

THE CHANGE AGENT

**Adult Education for
Social Justice: News,
Issues, and Ideas**

We All Need to Play

- Everyone Needs to Play: 3
- Walking is My Play: 4
- Red Tricycle: 5
- A Game for Learning: 6
- Just This One Time: 8
- Fair Play for a Fair Future: 10
- The Way I Got My Dolls: 12
- Fun in a Farming Village: 14
- Hide-and-Seek in War: 15
- Everybody Played: 16
- Passing the Ball On: 18
- I Still Like to Hula Hoop: 19
- We Were Captains of Our Ships: 20
- The Caves: 21
- Not Much Time to Play: 22
- Sacred Play: 24
- Old Games vs. New Games: 26
- Strict Mom: 27
- Nothing to Compare: 28
- Siri, Why Is Mom So Boring: 29
- Addiction to Video Games: 30
- Hooked on Video Games: 32
- Play for Bodies, Minds, and Souls: 34
- Who Is Allowed to Play? 36
- Playtime: Not Just Fun and Games: 38
- Football Taught Me to Embrace Challenges: 40
- Play Sports and Learn: 41
- My Tamagotchi Taught Me: 42
- Imagination is the Best Play: 43
- More than Marbles: 44
- Be Happy—Play: 47
- Whole Body Development through Play: 48
- Early Childhood Educator Career Pathway: 49
- I Wanted to Play: 50
- Gamification: 52



Concepción Saravia (above as a child with her baseball bat, and left as an adult) begged her mother to let her play baseball. Read her story on p. 8.

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The Change Agent is the bi-annual publication of The New England Literacy Resource Center. Each issue of the paper helps teachers incorporate social justice content into their curriculum. The paper is designed for intermediate-level ESOL, ABE, GED, and adult diploma classes. Each issue focuses on a different topic that is relevant to learners' lives.

In New England, online access to *The Change Agent* is available free of charge through NELRC's affiliated state literacy resource centers. Email changeagent@worlded.org to learn how to access the site.

Submissions:
For the theme of our next issue, see the "Call for Articles" on the back cover. Note that we feature writing by adult learners. For submission guidelines visit: changeagent.nelrc.org/write-for-us or contact us at 617-482-9485 or changeagent@worlded.org.

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WORLD EDUCATION

A Note from the Editor:

Our writers in this issue are from all over the world, from Mexico to Moldova, from Lebanon to Gambia, and from Indonesia to Cape Verde, as well as the U.S. They are enrolled in programs from Arkansas to Arizona, and from New England to Oregon and Alaska. One takes correspondence courses while incarcerated; another is studying to become a phlebotomist; some hope to help their children with their homework. Others are working on their high school diploma, job skills, and college readiness. One "has a curious mind, a kind heart, worker's hands, and traveler's feet." All of them put their full hearts and minds into exploring the topic of play – defining it, sharing the joy of it, noting the lessons learned from it, and shining a light on the ways we do not all have fair access to it. Special thanks to Netty Prastika (p. 3) who gave us our title, "We All Need to Play."

Students using this issue in the classroom will benefit not just from the stories, which are engaging, playful, and at times heartbreaking. They will also find learning activities; vocabulary lessons; extensions that incorporate math, science, geography, and history; as well as research and presentation ideas that help them take their learning further. I hope they will be as inspired as I am by these powerful stories. And perhaps they will consider writing for our next issue. See p. 55 and the back cover for more information about how to write for the next issue, "Stand Up and Be Counted," which marks the election and the decennial census.

Our Editorial Board:

Many thanks to the members of our editorial board, whose collective creativity and wisdom about play and all things adult ed. helped shape this issue: **Aliza Ansell**, ABE and Workforce Development at Holyoke Community College, Holyoke, MA; **Sheon Casabuena**, student at Avoyelles Parish Schools in Marksville, LA; **Ana Contreras**, ESOL student at the Seaport Hotel in Boston, MA; **Ed Latham**, technology specialist, Milbridge, ME; **Andy Nash**, World Education, Boston, MA; **Alexandra Papagno**, former ESOL teacher, Boston, MA; **Francisco Romero** ESOL student at the Seaport Hotel in Boston, MA; **Nico Scallan**, ABE teacher at Avoyelles Parish Schools in Marksville, LA; **Ebony Vandross**, World Education, Boston, MA.

—Cynthia Peters, cpeters@worlded.org

And finally... please subscribe or renew! We need you!

Spread the word to friends and colleagues, and encourage programs to subscribe. Remember to revisit our back issues for a great source of relevant, timely content. You – our fans and allies – help us keep the lights on!



Everyone Needs to Play

Netty Prastika

BEFORE YOU READ: How would you define play?

Play has many definitions. Some say that for children, play is actually their work. Others say that play is for fun only. The Google dictionary says play is for enjoyment and does not serve “a serious or practical purpose.” But most of us know that play helps us relax, and in this busy life, that is very practical! It is hard to decide which definition is right. Let’s look more closely at play.

For a child, play is an essential part of his or her life – it is like their job. Researchers have shown that play can increase a child’s intelligence and creativity, and improve their emotional, social, and physical health. When the children are playing, they look focused. They take their play seriously! Also, they look free, enthusiastic, excited, and so alive. I think many of us never realized as we were growing up, how lucky we were to be able to play.

As adults, there are so many important things to do. We work and have serious commit-

ments. We face daily stresses at work and in our families. We are always looking for ways to solve our problems. We feel like we don’t have time to play.

But play is not just for kids.

We all need to play.

We need to forget for a while about work, deadlines, or problems. By playing, we give ourselves permission to have fun, relax, or even be silly. When we play, it is not the outcome that is important, but the process. There are so many ways to play, such as sharing jokes with friends, flying a kite at a park, baking with your kids, biking around with friends, or building a sand castle on a beach.

Play is a way to fuel yourself! When you play, you have a chance to be creative, use your imagination, and solve problems in a carefree way. So... what is play? Play is something we do for pleasure. But it is also serious. Play is something that we all – adults and children – need in our lives.

Sources: <www.psychologized.org/jean-piagets-theory-of-play>; “Why It’s Good for Grown-ups to Go Play,” Jennifer Wallace, *Washington Post*, May 20, 2017.



Play is a way to fuel yourself!



“If you want to be creative, stay in part a child, with the creativity and invention that characterizes children before they are deformed by adult society.”

—Jean Piaget

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what is play?
2. Read the quote by Jean Piaget in the box. Discuss what it means. Research Jean Piaget and share your findings.

Walking is My Play

Marie Nicolle Romelien

As a child, I was worried about getting hurt playing games. So, as an adult, I still don't like to play games. Instead, I enjoy spending my free time walking around Cambridge. This past Saturday, I walked more than 12,000 steps.

I enjoy walking because I like to watch the boats in the river. I like to see people do their exercises. I get excited when I see buildings and construction. How intelligent people are! I love to stop and listen to people playing guitar or singing in the streets. I often watch kids play in the park.

They play basketball, soccer, and volleyball. And they ride their bikes, too. I feel emotional and happy to see kids that are doing well.

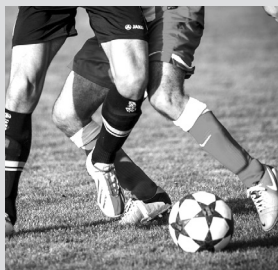
If I stayed in my house all the time, I couldn't see all of these beautiful things. As an adult, I enjoy walking because it makes me connected with the environment. I don't like to play games, but I love walking.



Marie Nicolle Romelien is originally from Haiti and is currently a student at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, MA. She attends English class twice a week and loves meeting people from different cultures.

What Is Your Play?

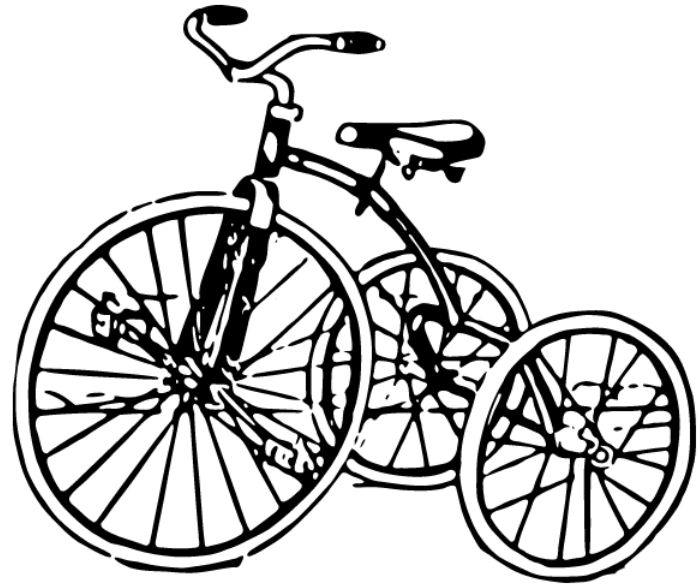
After you read Marie's story (above) and look at the images (below), describe the kind of play that you like the best. Explain. What is your definition of play?



Red Tricycle

Spozhmai Shahnan

When I was young,
I had a tricycle.
It was fun to ride,
easier than a bicycle,
red with three wheels.
I rode it outside.
I loved my red tricycle.
I miss my ride.



Spozhmai Shahnan is a student at the Family Literacy Program of IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services) in New Haven, CT. She came to the U.S. in 2014 from Afghanistan. She has two young children. She is studying English so she can talk to people in the community. Also, she wants to be able to help her children with their schoolwork when they start school.

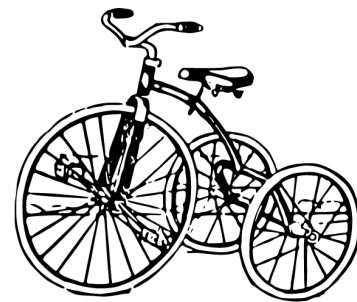
Language Practice



Unicycle



Bicycle



Tricycle

1. Consider the prefixes “uni,” “bi,” and “tri.” What do they mean?
2. Beware! English pronunciation is tricky! You pronounce “cycle” differently in different situations. When you combine it with the prefixes bi- or tri-, “cycle” rhymes with pickle. However, when you combine it with “uni,” the “y” sounds like an “i.” How do you pronounce motorcycle?
3. Write and say several sentences using these nouns ending with cycle.
4. Which words rhyme in the poem by Spozhmai Shahnan? Try writing your own poem using some rhyming words. Don't forget to write a title for your poem.

A Game for Learning

Fatou Daffeh

We play a learning game in my class. I love this game. Whenever my teacher says we can play the game, I get so happy and excited. We are learning through playing. We get to know each other, too.

My teacher puts us into four groups. She gives each group an article or some pictures to discuss. We look for key words to write on our poster paper. We have to find the most important parts to share with the rest of the class. In the group, one person does the writing. The rest of the group decides what to write. We cooperate, share our thoughts, and work together as one. When we are done, we go to the front of the classroom to share our ideas and explain why we chose those words to put on our poster. Every week, I look forward to this game. It is my favorite.

This game helps us to learn because, first, we read together in our group. Then we talk about what we read. Sometimes we read it over and over, and by doing that, we get more ideas. If I don't understand all the words, maybe someone else does understand. So they help me and I help them.

I improve my reading with this game, and I am learning new information. For example, we did one about global warming. I learned about things I can do to help the environment. I learned to save energy. I am teaching my children to do that, too.

The game helps me and my classmates become friends. For example, there is a woman I worked with in the group. When I saw her in the street, she gave me a big hug, and we exchanged phone numbers. In class, we are having fun and laughing. We try not to finish last. We try to put the best answers on the poster paper. We want to be the best group! Time goes by fast when we play this game.



Learn more about climate change in Issue #27 of The Change Agent.

Fatou Daffeh is from Gambia. She speaks Mandingo, a little Arabic, and English. She can read and write in Arabic. She is a student at Lehman College, Adult Learning Center in the Bronx, NY, where she is working to get her GED. She is also an Early Learning teacher, who works with children from birth to five years old.

Play “A Game for Learning” in Your Classroom!

Materials:

1. Poster paper and markers for each team
2. A variety of articles and/or pictures
3. Colored stickers or post-it notes to identify each team (optional)
4. A timer



Directions:

1. Divide into teams of 3-4 players each. Ask each team to choose a name for their team. (Or give each team a different color sticker or post-it note, so the teams are defined by the color of the sticker.)
2. Give each team poster paper and markers, and different articles or pictures.
3. Ask each team to pick someone to take notes on the poster paper and someone who will present what’s on the poster paper. Explain that the group will have time (you decide how much) to study the article and/or picture and to generate words or phrases describing what is most important about it. When the timer goes off, each group takes turns coming to the front of the room to explain what they put on their poster paper.
4. Decide if you want to make this a competitive game. If so, how will you give points? Play numerous rounds and rotate the note-taker and the presenter. Keep score.



