

A world with no wars

Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge	Basic knowledge of main historical wars (Napoleonic wars, World Wars, etc.)
Learning objectives	<p>Developing knowledge about human rights, citizenship, and the role of governments.</p> <p>Developing an understanding of the concept of human rights and a basic understanding of the causes and means of wars with the ultimate aim of realizing why wars should be avoided. Special emphasis is given to civil wars</p>
Subjects	History, Political Sciences, Philosophy, Social Science, Citizenship
Recommended Age	15 – 18
Sequence duration	60 – 90
Individual or group activity	Group activity (you should divide the students into groups of 3 or 4)
Expected production	Students should create a group presentation based on the videos they watched in the class.
Skills developed (after learning objectives)	Research, critical thinking, Empathy, social skills.
Price range of the game	Free videos
Extension / differentiation activities (at the end of the sequence)	<p>This pedagogical sequence can serve as an introduction to human rights; it could also be used in history class (i.e., Colonization, Greek civil war, etc.).</p> <p>In addition, this pedagogical sequence could be used in Religion, Politics, and Philosophy classes.</p>

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

- **Step 1 – Getting to know the game (10 minutes)**

This sequence will explore Final Fantasy X (read ‘Final Fantasy Ten’). This video game was released in 2001 but it still remains a very popular and memorable game. It takes place in an imaginary world that is divided into several city-nations. This sequence can be used as a tool to teach about the causes of wars, mainly civil wars, and as an introduction to the concept of Human Rights. You could also use this sequence in Religion, Politics, and Philosophy classes to ask your students to consider possible links between Religion and War and to critically assess the role of governments in international relations.

To be able to set these questions, you should introduce the game to your students. Here is a short description of the game:

Final Fantasy X:

Final Fantasy X takes place on a planet called Spira, which is composed of the mainland (various nation-states) and several smaller islands. 1000 years ago, a civil war, known as the Machina War, broke out in Spira between Zanarkand and Bevelle. In Zanarkand, they had magic (used by people known as summoners) and in Bevelle, they had weapons of mass destruction (known as Machina). When people of Bevelle attacked Zanarkand with Machina weapons, Yu Yevon – a summoner, leader of Zanarkand – created Sin to take revenge.

The game takes place 1000 years from the creation of Sin, a monster that wakes up every ten years and demands a sacrifice. The game starts with the main character,

Tidus, telling the story of his journey and his attempt to save the world of Spira with his companion, Yuna – a summoner. To save Spira, they must defeat Sin once and for all. People of Spira believe that Sin is the price they have to pay for their sins (a reference to the civil war and its consequences). However, this is revealed to be a lie, as Sin is the creation of Yu Yevon, and not a form of ‘God-given’ punishment. This lie is spread by the government of Spira to keep the people under control. Yuna finds out the truth and destroys Sin, but in the process, she will need to sacrifice her dreams and some of her friends (Final Fantasy Wiki, 2001).

- **Step 2 – Showing scenes of Final Fantasy X to your students (20 minutes)**

In this step we will explore the concepts of war, human rights, and religion as they are portrayed in Final Fantasy X. Students should be called to identify links between the imaginary world of Spira and our world, and they should be able to identify why wars break out, how to avoid civil wars, and the importance of the concepts of Human Rights and peace. To enable students to critically discuss these topics, you should divide them into groups of 3 or 4. This should enable students to discuss the video game, identify links to reality and debate the role of religion in wars as well as the role and responsibilities of governments in global politics.

Once students are divided into groups you could show them videos of the video game. It would be interesting if each group has a different video to enable a lively discussion with the whole class afterwards. It is not necessary for students to play the video game, because the storyline continues despite the decisions of the player. A brief description of each video should also be provided to the students when they watch the videos.

