

The City of The Future

Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge	Basic concepts of urbanization, cities and city planning
Learning objectives	Developing knowledge about urbanization and cities of the future
Subjects	Geography, Philosophy, Social sciences
Recommended Age	15-18
Material needed	Trailers of the video games, game play videos, technological equipment to project the videos
Sequence duration	60 - 90 minutes
Individual or group activity	Group activity
Expected production	Developing understanding of urbanism and spatial inequality
Skills developed (after learning objectives)	Critical thinking, research, empathy
Price range of the game	Free videos
Extension / differentiation activities (at the end of the sequence)	This pedagogical sequence can serve as an introduction to urbanism and planning; it may be used in the literature class on 1984 by G. Orwell to expand the discussion on dystopian cities and of the future
Similar games to use with the approach of the sequence	ShadowRun, Final Fantasy VII, Sim City (especially for urbanism and city management)

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

- **Step 1 – Familiarising yourself and the students with the game (10 minutes)**

In this sequence we will explore two video games: Detroit: Become Human and Cyberpunk 2077. Both games take place in the futuristic versions of existing cities in the US. This sequence can be used to teach about futuristic cities and to encourage discussions about the future. At the start of the lesson, briefly introduce chosen video games to your students. Here is a short description of the games which you may adapt for your students:

Detroit: Becoming human

This adventure game is set in Detroit in 2038, at the time when technology evolved to the point where human-like androids are everywhere. The humanoid androids serve humans and nearly every household in Detroit owns an android to take care of different chores. The androids can speak, move and behave like human beings. The plot follows three primary characters: Kara, a female android who escapes her owner to protect a young girl from domestic abuse; Connor, an android whose job is to investigate deviant androids; and Markus, who becomes the leader of the android's resistance movement.

The game is played from a third-person view and does not follow one storyline, instead the player has various choices to take to impact the story. Most choices are presented in a way that asks the player to make a quick decision which may be quite stressful when a choice has moral implications.



Cyberpunk 2077

Cyberpunk 2077 is an action role-playing video game developed and published by CD Projekt in 2020. The story is set in a dystopian future in a fictional Californian city named Night City. The game is played from a first-person perspective, as V, a mercenary whose backstory and roots will change depending on your chosen Lifepath.

- **Step 2 – Splitting the students in two groups and showing the videos (25 minutes)**

In this step we will explore the concept of the city in the future displayed in 2 different games. We suggest splitting students into two smaller groups, each group will focus on one game at the beginning and then come together for a discussion.

However, you may organise the activity without splitting the students into groups.

Once the students are split in the groups, show each group videos related to one video game.

Detroit: Become human:

- Video showing the street, the traffic, the buildings: [Detroit: Become Human Romance on the city streets of Detroit](#)
- Trailer – showing the role of androids, views of the city, traffic: [Detroit: Become Human – Launch Trailer](#)
- Gameplay trailer – shows the role of androids, the architecture and interior, traffic, city (until 0:50, after that it may be too violent for students younger than 17): [PS4 - Detroit Become Human Gameplay Trailer \(2018\) PGW](#)

Cyberpunk 2077:

- Video showing the city, buildings, traffic (until 1:26): [Cyberpunk 2077 — Official Cinematic Trailer | E3 2019](#)



- An Architect Review of the Night City (minutes to show: 0:33 – 1:49; 3:58 – 4:30; 6:16 – 6:20; 9:28 – 10:28: [An Architect Reviews: Cyberpunk 2077's Night City](#))
- Video showing the suburbs and desert next to the city, viewer follows the car riding (minutes to show: until 2:00; 3:38 – 4:40; 6:02 – 6:50) : [Cyberpunk 2077 - MAX SETTINGS 8k Resolution Ray Tracing PC Graphics! Night City Free Roam Gameplay](#)

Ask the students to focus on following questions and prepare a short presentation for the whole group:

- What elements of urbanism do you notice? (architecture, the buildings, the billboards, green spaces, the roads)
- What elements of city planning do you notice in the following clips? (infrastructure, open spaces, electricity, public services such as offices, banks, police station)
 - How is the city organised?
 - How is the transport organised?
 - Is there a specific part of the city where only certain population lives?
 - How are the characters portrayed?
 - How is the population of the city portrayed?

- **Step 3 - Each group presents what they saw on the videos (10 minutes)**

Following the presentation, show the short trailers of both video games to the whole group. Give a task to the groups to pay attention to the game they did not watch before and check for the elements that the other group mentioned.

Detroit: become human: [Detroit: Become Human – Launch Trailer](#)

Cyberpunk 2077: [Cyberpunk 2077 — Official Cinematic Trailer | E3 2019](#) (until 1:26)

- **Step 4 - Guided discussion and shared reflection, reaching the conclusion (15 min)**

At this point you can further explore the topics and concepts mentioned by your students as a discussion among the whole group. Of course, the discussion will depend on your students' presentation and the main concepts and challenges they noticed, but we suggest to also tackle the topic of spatial inequality, to highlight the different standards of living that some people may face in the urban areas and bring attention to positive and negative sides of urbanisation.

Here are some questions to guide the discussion:

- What questions do these games raise in your minds, about the cities of the future?
- How do you think city in the future will look like?
- Positive and negative sides of urbanisation?
- What are some challenges that come with urbanisation?
 - E.g. population expansion, slums, pollution, spatial inequality

References

Morphologis (January 3rd, 2021) 'An Architect Reviews: Cyberpunk 2077's Night City' [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkIZS20rJol>

GameTrailers (May 22nd, 2018) 'Detroit: Become Human – Launch Trailer' [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzXoDZIERyo>

Tom (May 26th, 2018) 'Detroit: Become Human Romance on the city streets of Detroit' [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btWlymOactg>

GameSpot (June 9th, 2019) 'Cyberpunk 2077 — Official Cinematic Trailer | E3 2019' [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LembwKDo1Dk>

GameNews Playstation (October 31st, 2017) 'PS4 - Detroit Become Human Gameplay Trailer (2018) PGW' [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qf6w8vVmrF8>

DubStepZz (December 24th, 2020) 'Cyberpunk 2077 - MAX SETTINGS 8k Resolution Ray Tracing PC Graphics! Night City Free Roam Gameplay' [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZyYwjNZ4ls>

Video games quoted:

Cyberpunk 2077: <https://www.cyberpunk.net>

Detroit: Become Human: <https://www.quanticedream.com/en/detroit-become-human>

