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Facebook users in Scrabulous SOS

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19th January, 2008

THE ARTICLE

The owners of the world famous word game Scrabble have asked Facebook to remove its online version of the game. Representatives from toy makers Mattel and Hasbro have told Facebook that its Scrabulous game was a "gross copyright and trademark infringement" and they want it shut down. Scrabulous provides over 2.4 million Scrabble addicts around the world a way to play each other. It is Facebook's most popular game but it is an almost identical replica of the 70-year-old board game Scrabble. Hasbro sold the rights to put Scrabble online to another company last year. This means there could be a big court battle over who can and who cannot publish the game on the Internet. There is big money to be made online either from selling it or from advertising revenues.

Scrabble has been one of the most successful games in toy history. Scrabulous was created in the summer of 2007 by two big Scrabble fans, Indian brothers Rajat Agarwalla, 26, and Jayant, 21. It is now a runaway success and a huge money-spinner for Rajat and Jayant. Over half a million people play it every day. The threat to take it off the Web has made many users angry. In just one day, more than 13,000 joined the Save Scrabulous group on Facebook. Thousands of people have written to Mattel and Hasbro to ask them to let Facebook keep the game on its site. Some people have called for a boycott of the game makers' products. Others said the dispute will ruin the reputations of Mattel and Hasbro. Neither Facebook nor the Agarwalla brothers have so far commented on the disagreement.

WARM-UPS

1. WORD GAMES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about word games. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

owners / games / toy makers / copyright / trademark / addicts / advertising / Scrabble / toy history / runaway successes / Facebook / boycotts / reputations

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. ADDICTS: Talk with your partner(s) about these addictions. Are you addicted to any of them? Rank your addiction: 10 = total addict, 1 = no interest. Change partners and share your findings.

- a game / puzzle
- TV
- computers
- shopping
- love
- English
- a sport
- partying

4. GAMES: Talk with your partner(s) about which of these kinds of games you like and have played. Agree on the best and worst three. Change partners and share your findings.

- video games
- board games
- pencil and paper games
- playground games
- role play games
- online games
- kids games
- party games
- card games
- ball games

5. WORD: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'word'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. LET'S PLAY: Play a few word games in class (Hangman, word jumbles, etc). Is there a word game from your own country you could play? After you have finished, discuss which ones you liked and disliked.

7. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A **strongly** believes copyright should no longer exist in the 21st Century; Student B **strongly** believes copyright is more important today than ever before. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Facebook users used Morse Code online to escape an emergency. | T / F |
| b. A toy company wants Facebook to remove a game called Scrabble. | T / F |
| c. At least 2.4 million people are addicted to the game Scrabulous. | T / F |
| d. Scrabulous is a real online money-spinner. | T / F |
| e. Scrabble is one of the most successful toys of the past 7 decades. | T / F |
| f. Scrabulous was created by two brothers from Indiana in the USA. | T / F |
| g. More than 500,000 people play Scrabulous online every day. | T / F |
| h. Facebook has issued several press releases about Mattel's request. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. remove | a. enthusiasts |
| 2. version | b. copy |
| 3. gross | c. possibility |
| 4. infringement | d. argument |
| 5. replica | e. edition |
| 6. fans | f. out and out |
| 7. threat | g. good names |
| 8. boycott | h. take off |
| 9. dispute | i. avoid |
| 10. reputations | j. breaking of the law |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. the world | a. to another company |
| 2. a gross copyright and trademark | b. many users angry |
| 3. Hasbro sold the rights to put Scrabble online | c. made online |
| 4. This means there could be a big court | d. toy history |
| 5. There is big money to be | e. money-spinner |
| 6. one of the most successful games in | f. battle |
| 7. It is now a runaway success and a huge | g. of Mattel and Hasbro |
| 8. The threat to take it off the Web has made | h. infringement |
| 9. people have called for a boycott of the | i. famous word game |
| 10. the dispute will ruin the reputations | j. game makers' products |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The owners of the world _____ word game Scrabble have asked Facebook to remove its online _____ of the game. Representatives from toy makers Mattel and Hasbro have told Facebook that its Scrabulous game was a "_____ copyright and trademark infringement" and they want it shut down. Scrabulous provides over 2.4 million Scrabble _____ around the world a way to play each other. It is Facebook's most popular game but it is an almost _____ replica of the 70-year-old board game Scrabble. Hasbro sold the _____ to put Scrabble online to another company last year. This means there could be a big _____ battle over who can and who cannot publish the game on the Internet. There is big money to be made online either from selling it or from advertising _____.

