

# Here's how to turn TV into a game for the kids

By SUE GILLESPIE MARTIN, Ph. D.

By the time he reaches high school, the average American child has spent 15,000 hours watching TV. Games that children play can turn these passive hours into creative ones.

Television shows, commercials, music and technology can be the basis for games that tickle the senses, and arouse curiosity and imagination.

## SIGHT

Watch a situation comedy with your children and take notes — using sight alone — on what is happening. Note the characters' gestures and facial expression for clues as to what is going on. Are the characters happy, sad, or surprised?

Interpret the characters' posture in order to determine if they are upset, excited, tired or relaxed. Then look in

the TV program guide to see how close you and your children came to the real plot.

Have children get a new view of their favorite series by watching it while standing on their heads. What does this upside-down view do to their overall orientation and focus? Did they see physical details in the set, or on the characters, that they had never noticed before?

Watch a few minutes of "WKRP in Cincinnati" through a brown or blue cellophane. These colors may upset the blue mood of this program.

Make a list of all the circle-like items you see in "Charlie's Angels." Study the walls, floors, Bosley, his desk and the Angels for circles. Circles can be found in the shape of doorknobs, buttons, clocks, and some faces.

## TOUCH

This exercise requires the partici-

pants to close their eyes or be blindfolded while they touch a just turned-off television set. The TV is a good object for touch awareness because it has shape, size, texture, weight and temperature.

Feel the shape and size of your set by slowly running your hands around it. Feel the difference in the surface of the glass screen, the metal or wood sides and the metal knobs. Are all the knobs the same size? Can you feel the warmth on the top of the set?

Watching over 22,000 commercials a year, the average child sees adults, children and animals eat everything from yogurt to Alpo. Play a game of eating — have one child pretend he is eating something and another guess what he is eating. Pretend to eat a Big Mac, Kentucky Fried Chicken and a dish of Prince spaghetti. Next try eating a candy bar on a hot day, blowing bubble gum that pops all over your

face, and eating cat food as a finicky "Morris."

An older child might watch food commercials to find tastes he is attracted to. He can set 3,000 taste buds to work by taking a bit of lemon, for instance, letting it roll around in his mouth concentrating on its flavor and texture.

Then he can imagine what kind of person is like a lemon — would he have a sour disposition, would his face be old and puckered?

Food characters can be triggered by anything from taco commercials to peanut butter.

## HEARING

The ear can hear tone, pitch, volume and rhythm. With increasing noise pollution our ears block out much of the auditory world. At the same time we become insensitive to the beautiful noise — the full spectrum of notes, the

different expressions of tone color and the lighter patterns of tempo.

Before beginning auditory games, have your children listen to "Procession" on the Moody Blues' album. With eyes closed, how many changes in the history of the earth can you hear?

Record 30 seconds of TV personalities and play them back to your children. See if they can identify the people and tell you when one voice stops and a new one starts. The new "Laugh-In" show is a perfect program to listen to in order to hear the differences between dialects.

Create sound environments with your children of their favorite shows. First, watch one program and make a list of the sounds that characterize the program.

For instance, the sound environment of "The Waltons" could include the buzz of a sawmill, birds singing and grandma humming a hymn. Whereas,

the sound environment of "Emergency" could include sirens, gunshots, radio calls and fist fights.

Encourage the child to imitate these sounds.

## SMELL

Television has made society acutely aware of odors. While watching an evening's worth of television see what commercial sells what kind of odor — flowery, spicy, burnt, rotten and fruity. Play a small recall game describing one of these odors while someone else tries to identify the smell.

Prepare an odor discrimination test by gathering up smells such as deodorant, some spices, a lemon, and vinegar. Be sure to select only non-toxic products and also make sure that no child is allergic to the selected substance. Ask family members to close their eyes, take a deep sniff and try to identify each product.

# Champions?

## Film tracks college bicyclists

(Editor's note: Louise Snider is on vacation but she will be back next week. This week we have a production story on the movie "Breaking Away.")

"Breaking Away" is about four young men who are trying to sever ties with their youth and enter into adulthood.

The movie was filmed on location at Indiana University (IU), Bloomington. Steve Tesich, a graduate of IU, wrote the screenplay and Peter Yates is the film's producer and director.

"Breaking Away" centers on four Bloomington townies who have just graduated from high school. Dennis Christopher, Dennis Quaid, Jackie Haley and Dan Stern play the innocent Bloomington natives.

The film's hero is Dave, played by

Christopher, whose ambition is to become an Italian bicycle racing champion. In pursuit of his goal, Dave chooses an Italian name for himself and starts speaking Italian.

The leader of the group is Mike, played by Quaid. Mike is a high school football star having trouble adjusting to life, who takes his frustrations out on the college students.

The four hometown boys are constantly in conflict with college boys — members of an IU fraternity. The two opponents clash in a swimming race and in a fist fight until their competition is resolved in the Little 500 bicycle race. This race, which is an actual sporting and social event at IU, brings thousands of spectators who watch 32 teams of four members each compete.

