HISTORY MEETS HUMANITY IMPACT REPORT

“IF WE ARE TO REACH REAL PEACE IN THIS WORLD, AND IF WE ARE TO CARRY ON A REAL WAR AGAINST WAR, WE SHALL HAVE TO BEGIN WITH THE CHILDREN.”

- MAHATMA GANDHI

History Meets Humanity provides students with a unique opportunity to engage in the history of World War II (WWII) Asia as a way to explore core questions about humanity, social justice, and global citizenship. ALPHA Education connects students through primary source documents with

- WWII Asia Survivors
- Social Activists
- Social Justice Educators

in captivating and interactive activities to give students a more critical understanding of history and humanity issues.

WHY LEARN ABOUT WORLD WAR II IN ASIA?

- To engage in historical Social Issues
- To be Inspired to Make a Difference
- To understand Histories from Multiple Perspectives
- To make Connections between Historical and Current Day Issues
- To give Voice to Silenced Victims and Survivors
- To learn Ethical Decision-Making and Values

ALPHA EDUCATION AND THE ONTARIO CURRICULUM

ALPHA Education works closely with school boards and educators to integrate this relatively unknown history into the Ontario secondary school curriculum. With successful efforts by ALPHA, the Ontario Ministry of Education approved the inclusion of the WWII Asia in relevant Grade 10-12 History and Social Science curriculum in 2005.

To further support educators, a 1st Edition of the Teacher Resource Guide was published by ALPHA Education and distributed to all high schools in Ontario. This history is now in a variety of courses such as World History Since 1900, Canadian and International Law, Canadian and World Issues, Canadian and World Politics, and Civics.
**Goals of History**

*Who are we? Who came before us? How have we changed?*

**Students will work towards:**

- Developing an understanding of past societies, developments, and events that enable them to interpret and analyse historical, as well as current, issues
- Analysing how people from diverse groups have interacted and how they have changed over time
- Understanding the experiences of and empathizing with people in past societies
- Developing historical literacy skills by analysing and interpreting evidence from primary and secondary sources

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**CONCEPTS OF HISTORICAL THINKING**

- Historical Significance
- Cause and Consequence
- Continuity and Change
- Historical Perspective

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**HISTORY MEETS HUMANITY IMPACT SURVEY DESIGN**

The data collected for this impact report were the responses from two secondary schools, totaling 272 grades ten and eleven students, who participated in the History Meets Humanity (HMH) Conference on March 28 & 29, 2019. The themes of the conferences were:

- Going Deeper into the Military Sexual Slavery System
- World War II Asia History through the Arts

There were seven different workshops: Walk Awhile in Our Shoes, Trauma and Healing, Exploring the Links Between Racism and Sexism, Exploring the How and Why of the Military Sexual Slavery, Answering the Call to Action, Public Art and Transnational Solidarity, and Shaping History and Beyond.

The survey was designed based on the Ontario Curriculum. Using the key concepts of historical thinking, the impact study examined specifically the following:

- Part 1: Historical Significance & Perspective
- Part 2: Critical Thinking
- Part 3: Take-Aways

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**THE TRUE TEST OF SOCIETY IS THE ABILITY TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE SMALLEST MINORITY AND TEACH EACH GENERATION TO HAVE COMPASSION, EMPATHY, TOLERANCE, AND UNDERSTANDING FOR ALL HUMAN BEINGS.**

PART 1: HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE & PERSPECTIVE

**Why** 97.8% of students reported they believe in the importance of historical evidence to form conclusions and detect bias

95.2% of students reported they understand the significance of war experiences on different groups of people in different countries.

**Based on Agrees**

- **Bayview S.S.**
  - 50.0% female students and 46.2% male students agreed that they can explain, from more than one perspective, about the impact of the military sexual slavery
  - 56.4% male students and 43.8% female students agreed that they are able to connect what they learned to present social, economic or political issues.
  - 48.7% male students and 46.9% female students agreed that by looking at historical evidence they understood some key issues from WWII Asia.

  n = 39 male; 64 female responses

**Weston CI.**

- 58.3% female students and 52.5% male students agreed that they are able to connect what they learned to present social, economic or political issues.
  - 61.3% male students and 45.9% female students agreed that they understand how art forms can be used to express the complexities of World War II Asia.
  - 63.8% male students and 51.8% female students reported that, by looking at historical evidence, they understood some key issues from WWII Asia.

  n = 80 male; 85 female responses

**On Historical Significance & Perspective, What Students Said...**

"Hearing the first-hand accounts of the survivors was very interesting because it offered a real perspective on the events that were taught."

"Tying the issues of racism + sexism back to maintaining humanity when looking at history was especially important to me. I think statistics tend to act as a barrier to understanding others’ experiences."

"That there’s a whole story about WWII that I had no idea about. Hearing about this made me become more aware about the other sufferings of people all across the globe."
PART 2: CRITICAL THINKING

I deepened my understanding of how history enables me to make informed moral decisions.

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<th>Disagree</th>
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93.6% of students reported they learned about the impact of human behaviour on others by examining WWII Asia atrocities.

91.3% of students reported they examined issues of bias and discrimination.

n = 270 students’ responses

BASED ON STRONGLY AGREES

Bayview S.S.

67.2% female students and 48.7% male students strongly agreed that they learned about the impact of human behaviour on others by examining World War II atrocities.

51.3% male students and 53.1% female students strongly agreed that they learned how to use primary source documents to examine historical political issues.

48.7% male students and 59.4% female students strongly agreed that they examined issues of bias and discrimination.

n = 39 male; 64 female responses

ON CRITICAL THINKING, WHAT STUDENTS SAID...

“"I was surprised that people still care about this topic & want to shine a light on it because society & school curriculum teach us useless things but it was great to finally learn something worth talking about.""

“The significance of war experiences on different groups of people in different countries.”

“The presence of ideological shaming towards sexual assault survivors that victims cannot escape.”

“The activity was quite interesting and profound as there was a tangible visualization of the effects of the inter-generational trauma.”

“The interactive activity of military poetry as our emotional response to the primary sources. I didn’t know that history could be so personal and at the individual level.”

Weston C.I.

38.0% male students and 51.2% female students strongly agreed that they learned about the impact of human behaviour on others by examining World War II atrocities.

35.4% male students and 50.6% female students strongly agreed that they learned how to use art forms (drama, sculptures, paintings, posters, poems, films) to express social issues.

Results from male students were more evenly spread out on all 5 measures of critical thinking when compared to females. The responses from females were more varied.

n = 80 male; 85 female responses
"We got to look at and analyze sources ourselves rather than being told the answer so we could come to our own conclusions about what was going on and learn first-hand."

"Very interesting to see actual primary sources which explicitly state these atrocities. We don’t see primary sources so seeing actual documents is interesting."

"The issue of reparations and justice are heavily affected by the loss of the war victor. Biases and discrimination play a role in the administration of justice."

"The analysis of the different documents from different time periods and how different nations were involved in the trials."

"The one thing that interested me was the paintings that these women drew. Their expression of emotion is both devastating and inspiring. It made me think more of the feelings and trauma these women have gone through."

"We can use art to tell stories about the past and we can also use it to place what our future is going to be and I can also learn about social history."

"Sooner or later being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so. In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressed, but rather restorers of the humanity of both."

- Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed Chapter 1
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For the 2019 Impact Report on History Meets Humanity, please contact info@alphaeducation.org
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