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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“Celebrity Celebrations”

Host Guide

For mini versions

by Stephanie Chambers

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Host's guide

It is easy to prepare and run a mystery party. We recommend that as host you should also take a role and participate along with everyone else. With our mysteries, not even the murderer knows who did it. But with a little intelligence and a careful ear for important clues, it is possible to solve the mystery.

Preparing for the party

- 1 Open the kit. The name of the kit shows the recommended minimum number of guests and the maximum number of guests for which this kit caters.
- 2 Decide when you will be having the party, where and who will play each role. You should read the description of each character and try to select a role for each guest. Or you may like to give your guests a choice of the roles not yet taken and let them decide for themselves. It is better if people play roles that are as different as possible from their normal lives.
- 3 We recommend that you tell your guests to: "Please dress up as your character. Over dressing and going to extremes is highly recommended." We generally find that the more people put into the event, the more fun it is.
- 4 Decide how you want to do the invitations. You can print out the Word or Adobe Acrobat versions and handwrite the details, or you can type in your party details before you print it out. There are four invitations per page. You can print them in color or black and white or you may like to print them on colored paper. If your guest is not being a participant (ie a suspect or one of the optional characters), then you should delete the word "Character:" before you print out their invitation.
- 5 The invitations refer your guests to read a web page to find out more details about their character (ie their character's description and their dress suggestions). They should try and read the descriptions of all of the suspects before they come to the party. We sometimes hide clues in these. However, they don't need to read the descriptions of the optional characters.

- 6 You may like to have a copy of the suspect pages available at the party in case some guests didn't get time to read them before the party.
- 7 Cut each of the clue pages in two using a guillotine/paper trimmer or scissors. Don't read the clues beforehand as it will spoil your enjoyment of the party, and you may spoil everyone else's enjoyment by letting on that you know everything!
- 8 If it says the line may be said by "Anyone", it can be said by one of the optional characters. If there is only one optional character or no optional characters, then the suspects should take a turn saying one of these lines, however, they shouldn't say it if it is a question for their character or about their character. You may like to work out beforehand who will say each of these "Anyone" lines and write their character's name next to each one.
- 9 The "Who Did It" pages are at the end with a warning beforehand not to read the next section. Fold these unread, put them in an envelope and open it at the end of your party to find out who did it.
- 10 Print a name tag for each guest. You can print them in color or black and white or you may like to print them on thicker or colored paper. Cut these up and have some small safety pins handy.
- 11 Decorate the room just before the party (see *Décor suggestions*).
- 12 Prepare or arrange for food for the event (see *Menu suggestions*).
- 13 Prepare props (see *Preparing props*). This is optional, but recommended.
- 14 Decide whether you are going to have prizes for the party (see *Preparing prizes*). This is optional, but recommended.

Special Items

There are the following Special Items:

- A Police Report
- B Last Will and Testament
- C Medical Report

D Photos of the evidence

E Facts about bats and pictures of the bats in Jerry's study.

You should also exhibit "*The Suspect*" pages.

You can place these Special Items on a table (or two) where people can view them throughout the party. If you prefer, you can stick them on the wall. If you like, you can use a photocopier to enlarge them. If you are having people seated at tables, you may like to pass around the Special Items.

Décor suggestions

These are suggestions you might like to follow to make your place look like a wealthy mansion:

- scatter around silk scarves and velvet cushions
- as the host collected bats, you may like to have a few bat pictures on the walls and/or bat cut-outs hanging as mobiles from the ceiling
- stick pictures around of some of the main characters (eg Fred Astaire) as the host obviously liked them as he invited them to his party
- play the music of some of the main characters (see *The Suspects*). Start by playing 60s rock music.

If you are hosting a Halloween party, you may also like to add traditional Halloween decorations such as skeletons and carved pumpkins and dim lighting.

Menu suggestions

Eat food you would find in America. Search for recipes on the Internet (eg search for "American recipes" or specific recipes on www.google.com).

You may like to serve cocktail party food such as:

- caviar and crackers (not necessarily expensive caviar)
- vol au vents filled with corn or asparagus and cheese
- spring rolls

- filo pastry parcels with spinach and fetta cheese and pine nuts
- spicy chicken wings
- mini pizzas
- hot skewered food
- mini sweet pumpkin pies.

If you would prefer, you can serve a sit down dinner or have the food in a buffet / smorgasbord arrangement.

Preparing props

You should provide a pack of playing cards and give them to Janis Joplin and Judy Garland so they can play cards. If you can't do this, tell them to pretend they are playing cards.

