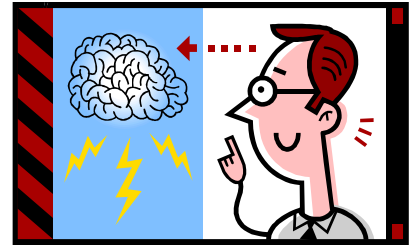


Tips for Telling BrainTeasers

BrainTeasers can be a great group or party activity for friends and family.

Some people love BrainTeasers and won't easily give up when trying to figure them out.

But most people are reluctant to exert a lot of mental effort, especially if they think they'll be frustrated in the end anyway when they fail to come up with the correct answer.



Here are some strategies to keep more people involved longer in solving BrainTeasers.

Start Easy

Start with easier BrainTeasers. If your listeners succeed at solving these, they're more likely to want more. As they gain confidence, you can increase the level of difficulty.

Example

"A pitcher throws a baseball 90 mph. The ball comes to a complete stop and returns directly to the pitcher. How is this possible?"

Answer Yes/No Questions

Let your audience ask a series of questions that can be answered "yes" or "no" (or sometimes "maybe"). You can limit it to 20 or so questions or keep accepting questions until the audience either solves the BrainTeaser or gives up and asks for the answer.

Example

Question: "Did the ball bounce off anything?" Answer: "No."

Give Hints

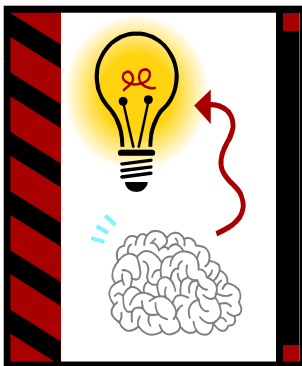
If your audience seems on the verge of giving up, and you don't want them to, offer a few hints.

Example

"Think about all the directions in which a pitcher can throw a ball."

Personalize It

Adapt BrainTeasers to your audience or your personal preferences. For example, change the names of any characters, things, or places to ones that are familiar to your listeners.



What about qualifiers?

BrainTeasers may have more than one potential answer, but usually only one best answer. To eliminate potential answers, you could include qualifiers with the original BrainTeaser. For the example above, you could add: "The ball was not attached to anything and did not touch anything."

On the other hand, it's usually more engaging to leave all possibilities open so people are freer with their guesses. If you qualify to the point where no one has any guesses, it's not much fun.

Of course, if someone guesses the best answer right away, it's not sporting to pretend that a different answer was the correct one. Remember, people who solve BrainTeasers want to keep playing, which is your goal.