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HOLOCAUST

Education in India

Fostering peaceful, resilient, and inclusive societies

Acknowledgments

This project was developed as part of the International Program on Holocaust and Genocide Education. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) wish to express their appreciation to the following and many more who are not named herein.

- Professor Subarno Chattarji (Project Researcher)
- Paul Salmons
- Dr. Kenneth X. Robbins
- Embassy of Israel in India
- Embassy of Germany in India
- Ms. Vinita Rikhi (CBSE)
- Ms. Ruma Mukherjee (CBSE)
- Dr. Neha Sharma (CBSE)

Holocaust Education in India: Fostering peaceful, resilient and inclusive societies

Published by: Central Board of Secondary Education with the support of UNESCO New Delhi Regional Office

ISBN : 978-81-89218-93-5

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Informed consent was obtained from all individuals whose photographs appear in this publication.

The report is available for download at:
https://en.unesco.org/fieldoffice/newdelhi

Introduction

The guide "Holocaust Education in India" focuses on Holocaust education in Indian secondary schools (Grades 9 and 10). The document is intended as a guide for classroom teachers, to develop a curriculum on teaching and learning about the Holocaust. The Holocaust is seen here not as a distant event in a far away place, but something that impacted India and has continuing relevance for students and teachers in India. The purpose is not only to learn lessons from past atrocities but to think of the values of diversity, inclusion, global citizenship, and pluralism in present-day India and the world.

The document provides a short, compelling rationale for teaching about the Holocaust in Indian classrooms, and a suggested curriculum framework for doing so. This is to be taught in line with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) grade 9 History chapter on the Holocaust and the rise of Nazism in Europe, and the national grade 10 English curricula that includes the diary of Anne Frank, a young Jew who went into hiding to escape Nazi persecution and died in the Holocaust.[1]

This framework consists of four key lessons, each containing essential knowledge for teachers; further reading and links to resources; and suggested lesson activities.

The curriculum framework consists of four lessons. It is likely that each lesson will be taught over 90-minute sessions to fit in with overall school timetables across the country. Importantly, this course will be offered as an extra-credit option and will not be included in the formal examination schedule.

An appendix indicating further resources and prompts for teaching and learning is included with the guide.

[1] The NCERT History textbook for Grade 9 has a chapter on "Nazism and the Rise of Hitler" https://ncert.nic.in/textbook/pdf/iess303.pdf
In Grade 10 the English textbook has a chapter titled "From the Diary of Anne Frank," https://ncertbooks.solutions/ncert-books-class-10/english/from-the-diary-of-anne-frank-class-10-pdf/

Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust

Guidelines	Description	Resources
Define the term "Holocaust"	A historically accurate and precise definition of the Holocaust is essential. Defining the Holocaust provides learners with a foundation from which they can explore the history and its lasting influence, identify who was involved, and place the history in context.	Guideline for teaching about the Holocaust: https://www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/guidelines-for-teaching-the-holocaust
Stress that the Holocaust was not inevitable	The Holocaust took place because individuals, groups, and nations made decisions to act or not to act. Focusing on those decisions leads to insights into history, politics, and human nature and fosters critical thinking.	The Path to Nazi Genocide: https://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust/the-path-to-nazi-genocide
Avoid simple answers to complex questions	The history of the Holocaust raises difficult questions about human behavior and the context within which individual and collective decisions are made. Be wary of simplification. Seek instead to convey the nuances of this history. Allow learners to think about the many factors and events that contributed to the Holocaust and that often made decision making difficult and uncertain.	Some Were Neighbors: https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/some-were-neighbors/home/exhibition-intro
Strive for precision of language	Avoid generalizations and distorting facts by helping learners to clarify the information presented. Try to avoid stereotypical descriptions. For example, though all Jews were targeted for destruction by the Nazis, the experiences of all Jews were not the same. Not all Germans were enthusiastic Nazis.	The photo exercise in Lesson 2 addresses some common stereotypes and misconceptions.
Strive to balance the perspectives that inform your study of the Holocaust	Make careful distinctions about sources of information. Encourage learners to consider why a source was created, who created it, who the intended audience was, and related questions. Most documentation about the Holocaust comes from the perspective of the perpetrators. In contrast, survivor testimonies and collections humanize individuals in the richness and fullness of their lives.	

Guidelines	Description	Resources
Avoid comparisons of pain	A study of the Holocaust should always highlight the different policies carried out by the Nazi regime toward various groups of people; however, these distinctions should not be presented as a basis for comparison of the level of suffering between those groups during the Holocaust. One also cannot presume that the horror of an individual, family, or community destroyed by the Nazis was any greater than that experienced by victims of other genocides.	Teachers may broaden the comparative frame by looking at the Holocaust in the context of other crimes/violent pasts. It is important to highlight the similarities and the differences between different historical contexts so that learners can better understand the specificities of the past and the present, and do not make ahistorical or inappropriate analogies. There is useful language on this in the teachers' guide for African teachers. *Teaching to prevent atrocity crimes: a guide for teachers in Africa* (UNESCO: 2023): https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386136?locale=en See also the IHRA report "Reflections on Terminology for Holocaust Comparison": https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/reports/terminology-holocaust-comparison
Avoid romanticizing history	Portray all individuals, including victims and perpetrators, as human beings who are capable of moral judgment and independent decision making. People who risked their lives to rescue victims of Nazi oppression were few; overemphasizing heroic actions can result in an inaccurate and unbalanced account of the history. Accuracy of fact, together with a balanced perspective on the history, is necessary.	
Contextualize the history	Events of the Holocaust, and particularly the choices of individuals and organizations, should be placed in historical context. The Holocaust should be studied in the context of European history to give learners a perspective on the precedents and circumstances that may have contributed to it. Discourage learners from categorizing groups of people on the basis of their experiences during the Holocaust; victims should not be perceived only as victims. Exposing learners to some of the cultural contributions and achievements of 2,000 years of European Jewish life, for example, helps them balance their perception of Jews as victims and appreciate more fully the traumatic disruption caused by the Holocaust.	

