

It wasn't me!

- A game about murder, deceit and lies.

What this game is about

In this game, every player is a murder suspect. The murder happened last night and each of you had an appointment with the deceased. You are all in for questioning with the police.

What you need

4 or more players
4 or more pens/pencils
Some paper
A bowl
45 minutes of free time
5 pounds of imagination

Setup

The first thing you have to do is tear the paper into little pieces. You will need about 40, just big enough to write a name on.

Now you must find out who died. Everyone writes the name of a famous person on a piece of paper, curls it into a ball and puts it in the bowl. Then one player draws a ball from the bowl. The person on that note is dead. Remove all the other notes in the bowl.

Then everyone writes their name on a piece of paper, curls it into a ball and puts it in the bowl. The bowl represents the mind of the police, and who they think is the most probable murderer.

Finally, tear up some more paper into bigger pieces and write «LIE» in big letters on them. Make one for each player.

The structure of the game

The game is divided into 5 rounds. Each round reveals a little more about the murder and who seems most likely to have done it. In each round the players need to answer a question.

The rounds and their questions are:

1. Where did the murder take place?
2. What was the murder weapon?
3. Why did you not meet the deceased?
4. What was the motive?
5. Who killed the deceased?

Rounds

Each round is divided in two - Fact and discussion. The round always starts with facts.

When you start a round the first thing you do is to take a piece of paper from the bowl and read the name on it. That person starts the round. That person then says a fact about the thing you are about

to discuss. These facts are truths about the scene that all the characters know, and that serve as the starting point for the discussion.

Stating facts

It is important that the facts are not very precise. Don't say «It was in a restaurant» or «It was in a red car». Instead, say «It was downtown» or «There were cars there». It still narrows the place down, but leaves more to the imagination.

Here are some examples of facts from round one:

- «It was dark»
- «It was by the ocean»
- «It was in space»
- «There were many people there»
- «No blood was found on the crime scene»

Discussion

When everyone has stated one fact around the table, you start the discussion. When you discuss everyone can talk when they want. This is when you can use your «LIE» notes.

Anytime during the discussion when someone states a fact you can use your «LIE» note by turning it upside down. Then the person who just spoke has lied, which makes them seem more suspicious. Write their name on a piece of paper and put it in the bowl. Every time someone lies you write their name down and put it in the bowl.

***Example:** You have found out that the murder weapon is a gun, and in the discussion round you ask a player: «Didn't you own a gun just like that?» He says «Yes, but i threw it away.» You use your «LIE» note and state that he didn't throw it away at all – he still has it.*

When all but 2 people have used their «LIE» notes, the round ends, and you discuss who is the most probable murderer. This is an open discussion which usually ends in a vote.

Be realistic! If, for example, it's known that you owned the murder weapon, that makes you an interesting suspect.

Ending a round

When you've finished the discussion and chosen a person, write that person's name down on a note and put it in the bowl, and start the next round.

The rounds

Round one and two: «Where did the murder take place?» and «What was the murder weapon?»

In the first two rounds, use the rules above with no modifications – that is, state facts, discuss them and choose a likely suspect.

Round three: «Why did you not meet the deceased?»

The third round is a bit different from the first two. In this round you tell a story instead of stating facts. The story should not be long, but should include an event that made you miss your meeting with the deceased.

Examples of such events are:

- *«I was kidnapped»*
- *«I was stuck in cement on the street»*
- *«I won the lottery»*
- *«I missed the bus»*

The discussion is the same as previous rounds, and you ask questions about the other players' alibis. Remember to discuss who is the most probable murderer at the end of the round.

Round four: «What was the motive?»

The fourth round is also a little different. In the facts round everyone comes up with a potential motive for the murder. It doesn't need to be something you've discussed before.

Examples of motives are:

- *Betrayal*
- *Revenge*
- *Money*
- *Honor*
- *Cover-up*

The discussion round is still the same, and you should try to pin a motive on the other players. Remember to discuss who is the most probable murderer at the end of the round.

Round five: «Who killed the deceased?»

The fifth and last round has no facts or discussion. Here everyone states their theory of the murder: Who, why, how, when and where. The theory should use facts that have been stated during previous rounds. In the last round there are no «LIE» notes.

When everyone has explained their theory, all players write down who they think killed the victim on a note and put it in the bowl along with all the other notes.

It is now time to find out who the killer actually *is*. This is done by choosing a random note from the bowl and reading out the name. That person is the killer!

After the killer has been found he/she should tell the story of how the murder really went down.

Now the game is over. If you like you can look at all the names in the bowl and see who got the most notes. Maybe someone was a more likely suspect than the real killer?

Notes from the author

I have played this game many, many times now, and had fun every time. I've also played it with people that didn't know what RPGs were; they had no problem understanding it, and had a great time.

The game itself was written for the Norwegian RPG contest R.I.S.K. I used about 15 minutes on the original idea, but it changed a lot after the first play test.