



**EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE**

# REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**MEMORY & REMEMBRANCE  
TO AWARENESS & ACTION**

2023-2024 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE  
COMMEMORATION AND EDUCATION  
RESOURCE GUIDEBOOK



PRESENTED BY  
THE OFFICE OF LAUSD BOARD MEMBER KELLY GONEZ & THE ARMENIAN NATIONAL  
COMMITTEE OF AMERICA - WESTERN REGION'S EDUCATION COMMITTEE

*Photograph: Memorial to the Armenian Genocide in Yerevan, Armenia*



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# INTRODUCTION

This April 24, 2024, marks the 109th commemorative anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, in which we remember the 1.5 million Armenian victims who were killed by the Ottoman Turkish government between 1915-1923.

The LAUSD Board of Education continues to reaffirm its commitment to honoring and remembering the Armenian Genocide through expansion of professional development for educators and distribution of age-appropriate resources and materials for all learners. The 2023- 2024 academic school year is the 2nd year in which all schools across LAUSD will be closed on April 24th, in remembrance of the tragic events.

This “Resource Guidebook” prepared by educators of the ANCA-WR Education Committee, provides strategies and resources for educators (K-12) that encourage classroom discussion and opportunities to extend students’ understanding of the significance of remembering the past, cultural identity and solidarity, in creating a more welcoming and inclusive world for all children to thrive in.

## Responsibility to Educate

Reminders of the atrocities committed during the Armenian Genocide echo in present-day conflicts, notably those perpetrated on the Armenian civilian population of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). Artsakh is an Armenian enclave that has been continuously inhabited by Armenians since the Bronze Age, and was landlocked by Azerbaijani territory since the rise and fall of the Soviet Union.

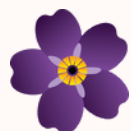
## INTRODUCTION CONTINUED...

From Azerbaijan's unprovoked invasion of Artsakh in September 2020, to its illegal blockade beginning in December 2022, which intentionally isolated more than 120,000 Armenians of Artsakh, and deprived them of essential, life sustaining goods and medical care, and children their right to an education in a systematic, state-sponsored effort, calculated to bring about their deaths. Humanitarian aid and medical transfers were additionally blocked, with civilian patients arrested, in clear violation of international and humanitarian law. By September 2023, Azerbaijan launched a full-scale invasion of Artsakh, destroying the civilian infrastructure and forcibly displacing Artsakh's Armenian population in an act that Luis Moreno Ocampo, first prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, defined as **clear and evident acts of genocide**.

Educators play a vital role in raising awareness of historical and ongoing atrocities, honoring victims, and fostering resilience against injustice. To that end, the LAUSD Board of Education has committed to standing in strong solidarity with the Armenian People—not only Armenians who perished during the genocide and those who survived, but also their descendants—as demonstrated by its unanimously passed resolutions in 2020, including **"Honoring the Significance of April 24"**, introduced by Board Member Kelly Gonez, as well as **"Standing with the Armenian People and the Republic of Artsakh,"** introduced by Board Member Scott Schmerelson. By educating students about history and promoting advocacy for justice, we can strive for a more just future.



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## ABOUT THE BOARD DISTRICT 6 COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY

### ABOUT THE EVENT

All LAUSD District 6 educators, students, and families are eligible to register their student work to be on display at our BD6 event *"Remembering the Armenian Genocide: Memory & Remembrance to Awareness & Action"* on Wednesday April 17th, 2024. The event will include welcoming remarks by Board Member Kelly Gonez and ANCA leaders, a gallery of student art work and submissions, student presentations, and informational booths! Select students will be invited to present their works and will receive a certificate of recognition for their work; teachers who submit class projects and participate will also be recognized for their passion and dedication to this important subject. Reference the details below to RSVP and submit work!

### REGISTERING FOR THE EVENT

The form below includes 3 sections:

- RSVP – Confirm your attendance and let us know if you'll be bringing guests!
- Optional Section for Student Performance Sign Up
- Optional Section for Student Work Submission for the Gallery.

