



National Park Service  
with **Teaching MUSEUM Collections**  
Management Program  
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum>

**A. Lesson Plan Title: *A Few of Eleanor's Favorite Things: Learning about History by Looking at Objects.***

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**Grade Level:** Middle School Grades

**Length of Lesson:** This lesson plan includes five [5] 50 minute activities. The class also needs a few days for a homework assignment before lesson plan begins.

**B. Overview of this Collection-Based Lesson Plan:**

**Park Name:** Eleanor Roosevelt National Historical Site, Hyde Park, New York.

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/>

**Description:**

1. The Public Life of Eleanor Roosevelt and her impact on history

Eleanor Roosevelt is important as a public historical figure, as the wife of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and as a pioneer and a model of a strong woman involved in politics and civil rights legislation. She lived at a time when women were not often vocal about their opinions, nor able to make an impact on a public stage. Mrs. Roosevelt is known because of her involvement with the United Nations and the 1948 document: *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. She also wrote about, and championed causes such as ending child labor, establishment of a minimum wage, and other human rights issues.

2. The Private Life of Eleanor Roosevelt:

We can learn about Eleanor's accomplishments and how this amazing woman lived her life by studying her home, Val-Kill at Hyde Park, NY, and her personal possessions. This lesson plan closely examines some of her treasured belongings. Students will therefore see not only the public side of Eleanor, but the private family-oriented Eleanor as well. The lesson will also broaden its scope to incorporate a student's everyday life.

**Essential Questions:** What is Eleanor's legacy and how do her personal possessions tell her story? Why is it important to tell one's family's story? How does memory work? How do objects help tell a story? What would you pass onto your ancestors? What legacy do you want to leave? Who is responsible for keeping a memory alive?

**C. Museum Collection Objects Used in Lesson Plan:**

**Objects, specimens, documents, photographs from the Park museum collection:**

1) *Pair of Nut Dishes* (from a set of six).

By Cartier.

In contrast to the seemingly informal atmosphere at Val-Kill, Eleanor's collection of fine silver echoes her very formal upbringing and her family's venerable social position.

Sterling silver. W 10.3, H 2.4 cm. ELRO 2574; ELRO 2575.

[http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/shelldishes\\_ELRO2574-2575.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/shelldishes_ELRO2574-2575.html)



2) *Appointment Calendars*. 1959 and 1960. Entries in Eleanor Roosevelt's own hand. Paper, leather; L 21, W 13.3 cm. ELRO 437, ELRO 438, ELRO 439. [http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/daybooks\\_ELRO437-438-439-440.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/daybooks_ELRO437-438-439-440.html)



3) *Tea Strainer*. Mouser Manufacturing Co. Eleanor used this tea strainer regularly for breakfast and afternoon tea at Val-Kill Cottage. One of her favorite possessions, she also took the strainer with her to the White House. Sterling silver. L 18.4, W 8.5 cm. ELRO 411 [http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/strainer\\_ELRO411.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/strainer_ELRO411.html)



4) *Suitcase*. Mrs. Roosevelt traveled extensively as a fact-finder and a representative of the FDR administration. After the White House years, she traveled as a diplomat, United Nations delegate, and lifelong advocate of humanitarian concerns. The suitcase is monogrammed "AER" (Anna Eleanor Roosevelt). This suitcase is similar to the one she is seen carrying in the image next to the suitcase, on website. Leather. H 48.9, L. 37.4, W. 15.5cm. ELRO 471 [http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/suitcase\\_ELRO471.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/suitcase_ELRO471.html) [http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/suitcase\\_ELRO471.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/suitcase_ELRO471.html)



#### **D. National Education Standards:**

Meets National Education Standards for Social Studies, from the National Council for the Social Studies, 1994. Middle grades level.

Number II: Time, Continuity, and Change.

- a) Identify and use key concepts such as chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity to explain, analyze, and show connections among patterns of historical change and continuity.
- b) Develop critical sensitivities such as empathy and skepticism regarding attitudes, values and behaviors of people in different historical contexts.

Number IV: Individual Development and Identity.

- a) Describe personal connections to place – as associated with community, nation, and world.
- b) Describe the ways family, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and institutional affiliations contribute to personal identity.
- c) Identify and describe the influence of perception, attitude, values, and beliefs on personal identity.
- d) Identify and interpret examples of stereotyping, conformity, and altruism.

Number V: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions.

