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Effects of Gender and Type of Board Game on 4-year-olds Engagement in Board Games

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates 4-year-old children's engagement while playing two different board games. The purpose of this study is to determine how engaged children are during the playtime. Questions guiding the study were: does gender influence children's engagement in the game? And does the type of game that they are playing make a difference in children's engagement? There is numerous research about children's engagement in the classroom and free play, but the studies that measure children's engagement in board games are very few. This study examines which game is more engaging and whether gender shows any differences. The data was collected as a part of another study that examined the effects of playing Robot Turtles on children's sequencing skills. As a part of the original study the children were videotaped while playing these board games. The current study will use those videos to examine the research questions. Two videos were transcribed and coded to measure children's engagement during the game play. The researcher developed a checklist, based on the videos and the literature, to measure the children's engagement during the play. The videos were chosen based on the gender of the children who were playing the game as well as the games that they were playing. There are two boys and two girls in each video and each video represents a different game. The preliminary results show that the gender influences the amount of time that children are engaged in the game with girls being more engaged than boys. Also, Robot Turtle seems to be more engaging than Candy Land.