



The Genocide Education Project

A Doll's Dress Humanizing History Through Objects

Rationale:

Humanizing history through objects is a powerful instructional approach for high school History and English Language Arts teachers. In this 50-minute lesson, students will engage in artifact analysis and practice critical examination of a historical object.

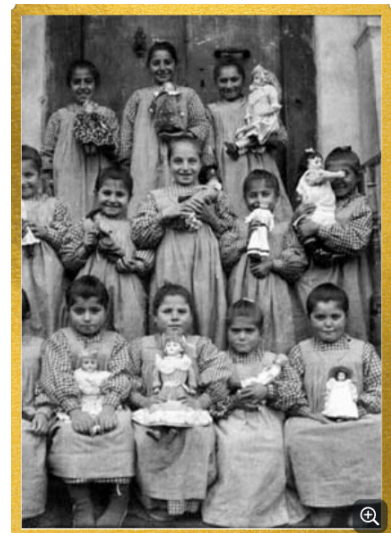
Sequence:

Grades 9-12

English Language Arts and Social Studies courses

Humanizing History Through Objects is an appropriate lesson for beginning a study of genocide, using the Armenian Genocide as a case study. Please utilize the resources available on [The Genocide Education Project's website](https://www.genocideeducationproject.org/) to

deepen students' understanding of the Armenian Genocide. The lesson can also introduce artifact analysis to students in any subject.



Student Outcomes:

Students will analyze an object for its intellectual, emotional, and historical meaning and importance to those who use it.

Students will interpret the story that an artifact can tell, specifically related to the Armenian Genocide.

California State Standards:

CCSS.HSS.10.5.5: Discuss human rights violations and genocide, including the Ottoman government's actions against Armenian citizens. (Also see Armenian Genocide section of [CA HSS Framework, 10th grade, Chapter 15, pgs 343-365](#))

History–Social Science / Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11–12):

- **RH.11-12.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **RH.11-12.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **RH.11-12.6:** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.
- **RH.11-12.9:** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
- **RH.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) to address a question or solve a problem.

English Language Arts – Writing Standards (Grades 11–12):

- **W.11-12.1:** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- **W.11-12.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.11-12.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Materials:

[Artifact from the Armenian Genocide](#)

[Analyze an artifact](#)

[VIDEO: A Doll's Dress](#)

[Survivor testimony: Shahnazar Keotahian](#)

[Claim, Evidence, Reasoning Handout](#)

NOTE: Depending on student familiarity and/or sensitivity with the subject matter, consider using the alternative lesson, [One Family's Key to Survival](#).

Process (50 minutes):

For students unfamiliar with the Armenian Genocide, teachers should provide background with resources from [The Genocide Education Project's Teaching Guides webpage](#). Additionally, short readings and video options are suggested in the [Resistance, Agency, and Empowerment teaching guide, Lessons 2 & 3](#).

Step One:

Hand out the [Analyze an Artifact](#) or provide it electronically. Review the descriptors in the boxes so students know what they are looking for and thinking about. *Note: Any photo analysis handout works well for this activity.*

Step Two:

- Hand out photocopies of the [Artifact from the Armenian Genocide](#) or provide it to students electronically. If possible, provide larger color prints to allow for easier object analysis. Ask students to analyze the artifact independently first, using their observation and critical thinking skills to answer the questions on the worksheet.
- Ask students to collaborate with a partner or in small groups to compare their analyses.
- Lead a whole-group discussion with students sharing their thoughts and analyses.

Step Three:

- Watch the "[A Doll's Dress](#)" video together as a whole group. Have students focus on watching and reading the first time through. (Ask them to turn their worksheets over before starting the film so they aren't tempted to correct anything.)
- In pairs or small groups, have students discuss what they got right about the object. How did the information from the video help them better understand the significance and importance of this object? Show the video again so students can focus on different areas of information. Provide time for them to revisit their analysis and make any additions to it.

Step Four:

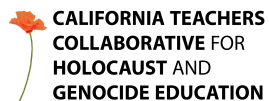
- Take time to debrief with students. This is a disconcerting story of genocide, and students may need to share their thoughts and feelings to process what they have just learned and how they feel. Simply inviting students to share their thoughts, feelings, and reactions will help them better process this.

