

MUSICAL GAMES

Musical: A suggestion for a new Broadway musical is taken and the team performs an abbreviated version of the musical in the time allowed. It usually starts with an opening number, continues with a little bit of a dialogue, then oftentimes a ballad and finally a big finale. Each number should have some dialogue between songs that help separate the numbers and add some story to connect everything together.

Tips: synchronized (not pre-planned) dance moves impress the audience / two people who can sing the same thing at once kills! (usually easiest to do with a repeated chorus and agreed upon ending moment) / a big finale with everyone involved is a great way to finish this game

Suggested ask fors: What's the name of the new musical in France? / Can I get a name for a musical that no one would ever want to see?

Piano Bar: Three members of the team get a suggestion for why they are reuniting. They talk and reminisce and eventually begin to remember the old days, where they sang some of their favorite songs. These songs are based on audience suggestions for music styles from basic genres. Each in turn reminds their partner about a particular song they used to sing (e.g. "Remember that heavy metal song you used to sing about the dangers of pancakes?"). Their partner remembers it fondly and sings it for us. The scene concludes after all three have sung their song.

Tips: whatever your topic, you should strive to conclude the song with some sort of punch line / your strongest singer should go last, your weakest should go second / a callback to the first or second person's song is great if the third person can deliver it

Suggested ask fors: What might bring three old friends together after all those years? / Give me a reunion that most people will never celebrate.

Radio: One member serves as caller while the other four will receive genres of music they will be using for their individual stations. The caller will kneel in front of the four performers and point to one of them at a time. When a performer is pointed at, they will begin to sing songs (real or made up) from their radio station. The moment the caller points at someone else, they begin singing a song from their station. The caller goes back and forth listening to different stations, pointing at each member of their team as often as they choose.

Tips: get one popular genre (country, Broadway), one that is little known (polka, zydeco), one that doesn't really exist (songs about monkeys station, angry music) and one of your choosing / once you leave a song—don't come back to it

/ keep pointing at your singer when they don't know any more of the lyrics and the singer has got to come up with something

Suggested ask fors: Name one of the most popular genres of music. / How about one that you think this guy will know nothing about? / Could I have an animal and a decade, please? (Great, camel songs from the 70's!—then sing real songs from the era, inserting camel references into them, or something like that.)

Song Cue: One suggestion for the scene is taken and the caller sits nearby, waiting for an opportunity to call for a song. As the scene is going along, the caller can take any line one of the actors has just spoken and call out “song cue.” When they do so, the person who said the last line must break out into a song, using the line they have spoken as the inspiration for their song. Once all the members of the scene (typically three people) have sung, the game comes to an end.

Tips: cue the person to sing after an especially long (or extremely short) sentence / the last line should obviously be a punch line / move the scene forward with a big revelation (some sort of plot twist) in the song once, if not twice

Suggested ask fors: What's an everyday problem people might have to overcome? / What's something kids do that gets them into trouble?

VERBAL RESTRICTION GAMES

Alphabet: Two or three people begin a scene based on an audience suggestion. Each time someone starts, the very first word they say must begin with the next letter of the alphabet. So if person one starts a sentence with the letter “a” the second person's sentence must start with the letter “b” and so on. The goal is to get all the way through the alphabet and complete the scene. If anyone starts with an incorrect lettered word, they are moved to the back of the line and are replaced by someone who has been waiting behind them.

Tips: think of words that seem wrong but are right (e.g. “knife” or “pneumonia” as well as sounds or foreign language words) / don't list lots of things (e.g. names, animals, colors, whatever) / don't forget to physicalize this game so it doesn't turn into a talking heads scene

Suggested ask fors: Could I have something that people might fight over? / Where would be a good place for a daring escape?

Gibberish / English Switch: A scene is started based off an audience suggestion. The scene begins in English (or gibberish) and continues that way until the caller calls for the opposite one by saying “English!” or “gibberish!” At that moment they all begin to talk in the new style and continue to do so as it goes back and forth throughout the scene.

Tips: switch your speakers during mid-sentence so they look like geniuses when they effortlessly switch from one to another / switch to gibberish when your actors are about to say something “inappropriate” / start slowly on the switches and consider having a flurry of them all on one actor toward the end for a big finale

Suggested ask fors: I’d like an unusual job for someone to have. / Could you give me a “sticky situation”?

Silent Scene: After a suggestion is gotten, the players begin a scene. The scene, obviously, has no dialogue in it—but emotional noises and sound effects are acceptable.

Tips: use sound effects in as many creative ways as you can—if you think about this, you can find a lot of funny options / emotional noises and sound effects could be provided by an offstage character / keep your character physical and avoid situations that would require you even to pantomime talking

Suggested ask fors: Could I get a physically demanding job? / Would you please give me an era from long ago?

Word Count: A scene suggestion is gotten and each player is given a certain number of words they must say every time they speak. Two or three players begin on stage with a single digit number (usually a lower number, although one might have a high single digit number). Whenever anyone uses the wrong number of words, they are out and one of the members of the team who was offstage comes in and takes over their part, with the same number of words to speak.

Tips: repeating a word or not being able to finish a thought is funny—as long as you don’t do it too much (remember that going to the well with a comedic concept too often kills the concept) / the audience is always impressed with sequences where everyone contributes to the scene in rapid fire order while getting their number of words down perfectly / the “one word person” and the “lots of words person” are the ones who are set up to get the most big laughs

Suggested ask fors: Could I have a location where there’s bound to be trouble? / I’ll need some kind of natural disaster, please.