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TEACHER'S GUIDE



FREE VIRTUAL AUTHOR VISIT!
See page 9.

TRAPPED IN A VIDEO GAME

Classroom Activity and Discussion Guide

The activities in this guide align with Next Generation English Language Arts Standards for grades 3–5.

READING with PICTURES

By Tracy Edmunds, M.A. Ed.
Reading With Pictures



Trapped in a Video Game

DUSTIN BRADY

AMP! Kids
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GRADE LEVEL: 3–5

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Language Arts—Reading, Language, Science, Programming

CONTENT STANDARDS

Language Arts
Common Core State Standards: www.corestandards.org

VOCABULARY

Note: Page numbers denote the first appearance of each word.

- accelerate (70)
- ambush (116)
- defeat (13)
- developer (90)
- glitch (91)
- haphazardly (87)
- hologram (97)
- illuminated (77)
- jet pack (33)
- massive (39)
- nanosecond (77)
- oblivion (92)
- optimism (109)
- portal (27)
- praying mantis (11)
- programmed (28)
- protocol (45)
- resistance (16)
- sergeant (8)
- terrain (19)
- tutorial (28)
- vaporized (12)
- vortex (13)

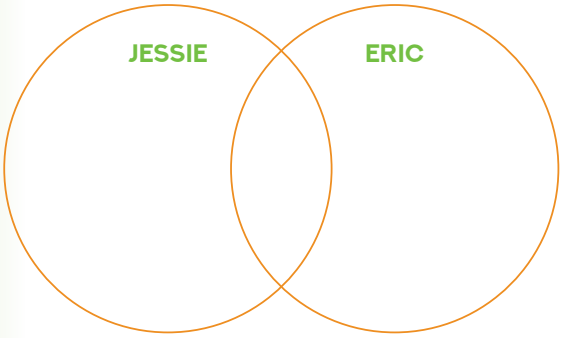
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

LANGUAGE ARTS

CHARACTERIZATION

- What are some of Jesse's character traits? Cite text evidence, including his thoughts and actions. How does he change over the course of the book?

- How are Jesse and Eric alike and different? Write a description of each character, including both physical and psychological traits. Then, create a Venn diagram to show how they are alike and different.



- Use the information in your Venn diagram to write a compare-and-contrast paragraph about the two characters. Be sure to include:

  - Details about the similarities and/or differences

  - Signal words to emphasize the similarities and differences:

    Alike: *alike, same as, similar to, equally, in common, as well as, both, also*

    Different: *but, while, different from, however, although, instead of, on the other hand*

WRITING TECHNIQUE

- From whose point of view is the story told? How do you know? Choose a scene from the story and rewrite it from Eric or Mark's point of view.

- At the end of each chapter, how does the author create mystery, excitement, or anticipation to make the reader want to read the next chapter?

READING COMPREHENSION

- When Jesse was in Eric's basement, why do you think he made the decision to press YES to play Full Blast? (p. 5)

- In the story, Eric says, "Real friends know each other. . . . And this friend knows that you never want to have fun or make decisions for yourself. So sometimes he has to push you a little bit" (p. 44). Find examples in the book where Eric "pushes" Jesse to do things he might not try on his own. How would you feel if your friend did these things to you?

- In the chapter "Mark Day" (p. 49), how does the author include foreshadowing, or a hint about something that will happen later in the story?

- Jesse uses the phrase "blow this popsicle stand" (p. 59). This is an idiom meaning "let's get out of here." What are idioms? Think of other idioms you know. Draw a picture showing the literal meaning of each idiom and another picture showing the intended meaning.

- What is the Hindenburg Protocol (p. 89)? How does it work? What was it created for? What caused it to be activated against Jesse and Eric?

- Does everything get resolved at the end of the book? Why do you think the author wrote this ending? How is it similar to the endings of the chapters?

What is onomatopoeia?

Find several examples in the book. How do these sound effects add to the story? Choose a few of your favorite sounds and hand draw the letters in a style that matches the sound. Add illustrative balloons or effects.



HISTORY

Several events and places of historic significance appear in *Trapped in a Video Game*. Research each event or place and write about why it is important.

