

# Stretch your performing skills at home with fun games

By Washington Post, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.23.20

Word Count **395**

Level **400L**



Image 1. Last year, Sasha Rotton (left) and Joseph Akinyoyenu (center) took part in a theater class at Adventure Theatre in Rockville, Maryland. The coronavirus outbreak is a good time to stretch your acting or playwriting muscles at home. Photo: David Moss/Adventure Theatre

William Shakespeare was a writer. He got stuck at home, too. He used the time to make up plays that are still loved today. Shakespeare lived in England. During the 1500s and 1600s, many people were getting sick. The illness was called the bubonic plague. Many people died.

Now the coronavirus is keeping people at home. It is a flu-like illness. Making plays might be the perfect thing to do.

Margo Brenner Collins works at Adventure Theatre MTC in Maryland. Ms. Collins says making plays can help you. You can act for your family. You can act out your feelings, too.

She says children can make up short plays. They can pick an item at home. It becomes the play's star. A couch is one idea. The couch can say it is tired. People have been sitting on it all day.

## Games That Move Your Body

Christopher Rushing works in theater, too. He knows being stuck inside is hard. This makes it more important to move, he says.

Mr. Rushing works at the Synetic Theater in Virginia. He teaches children. One game is "Super Serious Animal Yoga." Children move their bodies. They make funny positions, says Mr. Rushing. They name the positions after animals. "T. rex reaching for a spoon" is one example.

Mr. Rushing says another game is called "Yes, Let's." You do not need to talk much. You can use your body to communicate.

One person says, "Let's be popcorn." Everyone else says, "Yes, let's." Then you try your best to act like popcorn.

### **Playing Pretend**

Joanne Seelig Lamparter works at Imagination Stage in Maryland. They have a game kids love. It is called "Object Tag."

Ms. Lamparter picks up something nearby. She might pick a hairbrush. She acts like it is something else. She cannot tell people what it is.

Ms. Lamparter could act like it is a guitar. She plays its strings. Someone has to guess it is a guitar. Then another person takes a turn. They act like the hairbrush is something else.

Ms. Collins says the idea with theater is doing it with others.

"Part of what makes theater beautiful is sharing," she says.



## Quiz

1 Read the selection below from the Introduction [paragraphs 1-4].

*She says children can make up short plays. They can pick an item at home. It becomes the play's star.*

What does the author mean by the word "plays"?

- (A) making music on instruments
- (B) having fun with friends
- (C) actions in sports
- (D) stories that people act out

2 Read the selection below from the section "Games That Move Your Body."

*He knows being stuck inside is hard. This makes it more important to move, he says.*

What does the word "important" mean?

- (A) significant
- (B) difficult
- (C) joyful
- (D) tricky

3 WHY did the author write this article?

- (A) to describe how actors usually spend their time
- (B) to show the differences between writing and acting
- (C) to compare the coronavirus with the bubonic plague
- (D) to share some easy theater games to play at home

4 Read the paragraph below from the section "Playing Pretend."

*Ms. Lamparter could act like it is a guitar. She plays its strings. Someone has to guess it is a guitar. Then another person takes a turn. They act like the hairbrush is something else.*

What does the author want to explain in this paragraph?

- (A) how to play "Yes, Let's"
- (B) how to play "Let's Be Popcorn"
- (C) how to play "Object Tag"
- (D) how to play "Super Serious Animal Yoga"

## Answer Key

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