

Content research and content definition 2

Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge	Definition of the game genre and its atmosphere
Learning objectives	To learn how to do research, to identify an aesthetic (historical or fiction) and to recognise a general context
Subjects	History, Arts, Geography, English as a Foreign Language, Chemistry, Digital Literacy, Earth Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Programming, Physics
Recommended Age (10 – 14) or (15 - 18)	(15 – 18)
Material needed	Computers with Internet connection
Expected duration	30 - 60 minutes
Skills developed (after learning objectives)	Research, Digital literacy, Collaboration & teamwork, Critical thinking
Points of attention for inclusion / Inclusion best practices	Consider the possibility of finding assistive software/hardware for students with visual or hearing impairments
Individual or group activity	Group activity
Extension / differentiation activities (at the end of the sequence)	Integration of curricular elements, creation of the story
Similar games to use with the approach of the sequence	The videogame Papers, Please represents a well-rounded case in terms of the good results research can bring to the development of a video game. Investigating the bureaucratic system and the migratory policies of certain totalitarian states of the

past not only brings an aesthetically credible path to the title in question, but also helps players to experience the adventure more crudely and inhumanly. As a result, it succeeds in conveying the anxiety and moral conflict of the protagonist.

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

- **Step 1 – Determine research goals**

First, it is necessary to determine what information needs to be researched and then incorporated into the game. Special care should be taken to research and incorporate information that is relevant to both the credibility and the aesthetic quality of the game.

The research needed will differ depending on the type of game, but some elements that must be taken into account include: the characters' clothing, the architecture (especially in those games that seek to recreate an historical moment or a specific city/civilisation), and other elements that are considered relevant to the historical or geographical contexts, in order to create greater realism within the game.

- **Step 2 – Gather sources**

Make a list of sources where all the necessary information identified in the previous step can be found.

This list of sources should be based on credible and reliable websites. It can include online archives (preferably openly licensed materials), archive repositories, websites specialised in the subject matter (e.g. museums, universities, etc.), media, and others.

A bibliography list of encyclopaedias, books and/or specialised journals can also be provided. This research process can be more or less exhaustive depending on the students' and educator's interest and the specific characteristics of the game.

- **Step 3 – Create a document with the most relevant information**

In order to facilitate the research and to organise the information properly, it is important that the teacher and the students create a worksheet that includes the most relevant elements for their research. In this way, the students will have a guide in their hands that will facilitate their work, allowing them to know more precisely which information is the most important and gathering all the required sources in one place.

- **Step 4 – Research the information**

Now, it is the time to research the necessary information. Students should take the elements that were identified in Step 1 of this guide and the information sources that were identified in Step 2 to begin researching for the game.

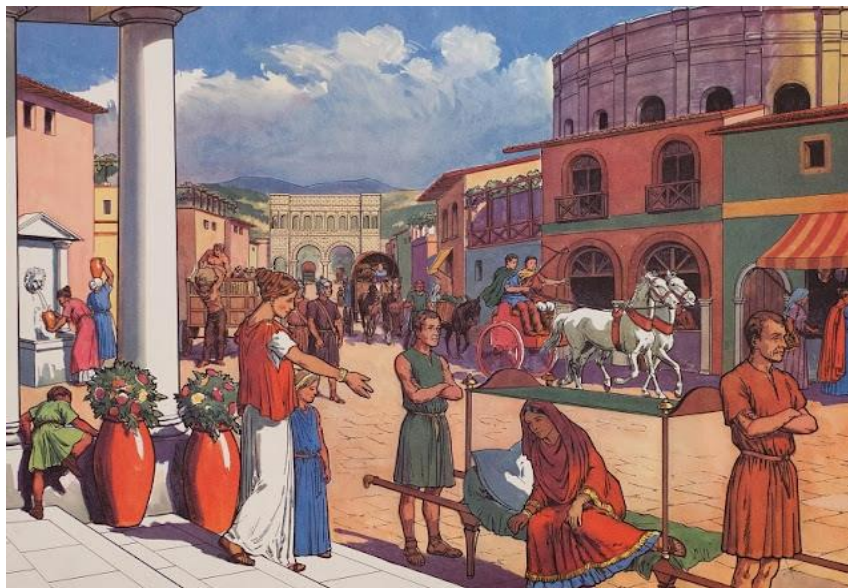
Students may need some prior guidance from the educator on how to distinguish between valuable and unnecessary information, as well as how to identify credible sources.

For inexperienced learners, the teacher may want to focus this exercise on researching audio-visual or image formats. More experienced learners can focus on researching written sources, which tend to be denser and/or more difficult in terms of both the amount and the depth of information presented.

For a more detailed, step-by-step approach on how to search for information on the internet, students and teachers can take a look at this webpage: [Web Searching Skills \(Granite School District\)](#).

Example of an accurate historical representation

Comparing the following photos, we can see an example of accurate historical representation. First, take a look at this illustration depicting an ancient Greek city.



Next, compare this capture from the game **Assassin's Creed: Origins** to the illustration we have just seen above.



It is quite clear how similar these two contexts are, and thus how far the game has gone to research and present the ancient Greek city in a historically accurate manner. In addition to the general architectural structures matching one another closely, details such as the cobblestone streets, the building awnings, and the large vases containing plants are further proof of the research done to ensure accuracy.

Generally, it is more useful to search for visual recreations of a time period rather than visual primary sources, as sometimes these primary sources do not represent everything we need to know. This is because visual recreations may capture more elements that are representative of a culture, time, and place than a primary source photograph taken at a single moment in time.

References

Gamepressure.com (2021). *Assassin's Creed Game Walkthrough: Shifty Scribe, Level 11* [Image]. Gamepressure.com.

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Gladiatrix en la Arena. (2021). *Ancient Greek City and Traffic* [Image]. Personal Blog: Gladiatrix en la Arena. <https://gladiatrixenlaarena.blogspot.com/2015/09/trafico-en-la-antigua-roma.html>

Granite School District. (2021). *Web Searching Skills*. Granite School District Webpage. <https://www.graniteschools.org/edtech/tip/information-and-media-literacy-skills/web-search-skills/>