

# WORLD OF WONDERS

## A BRAVE NEW WORLD

知の探索

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**World of Wonders: A Brave New World**

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# Preface

*World of Wonders: A Brave New World* is the third in a series of books looking at a variety of important trends that are shaping the modern world. Each of the chapters examines a topic or issue that affects our lives, or which will change our lives in the future. We hope that you will find these topics interesting and thought-provoking. We also hope that they will be sufficiently stimulating to encourage you to learn more about these topics and issues.

The topics covered in the 20 essays range widely and are grouped into four sections: the worlds of culture and society, science and technology, business and economics, and politics and international relations. The topics are drawn from a number of areas ranging from one of the world's favorite toys (Lego), to the importance of taking part in democratic elections. We hope that having read these essays, you will actively seek to develop your own views on the issues raised in this book, and that you will debate them vigorously.

As well as notes in Japanese following each essay, each chapter contains a pre-reading vocabulary exercise and post-reading exercises that are presented to test your comprehension of the essays. There is also a summary exercise for every chapter.

Finally, while we have tried to ensure that the material in this book is up-to-date, due to the fast-changing nature of some of the topics, it is inevitable that by the time the book is published, some things may have changed.

We sincerely hope you enjoy the book.

Anthony Sellick



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# Building Blocks, Building Minds

## *The Amazing Success of Lego*

### Useful Words

Choose a word from the list below to complete each sentence.

1. After he got his \_\_\_\_\_, nobody could copy his invention.
2. Losing weight is one \_\_\_\_\_ of exercise.
3. It is important for companies to \_\_\_\_\_ and develop new products.
4. Many people create videos and \_\_\_\_\_ them to YouTube for everyone to watch.
5. He \_\_\_\_\_ reads books. That is why he is so knowledgeable.

upload


patent

constantly

innovate

benefit

### Reading

① 02~08 02 

**1** Have you ever played with Lego? Lego is one of the biggest toy companies in the world and one of the most well-known toy brands. Lego was founded in Denmark in 1932 by Ole Kirk Christiansen. The company originally made high-quality toys from wood. However, in 1958, Ole's son, Godtfred Kirk Christiansen, patented the now famous plastic Lego block. The word Lego is derived from "leg godt," which means "play well," in Danish. It also means "I put together," in Latin. Lego is a special kind of toy that



A young boy displaying his Lego collection and an original spaceship he made himself.

can inspire, educate, and entertain both children and adults.

03 

**2** Lego's simple plastic building blocks encourage people to use their imagination and discover many different ways to play with them. This has become known as the "Lego System of Play," and is the foundation of the huge success of the toy. Many people play with Lego their entire lives — from beginner sets when they are young, through more advanced sets as they get older, to enjoying Lego with their children as adults. In this way, Lego truly spans generations.

04 

**3** The key to Lego's appeal is simply that children love to play with it. As all Lego blocks fit together, children can constantly make new toys and invent stories involving their creations. As well as being entertaining and encouraging creativity, playing with Lego also has other benefits. Scientists have found that playing with Lego when very young can improve children's ability in math, perceptual skills, and problem-solving. Along with all these benefits, it provides a great connection between children and their parents. This ability of Lego to encourage teamwork and collaboration has been used by psychologists to help children with autism to improve their social skills.

05 

**4** Lego does not only make toys for children, however. In 1998, the first Lego Mindstorms toys were sold. These Lego toys were for adults and allowed people to build and program robots made from special Lego bricks. In 2004, the first World Robot Olympiad (WRO) — a series of games for robots made using Lego Mindstorms — was held in Singapore with teams from four countries. In the 2016 WRO, held in India, 21,700 teams from 56 countries took part. In the 2016 FIRST LEGO League, a similar competition for elementary and junior high school students, more than 255,000 children in 31,079 teams took part.