- a) Demonstrate an understanding of concepts such as role, status, and social class in describing the interactions of individuals and social groups.
- b) Identify and analyze examples of tensions between expressions of individuality and group or institutional efforts to promote social conformity.
- c) Identify and describe examples of tensions between belief systems and government policies and laws.
- d) Describe the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change.
- e) Apply knowledge of how groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and promote the common good.

Number IX: Global Connections.

- a) Demonstrate understanding of concerns, standards, issues, and conflicts related to universal human rights.
- b) Identify and describe the roles of international and multinational organizations.

Number VI: Civic Ideals and Practices.

- a) Examine the origins and continuing influence of key ideals of the democratic republican form of government, such as individual human dignity, liberty, justice, equality, and the rule of law.
- b) Identify and explain the roles of formal and informal political actors in influencing and shaping public policy and decision-making.

#### **E. Student Learning Objectives:**

After this lesson plan, the students will:

- 1) Know about Eleanor Roosevelt's life and family, especially at Val-Kill, NY.
- 2) Understand the impact Eleanor Roosevelt had on history and why she is important. In particular, the student will know about her work with the United Nations and human rights.

## **F. Background and Historical Context:**

Eleanor Roosevelt was born in New York in 1884 to a wealthy family. Tragedy soon struck as her parents died while she was a child, and she was sent to live with relatives. She was educated in England, but did not attend college, and came back to the US and married a distant cousin, the future President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. They had six children. After her husband was stricken with polio, she became increasingly involved with politics in order to help him out. Eleanor became his “eyes and ears” and through this she became increasingly involved with the United Nations and other organizations.

Though she was a rather plain, awkward child, Eleanor blossomed into a strong, vocal woman who articulated her opinions by writing and traveling widely, giving speeches and talking to leaders. She supported many social justice issues including women’s rights, worker’s rights, stricter child labor laws, and civil rights in general.

After her husband’s death at the end of World War II, she stayed active and was more involved with the United Nations on various human rights issues. In particular, she helped develop the 1948 document: Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition, she had a syndicated column, “My Day” and was in demand as a speaker and advocate. She died in New York City in 1962 after living her post-White House life in her cottage at Val-Kill. She is buried at Hyde Park, New York, next to her husband.

## **G. Materials Used in Lesson Plan:**

### *Similar Items:*

Have students bring the following into class from home:

1. Bowl for nuts or snacks used in own home, or the plastic bag that one eats nuts out of directly.
2. Appointment calendar or daily planner (can be electronic).
3. Something to make tea with: strainer or tea bag.
4. Suitcase or other kind of travel bag, or something one always takes on trips.

### *Other Materials:*

1. Eleanor’s speech given at the Sorbonne, in Paris. Make copies if choose to include this in Extensions section. [www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/documents/speeches/doc026617.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/documents/speeches/doc026617.htm)
2. Images of Eleanor: Download from: [www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/shows/overview/slide1.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/shows/overview/slide1.html)
3. United Nations charter: Download from: [www.un.org/aboutun/charter/](http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/)

## **H. Vocabulary:**

*Aesthetics*: pertaining to a sense of beauty.

*Capitalism* (from Sorbonne speech): economic system in which the means of production and distribution are privately owned.

*Cartier*: famous French-based watch and jewelry maker, over 150 years old.

*Connotation*: the associated or secondary meaning of a word or expression, usually influenced by culture and social norms.

*Equality* (from Sorbonne speech): person or thing that is equal; this was a major goal of the French Revolution, along with fraternity and liberty.

*Feminism*: doctrine advocating social, political, and economic rights for women equal to those of men.

*Fraternity* (from Sorbonne speech): quality or state of being brotherly, a group of persons with common purpose; this was a major goal of the French Revolution, along with liberty and equality.

*Heirloom*: family possession handed down from generation to generation.

*Humanism*: any system of thought in which human interests, values and dignity predominate, associated with Human Rights.

*Liberty* (from Sorbonne speech): freedom from arbitrary or despotic government; this was a major goal of the French Revolution, along with fraternity and equality.

*Literal*: the strict meaning of a word, true to fact.

*Sorbonne University*: a famous Parisian school of higher education.

*Stereotypes*: a simplified and standardized conception or image shared by members of a group.

*Tea Strainer*: strains tea leaves in order to make tea, used instead of a tea bag.

*U.N.* (from Sorbonne speech): United Nations, based in New York City. Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) was instrumental in laying the groundwork for this international organization that focuses on human rights and international cooperation between nations. Eleanor Roosevelt did a lot of work on its behalf, particularly in human rights.

