

Recreate a Historical event with Civilization

| | |
|--|---|
| Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge | <p>Students may need some previous knowledge of the event or period worked on in this activity.</p> <p>The educator must know how the game works. Having already played at least the first 40 - 60 turns of the game can be helpful (see "step 0" below).</p> |
| Learning objectives | To learn about the key elements of a historical event. Being able to place a historical event in time and space, as well as identifying social and cultural changes. |
| Subjects | Social Sciences, History |
| Recommended Age | 10 – 14 (preferably 12 – 14) |
| Material needed | One computer and drawing materials |
| Sequence duration | 120 minutes |
| Individual or group activity | Group activity |
| Skills developed | Collaboration and teamwork, Communication, Creativity, Problem-solving, Planning |
| Price range of the game | >40€ |
| Similar games to use with the approach of the sequence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Civilization V ● Civilization VI ● Unciv (open source) |

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

- **Step 0: Preparation**

The educator should previously play the first 40-60 turns of the game so they can have prior knowledge of how the game might advance. Here the educator should decide:

- Which game actions constitute the goals they would like to achieve in class (i.e., building specific buildings, creating diplomatic relationships, making war declarations, etc.)
- Where to start the game with students. The educator should create a saved file on that turn (even if it is turn 0, so the configuration of the game stays the same).

When setting up the game, it is recommended to choose the quickest speed the game offers and an easy difficulty level, so the AI does not advance too fast.

Example: The first cities of Mesopotamia, using Civilization VI.

In class, the game will start from the beginning (turn 0) and the goal should be to play as Babylon, unlock the technology used for writing, and build the following elements:

- At least one city
- A monument
- Some Babylonian soldiers (Sabum Kibittum)
- A Palgum (a kind of canal), and
- The Hanging Gardens

- **Step 1: Establish the key concepts of the historical event and the game elements that will represent them (15 minutes)**

As an introduction, the class should begin with a brief review of the historical event the educator wants to cover. Then, the educator will determine which elements of the game should be put into play that relate to the concepts of the lesson.

Some great examples of historical events and explanations of their key concepts can be found on the YouTube channel Crash Course, specifically on its [World History 2](#) playlist. The educator may consider using some of the videos on this playlist to illustrate the concepts they want to introduce, or they can use the videos to debrief (either after introducing the concepts themselves or at the end of the pedagogical sequence).

In the specific example mentioned before, some of the key concepts might include: the ancient city-State as a new form of social organization (as opposed to previous forms, such as tribes), public administrations and forms of writing, the economy, irrigation systems, and the showiness of political power through the construction of great monuments.

- **Step 2: Playing the game (45 - 60 minutes)**

Now that the key concepts have been listed and explained, the educator will take control of the game or identify a student to play the game while the rest of the students actively participate in the decision making. The educator can decide to rotate who plays so that various students get a turn, or they may decide to have the same player for the whole class, depending on the dynamic they want to implement. The educator may guide the students but should not decide

everything— the students should be the ones who find ways to accomplish the goals the educator has established initially.

Once all the goals have been completed, the educator will stop the gameplay and save the file so it can be reviewed or revisited by the students afterwards at home.

- **Step 3: Draw a picture of the event in groups (45 - 60 minutes)**

Finally, the students will demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired of the key concepts by drawing a picture that shows these key concepts. This should be done in groups so each student can be in charge of one part of the drawing. The images of the game, such as the look of the historical leaders, the monuments and world wonders, etc., should serve as inspiration for the picture.

In the example mentioned before, students may draw several elements, such as the king, some of the monuments and other buildings, the soldiers, the citizens, the Hanging Gardens, etc. They can draw representations of one or more scenes, depending on the time available and their skill levels.

References

Civilization Fandom. (2021). *Civilization Wiki. Civilization VI*. Retrieved from: civilization.fandom.com

Crash Course. (2019). *World History 2 Playlist*. [YouTube Video playlist]. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/c/crashcourse>



Freeciv. (2021). Freeciv, a free and open-source empire-building strategy game inspired by the history of human civilization. *Freeciv.org*. Retrieved from:

www.freeciv.org

Meier, S. (1991). Civilization series [Computer Software]. Maryland, USA: Take-Two Interactive Software, Firaxis Games. Retrieved from: civilization.com

Unciv. (2021). Unciv, an open-source reimplementaion of the most famous civilization-building game ever (Civilization V). *Unciv.org*. Retrieved from:

yairm210.itch.io/unciv

