

ENGLISH

REGENTS PRACTICE TESTS

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June 2025

Part 1

Multiple Choice Questions

Directions (1–24): Closely read each of the three passages below. After each passage, there are several multiple choice questions. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer in the space provided. You may use the margins to take notes as you read.

Reading Comprehension Passage A

The Possibility of Evil

- ...She [Miss Adela Strangeworth] knew everyone in town, of course; she was fond of telling strangers—tourists who sometimes passed through the town and stopped to admire Miss Strangeworth’s roses—that she had never spent more than a day outside this town in all her long
- 5 life. She was seventy-one, Miss Strangeworth told the tourists, with a pretty little dimple showing by her lip, and she sometimes found herself thinking that the town belonged to her. “My grandfather built the first house on Pleasant Street,” she would say, opening her blue eyes wide with the wonder of it. “This house, right here. My family has lived here
- 10 for better than a hundred years. My grandmother planted these roses, and my mother tended them, just as I do. I’ve watched my town grow; I can remember when Mr. Lewis, Senior, opened the grocery store, and the year the river flooded out the shanties on the low road, and the excitement when some young folks wanted to move the park over
- 15 to the space in front of where the new post office is today. They wanted to put up a statue of Ethan Allen”—Miss Strangeworth would frown a little and sound stern—“but it should have been a statue of my grandfather. There wouldn’t have been a town here at all if it hadn’t been for my grandfather and the lumber mill.” ...
- 20 Walking down Main Street on a summer morning, Miss Strangeworth had to stop every minute or so to say good morning to someone or to ask after someone’s health. When she came into the grocery, half a dozen people turned away from the shelves and the counters to wave at her or call out good morning. ...
- 25 “Good morning,” Mr. Lewis said, and added politely, “lovely day.”
- “It is a very nice day,” Miss Strangeworth said as though she had only just decided it would do after all. “I would like a chop, please, Mr. Lewis, a small, lean veal chop. Are those strawberries from Arthur Parker’s garden? They’re early this year.”
- 30 “He brought them in this morning,” Mr. Lewis said.
- “I shall have a box,” Miss Strangeworth said. Mr. Lewis looked worried, she thought, and for a minute she hesitated, but then she decided that he surely could not be worried over the strawberries. He looked very tired indeed. He was usually so chipper, Miss Strangeworth
- 35 thought, and almost commented, but it was far too personal a subject to be introduced to Mr. Lewis, the grocer, so she only said, “And a can of cat food and, I think, a tomato.” ...

Miss Strangeworth moved slightly to make room for Mrs. Harper at the counter. “Morning, Adela,” Mrs. Harper said, and Miss
40 Strangeworth said, “Good morning, Martha.” ...

“Ran out of sugar for my cake frosting,” Mrs. Harper explained. Her hand shook slightly as she opened her pocketbook. Miss Strangeworth wondered, glancing at her quickly, if she had been taking proper care of herself. Martha Harper was not as young as she used to be, Miss
45 Strangeworth thought. She probably could use a good, strong tonic. “Martha,” she said, “you don’t look well.”

“I’m perfectly all right,” Mrs. Harper said shortly. She handed her money to Mr. Lewis, took her change and her sugar, and went out without speaking again. Looking after her, Miss Strangeworth shook
50 her head slightly. Martha definitely did *not* look well. ...

Many people seemed disturbed recently, Miss Strangeworth thought. Only yesterday the Stewarts’ fifteen-year-old Linda had run crying down her own front walk and all the way to school, not caring who saw her. People around town thought she might have had a fight
55 with the Harris boy, but they showed up together at the soda shop after school as usual, both of them looking grim and bleak. Trouble at home, people concluded, and sighed over the problems of trying to raise kids right these days.

From halfway down the block Miss Strangeworth could catch the
60 heavy accent of her roses, and she moved a little more quickly. The perfume of roses meant home, and home meant the Strangeworth House on Pleasant Street. Miss Strangeworth stopped at her own front gate, as she always did, and looked with deep pleasure at her house, with the red and pink and white roses massed along the narrow
65 lawn, and the rambler¹ going up along the porch; and the neat, the unbelievably trim lines of the house itself, with its slimness and its washed white look. Every window sparkled, every curtain hung stiff and straight, and even the stones of the front walk were swept and clear. People around town wondered how old Miss Strangeworth
70 managed to keep the house looking the way it did, and there was a legend about a tourist once mistaking it for the local museum and going all through the place without finding out about his mistake. But the town was proud of Miss Strangeworth and her roses and her house. They had all grown together. Miss Strangeworth went up her
75 front steps, unlocked her front door with her key, and went into the kitchen to put away her groceries. She debated having a cup of tea and then decided that it was too close to midday dinnertime; she would not have the appetite for her little chop if she had tea now. Instead she went into the light, lovely sitting room, which still glowed
80 from the hands of her mother and her grandmother, who had covered the chairs with bright chintz and hung the curtains.

