

TWO FAMOUS BOARD GAMES

In 1929 many people in the United States suddenly lost their jobs. This was the beginning of what Americans call the Great Depression, and it lasted for about four years. During the Great Depression, two of the most famous board games in the world were invented.

The Game of _____

One man who lost his job in 1929 was an architect called Alfred Butts. He loved games and played chess and dice games. But he wanted to invent a word game in which you needed luck and skill to win. He developed a game called Lexico, in which you used letters to make words. You got points for the number of letters and the kind of letters you used. There was no board. But when Mr. Butts took his idea to different toy companies they weren't interested.

At the end of the 1930s, crossword puzzles became very popular in the United States. Mr. Butts made some changes to his Lexico game. He designed a board, with 225 square spaces. He put the letters onto little counters. Each player got seven letters per turn to play with. Different letters were worth different points. With the help of another businessman called James Brunot, Alfred Butts changed the rules and the name of his game. The game became very popular and soon spread around the world.

The movie stars Mel Gibson and Keanu Reeves, the rock star Sting and the Queen of England all play it today. This

board game is now so popular that more than 100 million sets have been sold since 1931. It is available for sale in over 120 countries and in 29 different languages.

The Game of _____

This board game was also invented in 1934 by an unemployed American called Charles B. Darrow. It was played on a board, with a dice and counters. The idea of the game was to move your counter around the squares on the board and buy property. When you had property you could win money. The winner of the game was the person who won the most money at the end.

When he first showed it to a toy company, they also refused it. They said it had too many design errors. But Mr. Darrow didn't give up. He worked with a friend and made 5,000 sets of his game by hand. People loved it, and the toy company changed its mind. In 1935 it was the most popular game in America.

Over 200 million sets of this game have been sold around the world. The most expensive square on the game board is called The Boardwalk in America, Mayfair in the United Kingdom, Rue de la Paix in France and Schlossallee in Germany. The Parker Brothers company prints about 50 billion dollars worth of play money for this game every year. The game is published in 26 languages and available in 80 countries around the world.

Reading Activities

1. Read the article "Two American Board Games". Can you identify the two games?
2. Complete the sentences with the name of the game (if the sentence is true for both games, write the two names) Which game...
 - a) Was invented by a man who didn't have a job? _____
 - b) Didn't have a board at the beginning? _____
 - c) Uses money? _____
 - d) Uses a system of points? _____
 - e) Was refused by a toy company at first? _____
 - f) Can last a long time? _____
 - g) Changed its name? _____
 - h) Uses counters? _____

Games vocabulary I – Parts of a game

Fill in the blanks with the words.

joystick	console	board	counter	dice	button	card
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- a) Press the X _____ to pause the game.
- b) The game of chess is played on a _____.
- c) Move your _____ around the board.
- d) To save your game, insert a memory card into slot 1 of the game _____.
- e) Roll the _____. Whoever rolls highest goes first.
- f) Take a _____ from the deck and read what it says.
- g) To control your player, use either the keyboard or the _____.

Which of the above sentences is for 1) a board game? 2) a computer game?

Games Vocabulary II – Expressions in a game

Jumbled expressions. Each line contains two different expressions connected with games. The words are all mixed up. Unscramble the words to make the different expressions. In what game would you use the expressions?

the check dice roll mate

a your it's up turn pick card

_____.
_____.

go go a miss again

_____.
_____.

which why counter black is do get your I always?

_____?
_____ ?

I no win cheating

_____!
_____!

over start game again

_____.
_____.

Invent a classroom game

Work in groups of three or four. You are going to design a game for another group.

Here are the rules.

You can only use material that you have in or near the classroom.

The game has to be for a group of three or four players.

You must write the rules for the game in English on a piece of paper.

The game must be simple.

Read more about games

Go to these websites to find out more information about Scrabble and Monopoly. Each site has information and online activities that you can do.

www.mattelscrabble.com and www.monopoly.com