Murder Mystery Dinner

Instructions

Instructions for the leader

Before you start

- The murder mystery dinner works for any group of ten or more people.
- It doesn't matter whether the players know each other or not. You can play it with middle schoolers, youth groups and adult groups. It takes very little preparation and is a great experience for everyone involved.
- The murder mystery dinner combines elements of drama education and role-playing with the group dynamics of getting to know each other.

Preparation

- Label the rooms.
- Explain how the game works.
- Put up the victim list: WHO, WHEN, WHERE.
- Hand out the characters to the players. Allow plenty of time for this.
- Set the playing time. Usually two hours.

Introduction

- New York, 1929 ...
- Colonel Garcia Cortez has come back to America after a long time in Europe, where he followed the trail of his old Spanish noble family. He still had some business to take care of, houses to sell and friends to visit.
- For the date given, the colonel has invited old friends, acquaintances and well-known people from the city to his dinner party.
- But a murderer is hiding among them. Can the murderer be found?

How to play

- Every player plays a role during the dinner.
- One person gets the "murderer card" and becomes the murderer. Their job is to kill as many people as possible during the party WITHOUT BEING NOTICED. Not for real, of course, but with the murderer card: the murderer shows it to the chosen victim.
    - The murderer may only kill one person at a time.
    - The murderer may not kill a police officer or the judge.

- The player who was killed is out of the game and, as a last act, signs the “victim list.” This list shows who was killed, when and where.
  - Players who are out may not go back to their old role. But they can keep playing without a role.
  - They may not give the other players any tips or clues.
  - They write WHO, WHEN and WHERE on the victim list.
- The police officers’ job is to find the murderer. To do this, they can check the victim list or question witnesses and suspects.
- Once they have a specific suspicion and a chain of evidence that holds together, the police officers can go to the judge and ask for the suspect to be charged. The judge can agree or refuse if the arguments or evidence aren’t convincing. If the judge agrees to the charge, the judge asks the accused: **ARE YOU THE MURDERER?** The accused must then show the murderer card and is arrested.
- But if they charged the wrong person, the police have only one more try!
  - Gather evidence
  - Question witnesses
  - Question suspects
  - Bring the charge to the judge

Variation

- If you know your group well, you can pick characters that fit your players. That way you can break up some fixed roles in the group, and players can step into new roles and try themselves out.

Have fun hunting down the murderer!

Hans Christian Graß

Questions? Write to us: thepulse.org/en/contact

Murder Mystery Dinner was created by Hans Christian Graß; the camp version, by Sem Dietterle. Free for your work with young people. What you may do with this material: Terms of use (thepulse.org/en/terms/).