The Princess & the P's

A word-guessing game about puny protuberances.

3-7 players • 30 minutes • ages 12+

Prologue

Picky **P**rince **P**ercy and his very **p**articular **p**arents are rather **p**reoccupied with finding the **p**erfect **p**rincess to **p**ro**p**ose to.

The **p**arents **p**ontificate that the fool-**p**roof way to find a **p**roper **p**rincess is to **p**lant some **p**eas—and other **p**araphernalia—beneath a **p**ile of **p**oofy bed linens to see if the slee**p**ing "**p**rincess" can **p**erceive each **p**iece. (For only a true **p**rima donna of the highest **p**edigree could **p**ossess such a**p**titude.)

You—the **p**alace **p**eons—think this whole **p**lan is **p**re**p**osterous. But there's sim**p**ly no **p**oint in **p**rotesting.

Aus**p**iciously, earlier this **p**.m. the **P**rincess **P**enelo**p**e was in the **p**roximity, **p**icking **p**etunias along the **p**ebbly **p**ath. It began to **p**reci**p**itate. (It **p**oured, really). And having no **p**arasol, the **p**oor girl scam**p**ered to the **p**alace gate to seek **p**rotection with the **p**rince and his **p**ersnickety **p**arents.

The **p**eons are **p**ositive **P**enelo**p**e would make the **P**ERFECT **p**rincess. She's **p**atient, **p**olite, **p**ractical—**p**recisely the ty**p**e of **p**erson the **p**eons want in **p**ower. But the **p**arents are not im**p**ressed by such a **p**rovincial **p**edestrian, and insist she **p**ass the **p**roverbial "**P** test." So they **p**roceed with the whole **p**roduction. How can your **p**rincess **p**ossibly **p**revail?

No need to **p**anic. You **p**eons have a **p**lan: with **P**enelope **p**erched high u**p**on the mattresses,
You **p**eons will be in the peri**p**hery, whis**p**ering surre**p**titiously to hel**p** **P**enelo**p**e pinpoint **p**recisely what's been **p**lanted. If she can com**p**lete the **p**uzzle, you're **p**ositive she'lll **p**rocure the **p**rince's pro**p**osal, and bring **p**eace and pros**p**erity to the **p**rovince.

There is one com**p**lication…The royal **p**arents have **p**rohibited **p**eons from using the letter **P**, and **p**romise harsh **p**unishment for those who act ina**pp**ro**p**riately;

Can you still hel**p** **P**enelo**p**e **p**ass the test without **p**rovoking too much sus**p**icion from the **p**arents?

Game Particulars

The Princess and the P's is a semi-cooperative word game in which the "Palace Peons" (all but one of the players) take turns trying to get the "Princess" (the remaining player to guess **secret objects whose names contain the letter P**. But there's one complication: the Peons have sworn to the royal family that when speaking to this Princess**,** they will **never mention P's!** (So as they give clues, it is forbidden to use ANY words containing the letter P.)

