

History at Home - Riddles and Games

Parlor Games

Kids have been playing indoors on rainy days for as long as there have been houses. Here a few fun games you can try. If you want to share, you can take a video and post it on Facebook. Be sure to tag the Historic Commission and always be sure to ask your parents before posting anything online.

Blind Man's Bluff

People have been playing Blind Man's Bluff since at least Ancient Greece and evidence of the game can be found all over the world.

This one is sort of like tag with a twist. One player gets blindfolded. Spin them around three or four times, just enough that they're disoriented, and then everyone else tries not to get caught. Once the blindfolded player manages to catch someone, everyone freezes and the blindfolded player has to guess who they caught. If they can, then that person becomes the next one to be blindfolded.

Lookabout

Ever played I Spy? Well, Lookabout is a very similar sort of game. One player chooses a small object, something like a pen or a spoon or a small toy, and hides it somewhere. It has to be visible but could be up high, or really low, or in with a bunch of other things. The other players then come back into the room and have to search for the object. When you find it, don't say anything. Just go and sit down without telling anyone. The last person who hasn't found it hides the next object.

Pass the Slipper

You can play this game with anything, but they called it Pass the Slipper because that's what they played with in Victorian times.

Everyone forms a circle with one player in the center. One player in the circle starts with the object behind their back. The player in the center closes their eyes while the players on the outside pass the object around behind their backs. When the player in the center opens their eyes again, they stop passing the object immediately and the player in the center has to guess who has it behind their back. If they're correct, then they swap places with the person who had it. Otherwise, they stay in the center and keep playing.

The Laughing Game

This one can be a hard one, but guaranteed to get at least a few laughs.

Everyone starts out sitting in a circle. Going in turns, each player says either 'Ha', 'Ho', or 'Hee'. If a player laughs at any time, they're immediately out. The last player left wins.

Outdoor Games

Quoits

You've probably played this one before without even knowing it. Quoits is an old name for the game Ring Toss.

Take a stick (or five if you want a challenge) and push it into the dirt so it stands up straight. It should be about a foot tall. If you set up 5, they should make a square with one in the center. Next, take some rope or wooden rings or anything else that can make a six-inch circle that stays rigid. Each player takes turns throwing rings to try and get it to land on the stick. If you're playing with 5 sticks, then the one in the center is worth 2 points to the 1 point of the outer sticks. The first player to score 10 points wins.

How Many Miles to London?

This game is like Blind Man's Bluff with a twist. One player starts blindfolded. This player is "It". The other players stand in a line some distance from It. This could be as close or as far as the players agree on. From there, the players ask It for directions. The players must follow these directions. Then they guide the blindfolded It to where their line started from and It must follow the same set of instructions. When It believes they are where the players are, they can reach out to try and tag someone. The other players can duck or dodge, but cannot move their feet. If It tags someone, they are the new It and the game starts again.

Barley Break

Start by making a shape on the ground. It can be any shape you want and it has to be at least big enough that two players can run through it at the same time. One player is "It" and they cannot leave this zone. The other players must try to run through this zone without getting caught. If they get tagged, they join hands with It and help to catch others. Each player added joins the line but only the ends of the line can tag. The rest of the line can make it hard for other players to cross, getting in their way or trapping them. The last person left wins and is It for the next round.

Riddles

Riddles have been a popular way to pass the time since at least the Bronze Age. Why not give these a try? You can find the answers at the end of the packet. If you answer all of these, see if you can make one up and share it with your friends.

1. What 8 letter word can have a letter taken away and it still makes a word. Take another letter away and it still makes a word. Keep on doing that until you have one letter left. What is the word?
2. The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
3. Can you name three consecutive days without using the words Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday?
4. What comes once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?
5. What is more useful when it is broken?
6. It walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon and three legs in the evening. What is it?
7. What always runs but never walks, often murmurs, never talks, has a bed but never sleeps, has a mouth but never eats?
8. The more you have of it, the less you see. What is it?

Word Search

i n w r t a e k e b n h c j d
i d o t e b n r m o c o r d n
u s p i j c o c i q y u t r u
e p m a t l o t e f t s a p o
z u t j p a a r f s c e u y r
h e q x y r v a d a t m f c g
i b e i o z r r q s u o o o l
s d k t t m x d e z r l r z a
t j s e q n p h f s o i p s i
o e f v q m a o f n e j u h r
r p l a n t a t i o n r c r u
i f f e d e r a l j f q p l b
c l a i o b l y r e t e m e c
p q q s y a r m i w j v c n v
n o i t a t i l i b a h e r m

ancestors
antique
burial ground
cemetery
colonial
explore
farm
federal
historic
house
past
plantation
preservation
records
rehabilitation
restoration

Codes to Break

All through our history, people have needed to find ways to keep secrets. One of the ways they did this was by putting things in code. One of the ways they would do this was by swapping one letter for another in a word. Can you figure out which historic document this text was taken from? Here's a hint: when it was written, the United States was still using the British spellings for some words.

Jr gur Crbcyr bs gur Havgrq Fgngrf, va Beqre gb sbez n zber cresrpg Havba, rfgnoyvfu Whfgvpr, vafher qbzrfgvp Genadhvyvgl, cebivqr sbe gur pbzzba qrsrapr cebzbgr gur trareny Jrysner, naq frpher gur Oyrffvatf bs Yvoregl gb bhefryirf naq bhe Cbfgrevgl, qb beqnvva naq rfgnoyvfu guvf Pbagvghgvba sbe gur Havgrq Fgngrf bs Nzrevpn.

If you could solve that one, here's another one that's a little harder. See if you can solve this and find out which one of our presidents gave the speech this text was taken from.

Dv xsllhv gl tl gl gsv nllm. Dv xsllhv gl tl gl gsv nllm rm gsrh wvxzww zmw wl gsv lgsvi gsrnth, mlg yvxzfhv gsvb ziv vzhb, yfg yvxzfhv gsvb ziv sziv, yvxzfhv gszg tlzo droo hviev gl litzmrav zmw nvzhfiv gsv yvhg lu lfi vmvitrvh zmw hprooh, yvxzfhv gszg xszoovmtv rh lmv gszg dv ziv droormt gl zxxvkg, lmv dv ziv fmdroormt gl klhgklmv, zmw lmv dsrxs dv rmgvmw gl drm, zmw gsv lgsvih, gll. - Kivhrwvmg Qlsm U Pvmmvwb

Answers

1. Starting
2. Footsteps
3. Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow
4. the letter e
5. an egg
6. a person
7. a river
8. Darkness

Cipher 1

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Cipher 2

We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too. - President John F Kennedy