

Experience a revolution from the inside

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| Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge | None |
| Learning objectives | Historical events of the Iranian revolution. Ethical/moral questionings on revolutions. |
| Subjects | History, philosophy, Politics and law, social sciences |
| Recommended Age | 15-18 |
| Material needed | PC or iOS/Android device |
| Sequence duration | 5 hours (2 x 1 hour in class) |
| Individual or group activity | Individual homework (play time) and group activity (course and debrief time) |
| Skills developed | Critical thinking, cultural skills, empathy |
| Comparison of game time and study time | 1 hour history course, 3 hours of play, 1 hour debrief and discussion |
| Price range of the game | 10€ on PC, 5€ for mobile apps |
| Similar games to use with the approach of the sequence | This War Of Mine (11 Bit Studios) |

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

1979 Revolution: Black Friday is a very personal project that its developer, Navid Khonsari, called a 'vérité game", an interactive documentary based on real life stories and anecdotes from the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

The majority of the characters express a strong anti-western sentiment due to the historical relationship between the Shah and the U.S. This has caused a few to accuse **1979 Revolution** of being a propaganda-focused game. However, the unfiltered depiction of the events is divorced from an overt political statement.

Proof of this is that The National Foundation for Computer Games (NFCG) in Iran deemed the game “anti-Iranian” and “pro-American propaganda”, and [announced plans to block websites that sold the game](#).

The game sneaks in a wealth of educational material in effective ways. The rich Iranian culture that fills the streets and the dialogue gives a good sampling of its immediate context. They serve as teasers for the more detailed explanations of the game in the pause menu. Its summaries are succinct yet detailed descriptions that reward the player’s curiosity with a look into a culture and time period most of its audience might not be familiar with.

Cutting the costs

In order to diminish the price of this sequence, you can share a Steam account or tablets with your students. Download the game for one or two devices and have your students share it, bring it at home or use the account to play the game sequentially. It depends on the hardware your students have at home. The requirements of the game are fairly low, but check with them to see which version you should buy and share with them.

- **Step 1: Giving historical background (1 hour, optional)**

Explain to your students that after this course they will play a game set within the events of the Iranian revolution. Give a historical course about the revolution and the rejection of the Western model. Explain the different groups that took part in the

revolution, their ideologies, the role of foreign powers and the facts that took place. This will help the students understand the game setting when they play, as well as the different points of view and conflicts that the game depicts. Plus, playing the game will let the students review these concepts and hopefully anchor them more strongly.

- **Step 2: Students play the game at home (2 to 3 hours)**

The core mechanics of the game are the following:

- Free roam investigation

Use directional controls to move around. Interactive objects are indicated with a white diamond icon.



Figure 1: Free roaming and interactive objects

- Photographs: you must target the subject of interest and press the button when the focus is in the middle of the bar.

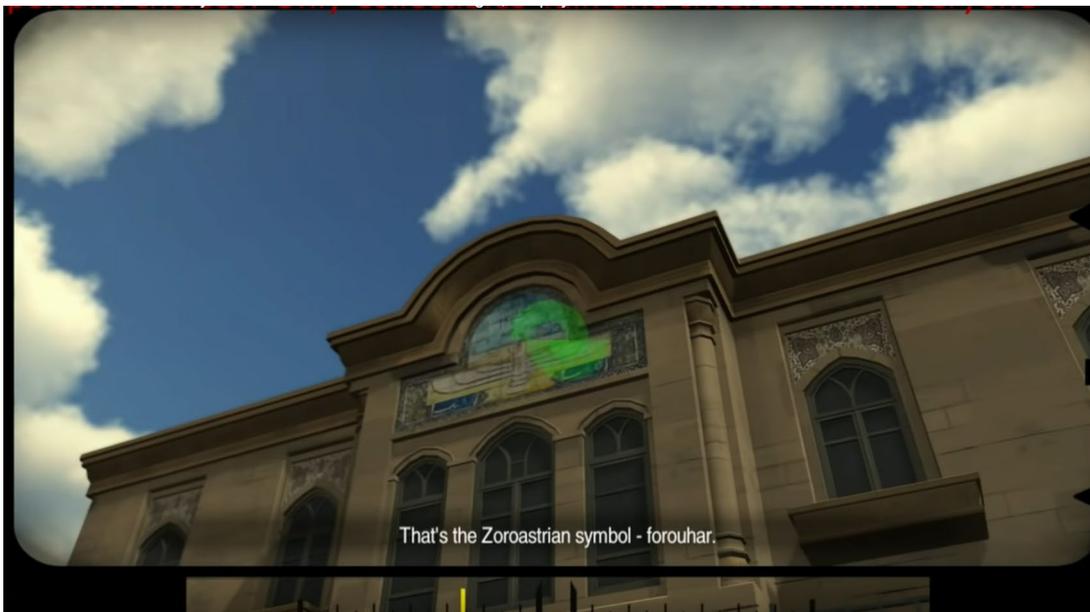


Figure 2: Photographs mechanic

- Quick time events: action scenes where specific inputs must be pressed in a limited time:



Figure 3: Quick time events

- Choices: boxes representing answers must be selected



Figure 4: Dialogue choices

The students' objective is simple: to finish the game. It should take 2- 3 hours of play. When they play at home, they should keep track of the choices they make. It is better if they pause the game to write them down when they can, during more slow-paced sequences. Before they play the game, make it clear that you will discuss their choices in class afterwards.

- **Step 3: Debrief and discussion**

The game is imprecise about which beliefs each faction holds — possibly in an attempt to demonstrate how groups get radicalized and subvert their original causes —, which may spur players to do further research and reading after playing. If they do not, they might end up with misinformation. Thus, you should make sure your students learn about the correct facts during this session. Review with them the events of the game and the different factions' beliefs in an objective way.

Ask your students to explain the choices they made and why. Even if these choices have a limited impact on the plot, it can be interesting to debate points of view (i.e: violence versus peaceful protest).

For choices that had a more significant impact in the game, ask your students what the consequences of their choice were, and make them compare with one another.

Finally, you can ask more open-ended questions such as:

If you found yourself getting involved with a revolutionary movement, how would you try to ensure that you followed your personal code of ethics? What would you do if you saw something happening that you didn't agree with?

- Do you think religious differences can split a family?
- Reza's brother became an enforcer for the powers he tried to overthrow. How and why did this happen??

Getting the game:

https://store.steampowered.com/app/388320/1979_Revolution_Black_Friday/?l=french
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.inkstories.blackfriday&hl=fr&gl=US>
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/1979-revolution-a-cinematic-adventure-game/id1107015898>

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