

QED Introduction

What is QED: Cosmo's Casebook?

QED: Cosmo's Casebook is a fun, educational game set in Ancient Rome in the time of the Republic. Players take on the role of Cosmo Veritas, a public advocate with a heart of gold. Cosmo wants to make a name for himself in the law courts of Rome, and dares to take on cases which other lawyers deem unwinnable. In each case, Cosmo explores Rome, interviews persons of interest and finds evidence to clear the names of his clients. Throughout the investigation, the player collects historical information about Roman people and culture. Each case ends with a duel in the Courtroom, as the player uses the narrative evidence and their historical knowledge to win the case for their client.

QED: Cosmo's Casebook presents a rich and detailed window into the Ancient World, offering teachers a new way to engage students with history and critical thinking.

What kind of game is QED?

QED: Cosmo's Casebook is part of a genre of games known as "visual novels". These games are highly accessible and easy to play. The main activities in the game are reading, exploring and problem solving. There is no time pressure; the game is designed to be enjoyed at the player's own pace. Like a book, you can stop reading at any time and return to the game at your leisure. This works for the classroom or home play.

The game rewards the player in a number of ways: the joy of discovery, funny dialogue, the thrill of unravelling a mystery, and the excitement of winning the battle in the court-room.

Games are often perceived as a male-biased medium; "visual novel" style games appeal to a broad audience, and enjoy a strong female-fan base. You don't have to be an experienced gamer in order to enjoy Q.E.D. Focus testing with QED found it to be equally popular with male and female students.

What makes QED educational?

The three cases in **QED: Cosmo's Casebook** are built around historically plausible scenarios. The game provides foundation knowledge around a range of Roman social groups and cultural conventions, building a framework for broader inquiry in the classroom. While playing the game, players interrogate a wide range of characters and explore richly-detailed 3D environments.

Each environment contains collectable fact cards ["Lore"]. The Lore cards function as context-relevant footnotes to the game, allowing the players to dive deep into history but never losing sight of the mystery they have to solve. As players progress through each case, they build upon their knowledge of Rome; there are over 150 Lore cards to collect in the game. The **Lore Master** mini games challenge the player to test their knowledge against their in-game mentor, Cicero. Lore Master is a great way to test your skills

Who would QED appeal to?

(Year 7) students who like:

- Horrible Histories;
- Caroline Lawrence's Roman Mysteries novels;
- Harvey Birdman (cartoon series);
- Tintin and Asterix books;
- Mystery and Adventure stories;
- Video games

Adults who like:

- HBO's Rome series;
- Robert Harris' Cicero novels;
- Court-room dramas;
- Roman History;
- Mystery and Adventure stories;
- Video games

How does the game work?

There are three cases to be solved by Cosmo, and hence three self-contained games within **QED**: "Citizen Exile", "The School of Hard Knocks" and "Death by Dormouse". To solve each case, the player, as Cosmo, investigates the crime in order to find sufficient evidence to refute the case of the Prosecution.

- The player uses the evidence they have collected to challenge the Prosecutor's witnesses.
- One of the key witnesses is the real culprit; the player's challenge is to use the evidence they have collected to break the Prosecution's case, and to force the real culprit to confess their guilt.
- To do this, the player must look for contradictions between the statements of key witnesses and the evidence they have collected.
- When the culprit 'breaks' on the stand, they are forced to recount the true set of events surrounding the crime, at which point Cosmo delivers his "Quad Erat Demonstrandum" speech, proving his client's innocence.
- The cases are best enjoyed when played in sequence. The first case, Citizen Exile, acts a tutorial for the game. Characters re-appear across cases, rewarding the persistent player with narrative arcs for villains and victims alike.

Why is QED set in the late Republic of Rome?

