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### How Friendship Was Key In Ready Player One

*Ready Player One* had many different elements. One element that really stood out was the element of friendship and how it helped the main ensemble conquer any challenge they were faced with. Within the novel, Wade's friendships and teamwork are vital to winning the competition proposed by James Halliday. Through friendship, the main four were able to overcome extreme odds, such as the Sixers at IOI hunting them down with the intent to kill them. The Sixers themselves are also a good example of teamwork prospering, even if they were technically cheating at Halliday's competition. Regardless of how teamwork was used, it's still a vital theme within the story.

The main ensemble of characters achieve their goals through the use of friendship and teamwork. One strong friendship within the story is Wade and Aech. Even after meeting Aech in person later on in the book, they still remain friends despite their differences. Aech's friendship with Wade is full of banter and lighthearted jokes. One example of this is when Aech is taunting Wade for his love of *Ladyhawke*. "He wasn't going to take the bait. I eyed the magazine's cover. 'Hey, can I have a look at that when you're done?' He grinned. 'Why? So you can read the article on *Ladyhawke*?' 'Maybe.' " (Cline 40). This is a great example of their lighthearted banter, showing they can tease each other like that. One good use of teamwork at the early points of the novel is when Wade and Art3mis are at the tomb that holds the first key they need in the competition. Wade gets the key first, and after claiming it first, he runs into Art3mis. She

questions him a lot on why he was there, and she presses him to see if he'd defeated the lich at *Joust*. He did, though he initially tried lying. Art3mis figured out he was, and pressed him for tips. He did give her one tip. That tip was “ ‘Try playing on the left side... I think he might be easier to beat if he's playing the stork.’ ” (Cline 98). Teamwork like this allowed the main ensemble to get their hands on the Copper Key and carry on with Halliday's game.

The hunt itself was a competition, but could not be completed without the use of teamwork. The third gate required the “power of three” in order to open it. The hunt itself was a battle for control of the OASIS. Since no one wanted IOI and the Sixers to have control of it, they all teamed up against the Sixers at multiple points within the story. The main group determined that the third gate did require the “power of three” to open from a reference to *Schoolhouse Rock*. They come to this revelation when Wade suggests reciting the words on the gate backwards. When they did, they got “faith and hope and charity” (Cline 307), which Aech then picks up and carries on with “the heart and the brain and the body...” (Cline 307), with Shoto closing off with “give you three... as a magic number!” (Cline 307). After they recite this whole thing, they all confidently say *Schoolhouse Rock*. Though, after figuring this out, the main group wonders if Halliday's ultimate goal was to have a team of people get through the third gate. Then they jump to the Sixers and how they have yet to get the reference and open the gate. To fight the Sixers to get to the gate, Wade proposes a plan to put together the biggest team, a team of all of the gunters to go against the Sixers to win the hunt. Art3mis doubts that people would even want to fight the Sixers, but Aech believes Wade is right in his assumption that everyone wants to see the Sixers gone and out of the hunt for Halliday's egg. When Wade proposes the fight against the Sixers, he sends a copy of his call to action email to Shoto, Aech, and Art3mis. He tells them “I'm sending each of you a copy of this message... Send it to

everyone on your contacts list. Broadcast it on your POV channels. We have thirty-six hours to spread the word” (Cline 311). The hope that the rest of the OASIS gunters will form a team, and the reveal of the third gate requiring the teamwork of three people, are good examples of teamwork within the novel.

In an alternative to the main ensemble and the gunters of the OASIS, the Sixers are also considered a team. IOI and their Sixers work together to tackle Halliday’s hunt, even though they cheated and committed murder to get there. Once the information about the first gate gets out, the Sixers all take up the rest of the leaderboard. The Sixers cheated to get there, through Sorrento admitting that the company’s avatars can be controlled by multiple different players at once. Sorrento tells Wade that IOI’s “systems allow multiple operators to control the oologist avatars”(Cline 137). Sorrento further explains that IOI does this with the oologist avatars because if they encounter something one person can’t do, then the avatar can be “transferred to the team member with skills best suited to deal with the situation”(Cline 138). Wade tells Sorrento that that’s essentially cheating, but Sorrento blows him off and tells him “Halliday’s contest doesn’t have any rules” (Cline 138). The Sixers just fed each other relevant information to get through the contest, which defeats the purpose of the contest itself and how Halliday intended it to be. Though the Sixers are technically a team, they don’t know that working together as a team is the key to finishing the third gate. The main ensemble has the advantage of teamwork and knowing that teamwork will get them through the third gate in the end. They also fight the Sixers using teamwork and by teaming up with every other gunter in the OASIS to take them down. Though the Sixers were a team, the main ensemble is a better team than them.

Overall, the theme of friendship and teamwork is a strong one. The main ensemble of Aech, Art3mis, Wade, and Shoto are good examples of how friendship and teamwork make things so much easier. The obstacle of the third gate in Halliday's hunt forced them to work together instead of competing. Wade gave advice to Art3mis at the beginning, so she could beat the lich at *Joust* and be the second person to get the first key. The main ensemble then worked together to get the puzzle of the third gate unlocked, where they realized they needed the power of three in order to open the gate to get to the third trial. They also showed the power of teamwork being the key through inviting all of the gunters in the OASIS to fight IOI and the Sixers. The Sixers themselves are also a team, though it's a very loose use of the title. Teamwork and friendship will get people far, and the use of the theme within the novel proves that claim.

Works Cited

Cline, Ernest. *Ready Player One*. Crown Publishing Group, 2011.