



LEARNING WITH: RISK

ABOUT THE GAME

of Players: All

Grade/Subject Matter: HS Modern World History

Time: Multiple Class Periods

Possibly the most popular, mass market war game. The goal is conquest of the world. Each player's turn consists of:

- Gaining reinforcements through number of territories held, control of every territory on each continent, and turning sets of bonus cards.
- Attacking other players using a simple combat rule of comparing the highest dice rolled for each side. Players may attack as often as desired. If one enemy territory is successfully taken, the player is awarded with a bonus card.
- Moving a group of armies to another adjacent territory.
- We will be adding a diplomacy component to the game in this lesson plan

WHAT THE GAME TEACHES

Risk, at its core, is a board control game that relies on dice to determine the outcome of wars. Attacking players need only to roll higher than the defending

player during battles to claim their territory. There are many strategies to Risk but one of the dominant principles in the game is probability. Understanding the principles of probability that are implicit in the game is a key building block of success. Students will inherently know that attacking a large force with a small force is not going to win them the game, however, by adding a diplomatic part to the game Risk becomes more than numbers and continents being controlled. Introducing armistice agreements into Risk makes it a diplomatic strategy game as well as a numbers game. Let us say student A has an army in Egypt, student B has an army in the Middle East, and student C has an army in Southern Europe. Student A, B, and C are all bordering each other, but Student C is building up their army in Southern Europe. At the end of each round of play a diplomatic session will begin where students can sign armistice agreements with each other. Whether they keep to their agreement or not is up to them. In the scenario Student A and B can decide to not attack each other for X rounds, but if secretly Student A and C also made an agreement, Student B is in trouble.

Guide created by Firefly Toys and Games

Fireflytoysandgames@gmail.com

Fireflytoysandgames.com



Please contact us if you have any questions about this game, or if you would like to know about more games that can help make learning fun!

EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Prep Time: 10-20 minutes depending on immersion

Material Usage: Risk board game, possible images on screen

Standards and Learning Objectives: Educators may use this lesson plan to reinforce, conceptualize, or to introduce topics of Modern World History. Educators may also see fit to focus on a specific portion of curriculum around the game being played.

Instruction: Set up the actual game board in the center of the room, or at the front of the room. Set-up/ prep time will vary depending on how immersive you want the game to be. Split the students into 5 groups and randomly assign them a starting area on the game board. Explain the rules of the game to the students or show them a quick video on how to play the game; these are easily found online. Once all rules are understood introduce the added armistice rule: *At the end of each game round (this is when everyone has taken their turn) the diplomatic session will begin. I will allot the class a certain amount of time to speak with other groups and come up with an agreement or agreements if they wish to do so. Groups are not required to agree to any terms and may spend the game not signing a single agreement. When making an agreement, groups must write their agreement down and have their designated group leaders sign the agreement.* Play out the game with this extra rule and see what happens.

Group Governments: One person will be the group leader; you are only to accept armistice agreements and military orders from the group leader. How the game is going, and how well the groups are interacting with each other can really be dependent on who you choose as the leaders. You may even have to enact another additional rule so that a coup can form and overthrow their leader if they are not listening to the will of their people.

The Armistice Rule: The agreements do not need to be upheld, there is no rule that says you must do, or not do, what your group signed for. This does not need to be said to everyone at the beginning, we actually encourage you not to tell them this, just see if agreements are broken on their own, or if it is asked, simply state the armistice rule again. Students will catch on quickly once the first agreement is broken and there is no disciplinary action from you.

Tips while playing: If you are on block scheduling, this could take two class periods to finish, more if you would like it to. Once a group is out of the game, you can then split them into the remaining groups, they will act as refugees to those groups. Interestingly, these refugees will have a unique perspective of the game at the end. Once they are in another group, they will have a clear bias against the group that took them out of the game, and rightly so. This could affect voting in those groups (if those groups have resorted to this to govern their group).

Extended/Optional Learning: Upon completion of the game students can be assigned a review paper of the events that transpired in their country. Some pertinent events for students to remember would be successful or unsuccessful invasions, armistices that were or were not upheld, how their group chose to govern, and if their governing systems were effective. This paper can then be a jumping off point for events and topics in Modern World History.

