



Welcome!

Introduction to HistoryMaker VR

You are here! An overview of HistoryMaker VR and its features, plus some tips for using HistoryMaker VR in an educational setting.

Tour of HistoryMaker VR

A step by step walkthrough of HistoryMaker VR with screenshots to show you what to expect and help with troubleshooting.

FAQ and Troubleshooting

A collection of frequently asked questions about how to use HistoryMaker VR.

Sample Exercises and Lesson Plans

Several examples of classroom activities for a variety of learning goals, timelines, and classroom sizes.

Figure and Set Summary

List of historical figures, set pieces, and props plus a copy of the in-game teleprompter and source content.



Overview

HistoryMaker VR is a virtual reality application that allows students to play the role of historical figures and capture audio-visual performances within a customizable content-creation theater. The app equips students with props, characters, backdrops, and interfaces that allow them to create imaginative speeches, stories, reports or presentations.

At launch, the app will allow students to perform as eight different historical figures. Ben Franklin, Abigail Adams, Tecumseh, Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, Mark Twain, George Washington Carver, and Sonia Sotomayor. Students use their own bodies, research, in-class materials, puppeteering controls, props, and a virtual teleprompter to create informed, imaginative performances.

HistoryMaker makes it easy and fun for students to create entertaining, informative, and shareable media.

Features

Headset

Select historical figure

Students can choose from a diverse group of impactful American historical figures. HistoryMaker VR includes content for each historical figure from some of their notable works to use for performances.

Setup stage

Students can select a premade stage set or HistoryMaker VR allows students to arrange set pieces on the stage for their performances. Students can also select props to help them bring nuance and detail to their orations.

Perform and record

When on stage, students can capture their movements and record their voices. The historical figure follows the motion of the student actor so that every nod and sweeping arm gesture is recorded.

Mirror Mode makes it easy for students to see their actions and expressions on their historical figure. They can practice their gestures and timing right on stage without having to play back a recording to see how they did.

Students can import notes and speeches to display on a teleprompter that they will be able to see from the stage. There is no need for them to memorize their entire presentations.

Review

Finally, from the comfortable atmosphere of the theater, students can watch their recordings. They can decide what's working, what's not and whether they want to do another take.

Desktop

Accounts

Outside of the headset, students and teachers are able to create accounts that save all of the settings and materials arranged during play. These accounts can be used to allow different users to keep their work separate and private.

Classes

Accounts can also be grouped into classes. This way, if several groups of people are using the same system, it's easier to keep everyone's work separate.

Prepare written materials

In addition to the included materials, students can import their own speeches and notes for the in-game teleprompters. Notes can be written in any word processing program, exported as a .txt file, and added to a project using the computer's file explorer.

Present Live

Students and teachers outside of the headset can use the desktop portion of the app to view a presentation live, as if they are sitting in the audience looking at the stage. They can also review their performance on the desktop before exporting a video.

Use in the Classroom

Hygiene

Keeping the headset and controllers clean is important to maintaining your VR system and making sure everyone stays healthy.

Before **each person** who uses the headset, wipe the headset and controllers down with sanitizing wipes. Be sure to get any part of the headset that the person using the headset will touch directly. You can also find single-use, disposable masks that cover the part of your face that touches the headset. If you use these, you will still need to wipe down the controllers and the part of the headset that wraps around your head.

Do not wipe the lenses with the sanitizing wipes. This can damage the lenses. You can use a microfiber cloth or lens wipes like the ones made for cleaning glasses to clean the lenses if they get smudged.

For more information, see the [Oculus Instructions](#) for cleaning the headset.

Student Groups and Roles

In our playtests with teachers and students, we learned that students generally had the best experience with HistoryMaker VR when they were in groups of 2-4 students.

It can also help to give each student a specific role. For example, in a group of 3 students you might have one student be the actor, another be the set designer, and the third be the director. If you're using HistoryMaker VR for multiple projects in one class, be sure to have the students rotate roles.

You can also make HistoryMaker VR a prize or a way to earn a prize. For example, maybe the students who submit the best speech from the perspective of a historical figure get to record their speech to show their classmates. Or maybe the group who creates the best video in HistoryMaker VR has their video used in other classes.

Important Conversations

HistoryMaker VR includes historical figures with a variety of genders and ethnicities. We believe that important learning can come from identifying with someone who does not look like you. We also know that there is potential for portrayal of historical figures to invoke harmful stereotypes or other offensive behavior. HistoryMaker can be used as a tool to start important conversations around these and other topics.