



Are Mario, YouTube & My Little Pony killing my Daughters Imagination?

Description

I am a huge advocate of the [benefit of games](#). They are amazing and I would quite happily argue with anyone shouting about games and violence, or games being bad for kids. I am also not against T.V. My youngest has amazing shape recognition, counting and even spelling and maths abilities – at three – thanks in large part to Team UmiZoomi!

However, I have started to notice a slightly concerning issue with my eldest daughter. She seems to have no imagination any more, or at least a very reduced functionality one!

She loves playing *Super Mario* on the DS, a great game by many people's reckoning (I may be one of the few people who never really liked Mario). As video games go, it is pretty harmless, unless you are part of the Mushroom Protection League. However, one thing that it does not do, is really allow for imagination. It is not a creative game, nor is it meant to be.

She also loves watching programmes like *My Little Pony*. This is again a show that is devoid of any need for imagination or learning.

Finally, she loves watching *YouTube*. Her choice of video is the concern. She likes to watch two main types of video. Opening videos and videos of people playing with toys. The first is a strange concept for me. You watch people open up surprise eggs or blind bags. She even has her own channel where she does the same.

The other, people playing with toys is the most concerning though. She watches people playing with the toys that she already owns. When I asked her why, she said "Because they tell me how to play with my toys".

My heart sank.

So I tried an experiment yesterday. I asked her to roll four dice from our *Rory's Story Cubes* and then draw a picture inspired by the dice or a little story. She couldn't do it. I had to actually show her how to make a story up, and when I had done, she just copied it! My story was about a princess who had lost her crown and was helped by a friendly bee to find it. Hers was about a prince wearing a crown who

had lost her bee!

That is not to say she can't use her imagination, but it seems that she needs to really warm it up to get it going after playing games or watching videos that require none. It makes me consider imagination in a different way, like a muscle. It needs exercise to stay strong and if you are doing something that does not use it for any length of time, it needs to be warmed up first.

I need to get her into [Minecraft!](#)

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