

MORTAL FOOLS

INTERACTIVE GAMES FOR DIGITAL SPACES

INTRODUCTION TO MORTAL FOOLS

Mortal Fools is a multi award-winning theatre, drama and creative learning company in North East England.

We create compelling, dynamic and high-quality theatre by professional artists working as co-creators with young people and communities; helping people connect, have fun, learn and grow together. Our work is collaborative and contemporary, pushing the boundaries of spatial configuration, audience interaction and design.

We also work with adults supporting people of all ages to form better inter-personal connections – strengthening people, groups and businesses.

You can keep in touch with Mortal Fools on social media [@mortalfoolsuk](#) or by emailing Rachel.Horton@mortalfools.org.uk – we'd love to hear from you!

DIGITAL GAMES INTRODUCTION

In a short space of a few months, we've all gone from using digital platforms to communicate as and when needed, to suddenly being entirely dependent and focused on them for communication, project delivery, meetings and even events.

For many, it has been a big shift and has led to people feeling disempowered, overwhelmed and a little stuck. There's a lot of new things to learn and audiences using these platforms, don't behave in the same way as they do in real life. It has certainly been a learning curve for Mortal Fools!

First and foremost, if you're feeling overwhelmed and unsure in regards to digital platforms, don't worry – we've been there too. You're not alone in that – when lock down hit, we reinvented our young people's programme in two weeks as we were determined to continue our work and not leave our young people in lurch. But we certainly, had moments of feeling very unsure of what to do and how to do it.

Secondly, this "new normal" digital landscape, is actually full of exciting opportunities and will enable us all to work differently, to be more accessible to people not able to connect in person and to reach audiences in new ways! We've been exploring the creative potential of these digital platforms instead of simply, trying to replicate our in person activities online and we've had lots of fun with this.

This document is a little helping hand from Mortal Fools if you are thinking about using games as a way to engage with audiences; at the beginning we spent a lot of time researching and trialling different games and activities, so here we are sharing some of our suggestions and favourites – we hope you find it helpful.

Follow us on:



[@mortalfoolsUK](#)

www.mortalfools.org.uk

WARM-UPS AND SETTLING INTO THE SPACE

ANYONE WHO

Great to see who you have in the space and what things you may have in common with others. Get participants people to cover their cameras and reveal themselves when they can relate to a phrase e.g. 'Anyone who has blonde hair, likes the colour purple, has a dog, prefers daytime to night time' etc. You could also link this to any genre or topic you are teaching.

EASY INTRODUCTIONS

Name a favourite biscuit or sweet treat – something non-threatening and usually easy for people to share about themselves, helping them to get used to talking on camera and used to unmuting themselves.

YOUR CREATIVE SPACE

Can you create an I-Spy style game: In my creative space I have something blue, wooden, circular, soft, that smells nice, that I can eat etc. Give participants a list on screen or read these out, and ask them to count how many, if any, of those things they may have in their physical environment. How many do people have?

NOTE: this is not so much a competition, more so something for the participants to take their eyes off the screen for a bit and tap into the real world as well as maybe sharing what's in their environments.

BINGO

Need we say more?

WARM-UPS AND SETTLING INTO THE SPACE

LETTERS

A great way to introduce a character that you may want to develop or set a session around – you could write the letter and email or post it to the participants beforehand.

This could also be used as a great icebreaker for those to discuss the letter and what it entails and can also set out tasks for the session if the character is wanting or needing something from the participants.

PHYSICAL PROMPTS

Be prepared for a session- if you know how many people are going to attend, send out (if you have the capacity to post something small) a creative prompt that you can use in your session. For example a small stone or postcard, something that could be posted out to participants which they could then use in the session to write about, talk about, or explore.

This works really well for theatre and writing based sessions as you can ask open questions such as 'where could this stone be from?' 'what kind of character might own this stone?' 'can you describe the feeling/textures of this stone?' etc.

PHOTOS AND TEXTS

Ask participants to scroll back in their phones to one of the last photos they've taken- can they use this as a visual prompt for a story, free writing, script. Can they look back at a text conversation and turn this into a fictional script?

BOOKS

Same as above but take a line from a book as a prompt - participants can use a book they're currently reading.

CALMING THE SPACE

MOMENTS OF MEDITATION

Participants can switch off mics and cameras for this and it could be a nice relaxing and safe way for them to try meditation without feeling 'looked at'. There are plenty of basic scripts online for body scans that you can adapt or a simple breathing exercise.

GAMES FOR ENERGY

ONE WORD STORIES

Using either the chat box or spoken get each participant to give a word which will ultimately create a story as a whole. Start with a sentence that the group can continue on from and encourage them to be silly and take it wherever they like.

MYSTERIOUS ZOOM ACCOUNT

If you have access to another device or laptop and have one or more emails, you could set up another zoom account from a 'character'. The character may send questions/exercises or prompts through the chat box. You can name them but keep their microphone and camera off.

I NOTICE

Freewriting exercise tapping into the senses: Ask the participants to write down or think about what they notice around them - what can they hear, see, smell, taste - close by or in the distance?

PICTIONARY

You could do a screen share of this on paint or just get someone to use their notebook and keep showing the participants where they are up to.

CHARADES

2 TRUTHS | LIE

NAME, PLACE, ANIMAL, THING

The whole group is given a letter. Everyone has to come up with a famous person's name, place, animal and thing beginning with that letter. The first person to type in the chat box wins.

DAFT DICTIONARY

Person 1 states a random word (frog), Person 2 gives a random word (bin), Person 3 then has 30 seconds to give the dictionary definition of a 'frog bin'. The other members can write questions in the chat box to help

TEMPLE RUN

One person is the temple run master and creates a series of actions – like "boulder", "fire ball" etc and participants have to get on their feet and "jump" out the way of the danger in a set way in response to each thing. When participants respond too slowly, at the wrong time or with the wrong move – they are out.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

- Use technology that's user friendly, easy to set up and reliable.
- Use platforms that people are already familiar with and build in time to "train" audiences and "test" during pre-event events. No point picking a platform that is fantastic and no one can use the functionality or participate in the way you intended.
- Digital and Zoom fatigue- have realistic expectations of your sessions – digital fatigue is worse when people engage on their laptops. For every hour spent on Zoom, you need 1.5hrs to recover which is why people end up feeling so tired, headachy, grumpy and disengaged as your brain has to work extra hard to process everything.
- Many folks choose to engage via their phones instead so be mindful of platform functionality on a phone when choosing the right platform.
- Lean into the creative opportunities on your chosen platform – you can do lots of interesting things.
- Define what you want the audience experience to be – you are responsible for the energy and experience of participants.

THANK YOU & KEEP IN TOUCH:

Thank you for reading and we hope you find this resource helpful.

You can keep in touch with Mortal Fools on social media @mortalfoolsuk or by emailing Rachel.Horton@mortalfools.org.uk – we'd love to hear from you!

Find us online at: www.mortalfools.org.uk