- Hindenburg
- Pearl Harbor
- The Wild West

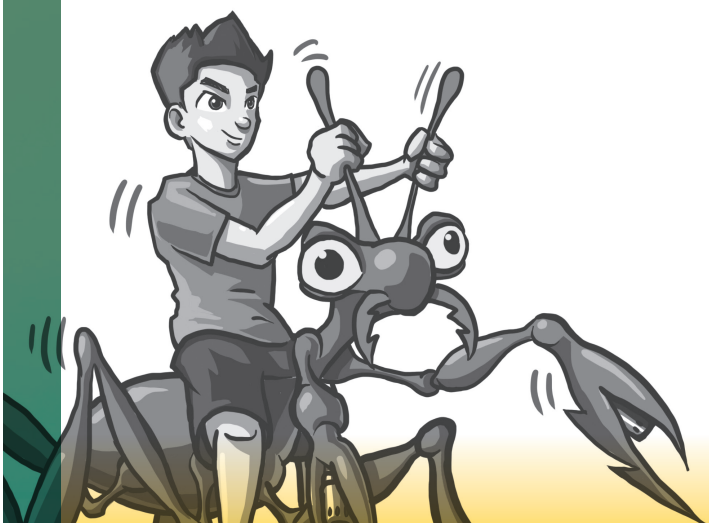
GEOGRAPHY

- In the chapter "Jet Pack Joyride" (p. 33), the author weaves descriptions of Hawaii in with the action. What features of the island are mentioned? Research the island of Hawaii and compare the features mentioned in the book to the real geography.

- On a map, locate the places that exist in the Full Blast game, listed below. How far would the characters have to travel between locations if they were going to each place in real life?

  - Middlefield, Ohio
  - Rocky Mountains
  - Hawaii
  - Statue of Liberty, New York City
  - Wrigley Field, Chicago
  - Golden Gate Bridge
  - Atlantic City boardwalk
  - Nevada desert
  - Grand Canyon

- In the chapter "Speed Run" (p. 75), the characters go on a crazy chase in a tank. Using evidence from the text, draw a map showing their course. Don't forget to label the places and include a legend.



SCIENCE

- Research Newton's first law of motion, which says that a body at rest tends to stay at rest and a body in motion tends to stay in motion, unless acted on by a force.

- Review this scene from the chapter "Captain Eric" (p. 70):

  Eric nodded. "Point taken." He then flicked a couple of switches and grabbed the steering wheel. "Let's see what this thing can do!"

  What it did was accelerate from zero to 100 miles per hour in a quarter of a second.

  "AHHHHHH!" I said as my right arm, which had been operating the cannon, nearly got ripped from its socket. I flew backward into the muck with a giant SPLAT.

- How does this scene relate to Newton's first law? Create a model using a toy car and a small action figure. Can you engineer a creative solution that will keep Jesse on the tank as it accelerates? Test your solution and compare it to the solutions that other students created. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each solution? Which would you use if you were Jesse?

- While the characters are driving the tank, they use fallen logs as ramps. Using a toy car as a model for the tank, devise an experiment to test what happens when it is launched at different speeds off of ramps set at different angles. What is the relationship between the speed of the vehicle and the distance traveled? How does the angle of the ramp affect the distance? What speed and angle will result in the vehicle flying the farthest distance?

- On page 95, Mark says, "That's the Black Box . . . Even light cannot escape the Black Box." What does he mean by this? Research the natural phenomenon of black holes and their effect on light.

- Research the square–cube law, which states that as an object's size increases, its volume is cubed and its surface area is squared. This means that as an animal gets larger, its mass and weight increase at a much faster rate than its strength. Would it be possible in the real world to have giant praying mantises or crocodiles? Why or why not?

COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

- The "More to Explore" section in the back of *Trapped in a Video Game* will get students started with some simple computer programming exercises that don't require a computer. Once students have completed the level 1 and 2 programming activities, challenge interested students with level 3 of the Dice Dare game on the following pages.

- Computer Science Fundamentals courses from code.org will allow you to teach the fundamentals of computer science, whether you have computers in your classroom or not. https://code.org/educate/curriculum/elementary-school

- If you have access to computers, try a student coding program such as Scratch (https://scratch.mit.edu), Tynker (https://www.tynker.com), or Kodable (https://www.kodable.com). Each is simple enough for students to explore on their own, but the programs also include plenty of teacher resources.

ELSE IF

The ELSE IF conditional says, "If that's not true, try this!" This conditional opens up a whole world of possibilities because it allows for three or more options.



To understand ELSE IF, imagine a family beach vacation. Your mom won't let you walk out the door without slathering sunscreen all over your body, right?

"But Mom," you complain. "It's so cloudy that the streetlights think it's nighttime."

"If it's that cloudy, then it's probably going to rain. You should take an umbrella."

"There's zero percent chance of rain."

Your mom looks at you skeptically, and then slathers sunscreen all over your body and gives you an umbrella, just to be safe.

