

ANGLAIS LVA

En vous appuyant *uniquement* sur les documents du dossier thématique qui vous est proposé, vous rédigerez une synthèse répondant à la question suivante :

What is at stake with the development of esports?

Votre synthèse comportera entre 450 et 500 mots et sera précédée d'un titre. Le nombre de mots rédigés (titre inclus) devra être indiqué à la fin de votre copie.

Liste des documents :

1. "Don't fear the rise of Fortnite and other video games – they bring young people together", *The Guardian*
2. "Esports Is Getting Bigger Every Year — So Where Are All The Women?" *Variety*
3. "Playing in the mainstream: How esports is becoming TV friendly", sportsmediapro.com
4. "The eSports Ecosystem", visualcapitalist.com
5. "All-star League of Legends, Paris 2014", Helena Kristiansson

Document 1

Don't fear the rise of Fortnite and other video games – they bring young people together

Adapted from Emily Gera, *The Guardian*, October 9, 2019

Until this summer, the huge rise in popularity of video games – played competitively and watched by millions on streaming websites such as Twitch, or seen live with thousands of others at Colosseum-like sporting arenas – had bypassed many people over the age of 35. But few could escape the headlines about the Fortnite World Cup and its \$3m (£2.4m) winner.

These games are known collectively as esports, and the number of young people playing them is truly staggering. Fortnite: Battle Royale has more than 250 million players, making it one of the most popular video games in the world, alongside the virtual football game Fifa.

To many in an older generation, the rise of esports rings alarm bells. Reports of children spending an unhealthy amount of time and money on games have become commonplace.

Of course there will be some children and young people for whom long hours spent playing computer games does cause mental health problems. The World Health Organization last year recognised “gaming disorder” as a medical condition, and the NHS is planning to open the UK's first specialist clinic to treat addicts of computer games.

Yet while fears around the rise of esports abound, games such as League of Legends, Dota 2 and Fortnite have become a cultural phenomenon, bringing young people from different regions and religions together and bridging divides. Slang, inside jokes and dance moves flow out of them as if they were a proto-society. Idols are made out of their best players – just ordinary teenagers and twentysomethings who cut their teeth in competitive leagues and then develop their own enormous followings over social media and online streams.

Game developers are now working to cultivate a pipeline of new “athletes”, modelling itself on the development pipelines of traditional sports leagues. Today more than 125 colleges in the US have esports scholarships, with more than \$9m awarded to students since 2017. Perhaps they recognise that esports can develop many of the same skill sets as traditional sports – from team-building to leadership, mental strength and cognitive abilities.

While I can appreciate why older people may feel uneasy about the rise of a phenomenon they understand little about, maybe it's time to be a bit more open-minded about the potential benefits of esports. Fortnite and Fifa are now talked about in the same way as rugby and football. There's even an ePremier League and Uefa eChampions League¹. And esports are being mentioned as a possible Olympic sport.

Their popularity may be about to eclipse traditional sports, but they actually perform a surprisingly similar function, for a younger age group, to the one fulfilled by football terraces for their parents and grandparents. What draws us to these games is kinship – a very ancient and tribal desire to be part of a group, and one that forms the basis of any team sport.

¹ The Premier League is the top level of the English football league system. The UEFA Champions League is an annual club football competition organised by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) and contested by top-division European clubs, deciding the best team in Europe. (Wikipedia)

Document 2

Esports Is Getting Bigger Every Year — So Where Are All The Women?

Adapted from Stefanie Fogel, *Variety*, November 1, 2018

Esports has experienced a popularity boom in recent years. The industry is expected to grow to over \$900 million this year, according to market intelligence company Newzoo. Major networks like ESPN² now regularly air tournaments with prize pools rivaling some of the biggest events in traditional sports.

While its audience is typically male and millennial, there are signs esports is becoming more diverse. About 29% of U.S. fans between the ages of 13 and 40 began watching in the past year and they “skew less male and are less likely to be millennials than fans who have followed esports longer,” according to a report from Nielsen Games. That same report said women now make up approximately 25% of the U.S. fan base.

There’s still a distinct lack of professional female gamers to watch, however, and it’s one reason why the industry remains unattractive to many women.

