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| **The Little War: Exploring the Life of a Child During WWI** |
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| Recommended Grade Levels: 5-8 |
| Course/Content Area(s): History & ELA |
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| **LESSON OVERVIEW:** | Students will use a museum exhibit to explore the lives of children in the United States and Western Europe during World War I and create a digital time capsule that demonstrates an understanding of children during this time period. |
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| **OBJECTIVES:** | *Students will:* |
|  | * Students will analyze primary sources, such as letters, diaries, and photographs, to gain insights into the experiences of children during World War * Students will compare and contrast the daily lives of children during World War I with those of contemporary children, identifying similarities and differences. * Students will synthesize information and create a presentation or project that communicates the unique perspectives of children during World War I. * Explore and research using an online museum exhibition. * Use research skills to gather historical knowledge about an artifact. |
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| **STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:** | **National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework Standards:**  **D2.His.2.9-12.** Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.  **D2.His.5.9-12.** Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s perspectives.  **Common Core English Language Arts State Standards:**  **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. |
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| **TIME NEEDED:** | 2-3 45-minute class periods |
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| **INTERDISCIPLINARY:** | ELA |
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| **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** | * Students should have a basic understanding of WWI, its causes, who was fighting, and where was fighting occuring. See the *Additional Resources* section for support. |
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| **MATERIALS NEEDED:** | * [Postcard template](https://theworldwar.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/2023-wwi-good-luck-coloring-postcards.pdf) * Copies of The Little War Notetaker (Appendix A) * [Google Slides as teacher introduction](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1su-luJxrN-Uy2QKH-zAgLzXE33K08huHcsy4xeNmgtQ/edit?usp=sharing) ([PPTX](https://www.theworldwar.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/day-life-child-educator-resource.pptx)) ([PDF](https://www.theworldwar.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/day-life-child-educator-resource.pdf)) * [Artifacts from The Little War](https://collections.theworldwar.org/argus/final/Portal/Default.aspx?lang=en-US&g_AAAK=final+%7cObject+%7cPortalAggr+%3d+%27lesson+plan+-+children%27&p_AAAD=Lesson+Plan+-+Children&p_AAAF=AAAT&d=d) |

| **LESSON** |
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| **PRE-ASSESSMENT/INTRODUCTION/HOOK:** |
| Host a classroom or partner discussion with your students over the following questions:   * What is your favorite childhood memory? * How would you describe the typical American childhood? The typical day for a child? A teenager? * How different was childhood during WWI? What made it different? (the war? technology changes? societal changes?)   Summarize that some aspects of childhood are relatively universal throughout time; some however, are unique to the period of time between 1914-1919. Today, you will begin exploring what it looked like to be a youngster during WWI.  Have students write a postcard to a child living in 1916. What questions would you like to ask about life during this time period? Have students share their postcards with their tablemates and then have a few share out with the class as a whole. Are there questions that appear more often than others? What do students most want to know about childhood during WWI? |
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| **DIRECTIONS:** |
| **Part 1: Exploring the Exhibition**   * Using the guided questions provided (Appendix A), students should explore the resources available online for The Little War. (If a museum field trip is possible, this can be done in person.)   + [The Little War Informational Page](https://theworldwar.org/exhibitions/little-war)   + [Artifacts from The Little War](https://collections.theworldwar.org/argus/final/Portal/Default.aspx?lang=en-US&g_AAAK=final+%7cObject+%7cPortalAggr+%3d+%27lesson+plan+-+children%27&p_AAAD=Lesson+Plan+-+Children&p_AAAF=AAAT&d=d) * The guided questions will take them through the entirety of the exhibition so they can get a full picture of a child’s life during the war years.   **Part 2: In-Depth Research**   * After finding specific artifacts that reveal various aspects of childhood during the war years, students should research to get information that will explain how those artifacts were used and what they tell about a day in the life of a child. * A few options for research tools to search for more examples of specific types of artifacts include:   + [National WWI Museum and Memorial Online Collections Database](https://collections.theworldwar.org/argus/final/Portal/Default.aspx?lang=en-US)   + [Imperial War Museums Collection](https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/search)   + [State Library of Ohio](https://ohiomemory.ohiohistory.org/archives/3871) |
| * Once students finish their research, consider if you would like them to share with a partner or group, or even to fully jigsaw their learning. This can allow students to have a more broad understanding of childhood during WWI before they move on to Part 3.   **Part 3: Creating a Digital Time Capsule**   * Students will evaluate the events and possessions that reflect the life of a typical child during the war years and select 8-10 of the most important examples to include as artifacts in a time capsule. * Students will create a digital page (google slide, power point, etc) for each artifact that includes an image of the item and an explanation of the item. |
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| **POST-ASSESSMENT:** |
| Once students have created their time capsule, they will write a postcard from a child in 1918  answering the questions asked on the postcard from the beginning of the lesson. |
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| **MODIFICATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS** |
| For struggling students, provide a list of artifacts to use for the time capsule. For advanced students, have students create a time capsule for a child living in Britain or France. How would this time capsule be different than one for an American child. |
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**Additional Resources**

* [How WWI Changed America](https://wwichangedus.org/)
* [The World, Today and Yesterday - 1919 Rand McNally Pamphlet](https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/educator-resource/world-today-and-yesterday)
* [The Impact of Animals During WWI](https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/educator-resource/impact-animals-during-wwi)
* [Interactive WWI Timeline](https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/educator-resource/interactive-wwi-timeline)
* [Breaking News: Assassination](https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/educator-resource/breaking-news-june-28-1914-austrian-heir-and-his-wife-murdered-bosnian)
* [WWI A-Z: An A-Z Guide to the War that Shaped the 20th Century](https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zQXh2YwsQYFzKA)
* [Online Exhibition - Home Before the Leaves Fall](https://artsandculture.google.com/story/VgXBwLtqBBEA8A)

Appendix A

**The Little War: Exploring the Life of a Child During WWI**

Directions: Use the following chart to compare and contrast your life as a youngster today to

the life of a child during World War I.

| Activity | Childhood Today | Childhood During WWI |
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| What do you eat for breakfast? Who makes your breakfast? |  |  |
| What clothes do you wear to school? |  |  |
| How do you get to school most days? |  |  |
| What subjects do you learn at school? How long is your school day? Describe your teachers. |  |  |
| What games do you play at recess? |  |  |
| What do you have for lunch at school? |  |  |
| What do you do after school? (free time activities: friends, toys, music, etc.) |  |  |
| Do you play any sports? |  |  |
| What chores do you have? |  |  |
| Describe a typical dinner meal. |  |  |
| When is your bedtime? Where do you sleep? Do you have your own room? |  |  |
| What do you do on weekends? |  |  |
| Does your family go on vacations? |  |  |
| Describe typical family activities. |  |  |
| How do you communicate with family members who live elsewhere? How often do you communicate with them? See them? |  |  |