Guidelines	Description	Resources
Translate statistics into people	In any study of the Holocaust, the sheer number of victims challenges comprehension. Show that individual people are behind the statistics and emphasize the diversity of personal experiences within the larger historical narrative. Precisely because they portray people in the fullness of their lives and not just as victims, first-person accounts and memoir literature add individual voices to a collective experience and help learners make meaning out of statistics.	
Make responsible methodological choices	Those who teach about the Holocaust seek to honestly and accurately investigate a history in which millions of people were dehumanized, brutalized and killed, while ensuring a safe learning environment that encourages critical thinking. Graphic material should be used judiciously and only to the extent necessary to achieve the lesson objective. Try to select images and texts that do not exploit the learners' emotional vulnerability or that might be construed as disrespectful to the victims themselves. Teachers should always indicate who is the author of a historical source, whether image or text. Instead of avoiding important topics because the visual images are graphic, use other approaches to address the material. It is best to draw upon a variety of primary sources, provide survivor testimony, and refrain from simulations or games that lead to a trivialization of the subject matter.	*Teaching to prevent atrocity crimes: a guide for teachers in Africa* (UNESCO: 2023): https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386136?locale=en Chapter 5: Teaching Principles, pp. 26-31. Annex: Create a classroom agreement for a safe and engaging learning environment, pp. 35-36 Teacher Guide Imperial War Museums: https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/teacher-guide-preparing-to-teach-the-holocaust

Fostering a Reflective Classroom Environment through Holocaust Education

"The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators from 1933 to 1945. During the era of the Holocaust, German authorities also targeted other groups because of their perceived racial and biological inferiority including Roma, people with disabilities, and some of the Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others). Other groups were persecuted on political, ideological, and behavioral grounds, among them Communists, Socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and men accused of homosexuality." While it might seem like a distant event in a faraway land that does not affect us in any significant way, teaching and learning about the Holocaust in India is important. There are historical connections between India and the Holocaust. For example, Jews born in India who were killed in the Holocaust, Jewish refugees who came to India, and Indian soldiers who fought in Europe on behalf of the Allied Powers. This guide is designed to indicate the necessity of teaching the Holocaust and its relevance for present times. It outlines approaches to teaching the Holocaust and its connections to India through four lessons.

This guide is designed to indicate the necessity of teaching the Holocaust and its relevance for present times. It outlines approaches to teaching the Holocaust and its connections to India through four lessons.

The Holocaust was meticulously planned and executed, and the industrialization of death manifested in organized mass shootings as well as concentration and death camps across Europe. The Holocaust was not the work of one individual or even a small group. Hatred of Jews was widespread in Europe, and everyday, ordinary people from across the continent participated in or benefited from the Holocaust. Learning about the Holocaust enables us to think about it not as an "event" but as a process, a structure of society and ideology, and the consequences of discrimination and hate. The Holocaust is arguably the most extensively documented, most intensively researched and best understood case of genocide in human history. As such, it can serve as an essential starting point for understanding how and why mass violence can occur; recognising warning signs; and strengthening efforts at prevention as genocide continues to scar our world today.[2] While the specific contexts and conditions that enabled the Holocaust will be continuously highlighted, teachers will make connections with contemporary realities that highlight contexts unnervingly similar to the conditions that led to the Holocaust.[3]

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[2] Preventing mass atrocities: https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/simon-skjodt-center/criminal-justice-approaches-for-preventing-mass-atrocities/videos/prevention-identifying-risk-factors

[3] See Scott Strauss, Fundamentals of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention, https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/reports-and-resources/fundamentals-of-genocide-and-mass-atrocity-prevention

Schools constitute an important socializing environment and teachers have the power and the responsibility to foster feelings of shared humanity, global citizenship, and belongingness. Teaching the Holocaust in a sensitive, non-sensational, and mindful way will enable students to think about historical questions that are central to everyday life. These questions include not only how the Holocaust unfolded and why, but also what Nazi policies against Jews and other so-called "non-Aryans" meant for the affected groups. By listening to survivor testimony, studying primary documents and photographs, or taking virtual tours of Holocaust museums, students will gain insights into the lived realities and humanity of Jews who were treated as less than human by the Nazis. Such a process is crucial because we need to see Jews not just as victims but as ordinary people with full, diverse lives and a rich culture who had lived in and contributed to Europe for centuries. They were not a homogenous group and they were citizens of the countries in which they lived. When they were declared to be non-citizens they lost their identity as Germans or Poles or French or Dutch etc. and were defined solely as Jews. They lost livelihoods, freedom, and dignity as they were expelled from their homes, isolated, and murdered. These multiple losses had profound effects on Jews as individuals and as a community. Learning about the Holocaust enables us to think about issues related to citizenship, discrimination, hate, being a refugee, trauma, and the pain of loss and survival.

As citizens of an ancient civilization, of the world's largest democracy, and global citizens, students in India share the promise and challenges of contemporary times. They live in a multilingual, multireligious, multiethnic and plural society and can reach out to their fellow citizens as humans with mutual respect, dignity and understanding.