*U.S.S.R.* (from Sorbonne speech): Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, also known as the former Soviet Union, now broken up into many nations.

*Val-Kill*: Eleanor Roosevelt's home along the Hudson River, New York. See [www.nps.gov/elro](http://www.nps.gov/elro) for details.

### **I. Teacher Tips:**

Activities 1 and 2 are group-oriented activities. The others are focused on the individual. Please read through and edit/tweak to your classroom's ability level. Each activity is designed to stand alone if need be, but ideally should be done together in sequence for best results. For the activities, you need to:

1. First print images of the four objects (as described in Section C of this lesson plan) from the website. (see links next to each object, above). Print enough **without captions** so that in the first part of Activity 1, the students can pass around the printed objects quickly.

For the second half of Activity 1, each group ideally needs a different object, printed and laminated **with captions** (If there are more groups than objects, then it is OK to have some groups working with the same object).

For Activity 2: make enough copies of Eleanor's suitcase (with captions) so that each group has a copy.

For Activity 4: make enough copies so that students can pass the printed objects around (with captions) and get ideas for their own museum.

2. Print the "How to Read an Object" document – see Activity 1, and make copies for each student.

3. Print the Sorbonne speech and the UN charter, discussed in Activity 1 and Extension section. Make copies for each student.

### **J. Lesson Implementation Procedures:**

#### **Activity 1:**

*What you see is not always what you get:*

- 1) Prior to the actual in-class activity, have as a homework assignment the task of finding objects from their home that have the functionalities of the following: eating snacks out of, keeping track of activities and appointments, vessel or container used to make tea, and container that holds clothing and items and is used for travel. Students should not have seen Eleanor's objects yet, but you may tell them this is for a lesson on Eleanor Roosevelt.
- 2) Once all students in the class have their own objects in the classroom, go into this activity. Have each student write down: "Assumptions One" which should be the student's assumptions about Eleanor Roosevelt before looking at her possessions or telling about her background. (If you have assigned asked the class to research Eleanor prior to this point, this is still a valid exercise as students will still have assumptions/stereotypes based on a small amount of research).
- 3) Next, have each student get out another piece of paper and label it "Assumptions Two." Look at Eleanor's objects without captions or titles, (can do this by printing the photos of the objects and removing the captions), and ask each student to just write down more thoughts about Eleanor's life, without talking about the objects.
- 4) Then, have class take out their objects/possessions they brought in. Divide into groups and swap objects, not telling which object belongs to which student. Have each group discuss what the person's life is like based on the object. This is very informal and doesn't need to be written down. (Only describe each object/assumption for about 1 minute).

- 5) Ask the class to think about silently: What can one really *see* from the object itself (color, material made out of, size, weight) versus what can be *inferred* based on cultural knowledge and connotations (plastic bag used for snacks on the go, well-worn suitcase means travel a lot, the herbal teabag means one typically likes nature, meditation, etc). Talk about the difference between what one can truly tell by looking at an object, observing it, versus what one infers and assumes by looking at it. Ask for a volunteer to now describe an object they have, with this new set of information. Why is this difference between the literal “seeing” and the cultural-based “inferring” important?
- 6) Everyone should now take back their own possessions. Ask for a volunteer and ask the following: What is the material, size, weight, versus do you adhere to the stereotypes associated with the object or not? Emphasize the issue of the literal seeing versus the cultural connotations we have which lead to stereotyping/assumptions, and basically, how looks can be deceiving.
- 7) Ask the class: Why should we make an effort to find out the real story? Discuss how assumptions can be dangerous, and what the consequences are of rushing to judgment. How does this relate to historical events?
- 8) Now we are going to look at Eleanor’s objects. Use “How to Read an Object” (available on the [www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov) website under “Teaching with Museum Collections”) in order to engage students and introduce them to the idea of learning through museum collections. Tell students they will be using objects from a National Park Service website as a source of learning and information. Explain that they will learn to look very closely at pictures of objects to deduce historical, cultural, and social information and to draw inferences about people, events, and life. Ask questions that draw on observational skills, and exercise powers of deduction, inference, and creativity base on this lesson. Share student learning objectives with students.

Now, organize students into groups and propose overarching question: Why is Eleanor Roosevelt important to history and how do her personal possessions tell her story? Hint: at this point, you should distribute copies of the UN charter (see Materials section above) and have the students think about the charter and how Eleanor’s life work aimed for similar goals.

