

2020ThomasAshley-abstract

Abstract

Mark Carnes' *Reacting to the Past* series of games have been the leading pioneer in bringing role immersion to a college humanities classroom. Rather than passively reading a textbook or copying down bullet points from a lecture, students are given roles of historical figures to actively role-play. Asked to give speeches and form alliances in these roles, they are making their own way through the historical events, forced to make what feel like real-life decisions and study primary documents to convince other students to join their side. The consequences of failure seem real, and the details of the actual events become vital. Having played through many of the games myself, I found that my recall and understanding of the historical events were far improved on my previous history lectures, as well as touched with personal interest and nostalgia. As a future secondary English/Language Arts teacher, I attempt to bring these same feelings and experiences to a high school English classroom by creating a new version of *Reacting to the Past*, using Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible* in my own version that I have chosen to call *Reacting to Literature*.

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