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Korean gamer dies after 50 hours online

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11 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Korean gamer dies after 50 hours online

BNE: A 28-year-old South Korean man has died after playing an online computer game for almost 50 hours non-stop. The man, known only by his family name of Lee, started playing the popular battle simulation game *Starcraft* on August 3 and was fixed to his seat for over two days. His marathon gaming session was apparently broken only with the occasional toilet break or five-minute nap. Reuters News Agency reports police sources saying the man died from cardiac arrest “stemming from exhaustion”.

Lee was on a mission to become a professional gamer. This is an increasingly attractive and well-paid profession in South Korea. Top players can earn substantial amounts of money each year. Lee had recently been fired from his job because of absences due to his obsession with gaming. The dangers of being addicted to fantasy games are resulting in many social problems. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players glued to their screens for many hours.

WARM-UPS

1. GAMING: In pairs / groups, talk about your life and video games. Use these words to help your conversation: First game / Best game / Technology / Characters / Time / Best score / Consoles / Addictive / Online / The future ... Change partners and report what your first partners said.

2. CONSOLES: Walk around the class and ask each other about the following consoles. Are they all the same? Which ones do you like and why? Think of three ways to improve each console. Which console is the class favorite?

- Xbox
- GameCube
- PlayStation 2 / 3
- Nintendo Revolution
- PlayStation Portable
- PC
- Nintendo DS
- Other

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

South Korea / gaming / online / internet cafés / marathons / toilet breaks / naps / "Starcraft" / Reuters / fantasy / obsessions / addictions / MMORPGs / glue

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. GAMING: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "gaming". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. TWO-MINUTE DEBATES: Debate each of the arguments below with a partner for just two minutes, then move on to the next one. Student A agrees with the first argument, Student B, the second.

- a. PlayStation 3 is best. vs. Xbox is best.
- b. Gaming is anti-social. vs. Gaming means you have lots of friends.
- c. Gaming makes you more intelligent. vs. Gaming makes you less intelligent.
- d. Gaming will be an Olympic sport one day. vs. Gaming will always be just a game.
- e. Fantasy games are dangerous. vs. Fantasy games are harmless fun.
- f. People should play real sports, not video games. vs. Gaming activates the brain.
- g. Top graphic designers are real artists, just like Picasso. vs. How ridiculous.
- h. Gaming is a social disease. vs. People said the same about television.
- i. Interactive gaming is best. vs. Playing alone is best.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A South Korean man died after spending two days in an internet café. T / F
- b. The man was fixed to his seat for two days. T / F
- c. The man didn't go to the toilet during the two days. T / F
- d. The man died from a lack of water. T / F
- e. The man was on a mission to become a professional gamer. T / F
- f. His company allowed him time off to pursue his dream. T / F
- g. Gaming is leading to many social problems. T / F
- h. Some role playing games keep players glued to their screens. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| a. non-stop | reportedly |
| b. marathon | quest |
| c. apparently | because of |
| d. cardiac arrest | continuous |
| e. exhaustion | leading to |
| f. mission | epic |
| g. profession | tiredness |
| h. due to | stuck |
| i. resulting in | heart attack |
| j. glued | career |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| a. almost 50 hours | over two days |
| b. fixed to his seat for | to fantasy games |
| c. marathon | nap |
| d. five-minute | a professional gamer |
| e. died from cardiac | profession |
| f. on a mission to become | gaming session |
| g. attractive and well-paid | glued to their screens |
| h. fired | arrest |
| i. The dangers of being addicted | non-stop |
| j. keep thousands of players | from his job |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

Korean gamer dies after 50 hours online

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Lee was on a _____ to become a professional gamer. This is an increasingly _____ and well-paid profession in South Korea. Top players can _____ substantial amounts of money each year. Lee had recently been _____ from his job because of absences due to his _____ with gaming. The dangers of being _____ to fantasy games are resulting in many _____ problems. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players _____ to their screens for many hours.

fixed
popular
online
nap
cardiac
break
known
session
earn
social
mission
obsession
glued
fired
addicted
attractive