(You can also help students with the history of Eleanor’s life by referring to Background section.)

- a. Give each group a copy of one of the downloaded and laminated objects **without captions**, and a “How to Read an Object” chart. Use the inquiry method to discuss history, material, size, date, function, maker/manufacturer, place of origin, function, and use, cultural significance of object.
  - b. Give students 10-15 minutes to look at museum collection pictures in their small groups and record their responses to the questions.
  - c. Have each group share their written responses and state what they think they have.
  - d. Now pass out the downloaded and laminated objects **with captions**. Have students compare their responses to the captions. Record answers to the overarching question. Ask what additional questions they have, now that they know what the object is. What does the object’s captions tell you, or do they provoke more questions?
- 9) What assumptions about Eleanor did you write down in the beginning that were proven wrong by glancing at the objects the first time? How were the assumptions proven wrong (or affirmed) by really looking at the objects (analyzing them) and learning about her life? How did the objects mislead you? Or did you assume the right thing? How did the objects reinforce that? What could the objects not tell you that you think written history/research could tell you? Vice versa? What answers do you think will still be elusive after studying historical documents and history?

## Activity 2:

*Compare and contrast today’s life to life during Eleanor’s time:*

- 1) Choose one of Eleanor’s objects (with captions). Ask for a volunteer who brought in an object that has same *purpose*, and display both for the class.
- 2) Ask questions of the class: What do these two objects (contemporary and Eleanor’s) tell us about the time period based on how they are designed, made and used? (Be sure to reveal that

several of the objects were made during Eleanor's mother's lifetime, and cherished by ER but they tell us about an even earlier period). Are there differences? Similarities? How has design changed? How has it not? How has modern technology and mass-production influenced the quality? Are things more practical today with less aesthetic value? Or vice versa? Do we care what our possessions look like or are they just functional? What does the role of "uniqueness" play in this – does someone want what everyone else has or not? What about sustainability/the environment? How has durability in design made a comeback? Or: do students think everything is disposable now days? Why? Is this good or not? Discuss the pros and cons.

- 3) Talk about how times have changed or not since Eleanor's life. How do material goods signify class status? Is it always accurate? What role do stereotypes play? What typically signified class status in Eleanor's day? How did she adhere to stereotypes and how did she resist? (Hint: have students look at her writings at: [www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/abouterp/](http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/abouterp/) and report back the next day.) How do her actions as an outspoken activist compare to today's culture? What stereotypes about activists are there and how does she fit or not into that stereotype?
- 4) Why do we value certain objects over others? Because of aesthetic value, or some other value? Why did Eleanor value these objects? Do you value similar objects or different ones? Why? What does this mean for history? What about a "sense of place"? How are these items viewed in the context of her home versus some other museum, or no context at all? What does the Internet do to this dynamic?
- 5) After the warm-up questions above and a quick break, depending on time, have the class divide into groups. We are now going to focus on one object: Eleanor's suitcase.
  - a. Each group will brainstorm what they think Eleanor took in her suitcase on her trips to visit foreign dignitaries and activists around the world, and write down a list, being aware of the different time period, clothes, events, etc. that Eleanor dealt with, and how one could fit it all into a normal size suitcase. Pass around a laminated photo of her and her suitcase, available online at: [http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/suitcase\\_ELRO471.html](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/gallery/suitcase_ELRO471.html).
  - b. Then ask the students to write down what they would put in a suitcase for a week-long trip if they were visiting heads of state, etc. as Eleanor did.
  - c. Have the groups look at the two lists, and share with the class the differences between the lists. What accounts for the differences?
  - d. Using the Background material, discuss how Eleanor was seen as a pioneering woman because she traveled on her own and was independent, which was unusual for the time period. Discuss whom she visited and what she did, using Background material to prompt the students. (If students have no knowledge, then decide ahead of time, before this activity, to divide up her life into chunks of time and assign each time period to a group of students, to research and present to class before this activity. Also, look at Extension activities at end of this lesson plan – especially the Sorbonne speech – as an example of what she did when she traveled.)

### **Activity 3:**

#### *Memories and Legacies:*

Refer to the Background historical material and talk about Eleanor's legacy: speaking out about human rights around the world. She did this by receiving visitors at home at Val-Kill in New York, as well as by traveling around the world. Eleanor's own family background helped her establish this legacy, as she came from an influential family that was already involved in public service (her family tree includes former president Teddy Roosevelt) and she forged her own niche by furthering the rights of women and all human beings. From her personal possessions at Val-Kill, we know that she entertained, and kept a busy schedule. We also know that she reflected on the conversations she had with activists and VIPs, at home and abroad, by writing in her journal and writing opinion pieces for publication ("My Day" columns).