The teaching and learning experience will allow for reflections on human behavior raising questions such as: why did ordinary people participate in the Holocaust? Did the German public protest? How did Germans (and other nationalities in Nazi occupied Europe, and non-occupied allies of Germany) help their Jewish neighbors? How did Jews resist the violence and dehumanization they were subject to? What do Holocaust survivor testimony and memoirs tell us about the experience of living through a genocide?[4]

What does "Never Again" mean in the context of the Holocaust? What are the implications of the Holocaust for societies today? As Jennifer Ciardelli writes: "What does the Nazi party's ability to transform a democracy into a dictatorship say about the vulnerabilities of democracy? What role did law and legislation play in increasingly marginalizing and ultimately excluding the Jews, formerly full-fledged German citizens, from society? How did trusted institutions facilitate this process? What was the effect on individuals and their families?"[5]

Learning about the Holocaust will enable us to think about the ways in which societies across the world foster hate and discriminate against "outsiders" based on their ethnicity, race, or religious affiliation. By contrast how can we nurture and value diversity, not only as a theoretical idea but as lived reality? What would it mean to live in a world or country or community that had no diversity - whether people, languages, food, clothes, music, attitudes etc.? If food, festivals, clothes, and languages are some markers of diversity that we see as enriching our life, then we need to think about preserving rather than destroying this. Prejudice, discrimination, and stereotypes of people unlike ourselves are easily internalized and acted upon, but that diminishes the beauty and wonder of our lives. To live at

[4] See "Facts about the Holocaust," https://aboutholocaust.org/en, UNESCO and "Discussion Questions," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/en/questions/landing

[5] Jennifer Ciardelli, "Holocaust education and the promotion of democratic ideals - The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum," in Karel Fracapane and Matthias Haβ, ed. *Holocaust Education in a Global Context* (Paris: UNESCO, 2014), p. 167.
See "The Nuremberg Race Laws," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-nuremberg-race-laws

peace and in harmony with diverse others is as vital now as it was during World War Two. If we value dignity and respect for ourselves then we need to see others through the same lenses.

Holocaust education is not just about the horrific events from the past; it is about learning the lessons of what led to the Holocaust and to create communities and societies where hate, prejudice, and discrimination have no place. As citizens of an ancient civilization, of the world's largest democracy, and global citizens, students in India share the promise and challenges of contemporary times. They live in a multilingual, multireligious, multiethnic and plural society and can reach out to their fellow citizens as humans with mutual respect, dignity and understanding. Perhaps the most valuable life skill that learning about the Holocaust can inculcate is that the "structure of ideas" that justified the Holocaust have no place in our lives. Students are heirs not just to the awful patrimony of the Holocaust, but also to its antithesis: a global and thoughtful citizenry dedicated to strengthening human rights and efforts at genocide prevention.

Teachers will be sensitized to follow trauma-informed classroom practices. This will include taking into account previous exposure to trauma (real life or online); trigger warnings since reading/watching traumatic events can be difficult; and the creation of a safe environment. Self-disclosure, the sharing of personal stories will not be required in the classroom. The classroom space will be based on shared values such as mutual respect, respect for evidence, a desire for truth, and a willingness to question our own assumptions and preconceptions.

Some Definitions

Allied Powers

The Allied Powers fought against Nazi Germany and other Axis Powers (which included Italy and Japan) in World War II. The three main Allied Powers were Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The Allied victory in May 1945 brought an end to the Holocaust. More information on the Allied Powers can be found at https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/tags/en/tag/allied-powers

Antisemitism

Hatred of Jews as a people or of "the Jew" as a concept. The term “antisemitism” was first coined in the late 1870s, subsequently it is used with reference to all types of Jew-hatred - both historical and contemporary. The word itself comes from the idea that Hebrew belongs to the Semitic language family, and thus Jews must be "Semites." Many other languages also belong to the Semitic language family, such as Arabic and Amharic, and therefore other cultures could also be called "Semites." However, there is no such thing as "Semitism" and no other groups have ever been included in the hatred and prejudice denoted by antisemitism. The word itself is a good example of how, during the late nineteenth century, Jew-haters pretended that their hatred had its basis in scholarly and scientific ideas.

https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/a.html

Concentration Camps

(in German, Konzentrationslager). Camps where the Nazis imprisoned their victims without trial. Although the term "concentration camp" is often used as a term for all Nazi camps, there were in fact several types of camps in the Nazi system, of which the “concentration camp was just one”. Other types include labor and hard labor camps, extermination camps, transit camps, and prisoner of war camps. As the war progressed, the distinction between concentration camps and labor camps became blurred, as hard labor was also performed in the concentration camps. The concentration camp network played a pivotal role within the Nazi regime, which developed over time.

https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/c.html

Extermination Camps

(in German, Vernichtungslager), Nazi camps located in occupied Poland with the sole purpose of murder of Jews. Altogether, some 3.5 million Jews perished in extermination camps as part of the “Final Solution.”

https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/e.html

Einsatzgruppen

(Full name: Einsatzgruppen des Sicherheitsdienstes [SD] und der Sicherheitspolizei [SIPO]), German term, meaning "action-groups," that originally referred to Nazi police intelligence units that worked with the German army following the invasion of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

Later, the term referred to mobile SS killing units that traveled with the German forces that invaded the Soviet Union in 1941.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/e.html
See also https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/einsatzgruppen

Final Solution

Code-name for the Nazis' plan to 'solve' the "Jewish question" by murdering all the Jews in Europe. The "Final Solution" was the culmination of many years of evolving Nazi policy – commencing with Hitler's earliest writings about the need for a solution to the Jewish question in Europe, followed by the Nazis' attempts to induce mass emigration during the 1930s - through to the plan for collective exile to a specific destination and finally by 1941, the mass extermination of Jews.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/f.html

Genocide

The annihilation of a racial, ethnic, political, or religious group or its destruction to the extent that it no longer exists as a group. The term "genocide" was first used in 1933 at a conference in Madrid by a Jewish judge named Raphael Lemkin. Lemkin proposed to the League of Nations that they create an international agreement to condemn vandalism and barbaric crimes.

