

GLOBAL  CONFLICTS

CHILD SOLDIERS



SERIOUS GAMES
INTERACTIVE

Teacher's Manual

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1. Introduction

This manual for "Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers" is developed based on our experience from our earlier titles in the Global Conflicts series and from the use of our games in secondary school teaching.

The game series includes a number of titles that can be played from our web portal at www.globalconflicts.eu. Each title focuses on specific issues of relevans for teaching citizenship, history, geography or media sciences. While the titles share the same general framework, each game episode can be played independently from the others.

In "Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers", the student play a representative for the International Criminal Court (ICC). Through interviews and personal meetings in the virtual world, the student encounters a country scarred by decades of conflict. The game focuses on the use of Child Soldiers in Africa and particularly on the leader of the rebel group Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Joseph Kony and his actions.

The student has to collect statements and arguments within a given time limit and use these in a final interview with Kony. The value of each statement the student is confronted with is measured by comparison to the questions Kony must face during the final interview. The success of the student is determined by how many arguments he or she has collected and how they are used in the final interview. Consequently, the final score reflects how well the student has understood the problems and issues relevant to the assignment and how well he/she has managed to apply the information collected.

In "Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers", time is a crucial element. Each question and each jeep ride is a time-consuming action that reduces the amount of time units available. The game distinguishes between real time and game time (measured in units). The later is the important one. Students are awarded for completing the game using the least possible amount of time and consequently compete on equal terms regardless of how fast they read or find the answers.

App. 80% of the actual playing time is used gathering information and arguments for the final interview, which covers the remaining 20%. Playing the game through takes app. 45 minutes and should be possible to do within a standard school lesson. We recommend using an equal amount of time on the student assignments and class discussion, preferably immediately after the lesson the game is played in.

1.1 Content of the educational material

Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers consists of one assignment taking place in Uganda. During the assignment, the student gets introduced to the history of the country along with issues such as peace vs. justice, child soldiers, human rights, life as a refugee and the various consequences of these issues.

Teacher's Manual: This guide offers suggestions on how to utilise the game in an educational context and deal with the topics of the game. The guide is meant to serve as inspiration, but it is up to the individual teacher to decide how to use the game. The guide is based on our experience with using the game in several schools. In the section Playing Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers, we have added a walkthrough of the game, which allows you to complete the assignment with the best possible score.

Game Manual: This manual contains information on how the game is installed, used and played. You will find a crash course on playing the game in the Teacher's Manual, but more extensive information may be found in the Game Manual.

Topics Overview: A booklet introducing the issues relating to Uganda's civil war as well as the history of the country. This booklet provides teachers and students with a good starting point for class discussions and further research.

Student assignments: A series of assignments for the students to carry out after the completion of the game. These assignments encourage reflection and discussion about issues relating to Uganda as well as to the native country of the students themselves.

1.2 Target audience

The game has been developed and tested for the upper grades of secondary school or high school which includes students in the age 13-20 years.

1.3 Support

If you encounter challenges when using "Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers" in your class please see the Game Manual for assistance. If the Game Manual is unable to address your challenges, you are most welcome to contact us at support@seriousgames.dk. We will then do our utmost to assist you. As a teacher, you get a special code allowing you to view all the sources in the game through the game logbook. You simply type "unlockallinfo" into the journal, which will enable you to find all information in your journal under logbook. You can then jump directly to the final interview and test the arguments. This might be advantageous if a student asks about a specific source, or if you need a general overview of the content of the game. You may also want to read the section *Walkthrough*, where we outline the course of the mission and list which sources to talk to in order to complete the game as well as which arguments to use and when during the final interview.

2. Basic educational principles

The educational principles behind the Global Conflicts series is an experience-based approach based on research conducted at the IT University of Copenhagen. The didactic approach described below offers suggestions on how to get the best results possible in your class, when using the Global Conflicts game series.

The experience-based approach involves changing between different teaching methods and emphasizing various activities and subjects.

The general didactic qualities of doing a course with the Global Conflicts game series are significant, but to us this courseware is so exciting because the students get to be active participants in a conflict and deal with issues they often cannot really relate to. Through the stories, problems and audiovisual setting of the game, the students will have to interact with the educational content of the game and experience something beyond ordinary classroom teaching, acquiring personal experiences, they themselves have helped shape. The students are the ones, who talk to the child soldier, the humanitarian worker, the victims of massacres and the government soldier.

These experiences are vital in the subsequent lesson, since they give students the chance to reflect on issues they have now experienced personally. Through the game's immersive qualities, students are involved personally in the issues and in the process of building knowledge. But the students also train their skills. During the interviews – a central part of the game – the students' search for important statements and arguments makes it necessary for them to reflect on, assess and finally select the topics they deem vital enough to inquire about.

The game contains information on various curriculum subjects, which the students have to understand and utilise of in order to complete the game. This is not random or irrelevant facts but carefully selected information that the students must consider and reflect on. Hereby, the game links the students' acquisition of knowledge with their competence development. In addition, the students' critical and analytical skills are developed while playing the game, as well as their ability to act on their convictions.

