

ROLE OF THE GAMES FOR DEVELOPING CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

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Abstract: This article discusses the role of games in critical and creative thinking and their role in our lives. Also, the types of games are introduced, and what mental games are effective are discussed.

Key words: Games, multiplayer, teamwork, creative thinking, players, sandbox, traditional education.

Introduction.

In an increasingly complex and fast-paced world, the ability to think critically and creatively is essential. These skills are not only vital for personal development but are also highly sought after by employers in various fields. One effective method for honing these abilities is through the use of games—both digital and analog. This article explores the significant role that games can play in fostering critical and creative thinking, supported by literature and scholarly research.

Main part.

Critical thinking involves the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in a logical and systematic way. It encompasses skills such as problem-solving, reasoning, and decision-making. According to Facione (2015), critical thinking is “the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information.” This definition underscores the importance of a methodical approach to understanding problems and making informed choices.

Creative thinking, on the other hand, is often defined as the ability to generate new and innovative ideas. It involves divergent thinking—exploring multiple solutions to a problem rather than following a linear path. Osborn (1963) emphasizes that creativity is about “the ability to put two and two together to make five” which highlights the value of unconventional connections in the creative process.

Games provide a rich environment for learning and engagement, allowing players to explore concepts, make decisions, and learn from experiences in a controlled setting. Research supports the assertion that games can enhance both critical and creative thinking.

Many games present players with complex problems or scenarios that require analytical thinking to solve. For instance, puzzle games like “Portal” or strategy-based games like “Civilization” challenge players to devise strategies and make calculated decisions to progress. A study by Gee (2003) highlights how game mechanics encourage deep thinking processes, as players must not only consider immediate impacts but also long-term consequences of their choices.

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Multiplayer games often require teamwork and communication, which can enhance critical thinking skills. Games like “Overcooked” or “Among Us” necessitate discussion, negotiation, and strategy development among players. According to Vygotsky’s (1978) social development theory, learning is inherently social, and collaborative problem-solving allows participants to consider diverse perspectives and refine their thinking processes.

Creative games, such as “Minecraft” or “LittleBigPlanet,” provide players with the freedom to explore and express their creativity in unique ways. These sandbox environments encourage players to experiment with different ideas and solutions without the fear of failure. As noted by Amabile (1996), intrinsic motivation and a supportive environment are key factors in fostering creativity, both of which are abundant in gameplay.

Serious games are designed specifically for educational purposes, targeting the development of critical and creative thinking skills. For example, simulations used in business schools allow students to make strategic decisions in a virtual environment, enhancing their analytical skills and encouraging innovative thinking. Research by Michael and Chen (2006) underscores the effectiveness of serious games in improving understanding and application of complex concepts.

The integration of games into traditional educational settings has shown to promote engagement and comprehension. The use of game mechanics in lesson plans can motivate students to learn and think critically. Deterding et al. (2011) suggest that game-based learning can lead to higher retention rates and better understanding of material, as students actively participate in their learning journey.

Conclusion.

Games play a multifaceted role in developing critical and creative thinking skills. They provide a stimulating environment where players can engage with complex problems, collaborate with others, and explore innovative solutions. As educational institutions and organizations increasingly recognize the value of these skills, integrating games into learning experiences may become essential. The combination of enjoyment and education that games offer can lead to improved cognitive abilities that are invaluable in today’s world.

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