### EVENT DETAILS

LOCATION: James Madison Middle School  
13000 Hart St, Valley Glen, CA 91605  
DATE: Wednesday – April 17th, 2024  
TIME: 4:30PM – 6:00PM (Doors open at 4:30pm)

RSVP & SUBMIT STUDENT WORK: <https://bit.ly/2024ancabd6>

#### PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES:

- **Signing up for Student Performances:** There will be six presentation slots during the event; 2 slots for elementary school students, 2 slots for middle school students, and 2 slots for high school students.
- **Signing up for Student Gallery Submissions:** If you would like to submit PAST or CURRENT student work (art pieces, sculptures, trifold, etc) to showcase in the Student Gallery section of the event please complete the form . Please mail student work to the address in form by Wednesday April 10th (or email to coordinate a drop off)

Questions? Contact Charity Castro at (818)200-5955 or via email at [charity.castro@lausd.net](mailto:charity.castro@lausd.net)



BOARD MEMBER KELLY GONEZ & THE  
ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AMERICA - WESTERN REGION'S  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE PROUDLY PRESENT

# REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

MEMORY & REMEMBRANCE  
TO AWARENESS & ACTION

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF  
STUDENT PERFORMANCES,  
PRESENTATIONS, RESOURCE  
BOOTHs, AND SO MUCH MORE.

CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION  
WILL BE PRESENTED TO STUDENTS  
AND TEACHERS AT THE EVENT.

RSVP, SUBMIT STUDENT WORK,  
& SIGN UP FOR PRESENTATIONS HERE:

<https://bit.ly/2024ancabd6>

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024**  
**4:30 PM – 6:00 PM AT JAMES MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
13000 HART ST, VALLEY GLEN, CA 91605

**Questions?** Contact our office at (818) 401-8585



2024 Event Flyer



## USING THIS GUIDE

To support student understanding about the importance of commemorating the Armenian Genocide and deepen students' sense of appreciation for one another, this guide provides definitions to key terms related to this theme and guided classroom frameworks designed to engage students in an exploration of how memory and identity (K-5), memory and remembrance (6-8), and solidarity and action (9-12) have played a role in their life. These materials can be adopted into existing curriculum, and adapted to fit the learning needs, strategies and timelines in your classroom. Additional resources are included at the end of this guide (page 12) to extend student learning about the Armenian Genocide.

### THEMATIC KEY TERMS

**Commemorate** – To mark by some ceremony or observation; to serve as a memorial of. *In many places around the world, when a tragic event takes place, communities commemorate what happened so that they never forget, and as a reminder to protect others from experiencing the same difficulties.*

**Genocide** – The deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group. (See more from the [UN 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#).)

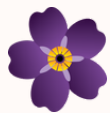
*Genocide is a planned campaign by one group or government, with the intention to destroy and erase a group of people in whole or in part.*

**Solidarity** – Unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on a community of interests, objectives, and standards.

*When you believe that something is wrong no matter who it happens to and you decide to stand with an individual or community because you believe it's the right thing to do, you're standing in solidarity with them.*



**Forget Me Not Flower** – The forget-me-not-flower was adopted as the symbol for the Armenian Genocide in 2015, in honor of the 100th Commemorative Anniversary.



# CLASSROOM PROMPTS

See the prompts below organized in grade level bands that encourage classroom discussion and student learning on the importance of memory, cross-cultural connections and solidarity in common cause against injustice.

## ELEMENTARY (K-5TH) - FAMILY AND MEMORY

**Prompt** – Everyone has their own ways of remembering people, places, and things that they miss. Have students think of a precious family memory that has played a role in shaping their identity. They will retell the story through an artistic work. Students will share their work with their peers to reflect on the importance of memories in their life and build connections between these stories and experiences.

- **Step 1:** Have students think of a family memory that has shaped who they are. Have them think about why it might be important to hold on to this memory. You may provide students with examples of your own or have them share their own examples. Give students time to think/pair share.
  - *Recommendation: Introduce students to the short text “Under the Light of the Moon” by Laura Michael Gaboudian or see additional resources that can be used in introducing this topic to students under “Extended Learning” of this resource guidebook.*
- **Step 2:** Now, have students write or record themselves telling the story of their family memory. If they do not remember the whole story, they may need to ask other family members or friends to help gather more information about the memory.
- **Step 3:** Next, have students recreate their memory in an artistic work. They can create a visual art piece (painting, poster, graphic, etc), write a poem, a short story or develop a performance piece that captures the memory. Their artistic work should deliver a message that emphasizes the importance of this memory in their life. Their work of art should leave an impact on the viewer’s heart.
- **Step 4:** Have students share their work in small groups and then share what they have learned about their classmates from this project. This activity will have them understand the importance of their own family history and will help to build connections towards their peers.



