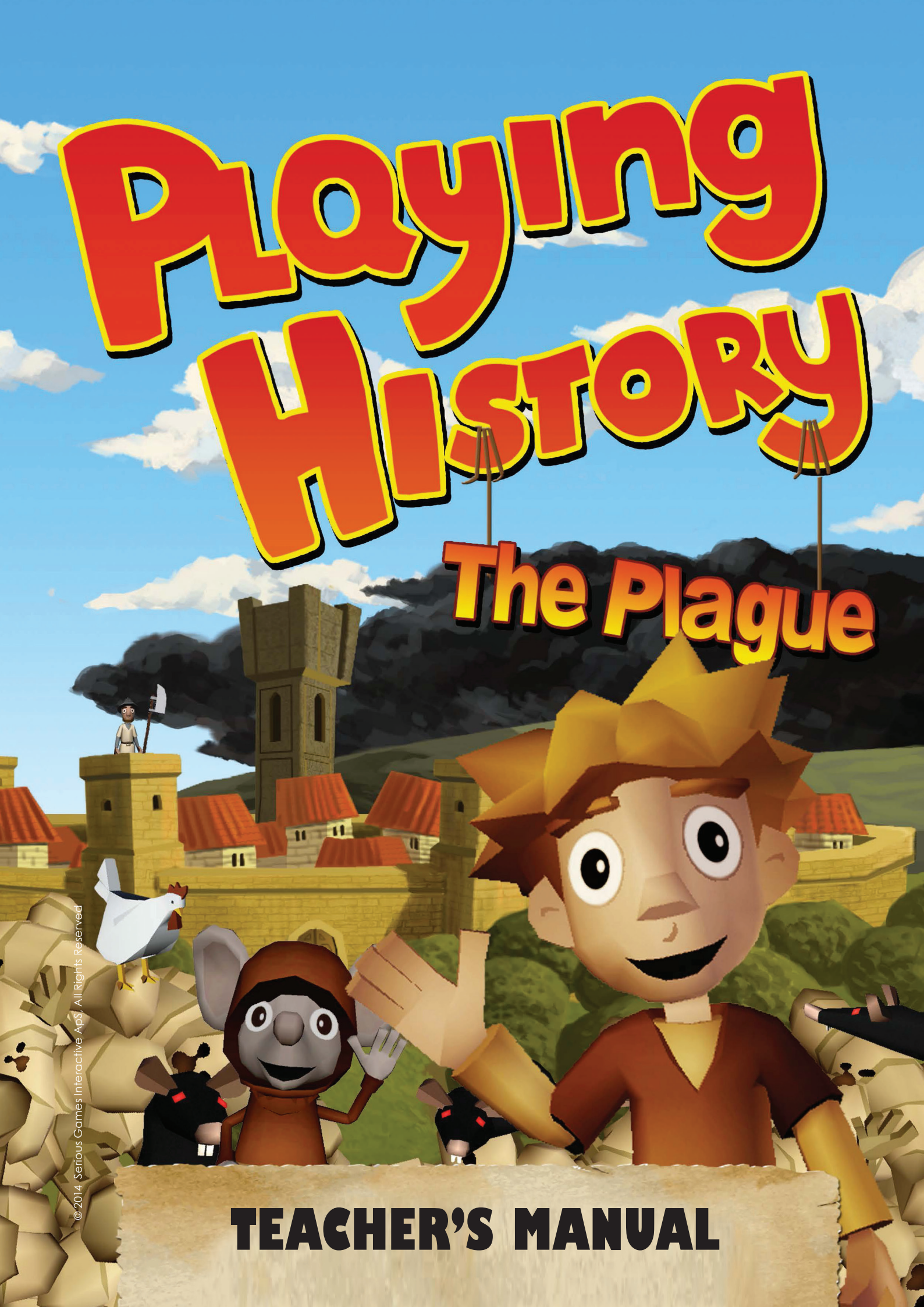
Playing History

The Plague



TEACHER'S MANUAL

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MISSIONS INTRODUCTION

In Playing History: The Plague, the main character, Marchione, must rescue himself and his family from bubonic plague. Firstly, pupils have to diagnose Marchione's sick mother, is it the plague?