He then went on to define and analyze the crime of genocide in books he wrote during World War II. He explained that genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate and complete destruction of a group; rather, it may also involve a series of planned actions that are meant to destroy basic elements of the group's existence, including its language, culture, national identity, economy, and the freedom of its individuals.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/g.html
See also "What is Genocide?" https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/learn-about-genocide-and-other-mass-atrocities/what-is-genocide

Ghetto

The term "ghetto" originated from the name of the Jewish quarter in Venice, Italy. Venetian authorities compelled the city's Jews to live in the quarter, which was established in 1516. In the 16th and 17th centuries, officials ranging from local authorities to the Austrian emperor ordered the creation of ghettos for Jews in Frankfurt, Rome, Prague, and other cities.

During World War II, the SS and other German occupation authorities concentrated urban and sometimes regional Jewish populations in ghettos. Living conditions were miserable. Ghettos were often enclosed districts that isolated Jews by separating Jewish communities from the non-Jewish population and from other Jewish communities. The Germans established at least 1,143 ghettos in the occupied eastern territories. There were three types of ghettos:

- closed ghettos
- open ghettos
- destruction ghettos

https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ghettos

Holocaust

(in Hebrew, sho'ah), the name used in the anglophone world to refer to the systematic destruction of European Jewry at the hands of the Nazis during World War II. The word Holocaust comes from the Greek word holokauston, which is a translation of the Hebrew word olah. During Biblical times, an olah was a type of sacrifice to God that was totally consumed or burnt by fire. Over time, the word holocaust came to be used with reference to large-scale slaughter or destruction.

The Hebrew word sho'ah, which has the connotation of a whirlwind of destruction, was first used in 1940 to refer to the extermination of the Jews of Europe, in a booklet published in Jerusalem by the United Aid Committee for the Jews in Poland. The booklet was titled Sho'at Yehudei Polin (The Holocaust of the Jews of Poland). It included articles and eyewitness reports on the persecution of Eastern European Jewry that began when World War II broke out in September 1939. The reports were written or dictated by Jews who had seen what was going on and escaped, including some prominent Polish Jewish leaders. However, the term sho'ah was hardly used until the spring of 1942. Instead, many Yiddish-speaking Jews used the term churban, which also means destruction or catastrophe, and historically refers to the destruction of the ancient Holy Temples in Jerusalem, both in 586 BCE and in 70 CE.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/h.html

Holocaust Denial

Claims that the mass extermination of the Jews by the Nazis never happened; that the number of Jewish losses has been greatly exaggerated; that the Holocaust was not systematic nor a result of an official policy; or simply that the Holocaust never took place. Clearly absurd claims of this kind have been made by Nazis, neo-Nazis, pseudo-historians called "revisionists," and the uneducated and uninformed who do not want to or cannot believe that such a huge atrocity could actually have occurred. Recent scholarship suggests that hundreds were killed.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/h.html

Kristallnacht

("Crystal Night" or "Night of the Broken Glass"). Pogrom (massacre or riot against Jews) carried out by the Nazis throughout Germany and Austria on November 9-10, 1938. The name Kristallnacht refers to the glass of the shop windows retaliation for the assassination on November 7 of a German embassy official in Paris - named Ernst vom Rath - by a young Jewish refugee named Herschel Grynszpan. On November 9 vom Rath died of his injuries.

That same night, a group of Nazi leaders gathered in Munich to commemorate the anniversary of Hitler's (failed) attempt to take over the Bavarian Government in 1923. The Nazi Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, told the other participants that the time had come to strike at the Jews. The Nazi leaders then sent instructions to their men all over the country - they were not supposed to act as if they had launched the pogrom, but were to participate all the same. Within hours, crazed rioting erupted. The shop windows of Jewish businesses were smashed, the stores looted, hundreds of synagogues and Jewish homes were burnt down and many Jews were physically assaulted. Some 30,000 Jews, many of them wealthy and prominent members of their communities, were arrested and deported to the concentration camps at Dachau, Sachsenhausen, and Buchenwald, where they were subjected to inhumane and brutal treatment and many died. During the pogrom itself, some 90 Jews were murdered. Recent scholarship suggests that hundreds were killed.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/k.html
See also https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kristallnacht

Pogrom

Pogrom is a Russian word meaning "to wreak havoc, to demolish violently." Historically, the term refers to violent attacks by local non-Jewish populations on Jews in the Russian Empire and in other countries. The first such incident to be labeled a pogrom is believed to be anti-Jewish rioting in Odessa in 1821. As a descriptive term, "pogrom" came into common usage with extensive anti-Jewish riots that swept the southern and western provinces of the Russian Empire in 1881–1884, following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II.

In Germany and eastern Europe during the era of the Holocaust, as in Tsarist Russia, economic, social, and political resentment of Jews reinforced traditional religious antisemitism. This served as a pretext for pogroms.

Such street violence involved burning down synagogues, destroying Jewish-owned homes and businesses, and physical assaults on individuals. Kristallnacht was by far the largest, most destructive, and most clearly orchestrated of these "pogroms."
https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/pogroms

SS

(Schutzstaffel, Protection Squad), elite organization within the Third Reich that was responsible for the "Final Solution" and other acts of terror and destruction. The SS was originally instituted in March 1923 as Adolf Hitler's personal bodyguard corps. It consisted of elite fighters, and competed with the Nazi Party's other militia, the Storm Troopers (SA), for superiority. SS members were subject to strict military discipline and swore an oath of complete loyalty to Hitler and those appointed by him.