Take it Further:

1. Define “cooperation”

- Define “competition”

2. In what way is the game cooperative? In what way is it competitive? Which type of play do you prefer? Why?

Just This One Time!

Concepción Saravia

When I was a child, I liked playing with dolls, but I mostly enjoyed being the pitcher on my baseball team. We would play other teams from towns that were close to our little town. Practice was so important. We would practice at recess every day so that we would feel confident about ourselves. We never lost a game.

I always felt proud of myself and my teammates after every game. When I first started playing, I had no experience. However, our coach told me that I had a talent for pitching. I worked so hard to improve and to compete. Sometimes my mother didn't want me to go to the games, so my teacher would send her a note asking for permission. My mother would always reply, "Yes, but just this one time." Nevertheless, my constant begging proved to be a success because she almost always let me play.

When I'd come home from the games, I could tell that she wasn't really interested in baseball, but deep down, I know that she was proud of me for improving my skills. Baseball was my favorite sport. If you've never had a favorite sport, I hope you try something new. It made my childhood so much better.



Concepción Saravia is an ESL student at the Fort Smith Adult Education Center in Fort Smith, Arkansas. She came to the U.S. from El Salvador in 2003. She enjoys spending time with her husband, son, and two daughters.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the text, what are some of the ways baseball made Concepción's life better?
2. Note how the author uses "nevertheless" in the second paragraph. What does it mean?
3. Have sports made your life better? Explain.



Change in Participation in Sports Since Title IX

High School Participation

Year	1971-1972	2005-2006	Percent Increase
Female	294,015	2,953,355	904%
Male	3,666,917	4,206,549	15%

Source: National Federation of State High School Associations, 2006

College Participation

Year	1971-1972	2005-2006	Percent Increase
Female	29,977	166,728	456%
Male	170,384	222,838	31%

Source: NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Participation Report, 1981-82–2004-05

Source: www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2012/07/gender-and-sports-forty-years-of-title-ix.html

Discussion Questions

1. Study the chart above. Based on the information in the chart, what do you think Title IX might be?
2. Write several true statements about the information in the chart.
3. Read about Title IX below. Look it up online and find out more about it. Who fought to get the law passed?
4. What else does Title IX apply to, besides sports?
5. Take it further! Watch this video and do the lessons at ed.ted.com/lessons/equality-sports-and-title-ix-erin-buzuvis-and-kristine-newhall.
6. What are your thoughts about Title IX?



Women's liberation march, 1970. Library of Congress.

Federal Civil Rights Law of 1972: Title IX

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Fair Play for a Fair Future

Kodyann Kent

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. Do you notice any difference between “girls’ toys” and “boys’ toys”? If so, what do you notice?
2. What does gender mean? How is it determined?

Gender Divisions Create Problems for Kids

Walk in to any toy store, and you’ll know right away which toys are for which gender. Pink and purple boxes line the shelves of one aisle, and blue and green boxes line the other. Barbies are in one section, and trucks are in the other. I volunteered at a preschool not too long ago, and the split between gendered toys was astounding. The “boy” toys were on one side of the room and the “girl” toys on the other. Rarely did I see a boy playing with a dollhouse or a girl playing with a train set.



Toy companies try to put children’s imagination in a box by making it look like some toys are only for girls and others are only for boys.

When adults create such strict gender divisions around toys, they create problems for children. For example, if a girl is seen playing with cars or trucks, she is labeled a “tomboy,” or people say her parents aren’t rais-

ing her right. If boys play with “girl” toys, they get labeled, too, sometimes much more severely.



Two aisles in a toy store.

Children naturally gravitate to all different types of toys, but toy companies try to put children’s imagination in a box by making it look like some toys are only for girls and others are only for boys. This could deter them from pursuing a hobby or career they are interested in when they are older. For example, a little girl who wants to play with trains or trucks may end up being interested in the same things when she is older. But she might not pursue her interests because she has been told it’s not normal.

Gender Neutral Toys Break Down Barriers

Marketing plays a big part in creating this idea that gendered toys are natural and normal. For example, Lego has a specific line just for girls. “Girl” Legos include a narrower range of what girls can build – mostly houses. Meanwhile, boys have a much greater range of things to make, such as trucks, machines, cars, and spaceships. If the Lego Company made their packaging more gender neutral, it would help break down barriers between the genders. With fewer barriers, boys and girls

could be more free to pursue more opportunities in the future.

Why not organize the toys in the toy store by interest or age, instead of gender? It's 2019! Diversity and gender neutrality are important to many people. Children's toys should reflect the idea that boys and girls can do whatever they want. There should still be Barbies and trucks on the shelves of toy aisles, but they should be packaged to look interesting and attractive to anyone—boy or girl. Gender neutral marketing and packaging would benefit all boys and girls and would give them a fairer shot at a fair future.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what is unfair about trying to direct girls and boys towards certain types of toys?
2. Look at and discuss the images that accompany this article. Describe in detail what you see. What are your reactions to the images?
3. Do you encourage your children to play with all types of toys? Why or why not?
4. Read the articles on pp. 22-23. What are other ways that gender affects our access to play?



Kodyann Kent is a student at ERACE in Branford, CT. Born and raised in Guilford, CT, she grew up with two younger boys and has observed how this topic impacts child development.



Write a Letter

Research several toy companies or toy stores. You can go online and find companies that sell toys, or you can visit a toy store to get information.

Take notes about the toys and the packaging. Are they designed to attract girls or boys? Or are they gender neutral? Take pictures or screen shots of products, and create a slide show to share your findings with your classmates.

Write a letter to the company that you researched. Describe what you think they are doing well or what they could be doing better in terms of how they market their toys.

Use a rubric to evaluate and improve your letter-writing skills. You can find one in “Issue extras” on our website.

Keep a portfolio of letters you have written. Note where you improve.

The Way I Got My Dolls

Petagaye Farr

BEFORE YOU READ: Did you make your own toys when you were little? Describe how you did it.

Mango Seed and Braided Grass Dolls

I grew up in Jamaica as one of seven children. My mother could not afford to buy dolls for us, so we used mango seeds for our dolls. We would cut our hair and glue it to the mango seeds so that we could comb our dolls' hair. That didn't go well for us; my mother got angry at us for cutting our hair. So my brother Marcel went to the slaughterhouse and cut some dead cow's hairs for us. He used warm blacktop tar from the road to glue the hair to the mango seeds.

Sometimes we went with our mother to the pond to wash our clothes. When we went there, my sister and I braided the tall grass into the shape of dolls to play with for the day. When it was time to leave, we would cry because we had to leave the braided grass dolls behind.

My brother went to the slaughterhouse and cut some dead cow's hairs for us. He used warm blacktop tar from the road to glue the hair to the mango seeds.

My siblings and I never got new things. Luckily, we had some cousins whose mother lived in America, and she would send them new clothes and toys. They gave us their old clothes whenever they got new ones, but they never gave us their old toys! Instead, they pretended that their old dolls died, and they planned a funeral service and invited us to attend. We went and sang songs and pretended to cry tears. They even made a fake coffin for the dolls and wrapped them in white cloth.



A Funeral Service for Dolls

My brother Marcel offered to be the undertaker. He thought that if he was in charge of the burial, he would know where the dolls were buried. His plan was to go back after the funeral and dig up the dolls for my sister and me. But my cousins were ahead of him. They knew that Marcel was a slick boy. So my cousins insisted that they would bury the dolls themselves.

After the service my cousins all went inside, and we pretended that we were leaving. Marcel told us to hide in the bush and watch to see if our cousins came back outside to bury the dolls. He was right — they came outside and peeked around to make sure that we had left. Marcel whispered to

us to be quiet, especially me because I was famous for being a “cry baby.” I stayed silent, and we watched them bury their dolls in their grandmother’s banana field.

We had to wait in the bush until it got dark. I was crying because I was hungry and mosquitoes were biting us. Marcel tried to comfort me. He said, “Everything is going to be OK. I promised to get those dolls for you, and that’s what I am going to do. I am tired of folks making fun of me every

time that I go to the slaughterhouse to get hairs off of dead cows, OK?”

Bringing Them Back to Life

It finally got dark. Marcel said, “You all stay put. I will go alone.” I watched him crawl on his belly down the hill and into the banana field like he was a soldier going into battle. When he came back, he had six dolls stuffed under his shirt. He gave them to my sister and me and said, “Let’s go home. Marcel might be poor, but he is no fool!” So we took the dolls home and played with them and brought them back to life.

Petagaye Farr is a student at Central Vermont Adult Basic Education in Morrisville, VT. She was born in Jamaica, and she became a United States citizen in 2016. She is a hardworking student with a beaming smile. Right now, she is working to reach her goal of getting a high school diploma.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. Use context clues to define these words: slaughterhouse, siblings, undertaker, slick, and stay put. Try using them in sentences.
2. Re-tell the story in your own words. Use words and phrases to show sequencing, such as first, then, after that.
3. Write about your own experience with hand-me-downs in your family.

Which Doll Would You Buy (or Make) for Your Child?



Fun in a Farming Village

Sneaking Out at Night to Play Hide-and-Seek

Victoria Ciobanu

When I was little, I did not have many opportunities to play games. I grew up in a village in Moldova, and we had a large farm. It was the job of my sister, brother, and me to take care of it. Daily chores included cleaning, plowing, planting, and selling vegetables at the market. It was a hard life, and we did not have much time to play. However, once in a while, after all the chores were finished, we would sneak out into the night to explore the land and play games with our friends.

One of my favorite games was hide-and-seek. We would split into two teams. One team would hide in the village, and the other team would try to find those that were hiding. Before we started playing, we had to decide on the rules. The village was quite large – it could take half an hour to walk from one side to the other – so defining where we could hide was important. We had a “five-foot rule,” which meant that we could only enter the first five feet of a neighbor’s yard. These rules made it easier to find the ones that were hiding.

One night, I remember all of us hiding in a pile of corn stalks. We could barely breathe! Yet, no one found us that time. We won!



Frequently, we had problems with our clothes. This was a poor farming village, where children wore hand-me-downs that didn’t always fit well. I remember some kids wore shoes that were too big, and they would fall off as they were running. They would usually stay barefoot after that



A Molodvan village. Photo from 365bookworm.wordpress.com/2017/05/25/the-good-life-elsewhere-moldova.

happened. We also had to be dressed to jump the neighbors’ fences!

I found hiding in our neighbors’ yards to be the most exciting and challenging. We did not want to wake up the village, so we would try to make as little noise as possible. But sometimes, our laughter and shouting erupted. Then we would all go quiet and try not to laugh. The next morning, we would hear villagers talking about a “robber” that was sneaking around town. One woman got tired of our noise, and she ran out of her house with an axe to scare us off!

Although the vast majority of the time we had to work on the farm, there were moments like these that I remember fondly. Life was very difficult growing up in the village but having my brother and sister and all our friends, made it much easier.

Victoria Ciobanu is an ESL student at Adult Learner Services in Lebanon, NH. She was born in Moldova, received her high school diploma in Romania, as well as her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in geography and marketing. She came to the U.S. in 2017, and she is now the owner of a small housecleaning business.



Hide-and-Seek in War

“It wasn’t safe to go out far from the house.”

Mirvat El Hamad

BEFORE YOU READ: Did you ever beg your parents for something? If so, share the story. Did you play hide-and-seek as a child? Describe how you played the game.

I come from Lebanon, and I have five sisters. When I was a kid, my favorite game to play with them was hide-and-seek. My parents did all they could to give us a happy life, but it was a time of war. It was not safe to go out far from the house, and kids couldn’t go to school. There was no

Our parents were afraid that we could be kidnapped.

government control, so our parents were afraid that we could be kidnapped.

So we played hide-and-seek inside. Most of the time we didn’t have electricity, so we played

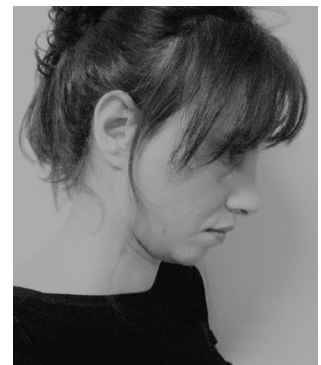


View of war ravaged Beirut, Lebanon, 2011. Image courtesy of the Beirut Collection (COLL/4232).

in the dark. We loved this game but we were very noisy, running and screaming a lot, which made my parents stressed. They were always stressed, not knowing about the future, and trying to protect us from war. Some days, my friends asked us to go out to play and my parents tried to prevent us. But we nagged and nagged them to be with our friends. When we came home, we had such happy faces, but my parents’ faces were different, full of worry and sadness.

