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By: Filip Truta, Games Editor



[Lego Star Wars Tested on 8-Year-Olds](#)

Producer Jonathan Smith reveals his secrets of making games based on children's reactions

Who would have guessed that we could be playing games tested by children whose influence was crucial in the making-of process? [Lego Star Wars](#) producer, [Jonathan Smith](#), told Gamespot that using [eight-year-olds](#) for testing games has been his secret for a long time and has made a pretty nice comment on the matter too: "They like moving forward in a game. They like funny things happening in a game when they press buttons. They love, more than you can possibly believe, cheats. ... They dislike waiting for anything, and the universal phrase is that if something is too difficult, that doesn't necessarily mean that it's too challenging, it means that they don't understand what they're being asked to do ... the game designer is asking something from them, but they're not asking the kids clearly enough and not giving appropriate feedback to their attempts to overcome the challenge. It's rarely a skill difficulty." You know what? I don't think I can contradict anything in this man's statement. Although I consider a challenging game to be interesting, I can't help realizing that Smith is right. A difficult portion of the game (chapter, episode, level) isn't always just another challenge. [Programmers](#) sometimes miss certain aspects (them knowing the answer to the problem put in for you to solve) and then release the game confident that everyone is going to be able to solve the difficult tasks the game implies. Well, certainly not everyone is on the same wave length so Smith's approach seems the most reasonable when it comes to game testing. If an eight-year-old can understand the problem faced within the game, then all developers have to do is increase the level of difficulty and the game is ready for the next phase. Still, Lego Star Wars isn't exactly a mind twisting game.