

# CHOICE BOARD

## "HOW ANIMAL CROSSING CONQUERED AMERICA" AND "A SWEET TREAT IN A TOUGH TIME"

Create a talk show in which you interview the creators of Candy Land and *Animal Crossing* about the games they developed and the impact those games have had on kids.

Write an article about the history of your favorite game.

Create your own board game. Will the aesthetic be like that of Candy Land and *Animal Crossing*, or something different? Sketch out your game, then create the board, make your playing cards and pieces, and play with your family.

A new version of Candy Land is being released, and you've been hired to help spread the news. Design an advertisement for social media that will get people excited to buy it.

In a well-organized essay, compare *Animal Crossing* with Candy Land. How are they similar? How are they different? Support your ideas with text evidence.

*\*This is the contest prompt that appears at the end of the story.*

Imagine that a documentary is being made about how games have helped people get through tough times. Design the movie poster for that documentary.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Go to Scope  
Online to listen to  
the words and  
definitions read  
aloud.

# Vocabulary

## "How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World"

1. **chaotic** (kay-OT-ik) *adjective*; Chaos (KAY-os) is a state of total disorder and confusion. If a squirrel got into your house and was running around in a panic, and your dog was chasing the squirrel and barking, and your parents were running around after the dog and the squirrel, and your sister was laughing, and your brother was crying—that would be chaos.

Something that is chaotic is in a state of complete disorder and confusion. Mornings can be chaotic when everyone in the family is rushing around trying to get ready for the day.

2. **fad** (fad) *noun*; A fad is something that is very popular for a short time. About six years ago, fidget spinners were a fad. About three years ago, flossing (the dance, not using dental floss) was a fad.
3. **Great Recession** (greyt rih-SESH-uhn) *noun*; A recession is a period of temporary economic decline—that is, a period when business activity is greatly reduced. During a recession, many people may lose their jobs, homes, and savings.

The Great Recession refers to a long, severe recession in the United States from 2007–2009. The Great Recession spread to other countries, some of which are still in a recession today.

4. **mundane** (muhn-DEYN) *adjective*; Something that is mundane is ordinary, dull, and common. Taking out the trash, doing the dishes, and waiting for the bus are all mundane activities.
5. **respectively** (rih-SPEK-tiv-lee) *adverb*; *Respectively* means "separately and in the same order as the items previously mentioned." If Bryan and Bailey like pepperoni and veggie pizza, respectively, Bryan likes pepperoni pizza and Bailey likes veggie pizza. If first and second place at the science fair went to Tia and George, respectively, Tia got first place and George got second place.
6. **serene** (suh-REEN) *adjective*; Something that is serene is calm and peaceful. Serene skies are clear and blue. If Anthony has a serene expression, he looks calm and untroubled.

## "A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time"

1. **bleak** (BLEEK) *adjective*; Something that is bleak lacks warmth, life, and cheer. Bleak weather is cold, damp, and unpleasant. A bleak room is empty and colorless. If a situation is bleak, it is bad and seems unlikely to improve.
2. **blissfully** (BLIS-fuhl-ee) *adverb*; The noun *bliss* means "complete joy and happiness." You might feel bliss biting into your favorite dessert or when your team wins a big game.  
  
If something is done blissfully, it is done in a way that shows complete joy and happiness. You might walk blissfully across a stage to collect an award you just won.  
  
*Blissfully* can also mean "in a way that causes joy and happiness." If your neighbor's dog barks for an hour straight, you might describe the quiet that follows as blissfully silent, because the silence makes you very happy.
3. **contagious** (kuhn-TEY-juhs) *adjective*; Something that is contagious is able to be passed from one person or animal to another. The flu is contagious; you can get it from someone else who has the flu. Sometimes laughter can be contagious; one person starts laughing and then pretty soon everyone else around them is laughing too.
4. **debut** (dey-BYOO) *noun or verb*; A debut is the first public appearance of something or someone. The first iPhone made its debut in 2007. You might make your acting debut in the school play this year.  
  