When we moved to Germany, our lives changed and our games changed. Now we could play basketball on a school team and also ping-pong! There was always electricity, and I could play with new friends from many countries. Our parents’ faces were happy when we went out to play. To this day, ping-pong is my favorite game.

Mirvat El Hamad is a student at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, MA. She has been in Cambridge for two years and lives with her husband and young son.



Take It Further

Read the stories about hide-and-seek on pp. 14-16. Compare and contrast the conditions for the game and the way the game is played in each article. Find the countries mentioned in these three articles on a map. Find out if your classmates played hide-and-seek. Which countries are represented in your class? Add them to the map.

Read another story about play during wartime by Vanso Lim from Cambodia. It is available with issue “extras” at <changeagent.nelrc.org/issues>.

Everybody Played

Lais Caroline Pellenz

BEFORE YOU READ: Does your family play together? What is fun (or perhaps not fun) about adults and children playing together?

LEARN AN IDIOM: What do you think it means to “wolf down” your lunch?

When I think about my childhood, the first memory that comes to mind is playing hide-and-seek. I know that it is a very common game, but it was special to me because my whole family played, including parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. It was a wonderful time when the adults in my family could be children again.

It was a weekend routine: every Sunday we had lunch with the whole family at my grandmother’s house. All of us kids would wolf down our lunches, so we could start the game as soon as possible. When it was time to play, kids and adults began running in every direction. I could see aunts helping nephews climb trees, kids hiding in small places, and my grandmother freaking out if someone – all dirty and sweaty – was hiding inside the house. Everybody was trying to find the best place



Lais Caroline Pellenz is from Brazil and is currently living in New Hampshire, where she works as an au pair and is a student at Portsmouth Adult Education and Great Bay Community College in Portsmouth, NH.

to hide. I loved feeling of the wind on my face as I ran, and my heart beating fast in my chest as I hid quietly in my hiding place.

Our game could *only* be played at my grandparents’ house. They had a big property with a lot of grass and trees, and small huts with chickens and pigs. If you heard the chickens clucking and running, you could be sure that someone



Lais Caroline Pellenz with some of her family.

was hiding between their nests. If, at the end of a round, some kid was missing, you might find her at the top of a tree. She probably got stuck.

Today, I’m 20 years old and living in the U.S., so I no longer have the chance to play this game with my family. I keep thinking how good it was being a child: the innocence in every act, the surprise at every new thing learned, the sincere smile after seeing a loved one, and the happiness to run around with my cousins. Thinking of all the adults in my family who played with kids makes me feel that becoming an adult myself isn’t so bad. The child I’ve been will always be inside me, and I deeply desire to play hide-and-seek with my future children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

My heart beat fast in my chest as I hid quietly in my hiding place.

Intergenerational Play

Study this article, the article on p. 18, and the pictures on p. 17. What are some of the physical, emotional, and social benefits of intergenerational play? Write about it.



Intergenerational play is when people from different generations play together – children, parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Describe what you see in the photos. Does it look like fun? Why or why not? Photos by Christinagro, from Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 4.0.



Passing the Ball On

Ralph Rivera

BEFORE YOU READ: What games have you passed on to your children?

LEARN AN IDIOM: What does it mean to “egg someone on”? Try using it in a sentence.

As a child, I played many games – baseball, basketball, tag, and handball. My favorite game was handball. From morning to night, I played. It would make my mind go to a peaceful place.

I mostly played against a wall in a playground in my neighborhood in Brooklyn. I also played in many different tournaments, all over the five boroughs of New York City. I played one-on-one and sometimes two-on-two; it all depended on who was there in the court.

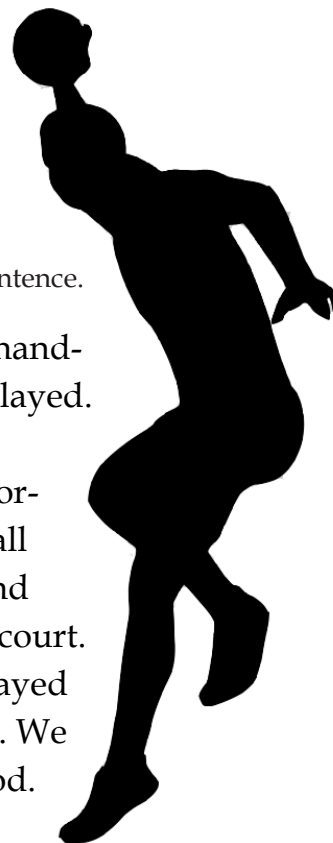
Handball is a game of strategy. We played for money. We played for fun. We played all over. We played against people of all ages. We played to learn. There was a 90-year old man in our neighborhood. He used to beat me every time!

I would always look forward to the morning, just so I could play my handball. Even in the snow and even in the rain, I kept playing. I practiced all the time to get better and to sharpen my skills. It’s easy to practice. All you need is a wall.

As time went by, I couldn’t play as much. I missed playing handball. But I am happy that I was able to pass my love down to my daughter. She started to play handball. She would egg me on, saying, “The old man can’t play!” I became the teacher, and she was the student of the game that I loved. Her friends started to play too. They came to find out that I wasn’t the “old man” they thought I was!

Handball was the greatest thing in the world for me: the thrill of a lifetime!

AFTER YOU READ: What are the examples of intergenerational play in this article? Based on the article and your experience, what are the advantages of continuing to play as we get older? Write about it.



Ralph Rivera is a student at East Village Access, and he also studies at the NYC Education Department in midtown Manhattan. He is a member of Fountain House where he participates in the Culinary Unit. He loves it!

I Still Like to Hula Hoop

Yol Hui Scott

When I was a child, I liked to play. I liked to play hide-and-seek because I liked to run around looking for my friends. I liked to play cat's cradle with my sister because it is an interesting finger game. I liked to hula-hoop because it was fun. I still like to hula-hoop today because it is good exercise.



YOU TRY IT: Write your own sentences modeled on Yol's sentences.

I liked to _____ because _____ .

I liked to _____ because _____ .

I still like to _____ because _____ .

Yol Hui Scott is in the Level 1 English Class at Portsmouth Adult Education Program, Southern New Hampshire Services, in Portsmouth, NH. She moved to the U.S. from South Korea in 1980. She has two grown children and her hobby is gardening.



KidTribe hula hoopers perform during the Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House, 2013. Photo by Pete Souza (official White House photo in the public domain).

We Were Captains of Our Ships

Diana Márquez

BEFORE YOU READ: What does it mean to be the captain of your ship, literally and figuratively? What is the meaning of “nostalgia”?

“I miss the way I took pleasure in small things...” This quote, by the writer Neill Gaiman, makes me remember my childhood. In my childhood, I was

My parents had money for shelter and food but not for toys.

very happy with small things. We were very poor. My parents had money for shelter and food but not for toys. My brother and I used

to create our own toys and games, and so did my friends. We did not have things, but we had a lot of love and a lot of imagination.

I remember my childhood with nostalgia. My friends and I used to play with little paper boats in the current created by the water that flowed through the ditches during a big rain.



Girl plays with a paper boat. Photo by Dipanka Dutter <creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>.



We had boat races, and competed to see which one came first. The most exciting thing, however, was not to win. It was to see how the little paper boats would slide along the water, and they would not sink because the paper was still dry.

That game was very exciting. We felt that we were captains of real ships navigating the Seven Seas. I remember how this game gave me that sense of freedom.

Furthermore, we were playing in the rain. I still remember how I felt when the rain touched my skin. It was an unforgettable experience.

Today, some children do not play outdoors because they prefer to play electronic games indoors. Parents should encourage children to play outdoors and to have contact with nature and feel the rain, the soil, and the breeze. Children should have the chance to create their own games, so they can develop their thinking skills and make proper decisions. Most importantly, they will be happy and have sweet memories about “taking pleasure in small things.”

AFTER YOU READ: What “small things” did Diana take pleasure in as a child? What is her opinion about children and play?

Diana Márquez is an ESL student at Bossier Parish Community College in Bossier City, LA. She was born in Puerto Rico in 1947, and she got her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Puerto Rico. She has two children and worked as a teacher for 48 years. She is grateful to her teachers at BPCC. She says, “I am proud of my progress because at my age, it is not easy to start a new life and learn a new language.”



The Caves

Columba Díaz

When I was young, my favorite place to play with my sisters was the mountain near my house—Montaña de Plata. It had beautiful trees and flowers. When it was raining, there was a waterfall. In the mountain, there were caves made of big rocks. We played house in the caves. We pretended there were different rooms and different floors. Inside the caves, there was an echo when we shouted. When it was raining, sometimes we shared the cave with animals like pigs, cows, and goats.

When it was raining, sometimes we shared the cave with animals like pigs, cows, and goats.

In the caves, we played many things. We pretended to cook and sell food. I cooked cakes made of mud. I used big round leaves as tortillas and made tacos filled with chopped

flowers. We used soda caps as money. I made tiny houses with sticks for my imaginary dolls. I put big leaves and branches on top for the roofs. We used plastic cups and thread to make a telephone so we could talk to each other in the caves. I collected plastic objects to use for play. I had recycling in my caves!

One time when I was playing, I heard something crying. I asked my sister, “Who is that?” My sister went to see and found a dog stuck in the cave. It was very weak. I pulled it out. When I looked into the dog’s eyes, it said, “Thank you.”

I was the oldest of seven children. I had a lot of responsibilities at home. But when I went to the mountain, I was very happy. It was my time. I didn’t have other responsibilities. I lived in a different world when I was there.

AFTER YOU READ: What does Díaz mean when she says, 1) “I had recycling in my caves!” and 2) “I lived in a different world when I was there.” Compare this story with the one on p. 22.



Columba Díaz, pictured above near the caves where she played as a child, is a student at Center for New Americans in Greenfield, MA. She is from Mexico. She is married and has three daughters.

What is a Cave?

A cave is a hole in the earth or in large rocks. It is big enough for a person to stand up in. Caves are formed by acidic rain, which eats away soft rock, gradually forming large holes. Find out more at www.nationalgeographic.com/science/earth/surface-of-the-earth/caves.

Not Much Time to Play

Ana Contreras

BEFORE YOU READ: As a child, did you spend more time playing or doing chores? How was it different for the girls and boys in your family?

I do not have much to say about playing. When I was a child, I did not have time to play. I was the fourth child and the first daughter, so I had to help my mother. I remember I was too little to reach the stove, I stood on a box to make tortillas.

Sometimes I played with my friend in the afternoon. Her name was Roxana. We used plastic bags to make our own “homes.” We cooked food in cans over rocks with a real fire. However, we only played for a short time. My mother was waiting for me to clean and cook.

In school, we played soccer with the boys. Playing soccer was so fun because I lived in a small town, and I did not have much freedom.

My brothers helped my mother too. They grew the beans and corn. They worked hard too.



Ana Contreras is from El Salvador. She studies ESOL at World Education's workplace-based program at the Seaport Hotel in Boston, MA.



Tortillas, made over a fire in El Salvador.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. Ana had three older brothers. She was the first daughter. Why is that significant in this story?
2. What did Ana play with her friend Roxana?
3. Why was recess at school so important to her?
4. Her brothers worked too. What did they do? What can you *infer* about what was different for boys and girls growing up in El Salvador?
5. Read all or part of the box on the next page. Say the main idea.
6. Look at the image on the left. Describe what you see. Describe how you make tortillas.
7. Write about your own experience doing chores and playing as a child.

Girls Spend More Time Doing Household Chores by UNICEF

NEW YORK, 7 October, 2016 – Girls between 5 and 14 years old spend 40 percent more time, or 160 million more hours a day, on unpaid household chores and collecting water and firewood compared to boys their age, according to a report released by UNICEF ahead of International Day of the Girl on 11 October.

“Harnessing the Power of Data for Girls: Taking stock and looking ahead to 2030” includes the first global estimates on the time girls spend doing household chores such as cooking, cleaning, caring for family members and collecting water and firewood.

The data show that the disproportionate burden of domestic work begins early, with girls between 5 and 9 years old spending 30 percent more time, or 40 million more hours a day, on household chores than boys their age. The disparities grow as girls get older, with 10 to 14 year olds spending 50 percent more time, or 120 million more hours each day.

Source: <www.unicef.org/press-releases/girls-spend-160-million-more-hours-boys-doing-household-chores-everyday>

AFTER YOU READ: According to the article, girls spend more time than boys doing chores. What are the various ways this might affect their lives in the short- and long-term?

