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CONTENT

Introduction **3**
Content of the educational material: 3
Target audience 4
Help to the material 4
Basic educational principles behind Playing History **5**
Teknical help 6
Playing the game **7**
Introducing the game to students 7
The game activity 7

INTRODUCTION

The Playing History games series utilises the game media to teach students about important events and periods in world history. The idea behind Playing History is to focus on the smaller stories in order to tell the big one: to experience the role of the individual in world history and human living conditions in different historical periods. Through the eyes of the protagonist, key elements of the historical period in question are made real for the students.

Playing History is based on the belief that it is exciting to learn about history. The game integrates learning and playing in a way that engages students and gives them a concrete feel for the historical time and setting.

Playing History can be compared to a journey through time and space. Students work with important historical issues in an interactive 3D world. The teacher helps students understand, organize and put their game experiences into a perspective that is of relevance to the curriculum.

The game aims to create a platform for students to immerse themselves in history and to subsequently engage with the historical themes in class.

Content of the educational material:

Game Manual: The manual contains information on how the game is installed, used and played.

Teacher's Manual: This guide has instructions as to how the game aims to create various experiences in correlation with a specific class. It builds around each mission; each contains different problems and themes.

Topics overview: This is a small booklet introducing key issues, the history of the individual regions and countries, as wells as the significant themes we hope to present. The booklet provides teachers (and students) with a good starting point for class and any further research for related material.

Student assignments: A series of assignments are made for the student to work through after each mission. These assignments encourage reflection and discussion about the issues of the particular region as well as the society the students themselves live in.

Target audience

The game has been tested and designed for students in elementary school, ages 6-12. The primary class is ''history'', though elements of religion are also present. The games challenge the students and their understanding of historical events while encouraging both critical analysis and personal involvement when they are faced with questions regarding ethics, religion and different ways of life.

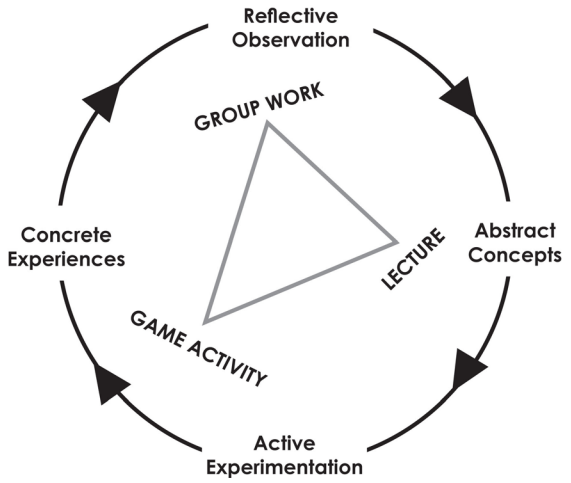
Help to the material

When using ''Playing History'' in your class, you might meet some unexpected challenges. If this occurs, refer to the game manual. If the game manual is unable to address the challenge, please do not hesitate to contact us at support@seriousgames.net where we will gladly answer your inquiries.

You might also want to read the "Walkthrough" in the choosen game, where we outline the elements you need to complete the game.

BASIC EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES BEHIND PLAYING HISTORY

The suggested ''Playing History'' lesson plan is based on an experience-oriented approach that is founded in research conducted at the IT-University of Copenhagen.



Inspired by **David A. Kolb's theory** of learning, this approach to learning is based on switching between different types of teaching, a method that emphasises different learning styles and forms of knowledge.

There is a progression between various forms of learning. Students may have different strengths and weaknesses in relation to these different forms of learning, but ideally all students in a class will work with various tasks across the learning spectrum.

Playing History allows students to participate actively in an historical event and experience the course of history through the eyes of the game's protagonist. They interact with different historical subjects, not through routine learning, but rather through a learning process based on their actions and decisions made throughout the game.

