

SPICEY: THE GAME

(in-progress Rules Revision, June 2019)

REQUIREMENTS

3-8 people, ages 12+.

15-60 minutes (more people = longer game)

Get a blank piece of paper and a writing utensil to keep score. Tally marks are fine.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

As a Spokesperson, gain points by using your Response Cards and quick wit to address and defend Incidents caused by the President of the United States, satisfying the Judges' Criteria.

DEFINITION: "ANSWER" (noun & verb)

For future reference, an Answer (with a capital A) is a 3- to 5-sentence improvised explanation and defense of the Incident, seeking to confidently cast the President in a positive light.

An Answer always begins with the Spokesperson reading his/her volunteered Response card.

THE CARDS

Incident Cards

Each Incident card describes something absurd the President did, followed by a question. Incident cards are drawn and read by the PRESS (in Classic Spicey) or the SOLO JUDGE (in Spicey Lite).

Response Cards

Each Response card either refers to a broad-topic issue, appeals to vague ideals, names a scapegoat, or skews the Incident card's question in some way. Response cards are dealt to and held by the Spokespeople, and are used to lead off each Spokesperson's Answer.

Judge Cards

3 cards for Classic Spicey – Press, President, & Public.

1 card for Spicey Lite - Solo Judge.

Scoring Cards

These are used to figure out how many points players earn during the game.

The Scoring Card for Classic Spicey stays with the Press card.

The Scoring Card for Spicey Lite stays with the Solo Judge.

THE ROLES

Spokespeople

When a player isn't a Judge, s/he is a Spokesperson (or "Spoke"). Using their Response Cards, Spokes can provide Answers to Incidents in an attempt to earn points.

Judges

Judges vote on the quality of a Spoke's Answer. When a player is a Judge, s/he puts his/her Response hand aside (face down) until the next time s/he is a Spoke.

In Classic Spicey, there are three Judge Roles: The PRESS, the PRESIDENT, and the PUBLIC.

The PRESS reads the Incident Card, and also Votes on the Spoke's Answer based on the question written on his/her Judge card. The PRESS is also in charge of moving the game along (you'll see).

The PRESIDENT and PUBLIC also Vote based on the questions on their Judge card.

The PRESS cares about whether the Spoke's answer was relevant to the Incident, and actually made any sense.

The PRESIDENT cares about whether the Spoke made the President's actions seem wise and in the best interest of the country.

The PUBLIC cares about whether the Spoke delivered their Answer with confidence and passion.

In Spicey Lite, there is only one Judge Role. Yup, it's the SOLO JUDGE (or SJ). The SJ is just like the PRESS in Classic Spicey, except his/her Judge Criteria also encompasses the POTUS and PUBLIC

THE SET-UP

Shuffle the Response Cards, and deal five (5) cards to each player, face-down. Players may look at their own cards. Place the remaining deck in the middle of the table, face-down.

Shuffle the Incident Cards and place the deck in the middle of the table, face-down.

Determine whether you are playing Classic Spicey or Spicey Lite.

If you have 3-5* players, play Spicey Lite. If you have 6-8 players, play Classic Spicey.

Spicey Lite: Give the Solo-Judge Role Card to the oldest player.
That player will be the first SJ of the game.

Classic Spicey: Give the PRESIDENT, PRESS, and PUBLIC Judge Role Cards to three players. We suggest that the Judges are all in a row, with the order being PRESIDENT-PRESS-PUBLIC.

THE PLAY

A single turn has four basic parts: Incident, Answer, Vote-and-Verdict, and Follow-Ups. It all goes like this...

INCIDENT

The PRESS/SJ draws and reads an Incident Card aloud. Then s/he counts down ten seconds quietly but visibly, either on his/her fingers or using a timer everyone can see.

During this time, a Spoke must volunteer to Answer by laying one of his/her Response cards on the table, face-up.

