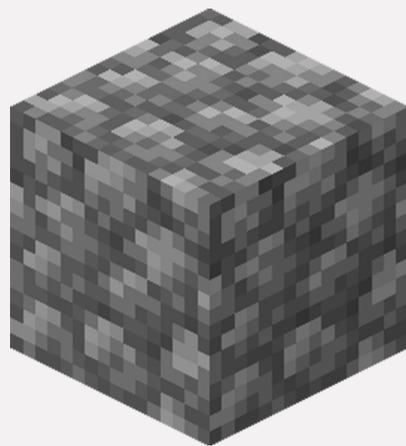


# Teaching Material for Students An Immersive Educational Tool

**t~~e~~AR down  
this WALL**



**DDR MUSEUM**

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# Background for the Teacher

### Course Learning Goals:

- Make students familiar with the wall and its context in European history.
- Provide an immersive learning environment to give students historical empathy.
- Stimulate the student's capacity to reflect on the role of current border walls in modern history.

The teaching material consists of 4 classroom modules of roughly 2 hours each, plus an immersive experience set to last anywhere between 2 and 4 hours.

It is created for grades 6th – 9th and is centered around a build for the Augmented Reality mobile game Minecraft Earth. This game allows students to experience the fall of the wall in augmented reality.

A tutorial for both teachers and students to the Minecraft build is included. Students need access to tablets or phones with cameras and the option to install new software (Android or iOS).

The material can be used as a standalone mini-course or a module in a broader course on border walls or European history.

The focus is on using gaming as a tool for immersive learning and historical empathy. The surrounding exercises aim at expanding the students' historical awareness and capacity for reflecting and contextualizing, particularly on the subject of border walls.

The course features many self-led research elements and group discussions. Remember as a teacher to balance that freedom of learning and imagination with a firm anchor in the objective realities of history as it happened. All research and discussion topics are for inspiration only — scale up and down to fit the level and engagement of your class and the allotted time-frame.

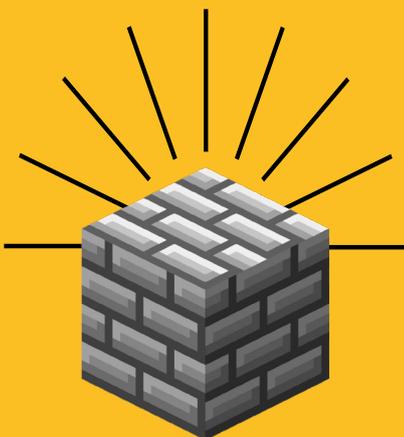
## First Module

# Introduction to the Course 1/2

### 1. Introduction 00:15:00 Minutes

### 2. Class Discussion: Preconceptions 00:20:00 Minutes

### 3. Teacher Presentation: Preconceptions 00:10:00 Minutes



### Course Learning Goals:

- I can explain what the Berlin Wall was.
- I can explain why the wall was built, and why it was torn down.
- I can relate the wall to other historical and political events in 20th century Europe.
- I can empathize with the people both for and against the wall.
- I can reflect on the role of border walls in history and today.
- I am familiar with the terms Immersive Learning, Mixed Reality, Communism, DDR, Iron Curtain, Cold War.

Open Brainstorm in the class – what do they already know about the Berlin Wall? The teacher can draw up the students' responses in a mindmap on a whiteboard to visualize the existing knowledge for the students. Any open questions also go on the board to explore later.

Summarize the class discussion with a short presentation on the basic outline of the rise and fall of the Berlin wall by the teacher. To ensure a common historical understanding rooted in facts, make sure to establish the objective realities of the Berlin wall:

- How the Berlin Wall was just one part of the larger Iron Curtain
- That the Iron Curtain wasn't just a physical thing, but also consisted of large swaths of patrolled land between FRG and DDR preventing exit from the former Soviet Union — even preventing information from leaving.
- The explicit purpose of preventing citizens of DDR to leave the republic.
- The very real threat and terror of the death strip.
- How peaceful, grassroots revolution finally brought the wall down, and what the actual demolition looked like.

The purpose is not to exhaust the subject, but to raise curiosity and whet the appetite of students before the self-led research exercise. Any questions can go on the board for exploration in the following exercise. For inspiration, the following [Image Gallery](#) with short corresponding texts can be used.

