

Mission US Implementation Guide

Getting Started

Review Required Background Reading

Before you begin using Mission US with your students, review the *Educator's Primer on the Historical Period*, which provides an overview of five key facts to consider before using the game to teach about this period of history.

Create an Account and a Class

After you create an account, be sure to set up a class to get a class code. Then ask your students to register using that class code. Once students have registered using the assigned code, a class roster will appear in your teacher dashboard.

Get to Know the Teacher Dashboard

Familiarize yourself with the teacher dashboard. You can track individual student progress by seeing which parts they have completed and their performance on multiple-choice **Exit Ticket** questions that appear in the game after Part 1, Part 3, and Part 5. You can also view full class performance on **Exit Tickets**, and see answer explanations that are helpful teaching supports.

Prepare Your Students

Before assigning the game, share the following handouts and information with students:

- *Top 5 Things to Know Before You Play*: Ask students to review the *Top 5 Things to Know Before You Play* document or watch the video version on the PLAY page. The five covered points: (1) *Mission US* is a role-playing game; (2) there are no right or wrong answers; (3) students decide their character's fate; (4) they will encounter difficult and challenging moments in U.S. history; and (5) there is never just one story.
- **Decision Tracker**: Distribute the **Decision Tracker** handout and ask students to take notes for at least one choice they make in each part of the game under the reason that most closely aligns with what motivated their choice.
- **Class Code**: Make sure students register using the correct code for their class.
- **Exit Tickets**: Let students know that they will encounter **Exit Ticket** questions to assess their knowledge after Parts 1 and 3 and again at the end of the mission. During game play, **Exit Ticket** questions must be completed before moving on to the next part. Also explain that you will review their performance on **Exit Tickets** as a way to track their progress and understanding of key historical concepts in the game.

Play the Game

- **Model the Experience**: We recommend introducing students to the game by playing through the Prologue and possibly Part 1 as a class. You can then demonstrate how students will need to make decisions for their character and should read through all choices carefully before selecting. You can also point out how they can click on highlighted words to see definitions and can collect "smart words" — useful vocabulary — along the way.

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- Model using the **Decision Tracker**: Show students how to use the **Decision Tracker** throughout the game to better understand the values driving the choices they make for their character.

Support Materials

Curriculum Overview

To help with planning, the TEACH page includes an overview of the Mission US curriculum supports for each mission in a document called **Curriculum Overview**. The provided chart includes a summary of the plot for each part along with the corresponding essential question(s), student activities, assessments, and relevant historical-thinking skills.

Activities and Assessment Tools

Note: There is a Teacher Guide version of all the documents below that includes estimated time for each activity, tips on classroom implementation, and additional discussion questions.

- **Exit Tickets**: Students will encounter **Exit Ticket** questions during game play at three points (after Part 1, Part 3, and the end of the game) to assess their retention of key historical details and moments in the game. Their performance on **Exit Tickets** can be tracked on the teacher dashboard.
- **Mission Reflection** and **Document Analysis** handouts: Ask students to complete the provided handouts at two points in the game (after Part 1 and Part 3). These handouts are available in the ACTIVITIES sections of the TEACH page and can be completed independently or in groups. Students are asked to reflect on the experience of their character and then compare that experience with the information revealed by analyzing relevant primary sources.
- **Decision Tracker Reflection** handout: At the end of the game, ask students to review and analyze the notes they collected on their **Decision Tracker** to better understand the values underlying their choices by answering the questions on the **Decision Tracker Reflection** handout.
- **Document-based Writing Activity**: After completing the game, students should complete the culminating **Document-based Writing Activity** included in the final ACTIVITIES section on the TEACH page. This assignment asks students to answer essential questions about the historical period by drawing on their experiences in the game along with key primary sources.

Historical-Thinking Skills

Mission US fosters the development of *historical empathy*, the process of students' cognitive and affective engagement with historical figures to better understand and contextualize their lived experiences, decisions, or actions. Historical empathy involves understanding how people from the past thought, felt, made decisions, acted, and faced consequences within a specific historical and social context.

Historical empathy can be fostered with the development of three historical-thinking skills:

- Historical contextualization
- Understanding multiple perspectives
- Historical cause and effect