In the game, pupils learn about the arrival in Europe of the so-called Black Death and what its consequences were. In Playing History, game and learning objectives coincide: To complete the game, pupils must find out more about medieval society, religion and medicine and about the living conditions of people at that time.

The game contains various anachronisms placed there to highlight the difference between different historical periods. The use of anachronisms aims to sharpen pupils' awareness of the course of history and of the opportunities, level of knowledge and conditions of people in different historical periods.

Game analysis & solutions
The game is in three parts. Each part deals main topic, but the topics overlap. Healing and diagnoses are repeated throughout the game.

Part 1. *Ends with the player is given Chrono Goggles*
Part 2. *Ends with you transfer the relic to the priest*
Part 3. *The ending.*

PUPIL ASSIGNMENTS

After each part of the game, pupils work with the work- sheet that relates to that part. Assignments are printed out and solved alone or in groups.

ASSIGNMENT 1
Multiple choice test: *This assignments focus on the historical facts, which will provide a good summary of what the game has taken the students through.*

ASSIGNMENTS 2-4
Describe and explain actions and characters in the game: *The questions all focus on the topics addressed in each file.*

ASSIGNMENTS 5-6
Learning Content: *The assignments can be used as a starting point for conversation or discussion in class.*

EXTRA ASSIGNMENT
Storytelling: *The assignment is to let the students tell how one of the game characters' fate is progressing. (this task is not in the student manual). It may take the form of a comic book, which subsequently dramatized in groups to the class or printed out and presented.*

GAME MANUAL

Below is a systematic description of how Playing History works and how to complete the game.

Movement

You control the game character with the mouse. By clicking on objects in the game, you can pick them up or examine them. In some mini-games, you need to use the keyboard too.

Jump and Run

Click on the place you want to move to. If you double-click, you will start running.

Menus

You access the game menu by pressing ESC or clicking the scoreboard. Here you can check out your game achievements. You can also adjust the sound and graphic settings.

Save game

You can save your game from the game menu.

Using the collected objects

Click on the bag in the top right corner. You can now see your available items.To use an object, click it. You now hold the object in your hand for use in the game. If you would like a short description of the object, hover the mouse pointer over the object. You can also combine individual objects such as a pitchfork and a pile of hay. This is how a haystack is assembled: Select the pitchfork from the bag, and click on the hay to gather hay for a haystack.

Chrono Goggles

Your Chrono Goggles are in the bag once you have received them. Select them and use them on your eyes. For a brief roment, your surroundings take on a greenish glow. In this mode, you can use things from other time periods in the game.

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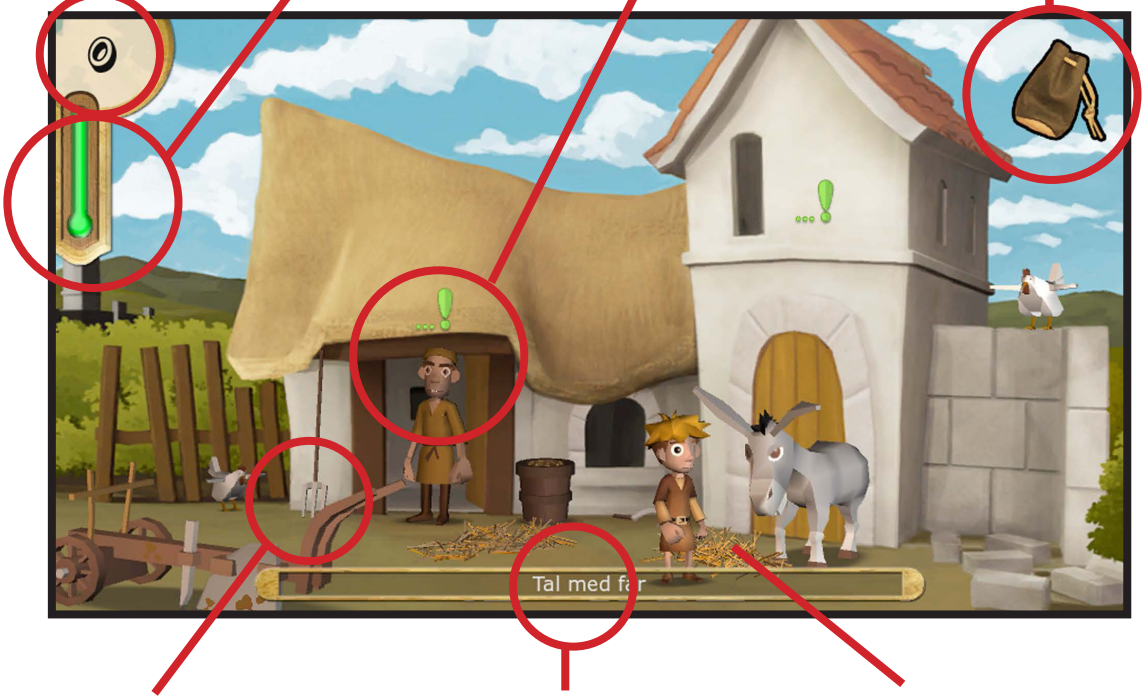
This is your score

