



## DO I-KNOW-VATION?

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“There's a zombie on your lawn... I don't want zombies on my lawn.” You probably haven't played Plants vs. Zombies yet if you just plainly read the quoted text. You ought to have sung it – yes it is a song and the first single in the record of the singing sunflowers. Cannot follow? Play the game; guaranteed: no regrets.

Many people – children and adults – have once been addicted to this game. Why? It is because the game is a perfect example of a product of innovation. A genius has come up with a marvelous game. An introduction of a cutting edge invention that creates a great impact on many people is innovation. How is it achieved? The equation is simple: one's creativity plus purpose plus work. There are many computer games out there, but only few stand out. However, innovation is not only about the best of games, but virtually about the exceptional of everything. TV show: we have the perennial Pokémon; technology: Job's Apple is just one of the many; movies: the superb effects of science fiction films.

Innovations are not limited to physical things. May I coin the word “abstract innovations” to describe the presentation of new ideas that are not only perceived by the senses? Style in singing could be one as methods of teaching could be another. Some may argue that these forms of innovation are still, more or less, observed by the human perceptions; however, they may only be seeing the utilization of them. It follows this pattern: creation of ideas – devising an invention – putting into usage. Similar to: discovery in science – development of technology – employment of end products. The same with: creativity – innovation – utilization.

Why is innovation important? Why else but it benefits humans. I believe a historical overview will help us understand. Wave 1: the earliest ancestors of humans invented tools made of animal bones and stones. Wave 5: one dexterous Mesopotamian invented the wheel. Mind you, if he – whoever he was – had missed it, we might not be having cars until now. Wave 25: the birth of spacecrafts for explorations. Wave 50: the internet! Need I say more about the benefits of it? Wave 75: gadgets, and more gadgets, we are all drowning. Wave 71: Plants vs. Zombies. Wave 72: Angry Birds. And pretty soon, Wave 125: human colonies on Mars.

Innovation improves the quality of living. At times, it may also help people achieve longevity. It greatly affects the many different aspects of culture, though people usually just link innovation to technology.

Why is it good to be innovative? First, people will appreciate the work. Personally, I admired the inventors of Plants vs. Zombies in the superlative. I couldn't have thought of that myself, and many more, I am certain. So applause, applause for them creators! Second, you inspire others. You put innovation on the face of the planet, others' creativity may be aroused, and in turn, they may produce equally-beneficial innovative stuff.

Everyone can be innovative in his or her own way. Just because you are not good at science theories does not mean that you cannot introduce a magnificent invention. Explore thy inner talent, and use them accordingly. Thinking? Good! Creating? Better!

Questions for discussion:

1. Do some reflection. Because everyone can be innovative. What is the probable scope of yours?
2. How is innovation influential?
3. What is the greatest “giant leap for mankind”?
4. Why is creativity different from innovation?
5. What can you say about “abstract innovation”?
6. BONUS QUESTION: What are your favorite plants when playing Plants vs. Zombies, Survival Endless Mode.