

Character role cards – more complex version

Give one character role-card to each student (group of students). Get them to read it through and make sure that they have understood everything.

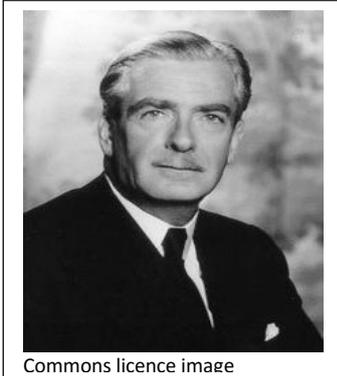
De Gasperi, Italian Prime Minister until 1953, after which he continued to have influence until his death in 1954



Commons licence image

You are a right-wing politician who founded the Italian Christian Democracy Party. With Robert Schuman and Konrad Adenauer, you are now regarded as one of the founding fathers of the European Union. You were born into a Roman Catholic and Italian speaking family in what is now Trentino in 1881. This province was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until after World War One. You went to the University of Vienna and spent your early working years as a journalist. You championed Italian culture, but claimed that 90% of Trentino would want to stay part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. You lived in Vienna during the years of the First World War and accepted Italian citizenship when Trentino was given to Italy. You were a deputy in the Italian Parliament from 1921-24 and became an opponent of Mussolini. Following imprisonment, the Vatican negotiated your release and gave you a job in the Vatican Library, where you stayed until 1943. The Christian Democracy Party was founded at this time and was illegal until 1944. As Prime Minister since 1945, you have steered Italy to becoming a democratic republic once more, to membership of NATO, and you ensured that Italy received money for reconstruction as part of the US' Marshall Plan for Europe. You are a federalist, influenced by Spinelli. You also took Italy into the European Coal and Steel Community and you helped to set up the Council of Europe. At the same time you have achieved guarantees from the western Allies about Italy's sovereignty and territory. You have a reputation in Washington as the Italian who can stop Italy from becoming communist, and they have supported you with US loans. During the election campaign of 1948, American-Italians were encouraged to write to relatives back in Italy to warn them about the horrors of communism. Your party got support from the US Government, including the CIA. You won enough votes to have a majority government, but chose to work in coalition. You are seen by many as a natural compromiser and mediator. You are convinced that only increased unity and cooperation between European nations can prevent the horrors of fascism and war returning. You have a clear vision of a Union of Europe that would not replace individual states, but would allow them to complement each other. In your words: "the future will not be built through force, nor the desire to conquer, but by the patient application of the democratic method, the constructive spirit of agreement, and by respect for freedom". You support and defend the idea of a European Defence Community. With Spinelli, you have written plans which would set up a whole structure of government for a Defence Community that would copy the one designed for the ECSC (the Coal and Steel Community). You work in a context of public opinion in Italy that is divided between attraction to the ideologies of the USSR and the US. Many Italians have bad memories of invasion by Germany, the US and Britain during the war years, but there is a willingness to accept the idea of a European future. Some Italians would like to see Italy restored as an important power and there is some resentment of other countries with more power and influence. However, you know that Italy cannot act alone in matters of defence.

Antony Eden, British Foreign Secretary

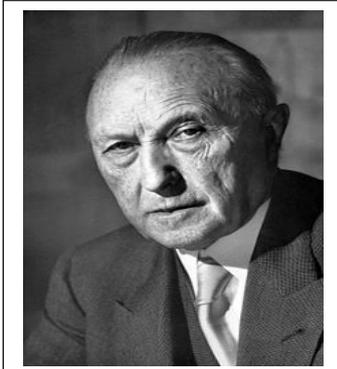


Commons licence image

You represent the British Government as its Foreign Secretary. Educated at the famous Eton College and Oxford University, you served as an officer in the British Army during the First World War. In 1923 you entered Parliament as a Conservative (right-wing) MP. You were first made Foreign Secretary in 1935, resigning in 1938 as you believed the British Government was underestimating the threat of Hitler's Germany. You were once again Foreign Secretary from 1940-45 and regained the post when the Conservatives returned to power in 1951. You are pragmatic rather than ideological as a politician. Britain is very short of money and over-stretched in its military commitments. As Foreign Secretary you face the fundamental

challenge of sustaining a world role for Britain with much reduced resources and in a harsh and swiftly changing world. You do not see participation in European institutions as necessarily in Britain's interests. You will not give away British sovereignty or damage relationships with Britain's Commonwealth (the family of nations being formed from the former British Empire). Britain agreed with the USA that West Germany should be established in 1949. Britain sees the USSR as the threat to peace in Europe and believes the USA's commitment to stay involved in European defence is essential, and you will work hard to save NATO. The British government is prepared to remain committed to the defence of continental Western Europe if other countries also play their part. Britain wants continental European countries to contribute to the defence of Western Europe if this results in the USA staying engaged. The British government also recognises that any defence force of Western Europe will have to include West Germany's strength if it is to stand a chance against the might of the USSR. Britain takes a pragmatic view towards Germany and realises that it is once more becoming a very important trading partner. There is widespread respect in the British government for Konrad Adenauer and you believe that there are practical measures that can be taken to prevent a resurgence of an aggressive Germany. While majority British public opinion cannot be described as friendly towards Germany, fear of a future aggressive Germany is not polling high as an issue amongst British voters.

