

StickyMonster

I have been playing the game “Exquisite Corpse” since I was a kid and it is my all time favorite social pastime. When given this app review assignment my mind went directly to wondering if someone has made an app for this fun and collaborative game, and I am happy to report the answer is yes. I simply typed “Exquisite Corpse” into my app search on my phone, and StickyMonster was the first thing to pop up. This free app is a virtual version of the surrealist invented technique aimed to inspire creativity and fun.

StickyMonster is collaborative and you are able to play with two, three, or four people. Each player takes a turn secretly drawing a different section of the “body” (1. hat, 2. head, 3. torso, 4. legs and feet) without seeing the other parts of the body that other players have drawn. Not until each part has been drawn does the app display the image as a whole, a sort of silly monster creation, and then turns it into a “sticker” that you can use in your text messages. Since I was already familiar with this typically pen and paper played game, I already understood the concept of the game, but playing with others who had never heard of the game before, they reported that after the first game they realized the intended outcome and the fun possibilities that could be created.

Aside from understanding the *point* of the game, the app is overall straightforward once you figure out how to download it and actually play. The initial downloading and playing with a friend/friends is not a clear process and I had to search in google how to do so. The game is played through iMessage, so after the app is installed, you must enable it to be used in your iMessage settings. It then appears as an icon in the icon row above the keyboard when you are texting. The second issue is that aside from a short intro when you download the app, there isn't an initial “how to” instruction or tour of the app contents. There are “hints” displayed at the

bottom of the screen informing you that you can 1. hold down the marker dot to change the size, 2. Hold down the color dots to see more color varieties, 3. Pinch the screen to zoom in and out, but these are written in a very small font. Many friends that I introduced the game to often asked me how I changed the marker size or drew with a different hue color. I figured out these three (and there really are only 3) components of this app just by playing with a friend on it for about three rounds. The only other issue I have with this app is that it is unfortunately only available to be played on iphones.