This is your health, make sure it doesn´t get too low or you might catch the Plague

To pick up items or to talk, click on an item or a person

To open your inventory, click on your bag.



To use an item, click on it. The object is now in your hands, and you can use it in the world.

The quest bar displays what your next objective is.

To move around, click on the ground. Double-click to run.

The game is about The Plague also known as the Black Death, a nasty disease that came to the city of Florence in Italy in the year of 1348.

You play a young boy called Marchione, who lives in Florence and is the son of one of the best barbers and surgeons in town.

Recently, your mother has fallen ill. You fear the worst, perhaps it is the plague. If it is, she may not have much time left to live.

But there is hope: In the plague-ridden city, you can find out all about the disease. Then maybe the family can escape the plague and certain death.

BUT BEWARE - DANGERS LURKS IN EVERY STREET!!

WALKTRHOUGH

GAME PART 1

Topics: Mediaval times, medicine and science

- **Learn how to move around and to use objects.**
- **Find out about the symptoms of the bubonic plague.**
- **Learn a simplistic version of the theory of cardinal fluids.**
- **Perform a bloodletting with leeches.**
- **Learn the theory of contagious smells.**

1. Click your father, and start a conversation with him.
2. Take the sign you receive, and put it on the door:
   Click the bag, the sign and finally the door.
3. Go inside again and talk to your father.
4. Exit the house, and talk to the man in black.
   Ask him what he knows about the disease.
5. Enter the house, and head up the stairs to the bedroom.
6. Tell your father that you have the information. He will ask you what information you have. The answer is that the sick get horrible boils. Head downstairs.
7. Pick up the tinderbox, which is at the end of the room under the thongs and the glass of leeches (in front of the shelf on the right side). Then address the visitor.
8. Go upstairs to your father, and talk to him. Notice the number 4 and the keyword balance.
9. Then speak to Giuseppe downstairs. The answer to his first question is "four" (the number of cardinal fluids) and the second is "two" (balance).
10. In the wealthy woman's room, speak to her, and then perform the bloodletting therapy in the mini-game: Place five leeches on the wom an's boils.
11. Talk to Giuseppe again. He will send you back to your father.

12. Talk to your father, and go out into the street. Walk straight through the gate and onto the empty street. Continue along the alley in the upper right corner towards the marketplace.