Subsequently, when the students are required to complete the enclosed Student Assignments, their experiences from the game will be put into a general context and no longer be associated only with the game setting.

The Student Assignments are formulated to make the students reflect on their experiences from the game, while thinking about them abstractly, making the game information valuable in the real world. Many of the questions encourage the students to draw parallels between their knowledge and society. This increases their educational value, since they not only provide new information but also deepen and challenge the existing knowledge of the students.

2.1 Course progression

It is important that the teacher decides, which assignments the students need to solve and what the desired result from the course should be. We recommend following the main steps listed here:

* The teacher provides a summary of the conflict to give the students an initial understanding of the issues at hand. If so inclined, the teacher can make use of the enclosed crash course (see the document titled *Topics Overview*).

- * The students (divided into groups of two to three) play the game.
- * When the game assignment has been completed, the students team up in groups of four to six and discuss the questions in the booklet *Student Assignments*.
- * Hereafter the students can individually write their own articles about their game experience, submit these to the teacher and publish them online for all other students to read.
- * We recommend a final discussion in class, dealing with at various issues and themes from a cross-disciplinary perspective (historical, political and social) as well as evaluating the entire course.

2.2 Making preparations for the course

- * Play the mission in order to get a clear understanding of it, and try to time yourself to get a sense of the amount of time needed in class. You can also read the summary in this manual (see the *Walkthrough* section).
- * Make sure the game is working on the students' computers. The students can save their game at any time during the game except during the final interview. If they wish to, they can switch computers and/or play at home, since the game is saved online.
- * Book a computer room, pass out student assignments and outline class discussions. Class discussions should take place in a classroom without computers, including laptops, in order to avoid distractions.
- * Divide the students into groups and try to match students who work well together.
- * Prepare a presentation of the game and its concept (e.g. by showing the game trailer) as well as a brief introduction to the region.
- * Organise group work activities for when the students finish playing and consider possible topics for discussions in class.
- * Make an evaluation plan for the entire course.

2.3 Using adequate time

If you experience problems with students rushing through the game without giving it a thought, you can activate a special timer that prevents the students from skipping the dialogue. The timer basically stops the students from clicking the next icon before some seconds have passed. The time intervals depend on the length of the individual texts.

3. Playing "Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers"

This is a brief introduction to the game functions. You can also read the game manual to get a more thorough understanding of the dynamics of the game.

* Choose a language

You begin by selecting the appropriate language. Note that once the game has started, the language cannot be changed.

* Log in

When you log in for the first time, you have to create profile. This is done by clicking *create profile* and subsequently enter your e-mail, username and password. You will need your log-in hereafter so be sure to write it down.

* Start game

Click *start* in the menu and then click the pin on the map. Read the introduction to the mission, then click play. A brief summary of the history of the country and the goals of your assignment will appear in a note book. You can turn the pages by clicking the bottom corner of the pages. When you reach the final page, click play and *start* and begin the game.

* Navigate

You navigate by clicking on the map. Double-clicking makes your character run, and you can speak to persons with a name tag above their heads by clicking on them.

* Interview

When interviewing people, you can choose from a list of questions. All questions use up game time, and you must decide, which questions that are most important as your time before the final interview is limited. A question can have several layers represented by the number given in the icon. Sometimes a person may not be willing to talk to you because you need another person's permission to interview this source.

* Journal

Your journal contains the necessary information to help you along in the game, for instance a map, a logbook and some hints for finding the arguments needed in the final interview.

* Final interview

The final interview works just like a regular interview, but at certain moments you can stress the interviewee by using the right arguments. When the opportunity occurs, you hear the sound of a heartbeat, and you must choose one of the arguments listed to the right. When you choose the correct argument, you stress the interviewee, thereby increasing the chance of completing your mission.

* Game ending

The game has three different end sequences depending on how successful your final interview was. Your success rate is measured by statistics on a series of key variables.

3.1 Game walkthrough

The following passage describes how to complete the game episode in the fastest possible way.

Talk to Jan Verheyen: Ask the first question twice, ask the second question once, ask the 5th question once, then ask the 2nd question twice. Exit conversation.

Take jeep to UPDF Office.

Talk to Charles Okonya: Ask the first question once, then ask the third question four times, then ask the second question twice. Exit conversation.

Take jeep to Gulu Children's Reception Center.

Talk to Obita John: Ask the first question twice, ask the second question once, ask the fourth question three times, ask the first question once, then ask the fifth question twice. Exit conversation.

Talk to Moses Apire: Ask the first question three times, ask the second question four times, ask the fourth question once, ask the fifth question three times, ask the sixth question twice, then ask the seventh question once. Exit conversation.

Talk to Obita John: Ask the first question once, then ask the second question once. Exit conversation.

Take jeep to Te-Tugu IDP Camp

Talk to Monica Atto: Ask the first question twice, ask the fourth question five times, ask the first question twice, then ask the fourth question twice. Exit conversation.

Take jeep to the square of Te-Tugu IDP Camp.

Talk to Elaine Wang: Ask the first question twice. Exit conversation.

