



Fact Fuse & Chrono Scouts Teacher's Guide

Fact Fuse & Chrono Scouts: WWI Edition is an innovative multiplatform set of classroom activities focused around a pair of educational card games and designed to teach critical 21st Century historical thinking skills to middle school students. The games and supplementary activities that surround them are aligned to Common Core standards and dovetail neatly into 7th and 8th grade appropriate content on the causes of WWI. While designed with middle schools students in mind, many of the activities are also appropriate for high school students as well.

Chrono Scouts focuses on the skills of assembling narrative out of disparate events while recognizing bias and perspective. It is played by small teams of cooperating students and accompanied by an online video that plays for the entire class and moderates gameplay.

Fact Fuse, on the other hand, focuses on the skills of articulating the relationships between historical actors and events, and making an argument to back up a historical claim. It is played competitively between students in groups.



Playing *Chrono Scouts*

Chrono Scouts is a game about recognizing and constructing multiple related causes of WWI. It can be played at the beginning of a unit on WWI to introduce relationships between actors and concepts, although we recommend students have at least a basic familiarity with the countries and their leaders before playing. Playing the game again at the end of the unit can be a useful tool to show students how much they've learned.

For each group of 2-5 students, print out or purchase one set of cards. You can download a free PDF of the cards and instructions at <https://gameinnovationlab.itch.io/chrono-scouts-fact-fuse>. You will also find links to purchase professionally printed decks that include both games and instruction booklets.

To play *Chrono Scouts*, you will need to play a narration track for all the students in your class. These videos are hosted on YouTube and can be found on our website at <https://history.gameinnovationlab.com>. If you don't have access to YouTube or video projection in your classroom or would otherwise prefer an audio-only version of the narration track, you will find also find a package of MP3 files on our website.

Contents Included in *Chrono Scouts*

Chrono Scouts covers a number of events, people, and relationships that constitute the major causes of WWI. The game includes 52 illustrated historical fragment cards that contain sentences and quotes about the beginning of the war. Some of this text is specific, and some is general. Examples include:

- *The ideals of nationalism spread through Europe.*
- *Terrorists assassinated the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne.*
- *Britain had a long-standing agreement to protect Belgium.*
- *Russia had influence in the Balkans through its ally, Serbia.*

The *Chrono Scouts* set also includes 8 mission cards that focus on themes of the start of the war. These themes are used to categorize the history fragments. They are *National Identity*, *History*, *Global Conflict*, *Strategy*, *Diplomacy*, *Alliances*, *Crisis Point*, and *Military Action*.

In addition to the cards, *Chrono Scouts* uses an audio track to moderate play. This track serves as both a 10-12 minute timer for the activity, a source of additional instructions, and as a fictional hook to the game play. Students are put in the role of Chrono Scouts, helping historians of the future untangle the space time continuum by investigating the causes of World War I.

Each time your class plays the game, use one of the different narration tracks. You don't have to play the tracks in order, but we do recommend starting with Track 1, which includes some extra instruction for first time players.

Classroom Play

Please refer to instructions included in the printable document or within boxed copies.

- Make sure everyone in the class will be able to either see or hear the narration track.
- Put the students into groups of 2-5. Distribute one set of cards to each group. In each group, the student whose birthday is closest to July 28th will take the first turn.
- Have each group separate their cards into a draw deck of fragment cards and a face down stack of mission cards. Each student should draw a hand of three cards. Each group should then draw five cards and lay them out in a line in the middle of the table. These five cards constitute the group's story sequence.
- Read the following instructions to the class:

You've been recruited by the ChronoZoom Guild for an important job: to recover parts of history that have been lost to disruptions in the space-time continuum. Your team's mission is to reconstruct a Story Sequence out of five individual fragments of history. We will briefly open up the time stream to give you access to these fragments and allow

you to piece together a Story Sequence that describes one of the many causes of World War I. Work as a group to create the best Story Sequence you can.

Each group starts with a Story Sequence of five cards in the center of the table. These cards will change as you play, and at the end of the game you will be judged on your group's final five-card Story Sequence. Each player in the group starts with a hand of three cards. The rest of the cards should be placed in a draw pile. Cards that are discarded should go in a discard pile.

When the game begins, take turns within your group. On your turn, you can do any one of the following:

- ❖ Replace a card in the Story Sequence with a card from your hand. Put the old card in the discard pile, and draw a new card for your hand. There should always be five cards in the group's Story Sequence.*
- ❖ Rearrange the cards in the Story Sequence so they are in a new order.*
- ❖ Discard the three cards in your hand and replace them with three new cards. You should always have three cards in your hand.*

If the draw pile ever runs out of cards, shuffle the discard pile and make it a new draw pile.

The time stream will only be open for a few minutes, and you'll have to put complete your Story Sequence before it closes again.

There are some inherent dangers to working with an open time stream. If we encounter a rift in space-time, your group will have to pick one of your five Story Sequence cards, discard it, and draw a replacement. If we suffer a power outage, all players will have to discard their hand of cards and redraw it. You will be alerted if either of these events occurs.