There are some notable exceptions, of course. The Shanghai Dragons signed the Overwatch League’s first woman player, Se-yeon “Geguri” Kim, during its inaugural season. Global esports organization Gen. G recently created an all-female U.S. “Fortnite” team, signing Tina Perez and Madison Mann.

“In my mind, the way that you create true fandom ... is standing for something a little more than just a win and loss record,” said Immortals CEO Noah Whinston. Immortals owns the Overwatch League team L.A. Valiant, which claims to have the highest percentage of female fans in the league.

Immortals’ values are consistent across all of its players and employees, and it’s led to a community that’s more inclusive and welcoming, Whinston said. He believes esports in its current state is limited because roughly half the world’s population is not the most welcome in it. That percentage might be even higher when you include the LGBTQ community and gender non-conforming people.

Toxicity also remains an issue. Earlier this year, two Dallas Fuel players, Timo “Taimou” Kettunen and Félix “xQc” Lengyel, faced disciplinary action in two separate incidents. Kettunen was fined \$1,000 for using anti-gay slurs on his personal stream, while Lengyel was suspended for four matches and fined \$4,000 for using an emote in a racially disparaging manner on the league’s stream and on social media.

“I don’t think that we’re in a position that we could stop the internet as a whole, but I think we can play our part,” said Jordan Sherman, Gen. G’s head of partnerships. “And I think our part is saying, ‘We’re going to make a commitment to female gaming. We’re going to make a commitment to female community organizing. We’re not going to apologize for who we are or the way we play, and we’re going to build a fan base of people who want to root for us and support us.’”

² ESPN (originally an initialism for Entertainment and Sports Programming Network) is an American cable sports channel.

Document 3

Playing in the mainstream: How esports is becoming TV friendly

Adapted from Curt Marvis, sportsmediapro.com, March 7, 2019

Few industries have managed to match the huge growth that esports has enjoyed in recent years - not bad for a genre that not so long ago was viewed as little more than a hobby for teenage boys.

Much of esports' growth is coming from brand investments, such as advertising, sponsorship and media rights. World class brands like Toyota and Coca Cola are getting in on the action by sponsoring Overwatch league events; traditional sports leagues are launching esports competitions and there's an ongoing discussion about whether advanced competitive gaming should become an Olympic sport. Broadcasters are now following suit and are looking for ways to bring esports to their services.

By including esports content as part of their offering, broadcasters will be able to re-engage with the highly sought-after millennial demographics. This generation is often nicknamed cord-cutters or cord-nevers, because a number of them have cancelled or never had a pay-TV subscription. This is not because they do not want to pay for TV - it's because they can't find the content they want to watch on traditional services.

