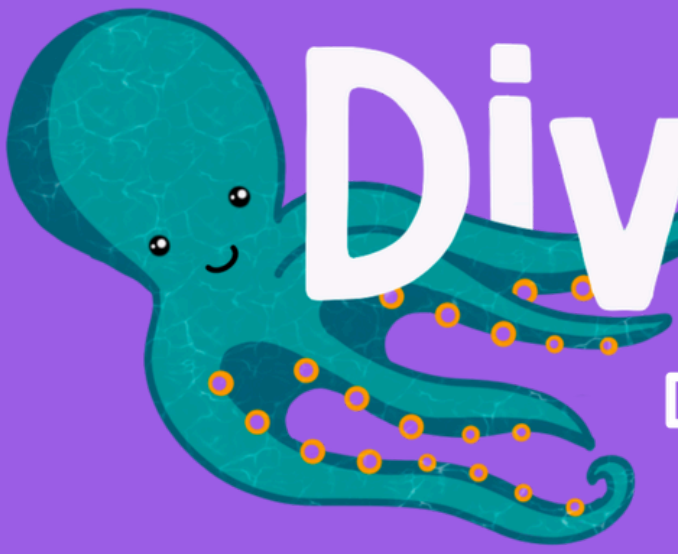
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DivE(d)

Diversifying Education

TTRPG-based learning methods

Project output #3

#DivEdKA2 #Erasmus+

2026
This manual was created as a Project Result of the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project “DivE(d): Diversifying Education” (2024-2-EE01-KA220-YOU-000290125).

The project is implemented by Vivere Kool (Estonia) together with Shokkin Group (Estonia), Nausika Educational Foundation (Poland), Fondazione Artos (Italy) and Cesis Berzaine Primary School (Latvia) with the support of the Estonian National Agency.

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Fragments of the manual are free to use in any form of educational activity, with acknowledgement of the source provided.

Content written by:
Roberto Marinelli

Edited and designed by:
Olalla González

About the project

The ultimate goal of **DivE(d)** is to develop a **set of inclusive learning methods** (LEGO®, puzzles, LARPs, TTRPGs) suitable for **diverse-ability groups** of young people in the **youth work and education fields**.

Our objective is to support inclusivity and learning enhancement of diverse groups of young people, including those with special needs. We aim to equip educators with **tools and methods that are accessible, engaging, and adaptable to young people with varying abilities**.

PROJECT RESULTS

- **5 capacity building webinars** about inclusive education and play.
- **5 webinar visual summaries**.
- **20+ exercises** using puzzle, LEGO®, LARP and TTRPG-based formats.
- **4 video trailers** introducing each approach.
- **2 know-how training activities** for 24 educators from the involved countries.

About the partner organizations

NGO Vivere school is an inclusive private school in Tallinn. The concept of the school is to create an inclusive learning environment and to develop a support system including the development of new innovative methodologies and training for teachers and professionals working with children with accessibility needs.

Cesis Berzaine is a school for children with special educational needs with the main value of human dignity: teachers who understand children's daily and future needs, believe in each child's ability to achieve, inspire and support children on their own way.

Shokkin Group is a non-governmental and non-profit youth organization founded in 2011 with the main aim of empowering young people from different backgrounds living in Estonia by providing them with opportunities for personal, professional and social growth.

Fondazione Artos was established in 2006 as partner of Caronno Pertusella's municipality in order to manage all social and educational services of the municipality, working with formal and non-formal education.

Nausika was established to design, promote, and implement educational games for personal development and social transformation. We design and lead activities about climate change, sustainable development, ecology, soft skills and mental health.

About the authors



Laura Cardinale

Director of Jano Studio S.r.l. and Vice-President of Il Salotto di Giano A.P.S., is a medieval historian specialising in public history, and a trainer for the Ministry of Education on the use of games in the classroom as part of the National Pact for Reading. She provides historical consultancy in the gaming sector and oversees outreach projects that combine gaming with culture. A member of the AIPH, she is also a member of the University of Genoa's Centre for Research on Games and the Game Science Research Centre. She works in the games publishing industry as a Line Editor and author of role-playing games, having developed more than twenty RPG campaigns and adventures in six languages.



Edoardo Filippi

A role-playing and board game enthusiast since 1988. Gradually, he entered the world of recreational associations and participated in competitions and events.

He holds a degree in Vocational Education and has worked for more than twenty years in a Disabled Day Center and for ten years as a trainer. It is precisely thanks to this profession that he introduced play as a teaching method and, recently, approached the EduLarp format. As an active member of I Guardiani del Warp association (Fossano CN), he is the promoter of the RPG Word Café, a quarterly event offering opportunities for discussion on role-playing games.

> There are stories that are in danger of being forgotten. Interpreting them, experiencing them and acting them out is a way of giving them a voice.



Roberto Marinelli

Roberto is Fondazione Artos Socio-Educational Area Manager and Project Manager. He holds a degree in philosophy, a degree in educational sciences (with a thesis in game pedagogy) and is enrolled in the master's degree in Pedagogy at the Bicocca University of Milan.

An avid table and role player like Player and Dungeon Master, he believes in the pedagogical value of the gaming device, which he uses daily in his work environment. He has been collaborating with an Italian role-playing game publisher, Aces Games, since 2020, It is currently involved in several wide-ranging European projects. He's also a Playful Trainer for educators and teachers.



Erica Meazza

Educator, amateur writer, and role-playing game enthusiast. She graduated in Social Work and she has been working in home education for seven years, supporting families and adolescents in vulnerable situations, and in educational projects aimed at small and medium-sized groups.

In playing, she recognizes a fundamental resource: a space of freedom, expression and experimentation, capable of becoming a pedagogical tool. Through storytelling, she thinks it is possible to observe the world, question it, and return it with attention and respect.

> Man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is only fully a human being when he plays.
> — F. Schiller



Claudio Muratore

Game Designer, Game Trainer and a Professional trainer in Game Based Learning and Learning by Design. He graduated in Statistical Sciences.

He focuses his work in the gaming field on creating educational games and organizing Game Jams as creative workshops for learning through the creation of new games. He collaborated with the Civic Libraries of Torin to launch activities to promote board games as a free and inclusive tool for social aggregation. President of the APS Ca' Ludica, founded with the aim of promoting gaming as a cultural, educational, and socially beneficial tool.



Eugenio Nuzzo

Founding partner of Jano Studio S.r.l., a journalist and a cultural anthropologist. As the author of adventures with educational and socio-educational aims, he is a trainer for the Ministry of Education on the use of games in the classroom and has curated the course 'Playing with Literature, from Short Stories to Games', as part of the Italian Literature course (Modern Literature – Sapienza University of Rome). He conducts training sessions with psychiatric patients under the care of the Mental Health Centre (CSM) at the Sabotino and Palestro Day Centres (ALS Roma 1), on behalf of the Arte e Mestieri cooperative. A member of the Game Science Research Centre, he teaches Game Mastering in socio-educational contexts at the Giano Academy.

