

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. The development of Tetris

The development of Tetris is an interesting story of innovation, international intrigue, and long-lasting popularity. The game was created in 1984 by Alexey Pajitnov, a Russian computer scientist working at the Dorodnitsyn Computing Centre of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow. Pajitnov, who had a passion for puzzles, designed Tetris as a simple yet engaging game based on the concept of pentominoes—geometric shapes made up of five squares. However, to make the game more dynamic, he simplified the pieces to four squares, creating the now-iconic tetrominoes.

The first version of Tetris was programmed on an Electronika 60, a Soviet computer with limited graphical capabilities. Pajitnov's game quickly spread among his colleagues, and a friend, Dmitry Pavlovsky, helped refine it. Vadim Gerasimov, a young programmer, later ported it to the IBM PC, which allowed it to gain a wider audience.

As Tetris grew in popularity, its potential as a commercial product became clear. However, due to Soviet laws at the time, Pajitnov was unable to profit from his creation. Instead, the Soviet government took control of the game's rights through a state agency, ELORG (Elektronorgtechnika), which became responsible for licensing Tetris to international companies.

This led to a heated battle for publishing rights. In the late 1980s, several companies—including Mirrorsoft, Andromeda Software, and Spectrum HoloByte—claimed to have the right to distribute Tetris, leading to confusion and legal disputes. Eventually, the Japanese company Nintendo, seeking a popular app for its Game Boy handheld console, entered negotiations. After intense discussions, Nintendo got the rights for the console version, leading to the legendary 1989 release of Tetris on the Game Boy. The game became a massive success, selling millions of copies and solidifying Tetris as one of the most beloved video games of all time.

In 1996, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Pajitnov was finally able to reclaim the rights to his creation. He founded The Tetris Company with Henk Rogers, a Dutch entrepreneur who had played a key role in negotiating the Nintendo deal. From then on, Tetris continued to evolve, appearing on countless platforms, from arcade machines to smartphones.

*(353 words)*

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage

1. **T / F** Tetris was created by a Russian computer scientist named Alexey Pajitnov.
2. **T / F** Tetris uses geometric shapes with five sides.
3. **T / F** Tetris was first programmed on an IBM PC.
4. **T / F** The Soviet government first owned the rights to the game.
5. **T / F** Nintendo secured the rights to Tetris for its Game Boy console.
6. **T / F** Pajitnov was able to reclaim the rights to Tetris after he escaped from the Soviet Union.
7. **T / F** Pajitnov bought the rights from a Dutch entrepreneur.
8. **T / F** Tetris has not yet been licensed for smartphones.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in bold).

1. **intrigue:** routine, mystery, boredom, clarity
2. **engaging:** indifferent, difficult, captivating, boring
3. **refine:** worsen, simplify, improve, damage
4. **ported:** transferred, removed, ignored, deleted
5. **rights:** restriction, penalty, ownership, duty
6. **state:** government, citizen, condition, business
7. **licensing:** selling, rejecting, forbidding, driving
8. **heated:** warm, slow, intense, calm
9. **distribute:** take, share, hide, collect
10. **collapse:** worsening, motivation, destruction, creation

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Mario Brothers

The origins of the game Mario Bros. go back to the early 1980s. Created by the legendary Japanese game designer Shigeru Miyamoto and released by Nintendo, Mario Bros. first appeared in arcades in 1983. The game introduced the iconic characters Mario and Luigi, who are plumbers working to rid the New York City sewers of various creatures.

Before *Mario Bros.*, Mario had made his debut in the 1981 arcade game *Donkey Kong*, where he was known as "Jumpman." In *Donkey Kong*, Mario was portrayed as a carpenter who needed to rescue a damsel in distress from a giant ape. The game's success prompted Nintendo to develop a standalone game that expanded Mario's character and introduced his brother Luigi.

The concept for *Mario Bros.* revolved around a simple yet engaging gameplay mechanic. Players control Mario and Luigi, navigating through a series of platforms to defeat enemies like turtles, crabs, and flies. The objective is to clear each level by eliminating all the enemies, which involves flipping them on their backs and then kicking them off the screen. One of the notable aspects of *Mario Bros.* is its setting. Miyamoto chose the sewer theme to reflect the idea of Mario and Luigi being plumbers, which differed from Mario's earlier portrayal as a carpenter.