## First Module

# Introduction to the Course 2,2

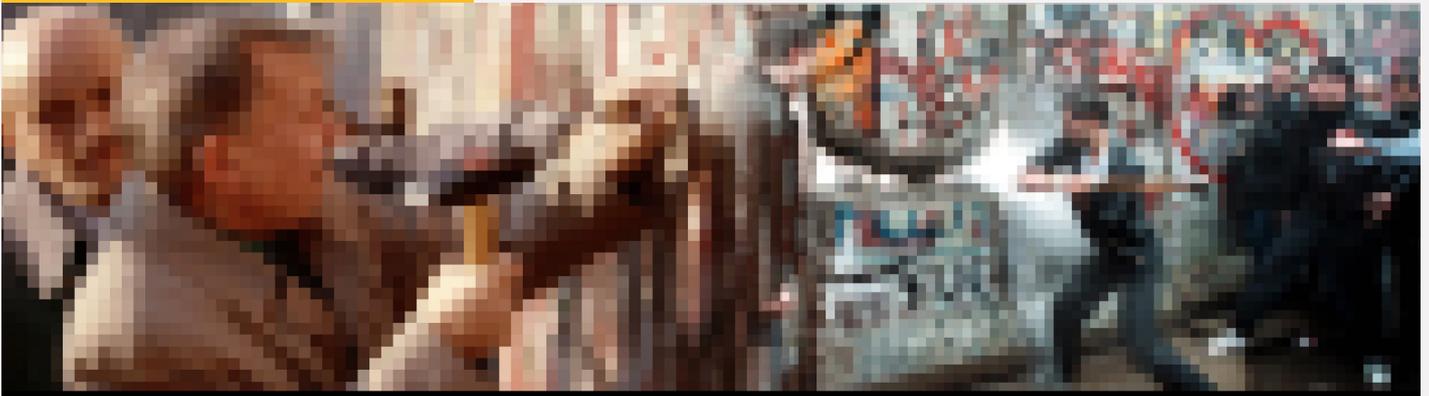
### 4. Self-led Research

**00:40:00** Minutes

Pick 1–3 things you don't know about the wall, then find answers in online resources and books. Remember to be critical of your sources. Use the questions on the right to supplement any that might have come up in class.

#### Research Guide

- Who made the wall
- Why did they build it?
- What did it do for citizens of Germany & Berlin?
- What role did the wall play in European history and politics?
- Who tore it down?
- What led to the fall?
- What did the fall lead to?



# BREAK

### 5. Share Back

**00:10:00** minutes

The teacher picks out a handful of questions, then collects answers from the students who worked those questions. More open-ended questions (like what surprised you the most?) can be included in classwide discussion if time permits.

## Second Module

# Historical Empathy and Alternative Viewpoints 1/2

1. Self-led Research  
**00:10:00** Minutes

2. Video Analysis:  
Both Sides of The Wall  
**00:20:00** Minutes

3. Plenum Summary:  
Living In The Shadow  
**00:15:00** Minutes

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Students are given the following article to read: [Ostalgie](#). Briefly let students summarize the main points.

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Watch the following two videos, recalling the wall from the perspective of both a border guard and an escapee. After each video, ask the students to narrate the video back and note the main points that surprised them & made an impression.

[Border Guard Perspective](#)  
[Escapee Perspective](#)

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Finish the exercise with a group summarization of the following points:

- What impact did the wall have on the psyches of those living on either side — both then and now?
- What were the special circumstances of the Berlin Wall, compared to the inner-German border — for those living on either side?
- How do the two accounts, border guard and escapee, illuminate the question?
- What are their biases, what are we not seeing through these accounts?
- How else could we explore what everyday life was like in the DDR?