There are a few props you may like to provide:

- a sign on a closed door saying "Study"
- stuff some men's clothes with newspaper or old clothes and arrange it so it looks like a man's body laying face downwards on the floor with his arms outspread. Put this body in the "Study" and close the door.
- 1960s rock music to play at the beginning of the party
- 1960s dance music to play later in the party
- a compilation tape of a few bars from the chorus of songs of the main characters (see "*The Suspect*" pages for suggestions). Don't worry if you can't find all the songs. Just play a few songs everyone knows (eg Elvis songs). You don't need to provide this if you think the people you assigned as the singing main characters will be happy to sing a few bars of their song themselves.
- Place copies of the *Special Items* on a table or table(s) which people will be able to go and see. Or if you are holding a dinner party, you may like to pass copies of these Special Items around the tables.
- If you can, hide any items which could be used to hit someone over the head. For example, you may want to hide your baseball bats in the laundry and write "Out of Bounds" on the door to the room where you hide everything. If you can't do this, tell people to pretend that these items aren't there.

Preparing prizes (optional)

This is optional, but you may like to have some prizes available to give to the people:

- who guess who did it
- with the best costume.

You can reduce the number of people you have to give a prize to by asking for details as to who, how and why the person did it.

If you do have prizes, you should let people know they exist just after you read out “*The Rules*”.

Tip: Don’t assume that only one person will guess who did it. It is best to have a prize you can divide up (eg a box of chocolates or a bag or box of Turkish Delights). If no one guesses correctly, divide the prize up amongst everyone.

If you have a color printer and some T-shirt transfers, you may like to download and print out some of our special T-shirt logos (ie “I Gussed Who Did It” and “I Had The Best Costume”). See <http://www.merrimysteries.com/tmm/prizes.htm> for details. These are free to download.

Optional: If you intend to also play the trivia game, you may like to have a prize for the first pair that find each other.

Running the party

We suggest that you run the party as follows:

- 1 Have the suspect's clue pages on a table near the entrance so people can collect their page and their name tag as they arrive. Or hand them to them as they arrive.
- 2 When everyone has arrived, read *The Rules* to everyone.
- 3 Have each suspect introduce themselves to the group by saying their character’s name and reading out their character's description (but not costume suggestions).
- 4 Check that everyone has read the “*The Suspects*” pages. If they haven’t, give them a few minutes to read them quickly. There may be important clues in “*The Suspects*” pages.

- 5 Serve your First Course (if you are serving various courses, otherwise, if you are providing food just make the food available and let people know they can eat it during the party).
- 6 Start reading out the clues of the play. Pass the booklet around to each person mentioned. If it says “Anyone” can say the clue, give it to someone who hasn't had much to say as long as it isn't about them. You may like to work out beforehand who will say each of the “Anyone” clues and write their character’s name next to each one. Make sure everyone reads out all their lines and that everyone participates.
- 7 Have the police officer (or someone else) read the police report and then let people discuss this and serve some more food (optional).
- 8 Have one of the optional characters read the will and then let people discuss this and serve some more food (optional).
- 9 Have one of the optional characters read the medical report and then let people discuss this and serve some more food (optional).
- 10 Serve hot drinks and after dinner mints (if applicable).
- 11 Ask each person to think about who did it and why and how they did it. Ask them to write down their final choice. When they are ready, go around the group and ask everyone who they think did it and why and how they did it. Or have each table discuss it and write down their nomination.
- 12 After everyone has had a guess, take the *Who Did It* pages out of their sealed envelope and read as specified.
- 13 Present the prizes (if you are providing these). If more than one person guesses correctly, give the prize to the person who has the most correct answers as to how and why the person did it. You may like to also give a prize for the person who has the best (or most creative) costume.

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The Rules

These are to be read out by the host to the whole group at the beginning of the party:

Welcome to “Celebrity Celebrations”!

As you know we have been invited here today by Jerry Oilman. Unfortunately, I have some sad news. Jerry has been murdered. Shortly after some of us arrived here, his body was found in his study. He had been murdered and then spread out with his arms open like one of his beloved bats on the floor. I will introduce the suspects to you in a moment. Please give the police and other authorities your full cooperation.

You have all been asked to remain here for questioning by the police. We must all work together to help determine who is the villain in our midst. When we do have some facts or evidence, we will read these to you.

There is no need to hurry through this and you can adlib a little if you want. You do not have to read each clue exactly as it is written – embellish it if you want. You might like to speak in slang or with an accent. For example, if you are playing a snob, you might speak as if you have a plum in your mouth. If your character is distressed, you could reveal your clues in between sobs. Act it out to the fullest. This is your chance to be dramatic!

At the end of the party you will be asked to guess who performed the crime and how and why they did it. If you work out who did it before the party ends please keep it to yourself. *Optional:* There is a prize for the people who guess who did it. There is also a prize for the person with the best costume.