The Tenement Museum’s *Your Stories, Our Stories School Project* connects history to the daily lives of your students. We recommend complimenting the program with a visit to the Tenement Museum, but it is not necessary in order to participate.

In this project, students:

- Interview family members to better understand their family’s cultural identity
- Choose an object that symbolizes a family story
- Write a personal essay
- Learn about other cultures in their classroom community
- See their work preserved in an online Tenement Museum exhibit

In this packet you will find worksheets to help facilitate the production of family object stories for the Tenement Museum website. *Supplemental worksheets, including an interviewing packet, can be found on tenement.org.*
Choose an object that connects to your immigration/migration experience. Your object stories will become part of a digital exhibit. The exhibit will be organized into 6 categories. 

*Circle the category that your object story should be part of:*

- Attire (clothing & jewelry)
- Work and Education
- Religion
- Foodways
- Fun
- Miscellaneous

Complete the questions below to create a compelling object story:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your object called?</th>
<th>Describe the person(s) that connect you to the object</th>
<th>How is your object used?</th>
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<th>Describe the time period that your object is from</th>
<th>How does your object connect to immigration or migration?</th>
<th>How does your object make you feel?</th>
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Now that you’ve prepared to write your object story, it’s time to share its significance. Please make sure to include the following details.

Please include three photos:

1. YOURSELF
2. YOUR OBJECT
3. THE REMEMBERED PERSON

Guidelines for crafting your story:

**YOUR STORY WILL:**

- Describe the object and includes the object’s role in the migration story
- Relate the object to a distinct person
- Connect the person to a place & a moment in history
- Share the emotional impact that migration had on your family
“The barong tagalog, or simply the barong, is a traditional Filipino men's outfit made from hand-sewn pineapple fiber. The barong is thin to keep men cool in the hot Filipino climate, and is usually worn for special occasions such as weddings, special masses at church, and parties. As a traditional outfit, many of my ancestors have worn barongs; my father wore one on his wedding day. When he immigrated to America, he brought a barong to wear at Filipino special occasions. Even today, he will wear it on special occasions to show his heritage. I have semi-sweet memories of the barong through my life. Every year, my parish celebrates the Flores de Mayo, a spring celebration of Our Lady of Antipolo, whom Filipinos venerate. My parents made me wear the barong, which I did not enjoy when I was younger. In contrast to the hot and humid Philippines, weather in New York averages 70 degrees in May. The barong's sheerness makes it a poor insulator, so every time the wind blew I would always shiver just a bit. I was also embarrassed by its translucence; as a child I sometimes envied the girls who got to wear opaque clothes instead of a translucent barong that would show my arms and undershirt. Because it is made from pineapple instead of cotton, the barong has a rougher texture than modern Western dress shirts, which I found uncomfortable. However, now that I've grown older, I've grown fond of the barong. Like my dad, maybe I'll wear one on my wedding day!"
--Kristian Mosquito

There aren’t any specific things that my mother brought over with her from Ghana but she constantly talks about the kinds of food they made back in her home country. It is important to her and it is also important for her to pass that down so that we always keep a part of those roots alive. People come home from work and they eat lunch with their families and then relax. Fufu is a large meal and the soup takes several hours to make. There are several countries in Africa that use Fufu for stews and soups. Fufu is like the equivalent of rice. This recipe is important to me because it is something that represents a strong relationship. The women often come together to make Fufu because it is such a large meal and it is time when a mother and daughter can bond. It is part of the process of teaching a daughter how to take care of a family and prepare food for everyone. Cooking is also a time for conversation and learning all kinds of things for taking care of the home. When my mother and I are cooking Fufu together she always starts off talking to me about food and cooking and then the conversation turns into her answering all the questions I ask about her time growing up in Ghana. There is an emotional connection that I have to this recipe because it represents part of the relationship that I have with my mom, while also being the only tangible piece of Ghana that I have.
--Elisha Hodge
For as long as I can remember, my grandmother always made the best sweet potato pies. No family gathering or dinner is complete without the traditional desert in attendance. I discovered that the original recipe dates back to when my grandmother was a little girl in the 1950s, and her mother baked the pie for their family events. My grandmother grew up in a small country town in Raleigh, North Carolina. According to the stories of my grandmother and my mother, my great grandmother was quite the cook. Her sweet potato pie was such a hit because she used a secret ingredient that wasn’t usually included in a traditional recipe. Growing up, my grandmother was the oldest female and she assisted my grandmother in the kitchen. As my great grandmother grew older she became very ill, and her sickness prohibited her from being in the kitchen. This is when the infamous sweet potato pie recipe was passed down. My grandmother continued to cook for the family with the help of her 2 younger sisters. Once she met my grandfather they migrated to the north and settled in a beautiful yellow house in which they still own and reside in today. This is the house in which I had my first taste of Mama’s sweet potato pie. The pie legacy will continue as my mother, the oldest daughter now knows the recipe too. Mama’s sweet potato pie will always hold a dear place in my heart but more importantly, the legacy linked to the roots of my family will forever reign. –Bill Powell

Growing up as a fourth generation American in my family has always made me feel like I was missing out on great tales of my heritage. Little did I know that something to satisfy my curiosity had been on the wall right near the front door my whole life. My mother told me, "It's something your Great Grandfather gave us when we moved in, I think it's Irish." This was my chance; finally I could connect with some aspect of my ancestry that was actually part of my family directly. After hours of searching on the computer, I finally came across an image that matched the mysterious symbol. It was Brigid's Cross, a symbol to represent St.Brigid, who was able to convert a dying pagan and baptize him in time by weaving this cross. Today, it is still used all over Ireland as a popular symbol, and certainly fit with my family's Roman Catholic identity. Further research revealed an even older story that answered why my great grandfather had told my parents to place it near the front door, as is still customary in Ireland. Brigid was believed to protect homes, and placing her symbol near the front door would protect against a house fire. While I am sad to say that my parents got rid of the cross for redecoration, I was still able to learn and can pass on the legacy of its meaning to future generations. Even if my parents have lost their connection to our history, finding this symbol has begun my determination to recover what has since been lost to us. --Matthew Dreyer