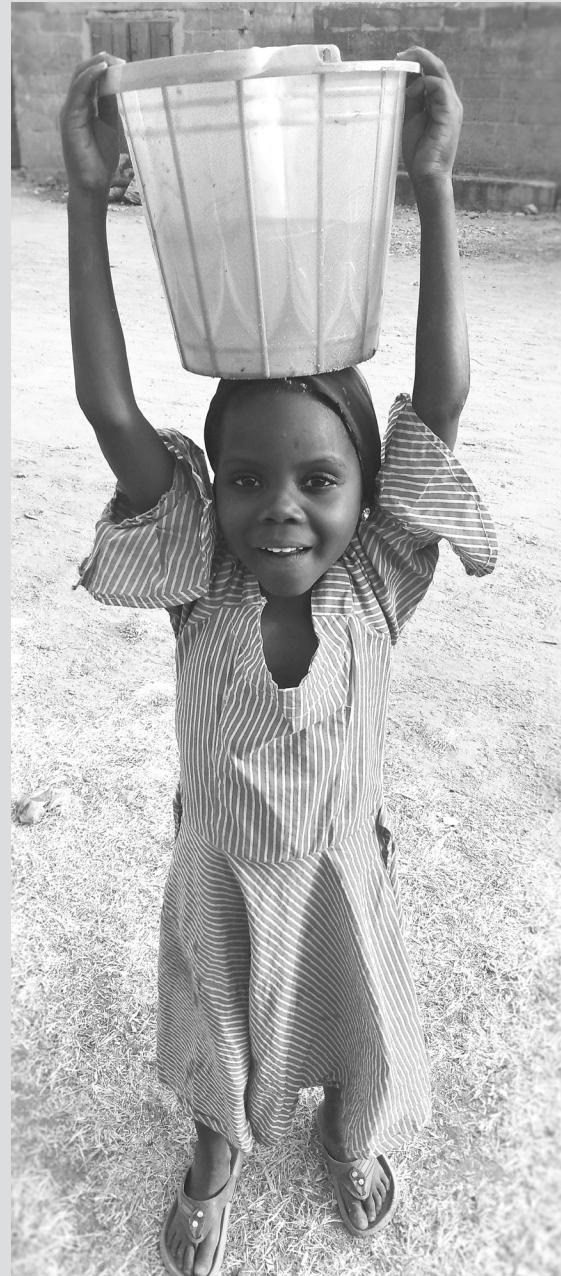


Photo by Yusuff Suleiman from Wikimedia, licensed under Creative Commons.



Sacred Play

Yirona Jericho Saucedo

BEFORE YOU READ: Learn the vocabulary words: atoll, islet, sacred, garland, coronation, and inanimate. Find the Marshall Islands on a map and describe their location in the world.

Play Is Sacred on the Marshall Islands

On the Marshall Islands where I am from, there is not a hard line between sacred activities and play. Children naturally want to mimic what they see their elders doing, and children from the Marshall

Islands are no different.

Play is considered a sacred activity that helps shape a child's heart.

I come from the small atoll of Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands. There are 29 atolls and 5 islets. Discipline, chores, sacred ritual, and play are important aspects of our

culture. Children are taught to respect the elders under all circumstances, even if the elders are from a different country. Play is considered a sacred

activity that helps shape a child's heart. Whatever shapes a child's heart, shapes a culture.

The Jobwa Dance: Our Most Sacred Ritual

The Traditional Jobwa Dance is our highest and most sacred ritual, and it is part of how children play. Because it is so sacred, it can only be performed by a High Chief and families of his choice. Therefore, many Marshallese have never seen the Jobwa Dance performed. However, I'm one of the lucky people who have seen the Jobwa Dance three times.

The first time was at the christening of the High Chief's new canoe. I was five years old, and it felt so scary when I heard the men blowing on the conch shells. The sounds made my skin crawl and my stomach tighten with excitement. The rhythm of the sticks pounding against each other was sacred. The most inspiring part was when the warriors do imitation stick fighting. The warriors wear grass skirts but no shirt and no shoes. The

women wear traditional outfits very similar to the men. After the Jobwa Dance, the women decorated the chief's canoe. They added garlands made out of dry coconut leaves. They also brought food, such as coconut, breadfruit, taro, fish, and other local food items.

After my first Jobwa experience, I was so inspired that I wanted to try the dance myself. I was too shy to practice in front of my friends, so I practiced in my kitchen where no one would see me. I got some sticks and hit them together and danced like the bow dancers.

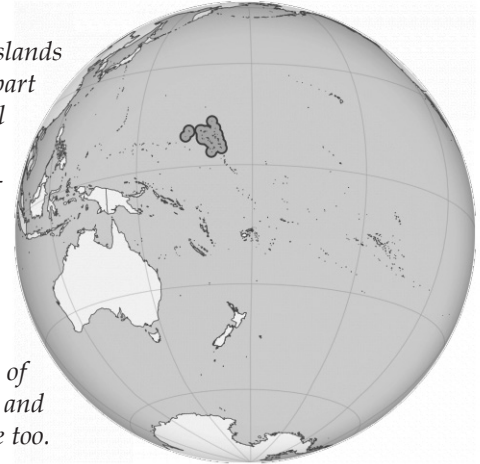
The other neighborhood children played Jobwa all the time, the boys hit the sticks together like the dancers. They practiced the dance steps all day long, the girls watched and clapped.

The next time that I saw the Jobwa Dance was when I was about 8 or 9 years old. The occasion was the christening of the High Chief's new house. It felt the same but less scary because I was older and because the ceremony was very similar to the christening of the High Chief's canoe. I understood what was going on. It felt familiar because I had been practicing. I was feeling more connected to my Marshallese community because I had been mimicking and learning the ritual.

The last time I saw the Jobwa Dance, I was 17 years old. The experience was very different from the other two times that I saw it. One difference was that the event was the coronation of the new High Chief, not simply blessing an inanimate object, like a canoe or a house. I could sense the

The group of islands in the shaded part is the Marshall Islands. What countries, continents, and oceans can you identify on this map? Label them.

Look up a map of Pacific islands and label them here too.



presence of my ancestors. I could also sense the spirit of the warrior, Lorenwa. I enjoyed the feeling of being surrounded by my culture, traditions, and memories.

Keeping Our Traditions Going

The new High Chief of the Marshall Islands is leading my people into the future by having his grandchildren perform the Jobwa at his coronation. Here in the U.S., our people live in various communities, and we are continuing Marshallese traditions. We get together, cook Marshallese food, sing Marshallese songs, and perform Marshallese dances. There's no High Chief out here in Arkansas, so we can't perform the Jobwa dance. I hope my daughter gets to see the Jobwa dance someday. I love being part of a culture that supports and values sacred ritual and play for all people.

AFTER YOU READ: How would you summarize the author's main point?

Yirona Jericho Saucedo is a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) student at Northwest Technical Institute, Adult Education Center in Springdale, AR. She hopes to become a certified Phlebotomist. Some day, she hopes to develop an outreach program that can help her Marshallese people with health, education, and careers.



Pacific Islanders

Pacific Islands Americans are Americans who are indigenous to Pacific islands that are affiliated with the United States, such as Hawaii, Samoa, or the Marshall Islands. Learn more about Indigenous people by reading Issue #48 of *The Change Agent*.



Old Games vs. New Games

Indira Martínez

BEFORE YOU READ: “Vs.” is an abbreviation for “versus,” which means “opposed to.” In a soccer game, for example, we might say U.S. vs. Mexico. Looking at the title and the photo, what do you think this article will be about?

I used to live in a little town in Honduras, where we did not have the internet. I really loved walking to school, and being in school was like being in a movie for me, where all the happy scenes were in slow motion. It was the best part of my day. I was a mediocre student—neither the best nor the worst. My favorite part of school was recess. Yes, I think all of us got excited about that part. (Even now, I enjoy break time when I come to English class, though the differences in my responsibilities are obviously huge.)

When I was a kid, recess was complete happiness. I loved to socialize with my friends, we would talk about what to play, and all of us would

yell at the same time, “Policías y Ladrones” (Cops and Robbers)! OMG, how I loved this game! I have to confess this game marks a shift in my childhood. At a certain point, the game

gave me an excuse to interact with my crush. I used to love being a Robber while my crush was a Cop, because he had to catch me, which was definitely my favorite part.

These days are so different. I have a 14-year-old daughter who is growing up in a different time. She loves technology, and I made the mistake of giving her a phone. Nothing catches her attention like technology does. I have to force her to exercise. I try to do activities with her, and sometimes for a week or month, I take away her phone. When I do that, all she thinks about is getting her phone back. She and all teenagers are

She loves technology, and I made the mistake of giving her a phone.



Indira Martínez with her daughter.

similar. When they are at a gathering or a party, it is not fun to be with them because they are all on their phones. We have to pay attention and wake up and see how technology is affecting our kids!

I’m very grateful to God for giving me a childhood away from technology. When I was a little girl, I was very happy. In contrast, it is very hard for me to get through this part of my life where everyone is acting like a zombie on tablets and smartphones.

Indira Martínez is a student at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, MA. She has a teenage daughter who loves to be on her cellphone. She is an active person who enjoys helping others.

AFTER YOU READ: What does OMG mean? Do you ever use it when you are speaking or texting? What does the author mean by crush? What other meanings does it have? Read another mom’s story on p. 27.

Strict Mom

Seila Gomes

BEFORE YOU READ: What does “strict” mean? Were your parents strict with you? How? In what ways are you strict with your children?

I am a strict mom. My father was so strict with us. That is how he showed us that he loved us. And that is why I am a strict mom too.

I have two kids. My son is 12 years old. He is such a smart boy but after he started playing on the iPad, he changed. He didn’t answer me when I called him. He was so distracted. He used to read more books. At school, he was a good student but now I have to push him all the time to do homework and organize his school bag.

I am very strict with him now. I take the iPad away for the school week. I just give it back to

him for the weekend. Sometimes he does well at school and asks me for it but my answer is no. Later on, he takes his Legos and starts to make things. Or he draws pictures or makes his own

I am very strict with him now. I take the iPad away for the school week.

comic book stories. It is better for him to do these activities than to be on his iPad all the time.

I am strict with my son because I love him, the same way my dad loved me. I wish a better future for my son, so I will keep being strict with him.

AFTER YOU READ: How do Indira (p. 26) and Seila limit their children’s time on their devices? What



Seila Gomes with her son.

else could they try? What methods have you tried with your children?

Seila Gomes is a student at World Education’s workplace-based ESOL class at the Seaport Hotel in Boston, MA. She is originally from Cape Verde.

How Much Do You Use Your Phone?

Track your usage. Use “settings” to look up how much time you spend on your phone. Chart your findings over a period of time on a graph. Compare your graph with others in the class. What did you learn from this process?



Nothing to Compare!

It's Not Worse, Just Different

Silvana Jelcic

BEFORE YOU READ: Discuss what we mean when we say, “There is nothing to compare.”

Games from my childhood and games from today are so different. There is nothing to compare!

Years ago, our environment was safer. There were fewer cars, and our parents felt safe letting us play outside, more or less alone. In modern society, that is not acceptable. We need to have control over the children’s play and observe them all the time because there is traffic and pollution, and neighborhood alleys are not the safest places anymore.

Also, these days, our children are exposed to technology from the earliest ages. When computers became common in our households, we changed our way of living and our children’s way of playing. I will not say it is now worse than it was before. It is just different – same as our childhood was different from the childhood of our parents and grandparents.

We all should try to adjust to changes and

We all should try to adjust to changes and learn how to use the benefits of technology, not just criticize it.

learn how to use the benefits of technology, not just criticize it. For example, it is awesome how my friend’s 11-year-old son is able to learn a foreign language by playing online games with children from other countries. It is great how he can talk and see his friends online whenever he wants, and he does not have to depend on someone to drive him or wait for a bus for hours to play with them.

We have to admit that our children are sometimes smarter than we are where technol-

ogy is involved. I remember when I bought a smart TV. My son had no problem understanding all the features, even though he was only 12 years old.

In contrast, my TV is still a source of mystery for me – even now, years later!

Times are changing, and for us, it is important to embrace all changes and learn how to make the best of technology.



Silvana Jelcic is a student in the ESOL class at the Portsmouth Adult Education Program in Portsmouth, NH. She was born and raised in Croatia, she has a 19-year-old son, and she loves the sea and traveling.

Lots to Contrast

List some of the ways that Jelcic’s childhood is different from her children’s.

Then	Now

Siri, Why Is My Mom So Boring?

Cira Castillo

When I was a child, I used to play a lot of games. When my mom would talk with her friends, she'd always tell me and my siblings to go outside so that we couldn't listen to her conversations. We'd play games like marbles, hopscotch, and hide-and-seek. When it rained, we'd go out to the street and make holes and cover them with leaves. We would then hide and watch people step into the holes and sink their shoes into the mud.

Today's games that rely on technology cause kids to feel more stressed.

that the games I enjoyed are boring. However, I think "our" games were relaxing. Today's games that rely on technology cause kids to feel more

Today, I sometimes try to teach these games to my children, but they always tell me that these games are for old people like me. They say

stressed. My kids feel like they have to know everything. So, instead of relaxing by playing with their friends, they spend a lot of time on their phones asking Siri questions. I think they are missing out on opportunities to have fun.