> Whoever wants to understand much, must play much.
> — Gottfried Benn

> We wear the masks of our characters not only to tell a story, but also to discover something new about ourselves.



Vittoria Greco

Author of short stories, poems, and adventures for role-playing games. She graduated in Modern Literatures and attended the master's degree in Modern Entertainment Literatures, developing over the years a strong interest in storytelling as a cultural and social tool. She collaborates with the role-playing game publisher Aces Games as a stand-up artist and demonstrator at trade fairs, focusing on playful dissemination and product presentation to the public.



Andrea Ricciardelli

Graduate in Communication Sciences and Pedagogical Sciences, he is Coordinator of an afternoon educational and recreational center, educator of school education and home education services with groups of pre-adolescents and adolescents. He plays as a personal passion and a professional resource, a privileged learning tool, which allows one to experiment and have experiences safely in protected contexts, to activate reflection, critical, creative, and lateral thinking, to get to know one another, to know the other and the world.



Lucrezia Manoussakis

Lucrezia lived for many years in England, where she earned a degree in acting. During this time she discovered role-playing and board games and she has been passionate about them ever since, finding them similar to her industry. She believes that, in addition to fun, an important part of play is the potential for empathic growth and emotional intelligence that the individual can develop, as well as the continued exercise of fantasy and collaboration. For these reasons, she believes that the development of play in the pedagogical field is extremely important and useful for critical learning.

> You're never really done for, as long as you've got a good story and someone to tell it to.
>
> — Alessandro Baricco, Novecento

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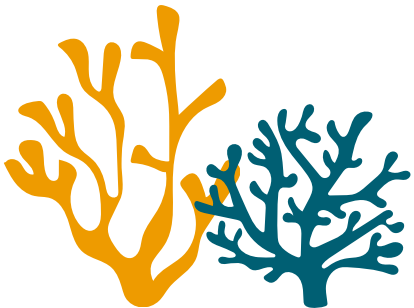
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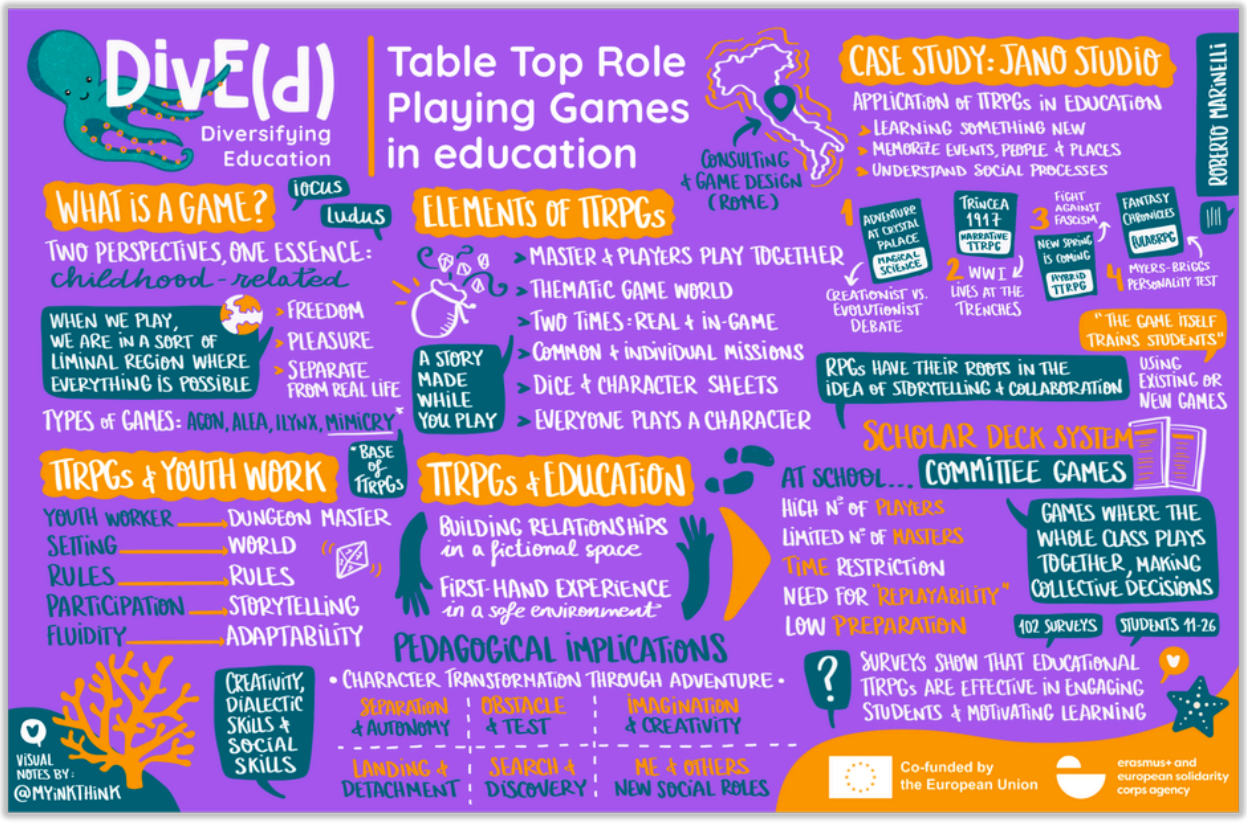
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About TTRPG-based learning

TTRPG-Based Learning (learning based on tabletop role-playing games) is an educational (and teaching) methodology that utilises the mechanics, dynamics and narratives typical of role-playing games to facilitate educational, training and personal development processes, placing participants at the centre of the experience.

Through the deeply immersive role-playing experience, players play a character, who may have characteristics similar to or different from the player's personality, and they are guided by a Dungeon Master, who acts as narrator, in a fictional yet believable world to achieve feats or adventures. In this way, we have learnings that can be referred to the emotional, problem solving, critical thinking, frustration tolerance, decision making areas, without however having consequences in the real world (even if we have them in the fantasy world).



THE "WHY" BEHIND THE METHOD

The usefulness of role-playing lies in the fact that one plays a real character in a verosmile, albeit fantastic, world. The player knows that the experience is not true, but the character believes it is absolutely authentic.

Role-playing, through the dynamic interpretation of a character interacting with others in a specific world, allows you to experience new possibilities and new experiences and their consequences, without any risk since they do not occur in reality. Wearing a mask also allows the player to be very different people, allowing for the development of the other's ability to understand. Again, role-playing naturally leads to collaboration with other players, if you want to complete the specific mission of the session, putting individual protaginismus on the back burner and placing collective protaginismus at the center.

In conclusion, we can say that TTRPGs help to develop: **problem solving; empathy; lateral thinking; critical thinking and teamwork.**

APPROPRIATE TARGET GROUPS

TTRPG game mechanics can be adapted to suit different age groups, skill levels and specific needs, whilst always promoting a high level of inclusivity. The main target groups include:

- **Middle School and Secondary school pupils:** TTRPgs games are designed as a non-formal engagement tools. They transform subjects often perceived as purely rote learning (such as history and literature) into interactive experiences. They stimulate the development of lateral thinking and active citizenship.

