

Summer Reading 2025: Level Up

Level up your summer with these books that bring the game to the page—whether it's tabletop quests or high-stakes challenges. For more recommendations, talk to a librarian or visit alamedafree.org



Didn't see that coming

by Jesse Q. Sutanto

Playing anonymously as a guy to avoid harassment from other male players, 17-year-old gamer girl Kiki Sirega, whose online best friend doesn't know her true identity since they've never met in real life, unwittingly transfers to his school where

romantic chaos ensues. YA FIC SUTANTO

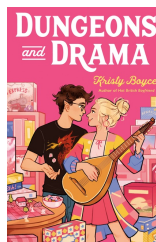


Don't read the comments

by Eric Smith

An elite gamer who uses her rising-star status to secure sponsorships to help her struggling family and a fellow player who resists his mom's ambitions for his future find their virtual worlds and blossoming romance challenged by gaming trolls and malicious

doxing. YA FIC SMITH



Dungeons and drama

by Kristy Boyce

Musical-loving Riley dreams of Broadway, but after "borrowing" her mom's car, she's grounded and stuck working at her dad's game shop. She convinces Nathan, a nerdy employee, to cover her shifts in exchange for fake flirting to impress his crush—but soon,

Riley realizes the act might be starting to feel a little real. YA FIC BOYCE



Fan the fame

by Anna Priemaza

When Lainey, sister of a massively popular video game streamer, decides to spill the truth about her hateful brother to his fans, she enlists the help of gamers SamTheBrave and ShadowWillow to help teach him a lesson. YA FIC PRIEMAZA



Reggie and Delilah's year of falling

by Elise Bryant

Pretending to be someone they're not, Delilah, who is unable to open up, and Reggie, a D&D Dungeon Master who is role-playing someone confident, fall for a version of each other that doesn't really exist when fate keeps throwing them together. YA FIC BRYANT



The no-girlfriend rule

by Christen Randall

When her boyfriend excludes her from participating in a role playing game, high school senior Hollie joins an all-girls group where an in-game romance has the potential to be more than just pretend. YA FIC RANDALL



Ready player one

by Ernest Cline

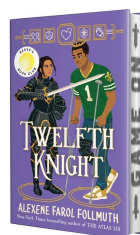
Immersed in a mid-21st-century virtual utopia to escape an ugly real world of famine, poverty and disease, Wade Watts joins a violent effort to solve a series of puzzles by the virtual world's wealthy creator, who has promised that the winner will be his heir. FIC CLINE



Wildcard

by Marie Lu

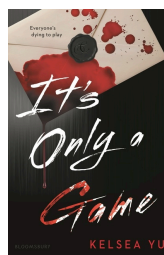
The thrilling sequel to *Warcross*, finds Emika Chen learning the truth about Hideo's new NeuroLink algorithm and banding together with the Phoenix Riders to put a stop to Hideo's grim plans, only to find herself caught in a web of betrayal that forces her to turn to Zero and his ruthless crew, the Blackcoats, to take down the man she loves. YA FIC LU



Twelfth Knight

by Alexene Farol Follmuth

Viola Reyes is annoyed. Her tabletop campaign got shot down, her best friend says she should be more "likable," and student body president Jack Orsino is a total slacker. Her escape? The MMORPG *Twelfth Knight*, where she plays as Cesario—her confident, male alter ego. But when Jack shows up in-game as Duke Orsino, their avatars hit it off. As their late-night game chats turn into something more, Vi's hiding a truth Jack doesn't see coming... YA FIC FOLLMUTH



It's only a game

by Kelsea Yu

Marina Chan, living under a fake identity to escape her past, risks exposure when her online gaming team accepts a tour of their favorite game company, only to find themselves entangled in a deadly game. YA FIC YU

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Don't hate the player

by Alexis Nedd

Keeping her life as a competitive eSports gamer a secret, field hockey star Emilia finds her two worlds colliding when she is recognized by a member of a rival team during a major eSports tournament. YA FIC NEDD



Side quest : a visual history of roleplaying games

by Steenz & Samuel Sattin

With a meld of history, fantasy and memoir, this graphic nonfiction book gives existing fans of tabletop roleplaying games (TTRPGs) insight into the history of the medium, and provides a gateway for anyone new to the phenomenon. YA GN 793.93 SIDE



The greatest stories ever played : video games and the evolution of storytelling

by Dustin Hansen

Focusing on some of the best, most memorable, experiences in gaming, a lifelong gamer with over 20-years experience in the gaming industry examines the relationship between gaming and storytelling in a new way. YA 794.8 HANSEN



Play the game

by Charlene Y. Allen

In the game of life, sometimes other people hold all the controls—or so it seems to VZ. Four months after his best friend Ed was killed, the man who murdered him is found dead in the same spot. Now VZ's other best friend, Jack, is the prime suspect. Determined to finish Ed's video game and uncover the truth, VZ teams up with Diamond from work and dives into Ed's quirky gameverse—where the clues might lead to justice. YA FIC ALLEN



Darkly : a novel

by Marisha Pessl

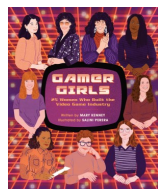
Arcadia "Dia" is chosen for an internship with the foundation of a late game designer whose empire, Darkly, is renowned for its terrifying toys and games, but Dia starts questioning everything, including why she was chosen as an intern. YA FIC PESSL



Slay

by Brittney Morris

Hiding her identity as the developer of an elite online role-playing game, a talented teen, one of the only Black students in her school, is targeted with violent racism when an in-game dispute escalates into a player's murder. YA FIC MORRIS



Gamer girls : 25 women who built the video game industry

by Mary Kenney

Profiles 25 of the most influential women throughout the history of the gaming industry. YA 794.8092 KENNEY



Queen of the Tiles

by Hanna Alkaf

Fifteen-year-old Najwa Bakri is forced to investigate the mysterious death of her best friend and Scrabble Queen, Trina, when her Instagram comes back to life with cryptic posts and messages. YA FIC ALKAF



The grandest game

by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

Seven players in the Grandest Game, an annual competition run by a billionaire to give anyone a shot at fame and fortune, are pushed to their limits —physically, mentally and emotionally— and it soon becomes clear that not everyone is playing by the rules. YA FIC BARNES



The bad ones

by Melissa Albert

When her estranged best friend, Becca, goes missing, along with three other people, Nora follows coded messages Becca left for her to unravel, leading Nora to a legendary goddess who played a role in their own childhood games. YA FIC ALBERT



DPS only!

by Velinxi

To everyone else, Vicky is a quiet student living in her brother's e-sports shadow. But in secret, she's a fierce competitor in *Xenith Orion*, the hottest multiplayer game around. When a local tournament calls, Vicky can't resist—but keeping her identity hidden can only last so long. YA GN DPS