If no-one volunteers before time hits zero, every Spoke loses one of their Response Cards, chosen randomly from their hands by the Judge(s). The turn is over: The PRESS/SJ discards the Incident Card face-up, next to the Incident Deck. Each Judge passes his/her Role Card to the right (counter-clockwise), and the new PRESS/SJ draws and reads a new Incident to begin the new turn.

But presuming a Spoke does volunteer...

ANSWER

After a Spoke has volunteered by placing a Response Card on the table, s/he may ask the PRESS/SJ to re-read the Incident card.

After the Incident is re-read, the Spoke must immediately begin his/her Answer, starting by reading the Response card s/he laid down, and continuing by improvising.

An Answer may begin with a bit of fluff like "Well, you see, Mark..." but there shouldn't be anything substantial before reading the Response.

An Answer may contain exaggeration, lies, and/or pure invention. This is not only legal – it's necessary. But be careful, the Judge(s) might not approve of over-zealous lying. That's up to personal taste.

After finishing the Answer, the Spoke discards the Response card s/he used next to the Response Deck. Whether s/he gets to draw a new Response card depends on the Vote & Verdict (next page).

VOTE

For Classic Spicy:

The PRESS calls for “Votes in 3...2...1...” and then each Judge puts out either a thumbs-up or a thumbs-down, based on whether the Spoke’s Answer satisfied his/her Role criteria.

For Spicy Lite:

The SJ ponders on the quality of the Answer, based on the questions on the back of the SJ Judge card. This should take just a few seconds

VERDICT

For Classic Spicy:

Based on the number of thumbs-up, The Press uses the Scoring Card (for Classic Spicy) to determine how many points the Spokesperson earned for his/her Answer. That number is written down under that player’s name, on a score sheet.

* If the Spokesperson earned 0 points, s/he does *not* draw a new Response card. Otherwise, s/he draws one new Response card (to replace the one s/he just used).

For Spicy Lite:

Once the SJ has decided on just how good or bad the Answer was, s/he checks the Scoring Card (for Spicy Lite) to see how many points the Spokesperson should earn. That number is written down under that player’s name, on a score sheet.

* If the Spokesperson earned 0 or 1 point, s/he does *not* draw a new Response card. Otherwise, s/he draws one new Response card (to replace the one s/he just used).

FOLLOW-UPS

After the points have been written down, the PRESS / SJ calls for “Follow-Ups in 5...4...3... 2...1...” during which time another Spoke may volunteer to Answer.

If someone does volunteer, play proceeds the same as before, from ANSWER through VERDICT, with one exception:

The Spoke’s Answer must be unique to previous Answer(s) given that turn. Even if it’s a better Answer, it can’t be similar to one that’s already been given that turn. Otherwise, Judges must automatically vote Thumbs-Down (or for the SJ, a 0 or a 1 at best).

Up to three Spokes may Answer per Incident (i.e. an initial Answer, and then two Follow-Ups). A Spoke may not Answer an Incident twice in the same turn.

If no-one else volunteers, the turn is over. Each Judge passes his/her Judge Card to the right (counter-clockwise), and the new PRESS draws a new Incident to begin the new turn.

A NOTE ABOUT THE SCORE SHEET

To encourage objective judging, players shouldn't spend time looking at the score sheet, and should only add up the scores at the end of the game. If you've got a friend who wants to watch but doesn't want to play, you could ask that person to be the scorekeeper and MC (taking over the timer/game-moving responsibilities of the PRESS).

THE END OF THE GAME

The game ends when the Role card(s) have made one complete revolution through the players (i.e. everyone has been each kind of Judge exactly once). At this point, one player (or the scorekeeper) adds up everyone's scores and reads them off from least to greatest. (drumroll please...)

Did you earn the most points? Then you're the winner! You're Spicy!
You're the new Press Secretary for the President of the United States!
Uh...you're probably a terrible person!