Cira Castillo is an ESL student at the Fort Smith Adult Education Center in Fort Smith, Arkansas. She came to the U.S. from Mexico in 2000. She loves going to class and hanging out with her husband and four children.

Take It Further

Write about your own childhood. Compare and contrast it to your children's childhood. Follow these steps:

- a) Use a graphic organizer like the one on p. 28 to collect your thoughts.
- b) Decide how to organize your thoughts into body paragraphs.
- c) Make sure each paragraph has a topic sentence.
- d) Write an introduction and a conclusion.
- e) Get feedback and write a new draft.

Interview your classmates about the strategies they use to manage their children's access to technology. Use charts or graphs to present the data that you collect.

Write a letter to your child explaining how you feel about their use of technology.



Addiction to Video Games

Mathias Hamman



BEFORE YOU READ: Who benefits from people being addicted to video games? What do you think makes something an addiction? In other words, when does something change from being a habit or something you like to do, to being an addiction?

Corporations that design video games make them addictive on purpose. They want you to be thinking about the game all the time. How do they do

Games use many different methods to addict you so they can make more money.

this? Let me give you an example. “Clash of Clans” is a game that you play on your phone. In the game, you create and defend your own village. This seems like it should be a fun game, and it

is! But the problem is that the game is designed to make you want to play it all the time. “Clash of Clans” uses different methods to make you an addict so they can make more money. For example, to have the best village, you need to send your villagers on missions where they collect gems. These missions can take one

to eight hours. Therefore, you can spend many hours trying to collect gems for your village. If you don’t want to spend that much time, you can buy your gems.

Another problem with the game is that when you are not connected, your village is more likely to be attacked. So the game

gives you an incentive to be connected all the time. Also, you get a special reward each day just by starting the game. All of these techniques can make you more and more addicted.

If you get addicted, you could face several problems. One effect of addiction is that the game takes more and more space in your life. You start thinking only about the game; everything else becomes uninteresting. You stop studying, work-

Sometimes addicts lose their jobs or fail their classes.

\$ According to <gameindustry.biz>, the gaming industry made \$135 billion in revenue in 2018.

ing, or playing sports. Sometimes addicts lose their jobs or fail their classes. Some addicts try to keep a “normal” life. They go to school or work during the day, but then they play all night.

This habit of playing every night causes people to lose sleep, which is bad for their health. Furthermore, even if they aren’t playing during the day because they are at school or work, their minds are still busy thinking about the game.

When you are addicted to a game, your attention is always on the game even if you are not playing it. Addiction to video games is a serious problem that we should not take lightly. I hope that by reading this essay, you will be more aware of these problems and how they are caused.

Mathias Hammam is a student in the ESOL at Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, corporations design video games to be addictive. What are some of the specific ways companies do this?
2. What do you think about the author’s idea that corporations want to addict people to video games so that they can make more money?
3. Read the information in the box on the right. What surprises you? What questions do you have about the informaton?

DO SOME RESEARCH ON ADDICTION:

1. What other items are legally for sale in the U.S. that might be addictive? Pick one and learn more about it.
2. How much revenue does the item generate? Who is its target audience? What policies or laws do we have in place to protect people from becoming addicted to this item and to treat them when they do become addicted?
3. Present your findings in an essay or a slide-show or poster presentation. Be prepared to discuss what you have learned.



More Information about Addiction

A study appearing in the medical journal *Pediatrics*, conducted by research scientist Douglas A. Gentile, Ph.D., examined video game usage rates of 3,034 children and teenagers. Statistics from this study revealed the following:

- The average length of time spent playing video games was 20 hours per week.
- An estimated 72 percent of American households play video games.
- An estimated nine percent of the 3,034 participants in the study showed signs of video game addiction.
- Four percent of study participants were categorized as extreme users who played video games 50 hours per week on average.

Source: <www.addictions.com/video-games/alarming-video-game-addiction-statistics>

Hooked on Video Games

Kyle Dougherty

BEFORE YOU READ: What does it mean to be “hooked” on something? What are you hooked on?

Playing video games has been an important part of my life. I have been playing video games since I was six years old and now, at 19, I still play video games. I don’t plan on stopping anytime soon. For my entire life, I have struggled with depression, anxiety, and ADHD. Video games have helped me deal with these issues unlike anything else. No matter what, it has always been a treat to come home after a stressful day and unwind with some video games.

Getting Started at Age Six

As a six-year-old, my first experience with video games was watching my older brother play them until one day (after annoying him enough) he passed me the controller. It was “Halo 2” for the Xbox, and it was the first time I felt the joy of playing. The fun of seeing the explosions on the screen, the thrill of sneaking around and finding better futuristic weapons on the map, and the motivation of trying to get my score higher

I have struggled with depression, anxiety, and ADHD. Video games have helped me deal with these issues unlike anything else.

than my brother’s all led to me being hooked on video games. I didn’t know it at the time, but this was the beginning of a 13-year “addiction” to gaming.

On my seventh birthday, I got a Nintendo GameCube along with three

games for it. As someone who struggles every day with ADHD, I find it difficult to pay attention to anything for more than five minutes. However,



when I was playing these games, I could easily sit for hours on end – never losing focus. Catching ghosts in “Luigi’s Mansion” fascinated me and gripped my attention. I remember zooming across the racetracks in “Mario Kart” with my brother as we jammed to the catchy soundtrack. And I loved staying up all night with him in our attempt to unlock all the characters in “Super Smash Brothers.”

Meeting My Best Friend through Xbox

When I was about ten, I got an Xbox 360. This was the console of all consoles at the time, and I was obsessed from the moment I got it. One of my favorite games for this console was “Halo: Reach,” which I would play with my best friend at the time, Stevie. We both loved video games, and we stayed up for hours every night playing any game we could get our hands on.

Stevie and I spent nearly eight years playing video games together almost every night on Xbox Live, until we eventually met up in real life and got an apartment together.

Leaving Our Kid Years Behind

As roommates, we still played video games, but not as much. We spent more time working jobs to pay rent, being in relationships, taking road trips, and hanging out in real life. We had to start acting like adults. I was 18 going on 19; he was 22 going on 23. Our kid years were behind us and the ugly, grimy face of adulthood was ominously staring right in our eyes. That same year, we both ended up having to sell our video games and consoles in an effort to pay rent. I got \$60 for my Xbox One, which I originally bought for about \$250.

I still remember the Gamestop employee asking me if I wanted cash or store credit and Stevie making a joke about paying our rent with Gamestop store credit. He was like that. I think Stevie had a better grip on adulthood than I did, I eventually had to move back in with my parents after the burden of it all became too much.

Grateful for Video Games

I'll always remember the transition I made to adulthood by selling all my video games and Xbox One. Eventually we all reach a point when we have to come to terms with the stark reality of adult life. But I am still thankful for everything that has come into my life through playing video games. I'm thankful for the time shared with my brother as a young pup, for all the friends I made through online gaming, and for the real-life friendships forged through a love of video games.

If it had not been for video games, I don't know where I would be right now. Even though I was struggling with an overwhelming amount of disorders in my brain, video games were always there to put a smile on my face. As life slowly becomes more complex and I take on more responsibilities, I know I can't just sit down with my GameCube and tend to my "Animal Crossing"



town like I used to when I was seven. There's not enough time for it anymore. Despite that, I still find time every now and then to play a game.

No matter how old you get, you still have to make some time for play. The stress of life takes a toll. It's good to take care of yourself by playing. Whether play for you is board games, card games, instruments, football, skateboard, or swing set, or being with your cat, dog, or child, take some time out of your day and play. Video games are my choice. What's yours?

That same year, we both ended up having to sell our video games and consoles in an effort to pay rent.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what benefits did he get from video games?
2. What significant transition does the author describe, and what role did video games play during that transition?
3. Read the article on p. 30 by Mathias Hamman. How does that Mathias's perspective contrast with Kyle's perspective?

Kyle Dougherty is in the GED preparation class at Plainville Adult and Continuing Education in Plainville, CT. He has a 7-month old golden retriever named Bones, and he is the best.

Play for Bodies, Minds, and Souls

Rahaf Almasri

BEFORE YOU READ: What does play do for your body, mind, and soul?

Play is an important part of life. It gives physical relief to our bodies and mental relief to our souls and minds. But these days, play seems more stressful and maybe even unhealthy. Children are disconnected from their parents and other children.

Is It Play? Or Is It a Pacifier?

For example, parents use technology to keep their kids quiet. I have seen kids in their strollers holding their electronic pads or their parents' phones.

Increased time on our devices means increased isolation. We are far away from our families and friends even if we are in the same room with them.

They are watching cartoons or playing games. It seems like this isn't really playing. It's more like the device is a babysitter or a pacifier for the kids because at the same time, the parents are busy

either on social media or playing electronic games on their devices too. Therefore, they need their children to be quiet all the time. This means that children, from an early age, are dependent on electronic devices. It could affect the development of their brains. And maybe they will miss the chance to learn and discover and create new techniques for solving problems.

Toys: Just More Stuff?

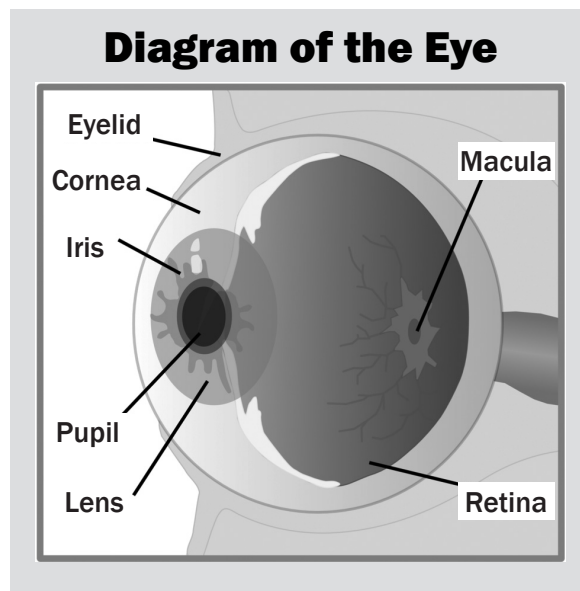
Also, children see advertisements every day about new toys. They feel that they must have the same toys that their friends have. They rush their parents to buy these new toys too. They play with

the toy for a couple of days until a new one is released, more advertisements come out, and they want their parents to buy the new one.

Online Games: Not Good for your Health

Teenagers play online games with their friends for many hours each day. As a result, they are not getting exercise, and they are damaging their eyes. In an article called, "Are Electronic Devices Affecting My Vision?," Dr. Jeff Taylor says, "Prolonged exposure to blue light can actually contribute to photochemical damage, which can potentially harm your retinal cells and make you susceptible to conditions like age-related macular degeneration."

Everywhere you go, people are staring at their phones. There is this new custom of having your phone with you all the time so you can "play" any time and all the time. But you are spending less time with your families and friends. And the



"Prolonged exposure to blue light...can potentially harm your retinal cells and make you susceptible to conditions like age-related macular degeneration."



People on their phones on subway in Seoul, South Korea. Photo by Mark Smith, Wikimedia.

play is not relieving stress. If you pay attention, you will notice that after playing on your devices, you are likely to have red eyes and even suffer from headaches. Increased time on our devices means increased isolation. We are far away from our families and friends even if we are in the same room with them.

What Should We Do?

As a community, we should do more to bring back the old kinds of play. We should provide playgrounds to the kids in the neighborhood. We should encourage them to play sports. All kids should have the same opportunity to play no matter

It's never too late to create quality time with your kids.

where they live or how much money their parents have. As a parent, I believe that we should understand the consequences of using electronic devices. We should make sure to spend quality time with our children—not on devices. And we should schedule time for them to be outside exploring, doing physical activities, and learning in groups.

It's never too late to create quality time with your kids. Play with them, teach them what your parents taught you, and share your childhood games with them. Make a better connection with their souls and minds, so they can be a good example for their kids in the future. The world is becoming more digital, but you can still help them see all the colors of life.

Source: <yoursightmatters.com/are-electronic-devices-affecting-my-vision/>

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What does the author say (and what can you infer) is the difference between play and a pacifier?
2. Re-read the quote by Dr. Taylor on p. 34. What strategies can you use to make sense of this complex sentence? Use the context clues to figure out what the unfamiliar words mean. Look them up. Try re-phrasing the sentence in your own words.
3. What does the author say we should do in our families and in our communities to increase quality time with our children? What else can we do?



Rahaf Almasri is a Syrian mother studying medical coding and billing at the Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center (BEOC) in Brooklyn, NY. She hopes to be a good example for her kids.

