



# SARA CORNING CENTRE FOR GENOCIDE EDUCATION

45 Hallcrown Place, Toronto, ON M2J 4Y4 | [www.corningcentre.org](http://www.corningcentre.org) | [info@corningcentre.org](mailto:info@corningcentre.org)

## Unit Title

**Artsakh War**

## Lesson Title

**Trauma for Armenians in the Diaspora**

## Learning Objectives

In this lesson, students will ...

- Review the history of the Armenian Genocide
- Read news articles highlighting the response to the Artsakh war by Armenians in the diaspora, specifically in Canada
- Reflect and analyze the affects of war and trauma
- Critically analyze the juxtaposition of photos, past and present deportation, reflecting on whom it could affect and why

## Background Information

The first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century took place in 1915, during WWI, against Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire; a planned, systematic destruction of an entire race by the Young Turks.

105 years later, on September 27, 2020, the state of Azerbaijan with the support of Turkey, launched a large-scale war against the republic of Artsakh. For 44 days, internationally banned weapons were used, including cluster munitions and phosphorus substances.

On November 9, 2020, the war came to a temporary halt with a ceasefire agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and with the signing agreement of surrendering 75% of the Republic Artsakh to Azerbaijan, along with the deportation of its residents.

## Resources

- **Armenian Genocide; Lessons from History**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ty4iRT0z5Ms&t=4s>
- **BlogTo News Article – Toronto Armenians Protest;**  
<https://www.blogto.com/city/2020/10/toronto-streets-canada-armenia-azerbaijan-conflict/>
- **CBC News Article – Armenian Canadian, Kristapor Artin;**  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/nagorno-karabakh-armenia-azerbaijan-1.5755538>

## Materials

- **Retell, Relate, Reflect** – graphic organizer
- **Reflection Assignment;** Pictures Speak 1000 Words
- **Discussion Questions**

## Assessment Strategies

- Observation



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- Question and Answer
- Group Discussion
- Individual Assignment

## Activity

- As a whole group, read, review and discuss the Youtube Video – Armenian Genocide – Lessons from History
- Small Group Activity; Assign 1 news article to each small group. In their groups, students are to read, reflect and discuss the contents of the article while completing the *Retell, Relate, Reflect* handout. Students will then present their notes to the class, discussing one another's findings.
- Allow opportunities for small group and large group discussions throughout

## Discussion Questions

- Why do you think the war of 2020 affected Armenians in the diaspora as much as it did?
- Why would Armenians in the diaspora go back to fight in the war?
- Do you think the war of 2020 caused trauma for Armenians in the diaspora?
- What are some initiatives that Armenians living in the diaspora can do to advocate for their brothers and sisters back home?

## Assignment

### Pictures speak 1000 Words

Reflection Assignment: Juxtapose deportation photos, past vs present

- For this assignment, students are to compare and contrast the photos of Armenians being deported from their homes/land in 1915 and in 2020
- Draw on similarities and differences
- Analyze and reflect on the affects of these photos for Armenians living in the diaspora



City

Mira Miller, Posted on October 13, 2020

## Protesters take to Toronto streets to demand Canada act on Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict

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Toronto's Armenian community is demonstrating and speaking out in light of the ongoing conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and they're demanding that the federal government take swift action against Turkey's alleged involvement in the violence.

Protestors marched through Toronto last Friday to show support and solidarity for those suffering in Armenia and Artsakh, and they called on

the government to condemn the military aggression that has been ongoing for several weeks now.

A **years-long conflict over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh**, which is a self-proclaimed South Caucasian state situated within Azerbaijan but is home to ethnic Armenians, erupted into intense violence reminiscent of **the Armenian Genocide of 1915** at the end of September.

The **Armenian-backed Republic of Artsakh** has been controlling the area since 1994 despite its location within Azerbaijan, though Artsakh's government is not recognized internationally.

According to **The New York Times**, the recent violence in the region is "the worst fighting the area had seen since a vicious ethnic war in the 1990s," and Armenian officials say Turkey is helping their ethnic Turkic ally Azerbaijan by sending arms, Syrian mercenaries and escalating the violence.

Peaceful protest of Canadians against Turkey's & Azerbaijan's recent military aggression towards Armenia.

As a result, the Armenian diaspora, including in Toronto, has been speaking out all over the world in an effort to urge foreign powers to get involved and help put a stop to the violence and aggression.

