

Is Gaming Good for the Mind?



Yahoo's "Plugged In" blog had an interesting review about some of the most recent research looking into popular video games and thinking skills, including research conducted through North Carolina State University and Georgia School of Technology that examined the qualities that [make a game good for the brain](#). Assistant Professor of Psychology at North Carolina State University Anne McLaughlin described the Boom Blox games, originally developed by Steven Spielberg for Electronic Arts (EA), as some of the best games for the development of brain skills. She depicts these games as having three important qualities: attention demand, novelty, and social interaction. A [follow-up study](#) also described the power of World Of Warcraft (WOW) for maintaining cognitive skills in the elderly, with improvement in spatial ability, memory, and attention.

While these studies are designed to work with the elderly, the same set of game qualities is seen as vital for the engagement of children's attention and learning. In the North Carolina State and George School of Technology studies, no efforts were being made to connect game-based learning to the real world, which is a basic principle in LearningWorks for Kids research.