As a verb, *debut* means "to make a first public appearance" or "to present to the public for the first time." Taylor Swift might debut a song from an upcoming new album at a concert. You might wait for a party to debut your new shoes.
5. **eradicate** (ih-RAD-ih-kayt) *verb*; To eradicate something is to put an end to it or completely destroy it. Some people fear that digital books will eradicate the need for bookstores. Thanks to vaccines, many deadly diseases have been eradicated.

6. **transport** (trans-POHRT) *verb*; *Transport* means "to carry or move someone or something from one place to another." If your family moves, you might use a truck to transport your stuff to your new home.

*Transport* can also mean "to cause someone to imagine that they are in a different place or time; to carry someone away with intense, pleasant emotion." A certain song might transport you to the summer when you listened to that song over and over.

7. **ward** (wawrd) *noun*; As it is used in the article, *ward* means "a large room or group of rooms in a hospital that is shared by a number of patients who need a similar kind of care."

**Directions:** In the space below, list any other words from the articles whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

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## Vocabulary Practice

**Directions:** Respond to each prompt.

1. Describe your idea of a serene day. Where might you be? What might you be doing?

2. Would the landing of the first humans on Mars be a mundane event? Explain.

3. If Sam, Becca, and Joey play soccer, basketball, and tennis, respectively, who plays basketball?

**Directions:** Choose the best answer to each question.

4. Which is an example of a fad?

- a. drinking water
- b. bottle flipping

5. Which is a synonym for *transport*?

- a. delight
- b. disappoint

6. Which landscape is bleak?

- a. gray, rocky cliffs covered in fog
- b. a sunny meadow full of wildflowers

7. Which would you more likely want to eradicate from under your kitchen sink?

- a. cleaning supplies
- b. a colony of ants

**Directions:** For each pair of boldfaced words, circle the word that best completes the sentence.

8. The roads were **chaotic/serene**. Every intersection was jammed with drivers beeping their horns.
9. My favorite actor's new TV show **debuts/eradicates** this Thursday night.
10. Josh works in the emergency **ward/debut** of the hospital.
11. The babysitter smiled **blissfully/respectively** as the baby finally fell asleep.
12. Colds are **contagious/serene**, so I stayed home from school so as not to get my classmates sick.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Close-Reading Questions

### "How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World"

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1. In the introduction, author Mackenzie Carro writes that *Animal Crossing* "took the world by storm last spring." What does she mean? (figurative language)
2. According to Carro, what factors contributed to *Animal Crossing*'s success? (key ideas and details, cause and effect)
3. On page 26, Carro writes of *Animal Crossing*, "You don't play to win; you play to *play*. There are no dangerous storms to outrun, monstrous creatures to kill, battles to win, or high scores to obtain." What do these lines help readers understand about *Animal Crossing* and why people play it? (inference)
4. How does the information in the sidebar on page 27 contribute to the article? (text features)

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## Close-Reading Questions

### "A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time"

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1. How did a polio epidemic inspire the creation of Candy Land? (summarizing, key ideas)
2. How is Candy Land's aesthetic similar to that of *Animal Crossing*? (synthesis)
3. On page 27, Carro quotes Angelina on *Animal Crossing*: "I think for a lot of people it's a means of escape. They want to get away from the bad parts of the world right now." What line or lines in Talia Cowen's article express a similar idea about Candy Land? (synthesis)

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## **Critical-Thinking Questions**

### **"How *Animal Crossing* Conquered America" and "A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time"**

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1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of connecting with people virtually?
2. How might learning about the history of Candy Land be helpful to kids living in 2020?
3. How has Covid-19 changed the ways we play? Have these changes been negative? Positive? A mix of both?

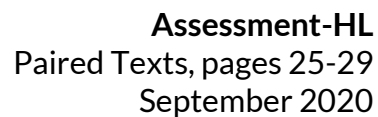


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paired Texts Quiz

**Directions:** Read “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World” and “A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time.” Then answer the questions below.