*rights**gross**identical**revenues**famous**court**version**addicts*

Scrabble has been one of the _____ successful games in toy history. Scrabulous was created in the summer of 2007 by two big Scrabble _____, Indian brothers Rajat Agarwalla, 26, and Jayant, 21. It is now a runaway _____ and a huge money-spinner for Rajat and Jayant. Over half a million people play it every day. The _____ to take it off the Web has made many users angry. In just one day, more than 13,000 _____ the Save Scrabulous group on Facebook. Thousands of people have written to Mattel and Hasbro to ask them to let Facebook keep the game on its site. Some people have _____ for a boycott of the game makers' products. Others said the dispute will _____ the reputations of Mattel and Hasbro. Neither Facebook nor the Agarwalla brothers have so far _____ on the disagreement.

*threat**success**commented**joined**ruin**most**called**fans*

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The owners of the _____ game Scrabble have asked Facebook to remove its _____ game. Representatives from toy makers Mattel and Hasbro have told Facebook that its Scrabulous game was a "gross copyright and _____ " and they want it shut down. Scrabulous provides over 2.4 million Scrabble _____ world a way to play each other. It is Facebook's most popular game but it is an almost _____ the 70-year-old board game Scrabble. Hasbro sold the rights to put Scrabble online to another company last year. This means there could _____ over who can and who cannot publish the game on the Internet. There is big money to be made online _____ advertising revenues.

Scrabble has _____ successful games in toy history. Scrabulous was created in the summer of 2007 by _____, Indian brothers Rajat Agarwalla, 26, and Jayant, 21. It is now a runaway success and _____ for Rajat and Jayant. Over half a million people play it every day. The threat to take it off the Web has made many users angry. _____, more than 13,000 joined the Save Scrabulous group on Facebook. Thousands of people have written to Mattel and Hasbro _____ Facebook keep the game on its site. Some people have _____ the game makers' products. Others said the dispute will _____ of Mattel and Hasbro. Neither Facebook nor the Agarwalla brothers have so far commented on the disagreement.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'word'** and **'game'**.

word	game

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • world • gross • addicts • identical • rights • big money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history • fans • runaway • angry • boycott • ruin
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STUDENT WORD GAME SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about word games in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
 - b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'word games'?
 - c) Do you like playing word games?
 - d) What do you think of Facebook?
 - e) Do you think Facebook should take Scrabulous off its site?
 - f) What games are you addicted, or have you been addicted, to?
 - g) Who do you think will win the court battle?
 - h) What board games do you like?
 - i) What do you think of copyright laws?
-

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Would you be worried if you were in the boss of Facebook's shoes?
- c) What do you think is the most successful toy in history?
- d) Has the Internet ever made you angry?
- e) Would you join an SOS group to save your favourite Internet game/page/forum...?
- f) Do you think people will boycott Mattel products? Will Mattel care?
- g) Is it good that people can use Internet sites to change things or get things done?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the boss of Facebook?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

The owners of the (1) _____ famous word game Scrabble have asked Facebook to remove its online (2) _____ of the game. Representatives from toy makers Mattel and Hasbro have told Facebook that its Scrabulous game was a "(3) _____ copyright and trademark infringement" and they want it shut down. Scrabulous provides over 2.4 million Scrabble addicts around the world a way to play (4) _____ other. It is Facebook's most popular game but it is an almost identical replica of the 70-year-old board game Scrabble. Hasbro sold the rights to put Scrabble online (5) _____ another company last year. This means there could be a big court battle over who can and who cannot publish the game on the Internet. There is big money to be made online (6) _____ from selling it or from advertising revenues.