SS officers were in charge of the planning of the "Final Solution" - the extermination of European Jewry. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Einsatzgruppen mobile killing units spearheaded the execution of hundreds of thousands of Jews. The RSHA's Jewish affairs expert, Adolf Eichmann, planned and supervised the deportation of Jews from their homes to ghettos, and then on to their deaths at concentration or extermination camps. SS officers were also directly responsible for the management of those camps, where millions of Jews were murdered by poison gas. During its existence, millions of soldiers and officers passed through SS ranks.
https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/resource-center/lexicon/s.html

Except where otherwise indicated, all definitions are from the Holocaust Lexicon, The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem. Full entries can be found by clicking on the links.

PEDAGOGICAL ENTRY POINTS TO STUDYING AND UNDERSTANDING THE HOLOCAUST

LESSON 1: Why did the Holocaust Happen? Nazi Racial Ideology and Antisemitism

WHO WERE THE JEWS?

Jews have lived in Europe for more than two thousand years. The American Jewish Yearbook placed the total Jewish population of Europe at about 9.5 million in 1933. This number represented more than 60 percent of the world's Jewish population, which was estimated at 15.3 million. Most European Jews resided in eastern Europe, with about 5 1/2 million Jews living in Poland and the Soviet Union. Before the Nazi takeover of power in 1933, Europe had a dynamic and highly developed Jewish culture. In little more than a decade, most of Europe would be conquered, occupied, or annexed by Nazi Germany and most European Jews — two out of every three — would be dead.[6]

Portrait of a German Jewish girl holding a Schultüte [school cone] full of candy on her first day of school in Leipzig.

Pictured is Berta Rosenheim.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Mina Katz Herman

By 1933, Jews had been living in countries across Europe for centuries. Some adopted the culture and language of their non-Jewish neighbors. Others preserved distinctly Jewish identities and communities. The largest Jewish populations were concentrated in Eastern Europe, including Poland, the Soviet Union, Hungary and Romania. Many of the Jews of eastern Europe lived in predominantly Jewish towns or villages, called *shtetls*. Many Eastern European Jews lived a separate life as a minority within the culture of the majority. They spoke their own language, Yiddish, which combines elements of German and Hebrew. They read Yiddish books, and attended Yiddish theater and movies. Although many younger Jews in larger towns were beginning to adopt modern ways and dress, older people often dressed traditionally, the men wearing hats or caps, and the women modestly covering their hair with wigs or kerchiefs.

In comparison, the Jews in western Europe — Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium — made up much less of the population and tended to adopt the culture of their non-Jewish neighbors. Most dressed and talked like their compatriots, and traditional religious practices and Yiddish culture played a less important part in their lives. They tended to have had more formal education than eastern European Jews and to live in towns or cities.

Jews could be found in all walks of life, as farmers, tailors, seamstresses, factory hands, accountants, doctors, teachers, and small-business owners. Some families

[6] "European Jewish Population Distribution, CA 1933," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/map/european-jewish-population-distribution-ca-1933?parent=en%2F11150
Also see, "How Many People Did the Nazis Murder?" https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/documenting-numbers-of-victims-of-the-holocaust-and-nazi-persecution

were wealthy; many more were poor. Many children ended their schooling early to work in a craft or trade; others looked forward to continuing their education at the university level. Still, whatever their differences, they were the same in one respect: by the 1930s, with the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany, they all became potential victims, and their lives were forever changed.[7]

Portrait of the extended Katz family in Vilna.The photo was taken during their daughter Mina's visit from Montreal. Among those pictured are Mina (Katz) Herman and her daughter, Audrey (front row, second from the right), Itzik Katz, Mina's brother (standing at the far left) and Malka Katz, Mina's mother (front row, center).

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Mina Katz Herman

THE ROOTS AND IMPACT OF ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism, the prejudice against and hatred of Jews, has a long and violent history in Europe. From the Middle Ages onward, anti-Jewish prejudice resulted in laws discriminating against Jews, along with pogroms. Pogroms were sometimes instigated by blood libels: the lie that Jews used the blood of Christians for rituals and the charge of "deicide" - that Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus.

The beliefs of Hitler and his Nazi Party were part of this long tradition of European anti-Judaism, and their racial a antisemitism found fertile ground among large sectors of the population. Nazi antisemitism is based on the false idea that all Jews are the same and that they are a separate, degenerate, dangerous race who must be expelled or exterminated because they contaminate "normal" societies. Hitler stoked hatred against Jews arguing that they (along with communists who were allegedly funded by Jews) had "stabbed Germany in the back", betraying Germany and were responsible for Germany's defeat and humiliation during and after World War I. Hitler projected himself as the savior of Germans and Germany and claimed that the enemy within were the Jews. Hitler's dangerous manifesto- *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle") outlines and justifies his ideas of racial superiority.

For Hitler and the Nazis, survival of a race depended upon its ability to reproduce and multiply, its accumulation of land to support and feed that expanding population, and its vigilance in maintaining the purity of its gene pool. Hitler's ideological mooring was racist and this meant he believed that there was a fundamental distinction between superior Aryan races and inferior non-Aryan ones, of whom the most despicable were the Jews. The Nazis believed that superior races had not just the right but the obligation to subdue and even exterminate inferior ones.

While it classified Jews as the priority "enemy," the Nazi ideological concept of race targeted other groups for persecution, imprisonment, and annihilation. These groups included Roma (often pejoratively called Gypsies), people with disabilities, Poles and other Slavic groups, Soviet prisoners of war, and Afro-Germans.[8]

In Nazi Germany therefore, Jews were deprived of all rights as citizens and human beings: their shops and businesses were destroyed; they were shunned

[7] "Jewish Life in Europe before the Holocaust," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jewish-life-in-europe-before-the-holocaust?series=32 More details can be found online.

