STEP ONE

In 1915, the Ottoman Empire (1300-1923) began a horrific massacre of more than 1.5 million Armenians. The Ottoman state’s governing body was ruled under Islamic law, which subjected the minority of the population that wasn’t Muslim to second-class citizen treatment, which included higher taxes, fewer legal and political rights, as well as cruel treatment. This system of discrimination was known as the millet system.

The Armenians residing in the Ottoman empire fell under this subjection due to being Christian. Despite these clear injustices toward this group, they managed to flourish under Ottoman rule, achieving education and wealth sometimes greater than their Muslim majority. This sparked distrust among Turkish muslims towards the Armenians, suspecting the group’s loyalty lied with Christian governments, not with the Ottomans. As the 19th century progressed, the Turkish state began to collapse, the Armenians became the scapegoat for the failures of the empire. Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who valued loyalty greatly, saw the Armenians as unloyal and therefore not trustworthy.

In the years 1894-1896, the government issued pogroms, which is an organized massacre of a specific ethnic group, targeted at the Armenians. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians perished in these state-organized slaughters, carried out by the government as well as citizens who supported the killings.

A new group of nationalists known as the Young Turks began to come to power in the Ottoman empire, with a main goal of returning Turkey to its Muslim roots. In the year 1908, the group overthrew the Sultan Abdul Hamid II, replacing the old government with a modernized constitutional government. The Armenians were a non-Muslim minority and were untrustworthy; they had no place in the new state.

April 24th, 1915, amidst World War I, was the beginning of the Armenian genocide. On this date alone, hundreds of Armenian intellectuals were rounded up by the government and put to death. Ordinary Armenians were often taken from their homes and executed; others would be exiled into the Mesopotamian desert with no clothes, food, or water. Those who rested were shot to death. Those who continued to walk would eventually drop dead. The Special Organization was assembled by the Young Turks to assist in the mass-murder of the Armenians. “Killing squads” were formed and the number of Armenians in the Ottoman empire quickly dropped. By the end of the genocide in 1922, the previous two million Armenians living in the empire had dropped to around 388,000.

Only recently has the Armenian genocide begun to receive the official recognition it truly deserves. Current-day Turkey denies that a genocide took place- the country believes that the killings were far less in quantity and that they were a result of Armenians joining forces with Russia to fight the Ottoman government. Today, almost 30 countries officially recognize the events for what they truly were- a genocide in every sense of the word.
STEP TWO

For this one day social media campaign, I’d use the following social media services: Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, and Tumblr. These services are extremely popular among various age groups and they all have specific functions they work best at.

**Facebook, Instagram** and **Tumblr** are great at getting people invested in controversial issues and allows for a longer message to be said. A page would be created specifically for my proposal, where I’d deliver updates and news regarding the topic and it would have a link to an online petition on **Change.org** to use my textbook section. Both websites use hashtags as well, so we could use a hashtag to get the message around easier. Here is a sample post:

“101 years ago today, the Armenian genocide occurred, resulting in 1.5 million innocent deaths. With your support, I hope to create widespread awareness about this event in history by incorporating it into the 10th grade world history curriculum with an update to our nation’s history textbooks. Support us by signing this petition to include in our students’ education! >> (link to online petition on Change.org) #NeverForget1915”

**Twitter** would have to be more simplified and shortened, while still getting people invested. A page would be made for the proposal to get short but powerful messages out into the world. A sample:

“Never forget the Armenian genocide- help the world remember & sign this petition to update our textbooks (shortened link to Change.org)”

The hashtag #NeverForget1915 would be used in most posts, but because of the 140 character limit, it can’t be used in every tweet.

**Snapchat** would be used solely to expand awareness through the use of a geo-filter. In partnership with Snapchat, it is very possible to get a geo-filter submitted for an area. The area would need to be somewhere where a message like that would be relevant and would gain a lot of exposure- perhaps Times Square in New York.