

MHS Kids Hooked on *Crack* Again

- Kathleen Alexandrou

...Trivia Crack, that is. The students of MHS are hooked not on cocaine, but on a quiz app known as Trivia Crack, which allows you to play people across the world in a quiz game similar to Trivial Pursuit. A year ago, in December of 2014, the app was the most downloaded app on the App Store, and anywhere you were in the school, you could hear students asking their friends, “What did the Mormon Church founder Joseph Smith prophecy that the moon would be inhabited by?” (6-foot-tall Mormons) or “Which country lies to the north of the USA?” (Canada). But Trivia Crack only lasted at MHS for a month or two. By late January, the app was essentially dead; if you still played it, you were considered a disappointment to humanity. For an entire year, the game was nonexistent, forgotten. Then, just a few weeks ago, the app came back. Out of nowhere, kids started re-downloading it. Trivia Crack had been resurrected.

Trivia Crack has six categories; sports, entertainment, art, history, science, and geography. Originally the app was titled Preguntados and marketed to people in Latin America, but as its popularity rose, the app was translated into English. Anyone who uses it can create questions, so while there are a few questions with dubious credibility - I was once asked “Which continent is the Hudson Sea located on?” As far as I know, the Hudson Sea does not exist. The Hudson Bay, yes; the Hudson River, of course. But no sea - most questions are surprisingly accurate, if somewhat random. You can challenge your friends and play a bunch of them at once, or you can play the “classic” version and have a one-on-one game. The app is available on iOS, Windows phones, Androids and Facebook.

Trivia Crack is also famous for its odd questions. In every category, you will inevitably get a question that does not fit whatsoever. There are simple questions like “What is Canada’s leading sport?” (hockey), and there are more obscure ones such as “Which state has the only diamond mine in America?” (Arkansas). Trivia Crack also has what I call question trends. There are certain topics that come up over and over. For example, I have had countless questions asking me about Vincent van Gogh and the ear he cut off and sent to a prostitute. This is a very specific category, but the people who submit questions to Trivia Crack love asking about it. Question trends can vary depending on the day as well. Today, I’ve had a lot of sports questions concerning Canadian sports, but tomorrow the majority of my sports questions might be about chess.

As previously stated, Trivia Crack has only recently made its unexpected comeback. In the past few weeks it has exploded, at least at Marblehead High School. Last February, it was cited as the most downloaded app in the world. So far it does not appear to have regained that status. Trivia Crack does appear to be a December app; it’s most popular during the holiday season. Perhaps there is a correlation between that and the fact that this is the period of time when students start losing focus on school and get excited for winter break. Perhaps - like Frosty the Snowman, who can return each year with the magical Christmas snow - we will see Trivia Crack return again next year to serve as a distraction from boring schoolwork as we approach the holiday season.