

## **Teaching American History Project**

### **Spiro Mandes**

**Lesson Title:** Christmas in the Trenches, 1914

**Length of Class Period:** 45 min (plan for one class period, two if you read it with the class)

**Inquiry:** What were the conditions that soldiers experienced in the trenches with trench warfare?

The Human Element to WWI: What was Christmas, 1914 like for the men on both sides of the trenches?

**Materials :** *Christmas in the Trenches, 1914*  
[www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/pftrenches.htm](http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/pftrenches.htm)

Analysis Worksheet, Page 92  
<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/document.html>

**Activities:** For homework, students will read *Christmas in the Trenches, 1914*. After reading the document, students will also complete a written analysis worksheet for homework. In class, students will be arranged in pairs to answer/investigate the questions “What were the conditions and realities of trench warfare?” and “What was Christmas, 1914 like for the men on both sides on the trenches?” Then the class will come back together to share their findings and hold a whole-class discussion focusing on how two enemies go from killing each other one day to celebrating Christmas the following day and then back to killing each other. Was it the common holiday? Was it the misery of trench warfare? Etc.

**Assessment:** Formal: Written Analysis Worksheet  
Informal: Small group and class discussion

#### **Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:**

- describe the multiple intersecting causes of events
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways that cultural encounters and the interactions of people of different cultures in pre-modern as well as modern times have shaped new identities and ways of life.
- Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that about as the resolution of conflict.