Name _____

## Mario: A Plumber's Odyssey through the Mushroom Kingdom

Mario, the iconic plumber with a red cap and blue overalls, has been a central figure in the world of video games for decades. From his humble beginnings as the star of "Donkey Kong" to his modern adventures in the "Super Mario" series, Mario has become a beloved character known to gamers of all ages.

Mario made his first appearance in the 1981 arcade game "Donkey Kong." Created by Shigeru Miyamoto, Mario was originally named "Jumpman" and tasked with rescuing a damsel in distress from a giant ape named Donkey Kong. His red attire and mustache quickly became defining features.

**Super Mario Bros. Revolution**

In 1985, "Super Mario Bros." was released for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES). This groundbreaking platformer allowed players to control Mario as he journeyed through the Mushroom Kingdom to rescue Princess Peach from the clutches of Bowser, the primary antagonist. The game's success established Mario as a gaming icon.

**Expanding the Franchise**

The success of "Super Mario Bros." led to a wide range of sequels and spin-off titles. These included "Super Mario 2," "Super Mario 3," and "Super Mario World," each introducing new gameplay mechanics, power-ups, and enemies. Mario also ventured into other genres, such as racing with "Mario Kart" and sports with "Mario Tennis" and "Mario Golf."

**Mario in 3D**

In 1996, "Super Mario 64" marked Mario's leap into the world of 3D gaming. This innovative title for the Nintendo 64 allowed players to explore Princess Peach's castle and jump into various paintings to access different worlds. Mario's 3D adventures continued with titles like "Super Mario Sunshine," "Super Mario Galaxy," and "Super Mario Odyssey."

**Cultural Impact**

Mario's popularity extended beyond video games, with appearances in cartoons, merchandise, and theme park attractions. The animated series "Super Mario Bros. Super Show!" introduced a generation of fans to Mario's adventures outside of gaming.

**Modern Times**

In the present day, Mario remains a vital part of Nintendo's gaming lineup. "Super Mario Maker" allows players to create their own Mario levels, and "Super Mario 3D All-Stars" brought classic 3D Mario titles to the Nintendo Switch. Mario continues to explore new worlds, rescue Princess Peach, and thwart Bowser's schemes in the ever-evolving "Super Mario" series.

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