06 

**5** As shown by Lego Mindstorms, one reason behind the continuing success of the Lego brand is its ability to evolve and innovate. In its early years, it switched from making wooden blocks to plastic bricks. At that time, plastic was not often used in toys. The company has also formed tie-ups with other popular brands such as Marvel and Star Wars, allowing fans to build their own versions of those fantasy worlds. But perhaps the most important reason for the continuing success of the Lego brand is that it listens to its customers. Lego Cusoo is a website that allows Lego fans to upload their designs and vote on other fans' designs. If a design receives more than 10,000 votes, the Lego company will consider creating and selling a set for

that design. The first two products created as a result of fans' votes on Lego Cuusoo were the Japanese Shinkai 6500 submersible in 2011 and the Japanese Hayabusa spacecraft in 2012. More recently Lego has introduced products using augmented reality such as the Lego AR Studio. Launched in December 2017, it allows children to combine physical Lego with virtual reality. For example, you can play with a fantasy castle Lego set while a fire-breathing dragon hovers above you! Lego is even used by some companies to develop their businesses, something which is called Lego Serious Play.

07 

**6** Like Disney, Lego even has its own theme parks and movies. The first Legoland opened in 1968 in Billund, Denmark. By 2017, there were Legolands in Dubai, England, Germany, Malaysia, Japan, and the United States (in California and Florida). Movies made with Lego, called brickfilms, have been made by fans since the early 1970s, and it is



The eighth Legoland opened in Nagoya, Japan on April 1, 2017.

easy to find many brickfilms on Internet sites such as YouTube. The Lego company encourages this, and between 2000 and 2003, released several Lego Studios sets for movie makers. In 2014, the first Hollywood Lego movie, called *The Lego Movie*, was released. It was a huge success, making \$469 million. Since then several more successful Lego movies have been made.

08 

**7** Today, Lego continues to be a powerful force in the toy world and beyond. Its mission “To inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow,” is still as relevant, powerful, and as fun as ever. Lego will undoubtedly continue to inspire future generations. As Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, the grandson of the founder said, “We are all growing older all the time, but we don't need to grow up. There'll always be a child inside and the child wants to have fun.”



**Ole Kirk Christiansen** 「オーレ・キアク・クリスチャンセン (1891-1958)」デンマークの玩具メーカー LEGO® (レゴ®) の創業者。Godtfred (ゴッドフレッド; 1920-1995) は三男、Kjeld (ケル; 1947-) は孫。 **Latin** 「ラテン語」 **key to** ~ 「~を理解する鍵 (ポイント)」 **perceptual skill** 「知覚能力」 **autism** 「自閉症」 **social skill** 「社会的交流能力」 対人関係における挨拶、交渉、自己主張などの技能。社会的スキル。 **World Robot Olympiad (WRO)** 「ワールド・ロボット・オリンピック (WRO)」小中高生によるロボット競技の国際大会で、毎年開催される。ロボット製作とプログラム開発のトータル技術で競う自律型ロボットのコンテスト。 **FIRST LEGO League** 「ファースト・レゴ・リーグ」米国のNPO法人「FIRST」とレゴ社が運営する国際的なロボット競技会。 **Marvel** マーベル・コミックス社がその前々身の出版社名で発刊した漫画雑誌『マーベル・コミックス』 (*Marvel Comics*) (1939~)。ここから生まれたヒーローたちはその後映画化もされ、現在もコミックスと映画の双方で米国のエンターテインメント業界をリードしている。これらのヒーローたちを総称して“マーベルの”スーパーヒーローと呼ぶ。マーベル・コミックスおよび現在の親会社であるマーベル・エンターテインメントは、キャプテン・アメリカやスパイダーマンなど超人的な力で知られる米国のスーパーヒーローのほとんどを生み出した。 **Star Wars** ジョージ・ルーカス監督によって世界観が生み出され製作された宇宙映画シリーズ。1977年にシリーズ最初の作品『スター・ウォーズ』 (*Star Wars*) が公開。後に『スター・ウォーズ エピソード4：新たなる希望』 (*Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope*) に改題されている。2015年のエピソード7からウォルト・ディズニー社が製作している。 **Lego Cuusoo** 2008~14年に運営されたウェブサイトで、後継サイトは Lego Ideas。 **vote on** ~ 「~に (ついて) 投票する」 **Shinkai 6500** 「しんかい 6500」日本の海洋研究開発機構が開発した有人潜水調査船。乗組員は3人で、6,500メートルの深海まで潜行可能。 **submersible** 「潜水艇, 潜水調査船」 **Hayabusa** 「はやぶさ」日本の宇宙航空開発機構 (JAXA) が2003年に打ち上げた小惑星探査機。2005年に小惑星「イトカワ」に着地して砂粒を採取、2010年に砂粒の入った耐熱カプセルを地球に届けた。はやぶさ自身は大気圏突入で燃え尽きた。 **augmented reality** 「拡張現実」実世界から得られる知覚情報にコンピューターで生み出される情報を重ね合わせ、人の知覚体験を豊かにする技術。 **virtual reality** 「仮想現実」 **Lego Serious Play** 「レゴ・シリアスプレイ」レゴ社が開発した組織活性化の手法。レゴブロックを用いて参加者が心の内面をブロックで立体化・可視化させ、問題解決やチームビルディング、組織のビジョンづくりなどへ導くワークショップ形式のビジネス研修。 **Billund** 「ビルン」デンマークのユトランド半島中央部の町で、レゴ本社もある。 **Dubai** 「ドバイ」アラブ首長国連邦を構成する7首長国の1つ。アラビア半島南東部のペルシャ湾の出口に位置する。首都はドバイ市。 **brickfilm** 「ブリックフィルム」レゴブロックなどのプラスチック製ブロック玩具を使用して制作されたコマ撮りアニメーション映画。日本語のレゴブロックは、英語では Lego brick と呼ばれている。brick は「煉瓦 (れんが)」の意。

