

U.S. History Media Project: Overview

What is the project about? The project will examine a [supplemental digital history curriculum](#) that includes a suite of **fun, interactive online games** designed as a free resource for middle- and high-school educators and students. The supplemental curriculum highlights transformative moments in U.S. history from the era of the American Revolution to World War II. In addition to the student games, the tool includes **curricular materials and supports** for teachers, including vocabulary quizzes, discussion questions, and document-based activities. The two games used in this project focus on immigration during the Progressive Era (~1910) and the Great Depression (~1929).

Why use the supplemental curriculum? The digital games and activities are designed to help students **develop core thinking skills** that are critical to understanding U.S. history. The games and curriculum motivate students and encourage them to see historical actors as actual people. The supplemental curriculum provides teachers with learning activities, quizzes, and discussion prompts that take 1-2 hours a week, save time in lesson planning, and provide new ways of engaging students.

Why is the project important? Although the supplemental curriculum has been widely used among teachers, there has not yet been a **rigorous research study to evaluate its impact on student outcomes**. With funding from the [Institute of Education Sciences](#), the [Education Development Center, Inc.](#) (EDC) will work with producer [WNET](#), as well as the [American Social History Project at CUNY](#) and [Electric Fun Stuff](#), to conduct an efficacy study to investigate the impact of the games and curriculum on students' history knowledge and skills.

When is the project happening? The project will take **three months** during the **2022-2023 school year**.

Where is the project happening? Teachers and students will participate as **part of their normal classroom experience**. All data collection will happen **virtually**, via digital surveys and at least one remote classroom observation.

Who can participate? We are enrolling **Grade 8, 9, and 10 history, civics, or social studies public school teachers**, along with their students. A [5-minute screener](#) will determine your eligibility. We plan to enroll two teachers per school, but if you are the only teacher in your school, it might still be possible for you to participate.

When?	How many teachers?	Where?
2022-2023 school year	70 (2 per school)	All activities are virtual

What do teachers have to do? Half of the teachers will be randomly assigned to use the supplemental digital history curriculum with their students during the project; the rest will continue to use their standard curriculum until after the project is over, when they will receive access to the professional development, games and curricular supports. All teachers will do the following activities.

Supplemental Curriculum Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend a one-hour PD session on using the supplemental curriculum and receive documentation of attendance Use two interactive online games focused on the Progressive Era and the Great Depression in the U.S. Use the provided curriculum materials and supports Facilitate student assessments at the beginning and end of the project <p style="text-align: center;">Classrooms receive \$500 for completing all curricular activities</p>

Research Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete one demographic survey Participate in random assignment Complete 5-minute weekly practice logs Participate in at least one classroom observation via Zoom <p style="text-align: center;">Schools receive \$500 for completing all research activities</p>

U.S. History Media Project: Information Sheet

This information sheet provides an overview of research activities that will take place and all the procedures in place to protect the rights of the project participants.

Project Purpose The purpose of this project is to evaluate whether a supplemental digital history curriculum, including an online game for students, plus curricular supports and activities, helps students in Grades 8-10 to learn history and develop historical thinking skills.

Data Collection During the project, researchers will be collecting information about teachers' background and instructional practice, students' and teachers' use of the supplemental curriculum (if applicable), and students' history knowledge, related history skills, and interest in history. Data sharing agreements will be secured to obtain background information on students, including demographics, latest grades, and attendance during the project period. Students will complete assessments twice during regular instructional time, once at the beginning and once at the end of the project. Teachers will complete weekly 5-minute practice logs and a demographic survey. Teachers will also be observed virtually via Zoom during at least one class period; this session will be audio recorded for researchers' later reference. All audio recordings will be destroyed at the end of the study.

Consent We will obtain informed consent from all teachers. Parents/guardians will have the right to opt their children out of participating in the research activities, however, all students will continue to participate in their social studies classes as instructed by the teacher.

Risks We expect the risks associated with this project to be minimal, no greater than the risks associated with daily life; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the project activities. Participating in any research involves the risk that information participants share could become public, but researchers will do their best to keep all information confidential.

Benefits Teachers and students may not directly benefit from participation. By participating in this project, teachers and students will contribute to important research that has potential relevance for all middle and high school students and educators in the U.S.

Compensation If chosen for this opportunity, teachers will get one hour of professional development that may count towards their state's requirements. At the end of the project, classrooms will receive \$500 for participating in the program. Schools will receive an additional \$500 for participating in the research activities.

Confidentiality All data will be kept in secured files. No identifying information of any kind will appear in reports or in other public documents and all personally identifying private information will be removed from the project data. All project data, including access to audio recordings, will be restricted to project staff and will only be used for research purposes. These data will not be shared with anyone at participating schools and will not be used to evaluate teachers' or students' performance in any way.

Future research All personally identifying private information will be removed from the project data. The remaining project data could be used in future research or distributed to another researcher for future research without additional informed consent from you or your legally authorized representative.

Participation is voluntary Teachers, parents, and students may refuse to participate or discontinue at any time, with no penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled.

Questions, Concerns, or Complaints Education Development Center received [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) approval for this project. If participants have any questions about their rights or feel that any harm has been done during the project, they should contact EDC's Human Protections Administrator at 1-800-225-4276 ext. 2971 or HumanProtections@edc.org. For questions about this project, participants should contact Joy Lorenzo Kennedy, Principal Investigator, at (212) 807-4233 or jlkenedy@edc.org.

Why use the supplemental digital curriculum?

Teachers tell us that the supplemental curriculum is **easy to use** and **saves them time**...and it's **fun for students!**



Evidence-based

Multiple research studies have shown that using this supplemental curriculum to teach history improves historical knowledge and skills, leads to deeper student engagement, and promotes richer classroom discussion.