1. What is author Mackenzie Carro’s main purpose in writing “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World”?
  - A. to teach readers how to play *Animal Crossing*
  - B. to compare *Animal Crossing* to other simulation games
  - C. to explain the *Animal Crossing* craze and the effect the game had on people
  - D. to analyze why video games are popular
2. Which line best supports the answer you chose in question 1?
  - A. “For one thing, the game is easy.”
  - B. “[*Animal Crossing*] will be remembered as a game that helped millions stay connected and uplifted during a very difficult time.”
  - C. “*Animal Crossing* is not the first game to become popular in a difficult time.”
  - D. “In the game, each player creates a village on their own island of talking animals.”
3. Carro describes *Animal Crossing* as “gentle” (26). She supports this idea by \_\_\_\_\_. Choose TWO answers.
  - A. including a quote from an *Animal Crossing* player about how the game is “peaceful.”
  - B. explaining that *Animal Crossing* is social.
  - C. providing stats about how many people have purchased *Animal Crossing*.
  - D. explaining that the sounds and graphics of *Animal Crossing* are soothing.
4. Consider the section “An Instant Hit” in the article “A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time.” This section helps readers understand
  - A. why people like board games.
  - B. why Candy Land became so popular when it first came out.
  - C. why polio is so contagious.
  - D. why Candy Land is popular today.
5. On page 29, author Talia Cowen writes “They could visit a world where the worst thing that could happen was to get stuck in the Molasses Swamp for a turn or two.” She is saying that
  - A. Candy Land provided an escape and helped players take their minds off the difficulties in their lives.
  - B. Candy Land was a boring game.
  - C. Candy Land was a dangerous game.
  - D. Candy Land was messy.
6. Which statement can be supported by information in BOTH articles?
  - A. *Animal Crossing* was a popular game during the Covid-19 outbreak.
  - B. Playing video games can make us feel better.
  - C. Playing games can help people cope during difficult times.
  - D. Polio had a major impact on America in the 1900s.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Constructed-Response Questions

**Directions:** Write your answers in a well-organized response. Use the space provided or your own document or paper.

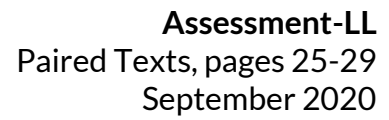
7. How does author Mackenzie Carro draw the reader in at the beginning of “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered The World”? Explain.
8. How does the information in the sidebar on page 27 contribute to both articles?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paired Texts Quiz

**Directions:** Read “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World” and “A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time.” Then answer the questions below.

1. What is author Mackenzie Carro’s main purpose in writing the article “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World”?
  - A. to teach readers how to play *Animal Crossing*
  - B. to compare *Animal Crossing* to other simulation games
  - C. to explain the *Animal Crossing* craze and the effect the game has had on people
  - D. to analyze why video games are popular
2. Which line best supports the answer you chose in question 1?
  - A. “For one thing, the game is easy.”
  - B. “[*Animal Crossing*] will be remembered as a game that helped millions stay connected and uplifted during a very difficult time.”
  - C. “*Animal Crossing* is not the first game to become popular in a difficult time.”
  - D. “In the game, each player creates a village on their own island of talking animals.”
3. On page 26, Carro describes *Animal Crossing* as “gentle.” Which lines best support this idea? Choose TWO answers.
  - A. “You hang out with animals and collect things. It’s a peaceful game.”
  - B. “Games are great at fixing our mood and reducing our stress and anxiety.”
  - C. “You can play it with other people.”
  - D. “Even the sounds and graphics are soothing.”
4. Consider the section “An Instant Hit” in the article “A Sweet Treat in a Tough Time.” This section helps readers understand
  - A. why people like board games.
  - B. why Candy Land became popular when it first came out.
  - C. why polio is contagious.
  - D. why Candy Land is popular today.
5. On page 29, author Talia Cowen writes “They could visit a world where the worst thing that could happen was to get stuck in the Molasses Swamp for a turn or two.” She is saying that
  - A. Candy Land provided an escape and helped players take their minds off the difficulties in their lives.
  - B. Candy Land was a boring game.
  - C. Candy Land was a dangerous game.
  - D. Candy Land was messy.
6. Both “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World” and “A Sweet Treat During a Tough Time” support the idea that
  - A. *Animal Crossing* was a popular game during the Covid-19 outbreak.
  - B. playing video games can make us feel better.
  - C. games can help people cope during difficult times.
  - D. polio had a large impact on America in the 1900s.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Finding and Using Text Evidence