¹rambler — vine

All the furniture was spare and shining, and the round hooked rugs on the floor had been the work of Miss Strangeworth's grandmother and her mother. Miss Strangeworth had put a bowl of her red roses on
85 the low table before the window, and the room was full of their scent.

Miss Strangeworth went to the narrow desk in the corner, and unlocked it with her key. She never knew when she might feel like writing letters, so she kept her notepaper inside, and the desk locked. Miss Strangeworth's usual stationery was heavy and cream-colored,
90 with "Strangeworth House" engraved across the top, but, when she felt like writing her other letters, Miss Strangeworth used a pad of various-colored paper, bought from the local newspaper shop. It was almost a town joke, that colored paper, layered in pink and green and blue and yellow; everyone in town bought it and used it for odd,
95 informal notes and shopping lists. It was usual to remark, upon receiving a note written on a blue page, that so-and-so would be needing a new pad soon—here she was, down to the blue already. Everyone used the matching envelopes for tucking away recipes, or keeping odd little things in, or even to hold cookies in the school lunch
100 boxes. Mr. Lewis sometimes gave them to the children for carrying home penny candy. ...

After thinking for a minute, she decided that she would like to write another letter, perhaps to go to Mrs. Harper, to follow up the ones she had already mailed. She selected a green sheet this time and
105 wrote quickly: *Have you found out yet what they were all laughing about after you left the bridge club on Thursday? Or is the wife really always the last one to know?*

Miss Strangeworth never concerned herself with facts; her letters all dealt with the more negotiable stuff of suspicion. Mr. Lewis would
110 never have imagined for a minute that his grandson might be lifting petty cash from the store register if he had not had one of Miss Strangeworth's letters. Miss Chandler, the librarian, and Linda Stewart's parents would have gone unsuspectingly ahead with their lives, never aware of possible evil lurking nearby, if Miss Strangeworth had not
115 sent letters to open their eyes. Miss Strangeworth would have been genuinely shocked if there *had* been anything between Linda Stewart and the Harris boy, but, as long as evil existed unchecked in the world, it was Miss Strangeworth's duty to keep her town alert to it. It was far more sensible for Miss Chandler to wonder what Mr.
120 Shelley's first wife had really died of than to take a chance on not knowing. There were so many wicked people in the world and only one Strangeworth left in town. Besides, Miss Strangeworth liked writing her letters. ...

She had been writing her letters—sometimes two or three every day
125 for a week, sometimes no more than one in a month—for the past year. She never got any answers, of course, because she never signed her name.

If she had been asked, she would have said that her name, Adela Strangeworth, a name honored in the town for so many years, did not belong on such trash. The town where she lived had to be kept clean and sweet, but people everywhere were lustful and evil and degraded, and needed to be watched; the world was so large, and there was only one Strangeworth left in it. Miss Strangeworth sighed, locked her desk, and put the letters into her big, black leather pocketbook, to be mailed when she took her evening walk. ...

She drew the shades, took the rose-satin spread from the bed, slipped out of her dress and her shoes, and lay down tiredly. She knew that no doorbell or phone would ring; no one in town would dare to disturb Miss Strangeworth during her afternoon nap. She slept, deep in the rich smell of roses. ...

