



**Orphaned children walking on a street in Brumana, Lebanon**

Online Collections Database, 2005.31.4.17, [www.theworldwar.org/research/database](http://www.theworldwar.org/research/database). National WWI Museum and Memorial. Online.

## **The American Colony Orphanage: Aid for Orphaned Youth of the Middle East**

Recommended Grade Levels: 6-8

Course/Content Area(s): World History

Authored by: Angela Guldin, Thamar Lebrón, Samantha Ness and  
Melissa Sarmiento, National WWI Museum and Memorial Summer Institute Teacher Fellows

<b>LESSON OVERVIEW:</b>	In this lesson, students will analyze a primary source document in order to explore the experiences of some children in the Middle East who were orphaned during WWI. Students will work with groups to practice data gathering and analysis, and then will complete an independent analysis and reflection based on their learning.
<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build an understanding of some of the challenges that civilians faced during and after WWI.</li> <li>● Evaluate the differences in experiences of those affected by war based on their diverse identities and backgrounds.</li> </ul>
<b>STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:</b>	<b>National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework Standards:</b>  <b>D2.Civ.2.6-8.</b> Explain specific roles played by citizens.  <b>D2.Eco.1.6-8.</b> Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.  <b>D2.Eco.6.6-8.</b> Explain how changes in supply and demand cause changes in prices and quantities of goods and services, labor, credit, and foreign currencies.  <b>D2.His.1.6-8.</b> Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
<b>TIME NEEDED:</b>	1 50-minute class period
<b>PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students should have an understanding of the scope and scale of death and destruction caused by WWI (on and off battlefield) and the influenza pandemic.</li> <li>● Students should be aware of the wide geographic area affected by WWI, specifically including the Middle East. See the Further Resources section for lessons that can help.</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The American Colony Christian Herald Orphanage PowerPoint</li> <li>● Appendix A: Analyzing Primary Resources: American Colony in Jerusalem Collection</li> <li>● Student access to the Library of Congress manuscript - <a href="#">American Colony in Jerusalem Collection: Part I: Record book listing girls receiving support through the Christian Herald Orphanage, as supervised by the American Colony</a></li> </ul>

# LESSON

## PRE-ASSESSMENT/INTRODUCTION/HOOK:

Host a class discussion using the following questions:

- How can war affect civilians?
- How can it affect families?
- Who takes care of civilians who have been affected by war?
  - Whose responsibility is it?
  - Where does funding to do so come from?

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Share background information about the American Colony Christian Herald Orphanage using the provided PowerPoint (slides 1-6)
2. Using the PowerPoint, slide 7, explain to students that the orphanage kept records of each girl who lived at the orphanage. Use the example page on the slide to break down the type of information each record included.
3. Using the PowerPoint, slide 8, fill out the first row of part 1 (the chart) on the “Analyzing Primary Resources: American Colony in Jerusalem Collection” sheet (Appendix A) together as an example.
4. After students have had practice as a whole group, split them into groups and let them choose 4 more individuals to learn about. They should fill out the rest of the chart (Appendix A).
5. As a group, students should then answer questions in 1-6 in part 2 (Appendix A).
6. Bring the class back together to process what they learned through their different explorations of the primary resource.

## POST-ASSESSMENT:

1. Using the provided primary source image in part 3 (Appendix A), students should answer questions 1-3 to analyze the image independently.
2. Finally, students should answer question 4 using all they learned through the activity.

## MODIFICATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS

For students that need more structure, assign specific individuals for their research, rather than allowing them to choose.

For advanced students, provide an extension option:

- Read "[Chapter 2 'Little Orphans of Jerusalem': The American Colony's Christian Herald Orphanage in Photographs and Negatives](#)". In *Imaging and Imagining Palestine*
  - Students should then respond with their thoughts about the chapter's critique of the orphanage's humanitarian mission.
- Select a theme from the following list and ask students to discuss how the orphanage entries of the girls relate.
  - Christian Humanitarianism and Activism
  - Destruction of War
  - Role of Mass Media and propaganda
  - Gender Dynamics

