

Kids who play "Minecraft" video game also read books about "Minecraft"

By Associated Press, adapted by Newsela staff on 09.07.14

Word Count **404**



Jonny Rice wears a "Minecraft"-themed mask while promoting a video clip he created during the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles, June 13, 2013. Photo: AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

NEW YORK — Like many kids, 7-year-old Tyler Sacharow is crazy about video games. Sometimes, Tyler stops playing games and reads instead. Seeing that makes his dad Aaron happy.

Aaron doesn't even mind that Tyler often reads a book about "Minecraft." The book is a guide, or manual, to the popular video game.

"I don't want to say it tricks them into reading," says Aaron. "But there are books kids are reading for schools and books that they hopefully like in their free time." The "Minecraft" books make kids want to read, he says.

The "Minecraft" game came out in 2011. Since then, it has sold more than 50 million copies.

6 Million Books

Now, the "Minecraft" guides have become best-sellers too. There are three guides: "Minecraft: Essential Handbook," "Minecraft: Redstone Handbook" and "Minecraft: Construction Handbook." All together, the guides have sold more than 6 million copies.

Scholastic is the company that puts out the guides. It plans to release a new guide, "Minecraft: Combat Handbook," in September.

Debra Dorfman works at Scholastic. "Kids, parents and teachers were all saying 'Minecraft' was good for you," she said.

Teachers were talking about how "Minecraft" helps kids learn about science, math and solving problems, Dorfman said. Parents let their kids play for hours at a time.

Kira Porton runs a bookstore for kids. She says the guides could become as popular as "The Diary of a Wimpy Kid" and "Percy Jackson."

"These books just fly off the shelf," she said.

"Encouraging Students To Read"

"Minecraft" takes place in a world where everything is made out of blocks. It is a little like Legos. Players can mine materials, like dirt, stone, metals, water and tree trunks. They stack blocks of the materials to make buildings, tools and armor. Their goal is to protect themselves from monsters.

Other books about games have sold many copies. Last year, "The Legend of Zelda: Hyrule Historia" was a best seller. Books about the games "Halo" and "World of Warcraft" have also sold very well.

Fans want to know more about their favorite games, says book expert Chris Schlupe. Many turn to books.

Elizabeth H. Madarang teaches second grade. She learned of the "Minecraft" games because her students kept mentioning them in their writing reports. Earlier this year, she ordered the first "Minecraft" guide. Her students have now formed a book club.

"I definitely see 'Minecraft' manuals encouraging students to read," Madarang says.

Quiz

- 1 How many copies of guidebooks for playing "Minecraft" have been sold?
 - (A) more than 6 million copies
 - (B) more than 50 million copies
 - (C) more than 5 million copies
 - (D) more than 60 million copies

- 2 What do teachers think about the video game "Minecraft", according to the article?
 - (A) It is important because it has sold more than 50 million copies.
 - (B) It helps students learn about science, math and problem solving.
 - (C) It is not a violent game.
 - (D) It has good, clear graphics.

- 3 Which of these sentences is LEAST important to the main idea of the article?
 - (A) "Minecraft" helps children learn about science, math and problem solving.
 - (B) "Minecraft" manuals have become best-sellers.
 - (C) "Minecraft" was released in 2011.
 - (D) Kids, parents and teachers are all saying that "Minecraft" is good for you.

- 4 In the section, "6 Million Books" select the paragraph that explains what "Minecraft" can teach kids about.

Answer Key

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Paragraph 7:

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