

Livestreaming star and Drake share their video gaming on Twitch

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A scene from the video game "Fortnite." Photo by: Epic games

On the night of Wednesday, March 14, Drake, the famous rapper, tweeted that he was going to play a video game.

He wasn't alone. Drake played the game "Fortnite" live on Twitch, the streaming platform where you can watch other people play video games. He played with Ninja, a rising video game streaming star. He also played with rapper Travis Scott, and Pittsburgh Steelers football player JuJu Smith-Schuster. The resulting stream broke viewing records for Twitch. It became an extremely big deal online very quickly.

The reasons why will be obvious for some, but the rest of you might need an explainer.

What Is Twitch?

"Streaming" video games refers to playing them online through a livestreaming service. The people who do this are called "streamers." Twitch is the most popular of these platforms, but some use

YouTube or another service. Some streamers earn money as they play, through a combination of ads, sponsorships, merchandise sales and paid subscribers.

Comedic And Competitive Content

Yes. It is actually an extremely popular genre of online content and has been for some years now.

PewDiePie is a popular and controversial YouTuber. He got famous by playing video games on his channel and commenting on them as he played. Some personalities like PewDiePie make what are more or less comedy videos, where their actual skill at playing the game doesn't matter. Others are more competitive.

Tyler Blevins, Twitch Star

"Ninja" is Tyler Blevins, a Twitch streamer and YouTuber whose popularity has exploded over the past several weeks. He's a former competitive "Halo" player. He now stands to make more than \$100,000 a month by streaming on Twitch. He has 3 million Twitch followers and 4 million YouTube subscribers.

After streaming with Drake, Ninja now has more than 180,000 paying subscribers on Twitch. Many people subscribe to channels on Twitch in order to support their favorite personalities.

Some are suspicious of Ninja's quick rise. Julia Alexander is a writer for the site Polygon, which covers the video game industry. She said that some in the streaming community suspect bots or some other form of trickery are responsible for Ninja's rise. Bots, or Internet robots, are a type of software that performs automated tasks. They do simple and repetitive tasks much quicker than a human can. This could include adding followers on social media sites. Ninja's rise could also be explained by his incredible mastery of "Fortnite." That game has also become extremely popular, very quickly.

Fortifications Against Zombies

"Fortnite" is currently the most popular competitive video game. It is a little bit like "Minecraft." A lot of the gameplay involves breaking down and collecting resources to create fortifications against a zombie horde.

The version Drake and Ninja played was "Fortnite Battle Royale," which is completely free to play. The "Battle Royale" feature was added late in 2017.

The Battle Royale concept takes after the cult Japanese film of the same name. In the game, there are 100 players in an ever-shrinking map armed with nothing but a pickaxe. Players have to scramble for resources and weapons and survive fighting each other, instead of the zombies in the original game. You can have up to four members in a team. Wednesday night, that was Ninja, Drake, Travis Scott and JuJu.

Honestly, it's just really fun to watch people play the Battle Royale mode. It's a great combination of tough and lighthearted. The gameplay is pretty different every time, too, which means it's not super repetitive to watch a bunch of different people stream the same game multiple times. Also, it doesn't hurt that this particular version of the game is free to play.

Drake Needed A Break

During the stream, Drake told Ninja he'd been playing "Fortnite" for "a month or two." He said he plays video games a lot during his downtime in the recording studio. "We stay in the studio for so long, sometimes like 20 hours," Drake said. "It's just nice to take a little mental break."

It turns out Drake is a fan and regular viewer of Ninja's streams. The rapper is an avid Instagram user and found Instagram clips of Ninja. He then started following his account. Ninja nearly fell out of his chair during a stream when he realized that Drake was following him.

We Meme It

Yes. Drake is already the source of multiple memes. That made it extremely easy to meme the heck out of his hour streaming with Ninja.

So Who Won?

Definitely Ninja, because he added all those subscribers. The makers of "Fortnite" also win, because a lot of new people have now heard about this game because Drake played it.

Quiz

- 1 Which sentence from the article BEST supports the idea that Drake playing "Fortnite" with Ninja was a popular event?
- (A) He played with Ninja, a rising video game streaming star.
 - (B) The resulting stream broke viewing records for Twitch.
 - (C) Some streamers earn money as they play, through a combination of ads, sponsorships, merchandise sales and paid subscribers.
 - (D) He then started following his account. Ninja nearly fell out of his chair during a stream when he realized that Drake was following him.
- 2 How effective is the last section "So Who Won?" as the conclusion of the article?
- (A) The conclusion is very effective because it explains the final results of the event described in the introduction.
 - (B) The conclusion is very effective because it shows who won the game "Fortnite" when Drake played it with other people.
 - (C) The conclusion is not effective because it says that Ninja added subscribers but does not say how many.
 - (D) The conclusion is not effective because there is no relationship between the section and the introduction.
- 3 Read the section "Tyler Blevins, Twitch Star."
- What does this section explain that other sections DO NOT?
- (A) that Ninja is a popular streamer
 - (B) that Ninja streamed with Drake
 - (C) that Ninja and Drake played a video game on platform Twitch
 - (D) that Ninja might have become popular with the help of bots
- 4 Which sentence from the section "Fortifications Against Zombies" shows the author's MAIN opinion about Battle Royale?
- (A) The version Drake and Ninja played was "Fortnite Battle Royale," which is completely free to play.
 - (B) The Battle Royale concept takes after the cult Japanese film of the same name.
 - (C) In the game, there are 100 players in an ever-shrinking map armed with nothing but a pickaxe.
 - (D) Honestly, it's just really fun to watch people play the Battle Royale mode.