[8] "Victims of the Nazi Era: Nazi Racial Ideology," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/victims-of-the-nazi-era-nazi-racial-ideology

For more on the roots and history of antisemitism see: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/antisemitism

To understand more on why the Jews were targeted see: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/antisemitism-1

Nazi Racial antisemitism and its relevance today: https://www.ushmm.org/teach/holocaust-lesson-plans/history-of-antisemitism-and-the-holocaust

from all public spaces such as parks, swimming pools, schools, and universities; they were socially ostracized even by neighbors and friends. Most Germans did not think that defending Jews was important enough. As the historian Peter Hayes has pointed out, Hitler succeeded in creating a murderous society built on antisemitic hatred of Jews, on intimidation and indoctrination. Jews who had assimilated in Germany, who had contributed to its culture, economy and society, and were citizens who had fought for Germany in World War I, were now seen as threatening outsiders.

After Hitler came to power in Germany and the Nazis occupied large parts of Europe, there was an exodus of Jewish intellectuals, artists, writers from Europe. These included artists, writers, scientists such as Hannah Arendt, Bertolt Brecht, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, and many others. Some, such as Arendt, analyzed the racial hatred and evil that the Nazis represented in their postwar works, such as *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To acquire knowledge about Nazi ideology and the ways in which it operated in Germany and other European nations;
- To learn about the long history of European antisemitism;
- To think about the ways in which antisemitism functions as hate speech, and its relevance today.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Antisemitism in history: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/antisemitism-in-history-racial-antisemitism-18751945?series=30
- In Their Own Words: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/series/in-their-own-words-holocaust-survivor-testimonies
- The Book of Names at Yad Vashem: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmK8mDlCokc
- 360° virtual tour for learning about, and teaching, the Holocaust https://www.yadvashem.org/education/educational-materials/learning-environment/virtual-tour.html
- Imperial War Museums documentary “The Way We Lived- Exploring Jewish Life and Culture” https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/the-way-we-lived-exploring-jewish-life-and-culture
- Addressing anti-semitism through education: guidelines for policymakers https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000263702
- Join Holocaust survivors for live First Person conversations as they share their experiences in their own words. https://www.youtube.com/c/holocaustmuseum/search?query=%22First%20Person%22
- Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide: A policy guide https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248071

LESSON PROMPTS

Who were the Jews of Europe and what were their lives like? Were they a homogenous group?

Why was antisemitism widespread and attractive as an idea for so many in Germany and Europe, more generally?

What are the consequences of denying citizenship rights to the Jews?

How can we work against dehumanization and hate speech?

An antisemitic poster entitled, "Behind the enemy powers: the Jew"

Copyright: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Provenance: Helmut Eschwege

CORRESPONDING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Holocaust Timeline Activity

This activity is structured around a multi-layered wall timeline that encourages critical thinking about the relationship between Nazi policy, World War II, historical events, and individual experiences during the Holocaust. Extension timeline card packs are available.

The activity allows students to make inferences about the interrelatedness of time and geographic location to historical events and promotes critical thinking about the impact on groups targeted for persecution and the experience of individuals within those groups.

More information on how to conduct the activity can be accessed here https://www.ushmm.org/teach/holocaust-lesson-plans/holocaust-timeline-activity#online

LESSON 2: Historical Overview: Essential knowledge for teaching about the Holocaust

INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLOCAUST

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million European Jews by the Nazi German regime and its allies and collaborators. The Holocaust was an evolving process that took place throughout Europe between 1933 and 1945.

Antisemitism was at the foundation of the Holocaust. Antisemitism, the hatred of or prejudice against Jews, was a basic tenet of Nazi ideology. This prejudice was also widespread throughout Europe.

Nazi Germany's persecution of Jews evolved and became increasingly more radical between 1933 and 1945. This radicalization culminated in the mass murder of six million Jews.

During World War II, Nazi Germany and its allies and collaborators killed nearly two out of every three European Jews using deadly living conditions, brutal mistreatment, mass shootings and gassings, and specially designed killing centers.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Introduction to the Holocaust https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum defines the years of the Holocaust as 1933–1945. The Holocaust era began in January 1933 when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in Germany.[9] It ended in May 1945, when the Allied Powers defeated Nazi Germany in World War II. The Holocaust is also sometimes referred to as "the Shoah," the Hebrew word for "catastrophe."

The Nazis came to power via democratic elections and Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany by the President Paul von Hindenburg in 1933. When they came to power in Germany, the Nazis did not immediately start to carry

[9] See https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler

out mass murder. However, they quickly seized all levels of government, persecuted their political opponents, and began using government authority and a huge propaganda machine to target and exclude Jews from German society. Among other antisemitic measures, the Nazi German regime enacted discriminatory laws and organized violence targeting Germany's Jews, who constituted less than 1% of Germany's population. The Nazi persecution of Jews culminated in a plan that Nazi leaders referred to as the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question." The intent of this "Final Solution" was the organized and systematic mass murder of all Jews, wherever they could reach them. The Nazi German regime and its allies and collaborators implemented a continent-wide genocide of all Jews, between 1941 and 1945.

Boycott of Jewish businesses (https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/photo/boycott-of-jewish-owned-businesses?parent=en%2F11164) "Germans, defend yourselves against the Jewish atrocity propaganda, buy only at German shops!" and "Germans! Protect Yourselves! Don't buy from Jews!" The photo is from April 1933.