QED: Cosmo's Casebook is set in the late Republic period of Ancient Rome (60 BCE). This period was chosen as a setting for the game because:

- It allows students to address content in the Australian Curriculum: History at Year 7: Depth Study 1: The Mediterranean World (Rome). See ACDSEH004; ACDSEH038; ACDSEH039; ACDSEH040; ACDSEH131.
- This period was the birthplace of modern jurisprudence. Marcus Tullius Cicero, the greatest Roman advocate, is a key character in all three cases. The gameplay is centred on investigation and testing hypotheses, which fits well with the inquiry method upon which the Australian Curriculum is based.
- The period contained political conspiracies and rapid population growth, with an influx of many thousands of immigrants.
- The cases in **QED** take place prior to Caesar's Civil War, and allowing students to explore the social conditions under which Caesar and other powerful demagogues rose to power.
- The liveliness and significance of the period lends itself to research, analysis and critical thinking.

Why should I use QED to teach Ancient Rome?

QED aims to inspire curiosity and engagement with historical inquiry, as required by the Australian Curriculum: History. It is one tool among many with which to explore the period.

The immersive, enjoyable and challenging atmosphere of the game makes it an ideal entry point for Year 7 students to a remote period in history. Created with the Australian Curriculum in mind, the game offers students scenarios that put a human face to themes such as warfare, slavery, law and citizenship, religion, living conditions and commerce.

Each case has been thoroughly researched, fact-checked and judged against the requirements of the Australian Curriculum: History at Year 7.

How might I teach with QED?

The creators of the game want students to approach the ancient world in a spirit of fun and adventure. They respect students and know they will learn a lot from the game if left to engage with it fully.

Ideally, students will play a case from beginning to end in one sitting, to maximise the momentum and atmosphere of the game. If this is not possible, it is advised that interruptions be kept to a minimum to maximise the immersive and challenging nature of QED. Save functions exist within the game to allow students to record their progress and return to the game if it cannot be completed in a single session.

The time required to complete each case is between 60 and 90 minutes, however, play time may vary from player to player. Case One – Citizen Exile – is the shortest case, and it is possible to complete this case in under an hour.

Each of the three cases covers a range of themes and concepts; some are native to the period, some speak to contemporary issues. The game is intentionally designed to be the springboard to discussion around these themes. Case notes will provide sample activities for classroom discussion.

QED would make an excellent opening activity to Depth Study 1: The Mediterranean World (Rome) as it brings out many of the key themes to be examined. Students will find that they can associate further work on Ancient Rome with characters and scenarios that they encountered in QED.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES for each of the three cases (Citizen Exile, The School of Hard Knocks and Death by Dormouse) can be found in the Teacher's section of the ABC Splash Q.E.D. website:

splash.abc.net.au/qed

What if my students find the game too difficult?

A **Frequently Asked Questions** page is available which guides the reader through the whole game, providing solutions for common problems. The developers have also provided '**Cheat Codes**' which can be entered in the **Options Menu**. The '**cheats**' can assist students who are finding some aspects of the gameplay too challenging.

Lore Unlock cheat – [7] [2] [3] [8] in Roman numerals

This unlocks all the Lore cards in the game. You can browse them in the front end of the game or from within the case.

Easy Mode cheat - [5][8][9][6] in Roman numerals.

This increases the number of Justice Medals and Hints available to the player at the start of the game.

Easy Find cheat - [4] [4] [1] [9] in Roman numerals.

[Browser only] This replicates the double tap hotspot locator from the app version. This allows students to know what to click on in any scene. Double-clicking on the scene will highlight any object that may be interacted with.

Case Unlock cheat –[2][5][3][7] in Roman numerals

This unlocks all the cases in the game. Cases are normally unlocked by trial completion; however, if a student is unable to finish a case, or is coming late to the game, this cheat will enable the player to access the cases out of intended sequence.

A word from Robot Circus, the game's developers

We are passionate about games and passionate about history, so making **QED: Cosmo's Casebook** was a labour of love for us. We have designed this game to be irreverent and fun – laughter is expected and appropriate - but this does not detract from our serious commitment to delivering an edifying experience.

Some games struggle to bridge the gap between education and gameplay; often the game activities don't correlate to the educational content. **QED** delivers a game that requires you to think – you learn about Rome while solving the mystery of the case. The game activities involve the primary tools of research and critical thinking: collecting evidence, testing hypotheses, and constructing arguments. We want students to acquire these skills in a fun and entertaining way. Games are a huge part of contemporary popular culture and we hope that **QED** is a game that can be enjoyed by students and teachers together.