## CLASSROOM PROMPTS CONTINUED....

### MIDDLE SCHOOL (6-8TH GRADE) - CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Prompt – Cultural practices play a key role in shaping students' identity. Have students think about a cultural practice in their family and write a vivid description about this practice and create a visual artistic work that captures it. Have students reflect on the significance of cultural practices in one's life and the importance of making an effort to learn about those of others.

- **Step 1:** Have students think about a special cultural practice that shapes their identity and where it comes from. You may provide students with examples of your own then have them share their own examples in a class discussion or in small groups. Give students time to think/pair share.
  - *Recommendation: Use the lesson Armenian Trchnakir (Bird Letters) by the Genocide Education Project to introduce students an example of an Armenian cultural practice or see additional resources that can be used to introduce this topic to students under "Extended Learning" of this resource guidebook.*
- **Step 2:** Now, have students write the details about this cultural practice, including any imagery, scents, tastes, and emotions associated with that practice. They may ask other family members or friends or do extra research to help gather more information about the cultural practice.
- **Step 3:** Next, have them produce a visual art piece (painting, poster, graphic, etc), poem or short story or develop a performance piece that captures this cultural practice. Their artistic work should deliver a message that emphasizes the importance of culture in their life.
- **Step 4:** Have students share their work in small groups and then share what they have learned about their classmates from this project. This presentation will have them understand the cultural experiences of others' building connections towards their peers.

## CLASSROOM PROMPTS CONTINUED....

### HIGH SCHOOL (9-12TH GRADE)- SOLIDARITY AND ADVOCACY

Prompt – Students will think about the concept of solidarity and reflect on the experience(s) they have had with this concept in their own lives. Students will investigate historical examples of individuals and/or communities who have demonstrated solidarity and/or have advocated on behalf of others (or themselves) during times of adversity or against injustice. Students will then produce an artistic work dedicated to this example that symbolizes the meaning of what showing solidarity and/or advocacy means to them.

- **Step 1:** Have students think about the concept of solidarity and how they have seen this concept experienced in history or in the present-day. You may provide students with examples of your own or have a few students share their own examples in a class discussion or in small groups. Give students time to think/pair share.
- **Step 2:** Next, have students research a historic example of when an individual or group has demonstrated solidarity for others and/or has advocated for justice on their behalf. Have students research and collect information about who, what, why and how the individuals or organizations demonstrated solidarity for others.
  - *Recommendation: Have students investigate the humanitarian and philanthropic efforts of the Near East Relief (formerly known as the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief) during 1915-1930, by exploring the exhibit on the [Near East Museum](#) website or see additional resources that can be used to introduce this topic to students under “Extended Learning” of this resource guidebook.*
- **Step 3:** Now, have students demonstrate what they have learned about the individual or group they have chosen through an artistic expression. Students can create a visual art piece, write a poem or short story or plan a performance dedicated to this history. Student work should not only represent what they have learned but should also convey a message of what showing solidarity and/or advocating for others means to them.
- **Step 4:** Have students present their work and what they have learned from this project either to the whole classroom or in small groups. This activity will have them recognize the importance of being aware of current events and challenges experienced by individuals worldwide and the difference that can be made when people stand together against injustice.



## EXTENDED LEARNING

Extend student learning about Armenian cultural identity and the history of the Armenian Genocide with age-appropriate resources made available by various individuals and organizations.

ANCA-WR Education Committee fosters and maintains relations with officials, education stakeholders, and representatives from community-based organizations that deal with education and youth matters. Visit the committee's [website](#) to find a variety of lessons and references to resources such as books and films that support discussion of Armenian culture and history for students, teachers and families. Find additional resources that also support teaching about the Republic of Artsakh and current day human atrocities that have occurred in the region.