Talk to Dalson Oyo: Ask the first question three times, ask the third question twice, then ask the fifth question once. Exit conversation.

Take jeep to M'Gomos Speedy Communication Shed.

Log on to the Internet: Ask the first question twice, ask the second question twice, ask the fourth question twice, then ask the fifth question once. Log out.

Go to final interview.

**Question
Argument**

What are his thoughts on the peace process?
Few believe Kony wants peace!

Why refuse to sign the peace treaty?
Negotiating the peace treaty!

Is he worried about disarming?
Reconciliation might be possible!

How does he feel about the ICC warrants?
ICC charges are well documented!

Would he be seeking amnesty?
Proof that LRA soldiers receive amnesty!

Isn't he worried about the UPDF?
Military action in the near future!

He knows the LRA is accused of using child soldiers?
Proof the LRA uses child soldiers!

But hasn't the LRA been attacking villages for decades?
Proof of LRA attacks on villages and camps!

But isn't he the one ordering the attacks on villages and camps?
Proof Kony orders attacks!

So none of his soldiers mutilate civilians?
Trademark LRA mutilations!

Did he order an attack on the Gulu Children's Reception Center?
Proof the LRA attacked the center!

4. How do I ensure optimal results for my students?

Educational computer games represent a new educational medium, and there might be students in your class with reservations about playing game. Or maybe they will end up playing the game as they would play any regular game – as entertainment – because this is what they are used to. You have to forestall this by making it clear to the students that this game is meant for educational purposes and should be played accordingly.

4.1 Groups

Let your students play in groups. This way the students get to discuss their options as they play, which is beneficial for the learning process. Studies indicate that boy-girl groups work better than boy-boy groups or girl-girl groups, since boys and girls have different approaches to games that might complement each other. However, boys tend to become too domineering when in boy-girl groups.

4.2 Competition

Our studies show that students more often than not compete with their classmates when playing the game. Competition is a vital element for the students and does in no way have a negative influence on the learning process as long as it is moderate. The best sort of competition focuses on who gets the most statements and arguments

in the shortest amount of game time (not to be confused with actual time - game time passes every time a character says or does something in the game). If you encourage this kind of competition prior to playing, it might motivate your students to be extra attentive while playing, since bad choices will result in wasted time.

4.3 Asking questions

In our studies, we have established that most of the questions asked about the game by students are in fact related to real life. As a teacher, you should keep this in mind and help students compare any questions about the game with the actual facts of reality.

5. How can "Global Conflicts: Child Soliders" contribute to teaching?

This game can be used as a supplement in several subjects by focusing on specific content related to the subject taught. The game can be used at different educational stages and offers the students valuable insights into the topic at hand. When planning your teaching, you have to decide what the students need to focus on in order to get a basic understanding of the features listed below.

- * Child soldiers: Life as a child soldier, before, during and after service as a child soldier.
- * International Law: The reasons behind international law and its practice.
- * Everyday life in Uganda: Living conditions, poverty and tensions in the country.
- * Critical Citizen: Reflection and critical interpretation.

"Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers" has a cross-disciplinary appeal. The game and the student assignments are designed to be easily used in teaching social science subjects such as citizenship, cultural studies, and history. Study Skills. As the time available for some subjects might be too sparse to use on this courseware, we encourage teachers to work together across subjects and use 2-5 lessons on this. This will reduce the time spent for the smaller subjects and encourage a more coherent understanding among the students, since they touch upon issues related to several subjects.

Several of the assignments contain questions that require the students to view the subject from different angles. Consequently, it may be advantageous for the students to have access to a computer and to the Internet.

The questions have been designed in collaboration with teachers to ensure that they comply with learning requirements. Below is a list of suggestions as to how the questions might be used in various subjects.

Culture studies

When playing Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers, the students get the opportunity to imagine themselves in other people's places and regard their actions, perceptions and viewpoints through the eyes of an ICC worker. This enables them to interpret and even predict how people from diverse cultural backgrounds deal with reality through experience.

During the game, the students are constantly challenged to measure the different responses to their questions. The characters in the game have different stories and backgrounds that can only be understood through reasoning and critical analysis.

History

Global Conflicts: Child Soldiers is an interactive portrait of civil war and the people caught in it. The game provides an inside look into everyday life in a conflict based on historical conflicting beliefs and cultural identities. The students will get acquainted with various participants, their views on the conflict and justifications for their actions. Ethnic, religious and socio-economic issues play a large role in the Ugandan civil war, and the students will be challenged to compare these issues with their own lives and identities.

Citizenship

Throughout the game, the students are constantly asked to consider the motives and backgrounds of the people they encounter, particularly in the Student Assignments. Furthermore, they are confronted with issues relating to the international society's responsibilities towards the victims of the conflict, such as refugee aid, rehabilitation, justice and prosecution and, most importantly, a sustainable peace solution. These experiences will enable the students to describe and evaluate the role of ICC in the global arena.

The Student Assignments include a large number of group assignments, emphasising cooperation by pairing the students and letting them discuss the game content in an open forum afterwards.

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