

Assignment Description (For Teachers)

Title: World War I in the Middle East: Museum Research Project

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Purpose/Connection to the Curriculum:

The Middle East played a major role in World War I, and, conversely, the war was important in shaping the development of the modern Middle East. One might even say that World War I began and ended with Middle East-related conflicts (1914 Sarajevo assassination related to the declining Ottoman Empire – 1923 Treaty of Lausanne with Turkey, the Ottoman Empire's successor).

This active-learning lesson helps students to learn more about World War I and the modern Middle East, both of which are important parts of the high school curriculum. Students meet important academic standards in Geography, World History, and English: increasing their reading, research, and presentation skills, working collaboratively on a research project, and presenting it to their school colleagues and parents. The creation of a Museum of the Middle East in World War I can be a stand-alone project; however, it would work particularly well as part of a greater collaborative (possibly school-wide) museum on World War I as a whole.

What the Lesson Entails:

Students read a brief (6-page) overview about World War I in the Middle East. Then, they work with 1-2 other students to research and create a project that becomes part of a museum (either a physical exhibition or an online one). The resulting museum can be shared with other classes, parents, and/or the community.

Grade Level: High School/College.

Time: several class periods (depending on how much is assigned as homework) to create the project + 1 additional day to present it and view others' work

Objectives:

- Students will analyze the issues and impact of World War I, which fundamentally transformed the Middle East.
- Students will explore the ways in which the conflict and the treaties which resulted laid the groundwork for contemporary political and social conflicts in the region.
- Students will gain the background to understand and participate in the dialogue about the war as we approach the 100th anniversary (2014) of the outbreak of the conflict.

- Students will see how Language Arts skills (reading, writing, research) are integrated into the study of history.
- Students will develop critical thinking, literacy, and research skills.

Targeted Skills - Based on Arizona State Standards:

High School Social Studies: Geography Strand:

- Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms. PO 1 – Interpret maps and images. PO 3 – Use appropriate maps and other graphic representations to analyze geographic problems and changes over time.
- Concept 2: Places and Regions. PO 1 – Identify the characteristics that define a region. PO 3 – Examine geographic issues in places and world regions. PO 4 – Analyze the differing political, religious, economic, demographic, and historical ways of viewing places and regions. PO 6 – Analyze how a region changes over time.
- Concept 4: Human Systems. PO 2 – Analyze push-pull factors that contribute to human migration. PO 3 – Analyze the effects of migration on places of origin and destination. PO 6 – Analyze factors (e.g., social, biotic, abiotic) that affect human populations.
- Concept 6: Geographic Applications. PO 3 – Analyze how geography influences historical events and movements.

High School Social Studies: World History Strand:

- Concept 1: Research Skills for History. PO 3 - Formulate questions that can be answered by historical study and research. PO5 – Evaluate primary and secondary sources. PO 6 – Apply the skills of historical analysis to current social, political, geographic, and economic issues facing the world. PO 7 – Compare present events with past events.
- Concept 8: World at War. PO 1 – Examine the causes of World War I. PO 2 – Analyze the impact of the changing nature of warfare in World War I. PO 3 – Explain the end of World War I and its aftermath.

High School English/Language Arts:

- Reading Standards. Comprehending informational texts
- Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies. Key ideas and details. Craft and structure. Integration of knowledge and ideas.
- Writing Standards. Understanding text types and purposes. Research to present knowledge.
- Speaking and Listening Standards. Comprehension and collaboration. Presentation of knowledge and ideas.

Suggested Procedures

1. Before this lesson:

- A. Students need a general background of World War I, including diplomatic, military, social, and political developments during the war (learning that takes place as part of the regular World History curriculum).
 - B. Students need an overview of the Middle East during World War I. Either as homework or in class, they should read **#2 – Overview** included in this lesson.
2. Students work in groups (The size may vary as the teacher sees fit.) to research a project and create a museum exhibit (**#3 – List of Projects, #4 – Description of the Assignment for Students, #5 – Some Selected Resources**). Note that some topics – maps, timeline – can be adapted for English Language Learners or Learning Disabled students.
 3. An important part of this lesson is having student work displayed in a large public exhibition. As one of my former students told a local news reporter covering an exhibition at our school, “I worked really hard on this, but it was worth it because I got a lot of attention for it.” How you do the museum depends on your interests, needs, and community. I usually took over a large public space (the school library or gymnasium) for an entire school day, inviting teachers in the school to bring their classes and inviting parents, school district personnel, and the general public to visit as well. Sometimes other teachers or student groups participated by creating and displaying projects. (For example, you could join with one or more World History teachers whose students could create similar projects on World War I in other regions of the world.) Alternatively, you might create an online museum, which can be shared with other schools and communities.
 4. Provide visiting teachers with the option of giving their students a viewers’ assignment, so that they can report on what they viewed. (See **#6 – Museum Viewers’ Assignment**.) Students can be required to view the entire exhibit and then use the guidelines provided in order to write, blog, or give an oral report analyzing in detail a certain number of exhibits of their choice.

Assessing Student Learning

Students may be quizzed on their comprehension of the background reading. However, the majority of their grade for this unit should be on the quality of their research and presentation of their research findings. (Have them present the material to the class, submit an annotated bibliography, and, of course, display their work for their fellow students, parents, and/or community members.)

Extending the Lesson:

Students may be required to visit other students’ exhibits at the museum. They may write a short formal summary of one or more of the other exhibits or write a journal or blog entry responding to the exhibit(s).

Students could also write up their project as a research paper, possibly in cooperation with their English teacher. Or the students may adapt/expand their entry in order to compete in National History Day regional competition in your area.