

Your Story, Our Story

Mia's Your Story, Our Story project turns students into historians.

Museums often ask their visitors to try and imagine how the objects in their collection might have been used in everyday life. Now, Mia and the Tenement Museum invite students to share their stories in a new online digital storytelling exhibit: Your Story, Our Story.

Your Story, Our Story highlights immigration and migration stories of the past and present. Each story reveals one student's family experience. Collectively, the stories tell America's story and highlight the patterns that bind us together, no matter where we came from or how long we've been in the United States.

This interdisciplinary project connects to English Language Arts, Social Studies, American and Global History, and technology curricula. Use the site to explore immigration and migration stories, have students publish their own stories, and/or to create a classroom exhibit.

"Our students felt they were truly able to make a difference through their stories. Students used their photo essays to give voice to the many immigrants in our communities who reside in New York City and this could not have been possible without the Museum's generous support."

-Shahzia Pirani-Mellstrom, teacher at Brooklyn International High School

Your Story, Our Story gives students the opportunity to:

- Select an object that tells a family story and photograph it.
- Interview family to better understand their family's cultural identity.
- Write a personal essay.
- Learn about other cultures in their classroom community.
- See their work preserved in a digital museum exhibit.
- Explore the ways their personal history connects to larger historical trends.

In this curriculum, you will find:

- Project Overview for Teachers
- Exploring the Exhibit worksheet
- Brainstorming Your Story organizer
- Sample Object Story with story arc
- Preparing your Story worksheet
- Writing Your Story checklist
- Instructions for Uploading guide

STEP 1 OF 7: Exploring the Exhibit (Pre-visit Activity)

Name _____

Date _____

Select and read 2-3 stories from the Your Story, Our Story website and answer the following questions:

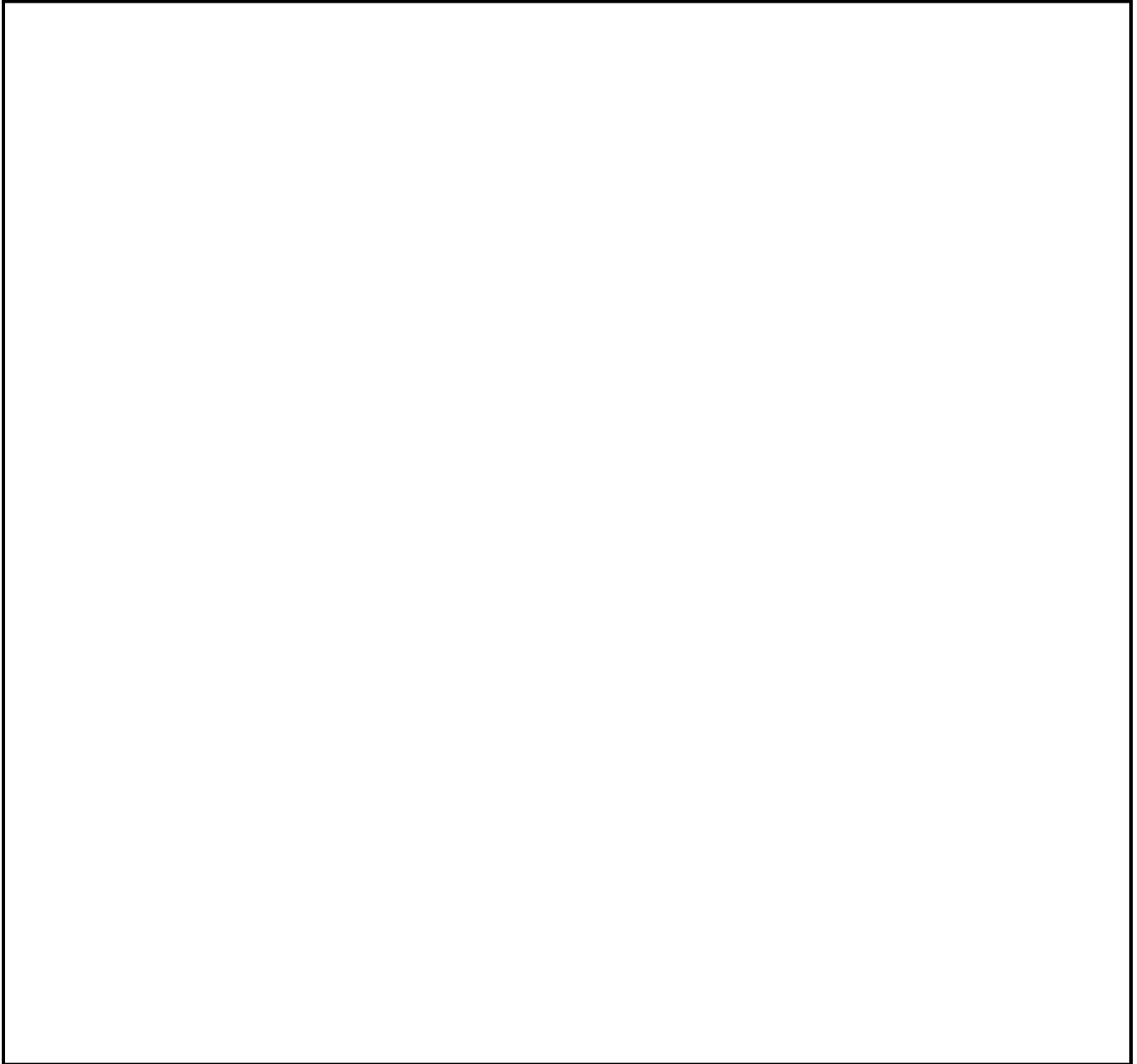
1. Compare and contrast two object stories. In what ways are they similar and/or different from each other?
2. What do the stories reveal about American identity?
3. What do the stories reveal about cultural identity?
4. In what ways do the objects connect to your own life?
5. How does personal history relate to American history?