Step Five:

- Present students with the [Survivor testimony: Shahnazar Keotahian](#). Have students first examine the photo of survivor Shahnazar Keotahian, then read his testimony. Using the [Claim Evidence Reasoning Handout](#), students should answer the Claim Evidence Response writing prompt. (*Note: For more information on how to use the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning writing strategy, please visit this [link](#).*)

Differentiation/ Enrichment:

For more information about Bodil Bjorn's work, the [Aurora Humanitarian Initiative](#) has background information as well as a biopic video. Students could research other upstanders/helpers of the Armenian Genocide by learning more about [Near East Relief](#), the U.S. humanitarian relief foundation responsible for saving many of the orphans who later settled in the United States.



This curriculum is a project of the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, established by the JFCS Holocaust Center, with support from the California Department of Education, Marin County Office of Education, and the State of California.

Artifact from the Armenian Genocide



Analyze an Artifact

Analyze an Artifact

Meet the artifact.

Material (check all that apply):

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bone | <input type="checkbox"/> Pottery | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood | <input type="checkbox"/> Stone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leather | <input type="checkbox"/> Glass | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Cardboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Fabric |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | |

Observe its parts.

Describe it as if you were explaining it to someone who can't see it.

Think about: shape, color, texture, size, weight, age, condition, movable parts, or anything written on it.

Try to make sense of it.

Answer as best you can.

Where is it from?

When is it from?

Who used it? List reasons you think so.

What was it used for? List reasons you think so.

What does this tell you about the people who made and used it?

What does it tell you about technology at the time it was made?

What is a similar item from today?

Use it as historical evidence.

What did you find out from this artifact that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand the event or time in which this artifact was used?

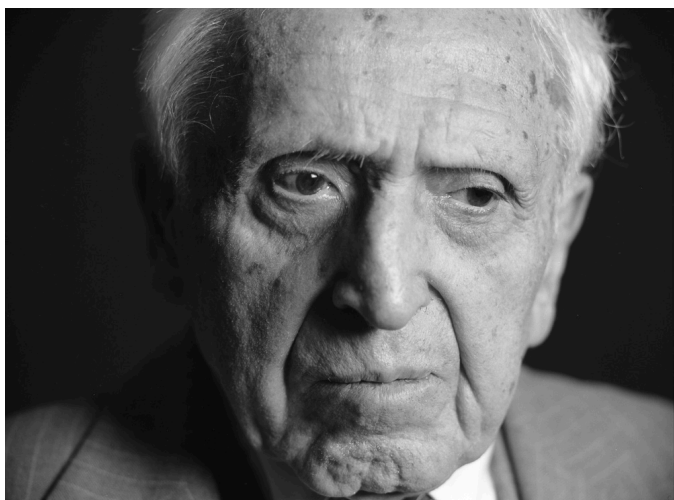


Materials created by the National Archives and Records Administration are in the public domain.



Survivor Testimony: Shahnazar Keotahian

b. 1902, Tamzara



One morning a young Turkish man
knocked on our door; negative attitude
... At that moment I was in front of our
house. My father had seen from upstairs
the approach of the young man and he
had been waiting; there was no way to
escape; after a few moments he came

downstairs. When the door opened the young man greeted my father in the following
manner; I remember his statement word for word: “Mustafa Effendi (the town leader)
wants you.”

My father exchanged a few words with my mother at the doorstep, took out his pocket
watch and gave it to her, and came out of the house to join the young Turk. And that was
his departure; he went ... he went to his death, to eternity.

I wanted to go follow my father, but my mother did not let me. “No, you must not go,
stay here, stay close to the house.” I was powerless, what could a small boy like me do?

I wonder what were my father’s last words, what did he feel, what thoughts passed
through his head. It was only later I would come to know that the front doors of all the
Armenians had been knocked on in the same manner and all the adult males and youth
who had come of age had been taken to Mustafa Effendi...

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning Handout

Student Name: _____

Using today's sources, A Doll's Dress video, the Doll's Dress artifact, Shahnazar Keotahian's photo, and Shahnazar Keotahian's testimony, answer the following:

Question: How does exploring a variety of sources help us gain a better understanding of a historical event?

Claim: *(This is your answer to the question.)*

Evidence: *(What text/media/artifact support(s) your claim?)*

Detail 1:

Detail 2:

Reasoning: *(How does the evidence support the claim?)*

References:

- Analyze an Artifact*. (2023, April 6). National Archives. Retrieved July 17, 2024, from <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/analyze-an-artifact-intermediate>
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- Feliz, B.S. (n.d.). *Six Vilayets (Vilayeti Sitte) Armenians in 1912*. <https://www.deviantart.com/bsfiliz/art/Six-Vilayets-Vilayeti-Sitte-Armenians-in-1912-920738903>
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