

## Games at the Library 2021 Report

**Jennifer Devlin, Games at the Library Convenor**

The 2021 Games at the Library week was held from Sunday, October 17 through to Saturday, October 23 inclusively. These dates were chosen so APLA's Games at the Library could align with celebrating Canadian Library Month. It was important this year, more than ever, to provide opportunities for community members to practice self-care through fun experiences and to connect with their communities in safe ways.

All participants during Games at the Library week were eligible to enter their names in the grand prize draw, which took place November 16, 2021. This year, there were 372 ballots submitted for the grand prize draw and 445 participants.

A total of 48 libraries sent in ballots and tally sheets in 2021. This rate of participation has increased from Games at the Library 2020, when only fifteen libraries submitted ballots and tally sheets. Rates of library participation were possibly improved due to the slight improvement in Covid-19 cases in the fall, in most places. Putting on a socially distanced, safe, game-themed event was a challenge, and many libraries may not have the resources to be able to put on an event while also following safety procedures. Even so, there may have been more participants willing and able to attend than last year and there were also more online offerings this year.

Library staff were very creative and put in extra time to organize, given the added challenge of making the event fun, safe, and socially distanced. Libraries offered many types of games including board, card, video, and building games (both socially distanced and lent for the week to family bubbles). Active and outdoor games were also offered. Virtual games included online trivia and an online escape room. Other games offered included: puzzles, trivia, Scrabble (patrons vs. librarians), Duplicate Scrabble, a pet photo contest, and guessing games.

Games included practicing literacy, creativity, memory, strategic thinking, problem solving, spatial analysis, nonverbal reasoning, and motor skills. Libraries held socially distanced games to encourage social connection while following state of emergency restrictions.

**Zachery MacDonald** participated in the 2021 Games at the Library week at Stone Park Intermediate School in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island and won the grand prize of an online gift card for EB Games (now Gamestop) of \$175!

Many thanks to **Keri McCaffrey** (APLA Technology Coordinator) for disseminating the information about Games at the Library online via the APLA Games at the Library Website and the APLA social media account. Thanks also to **Terri Winchcombe** (APLA Treasurer) for coordinating the prize, and APLA President **Marc Harper** for his guidance and support. Finally, a big thank you to everyone who held a Games at the Library event this year! The goal of Games at the Library is to show that libraries are places where people meet, learn, and have fun. That goal was met, and libraries were celebrated through the wide range of successful activities offered by Atlantic libraries during the Games at the Library 2021.