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Live the Game

Figures pass each other in darkness. All are dressed in black. Helmets cover their eyes and ears. Wires hang off their heads. Hands reach out to grasp thin air. Voices echo through a maze of rooms.

A line of people stretches out the door. They can hardly wait to be next.



This is The Void. It's a theme park. But it does not look like one. The action is virtual. It takes place in a **digital** world. People see this world through computer goggles. These are called headsets.

The Void is one of the first VR parks. VR stands for **virtual reality**. A VR experience seems almost real.



Visitors step into a special room. They put on a headset. Then they choose a video game. One is set deep in a jungle. Another has a *Star Wars* theme.

The headset produces detailed scenery. The virtual worlds look **3D**. An empty room becomes an endless forest. A plain wall turns into a spaceship control center. Characters come to life. Some may be wild animals. Others might be aliens.



FAST FACT: Each player in The Void wears a backpack. It contains the computer that powers the VR system.



FAST FACT: Some teachers use VR programs in classrooms. These let students visit the places they are studying.

Sensors monitor where players are standing. Friends can see each other in the game. They are not dressed like normal. The game adds digital costumes.

Hand movements are tracked by sensors. Players can “touch” digital objects. They might swing a sword or control a spaceship.

Each player wears a special vest. This vibrates if they get hit. Players feel blows to the chest. Bombs shake them. The action seems real.

The goal of The Void is simple. It aims to create **authentic** new realities. The founders ask a question: “Why play a game when you can live it?”

Some compare VR to magic. Like magic, it offers an escape from the real world. In VR, there are few limits to what can happen. Nearly anything is possible.

VIRTUAL FITNESS

VirZoom is a company using VR to make exercise more fun. Their stationary bike works with VR headsets. Users can pedal through virtual scenes. Some look like real places. Others are imaginary. One game lets users control a winged horse. Another puts them in a race car.



Glossary

3D: stands for three-dimensional; a shape that has width, height, and depth

authentic: real and true

complex: not easy to understand

compromise: something that blends the qualities of two things

digital: using computer technology

drone: a remote-controlled aircraft

eerie: mysterious and unexpected in a way that gives someone chills

empathy: the ability to understand and share someone else's feelings

hologram: a 3D image made by lasers or another light source

illusion: something that seems real but is not