The game's graphics were simple, but its tight controls made it a hit in arcades. The mechanics were easy to learn but difficult to master, which kept players coming back for more. Unlike many games of the era, *Mario Bros.* also featured a cooperative mode, allowing two players to work together to defeat enemies or compete for a higher score. This social aspect of gameplay made the game a favorite in arcades.

The success of *Mario Bros.* laid the groundwork for future Mario games, most notably *Super Mario Bros.* in 1985, which became one of the most influential video games of all time. The characters of Mario and Luigi have since become central figures in each version of the Nintendo console, appearing in countless games as well as movies and establishing themselves as cultural icons in the gaming world.

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Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage

1. **T / F** Mario Bros. was the first game to feature both Mario and Luigi.
2. **T / F** Before Mario Bros., Mario was introduced in the game Donkey Kong as a plumber.
3. **T / F** The main setting of Mario Bros. is the New York City sewers.
4. **T / F** In the game, the two brothers compete to save the princess from a giant ape.
5. **T / F** Players can defeat enemies in Mario Bros. by flipping them on to their backs.
6. **T / F** Mario Bros. was designed to be a multi-player game.
7. **T / F** The graphics of Mario Bros. were considered complex and advanced for the time.
8. **T / F** Mario Bros. was released for consoles but never as an arcade game.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in **bold**).

1. **rid** remove, obtain, keep, acquire,
2. **damsel** warrior, lady, flower, child
3. **distress** trouble, sickness, power, peace
4. **revolved around** moving, ignored, centered on, avoided
5. **objective** uncertainty, opinion, random, goal
6. **eliminating** removing, preserving, collecting, adding,
7. **portrayal** reality, fabrication, depiction, disguise
8. **master** struggle, perfect, fail, begin
9. **countless** rapid, many, difficult, a few
10. **laid the groundwork for:** neglected the core of finished the framework of  
established the base for destroyed the groundwork for

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Sid Meier's Civilization

Sid Meier's Civilization is a revolutionary turn-based strategy game that redefined the gaming industry and laid the foundation for one of the most celebrated franchises in video game history. Developed by MicroProse and designed by the legendary Sid Meier, Civ I was released for MS-DOS in 1991. It captivated PC gamers with its depth, complexity, and replayability.

The main idea of Civ I is deceptively simple: guide a civilization from the dawn of humanity in 4000 BCE to the modern era and beyond, while trying to achieve world domination or landing a spaceship on the closest habitable planet at Alpha Centauri. Players take the role of a leader, choosing from historical civilizations like the Egyptians, Romans, or Chinese. Each has its own unique strengths and weaknesses. Starting with a single settler unit, the player explores the map, builds cities, develops technology, raises armies, and engages in diplomacy to progress faster or defeat its rivals.

One of the game's most innovative features was its use of a tech tree, a concept that became a staple of the strategy genre. This allowed players to make meaningful choices about their civilization's development, balancing the pursuit of military, scientific, and cultural progress. The turn-based structure also encouraged thoughtful planning rather than reflexive action, appealing to a wide range of players.

Civ I was lauded for its dynamic gameplay and replayability. Each game generated a random map, and the interactions with AI-controlled civilizations provided different challenges. The AI leaders displayed varying personalities, from aggressive conquerors to cautious diplomats, giving each game a unique flavor. In addition, the game's iconic interface, which featured a top-down map and simple but effective animations, made it accessible even by the limited graphic standards of the early 1990s. Its memorable soundtrack and sound effects further enhanced the experience.

Civ I was a critical and commercial success, selling over a million copies and earning numerous awards. It established turn-based strategy as a dominant PC gaming genre and inspired a series of sequels, each building upon the brilliance of the original. Today, Civ I is remembered as the original strategy empire-building game.

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Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_



# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. The Legacy of *Doom*

*Doom*, released in 1993 by id Software, is widely regarded as one of the most influential video games in history. Its impact on future games includes multiple aspects, from technical advancements to gameplay design, storytelling, and community involvement.

However, the inspiration for *Doom* came from a variety of sources. The developers, John Carmack and John Romero, drew heavily from science fiction and horror films, particularly *Aliens* and *Evil Dead II*. The dark, atmospheric settings and nonstop action of these movies was a major influence. Additionally, the role-playing game *Dungeons & Dragons* played a role in shaping the game's design, especially in its emphasis on exploration, combat, and the discovery of secrets.