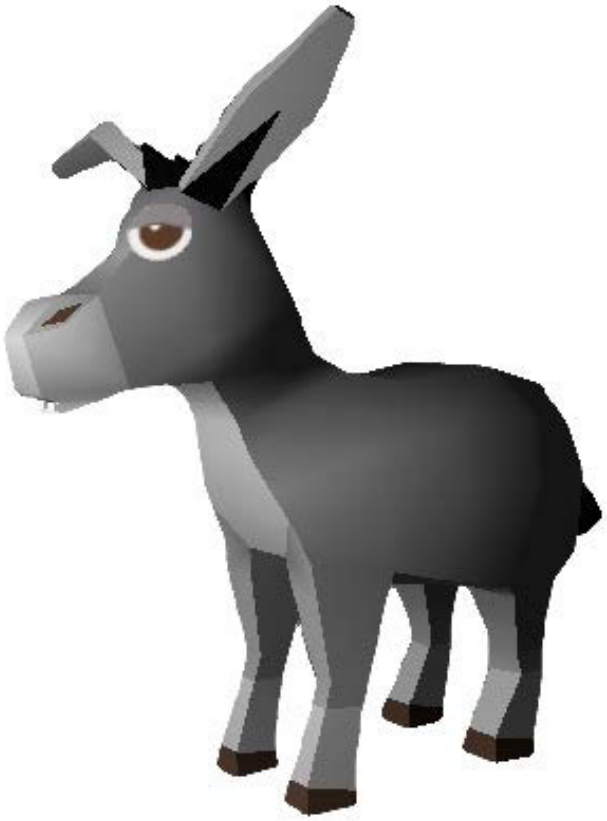
13. From the marketplace, continue through the gate at the bottom right corner next to the sales booth.

14. Talk to Lorenzo (the man with the paper), then click the door.

15. Click the doorknocker to make the chicken move away from the door. Pull the strings in the following sequence: Red, yellow, green and blue.

16. Talk to Mr. Arnetto. If you have not yet picked up your father's tinder-box, you can take Mr. Arnetto's. It is on the table in his room.

17. Go out and talk to Nostra the mouse. He will hand you the Chrono Goggles.



GAME PART 2

Topics: Society and church

- **Discover the inflated prices and the lack of produce at the market**
- **Meet the beggar whose hand is cut off as punishment for his crime**
- **Experience the declining faith in the Church in the empty church**
- **Encounter the fanatical flagellants, and listen to their point of view regarding the bubonic plague.**
- **Assist Mario shoving bodies into the already packed mass graves.**

1. You now need some money. Run to back Mario (The beccamorto), who is standing in front of your house.

2. Talk to him, and help him bury the dead. For your services, you will receive a purse filled with florins.

3. Go into the empty street and down the stairs to the dwellings of the poor.

4. Talk to the sick beggar in the corner, ask him if he knows anything about Giuseppe's ring.

5. He will ask you two riddles. The answer to the first is "My age", and the second answer is "R".

6. Click the barrel next to the beggar to obtain a wine jug, which you will need later in the game.

7. Go to the marketplace. Talk to the merchant to the right wearing red clothes.

8. Answer that you have money, then offer him a fourth of a purse of florins. When he declines, offer him half a purse to purchase the rosemary at the cheapest price. Once you have the rosemary, head back to your house and go to the bedroom.

9. Talk to your father. Take rosemary from your bag, and put it into the clay bowl on the table. Take your tinderbox and click the rosemary branch. The smoke will fill the room. Address your father. Afterwards, he will go downstairs.

10. If Marchione's health is failing (i.e. if the health indicator is yellow or red), you can put on the Chrono Goggles to pick up the antibiotics. Apply the antibiotics to Marchione.

11. Talk to your father, and head for the marketplace. Talk to the guard at the market, and show him your ring. He will let you pass. Go to the wealthy neighbourhood, pick up the whip and continue towards the tower. From the church square, enter the church.

12. Talk to the vicar, and get information on the important document.

13. Head back to the empty street and down into the poor quarters. Talk to the beggar, and question him about the important document. Give him the wine jug, receive the document and return to the church.

14. In the church, talk to the vicar, and then walk to the flagellant on the hill outside the church. Give him the whip. In return, he will hand you a relic.

15. Go back to the church, and give the relic to the vicar. Listen to his translation, then head back to your father.

GAME PART 3

Topics: Desperation and escape

- **Experience the distrust when you are accused of being the cause of the bubonic plague**
- **Escape to the countryside to avoid catching the disease**

1. Tell your father the news, and go to Mr. Arnetto's home again. Listen to his ideas for a diagnosis of the victims of the plague. Then head back to the bedroom to diagnose your mother.
   // The correct answers are 1, 2 and 2 respectively.

2. Talk to your father again, then head for the city gates. Continue across the marketplace, and take the exit on the left.

