

# ***“Ralph Breaks the Internet”***

By Helen Lutz

Way back in the Dark Ages, in 1971, I took my first computer class (it was actually my very first college class). In those days computers were as big as rooms and coding was done by punching IBM cards to be fed into the computer’s reader (those cards also made lovely Christmas angel decorations). My preferred style of learning is visual; just let me watch or do something and I usually get it.



Originally I had trouble understanding the concept of directories until it was explained that a computer is just a fancy filing cabinet. Each of its drawers is a directory and the file folders inside are sub-directories, files and so on. After watching Disney’s new film “Ralph Breaks the Internet,” I now understand how the Internet works!

Several years ago we were introduced to the inner workings of video arcade games featuring a cute little girl who loves racing and a great big brute who crushes buildings in “Wreck-It Ralph.” Opposites attract and the two became the best of friends. “Ralph Breaks the Internet” reintroduces Ralph (voiced again by John C. Reilly) and little Vanellope (voiced by Sarah Silverman) from the Sugar Rush game. Vanellope becomes bored with the same races day after day. While trying to create new challenges for her, Ralph wrecks the game; and replacement parts are all but impossible to obtain.

Litwak’s Arcade, home to Ralph’s and Vanellope’s games, finally makes a move into the 21st century with the addition of Wi-fi and THE INTERNET. After the steering wheel was broken on Vanellope’s game, Mr. Litwak finds a replacement on eBay, but it’s far too expensive; the game, and Vanellope, will have to be scrapped. Although THE INTERNET is off limits to game characters, Ralph and Vanellope manage to sneak through the barrier and enter the Internet in search of eBay.

An entirely new fast-moving world is opened up to our two friends as they venture into the high speed Internet, the difference between Boerne and New York City – amazing! Flitting around the Internet in little flying cars they see ‘buildings’ named Google, Pinterest, Amazon and a host of others. There’s a haughty search bar named KnowsMore (voiced by Alan Tudyk) as well as pop-ups, on-line shopping, viral fame and even a taste of the dark web with tweets flying everywhere. All they have to do is find eBay and get the steering wheel.

Bidding at the eBay auction turns out to be a whole bunch of fun as Ralph and Vanellope start out bidding one another resulting in a totally outrageous price – they didn’t know that they had to pay anything at check out. The duo needs money. Ralph and Vanellope venture into the adult racing game “Slaughter Race” and find the races live up to their name. There’s money to be made, but at what cost? The violence and adrenalin rush scare Ralph while Vanellope is all in – this is her kind of racing.

In order to raise the cash for the steering wheel Ralph links up with a youtube agent who turns him into a viral sensation (who needs cats?). He sucks the ‘harts’ and cash in like crazy. Vanellope ventures back to Slaughter Race to try to beat the champion Shank (voiced by Gal Gadot) and raise some real cash – fast. It’s much harder than it looks.

The two learn that nothing is quite what it seems on the Internet, especially when Ralph unleashes a virus from the dark web while trying to dissuade Vanellope from racing in Slaughter Race and finds that all of his ‘in-securities’ create a monster.

Disney does a great job in bringing the Internet to life in “Ralph Breaks the Internet” both visually and with a script which keeps kids and adults laughing throughout. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Ralph Breaks the Internet” THREE 1/2 HARTS. My nine year old grandson found it funny while my three year old granddaughter was a bit concerned about the safety of Vanellope. This one is a family winner!