Pools, Play, and Protests:

Public Swimming Pools and the Fight for Civil Rights

Ebony Vandross

BEFORE YOU READ: Is it harder for some groups of people to enjoy all kinds of play? If so, which groups? What makes it harder?

Swimming While Black in the 1960s

In 1964, the swimming pool at the Monson Motor Lodge in St. Augustine, Florida, was host to a very important yet often forgotten milestone in the ongoing Civil Rights movement. On June 18th, 1964, white and black activists staged a “dive in,” jumping into the pool together to protest racial segregation laws. In response, the manager of the hotel

poured muriatic acid into the pool and onto the protesters in an attempt to drive them out. Police officers arrived on the scene and arrested several of the protesters, while the hotel manager faced no charges. The next day, the Civil Rights Act was passed by the United States Senate.

When President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law on July 2nd, 1964, segregation was officially outlawed. So why does it seem like black people are still, to this day, getting kicked out of swimming pools? Here are three recent examples:

Swimming While Black in the 2010s

In 2015, 15-year-old Dajerria Becton and other black youth went to a private pool party in McKinney, Texas. Residents in the upper-class neighborhood made comments to the black guests, telling them to “go back” to their “Section 8” housing. Someone called the police, and Dajerria Becton ended up being pinned face-down on the ground by a police officer. In response to cries of protests from the other children present, the officer pulled out his gun and charged at them as well. In 2018, a settlement of \$184,850 was awarded to Dajerria’s family after they filed an excessive force claim against the police department. Officer Casebolt resigned from his position. In 2016, a grand jury declined to indict him for assault.¹

In 2018, a 38-year-old South Carolina woman pleaded guilty to assaulting 15-year-old Darshaun RocQuemore Simmons who was at a community pool with his friend. According to Simmons, “This lady walked up to us and was like y’all have to leave. We said, ‘yes ma’am.’ When I started walking out, she just started hitting me.” Simmons recorded the incident on his cell phone, and also said that the woman “called me the N-word.”²



Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X met at the U.S. Senate, where they had come to listen to Senators debate the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This was the only time the two men ever met; their meeting lasted only one minute. Photo by Marion S. Trikosko via the Library of Congress.

In July 2018, the pool manager of an apartment complex in Memphis, Tennessee, called the police on Kevin Yates, a black man who was wearing socks in the pool area. The manager claimed that socks were against the dress code. According to Yates, other people at the pool were wearing socks, but he believes he was singled out on the basis of race. The manager was fired following the incident.³

Race and Gender at the Pool

The Civil Rights Act may have made segregation illegal in 1964, but society is still trying to catch up. Why are swimming pools in particular so slow to desegregate? Why are white people still so fearful of black people being in the same pool with them?

According to historian and author Jeff Wiltse, pools used to be gender segregated, but in the 1920s, cities and towns started letting men and women swim in the same pool. That is when whites started insisting on racial segregation at pools. He goes on to explain that white swimmers and public officials “did not want black men having the opportunity to interact with white women at such visually and physically intimate public spaces.” White people worried that if blacks and whites swam together, then “black men would assault white women with romantic advances, that they would try to make physical contact with them, and that this was unacceptable to most northern whites.”⁴

Who is Allowed to Play?

Despite decades of people fighting for civil rights, there are still white people who believe that black people don't belong in the same pool with them. Play is supposed to inspire feelings of joy and freedom. It's supposed to bring people together. Yet racism still gets in the way. Thankfully, people are fighting back. They are telling their stories to show there is still work to be done. They are using anti-discrimination laws to protect their right to play.

Ebony Vandross is a staff associate at World Education. She frequently writes for The Change Agent.



In June 1964, James Brock dumped acid into the water at the Monson Motor Lodge in St. Augustine, Fla. He was trying to disrupt swimmers who were protesting the hotel's whites-only policy. Photo: Bettmann/Corbis.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What surprises you about this article? What questions do you have?
2. Research the Civil Rights movement, and present your findings to the class.

Sources: 1. Montana Couser, “McKinney, Texas, Girl Who Was Slammed to the Ground by Police at a Pool Party in 2015 Wins Settlement.” *The Root*. June 21, 2018. <www.theroot.com>; 2. <www.cbsnews.com/news/stephanie-sebby-strempel-pool-patrol-paula-pleads-guilty-to-assaulting-black-teen-at-pool>; 3. <www.nytimes.com/2018/07/09/us/memphis-pool-manager-fired-socks.html>; 4. <www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10495199>; <www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10495199>.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s helped bring about many changes in the law. One was the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It makes racial segregation illegal, and it outlaws unequal application of voter registration requirements.

Playtime: Not Just for Fun and Games!

Sterlin Reaves



BEFORE YOU READ: What is the role of play in social development? Do you think children in this society have equal access to play?

When I think about my youth, what I remember is the fun games I played with my friends. Whether at school recess or on the neighborhood streets, we played everything from “freeze tag” to “wall ball,” from video games to wrestling. While playing these games, I never really thought about what short- or long-term impact they might have. I just knew I was having fun.

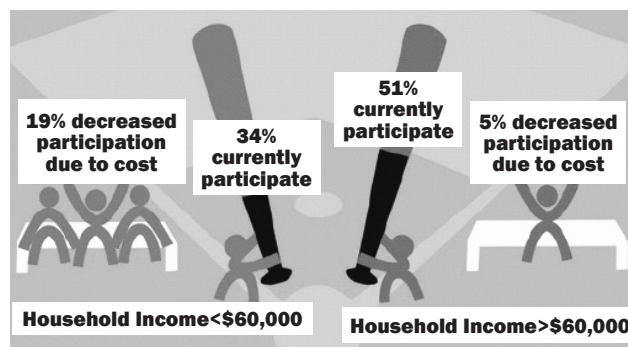
Play and Social Development

As I look at society today, I notice that the younger generation is much more technologically advanced than mine but also less advanced socially. I think it’s because my generation spent more time playing with other kids, and less time on devices. Playing with your peers gives you an opportunity to learn how to speak up for yourself and how to listen. You learn how to deal with success and failure. You learn how to develop different parts of your personality that may not come naturally, like being more assertive or considerate, being more patient or humble. You learn what kind of people

you do and don’t enjoy being around, and how to communicate with and understand people who are different from you.

Bring Back Recess!

Today, lots of people spend more time staring at their phones than they do at each other. And though I have no problem with gaming, I do think our society could do more to help children develop social skills that support them to transition from childhood to adulthood.



Study the infographic above. Make several true statements about the data you see. Graphic from *Educating the Student Body*, Chapter 6. <www.nap.edu/read/18314/chapter/8#272>

Unfortunately, children from wealthier families often get access to more of these resources. For example, some public schools have less recess because they need more time for test preparation. Private schools are not required to give students the same standardized tests, so they can be more flexible about giving kids time to play. Furthermore, some school districts do not have the budget to build safe playgrounds with sufficient space for kids to run around. In one neighborhood in Philadelphia where about one third of the people are poor and about half are black, Latino, or Asian, not a single one of the eight elementary schools has a playground.

I hope that in the near future, people will recognize the role “play” has in social development. Parents should encourage their children to put down their phones and tablets and go outside to play. Also, communities and school districts should fight to make sure that all children have equal access to play!

Sterlin Reaves is from Philadelphia. He is incarcerated in Indiana, PA, and he takes correspondence courses.

Sources: <isminc.com/advisory/publications/the-source/paying-for-recess-families-transfer-to-private-schools-for-recess>; <why.org/articles/uneven-play-most-philadelphia-public-schools-dont-have-playgrounds-thats-slowly-changing>.



In 2014, parents and grandparents from the Lake County School District in Florida protested the lack of recess for their school-age children. In 2017, they won a new law requiring children in grades K-5 to get 100 minutes of recess per week. How many minutes is that per school day? Do you think it's enough?



Yay for Recess: Pediatricians Say It's as Important as Math or Reading

“Recess is most children’s favorite period, and parents and teachers should encourage that trend, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Recess can be a critical time for development and social interaction, and in a new policy statement published in the journal *Pediatrics*, pediatricians from the AAP support the importance of having a scheduled break in the school day. ‘Children need to have downtime between complex cognitive challenges,’ says Dr. Robert Murray, a pediatrician and professor of human nutrition at the Ohio State University who is a co-author of the statement. ‘They tend to be less able to process information the longer they are held to a task. It’s not enough to just switch from math to English. You actually have to take a break.’”

Source: <healthland.time.com/2012/12/31/yay-for-recess-pediatricians-say-its-as-important-as-math-or-reading>

Football Taught Me to Embrace Challenges

Tony F. Jones

When I was growing up, football was my game. I was shorter and weighed less than the other kids, but I still made the team and played starting positions for two schools as well.

On offense, I started as quarterback and then tailback. These positions gave me the opportunity to make great plays and to score touchdowns to help my team win. Due to my speed, I was able to burst through the line or run around the end and score a touchdown.

On defense, as middle linebacker, I was able to intimidate guys bigger than me by rushing through gaps. I would interrupt and interfere with their offense and cause them to lose yards and downs. I would cause fumbles, and I would intercept the ball for a touchdown. I never

I never was shy or fearful or doubtful when I faced the other team.

was fearful or doubtful when I faced the other team. I embraced competition and challenges.

Sometimes, however, things did not go as I planned. One time, I got tackled hard, and I fumbled the ball. We lost that game. There were times when my timing wasn't perfect, or I chose a hole in the line to run through but didn't make it. With each loss and each mistake, you have to get back up and keep going.

It is the same for me today. Football taught me to be confident in myself. It taught me to face challenges with the resources that I had. Today, I face many challenges. I am trying to get my GED after being out of school for 41 years. (I made it to the 7th grade.) It is a struggle to stay clean and sober, but I have succeeded now for six and a half years. A major goal for me is to restore my broken

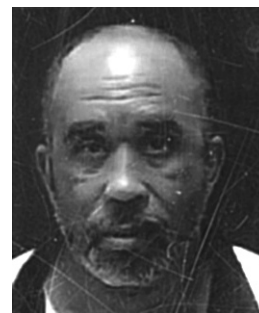
relationship with my two sons. I am putting forth all my effort.

Each time we lose, we can still grow and develop from that loss. In the game of life, each loss prepares us for the next victory because we can learn from it.

Football taught me to believe in myself and to embrace challenges. Whenever I give my all, in every challenge that presents itself, 100 percent of the time, the results will be great. To me, that's what counts!



Tony Jones was born in Mobile, Alabama. He is a cook and a baker, and his goal is to be a writer. He is the father of four. He is incarcerated in Calhoun State Prison in Morgan, Georgia, and he is using this opportunity to better his life. He has everything to win. He is confident and trusts God as his provider. His sister, Manzanita Jones, helped him write this article.



AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what did he learn from playing football?
2. Research the physical risks of playing football. Share what you learn. How do you weigh the risks of playing sports with the potential gains?

Play Sports and Learn!

Maria Castro

It is good to play sports. It is good exercise. But it does more than train your body. Sports teaches you about winning and losing.

At some point in your life, you are going to have competition. For example, you will try to get a job or apply for college. Always give your best. If you don't win, you still have to respect the result. Learn from the competition, and try harder next time. Remember, you can learn from every loss.

Also, when you play sports, you learn important social rules. For example, you learn how to obey written and unwritten rules.

The most important thing that sports teaches us is this: no matter what the result is, always enjoy it and have fun! You can apply this rule to every part of life!



Maria Castro is a student at the Alaska Literacy Program in Anchorage, Alaska.

Written and Unwritten Rules

What are some examples of written and unwritten rules in various sports (football, track, etc.), at your job, at the store, or in your classroom? Make a chart and fill it out.

Written Rules in _____	Unwritten Rules in _____

My Tamagotchi Taught Me...

Federica Ruozi

BEFORE YOU READ: What's a lesson you learned from a certain toy or game? Do you notice your children learning any lessons through their games?

When I was about 13 or 14 years old, there was a very popular game called Tamagotchi, which was from Japan. But it was quite expensive, so not all of us could have it. My mum bought me one when I insisted on having a dog. She told me, "If you can take care of Tamagotchi for two months, we can speak about you getting a dog."

I was very excited about that because I was pretty sure I could do it. Tamagotchi was a kind of

She told me, "If you can take care of Tamagotchi for two months, we can speak about you getting a dog."

video game that you could hold in your hand. The game consisted of raising and taking care of a chick. Once you start the game, you can't stop playing, because your chick depends on you.

If the game ends, it is because your chick died, which is your fault, so you lose.

When you start the game, one egg appears, and you have to take care of it. For example, you check the temperature to be sure the chick can

hatch. After three or four hours, the chick hatches and you become a "parent" of this little toy. That means you have to feed him, clean him, read to him, let him play, help him fall asleep, turn on the light for him, and so on. You need to take care of him all day and even during the night. A sound signal warns you when you need to do something.