Ask the class to choose their own family or another family in order to research the idea of memories and legacies. Make sure the students ask the family they are interviewing for permission to write a school paper/presentation on this, and present final work to class. The presentation can include artwork, power point presentation, or just an oral presentation with visual aids.

Start by having each student make an illustrated family tree about their family or the research family. Then have the students interview the family. Questions to include: what heirlooms or special objects have been passed down through the generations? Why are these objects important, who is the keeper of these objects, and how does one remember why it is important to keep this object? Are the objects displayed prominently in the house, or are they kept out of sight? Are they used every day or only for special occasions or not at all? What sensory experiences are associated with the objects? (i.e. food-related objects, or auditory, or visual, etc.) Is there a ritual associated with the objects? Are they something that the family wants to keep and pass onto their ancestors, or is it not that important any more? Why or why not? The student could also paint, draw, or photograph the object in order to pass it on to ancestors, thus preserving it.

More questions to include in final presentation: So, if we think of these objects as evoking memories, which memories are not kept alive and why? What is the difference between objects, photos and journals and their roles in keeping memories/legacies alive? What is the “story” that one remembers by looking at these objects? More specifically, what does one associate with these objects?

The student should interview family members and relatives, especially those deemed by others as the person responsible for keeping memories/legacies alive (objects, photos, journals, etc). Compare and contrast the family’s story with Eleanor’s. (See Eleanor’s writings online at: [www.gwu.edu/~erpapers](http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers) for examples of her legacy.) Encourage students to not just “write a paper” but to think in 3-D: include auditory, olfactory, and visual stimulations for the audience.

Each student can also compile a family memory book. This should include photos, mementos, and other items that help one to recall the history of the family. Or: Create a DVD that achieves the same goals. Or: Create a CD that is a compilation of songs (note: remind class to not illegally download music!) that have special meaning. Each song should trigger a memory of a family event.

#### **Activity 4:**

*Make a mini “museum” for your family or research family:*

This activity builds on the last activity, but can also be done independently. First, look at Eleanor’s objects (the laminated photos) and ask the class to think about how the objects tell the story of Eleanor’s life at Val-Kill and beyond. Then ask the students to think about what one would put in a museum (for preservation and display/exhibition), like Val-Kill, for one’s own family (or a friend’s family that one can interview). Have the students write down a list of the family’s items (no more than 10 objects) that one would include in their own museum, and short captions for each item. Ask the students: Who would visit the museum and gear text for that age group and demographics. Encourage creativity: the text should be clear to the audience, but also not be just black text on white paper. Also have each student work on a TV or radio ad, and brochure, for their museum. Write a paragraph about museum for the local town’s guidebook. Have student think about traffic flow through the museum, and build a small, simple model of the museum. Have student think about necessities such as parking, bathrooms, cafeteria and landscaping.

When considering the objects to include, have students think about and address in their presentation: why did some objects make the cut and why did some not? Did one include everyday objects as well as special objects, or not? Why? What message did you want to convey about the family, and how is this done through the choice of objects? Was there controversy over which objects to include or not? Who one responsible to when choosing the objects? How would your choice of objects differ if one was famous, like Eleanor? Or would it not?

Lastly, what do you think a guidebook for the town would say about your museum? (tie-in to the paragraph one wrote for the local guidebook, above,....prompt students to think that one of the challenges in promoting something is that the media does not always say what you want it to say!)

#### **Activity 5:**

*Make a family recipe book:*

This activity also builds on the last activity: With the same research family or one's own family, have each student create a family recipe book where (1) the student writes out each recipe and how to cook it, and (2) each recipe also gets a "caption" that explains why the recipe is important (i.e. we have this dish every Passover because\_\_\_\_, or we eat this special breakfast bread that my Aunt makes every Fourth of July). Each caption can be thought of as an exhibit label, with explanatory text and design elements. The student will bring in one of the recipes and make it in front of the class, like a cooking show. The student will also then present their book and tell the class an oral history of their family or research family by using these memory-triggering devices (recipes).

