

GLOBAL  CONFLICTS

# CHECKPOINTS



## TEACHER'S MANUAL

# CONTENT

<b>MISSION: Checkpoints</b>	<b>3</b>
History	3
Summary	3
<b>Using the game</b>	<b>4</b>
Role of the teacher	4
Working with the individual assignments	5
Plot	5
Work questions:	5
Topics for bigger assignments	6
What do the students learn ?	6
Sphere of competence	6
<b>Educational layers</b>	<b>6</b>
Themes	7
Skills/Methods	7
Competences	7

# MISSION: CHECKPOINTS

## History

To some history is a straightforward business that at its core deals with the factual accounts of past events. However, any account of past events involves a certain amount of interpretation. You may downplay some elements and stress others – indeed history is as common a battleground for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the Sinai Desert. The truth about the conflict is often supported by reference to historical sources.



The choice of these references is often informed by a specific purpose, and a critical approach is therefore important to grasp the complexity of the conflict.

History is for example used to support or undermine (depending on one's agenda and viewpoint) the legitimacy of the state of Israel – the same is the case for a future Palestinian state.

## Summary

In Global Conflicts: Checkpoints the students play the role of a reporter whose abilities are being tested during the assignment. The students start the assignment by choosing which story they wish to pursue. The story will be skewed towards different recipients: pro-Israeli, Western or pro-Palestinian newspaper.

It is the students' job to uncover information through various sources, which collaborate their chosen story. This happens when talking to different characters and paying attention to important comments. When the students experience an important comment, they push their 'quote'-button. This quote is then transferred to their notebook. The students can have a limited amount of quotes in their notebook and constantly have to consider which quotes they find the most relevant. This includes thoughts like considering the content, the source of the quote, and the angle to be used in the article.

At the end of the assignment, the students choose the most important quotes and achieve points based on the news value of the quotes and how well they fit the overall angle, i.e. the newspaper they write for.

Those who focus exclusively on pro-Palestinian stories will be able to talk to this side with more ease, while some Israelis might be more apprehensive. The challenge lies in keeping the work objective while at the same time being on everybody's good side, at least those with important information to be used in the article.

While the students play the main character in Checkpoints, they are also spectators in a universe where the Israeli-Palestinian conflict rages. The students have to form an opinion in complex situations based upon their own actions, essentially seeing the conflict from the inside. In the role of a reporter, the student will meet characters that represent different attitudes to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

## USING THE GAME

This section provides guidelines for the educational use of the game. It is recommended that the teacher make certain considerations and preparations before presenting the game to students.

It should be stressed that the game cannot stand by itself. You need to facilitate the learning experience for students expanding from the above-discussed learning principles. The teacher provides an overview of the conflict to give a rudimentary understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### Role of the teacher

Teachers are encouraged to use at least two lessons to give students an overview of the conflict. Before the students have a go at the game, it is important they are motivated and aware of rudimentary facts concerning the conflict. The teacher using a mind map on the blackboard illustrating the conflict can instil this motivation.

The awareness and knowledge of the conflict can also be expanded through discussions in class, for example exploring what students have heard from the news media about the conflict. It might prove advantageous for the teacher to read up on and supplement with background material about the conflict.

While the students play, the teacher must predominantly coordinate and be aware of when the assignment should be played, and the transition between lectures, game and discussions. The order and structure of this is up to the teacher. The teacher might challenge the students' actions and choices in the game, or start discussions based on specific examples from the game.

## Working with the individual assignments

In this section we submit a suggested work structure to be used with the game in line with the learning principles above. Then the assignment is presented, with a description of themes and inspiration for work questions.

The game-mission can be completed in 25-60 minutes, based on the individual student's grasp of computer games in general and the amount of time spent in conversations with characters in the game. Should students complete the assignment with time to spare, we recommend they try it again from a different perspective.

**Assignment:** Reporting from a checkpoint in Jerusalem

**Topics:**

Checkpoints

Human rights

IDF

Security problem

Background of the conflict.

## Plot

In this episode you play the role of a freelance journalist. The crisis between Israel and Lebanon is getting more intense. There have been reports of increased problems along the border and the recent raids against weapon caches in the area around Jerusalem have all contributed to an increase in security.

In this episode, you will be asked to write a story about life at the checkpoints that are set up to check people that go in and out of the cities. Your editor want you to cover life at a checkpoint and talk to some of the people affected by the increased security. What goes on at these places and what kinds of stories are told there?

## Work questions:

- What implications do the checkpoints have for the Israeli-Palestinian relations?
- How are Palestinians treated at the checkpoints, and how do checkpoints affect their everyday life?
- How does the journalist obtain information?
- What role does security play for the Israelis?

## Topics for bigger assignments

As an extension of the work done with Checkpoints and material concerning the conflict, it is fitting to let the students write a larger assignment on one of the following topics:

- The issue of land ownership
- Terror vs. freedom fighting, martyrdom
- Settlers vs. residents
- Checkpoints and the security barrier
- Human Rights Issue

## What do the students learn ?

Checkpoints has been designed to meet professional requirements in an educational setting. When an issue, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is thoroughly illuminated from different branches of knowledge, the student attains a more coherent picture of the reasons to its existence and the cultural, religious and political powers behind it. The teacher has to consider how much attendance the different subjects should have when working with Global Conflicts: Checkpoints.

## Sphere of competence

During the educational process with Checkpoints and subsequent work questions, article writing, group synopsis, essay and/or home assignment, a series of qualities have been trained. The role-playing aspects have the strong suit to make the students naturally engross themselves in the subject, and they are automatically forced to reflect on the choices they make in the game.

This exercise also requires the students to show criticism of sources when finding quotes for the article made by the journalist, to separate vital information and form an idea of a given subject. The students' encounter with the different perspectives in Checkpoints affords them a better opportunity to view the conflict in a bigger picture and remind them that there are always more sides to a conflict than one.

## EDUCATIONAL LAYERS

The teacher can use the material in different courses by focusing on different elements of the material. The content of the game has different layers of learning that provides a number of ways for different students to explore a topic.

In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the player will experience everyday life in the conflict through real personal accounts, which puts focus on some of the main issues of the conflict. This gives the students an experience-based starting point for digging deeper into the conflict.

## Themes

- Human rights
- Terrorism
- Role of the media

In the game there will be regular references to human rights, terrorism, and the media. This provides a shared and engaging starting point for discussions of these issues in a contemporary context.

## Skills/Methods

- Source criticism
- Writing article

In the game the students constantly have to be aware of the right story angle, the disposition of sources, and what it takes to write an article. In the end, the student sets up an article that can be used for further explorations of the media's role.

## Competences

- Perspective-taking
- Critical thinking
- Bias awareness

In the game students are given access to a variety of perspectives on the same events and issues, which forces them to shift between perspectives while thinking critically of the information they receive and potential biases encountered.



© 2014 SERIOUS GAMES INTERACTIVE APS  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED