
GAME ON!

Recreation & Play in the Fanshawe Library
Learning Commons

With Carlie Forsythe

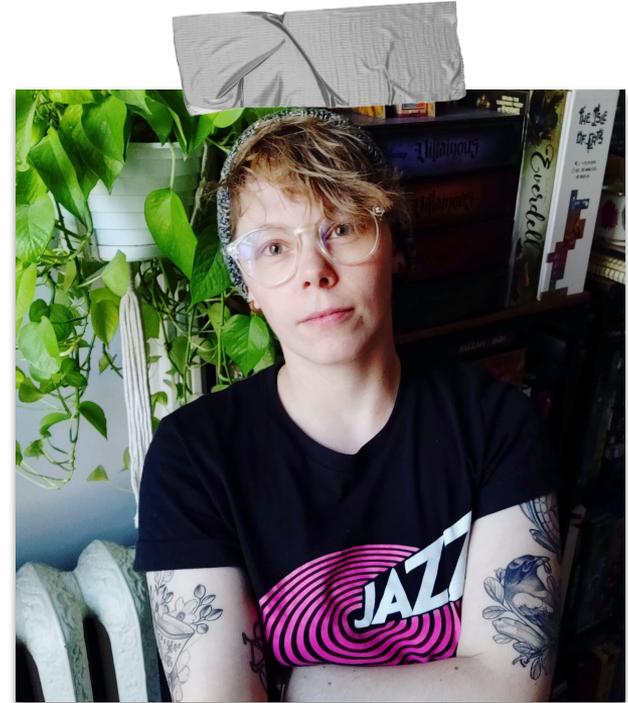


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A Quick Introduction

Carlie Forsythe

- 2020 MLIS graduate
- Reference Specialist and (unofficial Board Game Librarian) at the Library Learning Commons at Fanshawe College
- Owns ~84 board games!
- Favourite games: *Carcassonne* and *The Crew*



How familiar are you with board games?

<https://www.menti.com/3web24femi>





Outline

→ Why Board Games?

The importance of recreation and play in libraries.

→ Gaming in the Library

Board Games at the Fanshawe Library Learning Commons

→ Recommendations

A few helpful recommendations and reflections.

→ Toolkit & Resources

A toolkit to help get you started with your own board game collection or library program.

Why Board Games?

FINAL JEOPARDY!

**THIS IS ONE OF THE OLDEST
LIBRARY GAMING PROGRAMS
IN NORTH AMERICA**



Recreation & Play

Recreation “activities that people choose to do to refresh their bodies and minds and make their leisure time more interesting and enjoyable” (Recreation, leisure and sports, 2010).

Play “imaginative, intrinsically motivated, nonserious, freely chosen, and actively engaging” (Hurd & Anderson, 2010).

- Improves physical and mental health;
 - Develops physical and social skills/supports;
 - Lowers blood pressure and stress levels (Pressman et al., 2009).
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Benefits of Board Games

Social Benefits

- Build interpersonal relationships, often between social groups and generations (Pappas, 2013; Zander 2019).
- Builds confidence and sense of belonging.
- Culture of positive interaction (Pappas, 2013).
- How to win and lose gracefully (Zander, 2019).

Skills Development

- Language development and reading comprehension (Zander, 2019).
 - Critical thinking, inquiry, and problem solving skills (Mayer & Harris, 2010).
 - Communication and information sharing skills (Mayer & Harris, 2010).
 - Creative thinking (Pappas, 2013).
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Community-Building in Libraries

Three Functions of Libraries

- Educational
- Social
- Democratising

Educational. Aid in information literacy, critical thinking skills, self-education (Adams, 2009).

Social. “Third place”; provision of meeting spaces, recreational reading and other forms of media, programming (Adams, 2009).

Democratising. Provision of collections, services, programs equitably (Adams, 2009).



Gaming in the Library



Board Games in the LLC

Alignment with Library's Core Values

- Improvement of students' social and technical skills.
- Friendly and safe library environment.
- Attraction of non-users to the library.
- Collaborative learning.

Collection Development Criteria

- Number of players
 - User ratings on BGG
 - Play time
 - Weight
-



Board Games in the LLC

Benefits

- Can help dispel library anxiety and make students feel comfortable using library services.
- Equity - students able to access costly board games for free.
- Students able to socialize and improve their language, global citizenship, problem solving, and critical thinking skills.