"BREAKING AWAY" began production before IU students returned for the fall semester. However, a staged Little 500 race, 100 miles long, was filmed after fall semester began in a stadium holding 10,000 people.

Thousands of students at IU and residents of Bloomington showed up for the staging of the race. Most of the student extra parts are played by IU students.

Some became more than extras. Jennifer Michel, 17, was a freshman at IU who played the girlfriend of the fraternity leader. Another student was hired to do a 65-foot dive off a cliff during the swimming race scene shot at a limestone quarry.

The president of IU, Dr. John Ryan, appeared in the film. He played himself in a scene where he tells the students that he is opening the bike race to the townspeople.

"Breaking Away" is one of several films Yates has directed. His first was "Summer Holiday." Others include "For Pete's Sake," "Mother, Jugs and Speed" and "The Deep."

Screenwriter Tesich, 35, was born in Yugoslavia and came to the U.S. when he was 13. He won the Little 500 championship in 1962, and graduated from IU in 1965. "Breaking Away" is his first screenplay.

The stars of "Breaking Away" have had a variety of experience. Christopher recently appeared in Robert Altman's "A Wedding." Quaid appeared in the film "Our Winning Season" and some television movies.

Haley played the outfielder in "Bad News Bears," "Bad News Bears Break Training" and "Bad News Bears in Japan." Stern is making his screen debut in "Breaking Away." His stage credits include "Scout" (University in Chicago) and "The Mandrake."



Dave, (Dennis Christopher), lower right, is the hero of the movie "Breaking Away." He plays a determined racer.



From left to right: Dennis Christopher, Jack Haley, Dan Stern and Dennis Quaid star as four young men who become bike racing champions and grow up at the same time.

# This B'ham show does not go on

At Tweeny's Cafe in Birmingham, the show goes on — even if not as planned. Diners continue to eat, waiters keep on serving and the chefs go on cooking.

Yvonne Gill-Davis, owner of Tweeny's, and entertainer Phil Marcus Esser planned to present cabaret entertainment at Tweeny's on Friday, Aug. 17. (Cabaret is a few short, live programs performed in succession.) On Wednesday, Aug. 15 the city of Birmingham informed Tweeny's that because they don't have an entertainment license, cabaret is illegal at the cafe.

Ms. Gill-Davis wasn't bitter when she heard the news, only disappointed.

She said, "I was really naive and it was my fault because mine is a performance. It is clearly stated that if you have a class C liquor license as we have, you have to have an entertainment permit if you want to do cabaret or performing acts."

"It never occurred to me that something as simple as mine would be so out of tune that I would need an entertainment license."

A class C license allows the restaurant to serve beer, wine and liquor by the glass.

STEVE SCHWARTZ, Operations Auditor for Birmingham, explained how

the problem developed. "Tweeny's submitted a newsletter about their entertainment and we saw it. It said cabaret. They wanted to do mime, but no holder of a class C license in Birmingham has an entertainment permit."

"That means that you can't dance, have a monologue or a dialogue or any other kind of performance. You can play musical instruments, even have a hundred piece orchestra, or you can sing."

"Tweeny's was very innocent and did not know they needed a license to do this. They were very cooperative and understood our position as we explained it to them."

# Orchestra to hold Monday concerts

The 1979-80 "Monday Evening Series" of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra will be performed at Orchestra Hall.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra managing director Ralph Guthrie said, "I have been pleased to discover the quality and the ambitious programming of the Civic Orchestra, and I am sure this new move will enhance the Civic's position as a vital arm of the DSO's training and outreach activities."

"This is a very exciting event for all of us," said Raymond Turner, Civic Orchestra administrator and associate conductor.

"We have had a very satisfactory relationship with Ford Auditorium ever since we were established by the DSO in 1970, and we will continue to use Ford, for administrative space, activities, and so forth."

will be beneficial for Orchestra Hall, which will handle ticket sales for the series.

"Not only will we be enabled to present another fine performing group," said Orchestra Hall executive director Sander Kallal, "but we will gain another means by which we can attract attention and interest in our expanding activities."

The "Monday Evening Series" will feature the Civic Orchestra's three conductors: DSO Assistant Conductor Kenneth Jean, DSO Conductor Fellow Michael Krajewski, and Raymond Turner. Performances will begin at 8 p.m.

The season runs from October through May. Ticket information for the series or for individual concerts will be available from Orchestra Hall by phoning 833-3700.

Preliminary instrumental auditions for membership in the 1979-80 Detroit Symphony Civic Orchestra will be held on Friday, Aug. 31, and Tuesday-Thursday, Sept. 4-6. Appointments may be made by calling the DSO at 961-0700.

There is no age limit, the one criterion for candidates is that they be actively pursuing a career in the performance of symphonic music.

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