—Shirley Jackson
 excerpted and adapted from “The Possibility of Evil”
Just an Ordinary Day, 1997
 Bantam Books

1. The first paragraph develops a central idea regarding Miss Strangeworth’s

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| (1) sense of entitlement | (3) kindness towards others | |
| (2) acceptance of strangers | (4) comfort with flattery | 1 ____ |

2. Miss Strangeworth’s opinion about Mrs. Harper (lines 42 through 50) could best be described as

- | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
| (1) kindly | (2) superficial | (3) critical | (4) gracious | 2 ____ |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------|

3. The statement “many people seemed disturbed recently” (line 51) hints at

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------|
| (1) a strong understanding | (3) an unlikely problem | |
| (2) a possible motive | (4) an unpleasant reality | 3 ____ |

4. The details in lines 59 through 69 suggest that Miss Strangeworth

- | | |
|--|--------|
| (1) believes that her lifestyle is superior | |
| (2) resents the appearance of her neighbors’ homes | |
| (3) thinks that the neighbors are envious of her | |
| (4) appreciates the closeness of her community | 4 ____ |

5. Lines 89 through 101 indicate that Miss Strangeworth

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| (1) wishes to appear sophisticated | |
| (2) wants to remain anonymous | |
| (3) enjoys expensive traditions | |
| (4) values proper communication | 5 ____ |

6. Lines 108 through 123 detail Miss Strangeworth’s

- | | |
|---|--------|
| (1) justification of the methods of her actions | |
| (2) generosity of charity towards others | |
| (3) purity of intentions towards others | |
| (4) understanding of the impact of her actions | 6 ____ |

7. The decision to italicize the word *had* in line 116 emphasizes that Miss Strangeworth
- (1) dislikes judging other people
 - (2) prefers living life in the past
 - (3) knows her accusations are false
 - (4) believes her reputation is secure
- 7 ____
8. The statement “There were so many wicked people in the world and only one Strangeworth left in town” (lines 121 and 122) is an example of
- (1) personification
 - (2) irony
 - (3) allusion
 - (4) metaphor
- 8 ____
9. The final paragraph stresses that
- (1) the vision of the town presented in the first paragraph is true
 - (2) Miss Strangeworth is satisfied with her life in her town
 - (3) Miss Strangeworth believes that everything is perfect in her town
 - (4) the security of the town is based on the routines of daily life
- 9 ____
10. Throughout the text, Miss Strangeworth’s roses represent the
- (1) beauty of the image Miss Strangeworth wishes to project
 - (2) sweetness of Miss Strangeworth’s temperament
 - (3) loveliness of Miss Strangeworth’s view of the world
 - (4) preciousness of the people Miss Strangeworth seeks to protect
- 10 ____

Reading Comprehension Passage B Naming the Birds

The beach is noiseless,
stretching behind my father’s house,
a mile of stones and driftwood

- 5 for those herons, ghostlike,
carefully picking their way
down the shoreline,

all knees and neck,
looking for crabs or something
they lost in the surf, and my father

- 10 points at them and says their names
like he is making a wish.
Then they are all gone and it’s just me

- and the seagulls hover overhead
saying their own names,
15 the sky making those sounds

airplanes make when the world
has nothing left to say to you.

I have no memory of any wish
of mine coming true, no knowledge
20 of how a man turns to another man
and promises never to leave him,

but the other day I named the shadow
of a cardinal through a frosty window

for my son, described it so he would
25 know it when he sees one for himself.

—W. Todd Kaneko
“Naming the Birds”
from *Orion Magazine*, Summer 2020
<https://orionmagazine.org>

11. The herons’ searching for something “they lost” (line 9) implies

- (1) the speaker’s admiration of their efforts
- (2) the speaker’s fears for their survival
- (3) a competition between the speaker and them
- (4) a parallel between the speaker and them

11 ____

12. In the context of the poem as a whole, line 12 signals that the

- (1) waves are forceful and the beach is calm
- (2) speaker is thinking about a past event
- (3) father is looking at the birds but not talking
- (4) birds are too far away for the speaker to hear

12 ____

13. The descriptions of the “herons” (line 4) and the “seagulls”
(line 13) suggest a

- (1) contrast between what is remembered and what is present
- (2) comparison between the habits of the two species
- (3) regard for the presence of such beautiful birds
- (4) recognition of the significance of the past and its lessons

13 ____

14. The naming of the birds throughout the poem serves to

- (1) affirm a respect for nature
- (2) create a link between generations
- (3) exemplify the importance of words
- (4) distinguish the species of birds

14 ____

Reading Comprehension Passage C

A Forgotten Black Founding Father:

Why I've Made it My Mission to Teach Others About Prince Hall

Massachusetts abolished enslavement before the Treaty of Paris brought an end to the American Revolution, in 1783. The state constitution, adopted in 1780 and drafted by John Adams, follows the Declaration of Independence in proclaiming that all “men are born free and equal.” In this statement Adams followed not only the Declaration but also a 1764 pamphlet by the Boston lawyer James Otis, who theorized about and popularized the familiar idea of “no taxation without representation” and also unequivocally asserted human equality. “The Colonists,” he wrote, “are by the law of nature free born, as indeed all men are, white or black.” In 1783, on the basis of the “free and equal” clause in the 1780 Massachusetts Constitution, the state’s chief justice, William Cushing, ruled enslavement unconstitutional in a case that one Quock Walker had brought against his enslaver, Nathaniel Jennison.

