

# Augmented reality gets a leg up on virtual reality thanks to "Pokemon Go"

By Los Angeles Times, adapted by Newsela staff on 07.21.16 Word Count 634



Eggscute, a Pokemon, is found by a "Pokemon Go" player in Miami, Florida, July 12, 2016. The game marks a turning point for augmented reality, or technology that superimposes a digital facade on the real world. Photo: AP Photo/Alan Diaz

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Virtual reality is often described as the future of gaming because it can transport gamers to realistic computer-generated environments. These virtual worlds appear authentic because gamers use high-tech headsets, gloves with sensors or helmets with screens to interact with them. This special equipment simulates three-dimensional images and settings.

## superimposing

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But the recent runaway success of the mobile app "Pokemon Go" is suggesting big things for augmented reality, a related but less isolating technology. Augmented reality works by **superimposing** a digital image onto the real world.

## "Pokemon Go" Off To A Hot Start

### augmented:

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Pokemon is a Japanese entertainment brand that became popular in the 1990s. Its newest product, "Pokemon Go," is a location-based **augmented** reality game. The game makes Pokemon characters pop up on players' smartphone screens by using their cameras and GPS.

"Pokemon Go" was launched earlier this month. In less than a week, U.S. players spent more time playing it on average than they spent on Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook Messenger, according to Internet analytics company SimilarWeb.

### surge:

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Shops, parks and other public spaces around the world have recorded a **surge** in foot traffic as gamers venture out in search

of Pokemon. Experts think the popularity of the game is just one sign that augmented reality, or AR, will play a huge role in people's lives. AR could be even bigger than virtual reality.

Dmitri Williams, president of data company Ninja Metrics, said the reason for augmented reality's success is that "VR separates you from people, while AR augments your interactions with people."

## **Augmented Reality Less Restrictive Than Virtual Reality**

Virtual reality currently requires people to use headsets or other high-tech devices. Augmented reality, however, is simpler. People can blend the real and virtual worlds with just their smartphones. But AR games also let gamers interact with one another. "Pokemon Go" does this by allowing players to compete against each other for monsters and encouraging them to step outside and interact with others. That's only possible because the game is played on smartphones, a device that an estimated two-thirds of American adults already carry with them everywhere.

### **novel ways:**

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"(The game) taps into the fact that we have our mobile devices on us 24/7, we're checking them dozens of times a day, and it allows us to use them in new and **novel ways**," said Scott Steinberg, an expert on trends at a technology consulting company.

"Pokemon Go" can be played in small bits of time throughout the day. People are already checking their phones multiple times a day. Now they can also play in augmented reality for a few minutes. This is unlike playing games on a console or a computer, which need a player's full attention.

## **Interest In Augmented Reality Growing**

The gaming industry itself has largely overlooked augmented reality. This is in part because, until now, people weren't as excited about it as they were about virtual reality. There was also a sense that too few people understood the technology.

But now that "Pokemon Go" has taken off, there's little doubt that gamers understand — and adore — AR features.

Gamers such as Anthony Moreno, 17, of Compton, California, have trekked across the Los Angeles region trying to catch Pokemon. "We went to the San Pedro pier, Redondo pier and now we're going to the park over here," he said, standing outside Los Angeles City Hall. "We haven't been here, so it's going to be a new experience for us."

The popular game "Angry Birds" taught a generation of smartphone users how to swipe on touch screens. In the same way, "Pokemon Go" could help gamers better understand augmented reality, said Joost van Dreunen, chief executive officer at video game research company SuperData Research.

"People tend to lump augmented reality and virtual reality, and 'Pokemon Go' lets you separate the two," he said.

## Augmented Reality Pokemon Go AOW Quiz

### 1 What is the purpose for reading this passage?

- (A) To learn about the augmented reality game, Pokemon Go
- (B) to research a paper on the mechanics and operation of Pokemon Go
- (C) to explain the rules and concept of Pokemon Go
- (D) to learn about how augmented reality games like Pokemon Go are gaining attention and interest around the world

### 2 Read the following paragraph.

"Pokemon Go" can be played in small bits of time throughout the day. People are already checking their phones multiple times a day. Now they can also play in augmented reality for a few minutes. This is unlike playing games on a console or a computer, which need a player's full attention.

#### Which idea is BEST supported by the paragraph?

- (A) "Pokemon Go" is less interesting than other traditional computer games.
- (B) "Pokemon Go" is more technical than other traditional computer games.
- (C) "Pokemon Go" is less complicated than other traditional computer games.
- (D) "Pokemon Go" is more convenient for players than other traditional computer games.

### 3 Read the selection from the article.

Virtual reality currently requires people to use headsets or other high- tech devices. Augmented reality, however, is simpler. People can blend the real and virtual worlds with just their smartphones.

#### Which of the following can be inferred from the selection above?

- (A) Virtual reality is cumbersome since it's not mobile.
- (B) Augmented reality is too simplistic for high-tech people.
- (C) People prefer virtual reality to augmented reality.
- (D) Smartphones will become the only way that people play games.

### 4 Read the following sentence.

Shops, parks and other public spaces around the world have recorded a surge in foot traffic as gamers venture out in search of Pokemon.

#### Adding which of these sentences to the text would help explain the meaning of the word "surge" in the context of the article?

- (A) One store owner complained that these players have not given her any business.
- (B) One store owner noticed that people were using their smartphones outside.
- (C) One store owner observed a horde of people on the sidewalk outside her store.
- (D) One store owner learned all about augmented reality from a customer.

### 5 How does the author organize the passage?

- (A) by comparing various virtual reality games
- (B) by comparing and contrasting virtual reality and augmented reality games
- (C) by presenting a problem and describing efforts to find a solution.
- (D) by discussing a sequence of events in chronological order

### 6 Read the following sentence.

Augmented reality works by superimposing a digital image onto the real world.

#### Which word is a synonym for "superimposing"?

- (A) creating
- (B) overlaying
- (C) changing
- (D) isolating