## Appendix A: Analyzing Primary Resources: American Colony in Jerusalem Collection

### Part 1:

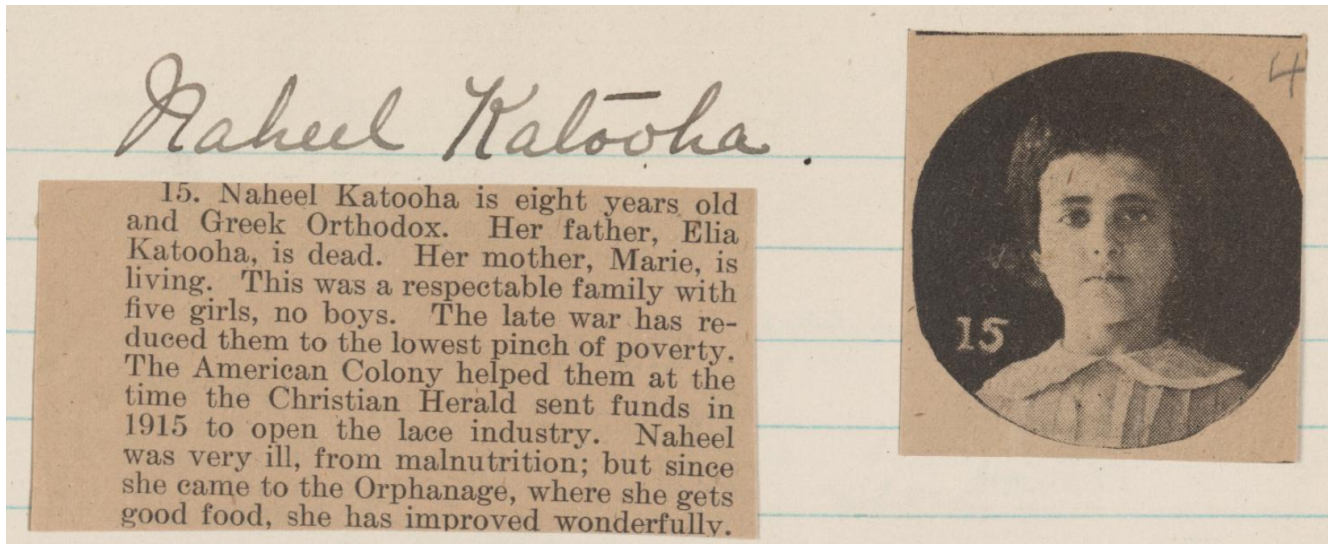
Name	Age	Religion	Parents	Reason for Arrival	Medical Conditions	Tone of the Document

## Part 2:

1. How many of the children you read about had a living parent? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What's the predominant religion among the children you read about? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the most common ailment experienced by these children?
4. Do you think girls were more likely than boys to be at orphanages? Why or why not?
5. What impact did the Great War have on these children's families?
6. How are these children described? What tone did you notice in the descriptions? Were there differences among descriptions of children from different religions? Be sure to answer ALL of these as you explain your answer!

**Part 3:**

Using your prior knowledge and the record provided below, answer the following questions:



1. Identify the military conflict referred to in the image.
2. Describe ONE change in women's lives as a result of the conflict.
3. Explain ONE way that economic conditions at the end of the Great War impacted the Middle East.
4. After reading all of the entries and reflecting on what you have learned, describe the impact of the conflict on families and children.

## Further Resources:

- Lessons & Activities:
  - [CSI Holy Land: WWI in the Middle East - Analyzing Primary Source Documents](#) (designed for 9-12, but can be adjusted for younger)
  - [Mapping the Legacy of WWI in the Middle East](#)
  - [World War I in the Middle East: Research Project](#) (designed for 9-12, but can be adjusted for younger)
- Readings
  - [Pandemic Then and Now](#)
  - [The Rise of Giving: American Philanthropy and WWI](#)
  - [Armenian and Syrian Relief Fund](#)
  - [Library of Congress Exhibition: The American Colony in Jerusalem](#)
  - [Encyclopedia 1914-1918 Online: Regions](#) (this includes information about the entire world; can help broaden perspectives about the scope of the war)

## Bibliography:

Christian Herald Orphanage, and Bertha Spafford Vester. Record book listing girls receiving support through the Christian Herald Orphanage, as supervised by the American Colony. to 1927, ca. 1920. Manuscript/Mixed Material.  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/mamcol.092/>.

Jacobson, Abigail. "Chapter 2 'Little Orphans of Jerusalem': The American Colony's Christian Herald Orphanage in Photographs and Negatives". In *Imaging and Imagining Palestine*, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2021) doi:  
[https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004437944\\_003](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004437944_003)