# BREAK

4. Partner Exercise #1: Research  
**00:15:00** Minutes

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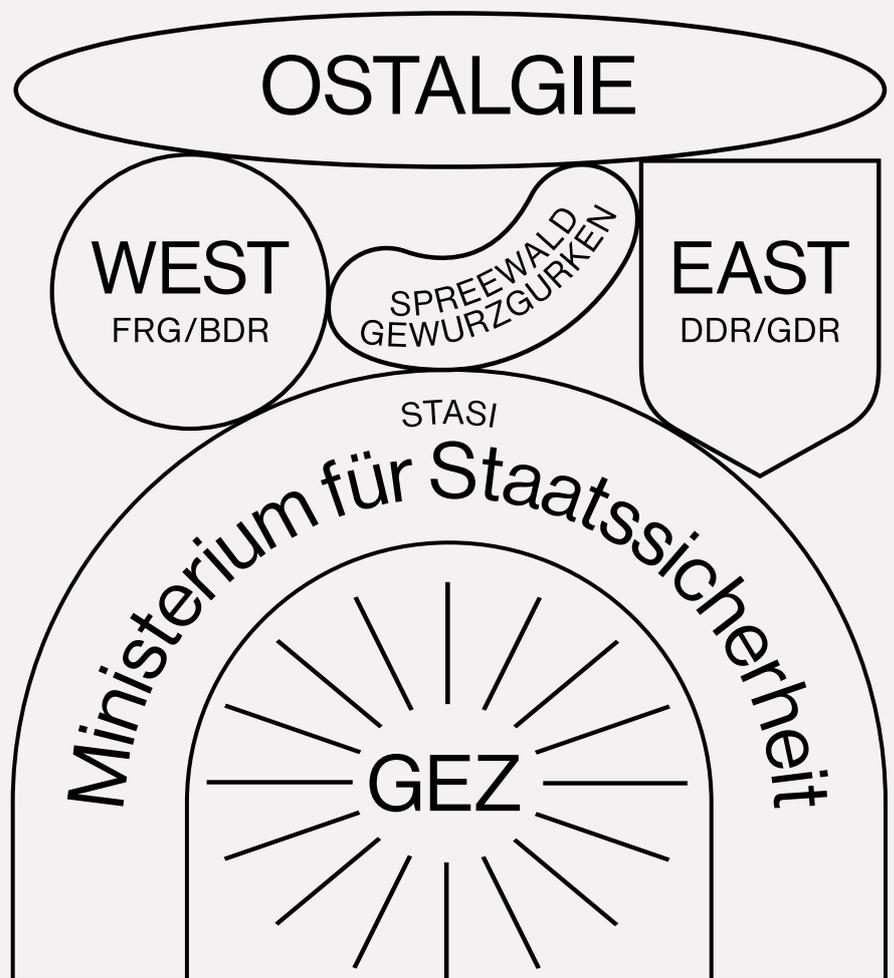
Team up in pairs.  
Pick sides – for or against the Berlin Wall (if you can't agree on a side, choose randomly). Start with 15 minutes for researching arguments for your case.

## Second Module

# Historical Empathy and Alternative Viewpoints 2/2

5. Partner Exercise #2:  
Discussion  
**00:20:00** Minutes

Set aside your personal opinions and try to see it from the perspective of an ostalgic person.



6. Sharing Back  
**00:20:00** Minutes

Consider if you've heard similar arguments in the news, online or in discussion with family or friends?

7. Preparation For Next Module  
**00:05:00** Minutes

Talk students through the preparations and requirements for the Minecraft exercise to make sure everyone is ready to get started.

## Third Module

# Immersive Learning with Minecraft Earth

### 1. Priming

**00:15:00** Minutes

As you go through the experience notice and write down your answers to these three questions:

- What things do you experience in AR that you wouldn't from a text or a video?
- What parts of history can technology help us understand and depict? What parts can't it?
- How would you change the experience to make it even better for learning? Why?
- How do you think it would feel to live next to the wall?
- What would be your plan if you had to cross it?

Go through the AR tutorial with the class and make sure everyone is ready to participate.

### 2. Immersion

**00:60:00** Minutes

Let the students explore and experience the Minecraft build on their own behalf. If possible, circle around and ask the students to vocalize their experience, potentially in context of the priming questions. Encourage students to share any insightful observations they have with the wider class for group exploration.

### 3. Reflection and Share Back

**00:15:00** Minutes

Discuss your findings with a partner. Share your results with the class.

**WRITE YOUR RESULTS BELOW:**

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## Fourth Module

# Reflecting on the Past 1/2

### 1. Video Analysis: The History of Border Walls

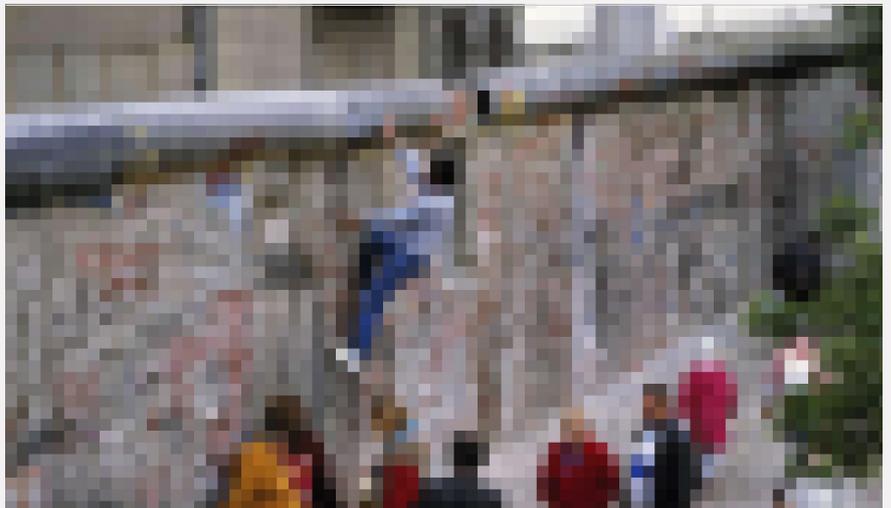
**00:20:00** Minutes

### 2. Class Discussion

**00:25:00** Minutes

Watch the following video on historical walls. Follow with a brief shared recap.