**Directions:** Read “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World.” Then complete the activity below.

**Imagine that you are writing a paragraph explaining how *Animal Crossing* helps people feel connected to one another during the Covid-19 outbreak.**

**1. Which of the following would be the BEST topic sentence for your paragraph?**

- ☐ A. People have taken up new hobbies since the outbreak of Covid-19.
- ☐ B. *Animal Crossing* helps people feel connected.
- ☐ C. Because you can play *Animal Crossing* virtually with others, the game helps people feel closer while isolated at home due to Covid-19.

**2. Which information from the article BEST supports the sentence you chose in Question 1?**

- ☐ A. “To pass the time, some of us took up puzzles and baking.” (p. 26)
- ☐ B. “In real life we may not be able to gather in large groups, but in *Animal Crossing*, groups all over America held virtual backyard barbecues, birthday parties, graduation ceremonies, and even weddings.” (p. 27)
- ☐ C. “Even the sounds and graphics are soothing.” (p. 26)

**3. Which of the following BEST explains why the text evidence you chose in Question 2 is relevant?**

- ☐ A. It provides examples of ways people socialize through the *Animal Crossing* platform.
- ☐ B. It explains how the game relieves stress and anxiety.
- ☐ C. It provides an example of how people have passed the time during the Covid-19 outbreak.

4. Choose the piece of text evidence that BEST supports the statement below. Then complete the sentence to explain your choice.

Statement:

***Animal Crossing* has been extremely popular and successful.**

- ☐ A. "One writer from *The New York Times* described the game's aesthetic, or look, as a 'warm hug.'" (pp. 26-27).
- ☐ B. "Eleven million copies were sold within 11 days of the game's release on March 20, making it the biggest launch of any Nintendo Switch game ever." (p. 26)
- ☐ C. "The first version of *Animal Crossing* was released in Japan in 2001." (p. 26)

I chose \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

5. Choose the TWO pieces of text evidence from the article that best support the statement below.

Statement:

**Playing games is good for your health.**

- ☐ A. "Research has shown that some games that challenge the brain, like chess, can help improve memory and overall brain function." (p. 27)
- ☐ B. "*Animal Crossing: New Horizons* is not the first simulation game—it's not even the first version of *Animal Crossing*." (p. 26)
- ☐ C. "Anytime she wants, she can shake down a crisp, red apple for herself." (p. 25)
- ☐ D. "As Dr. Rachel Kowert, a psychologist who studies gaming, explains, 'Games are great at fixing our mood and reducing our stress and anxiety.'" (p. 26)

Select one piece of INCORRECT evidence from above and explain why it does NOT support the statement

Evidence \_\_\_\_\_ does not support the statement because \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Choose the paragraph that correctly uses text evidence from the article in the form of a direct quotation.**

- ☐ A. *Animal Crossing* is different from many video games. In her article “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World,” author Mackenzie Carro writes, “You don’t play to win; you play to *play*” (26). In other words, *Animal Crossing* is not competitive and intense like most games; it is enjoyable and relaxing.
- ☐ B. In her article “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World,” author Mackenzie Carro writes, “You don’t play to win; you play to *play*.”
- ☐ C. *Animal Crossing* is different from many video games. “You don’t play to win; you play to *play*” (26). In other words, *Animal Crossing* is not competitive and intense like most games; it is enjoyable and relaxing.

