

ZANY COSTUME PARTY

At first glance, this might seem an April Fool's Party. And it could be used as such. But it can go even further in nonsense, following along the lines of any of these themes: topsy-turvy, backwards, mad house, etc.

INVITATIONS: Make them as nonsensical as you wish, but be sure to include the facts of the time, place, date and cost, if any.

COSTUMES: Guests can come dressed as their suppressed desire, their ambition, or their favorite character. The men may represent the ladies and vice versa. A Simple Simon, a bearded lady would be popular.

On arrival, guests are requested to put coats on backwards before meeting other guests.

Or costumes accessories such as artificial flowers, scarf's, bells, gaudy neckties, even makeup materials, can be provided for the guests to use upon arrival to help change their personalities and get into the spirit of the party.

Committee members should be distinctive in a nonsensical way, either overdressed, or gaudily dressed.

Give prize for best costume.

DECORATIONS: Turn pictures face to wall. Turn a few things in the room upside down. A startlingly foolish house plant may be made by thrusting such articles as old umbrella frames, poker, and toasting forks into the soil of a large flower pot, and sticking almost anything on the upstanding stalks and prongs. The plant can be thus made to bloom into old gloves, tomatoes, rubbers, cold potatoes, and bananas, all on one plant! A flour sifter sports artificial flowers.

Tack up such signs as, "Happy Labor Day", "Merry Easter," "For Rent", "Do Not Disturb". Use a few misguided proverbs such as, "As you sew so shall you rip", "A stitch in time gathers no moss," etc.

GREETING GUEST: Simple Simon meets the guest. (If possible, have them go around to a rear entrance to get in. Lacking that, have them jump over a low box or rope in the doorway to get into the hall. Simple Simon and his committee turn their backs to guest on arrival and shake hands only over their shoulders.

Simon should never appear to know any of the guests. "What name please," he asks?
"What d'ya want?"

He examines each costume with a critical eye. If he passes on it, he lets the guest in with some foolish remark such as, "No one's home; There's no place like home. Home run, you're safe."

Guests who fall short of achieving the desired foolishness are warned darkly that they must pay a forfeit.

DONKEY BITE: Get the picture of a donkey such as those used for the game, "Pinning on the donkey's tail." If such isn't available, have someone draw a picture of a donkey with long ears, etc. Choose several victims. Put them in an adjoining room. Bring them out one at a time to play the game. Tell them that you are going to show them a donkey, after which they are to be blindfolded. After the blindfold is adjusted; they must then poke the donkey's ear, someone gives the finger a sharp bite. This may be done with toy animal teeth, with a spring clothes pin, or with a large clip which is used to hold paper together. The first victim will have the fun of watching the others brought in.

THE BLIND GUEST: Blindfold a player who is clever at repartee. He moves among the guests as they are scattered about the room, shakes hands with all whom he can find, engages in conversation with each, and tells each what he thinks of him or her.

SHOES SCRAMBLE: The men all remove their shoes and place them in the center of the room, then withdraw and face the walls. The shoes are mixed up and arranged in a pile. At the signal, all run for the pile, try to find their shoes, put them on, lace them up, and run back to the wall. The first to finish is the winner.

Yes, it is fair to throw unwanted shoes into the pile, slip a box of safety matches in the toe, or pull out shoestrings. The girls can use their own good judgment.

CATCH THE POTATOE:

Equipment consists of a sheet and a small round potato. Players stand in a hollow square holding the sheet. Two players are designated as "Catchers" to start off the game. They stand behind the square of players. The leader tosses a potato into the middle of the sheet and the game is on. The "Catchers" try to get the potato. They may try to get it for themselves or help the other player get it. At the same time the players holding the sheet will try to prevent either of them from getting it. It is against the rules for any player who is holding the sheet to touch the potato with his hands. If he does, he must take the place of the catcher nearest him. When a catcher is able to catch the potato in his hand, the player on the right of him at the time he caught the potato must take his place.

There may be more than two characters. One on each side would make the game much faster.

FUNNY PICS:

A 16x20 picture frame is needed for this game. The person who is "IT" takes his place behind the picture frame which has only the glass in it or nothing at all. The players then by asking questions or making funny faces seek to make "IT" laugh or smile. A timekeeper keeps the time for each person and the one who refrains from laughing the longest wins.

LIARS CONTEST:

Ask for volunteers to get up and tell the biggest "story" their imagination can conjure. Audience applause decided the winner.

NUTTY RELAY:

Divide the group into two sides: Nuts and Nitwits. Lay two rows of beans down the length of the room. At the word "go" one member from each side picks up a one-quart bottle and, holding it on his head, picks up one bean and drops it in to the bottle.

Then he goes back to his side and the next one gets the bottle and repeats the procedure. The side finishing first calls the forfeits on the losers.

TRADING FISH:

Cut some small paper fish and give each guest ten. Whenever, during the evening, one guest succeeds in fooling a fellow guest, the player fooled must give him a fish. Whenever one player does or says something funny which makes other players laugh, those who laugh must pay a penalty of giving up a fish. The player with the most fish at the end of evening, and the one with the least fish, receive comic prizes.

FOOD:

Guests will undoubtedly expect to be fooled regarding refreshment; it will cause greater surprise if the food served is delicious and not make-believe. If guests sit at small tables, cabaret style, turn chairs away from table so those guests eat with backs to the tables.