Educational Relevancy | SPATIAL AWARENESS

PORTAL 2: PARENT IMPACT GUIDE

Age 10+ | 1-3 Hours

“There’s a lot of challenge in trying to figure out how as the player is moving through this, in terms of a story space, how can you make a gameplay space out of this and so they can travel through it in an interesting way.”

-- Jeep Barnett, Designer and Engineer, Valve

ABOUT PORTAL 2

Portal 2 and its predecessor, Portal, are arguably among the most popular games today. Players take the role of Chell, a “test subject” in the mysterious Aperture Science facility and attempt to outwit Aperture’s computerized guardian, GLaDOS, and her hazard-filled “test chambers” by placing pairs of portals. These portals follow one simple rule: anything that goes into one portal comes out of the other. These games are widely admired for their unique puzzles and quirky brand of dark humor. For more information, visit: http://bit.ly/cgiportal2

THEME FOR THIS GUIDE: Spatial Awareness

In Portal 2, portals are used to navigate obstacles filled with deadly hazards inside the mysterious Aperture Science Laboratories. In order to escape Aperture Science and GLaDOS, players must apply the laws of physics to move through the game space in unusual ways. Developing an understanding of the surrounding environment enhances creativity and sense of self. It provides the player with a deeper sense of place when he or she is able to recognize the interconnectedness between space, contexts, identity, and the ways in which one engages with the real and virtual worlds.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Challenge your child to play Portal 2 and manage space wisely. She or he will begin to learn important ideas about spatial awareness, that you can help him or her apply to life. Consider what the benefits of spatial awareness are and why it is beneficial. Use this guide and the Player Impact Guide to become familiar with Portal 2.

DISCUSS THE GAME

… the gameplay

• What can you do with portals? [+1]
• Other than portals, what tools do you have to move objects (or yourself)? Which tools are more useful? [+2]
• Did you ever move yourself, or an object, into a place you could not get yourself in or out of? [+2]

… the game’s impact

• What would be the benefits of having this tool in real life? What could you use it for? [+3]
• Do objects in Portal 2 move the same way they would outside of the game? Why? [+3]

INTERACT WITH THE GAME

• Have your child pick two game achievements and describe how they were earned and what they mean. [+1]
• Have your child setup two challenges, and watch as they complete them. [+2]
• Play the game yourself, and complete the “Game Basics” section of the player Impact Guide. [+2]
• Solve one challenge that your child sets up for you to complete with their help. [+2]

SHARE THE GAME

• Post a positive reflection on the CGI Facebook page: http://facebook.com/gamesandimpact [+2]
• Engage in conversations with other parents about your experience using the guide and playing the game. [+2]
• Host a “Game Slam” event, using these and other challenge questions you create. [+3]

Family Challenge: Play the game in cooperative mode with your child. Take a screencast of something you two can do together that cannot be done with a single player. Post it to YouTube, and share the link on the Center for Games & Impact Facebook page at http://facebook.com/gamesandimpact.