On Oct. 6, Canada's minister of foreign affairs, François-Philippe Champagne, **issued a joint statement** with the U.K. foreign secretary stating the "urgent need to end the continuing military action in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone." And in the previous day, Champagne also said Canada had halted its exports of a drone-targeting sensor, which

are made in Ontario, to Turkey amid allegations that they're being used by Azeri forces.

Some have said this isn't enough, however, and are also calling on the federal government to demand that Turkey stay out of the conflict, or vouch for the country's removal from NATO.

Following Friday's protest, meanwhile, Toronto Mayor John Tory **issued a statement** in support of the city's Armenian community.

"I am a strong supporter of Toronto's Armenian community and understand the pain and sorrow that this ongoing violence is causing the community," he said.

"I strongly support the federal government's decision to suspend the exports of military drones. I know they are committed to doing all that they can to help stabilize the situation and move towards peace," he continued.

"I condemn any form of terrorism or the use of military technology in this conflict and join the many calls that have been made thus far in encouraging a negotiated peace resolution, a ceasefire and protection of civilians in this region."

Lead photo by  
ANCC\_CNAC

#### **Source**

[Protesters take to Toronto streets to demand Canada act on Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict \(blogto.com\)](https://blogto.com/news/2020/09/20/protesters-take-to-toronto-streets-to-demand-canada-act-on-armenia-azerbaijan-conflict/)



## Politics

## Armenian community mourns Canadian killed in fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh

Kristapor Artin was killed while fighting Azerbaijani forces, says Armenian-Canadian group

[Levon Sevunts](#) · Radio Canada International ·

Posted: Oct 08, 2020 2:28 PM ET | Last Updated: October 8, 2020



Members of the Armenian community in Montreal demonstrate on October 4, 2020, as fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan intensified. (Graham Hughes/The Canadian Press)

Members of Toronto's Armenian community are mourning the death of a Canadian-Armenian businessman and community activist who was killed in Nagorno-Karabakh on Tuesday.

Kristapor Artin, a former Toronto resident who moved to Armenia in 2011, was killed while fighting against Azerbaijani forces in the breakaway Armenian-populated region, the Armenian National Committee of Canada (ANCC) said on Wednesday.

"It is with great sorrow that the Canadian-Armenian community mourns the passing of one of its repatriated members, Kristapor Artin," the ANCC said in a Facebook post, adding that he was "an active member of the Toronto Armenian community, before repatriating with his family to his homeland, Armenia.

"Our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. May his soul Rest In Peace."



Kristapor Artin, a former Toronto resident, was killed while fighting against Azerbaijani forces in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian National Committee of Canada (ANCC) said on Wednesday. (Sevan Hajiartinian)

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According to a brief statement from the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), one of the oldest political parties in Armenia and the worldwide Armenia diaspora, Artin was one of several ARF volunteers who were killed while trying to recapture a strategic point in the region.

Fierce fighting broke out on Sept. 27 along the entire Line of Contact that separated Armenian and Azerbaijani forces following a 1994 Russia-brokered ceasefire, as Azerbaijan moved to reclaim the breakaway region.

Sevan Hajiartinian said she'd known Artin since her childhood, when he was her camp counsellor in Toronto. She said she was shocked and devastated by the news.

## **'He volunteered to go'**

"But at the same time I wasn't surprised that he was the one that went there ... because of his passion for Armenia, his passion for our people," Hajiartinian said. "He volunteered to go, he wasn't doing this as a job, it was purely his choice that he chose to go and fight for his country."

Artin came to Canada in the early 1990s from Lebanon and became an active member of the growing Armenian community, Hajiartinian said.

"He was a proud Canadian and loved Canada but at the same time he taught us to be passionate about our Armenian identity, to always remember our roots," Hajiartinian said. "He was a very humble, honest, loyal friend and mentor."

Artin moved to Armenia in 2011 and settled in Kapan, a small copper mining town, in the country's mountainous southeast, not far from Nagorno-Karabakh.

In an interview with TorontoHye, an online Armenian community publication, Artin described how, after initially working in the mining industry, he set up his own fashion business and a farm for breeding chinchillas.

## **Civilians flee shelling**

The fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh already has killed more than 350 Armenian military personnel and 19 civilians, according to the region's Armenian officials.



Azerbaijani authorities say 31 Azeri civilians have been killed and 154 wounded since Sept. 27 but have not disclosed any information about their military casualties.

