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Gaming Has a Positive Side

By Paul Wilson

Gaming is not just about revenue, addiction, gamers, and so on. A game being an expression of technology, developing cultural norms, and a world wide phenomenon that transcends all boundaries, becomes a source of study.

Games are not mere toys, they promote:

- Information literacy. Players download text files, make notes, they also take "screen shots" of the game and upload it with their comments. A group then examines the suggestions and discussions emerge on strategies as well as required improvements or changes. Knowledge creation and rapid sharing is common to digital spaces. People of all ages and ethnicities from around the world pool their understanding and resources to solve problems.
- Curiosity and a thirst to find out more. Leading to the development of learning. Players pool thoughts and resources and try and work out how different elements function. Individual skills are sharpened using pooled resources.
- Development of well developed research skills and the use of a huge mind boggling variety of resources. For games like "Lineage" a player would need to become a member of a 100 or more strong clan and in order to protect his castle or carry out sieges he or she needs to manipulate text, images, research equipment use, draw out maps, manage resources, design strategies, create and maintain treasuries, write down facts, theories, and proposals, as well as design workable models.
- Social interaction and exchange of ideas and thoughts especially in multiplayer online games.
- An understanding of world history. A few games are based on civilizations and take players as far back as 4000 BCE leading them through different developmental stages of the world with the creation of cities, temples, libraries, granaries, railroads and more. Many games are map based and re-enact actual events that have taken place in the world.
- The setting up of virtual learning to explore new game related technologies, new gaming elements,

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and modes of play with peers. In fact, "Civilization" aficionados created "Give peace a Chance" in which players learn about winning by using non violence.

- Interpretation of data and lateral thinking. Players spend long hours absorbed in researching information, searching high and low for tips, cheats, and tricks, developing what are known as walkthroughs.
- Curiosity and sets the wheels of the mind clicking leading to innovations in design, software programming, graphics, strategies, and more.
- Team work, a sharing of ideas, as well as collective problem solving.
- Competitiveness a thirst to succeed and win.

In depth research has proven that gaming plays a role in increasing self esteem, and is motivational in many ways. Children who play games perform better at comprehension, spelling, and math.

Gee, Squire, and Stienkuehler, University of Wisconsin–Madison professors, are studying learning through game playing and the advantages of gaming over traditional teaching tools truly believe that gaming has woven within its matrix important learning technologies. Learning in the e–learning world of virtual gaming is hands on, interactive, has no restrictions or boundaries, promotes collaborative working, problem solving, creating a new generation of leaders.

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, the premier

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Video Games Are Good – Are They?

By Gabriel Adams

If you're like most parents, you're probably confused over the number of reports that argue against the use of video games as entertainment. Some of the information in these reports is quite convincing. After all, they're written by psychology experts, child educators, and social science professors from esteemed colleges or other similar institutions. And the arguments presented within these reports make sense. They're based on years of research and they may even resonate with experiences you've

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had with the children in your very own social circle.

On the other hand, it's important that some of this information be taken with a grain of salt. Rarely will you see a report that argues on the side of video games, and that outlines the positive attributes that time spent with a Nintendo system or Sony Playstation generates. With all the negativity surrounding these products, one could easily think that Nintendo and Sony were evil manifestations of the devil himself! But this couldn't be further from the truth.

The Nintendo system and Sony Playstation are mere platforms for video games that range from educational lessons to downright questionable material. We can't argue against the latter. There **are** some inappropriate video games in the public, but does that mean parents have ban the entire video gaming industry altogether?

Absolutely not – and to do so, in our humble opinion, would be detrimental to childhood development. That's right – detrimental. We don't believe this claim is a leap of faith, because just as there are reports that dissuade video gaming, there is a tremendous amount of evidence that suggests why video games are an important part of growing up. This evidence points to things like hand and eye coordination, the ability to focus, perseverance, and improving problem solving skills.

This evidence should give parents a bit of comfort in knowing that the gaming industry in itself is not the issue. The issue is instead, the parents' choice of video games that are allowed in the home.

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