*Doom* was a technological marvel for its time, introducing players to a pseudo-3D environment that created an immersive, first-person perspective. It used advanced graphics for the era, with texture mapping, dynamic lighting, and complex level design. All this allowed it to set a new standard for visual quality in video games. The game's engine became the blueprint for future first-person shooters (FPS), and it inspired the development of genre-defining games like *Quake* and *Half-Life*.

The fast-paced, action-oriented gameplay of *Doom* redefined the FPS genre. It introduced concepts like non-linear levels, secret areas, and different weapon choices that allowed for varied combat strategies. These elements became staples in FPS design, influencing series like *Call of Duty* and *Halo*. *Doom*'s emphasis on player skill and reflexes also laid the groundwork for competitive gaming.

One of *Doom*'s most lasting impacts is its modding community. id Software released the game's source code, encouraging players to create custom levels, characters, and gameplay modifications. This decision created a vibrant modding culture, which not only extended the game's lifespan but also inspired future games to support user-generated content. The modding scene for *Doom* directly influenced the creation of games like *Counter-Strike*, which started as a mod for *Half-Life*.

*Doom* also had a profound cultural impact, becoming a symbol of gaming's potential for intense, immersive experiences. Its controversial content sparked debates about violence in video games, influencing discussions about game ratings and content regulation.

(347 words)

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage

1. **T / F** *Doom* was released in 1993 by id Software.
2. **T / F** The developers of *Doom* were inspired by games like Halo, Quake, and Half-life.
3. **T / F** The designers of *Doom* put an emphasis on character development and story design.
4. **T / F** *Doom* introduced a mostly 3D environment for players to explore.
5. **T / F** The game's advanced graphics included texture mapping and dynamic lighting.
6. **T / F** *Doom's* gameplay was linear, guiding players along a predetermined route.
7. **T / F** *Doom* released its source code to the public.
8. **T / F** *Doom's* content sparked debates about violence in video games.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in **bold**).

1. **draw:** write, take from, painted, created
2. **a marvel** a wonder, a struggle, a problem, a mistake
3. **pseudo:** simple, real, not genuine, not complex
4. **immersive:** unclear, strange, engaging, fading
5. **a blueprint:** a story, a model, a picture, a decision
6. **non-linear:** sequential, simple, straightforward, disordered
7. **staples:** variations, essential items, irrelevant items, decorations
8. **modding:** selling, removing, playing, changing

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. The Diablo Franchise

The Diablo franchise, developed by Blizzard Entertainment, is one of the most influential action role-playing games (ARPG) in gaming history. First released in 1996, the franchise has become the most well-known dungeon-crawling franchise, combining dark fantasy storytelling, fast-paced combat, and deep loot mechanics.

The original Diablo introduced players to the cursed town of Tristram, in which they went down into a complex dungeon under a cathedral to battle the forces of Hell. The game featured three playable classes—Warrior, Rogue, and Sorcerer—each with distinct abilities. It was one of the first procedurally generated dungeons with real-time combat, creating an addictive gameplay loop of fighting, looting, and upgrading gear.

*Diablo II* (2000) expanded on its predecessor with a larger world, improved mechanics, and an in-depth skill system. Players could choose from five (later seven) classes and explore diverse environments, from desert wastelands to haunted jungles. The game's dark gothic aesthetic, randomized loot, and multiplayer support reinforced its status as the premier ARPG.

After a long wait, *Diablo III* (2012) modernized the series with updated visuals, faster combat, and streamlined mechanics. It introduced a real-money auction system, which was later removed due to controversy. It also featured a flexible skill system that allowed players to experiment with different builds. *The Reaper of Souls* expansion in 2014 significantly improved the game, adding Adventure Mode and the infinite Rift system for greater replayability.

*Diablo IV*, released in 2023, brought the series back to its dark, horror-driven beginnings. It included an open-world design, non-linear storytelling, and five distinct character classes. It emphasized player choice and deep character customization. The game also included seasonal content and multiplayer events.

Additionally, *Diablo Immortal* (2022), a mobile and PC spin-off, introduced a free-to-play phone game with massive multiplayer online (MMO) elements. While it received criticism for its microtransactions, it demonstrated Blizzard's push toward a broader audience.

The Diablo franchise has influenced countless ARPGs, inspiring games like Path of Exile and Torchlight. Its blend of dark storytelling, engaging combat, and addictive loot progression has kept it relevant for over two decades. With ongoing updates and expansions, Diablo remains a dominant force in the gaming world.