Half of Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenians have been forced to flee their homes due to incessant shelling of the region's capital, Stepanakert, and several towns and villages by Azerbaijani forces, regional officials said Wednesday.



In this image taken from a video provided by ArmNews TV, people carry out an injured man from the Holy Savior Cathedral after the church was shelled by Azerbaijan's artillery outside Stepanakert in the self-proclaimed Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh on Oct. 8, 2020. (ArmNews TV via AP)

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"According to our preliminary estimates, some 50 per cent of Karabakh's population and 90 per cent of women and children — some 70,000 to 75,000 people — have been displaced," Nagorno-Karabakh rights ombudsman Artak Beglaryan told the AFP news agency.

Speaking at a press conference in the town of Goris in Armenia on Thursday, Lt.-Col. Artsrun Hovhannessian, spokesperson for the Armenian ministry of defence, said some foreign journalists were injured earlier in the day during Azerbaijani shelling of the Ghazanchetsots Armenian cathedral in the town of Shushi.

The cathedral was damaged earlier during Azerbaijani shelling of the town and was targeted again during the visit by the foreign journalists, he added.

Hovahnnessian said authorities are working to determine how many journalists were injured, along with their nationalities.

- [Canada, U.K. call for ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan](#)
- [Canada suspends exports of military drone technology to Turkey](#)
- [Armenian-Canadians urge Liberals to stop export of armoured vehicles to Azerbaijan](#)

Canada has joined the growing chorus of countries calling on Azerbaijani and Armenian authorities in Armenia proper and in Nagorno-Karabakh to agree to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. Today, Global Affairs Canada said it's advising Canadians against travelling to the region.

"Global Affairs Canada is aware of reports of the death of a Canadian citizen in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh," the department told CBC News. "Consular officials are liaising with local authorities to gather additional information. Due to the provisions of the *Privacy Act*, no further information can be disclosed."

The federal government says it knew of 147 Canadians in Armenia and 117 Canadians in Azerbaijan as of two days ago. Registration with the federal government is voluntary for Canadians living abroad, so the true numbers might be higher.

Nagorno-Karabakh broke away from Azerbaijan in December of 1991 — weeks before the Soviet Union crumbled — after its majority Armenian population voted overwhelmingly to declare independence. Nagorno-Karabakh's minority Azerbaijani community boycotted the referendum and Azerbaijan has never recognized its results.

Azerbaijan's attempt to reclaim the breakaway region by force resulted in a military defeat and Azerbaijan was forced to agree to a Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. The war in the early 1990s resulted in about 30,000 deaths and nearly a million refugees.

Since then, Nagorno-Karabakh has been self-governed by the local Armenian population, with full economic and military backing from neighbouring Armenia. No country, including Armenia,

has recognized Nagorno-Karabakh's independence to date.

After nearly 30 years of on-and-off negotiations, the Azerbaijani and Armenian sides have failed to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution.

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## Retell, Relate & Reflect

<p><b><u>Retell</u></b> <i>the details</i></p> <p>The article is about... I found it interesting when... I noticed that...</p>	
<p><b><u>Relate</u></b> <i>analysis</i></p> <p>It sounds like... This reminds me of... This is different from...</p>	
<p><b><u>Reflect</u></b> <i>opinion &amp; understanding</i></p> <p>I think that... I wonder why... I understand that...</p>	





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## Pictures Speak 1000 Words...

- For this assignment, compare and contrast the photos of Armenians being deported from their homes/land in 1915 and in 2020.
- Draw on similarities and differences
- Analyze and reflect on the affects of these photos for Armenians living in the diaspora

### 1915

Deportation of Armenians from their homes in the  
Armenian Quarters of the Ottoman Empire

Image by:

Holocaust Encyclopedia





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**2020**

**Deportation of Armenians in Artsakh**

Image by:

Emile Ghessen, Documentary Film Maker





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## Compare & Contrast Past vs. Present

**Past**

**Present**

**Both**



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### Reflection

*War has a lot of adverse effects of those living in the war zone, along with those living in the diaspora.*

*Consider the mural (left) and the statement 'our wounds are still open'.*

- How do you think the Artsakh war and the deportation of Armenians from their homes affected those Armenians specifically living in the diaspora?
- Do you think that Armenians are reliving the trauma of 1915?

*Mural on Hollywood Boulevard, California  
Image By: Getty Images*