- **Non-formal education settings**: TTRPGs games promote team-building, constructive conflict resolution and the potential strengthening of group cohesion.

- **Young adults with special educational needs (SEN):** TTRPGs games, with its clear routines, repeatable stages and structured opportunities for expression (taking turns, using cards, debates), create a functional playing environment. They enable work on social autonomy, anxiety and emotional recognition.

- **Socio-educational rehabilitation:** role-play and the use of masks provide a protective screen, allowing participants to explore emotions, relational dynamics and experiences that need to be processed, thereby supporting therapeutic and reintegration pathways.

APPROPRIATE SUBJECTS AND TOPICS

The themes explored in the games facilitate an understanding of complex systems, the analysis of different perspectives, or the exploration of ethical dilemmas. The main themes and topics include:

- **History and Public History:** the games allow players to experience the social, political and economic climate of an era and, trhough the interpretation of some characters, relive its atmosphere and be its direct protagonists.

- **Literature and Narrative:** the games allow players to explore the motivations of characters (including literary ones), rewriting endings and understanding narrative structures through the active creation of the story.

- **Civic Education and Social Issues**: through their scenarios, games enable players to tackle themes such as civil rights, resource management, migration and inclusion. Players find themselves having to enact legislation, allocate scarce resources or manage crises, thereby gaining an understanding of the difficulties of politics and life in society.

- **Emotional Education and Soft Skills:** games scenarios are designed to be realistic, serving as safe spaces to practise assertiveness, teamwork, leadership and emotional intelligence, whilst prompting players to grapple with moral dilemmas.



TTRPG-based DivE(d) games

Game name	Subject	Topic	Facilitation difficulty	Player number	Age	Game difficulty	Link to game
A day in the trench	History, Civic Education	World War I	🔒	6-24	13+	🔒	
Ad Alpes. Spartacus' flight	History, Civic Education	Third Servile War, Roman Republic	🔒🔒	4-7	14+	🔒🔒	
Carrù 1944	History, Civic Education	Italian resistance against Nazifascsim	🔒🔒	6-30	14+	🔒🔒	
The Balkan Route	Civic Education, Human Rights	Migration and migrants' rights	🔒🔒	4-30	14+	🔒🔒	
The Stonewall Riots	Human Rights, History	LGBTQI+ community rights	🔒	6-30	14+	🔒	
Violets in the Mud	History, Civic Education	Suffragette Movement, women's rights	🔒	4-24	14+	🔒	



Facilitation of TTRPG-based activities

The role of the Facilitator in tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs) is crucial. Their task is to ensure that the gaming experience becomes an opportunity for learning, self-expression and reflection.

FRAMING

This serves to prepare the group for the experience, creating a framework in which players feel safe and immersed in the context.

- **Contextualisation:** Before beginning, the Facilitator must briefly introduce the historical and social context in which the game is set. This provides the players with the necessary context to make informed choices.
- **Role Allocation:** The Facilitator helps the players choose their Characters. It is useful to briefly outline each character's background details and role to facilitate an informed choice, encouraging the players to consider the connections between their characters.

FACILITATION

The Facilitator acts as a moderator, managing the timing, ensuring inclusivity and making sure everyone has a chance to speak.

- **Debate Management:** This is the central phase of the activity, the duration of which may vary from 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the game. The Facilitator's role is to actively oversee this phase.
- **Inclusivity and Participation:** Dividing the activity into phases helps to create a safe space for expression: the Facilitator must ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak. If participants are unable to self-regulate, the Facilitator must intervene to give a voice to those who are being excluded or to encourage participation.

DEBRIEFING

At the end of the game, the Facilitator leads a discussion on the experience, using the debriefing to highlight the educational aspects.

- **Emotional and Educational Analysis:** Players can analyse what they liked, what they didn't like, what they would have liked to do, and how they would have liked to change certain reactions. This helps the Facilitator to assess how much the participants have learnt about the socio-cultural context of the game and to highlight the group dynamics that developed during the activity.
- **Analysis of Choices and Mechanics:** The Facilitator can draw on the notes on the players' sheets to analyse the choices made.
- **Conclusion:** By focusing on these aspects, participants are encouraged to reflect on their thoughts, assumptions and the decisions they made. The ultimate aim is to identify strengths, weaknesses and lessons learnt (individually or collectively), helping players to understand how to apply these insights in real life and to plan concrete actions for improvement.



Adapting a game to your audience

The format of these games has been designed to be flexible. Although the phased structure provides a reassuring routine, the Facilitator can and should tailor the experience to suit the age, skills and sensitivities of their group. Here are some practical tips for adapting the game to your audience:

Adjusting the duration of the debate

A good suggestion is setting aside 5 to 10 minutes for the debate phase. This timeframe is not set in stone. If the group consists of younger players, those who lack confidence, or those who tend to get distracted easily, you can reduce the time to 3–5 minutes, intervening more frequently with direct questions to stimulate discussion. Conversely, with groups of adults or particularly engaged participants, you can make full use of the 10 minutes, encouraging a more structured formal speech before the vote.

Managing cognitive load

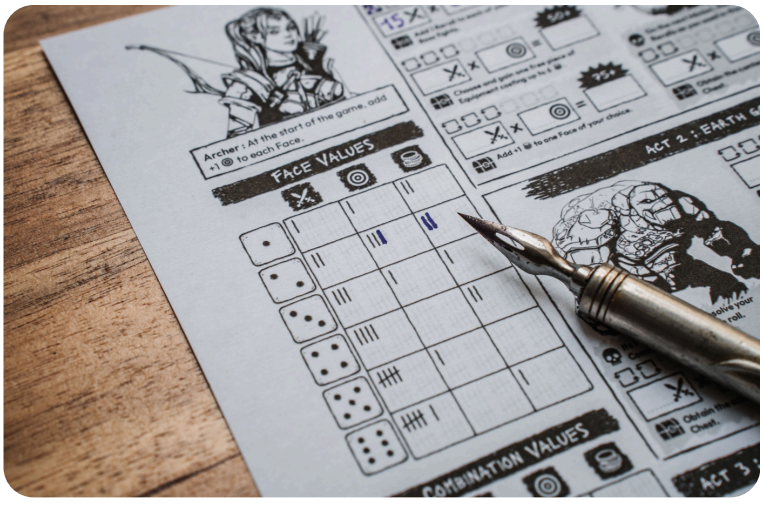
The game involves simultaneously managing different tasks. For an audience of beginners or for young people with specific Special Educational Needs, the Facilitator may decide to simplify the experience during the very first game.

Supporting the Debate

Not everyone has the same debating skills. If you notice that players are struggling or holding back, adopt a scaffolding approach: allow them to explain the concept in their own words and help them yourself (or encourage other players to do so), turning the obstacle into a moment of collaborative learning.

