

Holocaust Education Lesson Plan

Author: Judy Fritz

Topic/Era: Holocaust / Early 1940's

Lesson Title: Exploring History through Literature

Subject: United States History/English

Grade Level: 9-12

Length of Lesson:

85 minute block period

Introduction:

WWII had ended in the spring of 1945 and American soldiers stationed in Europe set out to free detainees located in war torn, Nazi Germany. What soldiers found, they would never forget, atrocities never before imagined: imprisoned living human skeletons who spoke unfathomable stories of disease, torture, crematoriums, and gas chambers. In spring of 1945, American soldiers discovered Hell behind the gates of concentration and death camps. The world would never forget the nightmare witnessed and be forever haunted by their discovery of this Holocaust.

Yet less than a lifetime later, some have forgotten and claim it never happened. Some pass it as political propaganda, a ruse, or just an extraordinarily, fabricated story. But there was nothing fabricated about the Holocaust; it did happen. It happened to everyday, law-abiding citizens who were physically or mentally disabled, gypsies, homosexuals, and 2 million Jewish men, women, and children. For some who have not believed their ears and the living testimony of survivors, perhaps they will believe their eyes in pictures bearing proof.

The pictures you will read with your eyes are real. At times, you will feel uncomfortable at what you see; that's normal. You will be looking at people like you and me, who had their lives stolen and lived in conditions we wouldn't impose upon an animal. Don't look away. It is important that you know each and every story; then tell others. The world must know. We must never forget.

Objectives:

Students will discuss a variety of books first, within a small group; then, within a whole class.

Students will actively engage in discussion acknowledging:

1. The Holocaust as a real, historical event and
2. Atrocities suffered by people of the Holocaust through picture books.

Standards:

[Nevada State Content Standards and Benchmarks](#)

Reading Content Standard 3.0: *Students read literary text to comprehend, interpret, and evaluate authors, cultures, and times.*

3.8.5 Analyze the use and purpose of imagery & figurative language

3.8.6 Explain the use of stylistic devices to create tone and mood.

3.8.7 Analyze the influence of historical events and culture.

4.8.1 Evaluate information from illustration

Writing Content Standard 7.0: *Students listen to and evaluate oral communications for content, style, speaker's purpose, and audience appropriateness.*

7.8.1 Listen for a variety of purposes including: gaining information, being entertained, understanding directions

7.8.3 Expand vocabulary through listening.

Writing Content Standard 8.0: *Students speak using organization, style, tone, voice, and media aids appropriate to audience and purpose. Students participate in discussions to offer information, clarify ideas, and support a position.*

8.8.2 Use precise language to describe and elicit, feelings, experiences, observations, ideas

8.8.3 Use public speaking techniques to deliver presentations

History Content Standard 9.0: *The Twentieth Century, a Changing World:*

1945 to 1990: *Students understand the shift of international relationships and power as well as the significant developments in American culture.*

History Content Standard 9.0: *The Twentieth Century, a Changing World: 1920 to 1945: Students understand the importance and effect of political, economic, technological, and social changes in the world from 1920 to 1945.*

Materials List:

You will need a variety of Holocaust themed picture books, one book per group works best. Recommended choices:

[The Children We Remember](#) – by Chana Byers Abells

[My Secret Camera](#) – by Mendel Grossman/Frank Dabba Smith

[Hidden Child](#) – by Isaac Millman

[Willy and Max](#) – by Amy Littlesugar

[One More Border](#) – by Shelley Tanaka

[Rose Blanche](#) – by Roberto Innocenti

[Best Friends](#) – by Elizabeth Reuters

Question worksheet (below) – Distribute one worksheet per group, pre-cut. Each student is responsible for one question (A-F).

Venn diagram worksheet (below)

In Class Activities:

Students will work in small groups

1. Arrange students in small groups. (4-6)
2. Each group will be assigned one book to read and analyze within their small group. Each student will be given one question to (first) individually critique; (then) facilitate small group discussion, recording responses; (finally) share findings with whole class.

Student Critique questions:

- A. Scrutinize color choice. Consider: Why did the author choose this color scheme? What do these colors infer?
 - B. Determine 2-3 themes of the story. Be specific.
 - C. Describe historical “secrets” revealed within the pictures.
 - D. Assess living conditions. What do you think it would be like to live this way?
 - E. Study facial expressions. Describe in detail, what their faces reveal.
 - F. List 10-20 words that describe what you observe, feel, or know after reading this book.
3. In addition, each student individually chooses one word to represent their reaction to their book. This is recorded as “Holocaust word” on Student Critique.

Teacher will facilitate large group discussion

4. Presenters paraphrase their book to whole class, using responses (A-F).
5. Teacher records responses visually, using Venn diagram format.
6. Students follow note taking using given Venn diagram worksheet.

Evaluation/Assessment:

At lesson end, Teacher reviews the following highlights:

Appraise: What descriptive words did we chose?

Compare/Contrast: What commonalities do you see as we compare these words?

Reframe: What do we know about the Holocaust?

Students will discover proof citing actual events which accurately assess:

1. The Holocaust as a real event
2. Atrocities suffered by people of the Holocaust.

Bibliography/Citations:

Barenbaum, Michael. The World Must Know. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993.

<http://nvholocausteducation.org>

www.ushmm.org

Student Critique

- A** Scrutinize color choice. Consider: Why did the author choose this color scheme? What do these colors infer?

Holocaust word:



- B** Determine 2-3 themes of the story. Be specific.

Holocaust word:

- C** Describe historical “secrets” revealed within the pictures.

Holocaust word:

- D** Assess living conditions. What do you think it would be like to live this way?

Holocaust word:

- E** Study facial expressions. Describe what their faces reveal.

Holocaust word:

- F** List 10-20 words that describe what you observe, feel, or know after reading this book.

Holocaust word:

Exploring History through Literature