Many of us who live in Massachusetts know the basic outlines of this story and the early role the state played in standing against enslavement. But told in this traditional way, the story leaves out another transformative figure: Prince Hall, a free African American and a contemporary of John Adams. From his formal acquisition of freedom, in 1770, until his death, in 1807, Hall helped forge an activist Black community in Boston while elevating the cause of abolition to new prominence. Hall was the first American to publicly use the language of the Declaration of Independence for a political purpose other than justifying war against Britain. In January 1777, just six months after the promulgation¹ of the Declaration and nearly three years before Adams drafted the state constitution, Hall submitted a petition to the Massachusetts legislature (or General Court, as it is styled) requesting emancipation, invoking the resonant² phrases and founding truths of the Declaration itself.

Here is what he wrote (I’ve put the echoes of the Declaration of Independence in italics):

The petition of A Great Number of Blackes detained in a State of Slavery in the Bowels of a free & christian Country Humbly shuwith that your Petitioners Apprehend that Thay have in Common with all other men a *Natural and Unaliable Right to that freedom which the Grat — Parent of the Unavese hath Bestowed equalley on all menkind* and which they have Never forfeuted by Any Compact or Agreement whatever — but thay wher Unjustly Dragged by the hand of cruel Power from their Derest frinds and sum of them Even torn from the Embraces of their tender Parents — from A popolous Plasant

¹promulgation — announcement

²resonant — significant

And plentiful cuntry And in Violation of *Laws of Nature and off Nations* And in defiance of all the tender feelings of humanity Brough hear Either to Be sold Like Beast of Burthen & Like them Condemnd to Slavery for Life.

In this passage, Hall invokes the core concepts of social-contract theory, which grounded the American Revolution, to argue for an extension of the claim to equal rights to those who were enslaved. He acknowledged and adopted the intellectual framework of the new political arrangements, but also pointedly called out the original sin of enslavement itself. ...

Hall was a relentless petitioner, undaunted by setbacks. When Hall submitted his 1777 petition, co-signed by seven other free Black men, to the Massachusetts legislature, he was building on the efforts of other African Americans in the state to abolish enslavement. In 1773 and 1774, African Americans from Bristol and Worcester Counties as well as Boston and its neighboring towns put forward six known petitions and likely more to this end. Hall led the formation of the first Black Masonic lodge³ in the Americas, and possibly in the world. The purpose of forming the lodge was to provide mutual aid and support and to create an infrastructure for advocacy.⁴ Fourteen men joined Hall's lodge almost surely in 1775, and in the years from then until 1784, records reveal that 51 Black men participated in the lodge. Through the lodge's history, one can trace a fascinating story of the life of Boston's free Black community in the final decades of the 18th century.

Why did Hall choose Freemasonry as one of his life's passions? Alonza Tehuti Evans, a former historian and archivist of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, took up that question in a 2017 lecture. Hall and his fellow lodge members, he explained, recognized that many of the influential people in Boston—and throughout the colonies—were deeply involved in Freemasonry. George Washington is a prominent example, and symbolism that resonates with Masonic meaning adorns the \$1 bill to this day. Hall saw entrance into Freemasonry as a pathway to securing influence and a network of supporters. ...

In the winter and spring of 1788, Hall was leading a charge in Boston against enslavers who made a practice of using deception or other means to kidnap free Black people, take them shipboard, and remove them to distant locations, where they would be sold into enslavement. He submitted a petition to the Massachusetts legislature seeking aid—asking legislators to “do us that justice that our present condition requires”—and publicized his petition in newspapers in Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. ...

³Masonic lodge — a group of members of the fraternal organization of Freemasonry, a brotherhood established for mutual help and fellowship

⁴infrastructure for advocacy — system of support

85 Prince Hall’s work on abolition and its enforcement was just the
beginning of a lifetime of advocacy. Disillusioned by how hard it was to
secure equal rights for free Black men and women in Boston, he
submitted a petition to the Massachusetts legislature seeking funds
to assist him and other free Blacks in emigrating to Africa. That
90 same year, he also turned his energies to advocating for resources
for public education. Through it all, his Masonic membership proved
both instrumental and spiritually valuable.