Collaboratively developed

The supplemental curriculum that will be used in the U.S. History Media Project was created by a team that includes historians, educators, and a team of advisors, to ensure the games and educator materials are guided by rigorous scholarship and that they involve members of the communities portrayed to ensure they are telling their own stories.



Safe, ethical, and age-appropriate design

Developers of the supplemental digital curriculum used feedback from teachers, students, and an advisory board of experts in culturally responsive education, adolescent development, ethics, game design, and other relevant areas to help make our games safe, effective, and engaging. The games are constructed so that students explore the perspectives of historical characters, make decisions, and take risks, but maintain critical distance from the situations depicted.



Enables inclusive social studies curriculum

The games and accompanying digital curriculum highlight the role of ordinary people in making history. It includes the experiences and perspectives of diverse Americans, especially those who have been ignored or marginalized by traditional accounts.



Accessible and easy to use (in classroom and out)

The digital games and curriculum are designed for a wide range of learners and instructional settings and are available online for free. The games are accompanied by the variety of curricular supports including discussion prompts, writing assignments, vocabulary, and document-based activities.

Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)

Policy: Research activities involving human subjects may not be conducted or supported by the Departments and Agencies adopting the Common Rule unless the activities are exempt from or approved in accordance with the Common Rule. The "pre-2018 Common Rule (or pre-2018 Requirements)" was originally promulgated in 1991 and amended on June 23, 2005 (70 FR 36325). The "2018 Common Rule (or 2018 Requirements)" was originally published on January 19, 2017 (82 FR 7149) and amended on January 22, 2018 (83 FR 2885) and June 19, 2018 (83 FR 28497). The categories of exempt research are provided in Section 101(b) of the pre-2018 Common Rule and Section 104(d) of the 2018 Common Rule.

The pre-2018 Common Rule requires institutions to certify that each application or proposal for research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Section 103(f)). The 2018 Common Rule requires institutions to certify that each proposed research study has been reviewed and approved by an IRB (Section 103(d)). Institutions must have an assurance of compliance that applies to the research to be conducted and should submit certification of IRB review and approval with each application or proposal, or proposed research study, unless otherwise advised by the Department or Agency.

1. Request Type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> EXEMPTION	2. Type of Mechanism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GRANT <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACT <input type="checkbox"/> FELLOWSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____	3. Name of Federal Department or Agency and, if known, Application or Proposal Identification No. Institute of Education Sciences (DED-IES) Proposal ID #: R305A210223
4. Title of Application or Activity U.S. History Through Young People's Eyes: An Efficacy Study of Mission US		5. Name of Principal Investigator, Program Director, Fellow, or Other Joy L Kennedy

6. Assurance Status of this Project (*Respond to one of the following*)

This Assurance, on file with Department of Health and Human Services, covers this activity:
 Assurance Identification No. 00000038, the expiration date 01/03/2027 IRB Registration No. 00000865

This Assurance, on file with (*agency/dept*) _____, covers this activity.
 Assurance No. _____, the expiration date _____ IRB Registration/Identification No. _____ (*if applicable*)

No assurance has been filed for this institution. This institution declares that it will provide an Assurance and Certification of IRB review and approval upon request.

Exemption Status: Human subjects are involved, but this activity qualifies for exemption under the pre-2018 Common Rule, Section 101(b), paragraph _____

Exemption Status: Human subjects are involved, but this activity qualifies for exemption under the 2018 Common Rule, Section 104(d), paragraph _____

7. Certification of IRB Review (*Respond to one of the following IF you have an Assurance on file*)

This activity has been reviewed and approved by the IRB in accordance with the Common Rule and any other governing regulations.
 by: Full IRB Review on (date of IRB meeting) _____ or Expedited Review on (date) October 4, 2021
 If less than one year approval, provide expiration date _____

This activity contains multiple projects, some of which have not been reviewed. The IRB has granted approval on condition that all projects covered by the Common Rule will be reviewed and approved before they are initiated and that appropriate further certification will be submitted.

8. Comments **This activity contains multiple components. The IRB initially approved preliminary focus groups to be conducted with teachers. Additional materials covering the pilot and RCT components have since been submitted through a series of amendments and have been approved.**

9. The official signing below certifies that the information provided above is correct and that, as required, future reviews will be performed until study closure and certification will be provided.	10. Name and Address of Institution Education Development Center, 300 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2010, Waltham, MA 02451.
11. Phone No. (with area code) 617 969 7100 x2971	14. Title Director, Human Protections Program
12. Email: humanprotections@edc.org	
14. Name of Official: Alan Stockdale	15. Date February 4, 2022
15. Signature:	

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From: Rodamar, Jeffery <Jeffery.Rodamar@ed.gov>
Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 at 1:38 PM
To: Metz, Edward <Edward.Metz@ed.gov>
Cc: IES Grants Team <IESGrantsTeam@ed.gov>, Kennedy, Joy L <JLKennedy@edc.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Protection of human subjects clearance: R305A210223 (EDC).

The study of "U.S. History Through Young People's Eyes: An Efficacy Study of Mission U.S." conducted by Dr. Joy Kennedy at Education Development Center, funded by U.S. Department of Education (ED) grant R305A210223 has ED protection of human subjects clearance. ED concurs with the grantee's determination that the research includes only research that falls under exemptions 1 and 2 of the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (34 CFR 97).

Keep a copy of this ED Protection of Human Subjects clearance in the official file for this grant.

Jeffery W. Rodamar

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Email for general queries: HumanSubjectsResearch@ED.gov

Resources <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>

Training: Department of Education: Implementing the Common Rule

For protection of human subjects in research (34 CFR 97)

<https://www2.ed.gov/rms.training/humansubjects-research/story.html>

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