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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 in an internet café in the city of Taegu. His marathon gaming session was apparently interspersed with only the occasional toilet break or five-minute nap. The man, known only by his family name of Lee, became engrossed in the popular battle simulation game *Starcraft* on August 3 and stayed rooted to his seat for over two days. Reuters News Agency reports police sources saying the man died from cardiac arrest “stemming from exhaustion”. He had just finished playing when he suddenly collapsed. Paramedics could not resuscitate him and he died shortly after arriving at hospital.

Lee was apparently on a quest to become a professional gamer, an increasingly alluring and lucrative profession in South Korea. Top players can rake in substantial amounts of money each year in sponsorship deals alone. Lee had recently been fired from his job because of absences attributed to his obsession with gaming. The dangers of being addicted to fantasy games are becoming more apparent and tragic. Gamers become immersed in the games and are totally mesmerized by the events unfolding in front of them. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players glued to their screens for hours on end.

WARM-UPS

1. GAMING: In pairs / groups, talk about your history with video games. Use these prompts to help your conversation: First game / Best game / Technology / Characters / Time / Best score / Consoles / Addictive / Online / The future ... Change partners and report on 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 how each console could be improved. 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

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, before moving 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 sharpens your mind. 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 will become 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. His marathon gaming session was interspersed with regular breaks. | T / F |
| c. The man died from dehydration. | T / F |
| d. Paramedics could not resuscitate the man after he arrived at hospital. | T / F |
| e. The man was on a quest to become a professional gamer. | T / F |
| f. His company allowed him time off to pursue his dream. | T / F |
| g. Gaming is becoming a recognized addiction. | 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. marathon | engrossed |
| b. interspersed | attractive |
| c. engrossed | revived |
| d. rooted | sprinkled |
| e. resuscitate | fixation |
| f. alluring | immersed |
| g. rake in | epic |
| h. obsession | spellbound |
| i. immersed | earn |
| j. mesmerized | fixed |

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

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. marathon | unfolding in front of them |
| b. interspersed only with | stemming from exhaustion |
| c. rooted to his | and lucrative profession |
| d. died from cardiac arrest | gaming |
| e. paramedics could not | seat for over two days |
| f. an increasingly alluring | glued to their screens |
| g. rake in | the occasional toilet break |
| h. his obsession with | resuscitate him |
| i. mesmerized by the events | substantial amounts of money |
| j. keep thousands of players | gaming session |

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

BNE: A 28-year-old South Korean man has died after playing an _____ computer game for almost 50 hours non-stop in an internet café in the city of Taegu. His _____ gaming session was apparently interspersed with only the occasional toilet break or five-minute _____. The man, known only by his family name of Lee, became _____ in the popular battle simulation game *Starcraft* on August 3 and stayed _____ to his seat for over two days. Reuters News Agency reports police sources saying the man died from _____ arrest "_____ from exhaustion". He had just finished playing when he suddenly collapsed. Paramedics could not _____ him and he died shortly after arriving at hospital.

Lee was apparently on a _____ to become a professional gamer, an increasingly alluring and _____ profession in South Korea. Top players can _____ in substantial amounts of money each year in sponsorship deals alone. Lee had recently been fired from his job because of absences _____ to his obsession with gaming. The dangers of being _____ to fantasy games are becoming more apparent and tragic. Gamers become _____ in the games and are totally mesmerized by the events _____ in front of them. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players _____ to their screens for hours on end.

engrossed

resuscitate

online

nap

cardiac

rooted

marathon

stemming

unfolding

addicted

lucrative

glued

quest

rake

immersed

attributed

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 | • lucrative |
| • interspersed | • substantial |
| • engrossed | • attributed |
| • stemming | • apparent |
| • collapsed | • mesmerized |
| • resuscitate | • glued |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Can you understand the man's actions?
- d. Have you ever been totally engrossed in something for many hours?
- e. What kind of power do you think video games can have over people?
- f. Are you addicted to gaming?
- g. Do you think gaming can be dangerous?
- h. Have you followed the *Grand Theft Auto* case in the news?
- i. Are video games creating abnormal people?
- j. Should video games carry a health warning similar to those on cigarettes?

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. When was the last time you were mesmerized by something?
- 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 regulated by the government. Team up with classmates who have been assigned 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 – Distressed 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 conducted 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 regulation.

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 monitoring their children. Bad parents let children play games too long. You totally reject all arguments that games are dangerous. You think 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.

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Lee was apparently on a quest to become a professional gamer, an increasingly _____ and lucrative profession in South Korea. Top players can _____ substantial amounts of money each year in sponsorship deals alone. Lee had recently been fired from his job because of absences _____ to his obsession with gaming. The dangers of being _____ to fantasy games are becoming more apparent and tragic. Gamers become _____ in the games and are totally _____ by the events unfolding in front of them. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players _____ their screens for hours on end.

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 situation 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. F c. F d. T e. T f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. marathon	epic
b. interspersed	sprinkled
c. engrossed	immersed
d. rooted	fixed
e. resuscitate	revive
f. alluring	attractive
g. rake in	earn
h. obsession	fixation
i. immersed	engrossed
j. mesmerized	spellbound

PHRASE MATCH:

a. marathon	gaming session
b. interspersed with only	the occasional toilet break
c. rooted to his	seat for over two days
d. died from cardiac arrest	stemming from exhaustion
e. paramedics could not	resuscitate him
f. an increasingly alluring	and lucrative profession
g. rake in	substantial amounts of money
h. his obsession with	gaming
i. mesmerized by the events	unfolding in front of them
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 in an internet café in the city of Taegu. His **marathon** gaming session was apparently interspersed with only the occasional toilet break or five-minute **nap**. The man, known only by his family name of Lee, became **engrossed** in the popular battle simulation game *Starcraft* on August 3 and stayed **rooted** to his seat for over two days. Reuters News Agency reports police sources saying the man died from **cardiac** arrest "**stemming** from exhaustion". He had just finished playing when he suddenly collapsed. Paramedics could not **resuscitate** him and he died shortly after arriving at hospital.

Lee was apparently on a **quest** to become a professional gamer, an increasingly alluring and **lucrative** profession in South Korea. Top players can **rake** in substantial amounts of money each year in sponsorship deals alone. Lee had recently been fired from his job because of absences **attributed** to his obsession with gaming. The dangers of being **addicted** to fantasy games are becoming more apparent and tragic. Gamers become **immersed** in the games and are totally mesmerized by the events **unfolding** in front of them. In particular, MMORPGs, or massively multiplayer online role playing games, keep thousands of players **glued** to their screens for hours on end.