

Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

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Time to Play!

By Debbie Vilardi

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Goal: To learn about the history and importance of play in the United States.

*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

Before Beginning:

- Why is play important? Why might the editors of this American history themed magazine have chosen play as a topic? Does play impact history?

"Make Time for Play" by Mark Clemens (Pages 2-3)

Comprehension:

1. Why is this issue about play?
2. What are some benefits of playing?
3. How was play viewed by early settlers?
4. How did the Industrial Revolution impact play?
5. What are some modern changes to play?

Research: Convention on the Rights of the Child, General Assembly of the United Nations, Industrial Revolution

"Gather 'Round the Table" by Lee Dennis (Pages 3-7)

Vocabulary: armory

Comprehension:

1. Why was it hard for early games to find a market?
2. How did religion impact game play?
3. Where did Milton Bradley get the idea for his game, The Checkered Game of Life?
4. How did Howard Garis convince the Milton Bradley Company to buy his game?
5. How did George Parker get started in the game business?
6. Who invented Monopoly?
7. How did Charles Darrow convince Parker Brothers to purchase the game?

Math Activities:

1. How old is Monopoly?
2. If there are 7,000 languages spoken in the world, what percentage of them have a version of Monopoly?
3. How old is the modern version of Game of Life?

4. How much older than you is the game?
5. Look at the games in your classroom or at home. Who produced the games? Which company produced more? What percentage of the games were made by that company?
6. Look for copyright information on the instructions or boxes for the games. Which game is oldest? Which game is newest? How much older is the oldest game?

Research: The Mansion of Happiness, McLoughlin Brothers Company, Milton Bradley, Howard R. Garis, Uncle Wiggily, George S. Parker, Parker Brothers, Elizabeth Magie, Charles Darrow

"America's Pastime" by Robert S. Fay and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 10-13)

"Play Ball" by Andrew Matthews (Page 13)

Comprehension:

1. What sports may have developed into baseball?
2. How are those sports related to baseball?
3. What were some of the names for early forms of baseball?
4. Why did the Knickerbockers decide to create a standard for the game?
5. How did the "Knickerbocker Rules" define modern baseball?
6. How did the professional leagues evolve?
7. How long has modern Major League Baseball existed?
8. How has baseball equipment evolved?

Writing Activity: What is your favorite baseball team? Why? Do you think this team will have a winning season this year? Why? Write an essay detailing why your team is the team to root for. See if you can convince your classmates to switch their allegiance and join you.

Research: Rounders, Cricket, Robin Carver's *Book of Sports*, Knickerbocker Baseball Club, Alexander Joy Cartwright, New York Nine, Civil War, National Association of Professional Base Ball Players, Arthur Irwin, Cincinnati Red Stockings, Major League Baseball, Little League, Carl Stotz, Babe Ruth League, softball

"In the City" by Laura Dickstein (Pages 14-15)

Vocabulary: brownstones

Comprehension:

1. Why did city children need to adapt the games played in rural and suburban areas?
2. How did they change baseball, so they could play it in the street?
3. Why was stoopball popular?
4. Why do you think sidewalk games were popular?

Authentic Experience: Play the games mentioned in the article. If necessary, conduct further research for the rules.

Research: Ellis Island, stickball, stoopball, marbles, hopscotch, jacks, skelly

"That's a Classic" by Will Bremen, illustrated by Larry Jones (Pages 16-17)

Research: checkers, chess, jacks, jump rope, kite, marbles, top, yo-yo

“Be a Good Sport” by Lori Calabrese (Pages 18-23)

Comprehension:

1. What evidence exists that sport may have evolved in prehistoric times?
2. Are you a team player or more interested in individual challenges?
3. What are some of the benefits of playing sports?
4. How can play negatively impact self-esteem?
5. What does the author recommend you do to keep playing sports from becoming a negative activity?

Research: first Olympic games, *Understanding Children’s Worlds: Children and Play*, American Academy of Pediatrics, *The Power of Play*, soccer, tennis, football, basketball, ice hockey, golf

“Did You Know?” illustrated by Chris Ware (Pages 24-25)

Research: Silly Putty, Joseph McVicker, Slinky, Walter Frederick Morrison, Emo Rubik

“Your Brain and Play” by Charlene Brusso (Pages 26-27)

Vocabulary: neurons

Comprehension:

1. How do the parts of the brain work together when we play?
2. How does play help us learn about new situations?

Writing Activity: Do you have enough time to play? Write a letter to your teacher or parent arguing that you need more playtime. Explain why this playtime is important for your future.

Research: the human brain, *Smithsonian*

“The Call of Coney Island” by Cynthia Overbeck Bix (Pages 29-32)

Vocabulary: barkers

Comprehension:

1. How did the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago inspire George C. Tilyou?
2. What was Coney Island like before Steeplechase Park opened?
3. How did new technology become rides?
4. How did public transportation impact the park?
5. Why did train and trolley companies establish their own parks?
6. How did Coney Island attractions entice visitors?
7. What is the legacy of Coney Island?

Research Activity: Research and write about the history of an amusement park ride or attraction.

Research: Coney Island, World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, George Ferris, George C. Tilyou, Steeplechase Park, Luna Park, Dreamland (amusement park), Great Depression, New Jersey’s Wildwood Park, California’s Pacific Park, Walt Disney World

"Get Plugged In" by Seth Shostak and Kathiann M. Kowalski (Page 33-35)

"Game Changers" (Page 35)

Vocabulary: archaeologists

Comprehension:

1. Why did Nolan Bushnell create a video game?
2. How do console games differ from computer games?
3. How has gaming technology changed over time?

Discussion Activity: Which are better, console games, handheld games, computer games, or arcade games?

Research: Nolan Bushnell, Atari

"Game On!" (Pages 36-39)

Vocabulary: ludeme

Comprehension:

1. What is a ludologist?
2. Why do some people study games?
3. Can you think of any activities that we commonly call games but don't fit the definition in the article? Name them and explain why they aren't games.
4. Why must a ludeme balance boredom with challenge?
5. What role does the cheater serve in game play?

Art Activity: Create your own game board. Be sure to include rules for your game and all of the pieces you need to play. Be sure it meets the definition of a game included on page 37 of the issue. Play it with your classmates.

Discussion Activity: Consider the discussion questions at the end of the "Cheater!" section of the article.

Research: ludology

"Going Global" by Marcia Amidon Lusted, illustrated by Brian Langdo (Pages 40-41)

Research: Backgammon, Mancala, Parcheesi

Activities for the Entire Issue:

1. Some museums, including The Strong: National Museum of Play, which is highlighted on page 46, have old games in their collections. Children's and toy museums may even have playable versions. Visit the museums to see the toys and games in their collections. Sometimes these are older versions of familiar games. Study the boards to see how the games have changed over time and play them if possible.
2. Go outside and play.