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'computer'** and **'game'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "GAMING" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about games and gaming.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- non-stop
- family
- popular
- apparently
- nap
- exhaustion
- mission
- substantial
- absences
- social
- massively
- glued

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first saw this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Can you understand the man's actions?
- d. Could you do something for 50 hours non-stop?
- e. What kind of power do you think video games have over people?
- f. Are you addicted to anything?
- g. Do you think gaming can be dangerous?
- h. Have you read about the *Grand Theft Auto* game in the news?
- i. Are video games creating strange people?
- j. Should video games carry a health warning similar to those on cigarette packs?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. What adjectives would you use to describe this story?
- d. What do video games mean to you?
- e. What are the dangers of video games?
- f. Do gamers learn important skills while playing games?
- g. What will video games be like in the future?
- h. Many people think video games are a new form of art. What do you think?
- i. Have you ever been glued to your TV set?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

ROLE PLAY: This role play is to discuss whether or not video games should be controlled by the government. Team up with classmates who have the same role as you. Develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins.

Introduce yourself to the other role players.

Role A – Worried Parent

You think the government must ban all video games. You are worried about your 15-year-old child, who plays games for 24 hours non-stop. He skips school, he doesn’t eat and he rarely communicates. He seems brainwashed and is becoming violent.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY VIDEO GAMES ARE BAD

Role B – Game Designer

You are a highly qualified computer graphics artist. You think video games are harmless and entertaining. They provide kids with excellent hand-eye coordination skills. Games allow children to explore their imaginations in an active way.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY VIDEO GAMES ARE BENEFICIAL

Role C – University Professor

You have done a lot of research into gaming and behavior. You believe games create anti-social and violent children. Your research shows children forget their responsibilities and become easily addicted to games. You recommend government control.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY VIDEO GAMES ARE DANGEROUS

Role D – CEO of Game Company

You have played games for years. You are a normal and successful person. You believe parents are responsible for controlling their children. Bad parents let children play games too long. You think games are totally safe. You think watching TV is more dangerous.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY VIDEO GAMES ARE GOOD FOR KIDS

Change roles and repeat the role play. Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

In pairs / groups, discuss whether you really believe in what you said while you were in your roles.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Korean gamer dies after 50 hours online

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HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the dangers of gaming. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS: Write a letter to your government about video games. Highlight all of the dangers / benefits you see with video games. State your reasons why you think games should / should not be regulated. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all have similar ideas?

4. DIARY / JOURNAL: Imagine you are in a role play in your favorite video (or non-video) game. Write your diary / journal entry for one adventure in the role play. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar adventures?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T b. T c. F d. F e. T f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. non-stop	continuous
b. marathon	epic
c. apparently	reportedly
d. cardiac arrest	heart attack
e. exhaustion	tiredness
f. mission	quest
g. profession	career
h. due to	because of
i. resulting in	leading to
j. glued	stuck

PHRASE MATCH:

a. almost 50 hours	non-stop
b. fixed to his seat for	over two days
c. marathon	gaming session
d. five-minute	nap
e. died from cardiac	arrest
f. on a mission to become	a professional gamer
g. attractive and well-paid	profession
h. fired	from his job
i. The dangers of being addicted	to fantasy games
j. keep thousands of players	glued to their screens

GAP FILL:

Korean gamer dies after 50 hours online

BNE: A 28-year-old South Korean man has died after playing an **online** computer game for almost 50 hours non-stop. The man, **known** only by his family name of Lee, started playing the **popular** battle simulation game *Starcraft* on August 3 and was **fixed** to his seat for over two days. His marathon gaming **session** was apparently broken only with the occasional toilet **break** or five-minute **nap**. Reuters News Agency reports police sources saying the man died from **cardiac** arrest "stemming from exhaustion".

Lee was on a **mission** to become a professional gamer. This is an increasingly **attractive** and well-paid profession in South Korea. Top players can **earn** substantial amounts of money each year. Lee had recently been **fired** from his job because of absences due to his **obsession** with gaming. The dangers of being **addicted** to fantasy games are resulting in many **social** problems. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players **glued** to their screens for many hours.