[Border Walls In History](#)



#### Discussion Guide

- What current border walls do you know about?
- Who built them or why?
- Do you think they too will fall?
- Are there more or fewer walls today than before?
- Does the role of a wall change in the internet age?
- Can you find examples of other walls that aren't physical? (Prompts: Chinese firewall, internet neutrality, filter bubbles, no-mans-land, vigilante border patrols)

## BREAK

### 4. Self-Led Research

**00:45:00** Minutes

Team up in pairs.

Pick a current border wall and research the reasons for and against it.

## Fourth Module

# Reflecting on the Past 2 1/2

### 4. Partner Discussion 00:20:00 Minutes

#### Discussion Guide

- Following the research, discuss the following:
- Do you agree with the reasons?
- Do you recognize any of the arguments from the Berlin Wall?
- How else could you solve the issues the wall attempts to solve?
- Do you think that would be better – why don't you think they happen?

### 5. Sharing Back 00:25:00 Minutes

Share your arguments in class and discuss it. Consider if you've heard similar arguments in the news, online or in discussion with family or friends?

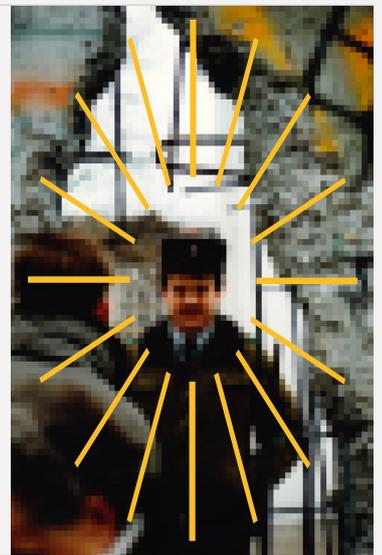
## BREAK

### 6. Brainstorm 00:25:00 Minutes

- How would you design a VR/AR Experience to give people insight or change their minds on a currently happening border wall?
- Are there any other current political situations you would like to make an AR/VR experience for and why? No right answer, no wrong questions.

### 7. Reflections 00:25:00 Minutes

- What do you know now that you didn't know before this module?
- Has any of your opinions changed?
- What surprised you most?
- Did the Minecraft session change your view on the topic? On the teaching in class?
- How else do you think Augmented and/or Virtual Reality can change our thoughts and feelings about history?

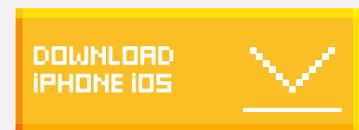


# Minecraft Earth

# Tutorial 1/2

## 1. Download the Game

# MINECRAFT EARTH



Minecraft Earth is available in the iOS App Store and the Google Play store.

Consider asking students to download in advance, in case anyone has parental permission enabled on their devices.

## 2. Deploy the Wall

We have created 3 BUILDPLATES [←] — pre constructed buildings resembling key pieces of the wall at Brandenburger Tor, Mauer Park and Checkpoint Charlie.

### **Go to the place where you will conduct the lesson.**

To deploy the wall, click on one of the following links [←] on a mobile device with Minecraft Earth Installed.

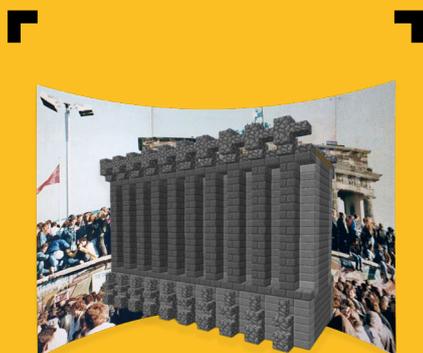
[Buildplate #1: Mauer Park](#)

[Buildplate #2: Checkpoint Charlie](#)

[Buildplate #3: Brandenburger Tor](#)

You will start in BUILD MODE, where the wall segment is shown in miniature. From here, click PLACE BUILDPLATE to put the wall up.

**NB: Only one player needs to place the buildplate, so appoint a tech savvy student for this task.**



**BUILDPLATE 1**

# Tutorial 2/2

3. Getting all the students in the game world.

After placing the wall, player number one needs to enter PLAY MODE.

From here, press INVITE PLAYERS. A unique block shaped code, similar to a QR Code [→] appears that the other students need to scan in order to enter the same gameworld.



4. teAR down that WALL

Now the action starts.

Equip the STONE PICK [↙] in the bottom right corner and start tapping the structure to take it down.

It takes several taps to break a BLOCK [↘] so keep going.

As the students tear down that wall, encourage them to share facts, stories and observations on what happened when the actual wall came down.

At its best, the game should give them the experience of what it means and feels like to be a part of a significant grassroots movement enacting change.