Photo restrictions: Dokumentationsarchiv des Oesterreichischen Widerstandes

Photo Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Muenchen Copyright: Exclusively with source

To learn more about the conditions, ideas and ideologies that made the Holocaust possible, refer to the Holocaust Encyclopedia (https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/) created by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

STORIES OF JEWISH RESISTANCE

While teaching about the Holocaust, it is important to counter the assumption that Europe's Jews didn't fight back against the Nazis. During World War II, Jewish resistance fighters launched attacks, created underground networks, led rescue missions and documented their experiences at great personal risk.

Ravensbrück was the largest Nazi concentration camp for women. Prisoners in the Ravensbrück concentration camp resisted in different ways. A small group of inmates wrote letters to their families with secret, coded messages written in urine that contained reports about the crimes being perpetrated in the camp. Another group of women took clandestine photographs as evidence of the medical experiments conducted on them. Several of these women survived the war and agreed to serve as witnesses at the Nuremberg doctors trial in 1946. Their testimony, along with the photo and letter documentation, ensured the conviction of 16 physicians on trial at Nuremberg.

The Warsaw Ghetto, established in October 1940 housed about 360,000 Jews from Warsaw and 90,000 from other towns. Nearly 100,000 died of hunger and 300,000 were murdered in Treblinka. On April 19, 1943 an uprising broke out in the Ghetto. For twenty-seven days the heavily outgunned ghetto leaders and inhabitants fought the Germans. The Ghetto was burnt to the ground by the Nazis. Survivors of the Uprising were sent as forced laborers to the camps of Majdanek, Poniatowa and Trawniki, where most were later shot in an action the Nazis called the 'Harvest Festival'. The Warsaw ghetto uprising and the Oneg Shabbat underground archive are a few examples of how Jews resisted Nazi oppression in a variety of ways, both collectively and as individuals.[10]

Cooking facilities in a bunker prepared by the Jewish resistance for the Warsaw ghetto uprising. https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/photo/underground-bunker-in-warsaw?parent=en%2F3636

Public domain

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The Oneg Shabbat underground archive represents a different and equally valuable form of resistance. Led by the historian Emanuel Ringelblum, a

[10] https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/warsaw-ghetto-uprising and https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-oneg-shabbat-archive

Portrait of female partisan, Sara Ginaite at the liberation of Vilna. The photograph was taken by a Jewish, Soviet major who was surprised to see a female, Jewish partisan standing guard.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Mina Katz Herman

dedicated group in the Warsaw Ghetto gathered records about life in the Ghetto. The material ranged from documents and train tickets to poems, stories, and excerpts from the underground press. Ringelblum and his fellow archivists worked in secrecy and were determined to ensure that memories of life and reality in the Ghetto would not be lost. Although most members of Oneg Shabbat perished, most of their records, buried underground in tin boxes and milk cans, survived. Today their work is commemorated in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The archives are included in UNESCO's Memory of the World register of significant documentary heritage.

A permanent exhibition at Jewish Historical Institute on the work on Emanuel Ringelblum and Oneg Shabbat can be accessed here: https://www.jhi.pl/en/exhibitions/what-weve-been-unable-to-shout-out-to-the-world-permanent-exhibition,105

The podcast "What a Secret Archive Taught the World" provides details of Emanuel Ringelblum's work on the documentation about the fate of Polish Jewry. https://www.ushmm.org/learn/podcasts-and-audio/12-years-that-shook-the-world/what-a-secret-archive-taught-the-world

Remembering the Holocaust: the Emanuel Ringelblum Archives: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLkPWH6IbXg

More details about Ravensbrück: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ravensbrueck

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Acquire a factually accurate picture of the Holocaust;
- Understand that Nazi ideology targeted Jews as the priority "enemy";
- Recognize the causes and consequences of the Holocaust;
- Identify that Nazi persecution of Jews and others gradually increased over time;
- Realize that the Holocaust is not an "event" in the distant past, but that it has relevance for our lives as global citizens today;
- Remember that Jews were not passive victims and resisted in various ways.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- What is the Holocaust? Education Video Toolbox By Yad Vashem https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLj1tRCohZq81aYbpsLMKimSXh2TibtwJW
- Debunking myths and misconceptions through "Facts About the Holocaust," https://aboutholocaust.org/en and the Holocaust Encyclopedia: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/
- Nazi Germany, World War II, and the Holocaust: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMnAztCHcNo&list=PLWQC3P4psZP44TamqzwnHMFxt6-AcVlhp
- The Path to Nazi Genocide- Using rare footage, the film explores Nazis' rise and consolidation of power in Germany. https://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust/the-path-to-nazi-genocide

LESSON PROMPTS

What were the causes of the Holocaust?

Why were Jews (and other victims such as Roma, Sinti) targeted?

Why is it important to learn about the Holocaust?

How is the Holocaust relevant today?

More information, including survivor testimonies, archives and documents can be accessed here https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jewish-resistance

CORRESPONDING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Photo Exercise

Aims: To introduce the curriculum unit of study by allowing students to express their existing knowledge and concepts about the Holocaust, surfacing preconceptions and misconceptions, then to develop and deepen understanding through a range of historical case studies.

Students will grasp a sound historical overview of the Holocaust; appreciate the complexity of this difficult past; be introduced to major themes and issues; and be given the space to raise key questions for further study.

First phase, open plenary: surfacing existing knowledge and common understanding of the Holocaust.

Students are asked to share what they already know about the Holocaust – what it was, when and where it took place, why it happened, who was involved and who was responsible. These early ideas are collected by the teacher and written on the board.

The teacher may prompt where necessary, referring to the names of people and places, well known films or books that might elicit more ideas from the class.