Videos to show in the class and their description:

- A. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl71iPKuKug> – **Origins of Sin:** in this video, students would be introduced to Sin, the main villain of the game. Sin was created as revenge for the harm caused by the use of weapons of mass destruction on the people of Zanarkand 1000 years ago.
- B. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YSf43SH17k> – **Before Yuna's fight:** in this video students will be introduced to the justification behind the creation of Sin. Sin is seen as an expression of hope, even if it causes harm.
- C. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgVnds4gW3s> – **Yuna sends dead souls to the Farplane:** this is one of the rituals that happen in the game. Sin wakes up every ten years and to be defeated, a sacrifice must be made. The dead are then sent away, to rest in peace. People that sacrifice them do it for their faith, and they believe that one day the monster would disappear forever. Their leaders, however, know the truth; they know that Sin was created because of the civil war that happened 1000 years ago. While watching this video, students should consider if this sacrifice is justified. Why do the leaders lie to their people? Are these lies justified?
- D. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRWkniXDC_4 – **Final Fantasy X ending** (show your students only the first 7 minutes of the video): In the end, Yuna destroys Sin. She managed to do this when she found out that it was created on purpose to get revenge and it was not a punishment for the sins of the citizens of Spira during the civil war. To defeat Sin, Yuna sacrificed some of her best friends and her dreams. Yet, there is a positive message that the world will be rebuilt into a better place.

- **Step 3 – Group presentations (30 minutes)**

At this stage, you should ask your students to discuss in their groups and make a presentation for the whole class. Each group should discuss a different topic. If there are more groups, groups with the same topic could present a different approach. You should provide each group with some questions as guidance for their presentations. Here is a list of possible topics to choose from:

Topics and Questions for each topic:

A. Religion and Politics (Religion, History, Philosophy, Politics):

- What is the main religion in Spira?
- Does religion have an active role in Spira?
- Are there any rituals? If so, what is their purpose?
- Is there a connection between religion and politics in Spira? Identify and critically discuss these connections.
- What is Sin and what role does it have in the plot of the game?
- Are the rights of people protected by the government in Spira? Identify possible violations of human rights and discuss the role of the government in protecting the rights of its citizens.

B. Weapons of Mass Destruction (History, Politics, Philosophy):

- Who used weapons of mass destruction in the game and why?
- What were the results of this use?
- Can you identify five negative consequences of the use of weapons of mass destruction?
- Do you know if weapons of mass destruction were used in reality? Find out when and what were their consequences.

- Can you explain why these weapons should not be used?

C. Civil War (History, Politics, Philosophy):

- How is the concept of the civil war used in Spira?
- What is the role of Sin in the game?
- Why was Sin created?
- What do you think of the reasoning behind the creation of Sin?
- What do the main characters think of Sin?
- Do you think Sin should be destroyed? If so, explain why.
- Do you know of any civil wars? Identify their similarities with the civil war in Spira.

These topics are suggestions and they could be adapted to fit the aims of your class. For example, if you have a class on the Greek Civil War, then you could change some of the questions and make them more specific to the topic.

- **Step 4 – Discussion and Conclusions (15 minutes)**

After the group presentations, the class should come together and discuss the key concepts they identified in the previous steps. The discussion will depend on the group presentations but you should direct the discussion towards highlighting the importance of human rights. By the end of this class, students should be able to defend human rights and identify human rights violations. Other topics that we suggest for further discussion are the role of government and the role of religion. For example, students should be able to distinguish between a political decision that promotes equality and inclusion and a decision that is causing harm to people.

Questions to guide this discussion:

- What similarities do you notice between the world of Spira and our society?
- How is the concept of human rights portrayed in Spira?
- What is the importance of the concept of human rights?
- How is religion portrayed in Spira?
- Machiavelli, a famous philosopher, said that the ends justify the means. This means that a decision that might cause harm could be justified if the overall goal is good. What do you think of this argument? Identify and explain five things that cannot be justified for any reason. (This question is specifically designed for a Philosophy class, but it could be discussed in history and politics as well.)
- What elements should a good leader/government have?
- Can you explain why wars should be avoided? Identify five negative consequences of war.
- Can you imagine a world without war? What can we do to achieve this?

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