(356 words)

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage

1. **T / F** Blizzard Entertainment developed the Diablo franchise.
2. **T / F** The original Diablo had four playable classes.
3. **T / F** One of the key features of the Diablo games is the ability to upgrade gear.
4. **T / F** Diablo II expanded the game with a larger world and introduced multiplayer support.
5. **T / F** Diablo III's real-money auction system was widely praised for modernizing ARPGs.
6. **T / F** Diablo IV was released in 2022 and featured six character classes at launch.
7. **T / F** Diablo Immortal is a mobile and PC game.
8. **T / F** Diablo IV moved away from the horror roots of the earlier games.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in **bold**).

1. loot: waste, treasure, structure, punishment
2. distinct: weak, unique, similar, blurry
3. predecessor: successor, duplicate, enemy, ancestor
4. gothic: plain, modern, dark, cheerful
5. aesthetic: style, problem, function, boredom
6. streamlined: messy, heavy, efficient, complicated
7. auction: sale, request, gift, battle
8. non-linear: unstructured, straight, rigid, predictable
9. spin-off: unoriginal idea, side project, main story, circular plot
10. microtransactions: trade taxes, small purchases, loans, large payments

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. The Popularity of StarCraft

When StarCraft was released by Blizzard Entertainment in 1998, it revolutionized the real-time strategy genre and became one of the most influential games of all time. One of the key reasons for StarCraft's success was its perfectly balanced asymmetry between the three factions: the Terran, the Zerg, and the Protoss. Each race played completely differently, requiring unique strategies. However, no single faction had a clear advantage over the others. This level of balance created a highly competitive game that kept players' interest for years.

The Terrans, a futuristic human faction, are the most adaptable race. Their units and buildings can be repaired, and they have the unique ability to lift off and relocate structures, making them more mobile than the other factions. Terran units are generally mid-cost and they excel at defensive play. They have strong ranged units like Marines and Siege Tanks. Their gameplay focuses on defending important positions, which makes them great for players who like tactics.

The Zerg are a race of insectoid aliens that rely on overwhelming numbers to defeat opponents. Their units are cheap, fast to produce, and can regenerate health over time. However, they are generally weaker than Terran and Protoss units. Zerg structures must be built on Creep, a biological material that spreads across the map, making quick expansion a key part of their strategy. Zerg players focus on rapid production and aggressive map control, using numbers to overwhelm enemies before they can build strong defenses.

The Protoss are an advanced alien race known for their superior technology and powerful but costly units. Each Protoss unit and building has shields that regenerate, giving them durability in battle. Their army units are strong but require a lot of resources to build, so careful micromanagement is important. Protoss structures "warp in" rather than being built conventionally, allowing for quick deployment. Protoss players often focus on efficiency and use their powerful units to crush opponents in decisive battles.

Each faction's unique playstyle ensures that StarCraft remains a deeply strategic and competitive game, which rewards players who can master different strategies and tactics.

(346 words)

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage

1. **T / F** StarCraft was released in 1998 by Blizzard Entertainment.
2. **T / F** The game was often criticized because all three factions had to be played in the same way.
3. **T / F** The Terrans can relocate their buildings by lifting off.
4. **T / F** Terran units are generally the most expensive in the game.
5. **T / F** The Zerg rely on a small number of powerful units to win battles.
6. **T / F** Zerg structures must be built on a metallic material called *crawl*.
7. **T / F** The Protoss have shields that regenerate over time.
8. **T / F** The Protoss units can be repaired, but it is expensive.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in bold).

1. **asymmetry:** uniformity, perfection, equality, dissimilar
2. **factions:** unions, groups, individuals, agreements
3. **adaptable:** unchanging, similar, rigid, flexible
4. **lift off:** sink, launch, land, drop
5. **ranged:** single, limited, from distance, fixed
6. **overwhelming:** weak, overpowering, minor, forgettable
7. **regenerate:** weaken, return, restore, break
8. **durability:** weakness, strength, softness, beauty
9. **micromanagement:** relaxation, overcontrol, delegation, command
10. **conventionally:** unusually, traditionally, rarely, randomly
11. **decisive:** wise, unsure, slow, critical

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. The Sims

When The Sims launched in 2000, few could have predicted the massive cultural impact it would have on gaming. It introduced a new kind of gameplay—one that focused not on action, combat, or adventure, but on everyday life. It allowed players to create and control virtual people, guiding them through daily activities, relationships, and careers.

