at odds with the heroes, creating conflict.
> Negotiation, deception, intimidation, interrogation, persuasion.

Exploration Challenges
Overcome environmental obstacles and hazards. Journey through, explore, enter, or escape dangerous or guarded places.
> Rivers, chasms, locked doors, traps, ambushes, natural disasters, sinking ships, scaling cliffs, escaping collapsing buildings.

Technical Challenges
Deal with interesting or dangerous technologies or magics.
> Repair devices, disarm bombs, hack robots, stop magic rituals.

Stealth Challenges
Perform any task or other type of challenge without getting noticed.
> Hide, sneak in and out of places, infiltrate, steal, spy, smuggle.

Setbacks and complications
Deal with extra problems and misfortunes outside of your control.
> Injury, equipment failure, betrayal, misinformation, getting captured, failed plans, time pressure, rivals, innocent bystanders.

Expert Game

A good Game Master (and roleplayer) should be ready to improvise information about the characters and the world even when they're put on the spot. In this game we'll practice that.

Player A becomes an "Expert"
One player becomes an "Expert" on everything in the world. Their goal is to confidently and convincingly answer any question on any topic (even if they have no idea what they're talking about).

Other Players take turns asking questions
Players take turns, each asking the "Expert" a question, and the expert gives a convincing and believable answer (like a good Game Master would when player asks them a question).

Play one round of the game with the questions about the real world:

> How is a marker made? Why is the sky blue? How did they build the pyramids? Who invented pizza? What's the story behind the first video game? What is the most seen picture in the world?

And one round of the game with the questions about a fictional world:

> Why did the dragons disappear? What does this strange lever do? Why was the town's mayor seen sneaking through the alley? Who is the most powerful wizard? How did is the most feared pirate get his nickname? What's causing that rumbling noise?

What if?

In this game we will build a world around a fantastic premise.

Player A: Come up with a fantastic premise
What makes the fictional reality different from ours?

> Invention of a device that lets people read each other's minds.

Player B: Explain the premise
Come up with an explanation for the premise. How did it come to be?

> A brilliant neuroscientist wanted to enhance human empathy.

Player C: Describe the direct consequences
If this were true, what would happen?

> Privacy vanishes, shared experiences become the social norm.

Player D: Describe the secondary consequences
What are the consequences of these consequences?

> A new economy forms around "experience creators", introverts and private individuals fight for privacy and face ostracism.

Player E: Explore the final outcome
What is the ultimate result of this premise?

> Society splits into "Sharers" who have merged into a hivemind, and "Individualists" who fight against it.