Scrabble has been one of the most successful games (7) _____ toy history. Scrabulous was created in the summer of 2007 (8) _____ two big Scrabble fans, Indian brothers Rajat Agarwalla, 26, and Jayant, 21. It is now a runaway success and a huge money-spinner for Rajat and Jayant. Over half a million people play it every day. The threat to (9) _____ it off the Web has made many users angry. In just one day, more than 13,000 joined the Save Scrabulous group on Facebook. Thousands of people have written to Mattel and Hasbro to ask them to let Facebook keep the game on its site. Some people have called (10) _____ a boycott of the game makers' products. Others said the dispute will (11) _____ the reputations of Mattel and Hasbro. Neither Facebook nor the Agarwalla brothers have so far commented (12) _____ the disagreement.

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. | (a) world | (b) Earth | (c) globe | (d) planet |
| 2. | (a) vision | (b) version | (c) versus | (d) visit |
| 3. | (a) dozen | (b) net | (c) gross | (d) grass |
| 4. | (a) an | (b) the | (c) one | (d) each |
| 5. | (a) by | (b) for | (c) with | (d) to |
| 6. | (a) nor | (b) neither | (c) either | (d) or |
| 7. | (a) in | (b) for | (c) of | (d) as |
| 8. | (a) with | (b) by | (c) for | (d) of |
| 9. | (a) put | (b) give | (c) take | (d) fire |
| 10. | (a) for | (b) out | (c) in | (d) with |
| 11. | (a) rein | (b) rain | (c) run | (d) ruin |
| 12. | (a) in | (b) on | (c) by | (d) with |

WRITING:

Write about *words* for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find word games to improve your English. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. TOYS: Make a poster about the top toys in your country. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. COPYRIGHT: Write a magazine article about the copyright of Scrabulous. Include imaginary interviews with the Agarwalla brothers and the boss of Mattel.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the boss of Facebook. Ask him three questions about the legality of putting Scrabulous on his site. Give them three suggestions on what he should do to keep Scrabulous addicts and the toy makers happy. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. F c. T d. T e. T f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. remove | a. take off |
| 2. version | b. edition |
| 3. gross | c. out and out |
| 4. infringement | d. breaking of the law |
| 5. replica | e. copy |
| 6. fans | f. enthusiasts |
| 7. threat | g. possibility |
| 8. boycott | h. avoid |
| 9. dispute | i. argument |
| 10. reputations | j. good names |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. the world | a. famous word game |
| 2. a gross copyright and trademark | b. infringement |
| 3. Hasbro sold the rights to put Scrabble online | c. to another company |
| 4. This means there could be a big court | d. battle |
| 5. There is big money to be | e. made online |
| 6. one of the most successful games in | f. toy history |
| 7. It is now a runaway success and a huge | g. money-spinner |
| 8. The threat to take it off the Web has made | h. many users angry |
| 9. people have called for a boycott of the | i. game makers' products |
| 10. the dispute will ruin the reputations | j. of Mattel and Hasbro |

GAP FILL:

Facebook users in Scrabulous SOS

The owners of the world **famous** word game Scrabble have asked Facebook to remove its online **version** of the game. Representatives from toy makers Mattel and Hasbro have told Facebook that its Scrabulous game was a "**gross** copyright and trademark infringement" and they want it shut down. Scrabulous provides over 2.4 million Scrabble **addicts** around the world a way to play each other. It is Facebook's most popular game but it is an almost **identical** replica of the 70-year-old board game Scrabble. Hasbro sold the **rights** to put Scrabble online to another company last year. This means there could be a big **court** battle over who can and who cannot publish the game on the Internet. There is big money to be made online either from selling it or from advertising **revenues**.

Scrabble has been one of the **most** successful games in toy history. Scrabulous was created in the summer of 2007 by two big Scrabble **fans**, Indian brothers Rajat Agarwalla, 26, and Jayant, 21. It is now a runaway **success** and a huge money-spinner for Rajat and Jayant. Over half a million people play it every day. The **threat** to take it off the Web has made many users angry. In just one day, more than 13,000 **joined** the Save Scrabulous group on Facebook. Thousands of people have written to Mattel and Hasbro to ask them to let Facebook keep the game on its site. Some people have **called** for a boycott of the game makers' products. Others said the dispute will **ruin** the reputations of Mattel and Hasbro. Neither Facebook nor the Agarwalla brothers have so far **commented** on the disagreement.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - a 2 - b 3 - c 4 - d 5 - d 6 - c 7 - a 8 - b 9 - c 10 - a 11 - d 12 - b