3. You need to bribe the guard with Giuseppe's ring. The Watchman suddenly suspects you of being the cause of the plague. Hurry through the gate and onwards to your uncle's farm

4. Find your uncle and ask him if he knows where you can hide out. Then start a conversation with the donkey. Collect hay for a haystack by using the pitchfork on the scattered hay on the farm. When you have a haystack, speak to the donkey again, and head back to town.

5. Play the mini-game of guiding the donkey in the right direction. You can only command the donkey while it is attentive.

6. Talk to your father, then exit through the door. Click the haystack on the wagon.

7. Finally decide whether you want to leave with your par- ents or stay in town. If you are not infected, you can escape to the countryside with your family. If you have the disease, the best choice is to sacrifice yourself by remaining in Flor- ence. By doing this, you save your family.

MINI-GAMES

In the Leech Game, you have to place five leeches on the patient's boils.

In the "Corpse Stacking Game" the player must find the best location for each body that falls into the grave. The bodies are rotated and moved with the arrow keys. Sometimes a body will twist and turn because the person is not quite dead yet.

At Mr Arnetto's door, you have to scare the chicken away by using the door knocker placed in the middle of the door. Then you have to pull the strings in the sequence: red, yellow, green and blue.

In the Microscope Game, you have to adjust the microscope to the number 3.

In the "map quiz" at Mr. Arnetto's, the correct answers are:

- Red: 1347
- Orange: 1348
- Yellow: 1349
- Green: 1350
- Blue: 1351
- Dark blue: After 1351

In the Donkey Game you have to guide the donkey down to the end of the road by clicking the mouse on a point on the road. Note that the donkey obeys only when it is attentive.

Extra missions

These tasks are not required to complete the game. How- ever, they add extra points to the player score and point to some interesting problems:

Talk to the crying lady in the market. She has an ethical problem for you.

Talk to the man on the empty street, wearing the Chrono Goggles. Then go to the market to buy flowers for him. Give him the flowers to earn extra points, an achievement and the plague doctor's mask.

Talk to the flagellant and challenge his knowledge of religion. The answers to his questions are "Avignon" and "Peace be with you". In addition to the extra points, you will get a pocket whip from him as a reward.

At the mass grave by the church, you can play the Corpse Stacking Game again by clicking the mass grave.

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OVERVIEW OF THE GAME´S ANACHRONISMS

The game contains a number of anachronisms that you can pick up through proper use of the Chrono Goggles.

- The microscope in your home // this activates a mini-game where you can learn more about the discovery of the bacteria that caused the bubonic plague.
- The antibiotics in your mother's bedroom // they can be picked up and used on yourself. The medicine cures the disease by reducing the level of infection.
- The computer monitor at the doctor's house // this acti- vates a mini-game testing your knowledge about when the plague arrived in different areas in Europe.
- The plague doctor in the street // he will tell you about the spreading of the plague after 1348. He will return to the future when you give him flowers (used to cleanse the foul air since this was believed to cause the disease).
- Rat poison on the marketplace, for killing rats of course. Provides information about the role that rats played in spreading the bubonic plague.
- Lutheran Bible in the church, provides information about the changing opinions of the Church after the plague hit Europe.
- The halberd on the farm, provides information about the peasant revolts that followed the Black Death.

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM OF HISTORY

ICT

Playing history incorporates ICT in the history teaching of children age 9-13 years. This stage deals with the historical period ranging from the Middle Ages until WWII. The game is set in Florence, Italy, but since the plague also reached Britain in the late summer of 1348, the events in Italy are intertwined with the outbreak of the plague on the British Isles.

Below, the principles of the game are outlined in relation to the National History Curriculum, including curriculum opportunities, key concepts, key processes and range and content.

The game may be used as a means of investigating Europe at the time of the arrival of the Black Death. When taking the national curriculum of history into account, Playing History also enables pupils to work interactively with the Black Death, and the teacher thereby makes sure that the game activity both covers the required key processes and concepts and that the pupils are actively engaged while learning.

