Dangerous Games?

Should kids be allowed to play violent video games?

Gift-giving season is here. Many people will buy and enjoy playing video games this holiday season. According to the Entertainment Software Association, United States customers spent $7 billion on computer and video games last year!

Most video games are just fun. But some people feel that violent games are dangerous for kids to play.

This year, U.S. Representative Roy Burrell of Minnesota wrote a law that would punish teens who tried to buy games rated "mature" or "adults only." Burrell cited a Harvard study that suggests video games teach kids violent behavior.

The law didn't pass. Similar laws have failed in California, Michigan, and Illinois. A study conducted at the University of Illinois and the University of Michigan found that playing a particular violent video game didn't make people more aggressive. Game supporters point out that, as video games have grown more popular, youth violence has decreased.

What Do You Think? Should kids be allowed to play violent video games?

Read both sides of the debate and decide.

Yes

Kids should be allowed to play violent video games. Here are some reasons:

• There's not enough proof that playing violent games makes people more violent.

• Playing violent games might actually keep kids from expressing aggression in real life.

• Kids see violence in movies and books. Violent video games are no different.

No

Kids should not be allowed to play violent video games. Here are some reasons:
• Seeing violence can give kids violent ideas they might not have otherwise.

• Seeing violence in a game might prevent kids from understanding how dangerous it can be in real life.

• There are many nonviolent games; kids don't have to play violent ones.

Word Workout

ci•ted: quoted, gave as an example

sim•i•lar: not very different

con•duct•ed: directed, run

par•tic•u•lar: single, certain

ag•gres•sive: violent, ready to attack

Point of View

Most writing is done either in the first-person voice or the third-person voice. If the word "I" tells the story, you are writing from the first-person point of view. When you use the word "he," "she," "it," or "they," you are writing from the third-person point of view.

You Can Try This!

We want to know what you think about kids and violent video games. Answer the questions below, using the first-person point of view for questions 1 and 2, and the third-person point of view for questions 3 and 4.

Also, practice using exclamation points. If you feel strongly about your answer, use an exclamation point (!) at the end to show that it really matters to you.

1. Do you like playing violent video games? ____________________

2. How do you feel after you play a violent video game? ____________________

3. Think of one of your friends. Does he or she like playing video games? ____________________

4. What's the best thing about video games? ____________________

Spelling and Grammar Checkup

Copy the four questions above and your answers onto a separate sheet of paper. Does each question end in a question mark? Does each answer have either a period or an exclamation point? If so, check here: ___

Writing and Grammar in Action: Understanding Point of View

About the Story: Several states have considered tightening rules about selling violent video games to minors. Are these games truly dangerous?

Vocabulary: cited, similar, conducted, particular, aggressive
Pre-Reading Skill Builder:

• **Point of View:** First-person uses *I, me, my,* and *mine.* Example: *I remember the Christmas when I was 4 years old. My presents were great.* Third-person uses *he, she,* or *they.* Example: *John remembered the Christmas when he was 4 years old. His presents were great.*

Vocabulary Quick Quiz:

• In her report, Maria (*cited*) research done by famous psychologists.
• Because the shoes were so (*similar*), Kay put on one blue shoe and one black shoe!
• The tire company (*conducted*) a survey to see if its product was popular.
• I like all candy bars, but my (*particular*) favorite is Milky Way.
• The boy was removed from the preschool program because he was too (*aggressive*).

Post-Reading Skill Builder:

• **Context:** This article’s title is "Dangerous Games?" In the context of this article, what does *dangerous* mean? Could you break your arm playing video games? No: *context* is important. Explain how these words can mean different things depending on the context: *conductor, funny,* and *table.*

• **Point of View Independent Practice:** Pass out "Cooking with a Point of View" below.

"Cooking" with a Point of View

The first-person point of view uses *I* or *me* to tell a story. The third-person point of view uses *he, she, it,* or *they.* Read these food-related sentences and circle the correct point-of-view. Earn five bonus points for the starred (*) sentences by figuring out the clues in each one!

1. She has a cooking show, but now she is also the host of her own talk show on ABC. *
   
   First Person
   Third Person

2. I am best known for saying "BAM!" many times during my cooking demonstrations. *
   
   First Person
   Third Person

3. Paula Deen uses lots of butter in her recipes, including eclair cake, peanut-butter cookies, and red velvet cake.
   
   First Person
   Third Person

4. I like "comfort food" like meatloaf and mashed potatoes.
   
   First Person
   Third Person

5. This show was a hit in Japan and now airs in the U.S. It is a competition to see who the best chef is. *
   
   First Person
   Third Person

6. Some cooking programs show people traveling around the country and tasting food from different...
regions.

First Person
Third Person

7. He likes fried chicken, she is a vegetarian, and the rest of the group likes Italian food.

First Person
Third Person

8. I lost weight by eating mainly this type of food, which includes broccoli, green beans, lettuce, and spinach. *

First Person
Third Person

9. Bobby Flay likes to barbecue everything on the roof of his New York City apartment building.

First Person
Third Person

10. I like to bake with this ingredient because it makes things taste sweet. *

First Person
Third Person

Answers

1. Third Person, Rachel Ray
2. First Person, Emeril Lagasse
3. Third Person
4. First Person
5. Third Person, Iron Chef
6. Third Person
7. Third Person
8. First Person, vegetables
9. Third Person
10. First Person, sugar