# Game Book [80,000 words max.]

**Revised December 2021**

**Front matter** **[doesn’t factor into word count]**

* 1. Series page (handled by publisher)
  2. Title page (handled by publisher)
  3. Copyright page (handled by publisher)
  4. Table of Contents (should include all of the sections shown below)

**Section 1: Introduction [3000-6000 words]**

1. **Brief overview of the game [400-800 words].** This provides potential GMs and players with a quick overview.
2. **Map** (optional).
3. **Prologue[1-4,000 words]**. This is a vignette written in first or second person. It should draw the reader into the world of the game.
4. **How to React [1,500 words].** This is boilerplate produced by the Reacting Consortium, which is downloadable from the “Games in Development” page and does not count toward total word count.

**Section 2: Historical Background [10,000-20,000 words]**

1. **Chronology.** The chronology should end where the game begins. Include 8-20 key events. Ideally, it will fit on one page.
2. **Narrative.** Provide endnotes, if needed. Include up to two levels of subheadings.

**Section 3: The Game [5000-9000 words].** The length of these elements will vary depending on the game, so there are not specific word counts for individual sections.

1. **Major Issues for Debate.** What are the intellectual collisions?
2. **Rules and Procedures.** Explaining how to arrange the room and how players should related to one another while in role. Also rules for speaking and game mechanics.
3. **Objectives and Victory Conditions**. Be as concrete as possible—players want to know how to win.
4. **Basic Outline of the game.** This should give players a sense of what is to come. At a minimum, it should provide details about the setup sessions and the first game session. It should also make it clear that a debriefing follows the game. It does not need to outline all of the sessions – especially if there are surprises.
5. **Assignments.** Many GMs develop their own assignments, but these descriptions should include default word counts for writing and time estimates for speaking.
6. **Counterfactuals.**

**Section 4: Roles and factions [2000-6000 words]**. Include a brief overview of each faction or subset of roles (around 100 words max. each) and 1-3 sentences on each role. These help to orient players to one another.

**Section 5: Core Texts [30,000-60,000 words].** Begin each document with a meaty headnote. Also provide a citation for the original source. If you want to include definitions, you may. Please provide subheadings. These are very useful in terms of accessibility. They are also a good way to tie roles to parts of the readings that are particularly important to them.

Note: this section may be divided into **“core texts”** and **“supplemental texts.”** The latter are either optional or intended only for certain roles.

**Section 6: Selected Bibliography [100-1000 words].** This is designed for players who want to do extra reading. If any roles are required to consult outside texts, make sure you list those here.

**Appendices.** These are optional; they may include glossary and/or pronunciation key.

**Acknowledgments [200-500 words].** Thank those who should be thanked—particularly your play-testers.

# Instructor’s Manual [85,000 words max.]

**Revised February 2022**

**Instructor’s Guide (a GM-facing document) [15,000-20,000 words]**

1. **Front Matter**
   1. Title Page
   2. Table of Contents
2. **Introduction [2200-2600 words]**
   1. **How to teach with Reacting to the Past [1800 words].** This is boilerplate produced by the Reacting Consortium, which is downloadable from the “Games in Development” page.
   2. **Brief Introduction to the Game [around 500 words].** This should be pitched toward faculty.
   3. **Learning objectives [around 500 words].** This explains the intellectual focus of the game. This lets GMs know what they should expect players to get out of the game. This can be helpful if they need to achieve particular curricular objectives.
   4. **Key concepts [around 500 words].** This describes the “big ideas” that the game embraces. This can be particularly important if the game is used in a course that is expected to deal with particular content.
   5. **Controversial content [500+ words] (if pertinent).** If the game deals with ideas that are likely to be controversial in the classroom, explain your rationale for including them in the game as well as advice for handling them.
3. **Planning [1000-3500 words]**
   1. **Necessary Materials [200-800 words]**. This describes any materials (funny hats, etc.) necessary to support the game.
   2. **Model Schedules [300-1200 words].**

i. Standard schedule

ii. Expanded schedule

iii. Compressed schedule

iv. Long class meetings

* 1. **Reading and Writing Assignments [150-800 words].** Most of this is in the GB, but this is a good place to remind GMs if certain players have particularly key assignments or if some players have special assignments. This is also a good place to provide advice about how to prioritize the different readings that are included in the game. Which of them should everyone read? Which of them should certain roles focus upon? Are there any that, in the interests of time, might become entirely optional?