One of the most unique aspects of The Sims is that it does not have a predefined objective, unlike traditional games with clear win conditions. Therefore, for many people, The Sims serves as a creative outlet. Players can design and build houses, decorate interiors, and customize every aspect of their Sims' lives. The detailed building and customization tools let players construct dream homes, recreate real-life places, or experiment with architectural styles they might never see in real life. Some use the game as a digital dollhouse, creating elaborate families and stories with highly detailed characters, relationships, and backstories.

For those who enjoy structure, The Sims offers a challenge in managing the daily lives of Sims. Players can set career goals, manage household finances, and guide their Sims toward success. Balancing needs such as hunger, hygiene, and social interactions while advancing in careers or relationships requires strategic planning. Some players enjoy setting up ambitious life paths—rising from poverty to wealth, mastering every skill, or completing every career track.

Not all players take a traditional approach—some enjoy pushing the game's limits by experimenting with absurd scenarios. This can include trapping Sims in unusual situations or testing their survival skills. From removing ladders from pools to creating haunted households, these players treat The Sims as a playground for hilarious outcomes.

For many, The Sims is a stress-free, relaxing escape. The game allows players to live out alternative realities, whether by fulfilling personal dreams or simply watching Sims go about their daily routines. The combination of gentle music, slow-paced gameplay, and unlimited possibilities makes it a comforting experience for many.

Ultimately, the beauty of The Sims is that every player can define their own purpose, making it one of the most entertaining and versatile games ever created.

*(351 words)*

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage

1. **T / F** The Sims was first released in 1999.
2. **T / F** The Sims is primarily a puzzle-solving game.
3. **T / F** The goal of the Sims is to keep your character happy.
4. **T / F** Players can design and customize houses in The Sims.
5. **T / F** Players don't have to worry about their Sim's hunger or hygiene.
6. **T / F** Players don't need to pay attention to money or wealth in the game.
7. **T / F** The game allows players to guide their Sim to get a job.
8. **T / F** The combination of music and game speed can make The Sims quite relaxing.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in bold).

1. **virtual:** unreal, tangible, real, physical,
2. **predefined:** unplanned, random, prearranged, flexible
3. **outlet:** restriction, expression, entrance, barrier
4. **interiors:** structures, inside spaces, exteriors, decorations
5. **finances:** investments, money matters, expenses, cash
6. **hygiene:** health, comfort, cleanliness, disease
7. **absurd:** sensible, ridiculous, logical, expected
8. **fulfilling:** unsatisfying, stressful, rewarding, frustrating
9. **versatile:** unchanging, narrow, limited, flexible

Time Reading:

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 8. Minecraft as a Creative Medium

When Minecraft was released in 2011 by Swedish developer Markus Persson, few could have predicted that it would become one of the most powerful creative tools of the 21st century. Unlike traditional video games with fixed goals and storylines, Minecraft is a sandbox game — a virtual world made entirely of blocks where players are free to build, explore, and create whatever they can imagine. There are no rules, no winning conditions, and no limits on what can be made.

At its core, Minecraft gives players an almost unlimited supply of materials and an empty world to fill. The results have been extraordinary. Players around the world have used these simple tools to construct breathtaking projects that rival the work of professional architects and engineers. One of the most remarkable examples is a full-scale replica of the city of Paris, including the Eiffel Tower, built block by block over several years. Similarly, players have recreated famous landmarks such as the Colosseum in Rome, the Great Wall of China, and entire fictional worlds from novels and films. Some community projects have involved hundreds of players working together over months or even years.

Perhaps the most astonishing creations in Minecraft are functional machines built using a material called redstone, which acts like an electrical wire within the game. Players have used redstone to construct working calculators, fully operational computers, and even playable versions of other video games — all within the boundaries of Minecraft itself. These creations require a deep understanding of logic and engineering.

Minecraft has also become a serious tool in the world of architecture and design. Professional architects have used it to visualize building concepts, and urban planners in some cities have invited residents to redesign their neighborhoods using the game. In schools around the world, teachers use Minecraft to teach subjects ranging from history to mathematics, recognizing that its open-ended nature encourages problem-solving and collaboration.

What makes Minecraft truly unique is that its materials are simple, but its possibilities are virtually limitless. It has proven that given the right tools and freedom, players can become architects, engineers, and artists — often all at once.

