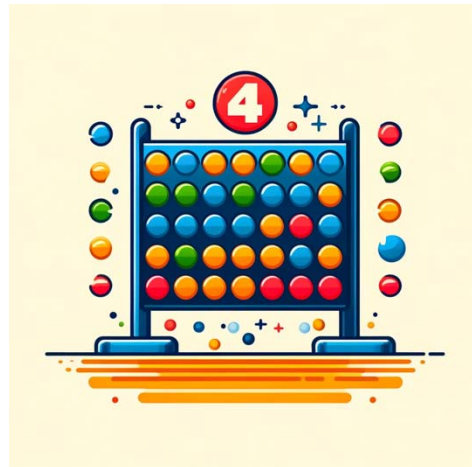


Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Connect 4: The Classic Game of Strategy and Alignment

Connect 4 is a beloved two-player board game that challenges players to strategize, think ahead, and outmaneuver their opponents in a race to form a winning alignment. In this reading passage, we will delve into the rules and gameplay of Connect 4, uncover the game's intriguing history, and explore the strategies that players employ to achieve victory.

### How to Play

Connect 4 is a game played on a 6x7 grid, commonly referred to as the "Connect 4 grid." The objective of the game is to be the first player to form a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal alignment of four of their colored discs. Here's how to play:

- **Setup:** Each player selects a color of discs—typically red or yellow—and takes turns dropping one disc at a time into any of the seven columns on the grid. The discs will fall to the lowest available space in the selected column.
- **Taking Turns:** Players alternate turns, with each player dropping one disc per turn. The discs stack on top of each other within the columns.
- **Winning the Game:** The game continues until one player successfully forms a line of four of their colored discs, either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. When this occurs, the player announces "Connect 4!" and wins the game.

### History of Connect 4

Connect 4 was invented by Howard Wexler and Ned Strongin in 1974. It was initially introduced under the name "Connect Four" by the Milton Bradley Company (now a subsidiary of Hasbro). The game quickly gained popularity and became a classic board game, cherished for its simplicity, quick gameplay, and strategic depth.

Connect 4 has also found its way into popular culture, appearing in movies, TV shows, and even as a life-sized game at amusement parks. Its enduring appeal lies in its accessibility to players of all ages and its ability to foster critical thinking and spatial reasoning.