Konrad Adenauer, German Chancellor



Commons licence image

You were elected leader of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949. You worked on the federal and democratic constitution of this new country and helped to ensure that it was acceptable to the western Allies who had to approve it. You were born in 1876 and you are a conservative, Roman Catholic from the Rhineland area of West Germany. You can never say it publically, but the reunification of Germany is not high on your agenda. You believe in strong, able leadership and you are proudly German. You are a skilled politician and strategist. You were mayor of the city of Cologne before the National Socialist times. You spent time in prison because you opposed the Nazis. You returned to your old job as Mayor of Cologne after the Second World War. However, you were dismissed by the British military for criticising their policies in their occupation zone. As a result you put your efforts into the Christian Democratic Union Party and soon became its leader. No one doubts your opposition to returning to Germany's recent past, but there is still widespread suspicion of you simply because you are German. Also, you are in your 70s and many people fear that your successors as leaders of West Germany will want to reassert German power. You are very realistic about the fears that other countries have of Germany. Still you have a vision of a strong and powerful Germany which lives in peace with its neighbours, and you are determined to use all your negotiating skills to regain West Germany's independence as a nation. You know that any effective defence of Western Europe against the USSR will need the strength of West Germany. You are determined to use this fact to the full. Since coming to power you have worked to ensure that your government's point of view is clearly explained to the people. You have an effective government office for information and you also ensure that you court the major newspapers. This means that you are critical of other leaders who allow themselves to be influenced by, rather than influencing, public opinion. You are helped in your aim of persuading the West German people of the need to rearm by the influence of the Korean War. Public opinion polls show that the voters' opposition to the participation of West German troops in a European Army drops from 50% in 1951 to 33% by 1953.

René Pleven, Prime Minister of France to 1952 (works with Mendès-France)



You were born in 1901 and so did not fight in the First World War. You trained as a lawyer in Paris and then went to live in the USA and the UK, where you spent most of the Second World War. Returning to France in 1945, you became a moderate socialist. You are a supranationalist. That means that you are content to set up European organisations that take power in specific areas away from the nation states of Europe. Your opponents in politics are the communists, other socialist parties and the right-wing Gaullists. The latter believe in cooperation between governments and oppose supranationalism; they are in power briefly in 1953. A fear of a Third World War is widespread in your country, as it is in much of Europe. There is a collective memory of the failed Peace Settlement of 1919. Events in

Czechoslovakia, Berlin and Korea are reminding many people of the conflicts of the 1930s that preceded the Second World War. In July 1951 the western Allies (Britain, France and the USA) will declare their state of war with Germany to be over, but there will be no sign of a peace treaty to resolve the conflict. Instead, the Cold War seems to be getting worse and there seems to be nothing to stop fascism emerging again in Germany. Quite a lot of people are sceptical that the new agreements about coal and steel, about human rights etc can keep peace. After all, there were such deals and arrangements in the 1920s and how much did they help to prevent war? The French political establishment reflects French public opinion in its view that Germany remains a threat. The French Government reluctantly agreed to the creation of the economically united western Germany that became the Federal Republic in 1949. France had shared the view of the USSR in 1945 that a de-industrialised and neutralised Germany was the preferred option. For many French people the lesson of the Second World War is that the Treaty of Versailles was not harsh enough. The US Army's continued presence in West Germany offers protection to France not only from the USSR, but also from Germany itself. Fundamentally Germany cannot be trusted to grow in power once more. This feeling overrides any argument that to be strong enough to defend itself against the USSR, Western Europe must include the strength of West Germany in its plans.