Founding the lodge had not been easy. Although Hall and his
fellows were most likely inducted into Freemasonry in 1775, they
95 were never able to secure a formal charter for their lodge from the
other lodges in Massachusetts: Prejudice ran strong. Hall and his
fellows had in fact probably been inducted by members of an Irish
military lodge, planted in Boston with the British army, who had
proved willing to introduce them to the mysteries of the order.
100 Hall’s lodge functioned as an unofficial Masonic society—African
Lodge No. 1—but received a formal charter only after a request was
sent to England for a warrant. The granting of a charter by the
Grand Lodge of England finally arrived in 1787.

In seeking this charter, Hall had written to Masons in England,
105 lamenting that lodges in Boston had not permitted him and his fellows
a full charter but had granted a permit only to “walk on St John’s Day
and Bury our dead in form which we now enjoy.” Hall wanted full
privileges, not momentary sufferance.⁵ In this small detail, though,
we gain a window into just how important even the first steps
110 toward Masonic privileges were. In the years before 1783 and full
abolition of enslavement in Massachusetts, Black people in the state
were subjected to intensive surveillance and policing, as enslavers
sought to keep their human property from slipping away into the
world of free Blacks. Membership in the Masons was like a hall
115 pass—an opportunity to have a parade as a community, to come out
and step high, without harassment. That’s what it meant to walk on
Saint John’s Day—June 24—and to hold funeral parades for the dead. ...

—Danielle Allen

excerpted from “A Forgotten Black Founding Father:
Why I’ve Made it My Mission to Teach Others About Prince Hall”
www.theatlantic.com, March 2021

⁵sufferance — toleration

15. The word “unequivocally” (line 8) most likely means

- (1) clearly (2) harshly (3) judgmentally (4) repeatedly 15 ____

16. The use of the word “forge” in line 20 suggests Hall’s

- (1) reassessment of his principles
(2) shrewd means of attaining his goals
(3) gradual emergence as an historical figure
(4) determination to create equality 16 ____

17. Lines 19 through 22 contribute to a central idea that what was needed to advance the cause of freedom was

- (1) devoted followers (3) a committed leader
(2) federal courts (4) a united legislature
- 17 ____

18. Hall's use of lines from the Declaration of Independence in his petition (lines 32 through 45) indicates that he was

- (1) showing respect for the process
(2) trying to criticize legislators
(3) skilled at repurposing an argument
(4) capable of outsmarting the court
- 18 ____

19. Hall chose to seek membership in the Freemasons (lines 70 through 75) because it

- (1) would allow him to fully integrate into the upper class
(2) gave him the best chance to make powerful connections
(3) could enhance his chance to hold a political office
(4) presented an opportunity to raise money for court cases
- 19 ____

20. As used in line 92, the word "instrumental" most nearly means

- (1) sensible (2) academic (3) impressive (4) essential
- 20 ____

21. Lines 93 through 99 reflect a central idea that induction into Freemasonry did not necessarily

- (1) adhere to the Masonic laws established in separate countries
(2) guarantee equal treatment throughout all Masonic society
(3) prevent secret persecution of Masonic members
(4) encourage participation in Masonic business by new members
- 21 ____

22. Which phrase best depicts Hall's role in history?

- (1) "Boston lawyer" (line 6)
(2) "transformative figure" (line 18)
(3) "historian and archivist" (line 68)
(4) "Massachusetts legislature" (line 88)
- 22 ____

23. Which quotation best reflects a central idea of the passage?

- (1) "Massachusetts abolished enslavement before the Treaty of Paris brought an end to the American Revolution, in 1783" (lines 1 and 2)
(2) "Many of us who live in Massachusetts know the basic outlines of this story and the early role the state played in standing against enslavement" (lines 15 through 17)
(3) "Hall's work on abolition and its enforcement was just the beginning of a lifetime of advocacy" (lines 85 and 86)
(4) "Hall and his fellows had in fact probably been inducted by members of an Irish military lodge, planted in Boston with the British army" (lines 96 through 98)
- 23 ____

24. The author's purpose for including several familiar, historical names throughout the text is most likely to point out that Hall
- (1) became an associate of historical figures who signed the Declaration of Independence
 - (2) earned his place as an historical figure for being a founding member of the Freemasons
 - (3) deserves to be considered an historical figure for his contribution to ending slavery
 - (4) used his associations with historical figures to pass laws to end slavery
- 24 ____

Part 2 Argument

Directions: Closely read each of the *four* texts provided on the following pages and write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your argument on a separate sheet of paper provided by the teacher.

