The History of Gaming

PONG

The first video games were single-player games made with a **cathode ray tube**. They were only found in research labs and universities. Things changed in the 1970s with games such as Pong. The success of these games sparked an interest in home gaming. Gaming has become one of the most popular activities in the world.

1970s

In 1972, the first home console was released called the Magnavox Odyssey. It wasn't very successful but gave a starting point for later consoles such as the Atari 2600 in 1977. Before this, you could only play games that were preloaded onto the computer or console. It was the first, popular system that allowed users to change **game cartridges** so that different games could be played. It was a huge success and was the beginning of how we play games today.

1980s

During the 1980s, people started to have home computers. They became a platform for games. This was the time of games such as Pac-Man, Donkey Kong and Space Invaders. They were simple and fun so everyone enjoyed playing them.

1990s

Some of the most famous consoles and games were released in the 1990s. Early in the decade, Nintendo released the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, or SNES for short, which became immensely popular. It followed the successful Sega console. These consoles introduced players to games such as Super Mario World and Sonic the Hedgehog.

Graphics became 3D in the 1990s!

2000s

In the 2000s, the PlayStation 2, Xbox and Nintendo GameCube were even more powerful than those that came before. Games began to push the limits of what was possible with graphics and sound. Many games included a morality system where the player's choices changed how the story of the game would unfold.

Present Day

Today, gaming is bigger than ever with consoles such as the PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X and Nintendo Switch. These consoles offer players an immersive gaming experience with virtual reality, or VR, and motion controls being used. Graphics are very realistic and make games come to life.
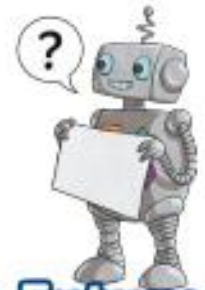
The Future

Glossary

cathode ray tube:
An early display device that made simple images appear on a screen.

game cartridges:
A cassette-like computer chip that holds data for a video game.

We can expect to see advanced VR technology that can create even more immersive worlds. VR will allow players to feel as though they were really inside the game.

Artificial intelligence, known as AI, would make games extremely exciting. Imagine a game where the AI learns from the way you play and adapts, making the game experience different for every player!

Questions

1. What made the Atari 2600 different? Tick one.

   ☐ You could change the game cartridges.
   ☐ Games were 3D.
   ☐ It used artificial intelligence.
   ☐ You could play it at home.

2. Draw **four** lines and match the events to the time periods.

gaming graphics became 3D		2000s
Space Invaders was released		The Future
games used a morality system		1980s
games using AI		1990s

3. Underline **one** word in the sentence below that means the same as 'extremely'.
   Early in the decade, Nintendo released the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, or SNES for short, which became immensely popular.

4. Which games consoles could you buy in the 2000s? Tick **two**.

   ☐ Xbox Series X
   ☐ Nintendo Switch
   ☐ Nintendo GameCube
   ☐ PlayStation

5. What does a 'morality system' do?

6. What technology can 'create even more realistic and immersive virtual worlds'?

   _____

7. Summarise how the popularity of gaming has changed over the years.

   _____

   _____

   _____

8. What do you think could be the biggest change that might happen in gaming in the future?