Challenges

- Programs are way easier to manage with volunteers, which are hard to come by.
 - Limited resources.
 - COVID-19.
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Library Learning Commons

[Library Home](#) / [Research Guides Home](#) / [Game On: Gaming in the Library](#) / [Guide Home](#)

Game On: Gaming in the Library

[Guide Home](#)

[Board Game Resources](#)

[Games A-O](#)

How to Use This Guide



Welcome to the Game On: Gaming in the Library Guide!

This guide is meant to provide students and faculty with tabletop gaming resources.

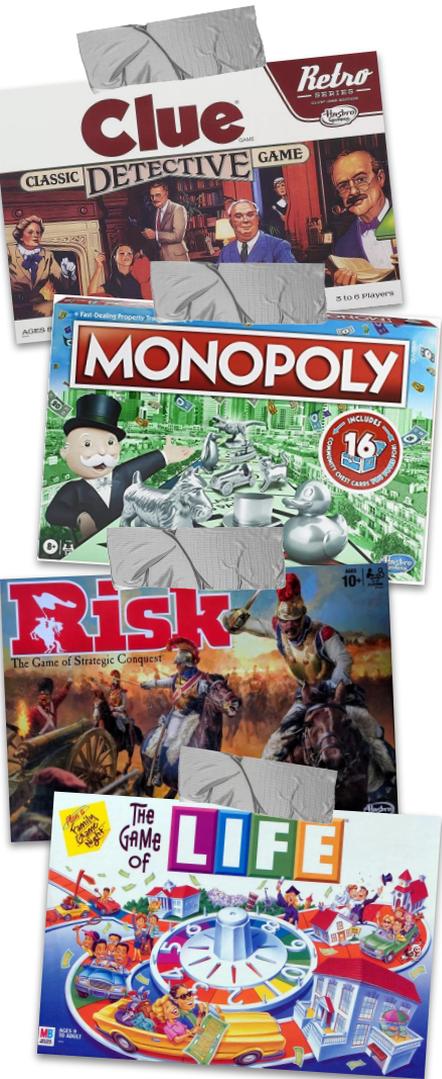
- Looking to learn how to play a new game? Check out some popular YouTube channels on our [Board Game Resources Page](#).
- Looking to play a game in the Fanshawe Library Learning Commons? Take a look at our [A-Q](#) and [P-Z](#) collection of games.
- Can't get together to play board games with friends? Learn about free online platforms, selected games, and games that you can

Meet the Analog Gaming Nerd



Game On! Guide

Recommendations



Traditional American Games

Pros:

- Games are rules-light.
- Similar and familiar.
- Easy-to-learn mechanics.

Cons:

- Games can overstay their welcome.
- Player elimination.
- Randomness over strategy.

Why Include in a Library Collection?

- Games are familiar and safe for new gamers.
 - Accessible gateway games.
 - Great for attracting new gamers to programming.
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Abstract Strategy Games

Pros:

- Instantly recognizable.
- Rules-light.
- Timeless classics.
- Easy to learn, hard to master.

Cons:

- Very abstract.

Why Include in a Library Collection?

- Creates multi-generational play spaces within libraries.
- Inexpensive.
- Familiar and great for attracting players at events.





Eurogames / Euro-Style Games

Pros:

- Complexity varies.
- Deep, strategic decisions.
- Highly replayable.
- Easy to learn, hard to master.
- No player elimination.

Cons:

- Weak themes and abstract components.
- Low player interaction.

Why Include in a Library Collection?

- Easy to learn/teach.
 - Predetermined game length ensures games rarely overstay their welcome and allows for players to try a variety of games.
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Thematic Games

Pros:

- Tense, immersive gameplay.
- Storytelling potential.

Cons:

- Heavily reliant on theme.
- Rules can become very complicated.

Why Include in a Library Collection?

- Immersive gameplay and storytelling.
- Cooperative nature is great for developing certain skills.
- Attracts reluctant players with interesting themes and intellectual properties.





Game Weights

5-point Scale (BGG)

- Light
- Medium Light
- Medium
- Medium Heavy
- Heavy

Considerations

- How long does a game take to play?
- How complex are the rules?
- How much luck is in the game?



Other Considerations

School, Academic, & Public Libraries

Educational games vs.
recreational games

Cultural Backgrounds

Easy ways to
expand the
collection and
increase
engagement



Gateway Collection

→ Core collection that will see the most use/circulation

Strikes a balance between:

- Thematic vs. Classic vs. Eurogames
 - Games range from low to medium weight
 - Variety of game mechanics
 - Inclusion of familiar games
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