Pierre Mendès-France, Prime Minister of France from 1954 (works with Plevin)



Commons licence image

You were too young to fight in the First World War and you trained as a lawyer at the University of Paris. In 1924 you became a radical socialist and you were elected as the National Assembly's youngest member in 1932. In 1941 you escaped from France to the UK. You acted as de Gaulle's finance minister. After the war you fell out with de Gaulle over nationalisation of the economy, but you continued in high profile economic roles as you are of high ability. In 1947 you re-entered the National Assembly. You support greater European integration. A fear of a Third World War is widespread in your country, as it is in much of Europe. There is a collective memory of the failed Peace Settlement of 1919. Events in Czechoslovakia, Berlin and Korea

are reminding many people of the conflicts of the 1930s that preceded the Second World War. In July 1951 the western Allies (Britain, France and the USA) will declare their state of war with Germany to be over, but there will be no sign of a peace treaty to resolve the conflict. Instead, the Cold War seems to be getting worse and there seems to be nothing to stop fascism emerging again in Germany. Quite a lot of people are sceptical that the new agreements about coal and steel, about human rights etc can keep peace. After all, there were such deals and arrangements in the 1920s and how much did they help to prevent war? The French political establishment reflects French public opinion in its view that Germany remains a threat. The French Government reluctantly agreed to the creation of the economically united western Germany that became the Federal Republic in 1949. France had shared the view of the USSR in 1945 that a de-industrialised and neutralised Germany was the preferred option. For many French people the lesson of the Second World War is that the Treaty of Versailles was not harsh enough. The US Army's continued presence in West Germany offers protection to France not only from the USSR, but also from Germany itself. Fundamentally Germany cannot be trusted to grow in power once more. This feeling overrides any argument that to be strong enough to defend itself against the USSR, Western Europe must include the strength of West Germany in its plans.

Joseph Bech, Prime Minister of Luxembourg



Commons licence image

You qualified as a lawyer in 1914 and you were elected to the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies in the same year as part of the Party of the Right. In World War Two you were foreign Minister of the Luxembourg Government in exile in London. You signed the Treaty that set up the Benelux in 1944. You understand that your small country is powerless to act alone and you seek internationalism and peaceful cooperation between states. You helped to set up the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community) and arranged for its headquarters to be in Luxembourg. As in much of Europe, dear of a Third World War is widespread in your country. There is a collective memory of the failed Peace Settlement of 1919. Events in Czechoslovakia, Berlin and Korea are reminding many people of the conflicts of the 1930s that preceded the Second World War. In July 1951 the western Allies (Britain, France and the USA) will declare their state of war with Germany to be over, but there will be no sign of a peace treaty to resolve the conflict. Instead, the Cold War seems to be getting worse and there seems to be nothing to stop fascism emerging again in Germany. Quite a lot of people are sceptical that the new agreements about coal and steel, about human rights etc can keep peace. After all, there were such deals and arrangements in the 1920s and how much did they help prevent war? You believe that the USSR is also a threat and, despite your concerns about Germany, you recognise that any defence force of Western Europe will have to include West Germany's strength if it is to stand a chance against the might of the USSR.

Wim Beyen, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands from 1952-1956



During World War Two you had senior position with the company Unilever and you were financial advisor to the Dutch government in exile in London. In 1946 you represented the Netherlands on the board of the World Bank, and in 1948 did the same for the International Monetary Fund. You do not belong to a political party, but you became Foreign Minister in 1952. You were appointed partly because it was not expected that you would not be a supporter of European integration. However, you became persuaded that it was a very good thing for the Netherlands and you worked hard to achieve it. You played an important role in the founding of the European Coal and Steel Community. You see the difficulties with negotiations and think that it is best to start with economic cooperation. In the Netherlands there is a heated debate about the country's defence policy. After the trauma of defeat and occupation, the national identity of the Netherlands is being rebuilt; including its armed forces. At the same time, the country is losing its former colonies. You are keen to make sure that the Netherlands has reliable allies and that there are strong institutions for peace. The Netherlands is not strong enough to guarantee its own security; particularly considering its geographical position. You are a supporter of NATO. Some of your fellow politicians see French plans for a European Defence Community as something that might conflict with your crucial relationship with Washington. You are realistic about the need for German rearmament and favour 'forward-defence'; that is the idea of having NATO strength as far to the east in Europe as possible. Fear of a Third World war is widespread in your country, as it is in much of Europe. There is a collective memory of the failed Peace Settlement of 1919. Events in Czechoslovakia, Berlin and Korea are reminding many people of the conflicts of the 1930s that preceded the Second World War. In July 1951 the western Allies (Britain, France and the USA) will declare their state of war with Germany to be over, but there will be no sign of a peace treaty to resolve the conflict. Instead, the Cold War seems to be getting worse and there seems to be nothing to stop fascism emerging again in Germany.

