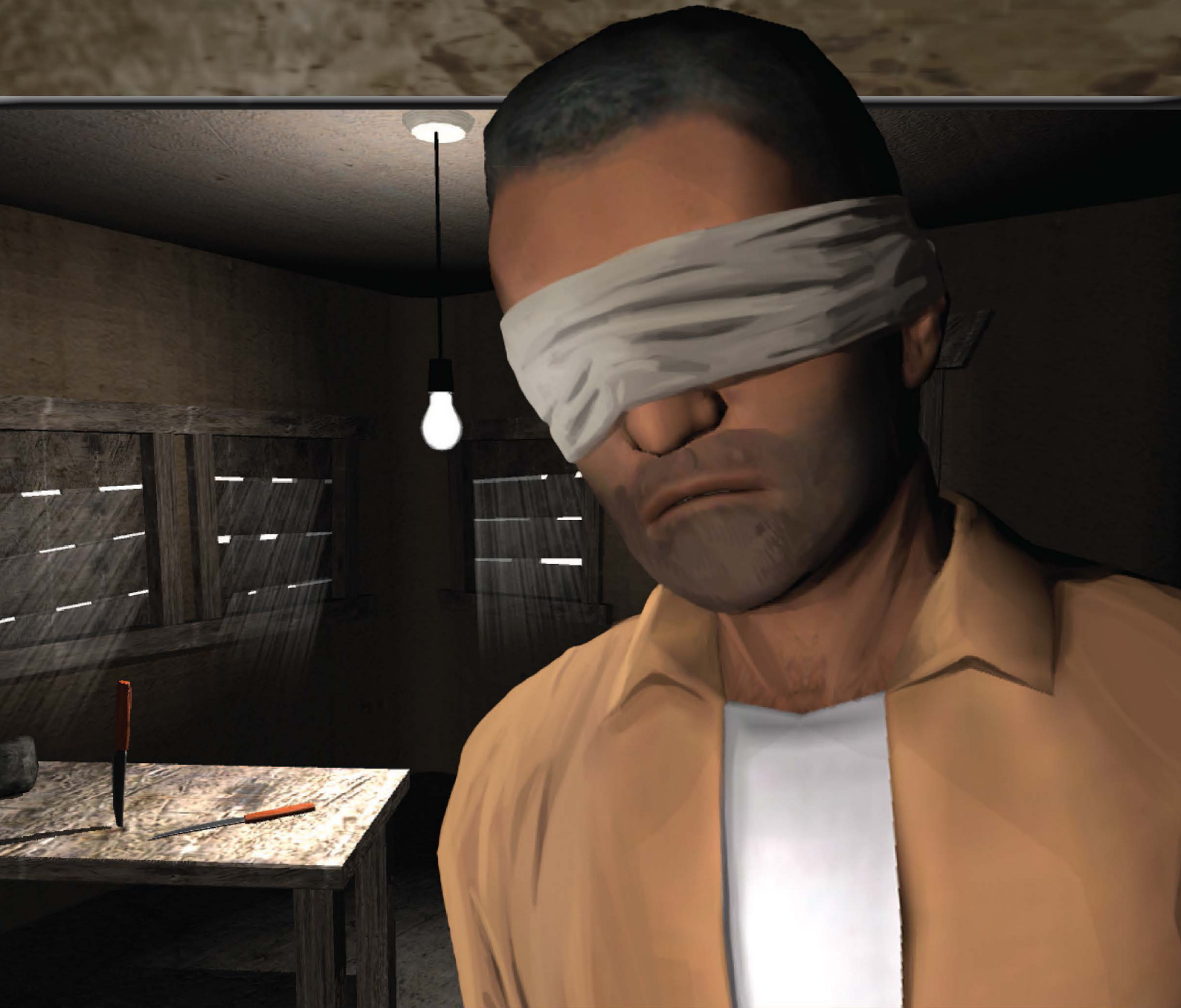


GLOBAL  CONFLICTS
AFGHANISTAN



STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

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STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

You have now played Global Conflicts: Afghanistan. Now you are going to discuss and reflect on your experiences. Below, you will find a number of assignments relating to the game. The following questions may be answered in groups or individually.

ASSIGNMENT 1.