Sometimes when you are at school, you can't take care of your chick, or you don't hear the sound during the night. When you have the chance to check on him, you find him dead or very sick and dying. You can reset the game, but you have to start from the beginning again. That's why it was a very dramatic moment. And what it meant for me was...no dog!



Toys as Teachers?

What did her mom do when Federica asked for a dog? What do you think of her mom's plan?

What lessons does Federica learn from her Tamagotchi?

Federica Ruozi is an English student at the Portsmouth Adult Education Program in Portsmouth, NH. She was born 40 years ago in a little town by the sea in Italy. She moved to the USA with her family two years ago. She has two kids and one dog. She loves reading and the sea.



Imagination is the Best Play

Estefania Aragon

BEFORE YOU READ: Were children ever cruel to you when you were growing up? What did you do about it?

I treasure the memories of my childhood. Even though I had all kinds of toys at home, the best games were the ones I played without toys.

When I was little, I didn't have girlfriends at first. Girls were very cruel to me because my mom

My grandmother taught me to read, and books helped me expand my horizons even more.

was a single mother, and that was unusual at that time. But I didn't cry or be sad about their treatment of me. I learned to be tough and to be creative about finding friends. I just wanted

to play. So, I drew the boys to me with imaginative games: role playing games about mystical worlds with dragons, warriors, goblins, and ghosts. I created worlds with all the things they would like, so they would play with me.

My grandmother encouraged me to cultivate my imagination with her wonderful life stories. Also, she taught me to read, and books helped me expand my horizons even more.

I grew up with an amazing imagination, which has helped me throughout life. As a child, imagination helped me survive the cruelty of other children, learn how to make friends, and develop a love of books. As an adult, I use my imagination when I confront difficulties but also to enjoy life. It makes me resourceful and creative. I love to think of the many possibilities for how things could be.

For me, imagination was, is, and always will be the best toy you can give a child.



Reading and Imagination

How was imagination important for Estefania during her childhood? How does it serve her now, as an adult?

According to the author, what is important about reading and hearing stories?

Do you remember stories that your grandparents told you? If so, share them.

Share some strategies you use in your family to encourage your children to read.

Estefania Aragon is a student at the Portsmouth Adult Education Program in Portsmouth, NH. She was born in Spain, and she and her husband and their two children have lived in New Hampshire for two years. She has a curious mind, a kind heart, worker's hands, and traveler's feet. She is always looking on the bright side of things.



More than Marbles: What I Learned from Shooting Little Glass Balls

Ana Maria Magalhaes

BEFORE YOU READ: Have you ever played marbles? If so, what did you like about it?

Gorgeous Glass Balls

As a child, marbles was my favorite game for many reasons. I remember when I saw a glassy transparent marble for the first time; I fell in love with it. Some marbles had tiny balls inside that reminded me of the universe made up of stars and planets. Others had gorgeous solid bright colors. Others had multicolored stripes inside, and others had a solid colorful core. The marbles were beautiful.

Practice Makes Perfect

I learned to play marbles by seeing my brothers playing, and I played by myself at home after school. I folded my thumb, and ringed my fingers into my palm. I rolled my pointer finger around the marble holding it against my thumb, and pushed my thumb out making the marble go so



Learn how to play marbles in 6 simple steps at plentifun.com/learn-how-to-play-marbles-in-6simple-steps.



fast and far. With practice, I also learned to have good aim.

On Saturday afternoons, my brothers and I got together with the kids from my neighborhood for the marble tournaments. I remember the sound of our laughter and our loud voices full of excitement while we walked to the field. Across the street from my home was a small, flat piece of land made of red dirt. We made a circle in the dirt using a piece of wood. We placed a big marble in the center and counted 20 steps out from the circle. Then we made a line to determine where the competitors would stand to shoot. We had a rule that if somebody crossed the line, he would be eliminated from the game for cheating. The winner was the person who could hit the big marble in the center of the circle, and the prize was keeping all the marbles that were inside the circle. I used to win most of the tournaments because of my practice during the week.

Learning from Marbles

I stored my marbles in empty cans in my room. They were my precious treasure. After my broth-

ers asked me to lend them some marbles, I learned that I could use them for trading. I lent marbles to the other kids and got extra marbles as interest, or I received cartoons, books, or magazines in exchange.

Marbles was a fun game that helped me build my self-esteem. I was the only girl among the big boys to secure a place as a competitor, and I was proud of that. Playing marbles helped me to

Marbles was a fun game that helped me build my self-esteem.

understand and deal with many kinds of feelings, such as frustration when I lost, happiness when I won, fear when big boys wanted to take my marbles from me, and courage to stand up for my rights to get my

prize when I won. I also learned how to put myself in someone else's shoes. Sometimes, I gave marbles to kids who didn't have any way to pay me back. I could relate to them because I always felt sad when I wanted to play but didn't have money to buy marbles.

Lessons Still Serving Me Today!

In my life, I have faced many challenging situations. I know how to stand up for myself because I learned to overcome similar situations when I was a kid playing with marbles. I remember once I had to talk to a boss about a pay raise and better working conditions. By the end of the meeting, I got a promotion because I stood up for my rights. Playing marbles was a kind of training for the challenges I would face in my adult life. It not only brought me many fun moments, but it also taught me important life lessons.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. Why is the article called, "More than Marbles"?
2. What are some of the lessons Ana learned from her experience playing marbles as a child?
3. Review the underlined words and learn their meaning.



Ana Maria Magalhaes is from Brasilia, Brazil, and her first language is Portuguese. She is in an Even Start program at RIRAL in Woonsocket, RI. She got her GED in 2009, but she is still taking classes to improve her English skills. She works as a bookkeeper.

How Are Marbles Made?

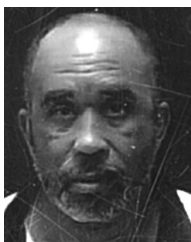
Marbles are made from glass. What is glass made from? Believe it or not, glass is made from sand that is heated to an incredibly high temperature, at which point it turns into a liquid. Read more about it here: <www.explainthatstuff.com/glass.html>. And watch a video about how marbles are made here: <tinyurl.com/makemarbles>. What questions do you have about the science behind glass marbles?

What Did They Learn?

The writers on pp. 40-45 talk about lessons they learned from play. Look up their stories and use the space below to write down some of the lessons they learned.

Writer

Lessons









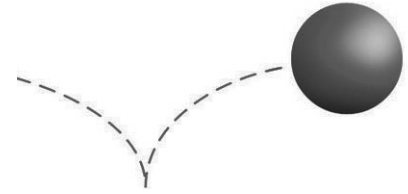
Be Happy—Play!

Wimana Mukankusi

BEFORE YOU READ: Learn the vocabulary word “bounce.” What games have you played that involve a bouncing ball?

In Africa when I was little, I played with my friends. My favorite toy was a red rubber ball. It was the size of a tennis ball. In the summer at school, I would stand in a circle with my friends. One person would bounce the ball under her leg and between her feet in a shape like a number 8. When the person missed the ball, the next person would get it and do the same. We called this game Bouncing. I felt happy when I played this game because I was good at this game.

I think that children should study *and* play in school. They learn better if they have time to play. Play helps children know many things. Children learn skills like counting (1, 2, 3) when they play. They also learn to tell stories. Play helps children learn how to be good to friends and how to work together. Children are happy when they play.



BOUNCE: When a rubber ball hits a hard surface, it will come back up. What else bounces? Try using this word figuratively. For example, describe a time when you had a difficult experience, but you bounced back.



Wimana Mukankusi came to the U.S. three years ago from Congo. She is married and has four children. She enjoys going to English classes. Instead of playing with a ball these days, she has learned how to knit and now likes to sit in a knitting circle with friends at Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS) in New Haven, CT.

Discussion Questions

1. What question do you have for Wimana?

2. Why did Wimana like to play Bouncing?

3. According to Wimana, what do children learn from playing?

4. In your opinion, what else do they learn?

Whole Body Development through Play

Jinping Li

BEFORE YOU READ: What is “whole body development”? Name the five senses.

When you see a toy that looks cute or interesting, you sometimes buy it for your child without thinking. How do you know whether the toy will be helpful for your child or not? In this essay, I will talk about all the different ways that kids can learn by playing. It doesn't always involve toys!



made “volcano” erupt. They love to plant seeds and watch them grow. Construction toys can spark their creativity and imagination. For example, they might use building blocks to build a pretend house, car, or castle. When they play with cooking toys, they imagine themselves in different roles in the house. Little kids don't realize

that they are learning with everything they do, so it's our job as teachers to expose them to dozens of different activities and ways of playing.

Outdoors

I work with kids at a preschool daycare center in Boston, where we focus on the kids' whole body development. We have outdoor play every day, because when the kids jump and run, they develop their gross motor skills. The kids listen to the sounds of the outdoors – rain, wind, birds, traffic – and

Does this toy help develop my whole child, or is it just cute and flashy and will entertain her for a couple of minutes?

we play a game with them where they guess what is making these different sounds. This helps develop kids' auditory sense. We also take them outside to observe and touch trees as they go through seasonal changes. These activities develop children's visual and tactile senses.

Indoors

Indoors, kids develop their fine motor skills by playing with playdough or using scissors to cut along the lines. Kids love science and seeing how things work. For example, they love to watch a paper flower open in a bowl of water or a home-

Social and Personal Skills

Indoor and outdoor toys and games do more than develop kids' gross and fine motor skills. They also help kids learn about sharing, taking turns, and waiting. Through play, they improve their language skills and learn how to communicate with peers. Through a wide variety of structured and unstructured play, kids have fun and learn many types of social and personal skills.

So, if you're in the toy store, and you're wondering if a toy will be helpful to your child, just ask yourself: does this toy help develop my whole child, or is it just cute and flashy and will entertain her for a couple of minutes?

AFTER YOU READ: What do fine and gross mean in this context? What are some examples of gross motor skills and fine motor skills? Look at the career pathway on p. 49.

Jinping Li is an ESOL student at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, MA. She is from China, and has been in the U.S. for eight years. She lives with her family and loves to work with kids.



Early Childhood Educator Career Pathway

Median Hourly Pay & Title		Skills/Tasks	Education & Time Required	
\$27.87	Kindergarten teacher	Instruct young students in basic subjects, such as math and reading, in order to prepare them for first grade.	Bachelor's degree	4 years
\$23.05	Pre-school center director	Supervise and lead staff, design program plans, oversee daily activities, and prepare budgets; responsible for all aspects of the center's program.	Bachelor's degree	4 years
\$14.32	Pre-school teacher	Educate and care for children younger than age 5 who have not yet entered kindergarten; teach language, motor, and social skills to young children.	Associate's degree	2 years
\$12.97	Teacher assistant	Work with a licensed teacher to give students additional attention and instruction.	Some college	varies
\$11.17	Childcare worker/babysitter	Attend to the basic needs of children, such as dressing, bathing, feeding, and overseeing play.	H.S. diploma or equivalent, on-the-job training	varies

Source: www.bls.gov.

More Career Exploration

1. Read about the skills and tasks related to early childhood education. Do your interests and abilities align with those skills and tasks? Why or why not?
2. Look at the hourly pay. Do these jobs pay a living wage? For more on living wage, see the “Good Jobs, Not Just Any Jobs” issue (#36) of *The Change Agent*.
3. Explore more career pathways (such as health care, construction, and information technology) by looking at the “Career Pathways” issue (#45) of *The Change Agent*. See the “Transportation” issue (#43) for a transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL) pathway.



I Wanted to Play...

...Even if I Got Punished!

Mideline Norelus

BEFORE YOU READ: Did you ever break the rules, knowing you would be punished? Tell the story of what happened. What sort of punishment did you receive as a child?

Every day when I got home from school, my mother encouraged me to do my homework. After that, I had permission to watch cartoons or play with my cousins. As an only child, I was alone a lot, and I didn't have any toys.

My main hobby when I was alone was watching cartoons. When I was with my cousins, we played dominoes. We brought chairs and tables under the trees, where we found shade from the hot sun. Sometimes, I fought with my cousins when they beat me in dominoes. Even when I fought with them, I still showed them respect because they were older than me. That was the play I enjoyed the most in my childhood.

Sometimes, I was in a hurry to start playing with my cousins or watching cartoons, so I lied to my mother and told her my homework was done. I knew punishment was waiting for me, but I did it anyway.

I knew punishment was waiting for me, but I did it anyway.

I received two kinds of punishment for not doing my homework. One punishment came from my father when he got home from work. He made me rehearse my lessons. If I didn't know my lessons, he punished me by making me stay on my knees for one hour. The second punishment came the next day from the teacher, who made me stand in front of the class for one hour. This sounds very harsh, and it was! But sometimes I still chose to play before I finished my homework.