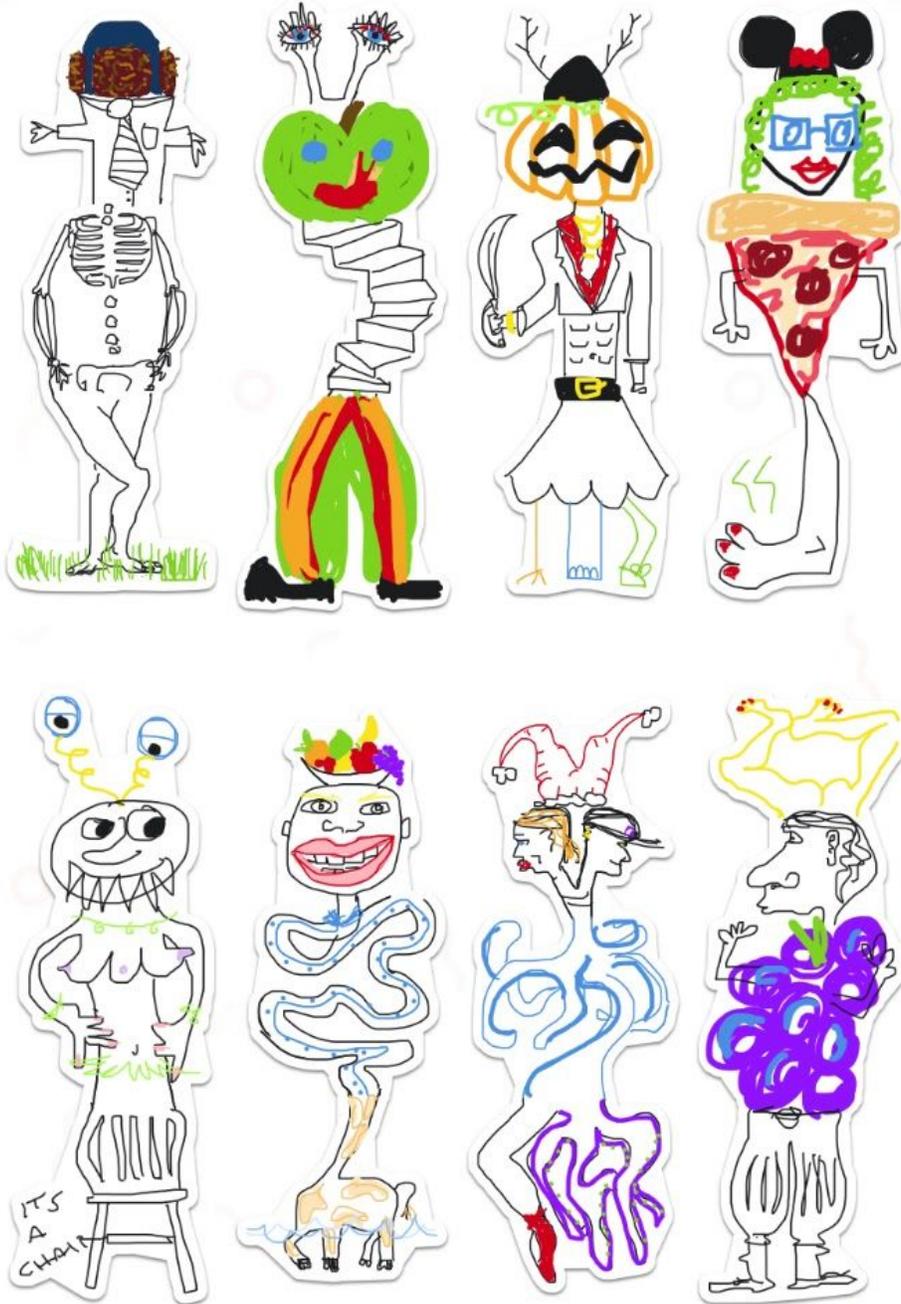
In many ways this app reconnected me to my friends. Before quarantine this game was very prevalent in our social gatherings. While hanging out, sitting at the beach, talking, eating, etc. a piece of paper would be passed around and we'd play Exquisite Corpse as if it were second nature. Since the pandemic I have felt, like others, cut off from my friends and their creative influence. Playing this with them, no matter where each of us are, has reconnected us and truly brought joy to each of us. I can see this game being used in and out of the physical classroom during the time of virtual learning. I think this app can be used as an icebreaker for students to get to know each other, and I think it could be used in both middle school and high school. It's a way for kids to create something together, no matter how far apart they are, and with an individuality aspect.

One thing teachers would have to monitor is the content that the students are drawing, because we all know there will end up being something like a penis in at least 4 out of 10 of the middle school students' drawings because that's just the age they're at. This immaturity can really spoil and disrespect the project for the other students involved who are looking forward to the end result. Instructions should be clear, and students should consent to not involving inappropriate images in their drawings.

I feel that the biggest thing students could learn from this game is how to think outside of the box- *ok, it's asking me to draw the torso- but what could I draw instead of just a human torso? Could it be.. A pumpkin torso? An octopus? A staircase?* Once the player starts thinking outside of the box, is when the outcome of the game really turns into something spectacular. You could also use it in order for students to create something based off of a story; say you read the Jabberwocky poem- allow each group of students to draw a different part of the body, how they imagined it, and see what it looks like with each students' input. This game is able to be played by those with all different levels of artistic abilities, and no matter the ability, the creation always comes out interesting and fun. Another great thing about this app is that it may be played by students with all backgrounds; ESL students and students with varying academic disabilities.

The last fun addition to this app is that once you are finished playing, it stores your drawings in your iMessage icon app folder so that you can then use them in your texts like "stickers". You can also look through the apps "gallery" of other users' stickers to get inspiration or just see how others are using the app. Overall I think this is a great app. Even after simply explaining to friends how to get started, they immediately fell in love with it and I can confidently say we are all addicted.

This is a series of StickyMonsters that I created with friends!



I have also included a few snapshots of friends' reactions to the app after playing for the first time, as well as their inquiries pertaining to how to use the app.

