

# BALDERDASH

PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING PLAY

## OBJECT OF THE GAME

To invent a phony definition for each word in play that could be mistaken by the other players as the correct definition. To identify and choose the correct definition for each word in play. To be the first player to reach the space marked FINISH.

## PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Each player receives a definition sheet, selects a coloured playing piece, and places it on the board in the space marked START.

## PLAYING THE GAME

1. The die is rolled by each player-high roll becomes the first DASHER(leader of each round).
2. The DASHER starts the game by taking the first card from the card box. (This card must not be shown to any of the other players until after the round is over).
3. He then rolls the die to determine which word will be played.If a "1" is rolled, the first word is played, a "2", the second word, and so on. If, however, a "6" is rolled, the DASHER may choose any one of the five words on the card. (OPTIONAL PLAY: Instead of rolling die to determine word in play, the DASHER may choose any one of the five words on the card.)
4. He then reads aloud the word in play and spells it for the other players who in turn write it on their definition sheets.
5. Each player then invents a meaning for this word that he thinks will bluff the other players, and writes it on his definition sheet.
6. Each player initials his definition sheet in the space marked NAME, and hands it to the DASHER.
7. While the other players are creating their definitions, the DASHER copies the (correct) corresponding meaning from the card onto his definition sheet, and returns the card to the rear of the card box. The definitions are found on the flip side of the cards; word #1 corresponds to definition #1, and so on.
8. The DASHER then looks at all the definition sheets, makes sure they can be presented clearly, arranges them, including the real one, in random order, and reads aloud each definition. (Hint: Do not reveal the true meaning by the manner in which you read the definitions).
9. After the laughter subsides, the DASHER reads all the definitions aloud a second time. In extreme cases, a third reading may be necessary.
10. Moving clockwise from the DASHER, each player then guesses which definition he thinks is the correct one. As each player chooses a definition, the DASHER writes this player's initials on the definition sheet chosen in the section marked SCORE.
11. After every player has guessed, the DASHER reveals the true meaning. The scores are totalled, and the playing pieces moved around the board accordingly (see scoring rules).
12. The player directly to the DASHER's left becomes the new DASHER, and play continues in the same manner.

## SCORING RULES

1. One point is given to each player for every vote (or guess) his phony definition receives.
2. Two points are awarded to each player who chooses the true BALDERDASH meaning.
3. Three points are given to the DASHER only if none of the players choose the true BALDERDASH meaning.
4. Three points are awarded to any player who submits a definition which is similar or very close to the correct meaning.

## **HOW TO WIN THE GAME**

A player moves one space on the board for every point awarded. The first player to reach the space marked FINISH is the winner. No ties allowed. In each round, the player to the DASHER's left moves his playing piece first, followed by the remaining players in a clockwise manner.

## **GROUND RULES**

BALDERDASH is not just a test of one's vocabulary. In fact, players are not expected to know the real meanings of any of the words found in the game. The main objective is to create definitions that will bluff other players. Anything goes. Just use your imagination. A player may, as a bluffing trick, vote for his own definition but never receives a point for this vote. A player should not reveal his own definition when it is read by shouting "that's mine" or by nudging or winking.

## **IMPORTANT**

If the DASHER receives a definition from a player which is similar or very close to the correct meaning, he should not read this player's definition aloud with the other definitions. Rather, the DASHER should put the definition aside, automatically award this player three points (who in turn, immediately moves three spaces on the board), and read the definition aloud only after the round is over. The round is played as usual (with one less definition) but the player who wrote the matching definition does not take part in the voting.

Note: If the DASHER receives more than one definition closely resembling the correct meaning, the round is cancelled, and the DASHER chooses a new card. However, each and every player that submits a definition closely resembling the correct meaning still receives three points.

## **OPTIONAL PLAY**

When playing with four people or less, one variation of the game is to have the DASHER submit a bluff definition in addition to the real definition. This gives the DASHER a chance to bluff as well as creating more definitions from which to choose.

## **TWO PLAYERS ONLY**

Another variation of the game is designed for two players only. One player chooses any one of the five words from a card, then flips the card and in random order, reads aloud all five definitions. The other player then chooses which one he believes to be the correct definition, and if right, scores two points and moves two spaces on the board. If the guess is incorrect, the reader scores one point. Play continues back and forth until one of the players reach FINISH.

## **FOOTNOTE**

The BALDERDASH definitions are the final authority for this game. Over two million words were thoroughly researched before the final entries were selected. Amazingly enough, every selection in the game has been recognized by at least one major dictionary as a legitimate word in the English language.

Should any questions arise, please write:

Mr. or Mrs. Balderdash,  
c/o Western Publishing  
Company, 1220 Mound Ave.,  
Racine, WI 53404.

If during the playing of BALDERDASH, the game erupts into a riot, the creators of this game will not be held responsible. One final note, Mrs. Balderdash wants it clearly understood that "he" also means "she" in the above rules.