*(Recommended for Primary and Secondary Level)*

Some featured books and films to include:

- ▶ **Under the Light of the Moon by Laura Michael-Gaboudian (Grades 2-6)**  
A children's chapter book details the heroic work of child actor, Jackie Coogan and Near East Relief in response to the Armenian Genocide. Based on the real experiences of the orphans of the Armenian Genocide, including the author's great grandparents, Under the Light of the Moon is a story of hope and survival during a dark time in world history. The true events of young Jackie's volunteer work remind us that anyone—no matter how young or old—can make a difference in the world. Use this book in the classroom as an example of a memory and story that is passed down for children to learn from and be inspired by. Author Laura Michael-Gaboudian's [website](#) includes a free teaching guide, student handouts and narrated slideshow.
- ▶ **Like Water on Stone by Dana Walrath (Grades 6-8)**  
This fictional account of the Armenian genocide. This novel in verse recounts the flight to America of three Armenian children after the Ottoman Turks confiscate their family's flour mill and murder their parents. For sixty-three days the children travel on foot, above the tree line of the Caucasus Mountains and through the Syrian Desert, to reach refuge in Aleppo, Syria. Taken in by a sympathetic Arab shopkeeper, the children disguise themselves as Arabs to avoid being forcibly relocated to the Deir el-Zor concentration camp, where starvation and barbarity led to certain death. After three years in hiding, the children finally receive a letter and boat tickets to America from their keri (maternal uncle).

Random House Publishing has created this [free educator guide](#) to accompany the text.

## EXTENDED LEARNING (CONTINUED)

### ► **My Mother's Voice by Kay Mouradian (Grades 9-12)**

This historical fiction is a moving account of the Armenian Genocide through the poignant story of a teenage Armenian girl faced with unimaginable life-choices and brings an epic chapter in Armenian history to life. Her voice is that of all the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide...a story that must not be forgotten.

Visit ANCA-WR Education Committee's [website](#) to access the complimentary teacher guide and 25-minute documentary to *My Mother's Voice*.

### ► **The Tales of the Blue Skyes by Vruyr Tadevosyan (Grades 10-12)**

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/920225278?share=copy>

Access Code for Film: bluesky2024

This powerful documentary, made by an Armenian-American filmmaker who grew up in Artsakh under siege by Azerbaijani forces in the early 1990s, returns to Artsakh to show the struggle of everyday life from the eyes of children who are growing up in present-day Artsakh after Azerbaijan's unprovoked invasion in 2020. This film shows the impact that war and hate-motivated violence have on children who seek peace and safety in their indigenous homeland.

The Genocide Education Project (GenEd) assists educators in teaching about human rights and genocide, particularly the Armenian Genocide, as the predecessor of the pattern of genocides that followed. GenEd develops instructional materials and provides workshops, consultation and presentations. Visit their site to access teacher guides, materials and resources to support your instruction at <https://genocideeducation.org/>. (Recommended for Secondary Level)

### ► **The Genocide Education Project's Teacher Fellowship Program**

offers secondary school social studies and English teachers an opportunity to receive intensive training on teaching about the Armenian Genocide. Through a unique partnership with the Armenian Genocide Museum and Institute (AGMI), the two-phased program combines GenEd's expertise in training high school educators with AGMI's unique role in Armenian Genocide remembrance and research about various aspects of the genocide, its aftermath and continuing effects today. For more information, visit <https://genocideeducation.org/>.

### ► **Bird Letters Lesson and Activity**

(Use this [link](#) to access)

Central to the Armenian identity is the unique language and alphabet, a deeply held religious faith, and their unique expression of these two components in "illuminated manuscripts" (handwritten books decorated with elaborate designs or miniature pictures.) When we choose to teach about hard history, helping students understand the lives of the victims and survivors—how they lived and expressed themselves before genocide—is essential to a deeper, more lasting learning experience. The activity is appropriate for 5-12 grade social studies, English language arts, and art students.

## EXTENDED LEARNING (CONTINUED)

► **Resistance, Agency and Empowerment**  
(Use this [link](#) to Access)

A ten-lesson teaching unit that explores the concept, forms, and examples of resistance by examining individual and collective actions in response to the Armenian Genocide and its subsequent denial. Each of the ten lessons is designed for a 50-minute class period and can be used on its own or with any or all of the other lessons, depending on classroom needs.

