

MLA Research Paper Structure

This version of a student's research paper is divided into sections so that you can clearly see how it would connect to her outline (there are no page breaks, so you can see how the paper flows). In the introduction, the thesis statement and blueprint are highlighted, while the conclusion shows how they are restated. For each body paragraph, the main supporting ideas, which follow the blueprint and support the thesis statement, are highlighted and labeled.

Anita's Original Outline

Thesis Statement: Video games should be required as part of modern K-12 curricula.

Supporting Topics

- A Physical Benefits
 - 1 Visual ability
 - 2 Physical dexterity
- B Social Development – Interpersonal Skills
- C Learning Opportunities
 - 1 Real-life
 - 2 Career-oriented

Header

(format this by clicking on

'Insert' 'Page' then add your last name)

Goodgrade [page#]

Class Info (the entire document is size 12 font & double spaced, including your class info)!

Anita Goodgrade

Miss Mosh

English 11, Thirteenth Hour

19 April 2011

Title (centered & first letters capitalized)

Gaming in the Classroom

(indent to show a new paragraph- press the "tab" key, not the space bar)

Introduction

Did you know that surgeons and combat pilots use video games as part of their training? Ranging from pocket-sized portables and cell phone applications that cater to individuals' needs, all the way up to traditional consoles and computers that can bring dozens of players together from around the world, video games are a huge part of modern life. Despite their prevalence, society often looks down on video games and the people who play them. Anti-gaming activists, from parents to politicians, think of video-game play as an idle waste of time and a danger. Unfortunately, these people choose to ignore that there are numerous benefits to gaming. In fact,

there are so many upsides to this electronic pastime, it ought to be required as part of modern K-12 curricula. Incorporating gaming into the school day would expand students' dexterity and visual ability, develop interpersonal skills, and create real-life and career-oriented learning opportunities.

Supporting Paragraph 1

Some of the most frequently referenced advantages of playing video games focus on the physical aspects of the hobby. Gaming enhances a person's vision, specifically spatial resolution, which is a technical term used to describe how well the eye makes out color, shapes, and movement (Eckleburg 71). In an article published by the Kennebunkport Times-Defender, eyeball researcher Dr. Alistair Charlatan, Esq., of the well-known Sedgwick Institute, notes that "numerous studies indicate gamers can detect movement in their peripheral vision 2.3 times better than non-gamers." For some perspective on those numbers, Dr. Charlatan quantifies the difference by saying that it's like someone holding an article in his/her hand versus setting it a distance of 20 yards away and trying to read it. The rapid-fire nature of video games in effect conditions the retina of the eye, making it more sensitive (Rater B1). While eyeball training has not been a traditional concern of the American school system, being able to see more effectively can enhance academic performance and is a skill likely to be valuable for college and workplace success.

Supporting Paragraph 2

In addition to improved spatial resolution, gaming also improves a person's motor skills. Video gamers tend to have better hand-eye coordination than non-gamers due to the precise control interfaces of games. As noted on the Global Alliance of Game Manufacturers' website, GAG-M for short, industry lobbyist Marcy Bowkew says, "motor skills can be sharpened and

senses heightened by playing video games, particularly ones that involve some sort of running and jumping.” The importance of kinesthetic development means that real-time strategy and digital versions of board games can sometimes have the opposite effect and be really boring, which, understandably, is not desirable or useful in the classroom. Lastly, many people probably aren’t aware of this fact, but today’s surgeons actually practice their skills by using surgical video games and playing in local-area network (LAN) tournaments. These are popular among the hospital staff members, particularly on weekends (Bowkew). Nobody wants a physician with less than top-notch coordination rooting around inside his or her torso.

Supporting Paragraph 3

To an outsider, gaming may appear to be a lonely activity, but this couldn’t be further from the truth. The perception among the technologically unenlightened is that those involved in the gaming lifestyle are cut off from society. People imagine them alone, holed up in their mothers’ basements, ignoring personal hygiene and playing until they pass out from exhaustion or dehydration, whichever comes first. Contradicting this misconception, social scientist Kenny Dunk notes that gaming can be a very communal activity: “Think of it as a modern version of an ice-cream social, but with cutting-edge technology instead of frozen dairy treats” (*Teaching*, 564). LAN parties are popular among all age groups. These get-togethers can range in size from just a few friends to tournament-sized events with thousands of participants (578). The events bring people together to spend quality time with each other, which teaches important social skills, like manners and sportsmanship. In these events, individuals compete against one another in a variety of game types ranging from simple games like cards to advanced first-person shooters (Dunk, “Social” 43). A junior at Ridgemont High School, identified only as Jeff S., is a big fan of LAN parties. He participates in at least one of these events every month. In an

interview published by the *Kennebunkport Times-Defender*, Jeff describes his enthusiasm for these events, explaining that he and fellow guild members scrounge up some cash to buy refreshments and then park themselves in his basement for the weekend. Jeff explains that LAN parties are “killer fun because it’s totally awesome getting together with [friends]” (Rater B5). Dunk notes that in many ways gaming is the 21st-century equivalent of a campfire. It’s a “silicon-fueled, electron-powered” place where people sharing a common interest can mingle. It builds bonds between friends and leads to a sense of fellowship among the participants (“Social” 567). Surely, the development of these kinds of interpersonal skills has a place in modern K-12 curricula.