*(353 words)*

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage.

1. **T / F** Minecraft was developed by a French company.
2. **T / F** In Minecraft, the main goal is to build a bigger structure than your opponent.
3. **T / F** Some players have built full-scale copies of cities in Minecraft.
4. **T / F** Redstone is used to add color and decoration to buildings in Minecraft.
5. **T / F** Some players have built working electronic devices inside the game.
6. **T / F** Large projects in Minecraft have been built by teams of people working together.
7. **T / F** Professional architects have used Minecraft to help plan real buildings.
8. **T / F** Minecraft has been used in schools to help teach a variety of subjects.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in bold).

1. **core:** surface, heart, edge, border
2. **brehtaking:** simple, impressive, familiar, dull
3. **rival:** match, follow, copy, avoid
4. **replica:** opposite, memory, improvement, copy
5. **landmarks:** open spaces, hidden places, famous structures, ancient ruins
6. **astonishing:** surprising, ordinary, familiar, expected
7. **functional:** working, imaginary, decorative, broken
8. **operational:** working, unfinished, inactive, damaged
9. **collaboration:** teamwork, isolation, competition, agreement
10. **virtually:** never, exactly, barely, almost

Time Reading:

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. The Last of Us

*The Last of Us* franchise is one of the most acclaimed and influential properties in modern entertainment. It includes video games, a television series, and other media. Developed by the game company Naughty Dog, the franchise debuted in 2013 with the release of *The Last of Us* for PlayStation 3. It has since evolved into a multi-platform storytelling phenomenon, known for its emotional depth, complex characters, and dark vision of a post-apocalyptic world.

The original game introduced players to Joel, a grizzled survivor, and Ellie, a teenage girl who may be humanity's last hope to overcome a deadly fungal infection that has killed most of the people on Earth. Combining stealth, combat, exploration, and emotional storytelling, the game received universal praise for its writing, acting, and immersive gameplay. An updated version was later released for PlayStation 4, followed by a full remake for PlayStation 5 and PC.

In 2020, Naughty Dog released *The Last of Us Part II*, a bold and controversial sequel that expanded on the themes of revenge, pain, and forgiveness. Players play the game as Ellie, the primary protagonist, who is dealing with the emotional toll of violence and loss. They also play as Abby, a fierce soldier whose quest for revenge starts the story. Although the sequel was a massive critical success, earning dozens of Game of the Year awards, it also divided fans because of some of the story choices the game developers made.

Despite early excitement, the planned online multiplayer game set in *The Last of Us* universe—often referred to as "Factions 2"—was ultimately never released and put on hold indefinitely. However, the franchise reached new heights in 2023 with the premiere of *The Last of Us* television series on HBO. The show, which stars Pedro Pascal as Joel and Bella Ramsey as Ellie, faithfully adapts and expands the game's story. Beyond games and television, the franchise includes a comic series, *The Last of Us: American Dreams*. All of these versions combine themes of love, loss, survival, and the complexity of human relationships, which make the franchise more than just a post-apocalyptic story.

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Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage.

1. **T / F** The Last of Us franchise began as a TV show in 2013.
2. **T / F** Joel and Ellie are the only human survivors in a post-apocalyptic world.
3. **T / F** In the game, Joel tries to save Ellie from a virus that has destroyed civilization.
4. **T / F** The Last of Us Part II allows players to play as both Ellie and Abby.
5. **T / F** The sequel was controversial but also very successful.
6. **T / F** The multiplayer version of the game "Factions 2" was released in 2023.
7. **T / F** A movie based on the original version of the game was also released in 2023.
8. **T / F** The Last of Us franchise includes a comic series called *The Last of Us: American Dreams*.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in bold).

1. **evolved:** vanished, stayed, progressed, collapsed
2. **phenomenon:** theory, rumor, success, error
3. **apocalyptic:** peaceful, ordinary, joyful, catastrophic
4. **grizzled:** youthful, strong, experienced, bald
5. **fungus:** woody, leafy, moldy, dry
6. **stealth:** teamwork, secrecy, speed, noise
7. **universal:** widespread, rare, specific, local
8. **controversial:** provocative, certain, beloved, accepted
9. **toll:** prize, gain, gift, cost
10. **fierce:** weak, intense, dull, calm
11. **massive:** tiny, light, enormous, brief
12. **put on hold:** rushed, paused, improved, ended
13. **indefinitely:** suddenly, randomly, endlessly, briefly

Time Reading:

# Video Game History

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. League of Legends

League of Legends is a multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game. It pits two teams of five players against each other, with the objective of destroying the opposing team's Nexus – the main building in their base. Each player selects a champion, a character with unique abilities from over 160 options. The variety of champions ensures that no two games are ever quite the same. Nonetheless, three champions tend to be the most popular.