Debriefing

Individual work

1. Reflect and write: state at least three feelings you had while playing the game. What made you feel like that?
2. What did the game make you reflect on?
3. What has changed in the way you regard Afghanistan?



ASSIGNMENT 2.

Game Summary

1. Give a brief, fact-based summary of the storyline.
Describe WHAT happened, but try to avoid writing WHY.

ASSIGNMENT 3.

Allan

It might be a good idea to answer this immediately after the dialogue, so you remember what you talked about.

1. Who may be threatening the school according to Allan?
2. How can a school make the village less safe?
3. Where in Afghanistan are the problems worst?
4. What is the problem with the Taliban?
5. What is the problem with opium?
6. What is the problem with corruption?
7. What is the ISAF and what is their job?
8. What do you think can be done to solve the problems?



ASSIGNMENT 4.

Farooq

It might be a good idea to answer this immediately after the dialogue, so you remember what you talked about.

1. Who is Farooq?
2. Why doesn't Farooq trust Qasem, the chief of police?
3. Why is Farooq afraid to support the school openly?
4. What did Farooq say about the Afghan attitude to the ISAF?

According to Farooq, several people may have a motive or reason to attack the school:

5. What could be the motive of Mullah Amir?
6. What could be the motive of the Taliban?
7. What could be the motive of the inhabitants of the village?



ASSIGNMENT 5.

Qasem

It might be a good idea to answer this immediately after the dialogue, so you remember what you talked about.

1. Who is Qasem?
2. What did you answer in this interchange and why?

Yes, after the village learned about the threats, many people took their children out of school. Even those who had received no threats. I kept my own children at home too. They shouldn't go to school where they may be threatened... Or worse.

1. *I can understand that.*
2. *But you can't just give in to threats?! And the chief police should be an example to the village, shouldn't he?*

3. Do you understand Qasem, and do you agree with him that he did the right thing? Explain why.
4. Do you sympathise with what Qasem is saying here? Explain why.

You think you can just turn up here and tell us how to live our lives! The only thing you do is to kill innocent people! You make more problems than you solve. Why don't you just go home and let us manage our own affairs?



ASSIGNMENT 6.

The Night Letter

1. Who sent the night letter?

Let me see...It says:"We will no longer tolerate that you have a school for boys and girls alike. It is against the principle of Islam, and we are willing to do anything to stop this insult to our faith, out culture and our country." Well... In a way they're right.

Yes..."If you don't stop breaking our laws, the blood of its children and teachers will be on you heads. We will kill incessantly until you get the message. There are no innocents. If you go against us, we will kill you. If you support the false government in charge, we will kill you.

2. What is its purpose?
3. Explain why you think that a school for both boys and girls is considered an offense.
4. What are the differences between how the school is perceived and what Allan intended when he established it?
5. What would you do to make the two parties (those for the school and those against it) understand each other better?

ASSIGNMENT 7.

Mullah Amir

1. Who is mullah Amir? What is his job?
2. What does he say about why the Quran school was closed?

We have our own traditions and culture. And if religion isn't an important part of the curriculum, I can promise you that a lot of Afghans will take their children out of school. If I had the chance, I'd establish a boys' school again, but not governed by the Taliban view of our culture.

3. What would you answer if the Mullah said this to you:

Michael...Your name was Michael, wasn't it? Let me make this clear: I'm not going to defend the methods of the Taliban. Not at all. It is vile to kill innocent people in this manner. But Afghanistan and the Afghans must take care that they don't get swallowed up by the despicable lifestyle of the West.

4. What does Mullah Amir mean by "the despicable lifestyle of the West"?
5. How does he explain his attitude to girls and schooling?

Yes. I don't care for the Taliban and their methods, but they're right. We Pashtuns have lived according to certain rules – our Pashtunwali – for centuries, and according to the Quran as well, just like the people in your country live by the rules that suit them. Would you change your rules just because some stranger turned up in your country and told you to?

1. *That's ridiculous. We're here to help, not to force you to anything. But you have to give the girls the same opportunities as the boys.*
2. *Yes. Perhaps you're right. There are pros and cons to both our ways of living.*
3. *You're absolutely right. It's your business how you want to live.*

6. Did you have this talk mullah Amir? If so, what did you answer, or what would you have answered? Why?

ASSIGNMENT 8.

