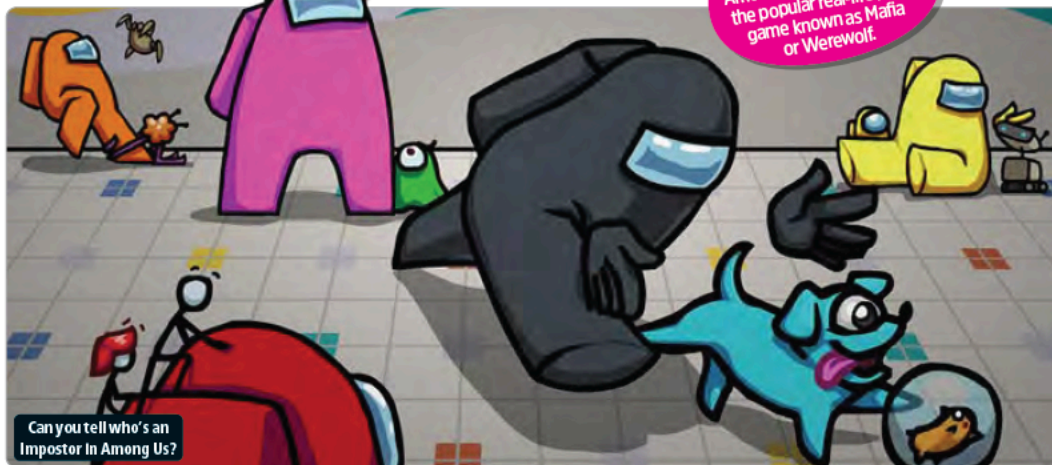




On screen

ONLINE MYSTERY

Among Us was inspired by the popular real-life party game known as Mafia or Werewolf.



Among Us is game of the year

In a year of social distancing and remote schooling, one game brought people together: Among Us. Every day, about 60 million people play the surprise hit of the year. The multiplayer party game came out in the summer of 2018, but it didn't get much attention until popular Twitch streamers began playing it online in the summer of 2020. By late September, Among Us had more than 100 million downloads. Later that month, more than three million gamers were playing it at the same moment.

You and your friends can set up a game, or you can join a random game. In each round, players control colorful space people, known as crewmates. You perform odd jobs around the ship, like fixing lights, repairing the engine—and catching a killer. You customize your crewmate's color, name, and hat before

the action begins. Next you choose from three different maps, each with a different design and many rooms. While most players run around fixing things, one to three players are secret "Impostors." Impostors sneak around killing other players, without violence and without being seen. They cause trouble and have special skills, like the ability to travel through vents.

When a crewmate is killed, the other players go to a chat room to identify Impostors. But Impostors are also in the chat and can lie to confuse you. It can get loud and hilarious as you debate who's telling the truth and who's not. Whether you're right or wrong—or whether there's more than one Impostor—determines what happens next. The rounds fly by, and Among Us can make you feel like you're right there with friends, even when you're apart.

PODCAST OF THE YEAR

STORY SEEDS

storyseedspodcast.com

In each episode, a young reader and a children's book author collaborate on an original story, starting with the child's idea. Authors include Jason Reynolds, Tracey Baptiste, and Chris Grabenstein, with topics like magic earthworms, theater mysteries, and very tall detectives.



APP OF THE YEAR



1 SECOND EVERY DAY: VIDEO DIARY

Google Play, iTunes
Time flies, but this app makes it easy to remember all the fun things you've done. Just record yourself for one second of each day, and the app will stitch those moments together into a custom video. At the end of the year, you'll be amazed by all you've accomplished.

VIDEO OF THE YEAR

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE ALL STOPPED

tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Poem

A beautifully animated video brings to life a poem about how the planet has thrived while we stayed home due to the coronavirus. Dr. Jane Goodall, a famous scientist, reads the poem with great emotion, providing hope to viewers who want to protect Earth.



IMAGE: COURTESY STORYSEEDS; COURTESY SEALAMY