

The Heroic Years (1912–1918)

Man and Society · Bulgarian Sunday School “Peyo Yavorov” · Brussels

4th grade | 10 years old | 40 minutes | Bulgarian curriculum

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AI Navigators: Empowering Teachers for the AI Era

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Why this case stands out

Age-appropriate history

A complex historical period is made accessible for 10-year-old learners through images, maps and short descriptions.

AI for creation

Students use AI and digital tools to create a short visual presentation or poster.

History meets empathy

The lesson asks students to connect heroic events with courage and empathy in their own lives.

Clear scaffolding

Templates support learners with less computer experience, while advanced students create more independently.

Visible outcomes

Group presentations make learning visible through factual accuracy, creativity and oral sharing.

The learning challenge

Students are invited to understand “heroism” not only as a historical topic, but as a human value connected to courage, empathy and memory.

- Name key events of the Balkan Wars and World War I.
- Understand Bulgaria’s role during 1912–1918.
- Use AI to create a short visual presentation about heroic moments and important personalities.
- Connect historical events with examples of courage and empathy in their own lives.

The hook: seeing history first

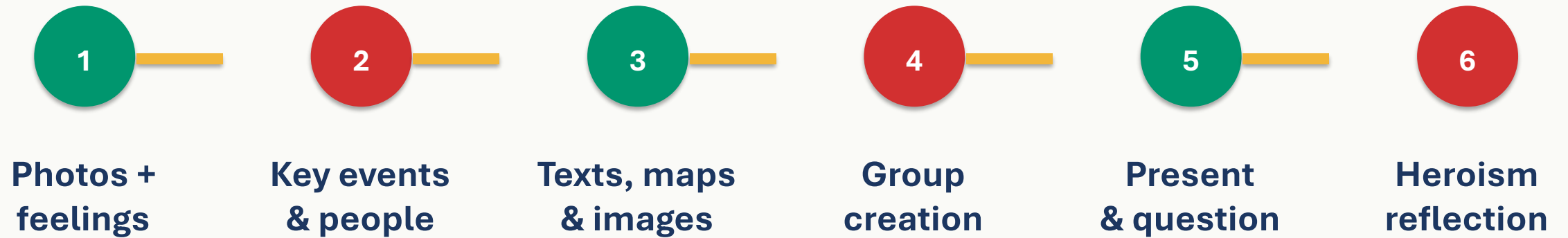
Historical photos from the Balkan Wars and World War I

“What do you see in these pictures?”

“How would you feel if you were there?”

The warm-up uses emotion and observation to open a history lesson with empathy, not only facts.

Lesson at a glance



**A compact cycle: observe → learn → create →
present → connect.**

Teaching focus: history made concrete

Explain

Main events and key personalities of the Balkan Wars and World War I.

Examine

Short texts, images and maps showing battles and historical context.

Create

A mini-presentation or poster about a heroic moment or personality.

Best-practice idea: the lesson balances direct historical explanation with student-made visual output.

Where AI enters the lesson

ChatGPT

Generates short descriptions of key events and personalities.

Canva

Creates visual materials that support understanding of historical facts.

Other tools

Support students in building short visual presentations or posters.

Prompt used during instruction

“Create a short description and illustration of the Balkan Wars and World War I, suitable for a 4th grade presentation.”

Student practice: history as a visual story

In groups, students use AI and digital tools to make a mini-presentation or poster about:

a heroic event

**an important
personality**

**a heroic moment
from 1912–1918**

The product is short, visual and collaborative, appropriate for young learners and a 40-minute lesson.

Differentiation by design

Support route

Students with less computer experience use pre-made templates.

Extension route

More advanced students write text and create visuals independently.

AI tools used for practice or differentiation: ChatGPT

The differentiation is practical: students can participate at different levels of digital confidence while still contributing to the shared historical task.

Formative assessment: evidence of understanding

Assessment method

Group presentations + short oral questions to classmates

What the teacher checks

Factual accuracy and creativity.

AI support

ChatGPT generates example questions for discussion.

Success criteria: students describe at least one key event or personality from 1912–1918 and make at least one connection with personal courage.

Closing the lesson

Closure

Discuss the most interesting findings from the presentations and summarise heroism and the importance of 1912–1918.

Homework

Write one sentence:
“Which heroic event would you like to experience and why?”

Teacher reflection

Students were actively engaged; visual and group tasks encouraged creativity and critical thinking.

What another teacher can borrow

- 1 Start with historical images** Invite observation and empathy before explaining facts.
- 2 Use AI for age-appropriate materials** Generate short descriptions and visuals suitable for 4th grade.
- 3 Turn history into a student product** Mini-presentations and posters make learning visible.
- 4 Connect past and present** Ask students to relate historical courage to personal examples of courage and empathy.

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