



Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love

By Mark Schlichting

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What makes an interactive experience compelling for children? What turns a simple click or tap into a magical interchange? Mark Schlichting's book, *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design*, answers these questions, and more, with a deep dive into the multiple factors needed to create award-winning games and activities that children will love and come back to.

With insights, research, and practical knowledge gathered during over thirty years of designing award-winning games, this book is the bible of interactive design for children. It is a practical book that discusses the physiological and psychological dynamics of attention, the value of intrinsic play, and strategies to invent activities that support kids' engagement, entertainment, and learning.

It helps designers to better understand:

- - The nature of play and how to recognize and support its presence.
- - Over 30 natural play patterns with applied examples in games and toys.
- - Learning theories, especially as they relate to optimum engagement.
- - How to connect with a specific audience by understanding children's ages and developmental stages.
- - Animation tips, tricks, and techniques for getting and holding attention.
- - How to keep games alive by using the many varieties of **surprise**.
- - How to maximize the impact of audio design in interactive experiences.
- - How to create character and avatar designs that kids will love, use, and relate to.
- - How to work with creative teams and clients to make the best products for kids.

Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design features real-world stories, practical methods, tips, and design secrets that user experience practitioners and children's designers need to ensure that the products they create are successful and engaging for kids. It addresses all aspects of children's design in depth, and it is packed with hundreds of full color photographs, screenshots, illustrations, and effects that use many of the design principles outlined in the book, providing a

look that practices what it preaches and teaches. Written in accessible style, it offers insights and inspiration to parents, designers, educators, and anyone looking to create content that will be an immediate hit with kids.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book must be in every children's interactive designer's library. In fact, *every* interactive designer should read it...a few times."

--**Warren Buckleitner, Ph.D.**, Editor, *Children's Technology Review*

"TeachersWithApps has had the honor and privilege of working directly with Mark Schlichting on several projects. He brings a wealth of knowledge, insight, and passion to everything he touches. Every page of Mark's new book brings another 'aha moment,' and I thought I knew a bit about children's digital space. This book is the bible and a must read for anyone involved in any area related to children, education, and technology."

--**Jayne Clare**, Co-Founder, TeachersWithApps

"Mark Schlichting's new book, *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design*, is a fantastic resource-the best I've ever seen-for interactive designers and others who want to understand play and learning. Mark is a master creator of great interactive experiences. He's dazzled us for decades with his really funny, endearing products. Now we can learn how he does it. Mark is thorough, precise, and incredibly generous to share his secrets of success. Don't miss this book if you want to create great games children will love. It's a classic that teachers and others should have."

--**Ann H. McCormick**, Founder of The Learning Company and Co-Founder of Learning Circle Kids

Review

"Fortunately for us, Mark Schlichting has created this marvelous book. By understanding and thoughtfully explaining what children do in the Kingdom of Play, and how and why they do it, Mark has provided a wonderful resource to those of us who would create fresh, invigorating playthings."

--**Jesse Schell**, CEO, Schell Games; Distinguished Professor of the Practice of Entertainment Technology, Carnegie Mellon University; author of *The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses*

"Mark Schlichting's book, *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design*, is the magnum opus of a creative lifetime, full of usable details framed in engaging and visually captivating formats. His book pioneers the blend of ever present technology with culture-enhancing guidance for the next generation of play-savvy designers. Belongs on every kids' play/game designer's bedside table."

--**Stuart Brown, M.D.**, Founder and President, The National Institute for Play; author of *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*

Review

"Children play in order to have fun, not to learn; but learning is the side effect that, from an evolutionary perspective, is play's purpose. In this book, Mark Schlichting reveals a remarkably sophisticated and accessible understanding of play, learning, and children, including differences among children related to age, gender, culture, and personality. This book will go a long way toward connecting game designers to the minds of children."

--**Peter Gray, Ph.D.**, Research Professor of Developmental Psychology, Boston College; author of *Free*

to Learn: Why Releasing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self-Reliant, and Better Students for Life.

"For over 25 years, Mark Schlichting has been an indispensable voice in children's media. To those of us who've had the pleasure to know him, he has been a voice of wisdom and reason. To those lucky children who have discovered the products he's created, his voice has been one of playfulness, surprise, and supreme silliness. In *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design*, Mark sets out the principles that have animated his work, starting with the deepest respect for the power and passion children bring to their play, and following up with a fierce determination to create digital spaces where that play flourishes. We will all benefit from the clear, well-argued, and generous way he shares his wisdom with the next generation of designers."

--**Scot Osterweil**, Creative Director, the Education Arcade, MIT

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Louetta Cantrell:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be change about what going on or details even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe may update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know what type you should start with. This *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love* is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Wendy Clark:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With looking at you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world could share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their own reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the information about something that you need illustration. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their proficiency in writing, they also doing some analysis before they write with their book. One of them is this *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love*.

Steve Henry:

The reserve with title *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love* has lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This book exist new expertise the information that exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world at this point. That is important to yo7u to understand how the improvement of the world. This specific book will bring you within new era of the the positive effect. You can read the e-book on your own smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

Chuck Bryson:

Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love can be one of your starter books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort that will put every word into pleasure arrangement in writing Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love but doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource details that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can drawn you into completely new stage of crucial imagining.

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