The first is Yasuo, who is a wandering swordsman. He is known for his calm demeanor and explosive fighting style. He was falsely accused of a crime he didn't commit, so Yasuo now walks a lonely path, trying to find redemption. In the game, he's lightning-fast — moving between enemies, deflecting attacks with his sword, and building up powerful gusts of wind to knock foes into the air. He is a champion for players who enjoy high-risk, high-reward gameplay. Watching Yasuo is like watching a deadly dance: graceful but dangerous.

Lux, in contrast, represents light and optimism. She comes from a noble family, and she secretly has the ability to use powerful magical energy in a world that is generally afraid of magic. On the battlefield, Lux uses beams of energy, protecting allies and trapping enemies. Her strongest ability fires a massive laser of pure light across the map. She is often chosen by players who enjoy controlling the battlefield from a distance.

Then there's Jinx, a chaotic, pink-haired rebel with a love for explosions. She is a wildcard — unpredictable and extremely fun. She has a large number of weapons, including a rocket launcher and a pistol. Her greatest strength is her ability to cause as much damage as possible. Her personality is as explosive as her abilities. She is wild, energetic, and impossible to ignore. When Jinx starts getting kills, she speeds up and becomes even more dangerous. This can often turn the tide of battles in a flash.

Together, these champions stand out among the many possible characters in the game. They help make League of Legends such a rich and exciting game.

*(348 words)*

Finishing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Answer these questions. Do not look back at the passage.

1. **T / F** The main goal in League of Legends is to defeat all five enemy players.
2. **T / F** Each player in League of Legends selects a unique champion with special abilities.
3. **T / F** Yasuo is slow but powerful and focused on defense.
4. **T / F** Yasuo committed many crimes in his youth.
5. **T / F** Lux is feared by her world because she openly uses magic in public.
6. **T / F** Lux's strongest ability is a laser of pure light that can travel across the map.
7. **T / F** Jinx is known for being quiet and careful in battle.
8. **T / F** Jinx becomes more dangerous after getting kills in a fight.

**Part 2:** Circle the word that is closest in meaning to the word from the passage above (in bold).

1. **pit:** match, join, dig, bury
2. **redemption:** wealth, punishment, forgiveness, fame
3. **gusts:** sounds, showers, images, blasts
4. **optimism:** sadness, pessimism, hopefulness, confusion
5. **allies:** strangers, opponents, friends, enemies
6. **massive:** tiny, thin, enormous, confusing
7. **chaotic:** peaceful, organized, disordered, calm
8. **turn the tide:** make peace, lose control, escape completely, change the outcome
9. **in a flash:** with effort, quickly, over time, after thinking

## 1. Tetris

### Part 1

1. T
2. F (*four squares, not five*)
3. F (*Elektronika 60, not IBM PC*)
4. T
5. T
6. F (*after the collapse of the Soviet Union, not by escaping*)
7. F (*he founded The Tetris Company **with** Henk Rogers*)
8. F (*Tetris has appeared on smartphones*)

### Part 2

1. mystery
2. captivating
3. improve
4. transferred
5. ownership
6. government
7. selling
8. intense
9. share
10. destruction

## 2. Mario Brothers

### Part 1

1. T
2. F (*Mario was a carpenter, not a plumber, in Donkey Kong*)
3. T
4. F (*they defeat sewer creatures, not save a princess from an ape*)
5. T
6. T
7. F (*graphics were simple*)
8. F (*Mario Bros. was an arcade game*)

### Part 2

1. remove
2. lady
3. trouble
4. centered on
5. goal
6. removing
7. depiction
8. perfect
9. many
10. established the base for

## 3. Sid Meier's Civilization

### Part 1

1. F (*released for MS-DOS, not Windows*)
2. T
3. F (*the tech tree was one of the most innovative features*)
4. F (*the game rewarded thoughtful planning, not reflexive decisions*)
5. F (*All leaders displayed **varying** personalities*)
6. T
7. F (*the game had a memorable soundtrack and sound effects*)
8. F (*over one million copies, not ten million*)

