

# Exploring Dark Tourism in Europe: *Confronting History's Shadows*

## 9th Grade

### Objective:

Students will be able to analyze the concept of dark tourism in Europe, evaluate its ethical implications, and explain its historical significance.

### Assessment:

Students will create a multimedia presentation on a specific dark tourism site in Europe, addressing its historical context, reasons for visitation, and ethical considerations. The presentation should include:

- A brief history of the site
- An explanation of why it's considered a dark tourism destination
- Discussion of at least two ethical considerations
- An analysis of its historical significance
- A personal reflection on the importance of remembering difficult histories

### Key Points:

- Dark tourism refers to travel to places associated with death, tragedy, or suffering
- Europe has numerous dark tourism sites due to its complex history, including World War II locations, former prisons, and disaster areas
- Ethical considerations in dark tourism include respect for victims, educational value, and potential exploitation
- Dark tourism can serve as a means of historical preservation, education, and commemoration
- Visiting dark tourism sites can evoke complex emotions and promote reflection on human nature and societal issues

### Opening:

- Begin with a thought-provoking question: "Have you ever visited a place that made you feel both fascinated and uncomfortable?"
- Show a series of images of popular European tourist destinations alongside images of dark tourism sites (e.g., Eiffel Tower vs. Auschwitz)
- Ask students to discuss in pairs what they notice about the two types of images and how they make them feel
- View Video - <https://youtu.be/zTZqz3vR8rs> (optional, 25min.)

## **Introduction to New Material:**

- Define dark tourism and provide examples of popular dark tourism sites in Europe (e.g., Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chernobyl, Anne Frank House)
- Discuss the historical context that has led to the prevalence of dark tourism sites in Europe
- Explain the motivations behind dark tourism, such as education, remembrance, and curiosity
- Present ethical considerations surrounding dark tourism, including respect for victims and potential commercialization of tragedy
- Highlight the educational value and historical significance of dark tourism sites
- Common misconception to address: Dark tourism is solely about morbid fascination, rather than education and remembrance

## **Guided Practice:**

- Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a specific dark tourism site in Europe
- Provide a worksheet with guiding questions for students to research their assigned site
- Instruct students to use reliable online resources to gather information
- Circulate among groups to monitor progress and provide assistance
- Have each group share their findings with the class, focusing on the historical context and ethical considerations of their site
- Facilitate a class discussion comparing and contrasting the different sites

## **Alternative task for pairs:**

[Group Task: Dark Tourism](#)

## **Independent Practice:**

- Explain the multimedia presentation assignment (as described in the Assessment section)
- Provide a rubric detailing expectations for content, creativity, and presentation skills
- Allow students to choose their preferred dark tourism site for the project
- Set clear deadlines for research, draft submission, and final presentation
- Encourage students to incorporate various media elements (e.g., images, videos, audio) in their presentations

## **Worksheet/answers:**

[Dark Tourism in Europe: Exploring Sites of Historical Tragedy](#)

## **Closing:**

- Conduct a brief class discussion on the question: "How can dark tourism contribute to our understanding of history and society?"

- Have students write a short reflection on what they learned about dark tourism and how it has changed their perspective on travel and history

### **Extension Activity:**

Students who finish early can create a hypothetical itinerary for a "dark tourism" trip through Europe, including at least three sites. They should justify their choices and explain how the trip could be conducted ethically and educationally.

### **Homework:**

Ask students to interview an older family member or friend about their experiences with or thoughts on visiting places associated with tragedy or difficult history. Students should write a one-page reflection comparing the interviewee's perspective with their own thoughts on dark tourism.

### **Standards Addressed:**

1. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
2. NCSS.D2.His.5.9-12: Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.