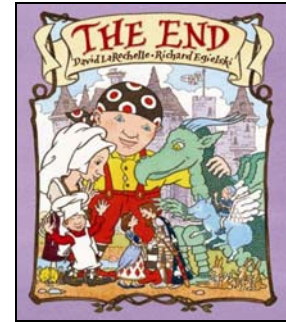


How to Host a Backwards Party

Reading the backwards fairy tale *The End* (written by David LaRochelle, illustrated by Richard Egielski, Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic, 2007) is inspiration enough for an entire party... in reverse! Here are some fun ways to hold your own backwards celebration.



- * Encourage guests to come dressed backwards with their clothes buttoned and zipped in the back. Socks can be worn on the hands like mittens. Pretend glasses could be worn on the back of the head.
- * When guests arrive, greet them with, “Good-bye! I hope you had a good time!”
- * Guests can make their own nametags by printing their names (backwards) on large white mailing labels, to be worn on their backs, of course!
- * While waiting for the other guests to arrive, partygoers can decorate their own paper crowns (like the royalty in *The End*) using crayons, markers, and stickers.
- * Set the proper backwards mood by reading *The End*. After hearing it once, kids might want to try acting out the scenes while you read the story a second time.

Games:

- * **Pin the Donkey on the Tail**

Photocopy a small drawing of a tail-less donkey for each guest. Taking turns, each child is blindfolded for a chance to tape his or her donkey as close as possible to a large paper “tail” taped to the wall.

- * **Backwards Relay Race**

Divide into two teams. Give the starting person on each team a lemon to carry in a large spoon. At the count of three, players walk backwards to the other end of the room, touch the wall, and return. They then pass the spoon and lemon to their next teammate. Any player who drops the lemon must pick it up again before continuing. The first team with all of its members to complete the course, wins!

- * See who can correctly recite the alphabet or the months of the year in reverse order. Use a stopwatch to see who is the fastest.

- * **Bowling for Bunnies!**

In *The End*, the bunny rabbits try to escape an enormous tomato rolling down the hill. Using a red ball for a tomato, guests can try to knock over empty plastic pop/water bottles with bunnies drawn on the outside.

- Prizes/
Party Favors: Bags of lemon drops or other lemon-flavored candy
Lemon-scented stickers
Plastic medals or first place ribbons, to be pinned on the guests' backs
Miniature toy knights, dragons, and princesses
- Refreshments: Lemonade, of course (Unlike the princess, don't pour it on anyone's head!)
- Backwards Sandwiches – Lunchmeat and lettuce on the outside of a slice of bread, held in place with fancy toothpicks
- Backwards Cookies – Vanilla wafers spread with frosting on the top and bottom
- Upside-down Ice Cream Cones – Served in a bowl and eaten with a spoon
- Or maybe lemon cheesecake (even if the giant in *The End* never got to have any!)
- Serve dessert first, naturally
- Other
Activities: * Sing a simple song...backwards!
You may wish to practice this few times before teaching it to your guests.
(To the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")
- Star Little, Twinkle, Twinkle,
Are You What Wonder I How,
Fly You World The Above Up,
Sky the in Diamond a Like,
Star Little, Twinkle, Twinkle,
Are You What Wonder I How.
- * Hold a treasure hunt in which the clues are written in mirror writing (reversed letters as if viewed in a mirror).
- * If you have access to a DVD player or VCR that allows it, play a short film or cartoon backwards. Sports scenes, car chases, or scenes where characters are eating are especially funny to watch!

When it comes time for your guests to leave, make sure to tell them "Hello," and give them an invitation to the party that they just attended!