Spot On Social Studies

Opinions About PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

by Erica Mennerich

Everyone has an opinion about playing video games. What's yours?



Benchmark EDUCATION

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For Review Only

VIDEO GAMES:
Entertainment for Everyone



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The video game world is exciting. It is full of bright colors and fun music. Since its introduction in U.S. homes in the 1970s, video game playing has become more popular over time.

Today's video games can look very lifelike. The characters and settings can look and sound real. Also, there is a video game for almost every interest. People can play adventure or sports games. People can even play video games to exercise!

In the past, people played video games using their television as a monitor. Now, people can play video games on computers or cell phones.

Then AND Now



▲ **The earliest video games (left) were simple. For example, players could take turns bouncing a "ball" from side to side. Today's video games (right) are high-tech. Many players can play the same game at the same time.**

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However, there is another side to playing video games. Playing video games is so fun that young people may be playing too much. They also may be playing the wrong types of games. The negative impact of video game playing worries people.

Researchers have tried to figure out how playing video games affects players. Studies show that playing video games can be good and bad. There are plenty of facts to support each side. And from these facts, people form their own opinions about video games. Read on to find out what research shows about playing video games.

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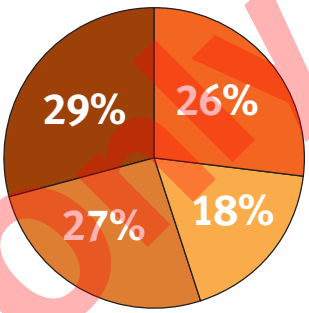


▲ **Handheld devices such as cell phones and tablets are a popular way for people to play video games anywhere. People have been playing video games on cell phones since the 1990s.**



VIDEO GAME STATISTICS

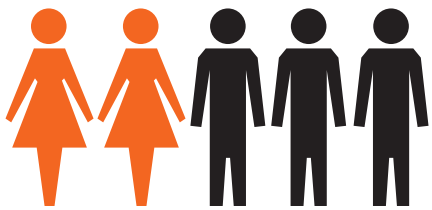
Here are some interesting facts about video game playing in the U.S. during 2016.



Age distribution of video game players

- under 18
- 18–35
- 36–49
- over 50

Roughly 2 out of 5 players were female.





The video gaming industry had sales of $30.4 billion in the United States.

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Video Game Playing: POSITIVE RESULTS

Research shows that young people benefit from playing video games. How so? Kids can improve important skills that help them be successful in life. Players learn to problem-solve and be creative. They learn a new way of seeing. They also learn to work with others.

Preview Only

Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills help people think of ways to deal with difficult situations. Many video games focus on facing challenges and solving problems. Players may have to fight a monster or rescue a character. Players must think of solutions as they move through a game.

People deal with challenging situations all the time in real life. For young kids, this is a very important skill to learn.

A 2013 study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* followed kids who played **strategic** video games. Kids who played these games over a period of time showed improved problem-solving skills and grades.

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CAREERS IN:

VIDEO GAME DESIGN

A video game designer creates video games. He or she will plan and design a video game with a team of people. Video game designers are artistic. They also have computer skills, such as coding.

Coding is writing instructions for a computer to follow. It may take several years for a designer to complete a game. After a game is finished, the designer may also test the game for problems.