### Part 2

1. established the base for
2. misleadingly
3. the beginning of
4. livable
5. creative
6. an essential part
7. automatic
8. praised for
9. famous
10. user system
11. continuation

## 4. The Legacy of Doom

### Part 1

1. T
2. F (*inspired by Aliens, Evil Dead II, and D&D — Halo, Quake, and Half-Life came after Doom*)
3. F (*emphasis was on exploration, combat, and secrets — not character development*)
4. T
5. T
6. F (*Doom featured non-linear levels*)
7. T
8. T

### Part 2

1. take from
2. a wonder
3. not genuine
4. engaging
5. a model
6. disordered
7. essential items
8. changing

## 5. The Diablo Franchise

### Part 1

1. T
2. F (*three classes: Warrior, Rogue, and Sorcerer*)
3. T
4. T
5. F (*it was controversial and was later removed*)
6. F (*released in 2023 with five classes, not six*)
7. T
8. F (*Diablo IV returned to dark, horror-driven roots*)

### Part 2

1. treasure
2. unique
3. ancestor
4. dark
5. style
6. efficient
7. sale
8. unstructured
9. side project
10. small purchases

## 6. The Popularity of StarCraft

### Part 1

1. T
2. F (*each faction plays completely differently*)
3. T
4. F (*Terran units are mid-cost, not the most expensive*)
5. F (*Zerg rely on overwhelming numbers, not a few powerful units*)
6. F (*built on Creep, a **biological** material — not a metallic material called "crawl"*)
7. T
8. F (*Protoss shields **regenerate***)

### Part 2

1. dissimilar
2. groups
3. flexible
4. launch
5. from distance
6. overpowering
7. restore
8. strength
9. overcontrol
10. traditionally
11. critical

## 7. The Sims

### Part 1

1. F (*released in 2000, not 1999*)
2. F (*not a puzzle-solving game*)
3. F (*there is no predefined objective*)
4. T
5. F (*hunger and hygiene are needs players must manage*)
6. F (*managing household finances is part of the game*)
7. T
8. T

### Part 2

1. unreal
2. prearranged
3. expression
4. inside spaces
5. money matters
6. cleanliness
7. ridiculous
8. rewarding
9. flexible

## 8. Minecraft as a Creative Medium

### Part 1

1. T
2. F (*no fixed goals or winning conditions*)
3. T
4. F (*redstone acts like electrical wire — used for functional machines, not decoration*)
5. T
6. F (*some projects involved hundreds of players working together*)
7. T
8. T

### Part 2

1. heart
2. impressive
3. match
4. copy
5. famous structures
6. surprising
7. working
8. working
9. teamwork
10. almost

## 9. The Last of Us

### Part 1

1. F (*the franchise began as a video game*)
2. F (*Joel and Ellie are main characters, not the only survivors*)
3. F (*it is a **fungus** infection, not a virus*)
4. T
5. T
6. F (*Factions 2 was never released*)
7. F (*a **TV series** was released in 2023*)
8. T

### Part 2

1. progressed
2. success
3. catastrophic
4. experienced
5. moldy
6. secrecy
7. widespread
8. provocative
9. cost
10. intense
11. enormous
12. paused
13. endlessly

## 10. League of Legends

### Part 1

1. F (*objective is to destroy the enemy Nexus, not defeat all players*)
2. T
3. F (*Yasuo is lightning-fast, not slow*)
4. F (*he was **falsely accused***)
5. F (*Lux uses her powers **secretly***)
6. T
7. F (*Jinx is chaotic, wild, and explosive*)
8. T

### Part 2

1. match
2. forgiveness
3. blasts
4. hopefulness
5. friends
6. enormous
7. disordered
8. change the outcome
9. quickly

Time	Words per minute
1:30	233
1:35	221
1:40	210
1:45	200
1:50	191
1:55	183
2:00	175
2:05	168
2:10	162
2:15	156
2:20	150
2:25	145
2:30	140
2:35	135
2:40	131
2:45	127
2:50	124
2:55	120
3:00	117
3:05	114
3:10	111
3:15	108
3:20	105
3:25	102
3:30	100
3:35	98
3:40	95
3:45	93
3:50	91
3:55	89
4:00	88
4:05	86
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4:40	75
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5:00	70

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