

A Few Activities to Survive Social Distancing

You've been through this kind of thing before. Pouring rain or driving snowstorms drive all the kids inside, and you really aren't in the mood to go anywhere else. Thus arises the problem of keeping the kids entertained while still maintaining your own sanity and keeping the peace.

Usually though, such a scenario only lasts a day or two. Now with coronavirus fears you're facing the prospect of social distancing for weeks, with no school, no museums, and no movie theatres to take the kids to.

The movie shelf has been exhausted, and besides, you know you can't just let the kids be on screens for the duration of this siege. So here are a few of the *Intellectual Takeout* staff's favorite family activities to bring your family together and keep it sane during this uncertain period.

Off-Brand Hide and Seek

Why stick to normal hide-and-seek when you can up the ante and keep the game fresh? Two variations were beloved by our staff.

First, there is ***Fright***, a favorite of our Director of Operations, Eric Teachout. This involves a group of players sitting in a closed "Waiting Room" for about fifteen minutes. During this time one or two other players, called "Frights" write a series of numbered clues, placing them around the house in a sequence to lead the other players to where the Frights are hiding.

As Eric recalls:

For example, the first clue – set in front of the door to the Waiting Room – could say, 'Mmmm... is that popcorn I smell?'

prompting the readers to go to the microwave. At the microwave, the Frights place a clue directing them to the laundry room, and so on, and so on. (The clues should be relatively easy to follow.)

When the game begins, the main group of players leaves the Waiting Room and follows the clues until they find the last one, which says “WATCH OUT!” Then they look around the room for the Frights, who are hidden, and then spring out, scare everyone and chase them back to the Waiting Room! The first people tagged become the Frights for the next round!

A second variation is [Sardines](#), beloved as a child by *Intellectual Takeout*’s editor, Annie Holmquist.

Sardines put new life into hide-and-seek when we first heard about it. Hunting down one hidden person makes the game much more competitive. And of course, having a bunch of people sitting on top of one another and spilling out of a hiding place always brings a lot of giggles!

The Play’s the Thing

Lorrie Wolf, an editorial assistant with *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, homeschools her children. She’s well-versed at filling their days with school, but also loves the ability to throw levity and creativity into home life. Accents and plays are quite popular:

On St. Patrick’s Day, for example, we usually find ourselves speaking in an Irish accent. That usually leads to pretend play for little ones, research into culture for the older kids, and inspires all sorts of shenanigans in any age group.

For the older kids, Lorrie notes that giving them freedom to stage great works to their level of interest can be an

invaluable source of entertainment.

Doing a reader's theatre of all or part of a Shakespeare play can provide days of activities. Read-throughs, finding simple props, posting advertisements around the house, and the performance itself can be part of the production process.

Bringing Back Boardgames

It's likely most families have at least one boardgame sitting around the house, especially classics such as Monopoly or Scrabble. Bring those out of the closet, or take advantage of the [proliferation of new board games](#) and bring a new one home for everyone to learn.

"If you have never played Quelf, you do not know what you are missing," said Cindy Link, the Circulation Manager for Chronicles, noting this is not a good game for excessively serious personalities, as it demands players perform various silly tasks.

You may have to stand up whenever anyone says a certain word and announce 'all hail great one!' Or maybe you'll have to talk like an angry gnome until your next turn.

Development Associate John Lucke is more than ten years younger than his siblings, but his family still managed to bond over board games. Games such as Rack-O, Uno, Monopoly, and Stratego were particular favorites in his household.

Unexpectedly having the kids at home can be a challenge, especially if both parents are working. Whether it is [learning how to homeschool the kids](#), keeping them entertained, or merely keeping them from killing each other, parenting just became a bit harder. But this coronavirus coop-up is also an opportunity for each family to grow closer together. All any of us can do is pray and try to make the best we can of this

situation.

We at *Intellectual Takeout* salute all the parents out there, and we wish the best of luck to everyone! We will get through this!

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