

GLOBAL  CONFLICTS

# Military Operations



## TEACHER'S MANUAL

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# MISSION: MILITARY OPERATIONS

## History

The truth about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is among the most contested in the world. This quick guide does not attempt to present one objective truth but rather to provide a balanced overview of the conflict in a condensed and accessible form. The conflict between Israelis and Palestinian has taken place over the last 4000 years in a land area referred to as Israel or Palestine depending on the time period or one's point of view.



During its long history, the size, population and ownership of the area have varied greatly.

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.

## Summary

The novice reporter arrives in Jerusalem. The reporter's editor has heard that the Israeli Defensive Force (IDF) is preparing a military operation and find a Palestinian terrorist suspect. The journalist has a brilliant opportunity to document how a military operation is executed.

In Military Operations the students play the role of a reporter whose abilities are being tested during the assignment (25-60 minutes to complete). 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 up to eight 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 Military Operations, 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. It is recommended that a work structure such as the one below is used:

The teacher provides an overview of the conflict to give a rudimentary understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### **The students (divided into pairs) play the assignment in Military Operations.**

After the game, the students work in groups of four, discussing work questions relating to the assignment – see suggestions for work questions in the assignment walk-through below.

Students hand in their own article, group synopsis or similar written assignment based on one or more topics from the assignment (see templates for writing an article).

A class discussion where the work questions are looked at from across disciplinary point of view, such as religious, historical and societal views on the conflict. Then a meta-discussion where an analysis and assessment is made of the different media used by the students in their investigation. Make room for a lengthy discussion.

## 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:** On a military raid with IDF

### Topics:

Terror vs. freedom fighting  
Israeli Defence Force  
Military operations  
Background of the conflict

## Work questions:

- How are military operations such as this one carried out?
- How are the suspected terrorists treated by the Israeli government forces, and are their rights upheld?
- How does the journalist obtain information?
- What other military operations exist in Israel and The Palestinian Authority?

## Topics for bigger assignments

As an extension of the work done with Checkpoints and material concerning the conflict (see references at the end of this guide) 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
- The water issue and geographical problems
- Checkpoints and the security barrier
- Human Rights Issue

## What do the students learn ?

Military Operations 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 Military Operations 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.

## GLOSSARY

**Bias:** This refers to a preference or inclination towards a point of view that inhibit impartial judgment.

**Bar mitzvah:** Jewish ceremony at the age of 13 marking manhood.

**EU:** Abbreviation for the European Union, which is a group of European countries that collaborate especially to further trade and economy of the European region.

**Ethnicity:** A term used to categorize people based on differences in national origin, language, and/or religion.

**Expropriation:** A government overtaking property by paying compensation but against the owner's will. The compensation is often limited when Israel takes over property due to security concerns.

**Fatah:** One of the major Palestinian political party, which remains the backbone in PLO.

**Geneva convention:** Four treaties that set the international law for humanitarian behavior.

**Hamas:** A religious/terrorist/political/social organization that is increasingly gaining power among Palestinian in favor of the previous dominating organization Fatah.

**Hezbollah:** An organization that controls most of Southern Lebanon and regularly attacks Northern Israel. It is described as a religious/terrorist/political/social organization supported strongly by Iran.

**Humanitarian:** The basic respect for and treatment of other people as human beings.

**IDF:** This is the abbreviation used for the Israeli Defense Forces.

**Islamic state:** This refers to a state which is built after the principles set down in the Koran that bring unity and leadership to the Muslim world.

**Koran:** Islam's sacred writings that were revealed by God to the prophet Muhammad.

**Legitimate:** Refer to whether something is justified.

**Martyrs:** People who die in the fight against Israeli occupation whether by choice or chance.

**Moderate physical pressure:** Often used to describe mild forms of torture that are sometimes argued to be within the law given extreme threats like imminent terror attacks.

**Occupied territories:** This is used to describe the areas Gaza and the West Bank.

**Palestinian National Authority:** Established after peace talks in 1992 to govern Palestinian affairs in the self-rule areas within the West Bank and Gaza.

**PLO:** The abbreviation for Palestinian Liberation Organization that for many years lead the struggle for a Palestinian state and the destruction of the state of Israel.

**Separation barrier:** Israel is currently constructing a wall to make it harder for unwanted Palestinians to cross into Israel. However, the barrier has cut off Palestinian villages, and is in some regions built on Palestinian soil.

**Shahid:** The Arab word for martyrs, people who have died in the fight against (Israeli) occupation whether by choice or chance.

**Torah:** Refers to all Jewish religious literature, law and teaching that guides the right way of living.

**UN:** The abbreviation used for the United Nations. UN is an international organization whose stated aims are to facilitate cooperation on especially social development, international law, international security, and human rights issues.

**Zionism:** Zionism is an ideology from the late 19th century that seeks to establish a Jewish homeland.



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