Next phone conversation with Allan

1. What does Allan say about Sharia law?
2. How many Afghans support the Taliban?
3. Why is it so hard to come up with an alternative to the Taliban?
4. Why aren't the Afghans just happy to get help from the international forces? What may be their reasons for fighting the ISAF?
5. What do you think about the international forces trying to make Afghanistan a democracy? Explain why or why not.



ASSIGNMENT 9.

The Taliban Warrior

1. What does the Taliban warrior say?
2. Which parts do you disagree with, and are there any of his opinions that you sympathize with?

ASSIGNMENT 10.

Colonel Greendale from the ISAF

1. What did you talk to the colonel from ISAF about?
2. Why was the ISAF considering withdrawing from the area?

ASSIGNMENT 11.

Final Conversation with Farooq and Qasem

1. Did you notice examples of corruption as you played the game?
2. What does Qasem say about corruption?
3. Who was responsible for the fire at the school and why?
4. Which answer did you choose here? What made you answer that way, and what are the pros and cons?

I think the time has come to make a choice. We've got three separate roads in front of us, and we have to decide which one to take. What is going to happen to the school?

1. We'll let Mullah Amir establish a boys school.
2. As soon as Allan is feeling better, we will re-open the school.
3. It is better if there's no school at all in Qurya. It is just too dangerous.



ASSIGNMENT 12.

Summing Up

Preparation for the Reconciliation Committee role-playing game.

In a few words, outline what the different characters in the game regard as Afghanistan's main problem and what they think it takes to solve it.

1. Allan
2. Farooq
3. Qasem
4. Mullah Amir
5. The Taliban warrior
6. Colonel Greendale from ISAF



ASSIGNMENT 13.

Role playing: Reconciliation Committee

Pair up.

Select two game characters who disagree entirely or partly on what is the main problem in Afghanistan and on how it should be solved. Write lists of their views. Help each other do the two lists. Take 15 minutes for the task.

When you are done, each of you pick and play one of the characters. Let the two characters discuss the problems in Afghanistan and what should be done about them.

Now act out the discussion in front of your classmates. You can use the lists you prepared by glancing at them, but do not just read them aloud, it is better if you improvise a bit during the discussion. Your classmates will listen and afterwards describe the points of disagreement. Afterwards, the entire class will discuss how the two parties may be got to understand each other better. What do they disagree on? And are they actually disagreeing on another level than the one being discussed? What will it take to get them to understand each other better...?

You then act out the discussion again, this time with one of your classmates acting as mediator participating in the discussion. The mediator's job is to understand both parties as well as possible and try to get them to understand each other better. The mediator must try to get the two opponents to soften their viewpoints a bit by asking questions like, "even though you disagree, can you understand why your opponent thinks this way?" or, "Is there anything you actually agree on?" etc.

If the discussion is going round in circles, your teacher can step in and call a time-out. Your classmates can then make suggestions to the mediator and the discussion can continue a little while longer.

The discussion is over when the mediator has succeeded in softening the opponents' positions a little and making them admit to understanding each other to some degree, apologise or reconcile in other ways. Your teacher can also end the discussion.

ASSIGNMENT 14.

List of Arguments

Preparation for the Stay or Go role-playing game.

Write below:

- Is each argument good or bad?
- Why?

Arguments for staying:

1. The Afghans aren't ready to manage on their own yet.
2. Al-Qaeda and the Taliban will seize power again if the ISAF leaves the country.
3. We have to stay for the sake of security in Western countries.
4. You have to finish what you started.
5. If the ISAF forces withdraw now, all their efforts so far have been in vain.
6. If the ISAF forces leave Afghanistan, it will increase the risk of Pakistan falling into the hands of the Islamists.
7. The Afghans and the UN Security Council wants the ISAF to stay, so they ought to stay.

Arguments for leaving the country:

8. The ISAF's project in Afghanistan was doomed to fail anyway.
9. The ISAF has trained many new police officers in Afghanistan, and they can easily handle the country's security problems.
10. It's impossible to turn Afghanistan into a democracy.
11. The ISAF forces make the problems worse just by being there – the more soldiers we send, the greater the resistance.
12. The new government in Kabul is no better than the Taliban.
13. It's not fair that soldiers should die to solve other people's conflicts.