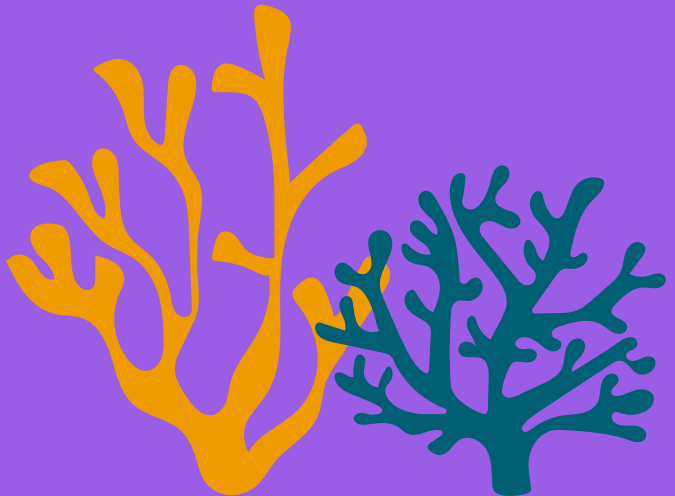
Calibrating Historical and Moral Intensity

The tone of the narrative can be adapted to the audience. With a mature audience, e.g., the Facilitator may push the game's framework towards more complex moral dilemmas, emphasising the sacrifices, political compromises and harsh historical realities.



TTRPG-based
DivE(d) games

OUTLINES



A Day in the Trench

TTRPG-based game

Authors: Roberto Marinelli, Erica Meazza, Andrea Ricciardelli
Visuals by: Erica Meazza

Learning outcomes

1. Understanding the cruelty of war.
2. Empathize with soldiers' life in trenches during World War I.
3. Learning how to work in a group in order to achieve a common goal.

Specs

- **Group size:** 20 - 25 players
- **Age:** 11 – 19
- **Game session duration (including briefing/debriefing):** 60 minutes

Disclaimer

Violence, Depression, Death.

Game setup

- Arrange the node cards face down on the timeline, with the text hidden from the players, in the following order:
  MUSTER, SIREN, DECISION, END OF THE BATTLE.

- Prepare the decks of event cards for the subsequent phases, separated by color and hidden from the players.

Ultimate mission

To get to the end of the day while trying to survive and to keep the team's moral stress low.

Moral stress is the collective resource and indicates the level of emotional fragility and ethical doubt perceived by the characters and the group. When it grows, the soldiers become nervous and unpredictable; when it diminishes, they remain calm and lucid.

Intro trailer (read to players)

"July 28, 1914, the world is at war and Europe will be the epicenter of the massacre that will slaughter more than 10 million men in 4 years (until November 4, 1918). A generation of boys will be swept away by the fury of the war device. Terrifying new weapons will appear, new ways to kill, and a new conception of life in war: the trench. In these holes dug in the ground, dirty, filthy, precarious, soldiers will live and die on every front, regardless of nationality. Fear, glory, despair, honor, disease, solidarity, death will be companions of this immense tragedy. Are you ready to put on the shoes of these men and experience 'A Day in the Trench?""

Step-by-step facilitation (what does the teacher do)

- The game rules change depending on the **game phase**.
- The **four phases** follow one another in sequence.
- The game facilitator reads the **node card** corresponding to the current phase.
- The game facilitator then shows the participants the corresponding **event cards**.
- Divided into groups according to the character they are playing, the participants must choose one card. This card represents the choice made by their character (answering the indirect question: **What does the character do?**).
- In some cases, the group can choose from the entire deck of choice cards. In other cases, they can choose only from half of the deck. The half of the cards available to choose from is determined by a **dice roll**, as explained in more detail in the game rules.
- After making their choice, each group rolls a **D6 die**.
  - **If the result is 1, 2, or 3,** the roll is considered a failure, and the corresponding paragraph is read.
  - **If the result is 4, 5, or 6,** the roll is considered a success, and the corresponding paragraph is read.
- Each choice card and each success or failure is associated with a numerical value. These values are used to **calculate the moral stress level**, which influences both the choices made during the game and the ending.

The facilitator is responsible for guiding the experience: introducing the game, reading and flipping the "node" cards, presenting the event cards to the players, tracking consequences (calculating the outcome and the resulting moral stress value), and updating the group on the current moral stress value affecting the game. The facilitator also leads the final debrief, allowing the participants to reflect on their experience.

Endgame

The game concludes when the facilitator turns over the final node: **"End of the fight/clash".** After reading the node card, the facilitator will tally the level of moral stress achieved and read the corresponding ending.

Debriefing

In this phase the students step out of character and return to the classroom, with a clearer head and a focus on what has been experienced. It is a moment to listen to themselves and each other: to understand the emotions that this experience brought out, what they liked and what they didn't like, and what thoughts arose during the game. This moment of reflection is needed to connect the game to reality: recognise what we learnt about war, about dehumanisation and trench life while making emerge what each student kept from playing.

Some guiding questions have been prepared to assist the moderator; however, it is recommended that the group be allowed the freedom to express themselves spontaneously, without being overly directed:

- What emotions did you feel while playing?
- Was it easy or difficult to reach an agreement? Why?
- Did you change your mind by listening to someone else?
- Did you feel a sense of closeness or detachment to your character?
- What could be the application in your daily life with what you learnt?

Game variations

The game can be played in groups (allowing the entire class to participate simultaneously), or in smaller groups. In the first scenario, the group of students collectively plays a single character; in the second, each player takes on a character. The first approach is preferred and recommended, as the internal group discussion (deciding how the character would act in a given situation) is an integral part of the game and can foster deeper reflection.

Material list

Physical objects:

- 1 x D6 die

Printouts:

- 1 x Rulebook
- 6 x Character cards
- 6 x Story node cards
- 32 x Event cards



Printable materials

Ad Alpes. Spartacus' Flight

TTRPG-based game

Authors: Laura Cardinale, Eugenio Nuzzo
Visuals by: Orietta Albertini, Stefano Cardinale

Learning outcomes

1. Use debate techniques to explore the themes of decision-making and conflict resolution.
2. Gain historical knowledge focusing on the social aspects and processes involved in shaping a historical event.
3. Develop empathy and a sense of responsibility.

Specs

- **Group size:** 4-7 players (+1 facilitator)
- **Age:** 12+
- **Game session duration (including briefing/debriefing):** 90 minutes

Disclaimer

Slavery.

Game setup

- The Facilitator shuffles the **Argument Cards** deck and places it face down in the appropriate section of the **Game Board** (Abacus Ludi).
- Each player chooses a Character from the available **Character Sheets** (Index Personarum). The Facilitator can help players with their choice, by briefly illustrating the Character Profile and the Role of each of them. Once each player has chosen their Character, the Facilitator assigns the corresponding Sheet.
- Each player chooses (or randomly determines by rolling 1d6) their **Character's Personal Objective** from those proposed in the assigned Sheet, taking care to mark it and keep it secret from other Players.