STEP 3 OF 7: Brainstorming Your Story Part II (continued from p. 3)

Name _____

Date _____

Use the space below to brainstorm words or draw pictures that describe the object(s); what they look/feel like, why they're important to you, etc.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for students to brainstorm words or draw pictures related to their story.

STEP 4 OF 7: Sample Object Story

Review these Your Story, Our Story submissions from high school students as inspiration for writing your own. Notice how both are about a physical object, refer to an immigration or migration story, and also relate the object to the writer.

Marzipan by Brianne Cotter

Marzipan, a candy of sugar, honey, and almond extract sometimes shaped to look like other fruits (or, more creepily, babies), has always been my maternal Grandma's favorite food. While almost all of her grandchildren (myself included) have never understood the appeal, she always has a collection of marzipan fruits in a little green plastic basket on her dresser, ready for snacking. Marzipan is not thought to have originated in Germany (my Grandma's home country) but rather in the Mediterranean, or in China, from where the recipe migrated to the middle east. However, it was in Germany that Marzipan was perfected, and thus the german name for this candy is most commonly used. Lubeck is a German town known for marzipan production. My Grandma was forced to flee the country when her Father was being pressured into doing scientific research for Hitler. As a Social Democratic, her father feared for their safety. Her whole family (mother, father, older and younger sisters) was able to make it out, though not altogether. At nine years old, my grandma had to first go to Cuba, then she made it to Ohio to reunite with her family. My grandma gave up much of her German culture, trying to hide her accent and identity at such a sensitive time in history, but she still loves Marzipan.



Rice Cooker by Jasmine Thomas

This object comes from my mother's side of the family. She has always been the cook of the house and no Filipino meal would be complete without a side of Jasmine rice. My grandmother bought it for my mom when she first moved out of the house after college. She considered it a staple for any Asian household and wanted to make sure she kept to her roots. Due to this, having any dinner without a fresh bowl of rice along with it just feels wrong to me. And now that I'm going off to college in the fall, my mother told me that she'll get me a brand new rice cooker for me when I leave. She wants me to keep the traditions that her mother taught her and that she taught me to stay alive. My mother moved to the United States with her family when she was five years old. My grandmother was so bent on her assimilating to American culture that she only spoke english to her. Now, my mother can't speak tagalog. She wishes she did so that she could have passed it down to me. Since she can't do this, she figures that she can at least pass on her Filipino culture through food. I plan to do just that and give my child the same housewarming gift when they reach that age.