Here's what that looks like:

IF **Sunny** THEN **Sunscreen**

ELSE IF (If not, try this)

ELSE

IF **Rain** THEN **Umbrella**

ELSE (If not)

ELSE

Sunscreen and umbrella (just to be safe)

Full Blast uses ELSE IF to determine how the blaster works. If the player taps the "B" button, he shoots a small blast. When he holds "B" for longer than five seconds, he gets full blast. And when he holds "B" for longer than a tap, but less than five seconds, he gets a medium blast.

IF **Player taps "B"** THEN **Small blast**

ELSE IF (If not, try this)

ELSE

IF **Player holds "B" for longer than 5 seconds**

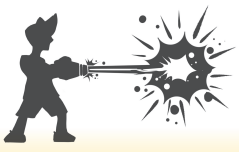
THEN **Full blast**

ELSE (If not)

ELSE

Medium blast

IF **JESSE BLASTS THE FINAL TARGET**



THEN **HE WILL MOVE ON TO LEVEL 1**





The Real-Life Video Game

Level 3: “Free Three”

In this version of the game, 3 is always the magic number. If a player rolls a “3,” she gets a free turn and can pass the die on to the next player. If she rolls any number under “3,” she gets to make up her own Dice Dare. If she rolls any number over “3,” the player to her left gets to make up a Dice Dare for her to complete. Here’s how a game might play out:

1. Player 1 rolls a “1.” He chooses to cross his eyes.

IF Player 1 rolls a “3” THEN Player 1 gets a free turn

ELSE IF (If not, try this)

ELSE

IF Player 1 rolls less than “3” THEN Player 1 chooses a Dice Dare

2. Player 2 rolls a “3.” Player 2 gets a free turn.

IF Player 2 rolls a “3” THEN Player 2 gets a free turn

3. Player 3 rolls a “5,” meaning Player 2 gets to choose the Dice Dare. Player 2 decides that Player 3 must twirl like a ballerina. Player 3 proceeds to cross his eyes, then twirl like a ballerina.

IF Player 3 rolls a “3” THEN Player 3 gets a free turn

ELSE IF (If not, try this)

ELSE

IF Player 3 rolls less than “3” THEN Player 3 chooses a Dice Dare

ELSE (If not)

ELSE

Player 2 chooses a Dice Dare

4. Play continues until someone breaks the code sequence.

IF Player 2 rolls a “3” THEN Player 2 pats her tummy, then does a disco dance.



STANDARDS Common Core State Standards: www.corestandards.org

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Grade 3

Reading

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1]

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4]

Writing

With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4]

Speaking and Listening

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1]

Language

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.3]

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4]

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.5]

Grade 4

Reading

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1]

Writing

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4]

Speaking and Listening

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1]

Language

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.3]

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.5]

Grade 5

Reading

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1]

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4]

Writing

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4]

Speaking and Listening

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1]

Language

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.4]

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.5]

Next Generation Science Standards: http://www.nextgenscience.org

3-PS2-1. Plan and conduct an investigation to provide evidence of the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces on the motion of an object.

