GRADE 6

English Language Arts

Assesslet

Argumentative Genre

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Directions

• Read all the directions for each question carefully and think about the answer.

• This Assesslet contains five items. Questions 1-3 are selected-response items where you choose the one BEST answer. Answer each question by filling in the circle on your answer document.

• Question 4 is a constructed-response item. Write your answer on the lines provided on your answer document.

• Question 5 is an extended-response item. Use the scratch paper provided to plan your writing. Then, write your essay on the lines provided on your answer document.

• Be sure to write your answers in the spaces provided on the answer document.
Today, many people enjoy video games. In fact, 58% of Americans play video games. But video games are not just for kids and teens! The average age of game players is 30. Forty-eight percent of gamers who responded are male and 50% are female. Games are purchased equally by males and females. Adult gamers have been playing video or computer games for an average of 16 years.

A 2011 study found that 91% of young people ages 2 to 17 play video games. Thirty-six percent of gamers are females over the age of 18. Seventeen percent of gamers are males under the age of 18.

Gaming can be an interactive or a social activity. More than half of U.S. households (51%) have some type of gaming console. A majority of gamers play games with others, either in person or online. Sixteen percent of gamers play with parents, 32% play with other family members, and 42% play with friends. Smart phones have made it possible for teens to play games on their phones, and 44% of people choose to play games on their phones.

For many, computer and video games seem to be a wiser choice for spending their entertainment dollars. Forty-four percent feel that purchasing video or computer games is more value for their money than buying DVDs or purchasing music or going
to the movies. As a result, people are spending less time watching TV, going to the movies, or watching movies at home.

Some parents are concerned that their children are being drawn to video and computer games at a young age. Some parents, 91%, say they set limits on the amount of time their children spend playing games. Eighty two percent of parents say they are present when children choose a game to purchase and/or when they are playing games. Many parents feel that video and computer games have become a positive part of their child’s life.

Video and computer games have become a big part of the entertainment for people of all ages. Christian Adame, assistant curator for the Phoenix Art Museum, says:

“I would say the evolution of video games has been very rapid. Because video games rely so much on technology and innovations, the possibilities of video games have been very quickly transforming before our eyes.”
Economy

If people stopped buying video games and the related components, retail businesses would be greatly impacted. From 2009 to 2012, the video game industry in the U.S. grew by more than 9%. This is more than four times the growth rate of the U.S. economy during the same period. In 2012, the entertainment industry spent $6.2 billion on software. Consumers alone spent $21.53 billion on video games, hardware, and accessories in 2013.

Based on information in Video Games in the 21st Century: The 2014 Report, more than 146,000 people are employed by the computer and video game industry. People working in this business earn an average salary of $94,747. Employment in this area grew more than 13 times the growth of the U.S. labor force between 2009 and 2012. California and Texas are the top two states employing workers in this industry. The popularity of gaming has prompted colleges and universities to offer computer and video game programs and degrees to prepare students for this popular area of employment.


Health

The popularity of playing video games has had an impact on the health of Americans. The U.S. Department of Health recommends young people ages 6-17 participate in 60 minutes of physical activity a day. In 2013, only 17.7% of female and 36.6% of male high school students participated in 60 minutes of physical activity a day. The typical teenager spends about 53 hours a week (7 hours and 38 minutes per day) in front of a television, computer, or cell phone screen.

Even though some games allow people to interact with the game, promoting some physical movement, most do not. Physical inactivity increases one’s risk of heart disease and developing diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure. Some people are more likely to snack on unhealthy foods while in front of a screen, which can lead to some of these health issues. Some mental health professionals believe video game addiction also leads to social isolation and depression. A 2009 study reports that violent video games teach youth that violence is an acceptable problem-solving...

Passage B continued on page 5
strategy. Other researchers believe that violent games help young players release stress and pent-up aggression.

Sources for facts and statistics: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Psychological Association.

**Education**

Since young people spend many hours in a day playing video games or interacting with a screen, this could have an effect on the study habits of some students. The average high school student spends 6.8 hours a week on homework, but the average teen can spend 9-13 hours a week playing video games. Some researchers believe that gaming improves strategic thinking, information gathering, hand-eye coordination, and flexibility. Some feel that students use effective problem solving and creativity while gaming. Playing games responsibly can help lessen the negative impacts gaming could have in the lives of young people.

Sources for facts and statistics: National Education Association and the Entertainment Software Association.
Selected-Response Questions

For questions 1-3, answer each question by filling in the circle on your answer document.

1. Which statement below **BEST** summarizes the information presented in Passages A and B?
   
   A. The passages show that playing video games has no effect on the people who play them.
   B. The passages show that playing video games has an effect on all age groups who play them.
   C. The passages show that playing video games impacts the health and welfare of only young children, but not adults.
   D. The passages show that playing video games has a greater impact on teenagers than any other group who play them.

2. Which of the following statements is **TRUE**?
   
   A. Most people play games on their smart phones.
   B. The largest percentage of gamers is over 35 years old.
   C. Males and females play video and computer games equally.
   D. More than half of U. S. households have at least one game console.

3. In Passage B, which of the following is the definition of the word **economy**?
   
   A. budget
   B. cheap
   C. expensive
   D. market
Constructing-Response Question

4 Do you think video or computer games have an impact on your life? Write a response, citing at least one detail or example from each passage to support your reasoning.

Write your answer on the lines provided on your answer document.
Extended-Response Question

5 Do you believe playing video and computer games has a positive or a negative effect on a teen’s life? Write a well-developed argument that answers this question. In your argument, be sure to:

- Clearly state your position or argument.
- Support your argument with details from both passages.
- Explain how these details support your argument.

Use the scratch paper provided to plan your writing. Then, write your essay on the lines provided on your answer document.