STEP 5 OF 7: Preparing Your Story Part I (continued on p. 7)

Name _____

Date _____

Select an object for your story. Begin the story writing process by answering these questions:

1. What is your object called? _____

2. Which category does the object fit into (circle one)

Attire

Miscellaneous

Foodways

Religion

Fun

Work/Education

3. Where in the world did this object come from? _____

4. Who in your life gave you or told you about this object? _____

5. In the space below, describe the object. What is it made from? How is it used?

STEP 6 OF 7: Preparing Your Story Part II (continued from p. 6)

Name _____

Date _____

6. What special occasions, celebrations or holidays do you connect to this object?

7. Why is this object important to you?

8. How does this object connect you to your identity/culture?

9. Write a list of the tags (topics) that are related to this object story?

STEP 7 OF 7: Writing Your Story Checklist

Name _____

Date _____

When you're ready to add YOUR STORY to the Your Story, Our Story digital exhibit, please review this checklist and make sure all boxes are checked:

- You have the link provided by your teacher to submit your story.
- Your story is based on a physical object.
- Your story has a title that relates to the object.
- Your story fits into one of these categories: Attire, Foodways, Fun, Miscellaneous, Religion, Work/Education.
- You know the year your story takes place—guessing is okay.
- You have a photo of your object, or you have drawn a picture of your object.
- OPTIONAL: you have a photo of the family member(s) the object reminds you of, and/or a photo of yourself.
- Your story is based on immigration to the United States, migration within the United States and/or American identity.
- Your story is no more 240 words.
- You have chosen tags (topics) related to your story.
- You have included the class tag assigned to you by your teacher: **INSERT SPECIFIC TAG**
- You have added the Mia partnership tag: **Mia High School Partner**

Once you have met all of these requirements, you are ready to submit your object story. Thank you for your contribution to this important project!

Instructions for Uploading

Step 1

To begin uploading, go to the link provided by your teacher.

Select this link to begin

The screenshot shows a website interface for 'Your Story, Our Story'. At the top, there is a dark banner with the text 'YOUR STORY, OUR STORY' in large white letters on a red background. To the right, it says 'YOUR STORY, OUR STORY features objects that tell personal stories of American immigration and migration' with a 'READ MORE +' button. Below this are logos for 'TENEMENT MUSEUM', 'Humanities', and 'MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK'. The main content area has a white background with the 'TENEMENT' logo on the left. To the right, it says 'HI THERE NYC SCHOOL! 10002' and 'Manhattan, NYC. As part of our school's social studies curriculum, students submit stories to Your Story, Our Story.' At the bottom, there is a light gray bar with a white box containing the text 'YOUR STORY' and 'Help us tell a more complete story of American immigration and migration by contributing a family object story to the collection.' To the right of this text is a red button that says 'ADD YOUR STORY +'. A black arrow points from the 'Select this link to begin' callout to this button.

Step 2

ADD YOUR STORY TO NYC SCHOOL

1

2

Select the closest match from six categories: attire, education/work, foodways, fun, religion, miscellaneous

What is your object called?

TIP: Your object doesn't need to be something in your possession, or something that's valuable! You can draw the object or think creatively to represent your story through an object

Step 3

3 Image of your object (max. 4). Author must have rights to all photos.

Select a photo of object (required)
DRAG + DROP YOUR IMAGE TO THIS AREA
or
BROWSE
Describe photo, max 40 characters

Select a photo of author (optional)
DRAG + DROP YOUR IMAGE TO THIS AREA
or
BROWSE
Describe photo, max 40 characters

Please include the following images, in this order:

1. Photo or drawing of your object (required, this will be the main image for your story)
2. Photo of someone central to your story (optional)
3. Photo of you (optional)



Step 4

5 Your Story (required)

B *I* ☰

Include people, places, and events to bring your story to life.

Your story must be 240 words.

Your story should include details related to the following questions, but not limited to:

- How does your object represent your family’s cultural identity?
- Where did your family members immigrate or migrate from and where did they land?
- Why is your family’s story unique?
- How does your family’s story connect to other family’s stories you are familiar with?

If you don’t know details about your family’s history, that’s important too!
We want stories with questions, as well as answers.

Step 5

6 Tags (e.g. holiday, cooking, Italy)

7 Places important to story (e.g. China, New York)

8 Year of immigration/migration

9 Relationship to im/migrant (required)

Use your best guess if you don’t know for sure!

Search tag words and select the closest match.

Popular tags include:

- Subjects/themes (“homesick”)
- Objects (“hijab”)
- Places (“China”)
- People (“grandfather”)
- Eras (“1920s”)
- Culture (“Catholic”)

Also include the tag assigned by your teacher.

Step 6

10

11

12

13 Accept Terms of Use

CANCEL

SUBMIT

After you submit, your entry will be sent through our moderation process; once it's approved, you'll receive and e-mail confirmation. After that, it's officially part of our digital exhibition!