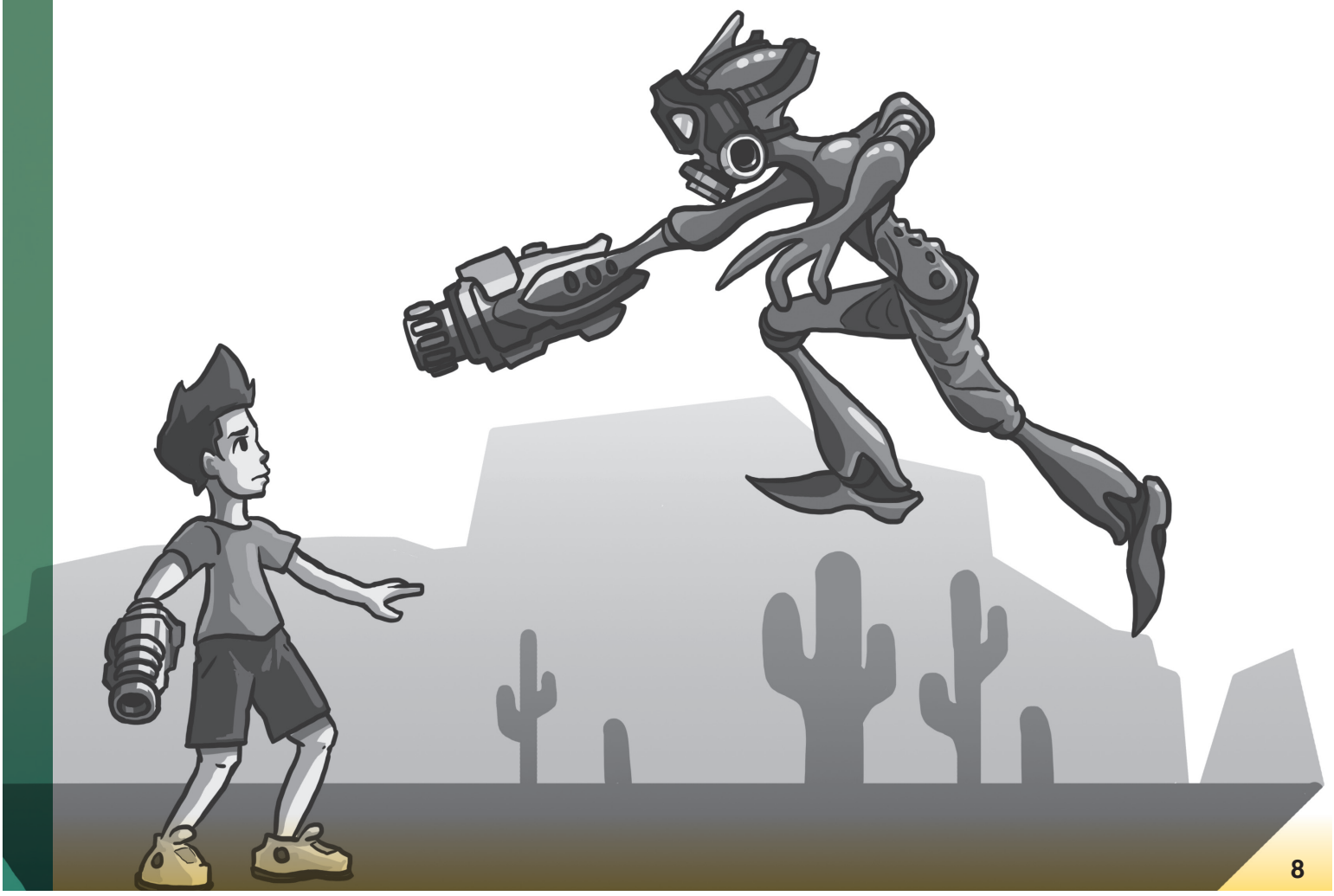
3-PS2-2. Make observations and/or measurements of an object's motion to provide evidence that a pattern can be used to predict future motion.

4-PS3-1. Use evidence to construct an explanation relating the speed of an object to the energy of that object.

4-ESS2-2. Analyze and interpret data from maps to describe patterns of Earth's features.

3-5-ETS1-2. Generate and compare multiple possible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

3-5-ETS1-3. Plan and carry out fair tests in which variables are controlled and failure points are considered to identify aspects of a model or prototype that can be improved.



FREE AUTHOR VISIT

THANKS FOR BRINGING MY BOOK INTO YOUR CLASSROOM!

I hope your students have had just as much fun reading it as I did writing it. One of the best things I get to do as an author is connect with classes that have read my book. If you've added Trapped in a Video Game to your classroom library or you've read it together as a class, I'd love to meet your students! Here's how:

1. Have your students complete the worksheet on the next page.

2. Upload your students' questions to dustinbradybooks.com/index.php/interview

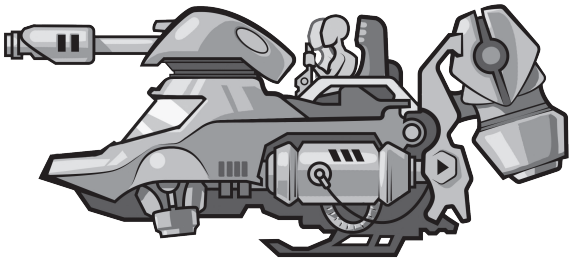
3. I'll record my answers and send back a private video just for your class.

The "visit" will be 100 percent free and won't require any technology beyond the ability to show a YouTube video. Can't wait to see what your students come up with!

— Dustin Brady



INTERVIEW AN AUTHOR



Name: _____

Grade: _____

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO INTERVIEW DUSTIN BRADY, AUTHOR OF TRAPPED IN A VIDEO GAME!

To be a great interviewer, let your curiosity lead you, avoid yes or no questions, and get creative. It's OK to cover the basics, but the best interviewers always try to think of at least one question that no one else has asked.

QUESTIONS ABOUT WRITING

Example: Where do you find inspiration for your stories?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAPPED IN A VIDEO GAME

Example: How did you decide what the Full Blast game would be like after Jesse gets trapped inside?

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Example: Do you have any pets? Would you rather be trapped in a video game or never play video games again?

5. _____

_____

6. _____

_____

WORKSHEET

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

Grade 3

Writing

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4
With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.6
With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Grade 4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.6
With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.

Grade 5

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.6
With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.

