

The Three-Word Story Game

1-4 people, up to 30 minutes. Speaking or imagining is enough.

Use a place where everyone can participate comfortably. Assume everyone is already home and available, with no added travel, paid care, admission, supplies, food, or data purchase needed. Include any added cost if your arrangement differs.

YOUR THREE WORDS: umbrella, ticket, moon

Choose a character, place, and problem. Example: a traveler finds a ticket inside an umbrella, but the destination is the moon. Create individual stories or one shared story.

Time	What to do
Minutes 0-5	Confirm participants and say the three words. Choose individual stories or one shared story.
Minutes 5-10	Think of the character, setting, and problem. Writing or drawing is optional.
Minutes 10-22	Tell, write, or imagine what happens. Divide this 12-minute block equally if sharing individual stories.
Minutes 22-27	Invent a different ending. For a shared story, each person can add a sentence.
Minutes 27-30	Choose a title and put away any optional materials.

5 + 5 + 12 + 5 + 3 = 30 minutes.

Sharing time: 2 people get 6 minutes each; 3 get 4 minutes each; 4 get 3 minutes each. Alone, use the block for your own story. Anyone can pass or finish early.

Other activities and backups

Object clues: 2-4 people, 15-20 minutes. Give three clues about a visible object and take turns guessing. Use familiar objects from memory if needed.

Three-panel comic: 1-4 people, about 20 minutes. Use available paper and a pen for a beginning, middle, and ending. Describe scenes aloud if supplies are unavailable.

Picture detective: 1-2 people, about 20 minutes. Choose an accessible picture, find five details, invent a caption, then compare with the real description. Use a room object as the backup.

No new purchase means using available resources. Food, supplies, utilities, and subscriptions can still have costs.

Check the Cost, Then Play

One occasion, all participants. Write on a copy; calculations are manual.

Optional snack purchase: two people

Hypothetical US-dollar example: \$6 is available for new spending. The host buys a six-portion, ready-to-eat pack for \$4.80 including tax, on an already planned shopping trip. Assume everyone is present, existing space and dishes suffice, and there are no other added costs.

What the amount represents	Amount
Checkout payment: the whole six-portion pack	\$4.80
Two portions eaten: 2 at \$0.80 each	\$1.60
Four portions remaining: 4 at \$0.80 each	\$3.20
Money remaining: \$6 - \$4.80	\$1.20

Average purchase allocation: $\$4.80 / 2 \text{ people} = \$2.40$ each. This is not an agreement that a guest owes the host. Food used plus remaining stock equals the purchase: $\$1.60 + \$3.20 = \$4.80$.

If a \$3 delivery charge is added, payment becomes \$7.80, exceeding \$6 by \$1.80. Omit that purchase or choose a plan within available funds. Snacks are optional for the story game.

Plan one activity

Activity and date:

Participants / everyone available:

Setup + activity + cleanup time:

Supplies and space already available:

New purchases, fees, or added costs:

Total for this occasion / per person:

Funds available / amount remaining:

Usable supplies or food left over:

Backup if people or materials change:

Check actual payments afterwards. Supplies used and usable stock remaining are parts of a purchase, not extra charges. An at-home activity does not establish an avoided expense.

Optional picture source: Library of Congress, Free to Use and Reuse collections. View an image on an existing device; printing is unnecessary. Check data access or use an existing photo.

[loc.gov/free-to-use](https://www.loc.gov/free-to-use) - themed historical image collections