Topic: Are video games a positive activity for adolescents?

Your Task: Carefully read each of the *four* texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least *three* of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not video games are a positive activity for adolescents. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least *three* of the texts to develop your argument. Do *not* simply summarize each text.

Guidelines:

Be sure to:

- Establish your claim regarding whether or not video games are a positive activity for adolescents
- Distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims
- Use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least *three* of the texts to develop your argument
- Identify each source that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

Texts:

Text 1 – Video Games: Pros and Cons

Text 2 – Playing Video Games is Good For Your Brain — Here's How

Text 3 – Game Theory: The Effects of Video Games on the Brain

Text 4 – Playing Video Games Makes Us Fully Human

Text 1

Video Games: Pros and Cons

Kids have been wild about video games for decades. But the introduction of mobile game systems and smartphone apps took that to new heights.

5 Mobility brought gaming into the car, the bedroom, and even to the bus stop. With roughly 95% of U.S. teens owning smartphones, it's hard to find a kid who isn't playing some kind of game.

Although video games get a lot of bad press, they do have some benefits. The trick is to strike the right balance of good content and appropriate limits. After all, video games should enhance your
10 child's life, not take it over.

Video Game Pros:**Education**

Studies have found that video games can improve learning. When video games have been used in the classroom, teachers see improved test scores. Games also allow students to learn and then apply what they have learned in a real-life situation. Medical and military training
15 programs both use simulation-style games to teach tools and strategy.

Life Skills

Many video games teach kids how to delegate, work as a team, and prioritize. Internet-enabled games that let kids play with their real-life friends often require collaboration and division of tasks to beat the level.

Improved Brain Function

20 Video games have been shown to help us improve our ability to reason and solve problems. They help us make split-second decisions, process information more quickly, and multitask effectively. Games can also improve hand-eye coordination and boost auditory perception.

Exercise

25 Motion-controlled games like the Nintendo Wii were once thought to be the answer to parental concerns about video games leading to obesity. But studies have shown these video games alone don't increase kids' overall activity level.

However, there is some hope in the form of smartphone games that encourage kids to leave the house. Pokemon Go is one example,
30 but your kids may also enjoy the real-life treasure hunt appeal of activities like Geocaching.¹ Some apps like The Walk, blend storytelling and exercise to get players moving.

Job Skills

The Federation of American Scientists (FAS) argues that kids need to play more video games in order to be competitive in the current
35 job market. In a report they released in 2010, the FAS said games helped teach higher-order thinking skills like problem solving, interpretive analysis, and more.

¹Geocaching — an activity that requires GPS to find hidden items

Video Game Cons:**Violence**

While every other study seems to draw opposite conclusions about the social effects of playing violent video games, studies involving
40 brain scans are concerning.

Simply put, children playing violent video games show decreased activity in areas of the brain dedicated to self-control and an increase in emotional arousal. ...

Addiction...

What makes video games addictive? Playing releases dopamine²
45 into our systems, which gives us a feeling of pleasure and tells our brain to “do it again.”

In fact, video games are designed to be addictive. John Hopson, a games researcher at Microsoft Game Studios, is also a doctor of behavioral and brain sciences who writes about game design.

50 In “Behavioral Game Design” he explained how game designers can control behavior by providing simple stimulus and rewards at strategic times and places. ...

Social Replacement...

Kids with Internet-connected games can easily “hang out” with friends after school without ever leaving home. But this type of virtual
55 get-together is no replacement for actual face-to-face interaction.

Setting aside the potential problems of online predators and cyber-bullying, virtual hangouts rob kids of the opportunity to practice their social skills and to move their bodies from one house to another. ...

Remember, even though video games have their place, they should
60 occupy less time than what kids need to devote to exercising, socializing, studying, and sleeping. In our ever-more connected world, we could *all* use a little more practice just being unplugged. ...

