



Age of Empires

Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge	Students should be introduced to the historical period and context of the game before starting to play or to analyze it.
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To learn about the historical periods narrated in the game. - To solve challenges and accomplish missions related to historical simulations.
Subjects	History, Arts, Engineering, Social Sciences
Recommended Age	(10 – 14) or (15 - 18)
Material needed	PC with required games settings or console or STEAM online platform
Sequence duration	60 - 90 minutes
Individual or group activity	Group activity
Expected production	Presentations by the students
Skills developed (after learning objectives)	Critical thinking, research
Price range of the game	20-40€

Similar games to use with the approach of the sequence

Age of Empires has some variations and different editions covering other historical periods in its versions I, II, and IV.

Bear in mind that every version of the game has its own required computer settings.

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

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

In this sequence, we will explore one specific video game, as **Age of Empires** is a series of historical real-time strategy video games.

The original **Age of Empires** focused on events in Europe, Africa and Asia, spanning from the Stone Age to the Iron Age; the expansion game explored the formation and expansion of the Roman Empire. The sequel, **Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings**, was set in the Middle Ages, while its expansion focused partially on the Spanish conquest of Mexico. The subsequent three games of **Age of Empires III** explored the early modern period, when Europe was colonizing the Americas and several Asian nations were on the decline.

The development phases of the **Age of Empires games** were similar in several ways. Due to the games being based on historical events, the team often had to conduct large amounts of research.

- **Step 2 – Exploration of the historical periods of the game (25 minutes)**

In this step, we will explore the concept of the historical periods displayed in the different versions of the game. We suggest splitting students into two smaller groups, where each group will focus on one version at the beginning and then come together for a discussion. However, you may organize the activity without splitting the students into groups if you wish.

Once the students are split into groups, show each group videos related to one of the video games:

Age of Empires III: The Asian Dynasties

This game introduces three new civilizations; China, Japan, and India. It also introduces secondary characters, campaigns, maps, and game modes.

More information:

[Age of Empires III: The Asian Dynasties Overview \(Wikipedia\)](#)

[Age of Empires III: Definitive Edition \(Official Website\)](#)

- Trailer: [Age of Empires III: The Asian Dynasties Intro Cinematic](#)
- Video introduction: [Age of Empires III: The Asian Dynasties Trailer](#)



Age of Empires III: The WarChiefs

More Information:

[Age of Empires III: The WarChiefs Overview \(Wikipedia\)](#)

[Age of Empires III: Definitive Edition \(Official Website\)](#)

- Video: [Age of Empires III: The WarChiefs- Fire and Shadow- Story Movie](#)
- Trailer: [Age of Empires III: The WarChiefs Trailer](#)



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

- Can you identify any distinctive elements of the culture of this civilization? Describe them.
- What elements of each culture are preserved if they evolve or are conquered?
- What are the defense mechanisms of each civilization?
- What architectural elements have particularly caught your attention?

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

Each group should give a short presentation explaining what they saw in their videos and highlighting the answers to the questions above. Following these presentations, 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 look for the elements that the other group mentioned in their presentation.

- **Step 4 – Guided discussion and shared reflection, reaching conclusions (15 minutes)**

At this point, you can further explore the topics and concepts mentioned by your students in a discussion amongst the whole group. Of course, the discussion will depend on your students' presentations and the main concepts and challenges they noticed, but we suggest also tackling the topics of conquest and the differences between cultures.

Here are some questions to guide the discussion:

- What do you think history would be like if these historical events had been different?
- What could be considered the positive and negative sides of conquest?
- What does history look like from the point of view of those who have been conquered?

- **Step 5 – Broadening reflections on historical facts (15 minutes)**

In this final step, ask students to continue thinking critically about the history of conquest and the way it is communicated in the videogame (as well as in school textbooks and wider cultural references). What historical changes would occur now if the outcome of these conquests had been different? How would their daily lives be different? Try to identify and expand upon key elements that have been important for understanding the historical development of nations and cultures.

References

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