

History Adventures World of Characters

Bringing the pages of history to life

History Adventures combines interactive digital storytelling with historical research. Students encounter people facing the choices of their time, then ask the central question: **What would I have done?**

Use this guide to plan character investigations, compare perspectives and connect a story to historical evidence. It adapts activities developed for History Adventures classroom use, rather than prescribing a single way to teach the products.

Choose your starting point

Product	Classroom connection
Empires & Interconnections 1450-1750	AP World History: Modern, Units 3 and 4: Land-Based Empires and Transoceanic Interconnections.
Revolutions & Industrialization 1750-1900	AP World History: Modern, Units 5 and 6: Revolutions and Consequences of Industrialization.
Plague of Athens / Black Death	Historical context, medical ethics, public health and the different experiences of a crisis.
Generation Revolution New York, 1770-1800	Revolution and the Early Republic; compare political loyalties and ideas of freedom. Prototype available.
Al-Khwarizmi Docudrama	The Islamic Golden Age, the history of mathematics and computing, and the distinction between evidence and dramatization.

Before class: Preview your chosen edition on classroom devices. Select a character, a question and a primary source. Choose individual, small-group or shared-screen work.

AP connections describe relevant topics, not a complete course or exam-preparation guarantee. See the current [College Board course framework](#).

Five lives in a changing world

Revolutions & Industrialization, 1750-1900

The Edison School guide centers on five character chapters. Each provides a way into the human consequences of political, economic and technological change.

Character	Place / year	Chapter
Agent 355	United States / 1778	The Spy Who Loved America
Jiembra	Botany Bay, Australia / 1788	Death of the Rainbow Serpent
Fei Hong	China / 1840	The Terrible Truth Serum
Khari	Congo Free State / 1890	Loyal to the Nightmare of His Choice
Thomas Brown	United States / 1899	The Crime Behind the Fortune

Where in the world?

Prepare: Give students a world map, a timeline and access to the character chapters. In small groups, locate the five settings and place the stories in chronological order.

Investigate: Ask groups to identify a connection between two settings: an imperial power, a commodity, an idea, a labor system or a technology. Students should also identify one important difference between the characters' circumstances.

Make the connection visible: Annotate the map with a route or relationship and cite the passage, scene or source that supports it. Label an inference as an inference.

The question behind the stories

Were the technological and economic advances of 1750-1900 worth their human cost? Ask students to build an answer around the experiences of at least two characters, using specific evidence and acknowledging who benefited and who bore the costs.

Check for understanding

Look for a claim that goes beyond a list of events, accurate placement in time and place, a meaningful comparison and evidence supporting the explanation.

The characters dramatize historical situations. Keep the distinction between a narrative character and a documented historical person explicit.

Primary-source investigation

Move from a character's experience to the evidence.

Teacher preparation: Select one character chapter and a related primary source from the product or your course materials. Explain who created the source and what information is available about it. Students may investigate individually, then compare interpretations in a small group.

Student task: Explain how the source supports, complicates or challenges the account in the story. A source does not have to agree with a dramatization to be useful.

Character, scene and historical question

Source title, creator, date and place

Who was the intended audience? What was the source trying to do?

What does the source show? Record a quotation or precise visual detail.

What does it help explain about the character's world?

What can this source not establish? What else would you need?

Share and revise

Compare your interpretation with a partner. Revise one claim after considering the source's perspective or limitations. Separate what you can demonstrate from what you imagine.

What would I have done?

Choices, constraints and plausible alternate endings

The original guides ask students to identify a character's dilemma and develop a historically plausible alternate ending. The goal is to explain a choice in its historical setting, rather than judge the past using information the character could not have known.

Prepare the investigation

Choose a decision point. Pause before the outcome, or revisit it after reading. List what the character knows, what they want, who has power over them and which options are actually available. Discuss how survival, family, beliefs, status or political loyalty might shape a decision.

Character and decision point

What options were available? What constrained the choice?

What did the character choose, and what happened?

My alternative choice and a plausible consequence

Evidence that makes my alternative historically persuasive

Discuss the branches

Compare two proposed endings. Which change is plausible? Which requires knowledge or resources the character did not have? Identify one consequence for someone besides the main character.

Teacher look-fors: A clear dilemma, contextual reasoning, a supported alternative and recognition that choices can have uncertain or unintended effects.

Read across lives and perspectives

Adapted from the America's City teacher guide

These approaches can support the available Generation Revolution prototype, selected World of Characters chapters, or later complete editions. Preview the material first and select an approach that the available scenes can support.

Deep dive

Follow one character rather than reading every scene in order. Build a short case file: their circumstances, relationships, dilemma, choice and the sources that illuminate their experience.

Contrasting experiences

Choose two characters with different positions in society. Compare how they understand freedom, loyalty or opportunity. Use the same historical question for both, then explain why their answers might differ.

Comparison	Character A	Character B
Social position and constraints		
What freedom or loyalty means to them		
A source or scene supporting the interpretation		

The outsider's perspective

Identify a perspective that is missing or marginalized in a familiar account. Explain what changes when the story is retold from that position. Avoid treating one character as representative of everyone in a group.

Student detective

On a second reading, hunt for connections among characters in time, place, institutions or events. Record each connection and its evidence. Distinguish a direct connection shown by the material from a pattern your group proposes.

Major themes

Trace one theme across scenes, such as competing ideas of freedom, political affiliation or religious identity. Ask when the theme changes, whose perspective explains that change and what remains unresolved.

Create, explain and extend

Creative work grounded in historical evidence

Create a historical artifact

Create a letter, diary entry, petition, map annotation or message that could fit a character's situation. Use accurate historical content and an appropriate audience and purpose. **Clearly label it as a student-created simulation, not an authentic primary source.** Add a note identifying the evidence used and the details you invented.

Ten years earlier, ten years later

Imagine a character ten years before or after their chapter, where historically plausible. Use knowledge of the period to explain how circumstances might have changed. If a later life depends on survival or a changed decision, state that condition explicitly.

Create a supporting character

Develop a person who could inhabit the same historical world. Describe their social position, challenge and connection to an existing character. Submit a short evidence note explaining which details come from sources and which are imaginative reconstruction.

Use the Al-Khwarizmi Docudrama

Choose a short episode or a chapter of the complete film. Ask students to distinguish a historian's explanation from a dramatized scene, identify an idea or method being explained and investigate how that idea traveled between languages or cultures. This is a history-of-mathematics extension, outside the main 1200-present AP World History period.

Resources and next steps

[Products and current platform links](#)

[Educator resources](#)

[Watch Al-Khwarizmi, complete cinematic edition](#)

[Contact History Adventures](#)

Additional product-specific teacher guides and classroom decks are planned. Use the published educator page for the materials currently available.

Source notes: Adapted from *History Adventures | World of Characters: Edison School of Innovation Teacher Guide* (Fall 2020), especially the character chapters and teaching ideas; and *America's City: Teacher's Guide* (first draft, May 3), including its reading strategies and classroom activities. Product status and viewing links updated October 2026. AP topic names checked against the College Board course framework.