Paul-Henri Spaak, Belgium Foreign Minister

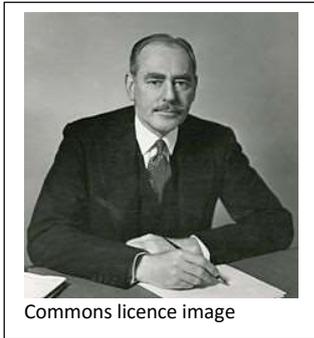


Commons licence image

You were born into a political family and lied about your age to join the Belgian Army during the First World War and became a prisoner of war. After the War you trained in law and became a socialist. During the Second World War you were Foreign Minister to the Belgian Government in exile in London. In 1945 you chaired the first General Assembly of the United Nations. You are famous as a great speaker. You believe that only closer cooperation can remove the possibilities of the terrible past returning to Europe. In 1944 you were a key part of the customs union of the Benelux, that brought free movements of goods, people and services between these three countries. You are fully European in your outlook, but you envisage a mostly economic unity.

You are realistic about Belgium's ability to defend itself and see the new realities of Cold War Europe. Widespread in your country, as in much of Europe, is a fear of a Third World War. There is a collective memory of the failed Peace Settlement of 1919. Events in Czechoslovakia, Berlin and Korea are reminding many people of the conflicts of the 1930s that preceded the Second World War. In July 1951 the western Allies (Britain, France and the USA) will declare their state of war with Germany to be over, but there will be no sign of a peace treaty to resolve the conflict. Instead, the Cold War seems to be getting worse and there seems to be nothing to stop fascism emerging again in Germany. Quite a lot of people are sceptical that the new agreements about coal and steel, about human rights etc can keep peace. After all, there were such deals and arrangements in the 1920s and how much did they help prevent war? You believe that the USSR is also a threat and, despite people's concerns about Germany, you recognise that any defence force of Western Europe will have to include West Germany's strength if it is to stand a chance against the might of the USSR. Particularly amongst the right-wing politicians in Belgium there is plenty of support for NATO.

The Secretary of State for the USA Dean Acheson (John Foster Dulles from 1953)



You are a lawyer and Democrat politician from New England. You served under Roosevelt's administration and helped to set up the IMF and the World Bank at Bretton Woods in 1944. By the end of 1946 you had become convinced of the aggression of Stalin. You wrote the words of the speech that became the Truman Doctrine and designed the Marshall Plan aid programme. Truman's government is now convinced that the USSR is an aggressive threat to liberal democracy and US interests. The USA wants to prevent the expansion of Soviet control westwards to prevent the loss of further markets for US goods. You want to see a prosperous Western Europe and you are a believer in free trade. The US Government has supported the setting up of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949. You cannot state it publically, but a divided Germany is not unsatisfactory for the USA. You strongly suspect that many in the USSR politburo agree. Germany cannot reassert itself if it is divided between your two countries. The USA also wants to avoid sending its young men to fight and die in Europe, as it did in 1917 and 1941. However, you believe that staying involved in peacetime is the way to ensure this. You were a key planner in the development of NATO, which was set up in 1949. There is now a belief in US government circles that continental Europeans will not make enough sacrifice for their own defence unless the USA insists that they do. However, you are certain that the USSR will not want to see a remilitarised Germany. Your response to the threat of the USSR is to support strong defence as well as strong economies in Western Europe. As part of this you think that if Germany is allowed to have its own armed forces again (to remilitarise) that will take some of the burden for Western European defence off the USA. You also recognise that any defence force of Western Europe will have to include West Germany's strength if it is to stand a chance against the might of the USSR.

Jean Monnet



CC BY-SA 3.0 from
the Peace Palace
in The Hague

You are a diplomat and French political economist. You are not elected but you have contacts at high levels in several governments. You are the architect of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). It is a supranational organisation and your main focus. You believe that the future of a peaceful Europe depends on supranational structures. You think that national governments will always be too cautious and weak to create a secure Europe. You think public opinion needs leading and you think that national governments listen to it too much. You think the USA has the power to make European nations set up supranational structures. It is from this position that you decide to support the idea of the European Defence Community. For you, defence issues themselves are not the most important. You see the EDC as a way to create more European political structures. With the outbreak of the

Korean War you can see that defence is a key topic for debate and that there is a strong case for German rearmament in the light of the fear that the Korean invasion could be replicated in Europe by the USSR. You want the EDC to have an assembly rather like that of the ECSC. This EDC Assembly will require national governments to give it some of their financial and political powers over defence. You have friendships high up in American politics and also with Pleven's government. The USA at first sees the EDC plan as a French tactic to delay German rearmament. They think Germany should just join NATO. You are able to persuade US politicians that the EDC is a good idea. You are then able to tell Pleven that the US will back the plan. However, public opinion in France is still very anti-German and many French people fear German rearmament. You underestimate the power of public opinion on politicians. Perhaps you have helped to make the EDC look too American.