- Begin the audio track. This will play for 10-12 minutes.
- After the audio track finishes, have each group read aloud their final Story Sequence. Ask each group why their story is the best description of a cause of the war.



Playing *Fact Fuse*

Fact Fuse is about spotting relationships between historical actors and concepts, constructing historical claims, and defending the validity of historical claims to a group of peers. In this game, students will competitively construct claims and present evidence to justify them. *Fact Fuse* is best played at the end of a unit on WWI, as it serves as a review of the information covered. The teacher's role is to monitor the classroom during play and help mediate historical arguments between students as needed.

For each group of 2-5 students, print out or purchase one set of cards. You can download a free PDF of the cards and instructions on our website: history.gameinnovationlab.com. You will also find links to purchase professionally printed decks that include both games and instruction booklets.

Contents Included in *Fact Fuse*

Fact Fuse includes 52 cards that consist of two parts: a verb, in red, on the top portion of the card; and a noun, in black, on the bottom portion. Three such cards can be put together to form a sentence of the form *Noun Verb Noun*. For example:

- "Austria-Hungary" "Attacked" "Serbia"
- "A War on Two Fronts" "Upset" "Germany"
- "The Invasion of Belgium" "Was a Direct Result Of" "The Schlieffen Plan"

Fact Fuse does not use the small deck of mission cards or the narration tracks; these materials are only required for *Chrono Scouts*.

Classroom Play

Please refer to instructions included in the printable document or within boxed copies.

- Put the students into groups of 2-5. Distribute one set of cards to each group. Students in each group will play simultaneously. There is no turn-taking in *Fact Fuse*.
- Have each group check to make sure there are no mission cards in their deck. They should then shuffle the cards.
- Read the following instructions to the class:

You will be competing against the other members of your group to collect as many cards as you can. You collect cards by forming claims about the start of World War I and then backing up those claims with evidence from your knowledge of history.

When the game begins, you will lay out six cards on the table. These cards have two parts: a verb, in red; and a noun, in black. You can put three cards together to make a sentence. For example: Russia (noun) Provoked (verb) Germany (noun).

This sentence is a historical claim. Just because you can make a sentence doesn't mean you get the cards. First you have to convince the rest of your group that your claim is justified. You do this by presenting evidence. How did Russia provoke Germany? When did this happen? What indications did Germany give that it had been provoked? Cite facts you and your classmates have learned in class.

Once you have made your case, everyone in the group gets to vote on whether or not your claim is justified. If most of the group says yes, then you get to take the three cards that made up your sentence. If not, leave the cards where they were and go back to looking for sentences.

Remember, there are no turns. Everyone should look for sentences at the same time. When you spot one, shout "Fact!" When someone shouts "Fact!" the game pauses and that person gets to tell the group their claim and justification. If the group determines that the claim is justified, the person who shouted keeps the cards as points. Immediately replace the three cards with new ones and let everyone go back to looking for sentences.

- Tell the students to begin playing the game by drawing six cards and laying them out in a grid on the table, where the whole group can read them.
- Monitor the classroom while the game is being played. The rules tell students to justify their claims, but some students may need additional prompting to construct proper arguments. You can settle questions about evidence if they come up, but keep in mind that the students should be practicing historical argumentation, and not just looking to you as an authority to defend their claims.

If a group is split during the vote, then the claim doesn't count as justified and the cards should be left on the table. If none of the students can make a claim with the cards on the table, have them add three additional cards and keep looking. If a student's claim is refuted because their justification isn't strong enough, it's okay for another student to make the same claim with the same cards and try to present better evidence.

You can make the game more rigorous by allowing students to use their history books or other sources, but require them to cite a specific passage as evidence before they can make a claim. This works especially well for high school classes.

Suggestions for Additional Activities

Timeline

Especially good when decks of cards are limited, this exercise will encourage students to collaborate to create a timeline of events leading up to WWI.

Use the *Chrono Scouts* cards, removing the Mission cards from the deck. Pass out one history fragment card to each student and set aside any remaining cards. In an open area or around the boundary of the classroom, instruct the students to arrange themselves in the best order to tell the story of the events leading up to the start of WWI. Students should debate amongst themselves for their proper placement, agreeing with their neighbors in the lineup that their card belongs between them. Once completed, the students should present their cards in order.

Fact Fuse Free-for-All

Especially good when decks of cards are limited, this exercise is used to play *Fact Fuse* with an entire class competing at once.

Construct an overhead projection or powerpoint slide of six *Fact Fuse* cards to display to the class (for classes without projection, write the words from six cards onto the board). Have students study the words and raise their hands (or shout "*Fact!*") as soon as they see a sentence. The first student to do so should defend their claim to the class, citing information or sources they have encountered during the unit. After they have defended their claim, the rest of the class votes on the validity of their argument. Once the claim is resolved, other students may attempt to make claims with the remaining cards. To extend the exercise, prepare a number of six-card slides.

Points may not be feasible in a class-wide game. Instead, consider rewarding individuals who defend their claims well.

Alternatively, divide the class into two to four large teams and track points between them, declaring the team with the most properly defended claims to be the winner.