ASSIGNMENT 15

Role-playing: Stay or Leave?

Should the ISAF stay or leave Afghanistan?

Divide the class into three groups. Everyone imagines that they are decision-makers from countries that contribute to the ISAF. The first group argues that ISAF should leave Afghanistan while the second argues that they should stay.

The parties keep the arguments from Assignment 13 in mind, but they must speak freely and not just read aloud.

The third group consists of observers. It should consist of three or four pupils. The observers should listen to the discussion without saying anything and note down those of the arguments submitted by both parties they regard as good ones.

When the discussion is over (the teacher ends it at an appropriate time), the observer group hold a short meeting to list all the good arguments they have heard. Next to each argument, they write why they find it good.

Afterwards, the observer group presents their findings to the class. After the presentation of each point, the class may comment.



ASSIGNMENT 16.

Tough Problems in Afghanistan

Read these tough problems through and note down what you think should be done to solve them. Then talk the problems through with your classmates.

Drug economy: Afghanistan has an extensive illegal drug economy that leads to many problems. But at the same time, this drug economy is vital to the livelihood of ordinary people. What should be done about it?

Recruits for the Taliban: Many people join the Taliban, not because they agree with their views but because they are poor and the Taliban can offer them things they can't get in any other way.

Karzai's dilemma: The Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, who is supported by the international alliance, is charged with cleaning up Afghanistan and enforce his power across the entire country. But he may not be interested in destroying all the existing power structures (such as local warlords) because this may lead to new uncontrollable fights or criminal acts.

A national army led from outside: The Afghan army is supported by the international alliance but may never be completely efficient because people won't fight for a government that they perceive as ruled by foreigners.

Transferring principles: Can you transfer principles of what is good and bad, such as democratic notions, from one country to another? Could you, for instance use American or European culture as a sort of role model, or would that be questionable?

Lack of understanding: The Western forces don't understand those whom they want to help (the afghan people), and they don't understand their adversaries either (ex Taliban). And maybe the afghans don't understand the Western forces either?

Down with the dictator: Getting rid of a dictator doesn't necessarily solve anything, since other problems may easily arise after he has been toppled. Dictators often keep other nasty forces in check, and when they are removed, these forces are suddenly no longer curbed.

Development takes a local administration: The Afghans want to be free from foreign interference since they regard these foreigners as an occupying power. The local administration in Afghanistan is in need of further development, but it is hampered by corruption, illiteracy, tribal rivalry and lack of qualified workers, resources and security.

Here to help: The populations of the countries contributing the international forces perceive these forces as helpers of the Afghans. Nevertheless, many Afghans regard the foreign forces as an unwanted occupying power.

ASSIGNMENT 17.

Research questions

If there is any time left, fast pupils can try to answer these questions

1. What is Al-Qaeda?
2. Who are the Taliban?
3. How did Hamid Karzai become president of Afghanistan?
4. Why did the USA attack Afghanistan in September 2001?
5. What happened on 11 September 2001?
6. What is the ISAF?
7. Who are in the ISAF?
8. What is the task of the ISAF?
9. How big is Afghanistan compared to your country?
10. How many people live in Afghanistan? And in your country?
11. What is the Capital of Afghanistan?
12. What does "life expectancy" mean, and what is the life expectancy of people in Afghanistan?
13. What is the main occupation of people in Afghanistan?
14. How many ISAF soldiers are there in Afghanistan today?
15. How many ISAF soldiers have died in the war so far?
16. How many Afghan civilians have died in the war so far?
17. What are Mujahideen?
18. Who was Osama bin Laden?
19. What was the situation like in Afghanistan in the 1980s?
20. What was the situation like in Afghanistan during the first half of the 1990s?

21. What was the situation like in Afghanistan during the second half of the 1990s?
22. Which do you think are the biggest problems facing Afghanistan today, and why?
23. Why is opium cultivation a problem?
24. Why do some people attack schools?
25. Which causes do the Afghans perceive as the most important reasons for their country's problems?
26. Should the terrorist attacks of 2001 be avenged? What will be gained from that?
27. Why did other countries take part in the attack on Afghanistan?
28. What problems is Afghanistan facing today?





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