## Questions for Understanding

### Part 1

Look at the following statements. Write T if the statement is true, and F if it is false. Write the number of the paragraph where you find the answer in the parenthesis.

1. Since it began, Lego has made its toys from plastic.

T/F   
(# )

2. Lego is popular both with children and adults.

T/F   
(# )

3. Playing with Lego can help children to become inventors. T/F  
(#      )
4. Lego allows its customers to decide new designs via an online system. T/F  
(#      )

**Part 2** *Look at the questions below. Check the best answer for each.*

1. What is the main reason that Lego is popular?
  - a.  Lego is very good at marketing.
  - b.  Lego helps children to do well at school.
  - c.  Lego is enjoyed by children.
  - d.  Lego teaches people about new technology.
2. When will Lego decide to manufacture a Lego set on Cuusoo?
  - a.  When it is confirmed that there will be a tie-up with a big brand
  - b.  When the number of customer votes reaches a certain number
  - c.  When a large number of customers write to the company suggesting a certain model
  - d.  When children testing the models confirm it is popular
3. Why was the first Hollywood Lego movie made?
  - a.  Because Disney suggested a partnership deal
  - b.  Because many Lego fans told the company they wanted to see one
  - c.  Because the brickfilms suggested that there was a demand for an official movie
  - d.  Because a movie studio was created at Legoland in Denmark
4. What does Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen mean by his statement “We are all growing older all the time, but we don’t need to grow up.”?
  - a.  Lego is still popular among children of all ages
  - b.  Lego is trying to increase its popularity among adults
  - c.  Lego reminds us it is important to maintain a childlike curiosity in life
  - d.  Lego helps older people to relate to younger people

## Summary

Fill each space with the best word or phrase from the list below.

enhance   relevant   evolve   Olympiad   derived from   put together

The word Lego is 1) \_\_\_\_\_ the Danish words “leg godt” which means “play well,” and the company has delighted children and adults for generations. Lego blocks can be 2) \_\_\_\_\_ in an endless number of ways, which fires the imaginations of those playing with them. One key to Lego’s success is its ability to 3) \_\_\_\_\_ and keep offering new sets to play with. Another is to incorporate new technology into their “system of play.” In 2004, a robot 4) \_\_\_\_\_ was held in Singapore, in which all the robots were made from Lego Mindstorms sets. Lego’s success seems assured as it continues to 5) \_\_\_\_\_ its products in order to remain 6) \_\_\_\_\_ to new generations of customers.

## What do YOU think?

Choose ONE of the statements below. Do you agree or disagree with it? Why? Prepare a short response giving your opinion.

- ▶ Lego is the best toy in the world.
- ▶ If you don’t encourage your children to play with Lego, you are a bad parent.

.....

.....

.....

.....

*You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.*

Plato (428-348 BCE)  
Ancient Greek philosopher