Tie this into Eleanor's family history by discussing in class: How has food preparation changed? Why? Pass around Eleanor's nut dish (laminated photo with caption) and compare and contrast with today. What does this tell you about the era? About Eleanor's family? Prompt the class: People want convenience and indeed go out to eat, but also buy lots of kitchen supplies to cook their own food; discuss this irony. How is this different (or not) from the past? If people are going out to eat more often, are family recipes forgotten? Why or why not? Discuss the importance of food and ritual – family meals and the items used in family meals (i.e. silverware, dishes). How has food and ritual changed (or not) over the years?

#### **K. Evaluation/Assessment for Measurable Results:**

Students should expect that they will be evaluated based on participation level and their full engagement with the activities. They will also be evaluated on their finished products: papers, presentations, family memory books, exhibits, CDs, DVDs, recipe books, and other crafted items as discussed in the activities.

- Do they address the questions asked in the activities when they turn in their finished work?
- Do they understand why Eleanor Roosevelt is important and how her personal possessions reveal this? Make sure they understand the key historical facts of Eleanor's legacy.
- Evaluate based on intellectual curiosity and creativity in the projects/writings. Are they making connections to bigger issues? (for instance: class, stereotypes, assumptions).

#### **L. Extension and Enrichment Activities:**

1) Have students use [www.cr.nps.gov/museum](http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum) and go to the *Eleanor Roosevelt: American Visionary* web exhibit and their local library to help answer questions that the objects left unanswered. Discuss Eleanor's history/background in more detail and take a virtual tour of Val-Kill online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/>.

Have students write a brief paper on what they think is the "essence" of Eleanor's life, using the objects and additional written material as sources (Some of her writings are online at [www.gwu.edu/~erpapers](http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers)). They could do a longer paper covering: How does personality affect history? Which "issues" got promoted because Eleanor or Franklin cared about them more? By following one's passion, one can get more done, as we see with these examples. Students can also interview family and friends and see what their passions are and how they have followed them, or not, and what the consequences are, and compare/contrast with the Roosevelts.

2) Write a report exploring FDR's history and life, and how it involved Eleanor, especially looking at human rights issues and New Deal projects. Go to [www.nps.gov/hofr](http://www.nps.gov/hofr) and [www.nps.gov/frde](http://www.nps.gov/frde).

Have students get into groups and assign each group a part of Eleanor's life to research and present to class: pre-FDR marriage, pre-White House years, White House years, post-White House years. See Resources below for websites.

3) Go to: <http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/documents/speeches/doc026617.html> to print out the speech Eleanor delivered at the Sorbonne University in Paris, about human rights, and have students practice their oratory skills by delivering the speech to the class, acting as if they are Eleanor. They should especially work on talking without slang or modern day expressions (for example, can not mention the Internet or teleprompters or air conditioning). Explain how giving this speech is an example of what Eleanor did when she traveled as a representative of the US. This shows just one example of

Eleanor's impact on human rights and as a model of a strong, pioneering women ahead of her time, and consequently on the emerging role of first ladies as activists with their own policy agendas. You can also go into what the U.N. is and how Eleanor related to it. See [www.un.org/aboutun/charter](http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter) to download UN charter which lists the goals of the UN.

**M. Resources:**

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/>  
[www.nps.gov/elro](http://www.nps.gov/elro)  
[www.gwu.edu/~erpapers](http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers)  
[www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov)  
[www.feri.org](http://www.feri.org)  
[www.nps.gov/hofr](http://www.nps.gov/hofr)  
[www.nps.gov/frde](http://www.nps.gov/frde)  
[www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu)  
[www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eleanor/peopleevents/pande01.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eleanor/peopleevents/pande01.html)

**N. Site Visit:**

*Pre-visit:* Before the visit, please have students visit the <http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/> and [www.nps.gov/elro](http://www.nps.gov/elro) website for background/historical information, (be sure to do this after Activity 1.) They should take the virtual room tour at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/elro/> and choose 2 objects from this tour that they will then look for during the visit. Students should have done Activity 1 and be aware of "how to read an object" (see Activity 1). Also, have each student write and bring with them a few questions they have, after looking at the website. Call ahead to let park rangers know a school group is coming and arrange for any ranger talks, as time allows. Discuss visiting a similar historic home in the local area if students can't get to Val-Kill itself.

*Site Visit:* Students to look for objects and ask questions they have already written down ahead of time. When the students find their objects, they should take notes, utilizing "how to read an object" knowledge.

*Post-visit:* Have students write down reactions and what they learned about Eleanor from Val-Kill and her personal possessions. How did the possessions reveal her historical "self"? Her family "self"?