- The Facilitator chooses an opening **Scenario from the Book of Incipits and Events** (Liber de Incipitibus et de Eventibus). Then reads the **Narrative Introduction** out loud, declares the **Objective**, and performs the **Scenario Setup**:
  - Places the Roman Republic and Spartacus Army token into the indicated box of their respective tracks;
  - Randomly assigns the indicated number of Argument Cards to each player;
  - Places the number of Resources of the indicated Type into the Common Resources field of the Game Board.

The remaining Resource Cards are then shuffled and the deck is placed face down in the appropriate section of the Game Board. The Facilitator briefly introduces the historical and social setting of Republican Rome, explaining the topic of slavery and the issues related to the Scenario being played.

Ultimate mission

Living the story of Spartacus' slave revolt, trying to achieve freedom.

Intro trailer (read to players)

It depends on the chosen Scenario. **See The Book of Incipits and Events.**

Step-by-step facilitation (what does the teacher do)

The game is played in Rounds, each consisting of 4 Phases. Rounds continue until one of the two Tokens ends up in box 10 of its track, thus ending the game and determining the Victory or Defeat of the Group (depending on the Objective indicated in the Scenario).

The 4 Phases of a Round include, in sequence:

1. Vote for the Leader;
2. Read the Event;
3. Engage in the Debate;
4. Read and implement the Resolution.

For more detailed steps, see the Rulebook.

Endgame

The game ends when one of the following conditions occurs:

1. The Spartacus Army Token reaches the last space on its track on the Game Board.
2. The Roman Republic Token reaches the last space on its track on the Game Board.

If a game effect causes a Token to reach the last space before the end of the Round, the game continues until the Round is concluded.

If a game effect causes a Token to move back from the last space, the game is not over and the next Round is played regularly if no victory or defeat condition is met.

When the game is officially over, the Facilitator consults the Victory Condition established by the Scenario. Resource Cards are counted as part of the Victory Condition, as well as the Tokens positions.

Debriefing

At the end of the game, the Facilitator and the players can discuss their experiences. They have the opportunity to analyse what they liked and disliked, what the they would have liked to have done, or how they would have changed their reactions. Debriefing helps the Facilitator to understand how much the participants have learnt about the sociocultural context of the era in question, as well as assess potential group dynamics that emerged during the activity and the unfolding of the game phases.

In structuring and leading the debriefing, the Facilitator can help themselves by taking note of the choices taken by the players during the game Phases, analysing with the participants what was recorded on their sheets. The Facilitator can focus on the players' use of Argument Cards, on the Choices they supported, and how and through what means. A player may have played an Argument Card because it fits their argument, or they may have made an effort (for example through dialectics, argumentation, or lateral thinking) to try to adapt their thesis to the card that they wanted to play at that moment.

Some guiding questions have been prepared to assist the moderator; however, it is recommended that the group be allowed the freedom to express themselves spontaneously, without being overly directed:

- What emotions did you feel while playing?
- Was it easy or difficult to reach an agreement? Why?
- Did you change your mind by listening to someone else?
- Did you feel a sense of closeness or detachment to your character?
- What could be the application in your daily life with what you learnt?

Follow-Up Suggestions (idea for following lesson/meeting)

Thanks to the different available scenarios, it's possible to play different phases and sessions with the same groups, doing specific lesson on costumes, philosophy, society, and also Latin literature and grammar. Players can also create their own character or try to use the same rules for different settings.

Material list

Physical objects:

- 1 x D6 die

Printouts:

- 1 x Game Board
- 1 x Book of Incipits and Events
- 1 x Rulebook
- 7 x Character Sheets
- 50 x Argument Cards
- 70 x Resource Cards



Printable materials

Carrù 1944

TTRPG-based game

Author: Filippi Edoardo
Visuals by: Orietta Albertini, Stefano Cardinale (Jano Studio)

Learning outcomes

1. Developing conflict management skills.
2. Understanding resources sharing.
3. Understanding a specific historical period (WWII).

Specs

- **Group size:** 6-30 players
- **Age:** 13+
- **Game session duration (including briefing/debriefing):** 60 - 180 minutes

Disclaimer

War memories.

Game setup

- Divide the cards **(Character cards and Event cards)** in two separated decks.
- Put Event cards in alphabetical order (from A to G) and numeric order (e.g A-1, A2...).
- Prepare the diary notes for being read.
- Prepare a visual Tension Line (e.g. a numbered scale from 1 to 15).

Ultimate mission

To deal with event cards as they unfold and make decisions as a team to decide what response to apply.

Intro trailer (read to players)

Read the “Introduction” section on page 1 of the Rulebook.

Step-by-step facilitation (what does the teacher do)

1. Participants choose a **Character card**.
2. Participants choose **skills** for their characters from the list provided by the game master.
3. The game master reads the **excerpts from the war diaries** so as to have an overall view of the historical facts.
4. Start the game with the **Event cards ordered by letter.**
5. Participants have the consequence of the event chosen based on the characters' personalities.
6. Evaluate which and how many Event cards to use (based on participants' choices).
7. Repeat this steps until the end of the game.

For more detailed steps, see the Rulebook.

Endgame

The game ends when the final event is solved and the Germans let townspeople live or they burn down the village.

Debriefing

After the game, hold a group discussion on the use of one's character and the dynamics that have developed between characters.

- What was the most difficult decision to take? Why?
- Have you had any conflicts while discussing the group's ideas and your own (or your Role's) ideas?
- Which one of your character's characteristics were you able to expend the most?
- What does this story teach us about conflict? And about the concept of justice?
- Which types of fear grow inside us?
- What can we do to contain the escalation of violence?

Follow-Up Suggestions (idea for following lesson/meeting)

- Complete the reading of the war diaries and analyse the different readings of the events that occurred.
- Make a research on Italian Resistance during World War II and try to compare it in your country. Is there something similar or was too specific or so different?

Game variations

Number of Event Cards proposed, based on the time available and the number of players involved.

Material list

Physical objects:

- 1 x D6 die

Printouts:

- 1 x Rulebook
- 16 x Character Cards (each with 2 additional information cards and 1 customization card)
- 33 x Action Cards
- 1 x Short diary
- 1 x Full diary



The Balkan Route

TTRPG-based game

Author: Claudio Muratore
Visuals by: Orietta Albertini and Stefano Cardinale (Jano Studio)

Learning outcomes

1. Understanding the migration phenomenon in its complexity.
2. Empathizing with migrants as human beings.
3. Understanding the importance of collaboration to achieve a common goal.

Specs

- **Group size:** 4-6 players
- **Age:** 11 – 19
- **Game session duration (including briefing/debriefing):** 60 minutes

Disclaimer

Violence, Depression, Abuse of power.

