

The Day the Music Died: 6 Fun Road Trip Games

BY ANDREW ROSEN



As a kid, my parents never put on the radio in the car when we went on family road trips. I'm guessing that me punching my little sister in the arm was enough of a driving distraction for dad. Now, as a commuting adult, I can't imagine a single drive without music. So when my wife and I set out on an overnight drive to visit friends in Raleigh, N.C., and the radio died two hours into the trip, dread set in. How would we pass the time? Sure, we could reminisce about the past, plan for the future and chat up everything in between, but that adrenaline burst brought on by thumping speakers would leave a void in the car.

Thankfully, my wife and I never run out of things to say. And just as the state of Virginia seemed as if it was taking forever to cross, we hit on a great topic: road games from yesteryear. We reminisced on traffic bingo, a simple game we played as kids that consisted of locating street signs and marking them off on a card. As the exits whizzed by, we recounted more and more games—none of which required the radio dial.

► **I'm Going to a Picnic**—I'm not sure about you, but my road trips always involve a lot of talk about food. Something about an open road gives me an empty stomach. This game tests your

memory skills. The driver starts off by saying, "I'm going to a picnic, and I'm bringing... asparagus." The next player then must use the letter B and recap A. So, "I'm going to a picnic, and I'm bringing a banana and asparagus." By the time you get deep into the alphabet, you and your passengers will be struggling to remember this virtual menu.

► **The Last Letter Game**—First the passengers have to agree on a topic. Let's keep it family-friendly and stick with the food theme. If the driver says "pizzA," the person sitting in the front has to use the last letter as the first letter in another food. Let's say "apple." The person in the backseat then says "EggS," and so on. The more miles you traverse, the better the odds that you will run out of food options and get plain silly. This game can also be played with proper nouns, three syllable words or any other topic you can think of.

► **Let's Get Personal**—This game tests out your bluffing skills and is particularly fun to play with people you know well. You simply tell the other passengers something about you, and they have to guess if it really happened or if you're making it up. For example, "I once faked being sick to get out of my mother-in-law's birthday party." And the answer is... false! (though I did think about it).

► **Story Trail**—More of a creative exercise than a game, this is when you and your passengers create a fictional story. Someone starts off with a few sentences, and the other people pick it up and run with it. You'll be amazed at the direction the story will take.

► **Who Would You Rather Marry**—This game has one person toss out a duo of names, and the passengers must decide—and debate—who they would rather marry. Matt Damon or Ben Affleck? Thelma or Louise? Tom or Jerry? You will learn things about your friends and family that you never imagined. Be warned, you might learn too much.

► **Connect the Actors**—A favorite of my sister (now that I'm no longer punching her in the arm), and a variation of the famous "Six Degrees of Separation/Kevin Bacon" game, this diversion has two players. Each, at the count of three, names an actor. The goal is to see who can connect the two actors using only movies they've appeared in. Whoever can uncover the chain first, wins.

We made it to Raleigh that night, *sans* radio. The most exhausting part of the trip was laughing so hard from these fun road games. My friends fixed the radio just in time for the trip home, but I don't recall putting it on once.

Now it's your turn. What's your favorite road trip game? Tell us at AAA.com/Fun.

Andrew Rosen manages Car & Travel's Website (CarandTravelMagazine.com)