Educator and Student Online Resources

Welcome to our online resources for educators and students, developed and written by the education team at the House of European History.

If you are wondering how to connect the teaching of European history to our contemporary world, then you have come to the right place. We have specifically developed these educational materials in conjunction with the narrative of the permanent exhibition of the House of European History. You can explore, in your classroom, at home, or in other educational settings, some major themes that have as much relevance for our lives today as they did for Europeans in the past. If you happen to visit the museum you will also discover on-site resources that explore these themes.

Age ranges

The educational materials have been written in an accessible and open-ended manner enabling you to adapt and utilise the content as you see fit for your students. Our thematic approach means that you dip in and out of the content selecting areas of work that can be covered in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

The learning approach of the resources

We have created resources that touch upon themes that exist in all educational curricula across Europe. There are, equally, many different ways in terms of how teachers and educators approach what they want to teach and how they teach it. Our resources are therefore thematic in structure rather than chronological, are transnational rather than national in focus, and move between different time periods allowing a 'compare and contrast' approach. Most importantly, we ask a lot of questions throughout the resources and encourage you to do the same with your students. The development of critical thinking skills and the building of core educational competences in those who utilise our resources is a central aim of our work.

These resources foster key competences in knowledge, skills and attitudes, all of which are defined as necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment.

Reference: [Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council](), 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006).

You can read more about our learning approach in the PDF document
Learning Resource Objectives.

Themes

Borders and bridges – Migration
The issue of migration is a hot topic in today's Europe, but why? A mass global movement of humanity is taking place, as is evidenced by phenomena ranging from the tragic drownings in the Mediterranean to the so-called 'brain drain' within Europe itself. This theme examines some of the reasons behind such migrations and asks us to consider how we might better understand today's voluntary and forced movements of people in light of European historical examples.

Who do you think you are? – Identity
How do you define your identity? And what might such characteristics be? Identity constantly shifts and evolves, and therefore our views about who we are and who others might be are open to change. This theme examines the multidimensional nature of identity and draws on past and present examples, getting us to ponder on what European identity might mean in the 21st century.

Hawks and doves – Conflict
Many reasons can bring individuals and groups into confrontation with each other. At the same time, there are things we cannot achieve without others. This theme explores dynamics of war and peace through patterns of interaction such as winners and losers, pacifists and warmongers. It highlights how Europe today is largely the result of both a history of war, occupation and destruction, and a history of solidarity, negotiation, and reconciliation.

Treated as equals? – Human rights
This theme sets out to investigate some of the most prominent categories contained under the broad definition of human rights, and assesses the links and clashes between rights and responsibilities. European and global contemporary and historical examples will be used to guide learners through an exploration of the topic prompting them to consider their responses to complex ethical scenarios. Areas to be covered will include respect for other peoples' rights, conflict between cultural practices and human rights, and whether the removal of rights in certain situations can ever be justified.

The power of communication – Information technologies
Cloud computing, internet piracy, WikiLeaks - all are important elements of our 21st century information age. Communication technologies have transformed public and private life in Europe in recent years, but are in fact part of a much longer history of technological development that has been intimately connected to the continent. This theme explores how technologies both old and new have impacted on European life across over a century and a half, in both positive and negative ways.

How to use the resources

Each theme consists of the following segments:

1. **Introduction:** An overview of the overall structure and messages of the theme.

2. **Section:** Each theme is divided into 3 sections of work, each of which addresses different aspects of the theme being studied. Sections can be worked on independently of each other.

3. **Teachers' Notes:** These are provided within all 3 sections that make up a theme. They include class or group activities with specific reference to accompanying resources (see 4 below). We define class activities as sessions which are led by the educator at the front of the class. We define group activities as sessions done by the students in groups working with the resources. Some of the notes contain embedded film/audio clips which can be accessed and played to your class by clicking on the illustrative screenshots. We have indicated time periods for the completion of activities. However, you are free to choose activities which best suit the needs of your class.

4. **Resources:** These documents can be distributed to your students. They include primary and secondary historical source material, sometimes in the original language. They also include contemporary texts and/or images. As some of the resources deal with sensitive historical and contemporary issues, caution is advised when using them in group sessions.

5. **Film/audio transcriptions:** We have produced written transcriptions in 24 languages, when necessary, for film and audio material used in the Teachers' Notes and Resources. As our film clips link to external sources, we advise caution when working with this material in the classroom.