Curriculum opportunities

During the key stage pupils should be offered the following opportunities that are integral to their learning and enhance their engagement with the concepts, processes and content of the subject.

The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Explore the ways in which the past has helped shape identities, shared cultures, values and attitudes today
- Investigate aspects of personal, family or local history and how they relate to a broader historical context
- Appreciate and evaluate, through visits where possible, the role of museums, galleries, archives and historic sites in preserving, presenting and influencing people's attitudes towards the past
- Use ICT to research information about the past, process historical data, and select, categorise, organise and present their findings
- Make links between history and other subjects and areas of the curriculum, including citizenship.

(Source: National curriculum in history)

Key concepts

Pupils develop a stronger chronological understanding as they are placed in the Florence of 1348. As the game portrays that specific place and time and the characters that inhabit the city, pupils gain an understanding of the relationship between the plague, the people affected by the disease and the impact the epidemic had on society and religion. It is the aim of the game to help pupils draw chronological parallels between the time period of the game and today.

The Chrono Goggles are the most obvious tool pupils can use in order to make comparisons between now and then. The game focuses particularly on medieval cultural, ethnic and religious diversity and the role of the Church. Pupils encounter medieval beliefs as represented by the priest and the flagellant. The priest and the Church are portrayed as facing a difficult time due to loss of authority. The flagellant is an exotic character who represents a totally different view of religious beliefs that might seem very odd to the pupils. The ideas of the flagellants are still to be found among some religious movements today however.

When taking change and continuity into account, Playing History is about the sudden impact of an epidemic that had severe consequences for people all over Europe. The plague arguably changed the continent, but its exact significance is still being debated by historians. However, the cause and consequences of the Black Death has some interesting perspectives when working with an understanding of the relationship between an epidemic and its consequences for the individual, the authorities, society as a whole and the relationship between the various countries of Europe.

The game offers a certain interpretation of the events of the year of 1348. This interpretation has interesting teaching potential since pupils are encouraged to compare the game with other interpretations of the Black Death. The main goal is to encourage pupils to form an opinion as to how historical accounts differ and how knowledge of history is based on what sources we obtain this knowledge from

Key processes

Regarding historical enquiry, game based learning enables pupils to investigate and test hypotheses about the historical context in which they find themselves when playing the game. We find that interactive learning like this strengthens pupils' reflection on historical subjects because they become agents in the game world and consequently feel more involved in the learning process. Playing History offers a certain interpretation of events connected to the spread of the Black Death across Europe. A game such as Playing History can be viewed as a source that pupils can investigate in order to draw their own conclusions about the period portrayed.

Pupils' increased motivation and their more personal partic- ipation in the historical theme will hopefully encourage them to be interested in the past and to talk about historical topics since they have experienced the time period and taken action within the game world. The worksheets of Playing History focus on creating a foundation that facilitates pupils' verbalisation of the historical themes of the game.

Range and content

Working with the Plague as a theme in History class offers the opportunity to investigate how an external influence such as a pandemic can have a fatal impact on people across an entire continent. The Plague had parallel consequences for most countries in Europe; the general increase of disbelief in the Church and the shortage of labour are examples of the results of the plague across the continent as well as in The British Isles.

Working with the Black Death offers an opportunity to work with the relationship between the rulers and the ruled and the development of democracy, humanism and Protestantism in the western world. For instance it is argued that the Plague was the indirect cause of the peasant revolt, the so-called Great Rising of 1381, which had a major impact on British politics.

Playing history focuses on the consequences of the Plague for the individual and the family. The aim of this approach is to enable pupils to relate to the epidemic on a more personal level and to compare medieval living conditions to modern life. The pupil assignments aim to serve as a foundation for classroom discussions that relate pupils' game based learning to a broader historical context.

More activities

- Pupils can play a role-playing game about the arrival of the Black Death in a town in Great Britain, perhaps based on the characters from the game.
- Pupils can study Dance Macabre pictures and produce their own art.
- Pupils can draw a map showing the spread of the plague across Europe and onto The British Isles.
- Pupils can write a personal story about encountering the plague, possibly based on the characters from the game.
- Pupils can write a paper comparing the Black Death with other epidemics in world history.

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