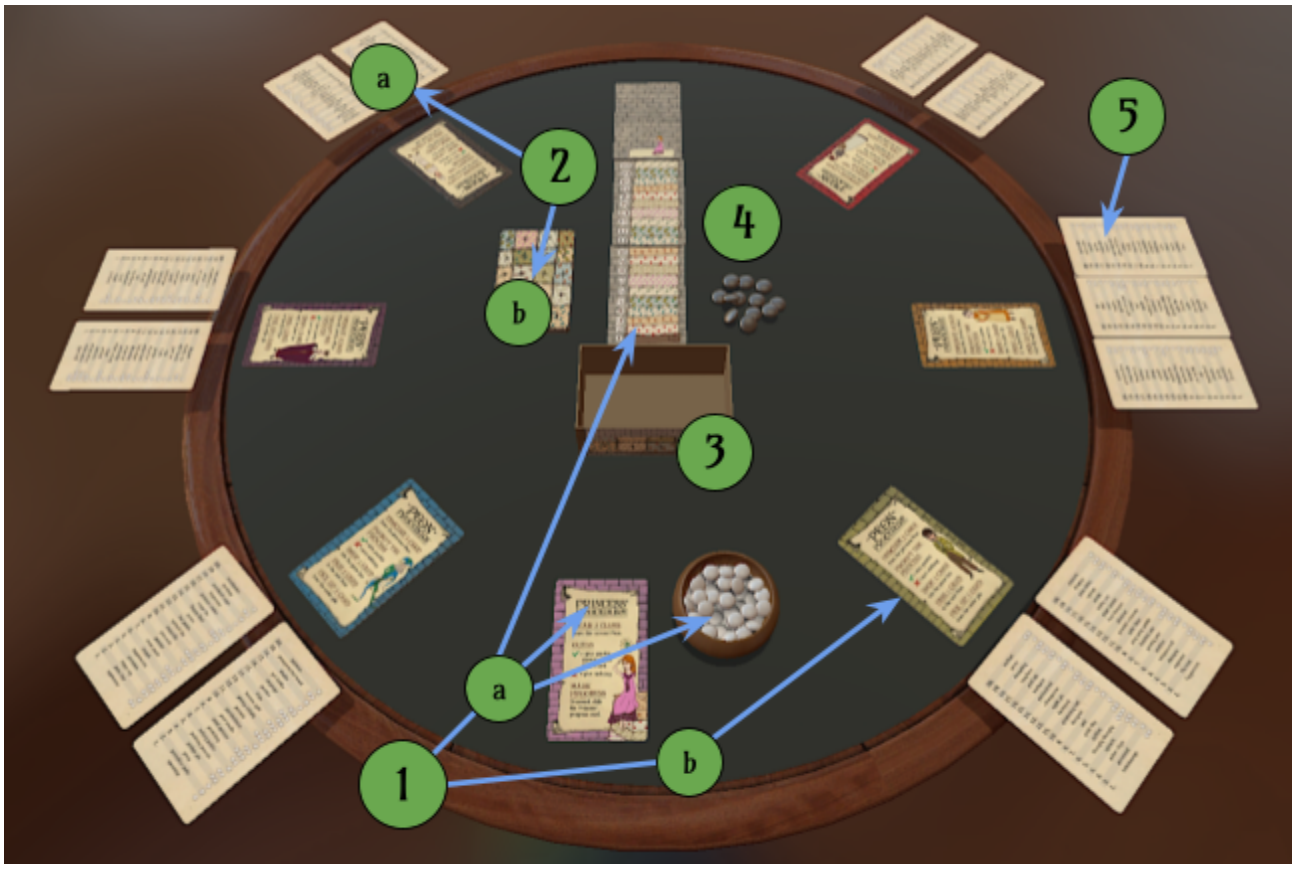
As you help the Princess guess the objects beneath 20 mattresses, she will award you Pearls from her necklace to keep track of which Peon has been most helpful. If the Peons help her guess 20 objects without too many failures, the Princess will win, and so will the Peon who helps her guess the most words. (This player becomes the MVP—or Most Valuable Peon.) But if the Princess fails, all players—including the Princess—will fail together.

Package Contents

- **A.** 40 Mattress cards
- **B.** 40 Pearls
- **C.** 12 Pebbles
- **D.** 7 player reference cards
- **E.** 3 Princess's Progress track cards
- **F.** 1 Bed Frame (the game box)



Setup



1. **Pick 1 player to be the Princess.**
    a. Give the Princess the Pearls, the Princess reference card, and the progress track. Set up the track to show “20.”
    b. Give each Peon a player reference card.
2. **Gather Mattresses.** Shuffle all the Mattress cards.
    a. Deal 2 to each Peon.
    b. Place the rest in a face-down pile in the center.
3. **Place the Bed Frame (the game box) near the center.**
4. **Place the Pebbles in a supply** where all players can reach them.
5. **Pick 1 Peon to be the first player.** Deal them 1 extra card (so they have 3).

Playing Procedure

The game is played over 20 rounds, or until the deck of Mattress cards runs out. A round may be as few as 1 turn, or it may last for many turns, depending upon how efficiently the Peons can procure correct answers from the Princess.