**Explain why the two answers you did NOT choose are incorrect.**

**7. Choose the paragraph that correctly uses text evidence from the article in the form of a paraphrase.**

- ☐ A. People turn to games for comfort in times of crisis. For example, in “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World,” Mackenzie Carro notes that during the Great Recession, video gaming equipment sales spiked (26). In other words, the playing of video games increased, despite—and perhaps because of—the tough economic times.
- ☐ B. People turn to games for comfort in times of crisis. During the Great Recession, video gaming equipment sales spiked (26). In other words, the buying and playing of video games increased, despite—and perhaps because of—the tough times.
- ☐ C. People turn to games for comfort. “In 2008, in the midst of the Great Recession, both video games and video gaming equipment experienced a spike in sales” (p. 26).

**Explain why the two answers you did NOT choose are incorrect.**

**8. Now it's your turn. In the box below, write a paragraph explaining how to have a healthy relationship with video games. Be sure to include:**

- **a topic sentence**
- **at least one piece of text evidence in the form of a paraphrase or a direct quotation**
- **a sentence that states how that evidence supports your central idea**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Finding and Using Text Evidence

**Directions:** Read “How *Animal Crossing* Conquered the World.” Then complete the activity below.

- 1. Choose the TWO pieces of text evidence from the article that best support the statement below.**

**Statement:**  
**Playing games is good for your health.**

- ☐ A. “Research has shown that some games that challenge the brain, like chess, can help improve memory and overall brain function.” (p. 27)
- ☐ B. “*Animal Crossing: New Horizons* is not the first simulation game—it’s not even the first version of *Animal Crossing*.” (p. 26)
- ☐ C. “Anytime she wants, she can shake down a crisp, red apple for herself.” (p. 25)
- ☐ D. “As Dr. Rachel Kowert, a psychologist who studies gaming, explains, ‘Games are great at fixing our mood and reducing our stress and anxiety.’” (p. 26)

- 2. Choose the ONE piece of text evidence that best supports the statement below. Then complete the sentence to explain your choice.**

**Statement:**  
***Animal Crossing* can bring people closer together.**

- ☐ A. “In the game, each player creates a village on their own island of talking animals.” (p. 25)
- ☐ B. “Multiplayer games that offer the chance to socialize and collaborate with others, like *Animal Crossing* and *Dungeons and Dragons*, can strengthen bonds between friends.” (p. 27)
- ☐ C. “The first version of *Animal Crossing* was released in Japan in 2001.” (p. 26)

I chose \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Read the lines from the article that appear below. Then write a statement that they all support.**

**Statement:**

- A.** “During the Great Depression in the 1930s, when millions of Americans lost their jobs, families entertained themselves at home with affordable board games like Monopoly and Sorry!” (p. 26)
- B.** “And during a time when something as simple as going to the store had become scary and dangerous, the ‘warm hug’ of *Animal Crossing* was exactly what many of us needed.” (p. 27)
- C.** “In 2008, in the midst of the Great Recession, both video games and video gaming equipment experienced a spike in sales.” (p. 26)

# Games Contest

In a well-organized essay, compare *Animal Crossing* with Candy Land. How are they similar? How are they different? Support your ideas with text evidence.

Send your essay to Games Contest. Three winners will each get *The Game Masters of Garden Place* by Denis Markell.

## Entries will be judged on:

- ✓ a clearly stated central idea
- ✓ good organization and transitions
- ✓ use of supporting text evidence
- ✓ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's email: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents to my participation in this contest.

**Parent's or legal guardian's signature:**

X \_\_\_\_\_

Include this form with the entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY October 20, 2020.**

\*Entries must be submitted by a legal resident of the U.S. age 18 and older, who is the teacher, parent, or guardian of the student.  
Please submit .docs and PDFs. Google docs cannot be accepted.