

Worksheet 1: Computer Games Facts about Phobias

The heavy gamers, who played an average of 31 hours a week... were more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety and social phobias.

A phobia is an irrational fear of an object or situation. Social phobias, as mentioned in the excerpt above from *Computer Games*, is the fear of being in social situations. Other phobias deal with the fear of a specific trigger such as public speaking, spiders and heights. Although these fears are relatively common, they can become a problem if they prevent the sufferer from living a normal life.

Task 1: Match up the phobia to their correct name:

Aviophobia	fear of flowers
Frigophobia	fear of fire
Acrophobia	fear of being too cold
Hylophobia	fear of the dark
Nosocomophobia	fear of being closed in
Thalassophobia	fear of being laughed at
Glossophobia	fear of heights
Photophobia	fear of germs
Cyberphobia	fear of flying
Gelotophobia	fear of hospitals
Anthophobia	fear of the sea
Mysophobia	fear of public speaking
Achluophobia	fear of computers
Pyrophobia	fear of light
Claustrophobia	fear of trees

Task 2: There is even a name for the fear of having a phobia! What is it? What about these other odd phobias: fear of hair, rain, clowns, vomiting and belly buttons?

Task 3: The word *phobia* actually derives from the Greek word '*phobos*' meaning 'fear'. Study the names of these phobias and see if you can work out what fears they relate to: *Pharmacophobia*, *Phonophobia*, *Seismophobia*, *Spectrophobia*, *Technophobia*, *Aquaphobia*, *Thermophobia* and *Dentophobia*.

Task 4: Did you know? *Zoophobia* is the term used for a fear of animals. Locate the specific terms used for the fear of these animals: cats, bees, spiders, cattle, bats, dogs, insects, horse, reptiles, horses, fish, snakes, birds, mice, frogs, sharks and worms.

Extension Activity:

- Some phobias are neologisms (newly invented words) e.g. *Aibohphobia* – fear of palindromes (try and work it out!), *Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia* – fear of long words, *Monkeyphobia* – fear of monkeys (as seen in the cartoon *Kim Possible*) and *Robophobia* – fear of robots and/or androids (from *Doctor Who*). Invent your own 'phobias' and see if your classmates can figure them out.