

VERBATIM[®]

THE LANGUAGE QUARTERLY
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You've Got Game V

The Best Word Games for Holiday 2007

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Valley Stream, New York

Let the games begin! Or, at the very least, let the review of the games begin. Once again we are here to tell you about the very best new games, and sometimes reissues of the very best games of the past, all perfect for gift-giving or receiving (start hinting). Nobody has more fun at Toy Fair than we do when seeking word games for word lovers and that would be you, else why would you be reading this world famous Language Quarterly? Games have rules and so do we. Ours are not as complex (in some cases) or compelling (in all cases) as those enclosed in the boxes set forth below, but we'd like you to know our thinking when we created this list.

Prices: we provide Suggested Retail Prices (or SRP as they say in the trade). But in the games game, the SRP is often a jumping off point and you will do well to seek discounts by googling the name of the game. We are listing these games from highest to lowest price for your convenience, not by our preference. We play-test all games and only the ones we love make it to this list.

Ages: we've included company-assigned age categories exactly as given in their rules but please use this as a guide not to be taken too literally. Many "8 to adult" games can be too challenging for an eight year old, yet many younger players easily handle "teen to adult" games. Of course, the youngsters in your realm are all brilliant. We know that, but still, read our reviews and ponder potential players. This will help you make the right match.

Word games: yes, they are. Well, most of them are but a few made the list because we relished playing them and wanted to share that pleasure with you.

All right now, play nice, don't fight!

AMUSEAMAZE (8 to Adult 2-6 players 24.99)

Let us start with the game board because you won't see one when you open the box. You will see 15-18 6x6 inch flat pieces that you assemble into a fairly large board. Caveat: you need a large table, or even the floor, to accommodate the board, which you assemble according to number of players. Play consists of forming words from adjacent letters in this Garden of Letters, a new, challenging, totally different type of word search. There are hedges that must be jumped over to use letters on the other side, but you can only scale them if you have a "Gardener Card". Picking up letter tiles and target cards, while blocking opponents, is at the heart of this innovative word game. All players plan moves and strategy during every opponent's turn, a feature we appreciate in every game. An important part of strategy is the unusual feature here; short, simple words may be better than long ones, nice when playing with younger players (additional challenge for those of us who try to make long words in every other game).

They say this unique 18-part game board gives more than 6 billion possible set-up combinations but we haven't counted them! We do know that the many times we played AmuseAmaze, we found each to be a vastly different game so you won't tire of playing it. The copy on the box declares that AmuseAmaze is The Spellbinding Word Race Game! and we can vouch for that. Take our word for it.