



YOUR STORY, OUR STORY

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Museums have always asked visitors to imagine the lives of objects in their historic collections. Now, the Tenement Museum invites 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 the 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 there.

This interdisciplinary project has been incorporated into a range of undergraduate courses, including Asian-American History, American Studies, English Literature, Modern Jewish Literature, Political Science, and History through Objects. Use the site as a resource or assign students to contribute their own stories to this living exhibit.

"I was lucky enough to have my Seminar 2 (Peopling of New York City) students take part in the Tenement Museum's Your Story, Our Stories web project last spring. The project gave my students an opportunity to think in a focused manner on specific objects that helped trace the narrative of their immigrant past and to write eloquently about these objects and their meaning. It was a brilliant idea that perfectly meshed with the goals of the seminar in a creative and imaginative way..."

--Connie Rosenblum, Macaulay Honors College

"The Your Story Our Story project was possibly the best assignment. The students also wrote longer papers to accompany their object and text uploads. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to connect personal stories to broader historical events."

--Mae Ngai, Columbia University

"Visiting the Tenement Museum with my students from St. John's University made the history of labor, immigration, and urban neighborhoods come alive. They loved visiting the apartments, seeing how the families lived and worked, and hearing their stories...this process deepened as they selected an object related to their own family's migration as the subject of a short paper. By sharing their stories, students got to know each other much better, and patterns of global migration took on a much more personal meaning. At the end of the semester, my students agreed that their visit to the museum, and their work on the family object stories had been the best part of the class."

--Lara Vapnek, St. John's University



PROJECT GUIDE FOR COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS

Create a Group Gallery

- a. Go to: <http://yourstory.tenement.org/for-educators/resources>
- b. Click “Start a Group Page”
- c. Complete all required fields, using *Tips for Starting a Group*
- d. Give students link to group gallery to submit their stories.

Explore the *Your Story Our Story* Exhibit

- a. Select a story from the site, or upload your own, to introduce the project.
- b. Consider how the project will align with your course aims and objectives.
- c. Consider exploring the exhibit’s feature stories through these guiding questions:
What historical trends are revealed by the stories?
What is cultural identity and how does it shift over time?
What does it mean to be American?
How does personal history relate to American history?

Story Composition

- a. Assign students to write their object story and to photograph or draw their object. *We require a photo of the object, and students can choose to include a photo of themselves and a family member connected to the object.*
- b. Distribute the **Writing Your Story** checklist so students can ensure their story includes all the necessary components for inclusion in the exhibit.

Story Uploading

- a. Assign students to upload their stories using your unique group gallery link.
- b. Refer to our **Instructions for Uploading** guide for a step-by-step process.

Project Presentation (Optional)

- a. Students present their stories in class. *Instructors can print stories directly from the site for display/distribution.*
- b. Invite students to find connections between their stories and their classmates’, and consider how each of their family’s experience is part of American history.