Q. What is there's a TIE for first place?
A. Then the game proceeds to...

SUPER SPICY ~~~~HEY HEADS-UP - I HAVEN'T FINISHED THE RULES FOR THIS ~~~
Super Spicy is terrific. You're gonna love it. Believe me.

Here's how it works:

ROLES:

The Spokes are the players who were tied for first place.
The Judges are everyone else.

If there's one Judge, give that person the SJ card.

If there are two Judges, they share the SJ card.

...three Judges: 1 POTUS, 1 PRESS, 1 PUBLIC
(i.e. Classic Spicy).

...four Judges: 1 POTUS, 2 PRESS, 1 PUBLIC.

...five Judges: 2 POTUS, 1 PRESS, 2 PUBLIC.

...six Judges: 2 POTUS, 2 PRESS, 2 PUBLIC.

(whenever there are two of the same kind of Judge, those people should be seated next to each other, and share their Judge Role card)

SET-UP:

Gather up all of the Incident Cards that have already been read this game, shuffle them, and place this deck face-down on the table.

Gather up all of the Response Cards that all players still had in their hands (unused), shuffle them, and place this deck face-down on the table.

THE PLAY: ~~~ ok, I haven't actually finished out the rules for this yet. Sorry! ~~~

Q. But what if EVERYONE was tied for first-place?

A. Then you all lose. Hah! Losers!

PARTY FOULS

These are things you shouldn't do because it makes the game less fun.

Playing Loose With Your Role

Judges should try to follow their Role and corresponding criteria objectively, no matter who is giving the Answer (or how many points they have). There may be gray areas, and it's an honor system, but try to be fair and don't be a jerk.

Alliances (spoken or otherwise)

It is against the rules for two (or more) players to form an alliance of any sort. Let's keep politics out of this, please.

I mean, really.

VARIANT RULES

These are changes/additions you could make to the game to suit your tastes.

Make sure everyone understands what variants you're playing with before the game begins.

Unchanging Roles

Do you have one (for 3-5 players) or three (for 6-8 players) people who JUST want to be Judges? And the rest of you JUST want to be Spokespeople? Well I think that's just ducky. Instead of rotating around the table, the Judge Role Card(s) will just stay where they are. We suggest you make one game be as many turns as the total number of players (Judges + Spokes), but you might decide differently.

High-Mileage Incidents

Want to get as much nonsense as you can out of each Incident? Instead of allowing only 3 Answers per Incident, allow as many Answers as there are Spokespeople per Incident. For example, if you have 8 players (3 Judges and 5 Spokes), after 3 Spokes have given Answers, the 4th and 5th responder can also Answer the Incident. They are eligible for the same points as the 3rd responder.

Sass from the Press

For players who want to encourage banter, allow the PRESS/SJ to respond to the Spoke after the Spoke Answers. This could be a question for clarification, or making fun of the Answer, or anything else. To keep things from turning sour, you may want to limit exactly how much back-talk is allowed. We suggest the PRESS/SJ only be allowed to talk back twice per Answer. Of course, the Spoke should respond to the PRESS's questions/comments. You know. Like a reasonable person would.

Criteria Schmitteria

If you don't want to be restricted to judging by the standards written on the Role Cards, ignore them and just follow your heart. Or you could make up your own criteria.

Cut-Throat

It's all or nothing! Instead of using the standard Verdict Points chart, use the chart below.

Alcoholic Spicey (21+)

Draw a copy of the Approval Rating (AR) track below, and get out a penny or some other kind of marker. At the beginning of the game, set the AR to 40% by putting the penny in the 40% box.

For every Answer that earns 1 or 0 points, the AR drops by 20%, and the Spoke who Answered takes a drink.

For every Answer that earns 2 points or more, the AR increases by 20%, and all other Spokes take a drink.

Whenever the AR hits 0%, the current Judge(s) finish their drinks – they clearly need to loosen up! The AR resets to 60%.

Whenever the AR hits 100%, the current Spokes finish their drinks – y'all need more fog in your brain. The AR resets to 40%.

0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
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