Supporting Paragraph 4

Video games have a laundry list of social benefits, but surprisingly they do plenty of good for the individual as well. Almost without exception, students who regularly play video games are more creative than those who do not. Victoria Kruger, principal at the prestigious Peoria Art Academy in Peoria, Illinois, claims that pupils in her school with at least one gaming console at home do better across the board. In an article published in the art-themed academic journal *Clay, Brush and Pencil*, Kruger writes, “[The gaming students] have much more imaginative ideas. When it comes to sculpting or painting they simply perform better than non-gaming students.” Stan Dandeliver, a professor at the Peoria Art Academy explains that gaming students may be more creative than others because being immersed in a vivid, virtual world has an almost magical effect on children. It teaches them to have a more tolerant and open mind, and that there’s more to life than what meets the eye (310). Video games also teach kids empathy, or compassion toward others. Sure, many video game titles on the market today tend towards violence, but even the worst of these games have hopeful messages. Many of them feature hero-

type protagonists fighting against an oppressive, evil force. Today's youths pick up on these themes and learn to do good deeds in the real world (Bowkew). Trixar® Entertainment executive John Flushing claims that games also teach kids to have goals:

Finishing the next level, formulating a strategy on how to beat a tough boss, or collecting all of the coins in a given stage are things children can strive to do in a video game; these are also things from which they can learn important life lessons. Games teach them to ... 'stick with it' and 'hang tough' when life gets hard. (Rater B1)

While these kinds of soft skills are hard to measure on a standardized test, they are nonetheless important ingredients for a student's future success, and therefore deserve incorporation into K-12 curricula.

Supporting Paragraph 5

A final area overlooked by video game critics has to do with the future benefits of the lifestyle. Gaming exposes children to computers and other high-tech devices at an early age, which, in turn, leads them toward a career in a number of cutting-edge fields like engineering, biochemistry, and physics. Appalachian Valley University applied sciences Professor Samantha Cuddly started a video-game-playing course for college students considering the field of video game development. She says the program has been a great success and "shows students practical, real-life benefits of computers." Continuing, Cuddly adds that the hands-on experience gained in the classroom setting is a positive addition to a resume (Rater B5). Schools are expected to assist with preparing students for the workforce and ought to consider classes like Cuddly's as models for building opportunities to achieve this goal. In fact, these attempts to teach students real-life computer skills have already yielded inarguable success. A former student of Cuddly's class, notorious computer hacker Mayh3M, credits Cuddly with much of his success. He strongly

supports Professor Cuddly's research, saying that the video games he played in Cuddly's classroom guided him to his current profession — classified work for an unnamed government agency (Rater B5).

Supporting Paragraph 6

There's no reason why similar video-game courses could not be offered to K-12 students.

Imagine a roomful of kindergarteners sitting in gaming chairs, questing together as a clan in search of a math solution — it's a marvelous educational vision. According to author T.J. Eckleburg, getting students started during primary education really gives them a leg up when they enter the working world(249). Young people with experience playing certain types of games — like first-person shooters — are more likely to understand spreadsheets or word-processing programs (critical skills in the business world) than the average non-gamers.

Conclusion

As you can see, video games are not the wickedly harmful or worthless pastime many people have made them out to be. Once the various benefits are considered, it is clear that video games are necessary as core parts of school curricula. Gaming helps students physically, bolstering visual acuity and motor skills. There is also a host of social benefits associated with gaming, such as teaching sportsmanship and manners. Plus, gaming has future payoffs in the forms of job skills and opportunity. With this laundry list of advantages, one can only imagine what scientific, sociological, or technical breakthroughs a child who was taught through video games might make in the future.

Source List (this is the last page of your document- click the "return/enter" key to separate it from the preceding pages)

Works Cited

Bowkew, Marcy. "Benefits of Gaming." *All About the Gaming Industry*. Global Alliance of Game Manufacturers, 5 December 2010. Web. 14 April 2011.

Dunk, Kenny. "Social Sciences in the Modern World." *Computer World* May 2009: 564-588. *ProQuest*. Web. 14 April 2011.

---. *The Teaching Power of Video Games*. New York: Grambling, Gropeler and Meowmers, 2010. Print.

Eckleburg, T.J. *Aye-Aye, Eyes: The Convexion of Video Games and Human Vision*. New York: Grambling, Gropeler and Meowmers, 2005. Print.

Kruger, Victoria. "Cranking Up Creativity: Getting Kids High on Art." *Clay, Brush and Pencil* 6 (2009): 300-45. Print.

Rater, Jenny. "Learning to Play, Playing to Learn: Video Games as an Educational Tool." *Kennebunkport Times-Defender* 14 January 2011, final ed.: B1+. Print.