Game setup

- Participants are divided into a maximum of **6 groups** of between 3 and 6 players.
- Each player is given a **character card**. Players reads the card and play that character throughout the game.
- The deck of **poker cards** is divided into suits: the heart and diamond cards will form the Refugee Camp cards, while the spades and clubs cards will be the Journey Cards.
- A player is chosen as the Facilitator: he will read the **Game Playbook** for everyone. It is possible that the role of Facilitator is entrusted in turns to multiple players.
- The Facilitator reads the **Introduction** in the Game Playbook and then the game begins.

Ultimate mission

Each group of players plays a group of migrants (up to 6) who are trying to reach Europe in order to start a new life.

Intro trailer (read to players)

"The coach stops with a jolt and, for a moment, all that remains is the sound of your feet stepping onto the wet asphalt. Bihać smells of the humid air of the river and the hills; the smell of smoke and hot soup wafts in, mingling with the cold of the metal and the plastic of the tarps. Someone points in the direction of the camp with their chin, as if it were a word that didn't need to be spoken. Walk.

At the entrance the neon light cuts through the darkness. Volunteers wearing different vests speak overlapping languages – Bosnian, English, fragments of Arabic, Farsi, Urdu – and ask you your name, where are you from and if you're okay. They give you a water bottle and an apple. There is a neat but slow queue: a guy with a tablet takes note of the new arrivals; every now and then a short laugh, as if to remind you that it is still possible.

Inside, the camp is a geometric composition of tents and containers. From the back, steam can be seen rising from a large pot. Someone makes room for you to sit on a bench; a child stares at your muddy but sturdy shoes, then smiles and looks away. You put your rucksack down and feel your shoulders suddenly lighten. A volunteer asks you if you have a number to call. You nod, but for a minute you say nothing: you listen to the crackling of the fire, the wind rustling the tarps, the murmur of names. You've arrived. It's not the end of the journey, but here, for a while, you can stop to rest and get to know your fellow travelers before tackling the hardest part. Before starting the border game..."

Game rules (what is introduced to players)

"You have a **Smartphone**, a pair of **Sturdy Shoes**, you are not **Cold** and you don't have **Blistered Feet**, but mark on your character sheets **2 Stress Points** due to the harshness of your journey to here. **For each Stress Point you have, deduct 1 to any roll.** You can't leave the Refugee Camp while having Stress Points. Now is the time to get to know your fellow travellers, rest and prepare yourselves for the next phase of your long journey. Here starts the phase at the **Refugee Camp**."

Step-by-step facilitation (what does the teacher do)

The game is organized in **two successive phases.** The first phase takes place at the Refugee Camp. The second one is the Travel Phase. Each phase is divided into several rounds. What happens in each round of the two phases is described below:

REFUGEE CAMP PHASE

1. **Refugee Cards:** the group draws 3 Refugee Cards and the Facilitator reads the relevant paragraphs in the Game Playbook aloud to everyone. The group, playing their characters, discusses the opportunities and each chooses a single Refugee Card to follow. Multiple players can choose the same card. The cards drawn are then discarded. If the Refugee Cards deck has less than 3 cards, the characters are too tired, discouraged and depressed to continue their journey and the players lose the game.

2. **Rest:** each player removes (if present) 1 Stress point from their Sheet. If they need it, they can charge their Smartphone and dry their Wet Socks.

3. **Departure:** if the following conditions are met: no character has any Stress Points, no character has Blistered Feet, no character is Cold, every character wears Sturdy Shoes and at least one character has a charged Smartphone, then the characters can shuffle the discards into the Refugee Cards deck and move on to the Travel Phase.

4. If the group can't depart, they go **back to point 1**.

TRAVEL PHASE

1. **Journey Cards:** players draw 1 Journey Card; the Facilitator reads it and the characters face the event that is described with all the consequences. After this, discard the Journey Card.

2. If at least one character gains **more than 5 Stress Points, the group cannot continue.** Discard all collected Journey Cards and shuffle them into the deck. Go back to the Refugee Camp.

3. If there are at least 5 Journey Cards in the discard pile you have arrived in Trieste. **You have overcome the border game and can breathe a sigh of relief.**

Endgame

If the group manages to pass 5 Journey Cards consecutively without being sent back to the Refugee Camp, they arrive in Trieste and reach their goal.

Analysis

- What emotions did you feel during the game?
- Was there a moment when you felt uncomfortable, frustrated, or just had a hard time?
- Did you feel a sense of closeness or detachment to your character?
- What do you think about migrants' lives, after playing?
- What have you learnt about migrants' conditions?
- What do you think needs to change in international migration laws?
- What can you do in your daily life/at the local level to support migrant people?

Follow-up suggestions (ideas for following lessons/meetings)

Assign students the country they "missed" the most times to research 3 new facts about and, have students write their own Country Cards for a country of their choice to test the class next time.

Game variations

Character cards from Afghanistan have more story details. It is possible to use them for older players and the keep the simpler character cards for younger players.

Material list

Physical objects:

- 1 x Die for each group (better if 1 for each player)
- 1 x Deck of poker cards without the Jokers for each group.

Printouts:

- 1 x Rulebook
- 1 x Playbook
- 36 x Characters cards



Printable materials

Stonewall Riots

TTRPG-based game

Authors: Roberto Marinelli, Erica Meazza, Andrea Ricciardelli
Visuals by: Erica Meazza, Jano Studio

Learning outcomes

1. Getting to know and deepen knowledge of the LGBTQI+ community.
2. Learning the value of solidarity and equality in social contexts.
3. Learning to collaborate to achieve a common goal.

Specs

- **Group size:** 20 - 25 players
- **Age:** 11 – 19
- **Game session duration (including briefing/debriefing):** 60 minutes

Disclaimer

Violence, Repression.

Game setup

Arrange the different decks of cards according to color and with the text side not visible to the players.

Ultimate mission

Players experience the night that led to the birth of the LGBTQI+ Rights Movement and see, at the end of the game, whether the choices they made reflect history or not.

Intro trailer (read to players)

“Night of June 27, 1969, New York. Inside a club notoriously frequented by homosexuals, yet another police raid. The most common charge is ‘indecency’, and simply kissing, holding hands, wearing the opposite sex's clothing, or even being in the bar at the time of the raid is enough to get arrested.

This is 1969 when youthful consciences make the old world tremble, even in the area of sexual liberation. The premises are different, the souls more aware, the desire to be oneself stronger and the anger, growing. The ingredients are set up, and just a spark is enough for a "normal raid" to transform into the "Stonewall Riots"... Which side will you be on?”

Step-by-step facilitation (what does the teacher do)

- The game has four phases, which occur one after the other.
- The moderator reveals the first Node Card Start (“The police burst in”) and begins the game.
- After reading the card, the moderator shows the action cards from which players can choose.
- Groups then have 5-10 minutes to choose how their character behaves in that situation.
- Once all the groups have decided, they communicate their choice to the moderator via a spokesperson.
- When the moderator has every group’s choices, they sum up the results in secret and tell players about their new Community Spirit level (following the “Card Results Guide” in the Game rulebook).
- The same procedure is followed for each of the nodes until the Node Card “The End of the Night”. At this point, the moderator sums up all of the results obtained, which determine the amount of Community Spirit gained, and thus the ending.