—Jonathen Bartholomew, D.O.
excerpted from “Video Games: Pros and Cons”
www.uvpediatrics.com, November 21, 2019

²dopamine — a chemical used by the nervous system to send messages between nerve cells

Text 2

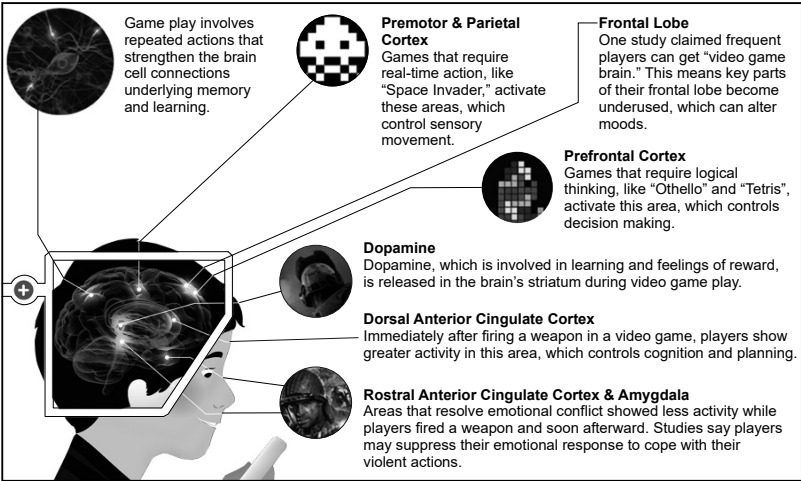
Playing Video Games is Good For Your Brain — Here’s How

Whether playing video games has negative effects is something that has been debated for 30 years, in much the same way that rock and roll, television, and even the novel faced much the same criticisms in their time.

5 Purported¹ negative effects such as addiction, increased aggression, and various health consequences such as obesity and repetitive strain injuries tend to get far more media coverage than the positives. I know from my own research examining both sides that my papers on video game addiction receive far more publicity than my
10 research into the social benefits of, for example, playing online role-playing games.

However there is now a wealth of research which shows that video games can be put to educational and therapeutic uses, as well as many studies which reveal how playing video games can
15 improve reaction times and hand-eye co-ordination. For example, research has shown that spatial visualisation ability, such as mentally rotating and manipulating two- and three-dimensional objects, improves with video game playing.

To add to this long line of studies demonstrating the more positive effects of video games is a study in the Proceedings of the National
20 Academy of Sciences by Vikranth Bejjanki and colleagues. Their newly published paper demonstrates that the playing of action video games — the sort of fast-paced, 3D shoot-em-up beloved of doomsayers in the media — confirms what other studies have revealed, that players
25 show improved performance in perception, attention, and cognition.²



¹purported — claimed
²cognition — thinking

In a series of experiments on small numbers of gamers (10 to 14 people in each study), the researchers reported that gamers with previous experience of playing such action video games were better at perceptual tasks such as pattern discrimination than gamers with less experience. ...

In my own papers, I have pointed out many features and qualities that make video games potentially useful. For instance, in an educational context, video games can be fun and stimulating, which means it's easier to maintain a pupil's undivided attention for longer. Because of the excitement, video games may also be a more appealing way of learning than traditional methods for some.

Video games have an appeal that crosses many demographic boundaries, such as age, gender, ethnicity, or educational attainment. They can be used to help set goals and rehearse working towards them, provide feedback, reinforcement, self-esteem, and maintain a record of behavioural change.

Their interactivity can stimulate learning, allowing individuals to experience novelty, curiosity and challenge that stimulates learning. There is the opportunity to develop transferable skills, or practice challenging or extraordinary activities, such as flight simulators, or simulated operations.

Because video games can be so engaging, they can also be used therapeutically. For instance, they can be used as a form of physiotherapy as well as in more innovative contexts. A number of studies have shown that when children play video games following chemotherapy they need fewer painkillers than others.

Video games have great educational potential in addition to their entertainment value. Games specifically designed to address a specific problem or teach a specific skill have been very successful, precisely because they are motivating, engaging, interactive, and provide rewards and reinforcement to improve.

But the transferability of skills outside the game-playing context is an important factor. What's also clear from the scientific literature is that the negative consequences of playing almost always involve people that are excessive video game players. There is little evidence of serious acute adverse effects on health from moderate play.

—Mark Griffiths

excerpted and adapted from

“Playing Video Games is Good For Your Brain — Here’s How”

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