1. **How the Game Works [1000-3500 words]**
   1. **Roles (and Factions, if applicable) [300-1300 words].** This section provides the GM with a look “behind the curtain.” Public relationships are covered in the GB, so this section should focus on secrets.

i. **Brief description roles and/or factions**. Include information about how they should interact.

ii. **Role allocation table.** Identify roles that require special work or high levels of responsibility.

**iii. Brief description of extra roles.** Provisions must be provided to run the game with up to 28 players. Provisions for larger games and additional roles are optional.

iv. **Explanation of resurrection policy (if applicable).** How to assign new roles to players whose roles have been killed or otherwise removed from the game.

* 1. **Rules and Procedures [500-3000 words]**. Similar to the section above, this explains various game mechanics from the point of view of the GM. Consequently, in addition to providing deeper explanations of the game mechanics, it should include descriptions of any hidden game features.

1. **Managing the Game [6000-12,000 words]** 
   1. **Narrative arc.** Sketch the narrative arc of the game as a whole in a paragraph.
   2. **What needs to happen.** Describe what should happen during each session (including setup sessions). Specifically highlight what is expected of the GM. If applicable, include the following information for **each session:**
      * Items you will need (handouts, dice, funny hats, etc.)
      * Learning objectives (i.e. what’s the point of this session?)
      * Readings
      * Assignments
      * Guidance for discussion
      * GM interventions
2. **Debriefing [300-1,600 words].** This details what should happen after the game ends. Sometimes handouts are useful.
   1. **Instructions for determining victory.** This may include charts.
   2. **Instructions on exiting the game.** Provide some advice for how to help players exit the game – especially if the game is emotionally intense.
      * Exiting roles.
      * Reflection on what happened during the course of the game, including revealing of secrets.
   3. **What really happened?** A brief explanation of the actual events that took place in the period covered by the game.
   4. **What happened afterward?** A brief explanation of the events following the period of the game. Players like knowing what happened to their individual roles, so if you can provide that, it is a plus.
   5. **Provide connections.** There are many ways to do this. Choose your level of specificity.
3. **Annotated Bibliography [100-500 words].** This is for GMs who want to deepen their understanding of the game. They do not need to be exhaustive. If any roles are required to consult outside texts, make sure you list those here.

# Role Sheets [1-4,000 words]

**Revised October 2016**

Name

Office (if any)

Faction (if any)

Biography

Objectives

Responsibilities *(e.g. serving as an officer or performing rituals)*

Powers *(e.g. casting votes, paying bribes, raising armies, etc.)*

Assignments – *please provide default word counts for writing assignments and time estimates for speaking assignments, but make it clear that these vary from course to course.*

Relationships

* + - 1. With Ideas – *what’s at the intellectual core of the role?*
      2. With Texts – *help the player prioritize reading. If outside texts are required, make sure you list them in the GB and IM bibliographies.*
      3. With Other Roles – *direct the player toward two or three others*
      4. With Your Faction (if applicable)

Strategy advice

To Learn More *(optional, but encouraged)*

Summary of Your Individual Victory Objectives *(a check-off list)*

# Handouts [100-4,000 words]

Most should be kept on the shorter side.

* 1. **Role assignment questionnaire** (optional). Games that deal with potentially controversial issues and/or require unusual actions must include these.
  2. **Reading comprehension quiz and key** (required).
  3. **Other handouts** (optional).These might include in-game news announcements, constitution worksheets, explanations of game mechanics, debriefing handouts, etc.—anything that the GM might want to provide to besides Role Sheets.

# Guidelines for selecting Core Texts

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* Any work published between 1923 and 1963 and the copyright registration was not renewed is public domain.

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* For works published from 1964 to 1977, the term of copyright lasts 95 years from date of first publication.
* If a work was created but not published before 1978, the term of copyright is life of author plus 70 years. If the work was published between January 1, 1978 and December 31, 2002 the term is life of author plus 70 years or until December 31, 2047, whichever is greater.
* The copyright term for most works published after January 1, 1978 is life of the author plus 70 years. If the work is a “work made for hire,” or is published anonymously or under a pseudonym, the term is 95 years from the date of first publication or 120 years from creation, whichever is shorter.

The duration of copyright in other countries is as follows:

* Canada: The term of copyright is the life of the author plus 50 years.
* British Commonwealth and European territories of the open market: The term of copyright is the life of the author plus 70 years.

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