The facilitator is responsible for guiding the experience: introducing the game, reading and flipping node cards, presenting choice cards to players, tracking consequences (calculating the outcome and the resulting Community Spirit value), and updating the group on the current Community Spirit value affecting the game. The facilitator also leads the final debrief, allowing the participants to reflect on their experience.

Endgame

The game concludes when the facilitator turns over the final node: **"The End of the Night".** After reading the node card, the facilitator tallies the level of Community Spirit achieved and reads the corresponding ending.

Debriefing

At the conclusion of the game, a debriefing session follows. In this phase, we step out of character and return to the classroom, with a clearer mind and a focus on what has been experienced. This space for reflection helps to connect the game to reality, to recognize what we have learned about discrimination, marginalization, and the lives of queer people in New York in the 1970s.

Some guiding questions have been prepared to assist the moderator; however, it is recommended that the group be allowed the freedom to express themselves spontaneously, without being overly directed:

- What emotions did you feel while playing?
- Was it easy or difficult to reach an agreement? Why?
- Did you change your mind by listening to someone else?
- Did you feel a sense of closeness or detachment to your character?
- What could be the application in your daily life with what you learnt?

Game variations

The game can be played in a big group (allowing the entire class to participate simultaneously), or in smaller groups. In the first case, the group of students collectively plays a single character; in the second, each player takes on a character. The first approach is preferred and recommended, as the internal group discussion (deciding how the character would act in a given situation) is an integral part of the game and can foster deeper reflection.

Material list

Printouts:

- 1 x Rulebook
- 6 x Character cards
- 22 x Cards
  - 16 x Event cards
  - 6 x Story cards



Violets in the Mud

TTRPG-based game

Author: Vittoria Greco
Visuals by: Vittoria Greco

Learning outcomes

1. Understanding the historical struggle for women's suffrage.
2. Developing empathy through historical role-play.
3. Connecting past social struggles with present-day issues.

Specs

- **Group size:** 4-7 players (+1 Facilitator)
- **Age:** 12+
- **Game session duration (including briefing/debriefing):** 60–90 minutes.

Disclaimer

This game deals with historical themes such as political repression, social injustice and death. It is recommended to provide a safe space for discussion and debriefing.

Game setup

Place the **Game Board** in the center of the table, the **Event Card** in each Clock and distribute **Argument cards** and **Character sheets** among players.
To explain the rules, follow the **Rulebook**, state the theme and the final objective, describe the structure of the Clocks and perform a brief practical simulation before starting the game. The Facilitator can find all Event presentation and outcome in the **Facilitator Guide.**

Ultimate mission

Guide the Movement through four historical phases and reach the end of the struggle while maintaining enough Morale and Visibility without being crushed by Repression.

Intro trailer (read to players)

"At the beginning of the twentieth century, the United Kingdom was considered a modern nation. Women could study, work, pay taxes and take part in many aspects of public life. And yet, they still had no political voice.

Across the country, women from different social classes began to organize. Some believed in peaceful protest and political dialogue, others were convinced that only radical action could force the system to listen. Together, they formed a Movement that would challenge society, the government, and even itself.

In this game, you are not just observers of history. You are members of that Movement. You will face difficult decisions, internal disagreements and the pressure of a system that does not want to change. Your goal is not only to win rights, but to keep your movement alive, united and visible long enough to make a difference."

Game rules (what is introduced to players)

Violets in the Mud is a semi-cooperative card and role-playing game for **three to seven players and a Facilitator,** based on interpretation and role-playing dynamics.

Players take on the roles of **members of a Movement of British citizens** of varying social status during the struggle for universal suffrage, spanning a historical period from 1907 to 1917.

The game focuses on **debate, political pressure, and the collective consequences of decisions.** The decisions made by the Movement do not have immediate and discernible effects, and their true cost emerges only over time, in the form of loss of consensus, repression, or internal fractures.

The Common Objective of the Movement is to **go through the four Clocks of the game,** which represent the different phases of the struggle for suffrage, and to reach the end of the game while maintaining a fragile but sufficient balance. At the end of the last Clock, the Movement must have **at least 3 Movement Morale points and 3 Public Visibility points, while Government Repression below 4 points.**

If at any point in the game, the Repression reaches 4 points, then the game ends immediately with a **collective defeat**. Besides the Common Objective, each player has a Personal Objective which is tied to their character. The Movement can win as a whole, but a single character could not be able to achieve what was most important to them.

Step-by-step facilitation (what does the teacher do)

At the beginning of the game, the Facilitator reads aloud the **Game Historical Introduction** written in the Facilitator Guide, and then the **Game Board** is placed in the centre of the table.

The game is divided into **four Clocks** to be played in a fixed order: the Mud March; Emily Davison's Death; The Great War and The Race to Parliament.

Each Clock represents a distinct historical phase and contains a single **Event** that the group will have to face. The initial values of the Movement are set to:

- **1 Morale point;**
- **1 Visibility point;**
- **0 Repression points.**

Each player chooses or receives a **Character Sheet**, which describes their name, age, profession, background and Personal Objective. The player will have to introduce themselves to the Movement describing their character.

After that, each player is given **6 Argument Cards**, which represent the words, concepts and the rhetorical devices at their disposal during the Debate phase.

The Facilitator then prepares the **four Event Decks**, one for each Clock. From each Event Deck, they draw one Event Card and place it face down on the corresponding Clock, without revealing its contents.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CLOCK

At the beginning of each Clock, the Facilitator reads aloud the Clock Historical Introduction written in the Facilitator Guide, providing context and atmosphere to the players. Immediately afterward, the Facilitator reveals the Event Card associated with that Clock and reads its contents, including the three possible Resolutions (but not the Consequences).

At this point, the Debate begins.

THE DEBATE

During the Debate, the players roleplay their characters and discuss which Resolution to adopt. Each player chooses **one of the 3 proposed Resolutions** and uses one or more of Argument Cards to justify their position, connecting the words on the card to the character's beliefs, experiences or interests. Each Argument Card used awards 1 point to the Resolution the player is currently supporting.

The Debate ends once all the players have confirmed their final choice.

In case of a tie, the Movement's indecision favours the institutional powers. Therefore, the Resolution that leads to higher Repression will be chosen. If more Resolutions bring to the same increase, then the Facilitator chooses the one that better represents the Movement's inertia or division.

RESOLUTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Once the final Resolution is determined, the Facilitator reads out the **Consequence** and immediately applies the changes to the Morale, Visibility and Repression values.

The Consequences of the Resolutions can be found in the Facilitator Guide and cannot be shared with the players before they make a choice. Some Resolutions have a few random Consequences that must be decided by the roll of a Six-Sided Die (available to print out in the Game Components).