Playing turns: Beginning with the first Peon and proceeding clockwise, Peons take turns doing ALL of the following, in order:

1) **Procure 1 Mattress.** (The first player already has 3, so they don't need to procure any.. But in all future turns, a card will be presented by the previous Peon.)
2) **Prompt the Princess.** Look at the highest visible number on the Princess's progress track. Each card in your hand will have 1 object that matches that number. Choose 1 of these objects and say, *"Pssst…Princess!"* And speak up 2 words as clues. After you provide your pair of clues, the Princess makes 1 guess about the name of the object by saying *"I think there is a _____ beneath my mattress!"*
3) **Gain Pearls / Record Progress.** If the Princess guesses correctly:
    - **The Princess slides down the Princess progress track** by 1 number.
    - **The Peon gains Pearls,** as indicated by the Mattress card.
4) **Drop any 1 card into the Bed Frame.**
5) **Pass 1 card, Pick 1 card**. Choose 1 card in your hand and pass it to the next Peon. Then pick a new card from the pile.

Note: As a Peon, your hand limit at the end of your turn is 2 cards. At the beginning of your turn, you will always procure a third card from the previous Peon. But at the end of your turn, you should never have more than a pair (2) cards in your hand.

Hint: after prompting the Princess, you may place ANY card into the Bed Frame. It does not need to be the one you were promoting from. So, if desired, you can pass the card you failed at to the next player, who can continue giving clues for that object.

Peon Stipulations

Prohibited Practices

As a Peon prompting the Princess, you are prohibited from:

- using any part of the object's name
- using hand gestures, sign language, Morse code, or non-verbal cues
- using foreign languages
- using letters or rhymes (e.g., simply spelling the object's name, instead of defining it with your clues).

Any time you disobey these rules, your current object becomes an automatic failure, and you must discard your current card.

Penalties for Using "P"

As a Peon, if you use the letter "P" as you Prompt the Princess, any other Peon may say "PENALTY!"

If they do, you must take 1 Pebble from that player (or from the center, if they have none) as your penalty. Then discard the card you were working from into the Bed Frame.

If you use a "P" but no one catches you before the Princess guesses,continue without penalty.

Example Turn

In round 17, Pam has 3 cards in her hand. She chooses the one shown on the right. Because it is round 17, "**peg leg**" is her secret object.

Pam ponders, then says "**buccaneer limb**" as her 2 clues. The Princess correctly guesses "peg leg," Pam gains 2 Pearls.

Then Pam passes 1 card to the left, to Peter, and then draws 1 new card from the pile. This ends her turn.

Note that if Pam had said "pirate" or "appendage," and another player said "Penalty!" before the Princess guessed, Pam would have to take 1 Pebble and immediately pass this card to Peter, which would end her turn. The Princess could still make 1 guess. If that guess is successful, Peter (who is holding the card), would gain the 2 Pearls. Then Peter would take his turn.



Completing the Game / Epilogue

Play continues until there aren't enough Mattresses left for a Peon to complete their turn, OR the Princess progress track reaches "0," whichever happens first. Then the players read the appropriate epilogue, provided below.

If the Princess progress track reached "0"...

...the princess passes! The Peon who performed most positively—as indicated by the number of Pearls they have procured, minus the number of penalty Pebbles—becomes MVP. (If a tie, multiple Peons receive this praise.)

The Peons and the Princess have prevailed. With a pinch of apprehension, Penelope accepts Percy's proposal. Their nuptials include a perfectly planned party, complete with pomp and pageantry. Everyone is present, from the poorest peasant to members of Parliament. They are all tickled pink to welcome the new princess to power. Presents pile up. Pastries are passed. The pair dance a polka to the sounds of the pianoforte. Applause is plentiful.

As time passes, Penelope teaches Percy to mind his P's and Q's. With her persistence and lots of practice, he develops a more approachable personality, and not only improves, but surpasses all expectations. Then the pair live pleasantly in perpetuity (like two peas in a pod).

If you ran out of Mattresses cards…

…your performance is pitiful! (Everyone loses.)

The Prince's parents' pea-brained prerequisites perplex the princess, who awakes to a very unpleasant surprise. Palace guards appear and escort her from the premises, declaring her too provincial and plain for princessdom. You utter pejoratives as the paladins pass by. But, after all, who could possibly perceive such puny protuberances beneath all that perfectly plumped padding?

Penelope will probably have better prospects elsewhere, as Prince Percy's parents continue probing prospective princesses. Perhaps at some point, they'll learn to be more practical with their expectations. (Or perhaps Percy will just procure a puppy.)

Scoring Example: In this example, if the Princess progress track reached "0" successfully, **PAM** would be the MVP.



PAM: 8 - 1 = **7 pts** PETER: 8 - 2 = **6 pts** PJ: 7 - 3 = **4 pts**