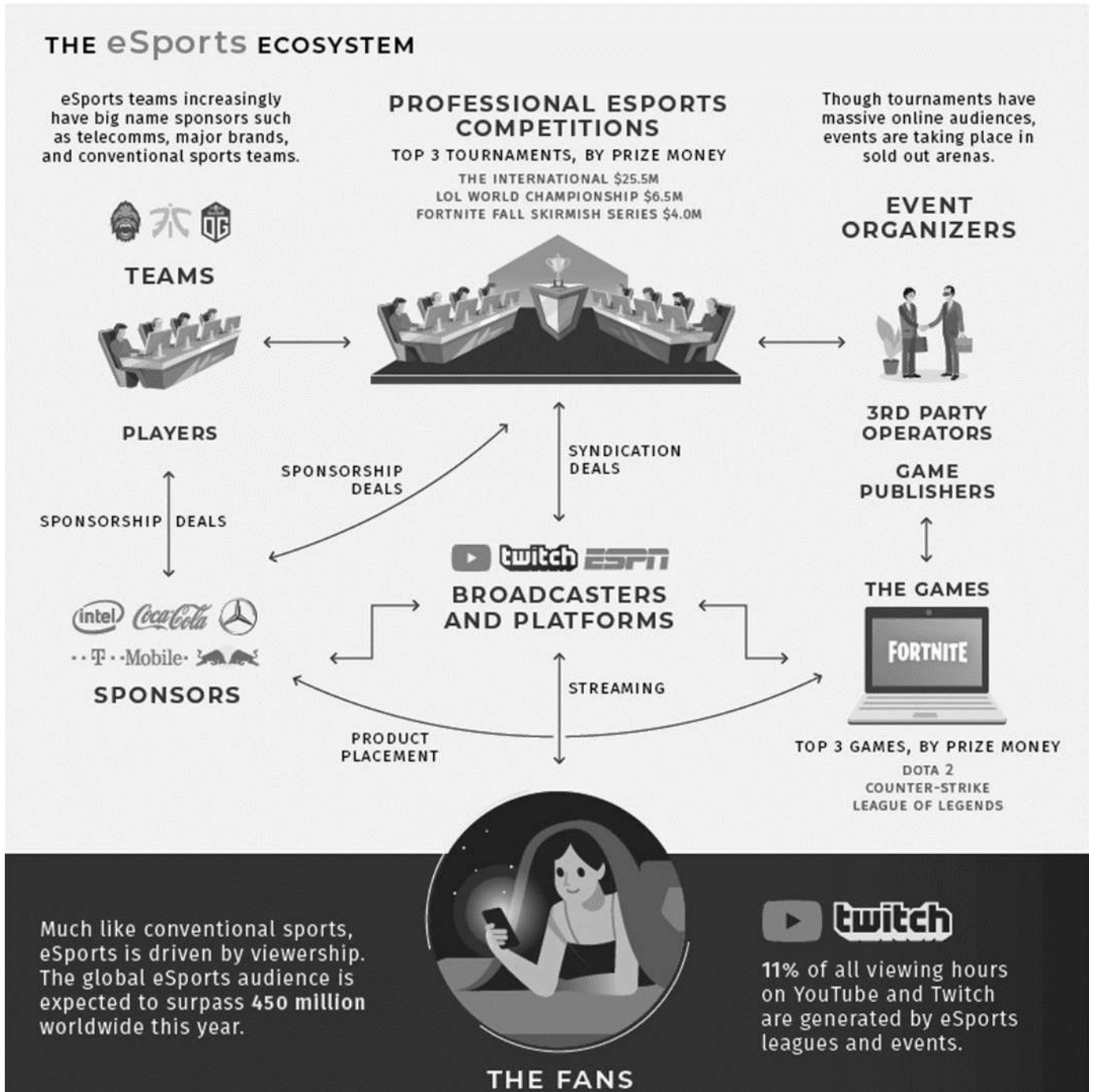
The esports content popular on streaming platforms, such as Twitch, typically attracts a niche audience that is already deeply embedded in the world of competitive gaming. This audience avidly follows and discusses the most complex games in extreme depth and will happily watch a live tournament for hours on end. However, in order to make esports relevant to a wider audience, broadcasters need to adapt their online format, so it is TV friendly. For example, the type of games watched online can be quite violent, complicated and long. Broadcasters need to shift the focus onto simpler and less violent games.

Broadcasters can also make esports TV friendly by partnering with traditional sports organisations. Tapping into the popularity of sports such as football and basketball can help drive the genre's growth among a mainstream audience and turn it into a global sport.

There has already been quite a bit of crossover between esports and traditional sports. The English Premier League has started its expansion into the world of competitive gaming by launching its ePremier league which kicked off in January. Additionally, the genre has been boosted by high-profile footballers like Arsenal's Hector Bellerin and Juventus' Andrea Pirlo, both of whom are avid gamers.

Traditional sports stars are not the only celebrities that can help drive esports viewership among mainstream audiences. World famous rappers, like Drake and Travis Scott, have already joined one of esports' biggest stars, Tyler "Ninja" Blevins, for a session on his Twitch stream.

When Drake joined Ninja's stream it broke the platform's record for concurrent viewers on an individual stream and Ninja received more than 50,000 new subscribers. Broadcasters can replicate the Drake effect by using stars that mainstream audiences already know and love as influencers and ambassadors for their TV esports offerings.



The eSports ecosystem, from “The eSports Boom, and the Numbers Behind the Sector’s Explosive Growth”, visualcapitalist.com (May 2019)
 LOL (League of Legends), Fortnite, Dota 2, Counter Strike are all video games

Document 5



All-star League of Legends, Paris, 2014 (Photographer: Helena Kristiansson)