> *The experience-based approach involves changing between various teaching methods and emphasizing various styles and subjects. This means there will be a progression through the different methods of instruction.*
>
> *The general didactic qualities of doing a course with ''Playing History'' are significant. To us, the noteworthy thing about this courseware is that the students are able to be active participants in an historical scene and with issues that are usually difficult to relate to. Through the stories, problems and audiovisual setting of the game, the students can to interact with the educational content of the game and experience something beyond regular learning, giving the students personal experiences they have helped to shape!*

The students' in-game experience is very valuable with regards to the subsequent lessons. It gives students a foundation for reflecting on the themes which they have a working knowledge and now relates to them in a more personal way. Through their involvement in the challenges of the game, students use and improve their knowledge in a highly motivated way.

Teknical help

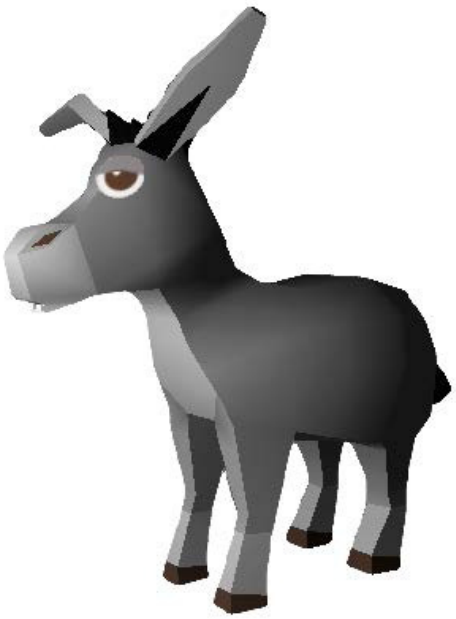
Do the games work on both PC and MAC?
Yes, they work for both platforms

What are the minimum hardware requirements?
- *PC: 1 GHz CPU, 512 MB RAM, Windows 2000/XP/Vista/Windows7+8*
- *Mac: G4, 512 MB RAM, Mac OS X 10,3 or newer*
- *Display resolution 1024x768 or above*

Do I need to install anything to play?
The first time you intend to use our games, you must install Unity3D. You can download it for free at this link: http://unity3d.com/webplayer/

What do I do if the games do not work?
The first thing you must do is to ensure that you have installed the Unity Web Player (mentioned above) – afterwards, restart your game. Furthermore, you must ensure that your graphical drivers are fully updated. If the issue persists, try downloading the game again If issues have not yet been remedied by following the steps above.

Can I get help for use of the games?
Yes, simply write a mail for support@seriousgames.net with your question.
Or contact us call us, Monday to Friday 9.00 and 15.00 on +45 4844 5192



PLAYING THE GAME

As part of the preparation, we recommend that you play the game and evaluate how much time it will take for students to complete it. By playing the game you become aware of how the game works as well as which problems students might encounter while playing.

When you have played the game, it becomes easier to answer questions in the classroom when students need help. Alternatively, you may use the teacher's manual to get an overview of the game before the pupils start playing.

Introducing the game to students

Before the students start playing the game, it is recommended that you give an overview of the chronological and geographical setting of the game. You can use the enclosed theme overview to outline central subjects of the game and therefore enhance the students' understanding of the game's learning content.

We recommend that you prepare an introduction to the game for the students. If the classroom features an interactive whiteboard (e.g. a SmartBoard or Prometheon) or a projector, you can show the game trailer or play part of the game while the students watch. It is also helpful to hand out the game manual to the students.

It might be necessary to emphasize that ''Playing History'' is a game that teaches students about history. It is therefore important that students are very attentive to what happens in the game and what the people they encounter in the game tell them. This is necessary in order to complete the game as well as to learn from the game's activity.

Before the course begins, it's advisable to explain to the students how long they are allowed to play and what tasks they are expected to complete while and after playing.

The game activity

- Students (perhaps working together in pairs) play up to a point in the game that has been previously agreed upon in class. For instance, the completion of one segment of the game.

- Students can also play the entire game in one go, but as it takes at least three hours it is not recommended unless the class has an entire day available for working with the game. Please note that there is likely to be a huge variation in the amount of time spent by the pupils to complete the game.

- A situation might occur when some students are finished while others have barely begun. Remember that the student do not have access to a ''Walkthrough'' and that they can get stuck in the game. The pupils who complete the game quickly can start working on the appropriate student assignments. Remind students to save their game progress while playing.

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