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EAIE
Esports as Accelerator for Social Inclusive Education

LESSON
A PLAGUE TALE: INNOCENCE — ANALYSING NARRATIVE AND ATMOSPHERE

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A PLAGUE TALE: INNOCENCE – ANALYSING NARRATIVE AND ATMOSPHERE

This learning design uses narrative-driven gameplay to strengthen students' ability to analyse and discuss literary elements such as setting, characterisation, and themes. By experiencing a strong narrative through an interactive medium, students are encouraged to use their analytical skills and critical thinking to discuss how storytelling elements are conveyed through visual, audio, and interactive design. The activity combines close reading strategies with multimodal analysis, helping students build bridges between traditional literature and modern narrative media.

Subject and level

English B-level. Upper Secondary Education.

Connection to curriculum

This task links to the academic goals of analysing and interpreting literary and multimodal texts, as well as for discussing themes as for example "Growing Up" and characterisation in English class. It also strengthens oral and written communication skills through note-taking, pair work, and discussion.

Didactic and pedagogic considerations

Video games often provide immersive storytelling experiences that engage students emotionally and cognitively. This activity leverages students' familiarity with digital media to support deep literary analysis. By combining individual reflection with collaborative discussion, the task supports different learning styles and encourages critical engagement with narrative and thematic structures.

Time estimate

2-3 hours

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Group size

Class, in pairs and individually

Overall introduction to exercise

Students will play through the opening chapter of A Plague Tale: Innocence and take notes on key elements of the narrative, including setting, characterisation, and themes. The first playthrough focuses on personal impressions and recall, while the second includes collaborative discussion and deeper textual analysis. The activity is flexible and can be adapted to different levels and objectives — for example, as preparation for literary analysis, oral presentations, or written assignments.

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Exercise as presented to the students

A Plague Tale - Innocence, part I

Head over to the Steam store and download the free demo for A Plague Tale: Innocence.
https://store.steampowered.com/app/752590/A_Plague_Tale_Innocence/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cZ0MDQUjq4 (first chapter, about 26 minutes)

- First play through: write down notes afterwards for the following questions from what you can remember

- Second play through: With a partner, stop during play, discuss and write down even more elaborate notes. Maybe there are details you missed throughout the first playthrough?

Setting:

- How do the colours and sound contribute to the atmosphere?
- Is the setting important for the story?

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Characterisation through dialogue & actions:

- Characterise the main character. What is she like? What is important to her? What is her status? How do we see that?
- What is the main character's relation to other characters? E.g. Father, mother, little brother.
- How do we see that?

The narrative & theme:

- What is the development in the story?
- How does it affect the main character and is it important to the theme of growing up?

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