In conclusion, I enjoyed my childhood. I will raise my kids like my parents raised me – to be respectful and pious. But I will change some of their methods. I will give my kids more hobbies and play time, and I will spend more time with them. And I will definitely not punish them the same way that I was punished! I really liked to play when I was a child, and I want my children to enjoy it too, without fear of what comes after.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. Use context clues to figure out the definitions of encourage, hobby, rehearse, harsh, and pious. Verify your definition by looking it up.
2. According to the author, why did she sometimes lie to her mother? What will she do differently with her children?
3. Do you know how to play dominoes? If so, write down the directions and share them with your class. Bring in a set of dominoes and teach others how to play. If you don't know, look it up online and try playing it with your classmates or family.

Mideline Norelus grew up in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She is a student at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, MA. She lives with her family in Cambridge. She loves going to the beach and watching movies in her free time.



Punishment

Punishment (noun): a penalty imposed on someone who has done something wrong. “Parents often use punishment (like time-out) when they are disciplining their children.”

To punish (verb): When you or someone else imposes a penalty. “I will punish you if you cross the street without looking.” “She punishes her child when he behaves badly.”

To get punished (verb): When the penalty is imposed on you or someone else. “I will get punished if I don't do what my mom says.” “She got punished for not doing her homework.”

Take it further: Discuss punishment. What are we trying to accomplish when we punish? Is punishment generally effective? What are the advantages and disadvantages of punishment?

Gamification

Ed Latham

BEFORE YOU READ: Have you ever participated in something (eg., work, learning, chores, exercise) that was turned into a game to make it more fun? If so, describe the situation. What was the effect of turning the activity into a game?

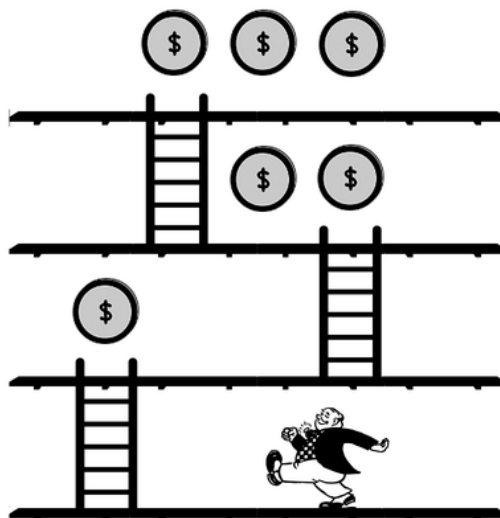
You're Not Just Buying a Burger, You're Playing a Game!

In the mid-1980s, McDonalds was looking for a way to boost sales during slow times of the year. The company wanted to offer something new and fresh that would bring people in to buy more products. Someone came up with the brilliant idea to turn purchasing into a game, and the company eventually settled

The idea of adding game elements into a task that traditionally is not fun or desirable is called gamification.

on the idea of using Hasbro's popular Monopoly game as the backbone of their marketing. In effect, each purchase would include a game piece that could be used to fill in a Monopoly board. When customers made enough purchases and collected all the game pieces, they received a prize. Of course, the people at McDonalds who developed this game made sure to make some pieces readily available, while others would be very rare and hard to get. In addition to the grand prizes, the company added many little prizes like free merchandise, small cash awards, and discounts on other products to encourage people to buy more.

By adding game elements to what is normally a fairly mundane consumer transaction, the company made a ton of money! In September of 2013, the company reported profit increases of 5% with much of the credit for that surge attributed to the Monopoly game promotion.



Interestingly, there are laws that prevent a business from promoting any of their products with games of chance. McDonalds got around this by subcontracting with a company that was solely responsible for the creation and distribution of the game pieces. For three years, this subcontracting company would make the pieces and ship them to McDonalds stores where employees would simply add those pieces to customers' orders. After three years of great success, the subcontracted company was found to be engaging in corrupt activities. They were withholding the winning pieces and distributing them to employees or friends and family members. This corruption forced McDonalds to stop running the game.

Gamification Makes It Compelling

The idea of adding game elements into a task that traditionally is not fun or desirable is called gamification. There are many companies that have used gamification in the last three decades and in almost every case, the companies have found great results. You may often be presented with a loyalty card for something like a coffee. With each purchase of a coffee, you get a stamp on your card and when you accumulate enough stamps, you get a free coffee. This is a very simple version of gamification and one we can easily see with most any services today. Another example is when credit card companies offer a percentage of your

purchases back in the form of free services, virtual credit, or free products.

One health insurance company uses gamification as a way to help people *and* cut the company's costs. On their website, there are many resources

One health insurance company uses gamification as a way of helping people and cutting the company's costs.

that people normally don't take advantage of. The company decided to award points for reading articles, tracking their nutrition, and taking health surveys. If participants collect enough points, the

insurance company rewards them with a \$25 gift card. Participants can earn up to \$250 a year in gift cards simply by engaging with the website. Their \$250 investment keeps people engaged throughout the year in health and healthy thinking – all the while making it feel more like a game.

Why Not Make Learning into a Game?

With decades of success in the commercial sector, there are many who are experimenting with how



Read about how Texas teachers are helping students improve their standardized test scores by creating opportunities for them to play Dungeons and Dragons <tinyurl.com/teachwithd-d>.

to use gamification in education. For example, Khan Academy gamifies their educational website in a few different ways. Within every practice, the user has to get five consecutive problems correct in order to “pass” that level. Once the user passes a certain threshold, she receives a digital badge indicating her mastery. Khan Academy even gives

Word Play

In English, we add the suffixes “ify” and “ification” to words to turn them into verbs and nouns respectively. Look at the following chart. Can you fill in the missing words?

Root word	Add “ify”	Add “ification”
Game	Gamify	Gamification
Just	Justify	Justification
Beauty		
Purity		
Quality		
Clear		

What do you notice about the spelling of the words as you add the suffix? Can you make up a rule for how to add the suffix to the root word? Try using these words in sentences.

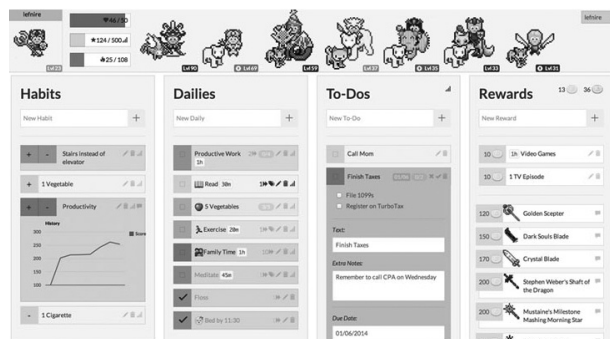
badges for certain behaviors, such as simply for attempting many lessons in a given time period. When you log in to Khan Academy, you see all of these badges proudly displayed on your page, and you get to enjoy the feeling of making progress.

Another game element Khan Academy implements is constant communication with users. The program sends regular emails, reminding users to continue on their journey, noting their progress, and updating them on their badges. All of these feedback tools are part of what good game designers build into their games. One free product (with advanced fee options), called Classcraft, allows teachers to create collaborative and competitive challenges for groups of learners. This tool allows a teacher to add a game element to their learning environment. The non-profit Games for Change supports the development of games that solve real-world problems. Their games are entertaining, informative, and promote civic engagement. And most are free.

Many organizations are exploring how to gamify education. One challenge is that some academic learning requires a certain kind of rigor and cannot be turned into a game. At the other end of the spectrum, some of the experiences that are the most entertaining do not directly enhance academic learning. But there is a lot of learning that would be more appealing if we gamified it! Educational companies and non-profits are on a quest to balance entertainment with academic rigor. This game is in full swing! Don't you want to play?

Ed Latham has worked with K-12 and adult students as an instructor, consultant, and technology integration specialist for 25 years. He combines his love of table-top board games into his mathematics and technology specializations as he engages people of all ages in learning and meeting their goals. He is a LINCS member who participates in the Integration Technology group as well as other LINCS groups.

Sources: "McDonald's Monopoly game boosts chain's profits" (2013, August 11). Retrieved from <www.csmonitor.com/Business/Latest-News-Wires/2013/0810/McDonald-s-Monopoly-game-boosts-chain-s-profits>; "McDonald's Monopoly game has a surprisingly wild history" (2016, April 11). Retrieved from <www.businessinsider.com/mcdonalds-monopoly-game-has-a-surprisingly-wild-history-2016-4>; "Monopoly Sends McDonald's Directly to Profits" (2011, November 08). Retrieved from <investorplace.com/2011/11/mcdonalds-monopoly-same-store-sales>.



Apps like Habitica help you gamify your life. With this app, you select a character and gain points as you complete tasks and goals in your daily life. Find the free app here: <habitica.com>.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What are the advantages of turning an activity into a game? What are the disadvantages?
2. What do you think about coporations like McDonalds using gamification to increase profits?
3. Note the word subcontracting in the third paragraph. What does it mean in this context?
4. Do you use games in your adult education classroom? What do you like or not like about them?

Games for Learning

- Turn a Google spreadsheet into online flashcards at <flippity.net>.
- Find interesting things for ESL learners at <www.manythings.org>.
- Create flashcards, games, and learning tools at <quizlet.com>.
- Download and customize a Jeopardy game for free at <www.lifewire.com/free-jeopardy-powerpoint-templates-1358186> or <jeopardylabs.com>.
- Turn your classroom into a gameshow, complete with music and points, using <getkahoot.com>.

Stand Up and Be Counted!

Cynthia Peters



The upcoming election and the decennial census make 2020 a big year! At World Education, we are working hard to create not just learning materials, but a whole process of community engagement, that will support learners to work on their basic skills and participate in some important civic opportunities. Keep an eye out for:

- **Voter Education, Registration and Action**

This is a non-partisan effort designed for adult learners and program staff to educate adult learners about voting and current election issues, connect them to community resources, and mobilize them to vote in the 2020 elections. VERA is sponsored by the New England Literacy Resource Center (NELRC) at World Education <<https://nelrc.org/VERA/>>.

- **Participate in the 2020 Census!**

Not being counted means losing important funding for education, health, and infrastructure, as well as representation in Congress. Go to <nelrc.org> and find compelling materials (some co-developed with <national-coalition-literacy.org>) on the importance of participating in the 2020 census.

- **New workshops offered by World Education,** such as, “Stand Up and Be Counted”:

In 2020, U.S. residents will have the opportunity and challenge of participating in two national civic events – the election and the decennial census. We are working to make sure that all adult students, who are typically under-represented, feel prepared to stand up and be counted in these and other civic activities. We do this through: 1) classroom-level activities that build reading and digital skills, as well as an understanding of why participation matters; 2) program-wide mobilization activities that emphasize building and taking care of our communities. Learn more at <www.worlded.org>.

- **A new Change Agent Call for Articles: “Stand Up and Be Counted”** <changeagent.nelrc.org/write-for-us> prompts students to write for an authentic audience – more than 10,000 adult learners all over the U.S. Learners of all levels and backgrounds are welcome to submit; if their piece is accepted, they receive a \$50 stipend. *Please include contact information with every submission.* Deadline: November 1, 2019.

Questions? Contact cpeters@worlded.org.

Write for The Change Agent

CALL FOR ARTICLES

YOU MUST: Include contact information in *all* articles and emails. *Please cite sources.*

THEME: “Stand Up and Be Counted!” With a presidential election and the decennial census coinciding, 2020 is a big year for adult education students. Because these civic events are of major importance to all our communities, *The Change Agent* is looking for stories by adult learners who address the following questions:

- Explain why voting matters to you. What difference can you make when you vote?
- If you are someone who chooses not to vote, explain why. Are there other ways you participate in your community besides voting?
- If you are not a citizen or can't vote for some other reason (such as being incarcerated or having a criminal record), what other ways do you engage in the debates and activities that come up during an election year?
- Share what you know about the history of voting rights in your state. What are the current struggles happening in your state to protect voting rights?
- Discuss one or two key issues at stake for you, your community, or the nation as a whole in the upcoming election.
- What does the Census mean to you and to your community? Why do you think it matters (or does not matter)? Do you plan on participating in the 2020 Census?
- What happens if your community is not fully counted in the census?
- Research the history of the census. Has the government misused information from the census? If so, how? Do the same risks of misuse exist today? What protections are in place now to keep people's information anonymous?
- When it is not an election or census year, there are still important ways to “stand up and be counted.” Describe ways you make your voice heard in your family, workplace, and community.
- What does the quote, “Speak the truth, even if your voice shakes” mean to you?
- As an adult learner, have you ever advocated for more money for adult education? How did you do it? What happened? How is education important in a democracy?

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: November 1, 2019. *Make sure to include contact information.*
Send to: cpeters@worlded.org. Learn more at: changeagent.nelrc.org/write-for-us.

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