**Facing History and Ourselves** helps educators to prepare their students to participate in civic life—using intellect, empathy, ethics, and choice to stand up to bigotry and hate in their own lives, communities, and schools. (Recommended for Secondary Level)

- **Crimes Against Humanity and Civilization: The Genocide of the Armenians** is a valuable resource that provides an interdisciplinary approach and examination of the choices that individuals, groups, and nations made before, during, and after the Armenian Genocide.
- Search “Armenian Genocide” to find a variety of lessons and materials that support student engagement with this history on <https://www.facinghistory.org>.

**Near East Relief Museum** offers an [online exhibit](#) that provides historical background and primary sources related to the important history of this non-governmental organization of the United States, formerly known as the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief and today the Near East Foundation. The Near East Relief, 1915-1930, was responsible for the establishment of orphanages which provided food and vocational programs, among other forms of aid that enabled relief and resilience of Armenian orphans and refugees, during and after the Armenian Genocide.

► **America We Thank You**  
(Use this [link](#) to access)

Visit the ANCA-WR Education Committee website and find a complementary documentary for introducing this history and fact-sheets that highlight the humanitarian efforts of every state



## EXTENDED LEARNING (CONTINUED)

### USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History & Education

**IWitness** is a no-cost educational website where educators and students can access audio and audiovisual testimony of survivors and witnesses of genocide as well as ready-to use classroom activities and materials. Integrate these primary sources as part of your teaching approach at the beginning, middle or end of a unit or lesson. Follow the links below. (Recommended for Secondary Level)

- **Keep the Promise: Armenian Genocide Education on IWitness**  
Explore multimedia testimony-based resources available on IWitness that contextualize and humanize the Armenian experience with testimony of survivors and witnesses to this history.
- **Teaching with Testimony**  
An educational program between the USC Shoah Foundation and Discovery Education that unlocks the power of testimony. Explore the Virtual Field Trip “**Identity, Belonging, Legacy: How Testimony Makes Us Stronger Than Hate**”, and discover firsthand stories of anti-hate advocates working to preserve the legacy of the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide.
- **USC Shoah Foundation’s IWalk Mobile App**  
IWalks provide age-appropriate and customized experiences and include testimony, maps, photos, and other multimedia that contextualize the history remembered at each site. Download the IWalk Mobile App and explore the Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument in Montebello, California, a historic site where hundreds of people gather to lay flowers dedicated to the victims of genocide. (Note: Share your educator class code available on the app with your students).



# ON ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION DAY

## LOOKING TO COMMEMORATE THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE ON APRIL 24?

Visit the Armenian Genocide Monument at Bicknell Park in Montebello, CA. The Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument, also known as the Montebello Genocide Memorial, is dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Each year on or around April 24, hundreds of people gather at the memorial and lay flowers to the victims of the genocide.

## TAKE AN WALK WITH USC SHOAH FOUNDATION'S MOBILE IWALK APP

Developed by USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education, [iWalk](#) unlocks a new window into our past. Visitors and students at authentic sites of history and memorials can discover curated iWalks—tours that connect specific locations of memory and memorialization with testimonies from survivors and witnesses of genocide, violence and mass atrocity.

### ABOUT THE IWALK: THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MARTYRS MONUMENT: COMMUNITY, MEMORIALIZATION & COMMEMORATION

*(Audiences: Middle School students, High School students, and the General Public)*

The Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument in Montebello, California is a historic site of memory for the local community and the Armenian diaspora worldwide. Through this guided iWalk, visitors will learn more about the significance of this site and how annual commemorative events held here continue to play a key role in preserving the memory of the Armenian Genocide. This iWalk is available now for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) devices.



USC Shoah Foundation's [iWalk](#) mobile app offers interactive guides for students, educators and public visitors as they move through an authentic historic site or memorial connected to the memory of genocide. Guides include testimony, maps, photos, and other multimedia that contextualize the history remembered at each site. iWalks provide users with an age-appropriate and customized experience.



# EDUCATION COMMITTEE

