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***Are You a Fortnite Addict?***

A scene from the popular game Fortnite: Battle Royale.CreditCreditEpic Games

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Do you, or have you ever, played Fortnite? Do any of your friends or peers at school play? What do you think of the game?

In “[Parenting the Fortnite Addict](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/30/well/family/parenting-the-fortnite-addict.html),” Lisa Damour writes:

Every so often a game comes along that conquers the hearts, minds and thumbs of gamers everywhere. Fortnite: Battle Royale is the latest victor in this category. According to a report last week from the market research firm SuperData, the game generated $223 million in March, and it begins a new season — with a new theme and a few other changes — on May 1.

Like a cross between Minecraft and the Hunger Games*,* Fortnite drops 100 competitors on an island and requires them to scavenge for weapons and other resources, build defensive structures and vanquish opponents in a quest to become the last player standing. The game itself is free and playable on game systems, computers and mobile phones alike, but players pay for accessories and costumes for their characters.

Not surprisingly, middle and high schools are finding themselves at odds with students who surreptitiously play the game throughout the day. The game is also popular with adults, including Major League Baseball players, who compellingly bring an element of the game into real life through victory dances on the field based on dances from the game. For parents bewildered by the sense that the game has swallowed their children, especially since the mobile phone version was released in late March, here’s some information that may help.

**It’s a Social Experience …**

While Fortnite can be played solo, it is often a social experience as friends can team up in pairs or fours. If they’re not together physically, they communicate — over FaceTime, a headset linked to a game system, or the like — to coordinate strategy, alert teammates to threats, root for one another and trade banter. …

**… But It Is Built to Be Addictive**

Fortnite incorporates much of what game designers know about how to ensure a captive audience. Some of what hooks players is obvious: it has quality graphics, a sense of humor and advances rapidly. But it also includes stealth habit-forming features, such as an element of luck that keeps players coming back for more. As with gambling, it’s hard to walk away if you believe that good fortune is always just around the corner.

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER -**  Read the entire article, then choose one question to respond to:

1.— For you, what are some of the benefits and drawbacks of playing Fortnite? Have you met friends or acquaintances online? Have you learned any skills, like teamwork, communication and spatial awareness? Do your playing habits prevent you from having other experiences or taking care of your responsibilities?

2.— Do you feel like the game is addictive? Why or why not? Are you or any of your friends Fortnite addicts?

3.— Is Fortnite a distraction at your school? Do students play it in class or during free time? If so, how does the administration deal with it, and do you think their response is appropriate?

4.— What do you think about the violence in the game? Is it suitable for young people? Why or why not?

5.— How do your parents feel about Fortnite? Based on what you learned from the article and your own experiences playing the game, do you think parents should set limits on it? Why or why not?