Endgame

The game ends **when the fourth Clock is completed**, at which point it is checked whether the Movement meets the victory conditions, or ends immediately **if the Repression reaches the value of 4 points.**

At the end of the game, or if the Movement is defeated before the final Clock, the Facilitator reads the appropriate ending text. These paragraphs are provided at the end of the Facilitator Guide.

Victory or defeat concerns the entire Movement. Personal Objectives are instead evaluated individually.

Analysis

At the end of the game, it is recommended to provide time for discussion led by the Facilitator. Debriefing isn't optional, but an integral part of the gaming experience, especially in educational settings.

The Facilitator invites players to reflect on their recent experience, creating a safe space and asking some open-ended questions. It is important to remember that the Facilitator isn't required to ask all the questions. Even a brief closing discussion is sufficient. Below are some possible questions:

Questions about emotional experience:

- How did you feel during the game?
- Was there a moment when you felt uncomfortable, frustrated, or just had a hard time?
- Did you feel satisfied with any of the group's choices?

Questions about group decisions:

- Was it easy or difficult to reach an agreement? Why?
- How did the Debate change your decisions?
- Have you ever changed your mind by listening to someone else?

Questions about the game's mechanics:

- How did you experience the growth of Repression?
- Did Visibility always seem positive to you?
- Have you ever felt like "doing the right thing" came at a cost?

Questions about role and identification:

- Did you feel a sense of closeness or detachment to your character?
- Has your Personal Objective ever created conflict with the group?
- If the character were a real person, what kind of activist would they be?

Historical and connecting questions:

- What surprised you most about the struggle for suffrage?
- Do you think some of the dynamics seen in the game still exist today?
- Why do you think political change is often slow and conflicted?

Follow-up suggestions (ideas for following lessons/meetings)

Discuss real suffragist organizations, key historical figures, and how political rights are achieved over time.

Game variations

You can play each character in teams or individually.

Material list

Physical objects:

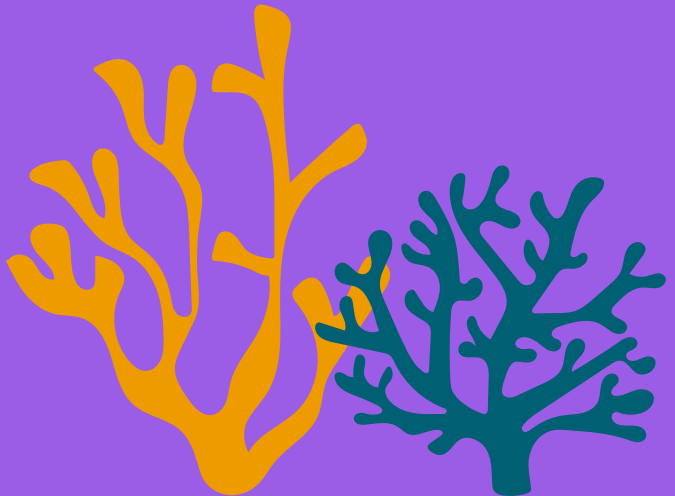
- 1 x d6 die

Printouts:

- 1 x Game board
- 12 x Event cards
- 42 x Argument cards
- 7 x Character sheets
- 1 x Facilitator guide
- 1 x Rulebook



Printable materials



Resource list for more games

If you would like to find out more about TTRPG-Based Learning or are looking for other tabletop role-playing games with socio-educational aims, here is a list of useful resources and platforms:

- **DriveThruRPG (Educational/Family section)**. One of the world's largest digital libraries of role-playing games. By filtering your search by categories such as 'Educational' or 'Family', you can find hundreds of independent role-playing games designed for learning, managing emotions and teaching.
- **Itch.io (Tags: Educational TTRPG / Physical Games)**. This platform for independent creators is full of 'micro-RPGs' and educational role-playing games (often free or available on a 'Pay What You Want' basis). By searching for tags such as 'Educational', 'Historical' or 'Classroom', you can discover highly creative projects that can be easily adapted to your own facilitation context.

TTRPG-based activity design

Designing an educational tabletop role-playing game (TTRPG-based learning) requires a methodological approach that blends game design with pedagogy. The most common mistake is to try to 'disguise' a lecture with dice and worksheets.

On the contrary, an effective educational game must first and foremost be a good game: it must offer players genuine agency, meaningful dilemmas and an appropriate level of challenge, whilst balancing enjoyment with educational objectives. When players are genuinely engaged by the mechanics and the narrative, learning takes place naturally and immersively.

Below is a list of guidelines and practical tips for educators and professionals ready to design their own TTRPG-based activities:

1. DEFINE THE EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE AS THE 'CORE LOOP'.

Before writing the setting or the rules, ask yourself: what do the players need to learn or experience? If the objective is to develop empathy, the game will need to be based on character interactions and role-play. If the objective is to understand an economic or historical system, the heart of the game will need to be resource management or diplomacy. The educational objective must influence the design of the core mechanics.

2. GAME MECHANICS ARE METAPHORS.

Choose rules that reflect the message you wish to convey. If you want to teach collaboration, avoid individual scoring systems and reward group success. If you want to convey the difficulty of making decisions under pressure, introduce real-world time limits (as in structured debates) or resource scarcity mechanics.

3. MAINTAIN ACCESSIBILITY

The cognitive load on participants should be focused on the moral, historical or strategic decisions to be made, not on mathematical calculations or memorising dozens of rules. Opt for streamlined systems, intuitive character sheets, highly legible fonts and procedures based on clear routines. The less time players spend trying to understand the rules, the more time they will spend immersed in the learning experience.

4. DESIGN MEANINGFUL CHOICES

Players must feel that their actions carry real weight. Avoid creating linear plots where the ending is already predetermined regardless of what the group does. Instead, design scenarios based on branching paths, dilemmas and unexpected events, allowing the participants' ethical or tactical choices to determine success, failure or an intermediate outcome.

5. CREATING 'HOOKS' FOR THE DEBRIEFING

A good educational TTRPG is designed from the outset with the final reflection in mind. Include moments in the game where participants must openly state their motivations, vote or take physical notes (such as keeping track of resources spent or jotting down their arguments). These tangible elements will be valuable tools in the facilitator's hands during the debriefing to stimulate analysis.

6. EMBRACE FAILURE AS A TEACHING TOOL

In educational games, losing need not be a frustrating experience, but an instructive one. Ensure that any defeat within the game is always attributable to the group's choices (e.g. 'we ran out of resources because we didn't work together') and never to the mere chance of a dice roll. Defeat at the gaming table is often the most powerful starting point for a discussion on how complex systems work in the real world.

7. ITERATIVE PLAYTESTING

Quickly develop a paper prototype and test it first with colleagues and then with a small group from your target audience. Observe their behaviour closely: do they get bored at certain stages? Are the rules unclear? Have they found a loophole in the system? Use this ongoing feedback to streamline, balance and refine the design before taking it into the classroom.





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