Taking the responses of the group as a starting point (e.g. Hitler, Nazis, Jews, Germans…) and giving short examples of actions/ decisions/ behaviours, the teacher introduces some key terms

that can be helpful through the unit of study – perpetrators, victims, rescuers, resisters, and bystanders.

What preconceptions do students have about each of these groups, and the individuals already listed on the board? Ask for descriptions of these people and groups, what qualities and characteristics could explain their roles, actions and behaviours; also explore stereotypical conceptions of these groups through discussion of the visual images provided: line drawings that elicit discussion of common archetypes. The purpose at this stage is to reveal how students already "see" the perpetrators, victims, rescuers etc before they have studied the Holocaust in depth.

Anticipate that at this stage in their learning, students are likely to rely on rather oversimplified notions and explanations, of perpetrators as "mad" or "evil", rescuers as idealised heroes, etc. This is to be expected, but of course it is not the goal of the lesson to leave them with this level of knowledge and understanding. Rather, the core of the lesson will allow them to explore a range of case studies that will challenge and subvert many of these notions, creating a cognitive dissonance that can lead to critical reflection and deeper thinking.

A note on pedagogy: It is anticipated that the opening phase will **surface common preconceptions and misconceptions about the Holocaust**, why it happened, and the people involved. Capturing this information is important as a baseline from which to then measure and evaluate learning over the lesson and over the unit of study. The teacher should not at this stage correct this pre-knowledge and understanding through direct instruction or lecture, but rather provide a range of case studies for **independent investigation.** This student-centred approach is designed to foster critical thinking, as students begin to test and refine their own ideas and understanding in response to what they find in the case studies.

Second phase, individual and small group work:

Preparation – display the photo cards around the classroom, and invite the group to circulate, looking closely at each image and writing their impressions of the people in the photographs on the accompanying sheet of paper. They should describe the people in the photographs – what can they say about the personalities and relationships they see in the photos, what do they discern about their characters, socio-economic class, their homelife etc? All students should write on the same sheet of paper that accompanies each photo, adding their thoughts and reflections to those recorded by their classmates before them. In this way, you will create a collective picture of how each person in the photographs is seen by the student group as a whole. Invite students also to think about what role they think each person in the photographs took during the Holocaust – were they a victim, a perpetrator, a rescuer or resister…?

When the students have had enough time to examine all of the photographs, use the PowerPoint presentation to take the class through a selection of the case studies. Ask a volunteer to read out the class impressions of each case study, as recorded on the accompanying sheet of paper that they have been filling out. Ask a second volunteer to open the sealed envelope containing a second photograph – show this on the PowerPoint, also – and have the student read out the key information on that photocard.

Third phase, feedback and class discussion:

As the class discovers information about each individual on the photocards, lead a discussion about how well this matches the impressions they had formed in the initial phase of the exercise. In most cases, there is likely to be a significant level of dissonance between what they assumed and the actual role of each person in the various case studies. This gap between assumptions and preconceptions opens a space for learning.

Use this dissonant space to encourage critical reflection on how reliable our first impressions of other people are, and to interrogate and counter our own tendency to judge by appearance. How far were we making judgements based on gender, age, or other factors? What do our assumptions say about our own prejudices and stereotypes?

Fourth phase, tentative conclusions and open questions:

Further discussion should include whether the group can add to or refine their initial descriptions of what the Holocaust was, and their explanations of why it happened and who was involved. Drawing on the case studies, they should be able to provide a far richer, more complex and detailed picture of the past.

This activity, and the realization that these were ordinary people involved in gruesome events should provide great scope for discussion and elicit a range of further questions that can inform other lessons in the series. These might include:

- Why did the Nazis persecute Jews and other groups? What were the similarities and the differences in these persecutions?
- What examples do we see in the case studies of how Jews responded in the unfolding genocide? What more would you like to know about this?
- What did the international community know, and when? Why did the Allies and the outside world not do more to rescue Jews from the Holocaust?
- Why did the Christian Churches not do more to speak out against the Nazi crimes?
- There are examples of Jewish resistance in the case studies, but why didn't more people fight back?

For further instructions and access to the photos for this exercise, please use the following link : https://www.ushmm.org/holocaust-photo-activity

LESSON 3:
International Responses

There are several contextual elements essential to understanding international responses to Nazism: (1) the situation in the 1930s, before the outbreak of the Second World War, when countries had more ability to act but could not yet envisage the scale and extent of persecution and murder that would unfold under the cover of war (2) the existence and geographical reach of the war itself, including the enormous demands the priority of waging this war placed on the Allied nations, and the extensive territory occupied by or allied to Nazi Germany at the time of the implementation of the Final Solution and (3) the "multinational" nature of the Holocaust -- many other European governments and peoples collaborated with Nazi Germany to bring about the extermination of the Jews (and this collaboration was a key to the Nazi project across Europe).

Myron Taylor, US industrialist and diplomat, addresses the International Conference on Refugees at Evian-les-Bains.

Photo Source: National Archives and Records Administration, College Park
Copyright: Public Domain

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

By 1938 about 150,000 Jews had left Germany due to persecution under the Nazis, but there were thousands more who could not find refuge. The Evian Conference in July 1938 was attended by 32 countries to discuss the growing refugee crisis in Europe, but virtually none of these countries changed their immigration policies to accept more refugees. The US and Britain had strict immigration quotas and laws and they were not changed to enable Jews to escape. Even some of those who managed to escape, such as the passengers on the St Louis, were turned away in May 1939 from Cuba, the US and Canada and the ship eventually returned to Europe.[11] This was at a time when news about persecution and systematic violence against Jews in Germany was well-known outside Europe. For more on the Evian Conference see: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/emigration-and-the-evian-conference.

Joint Allied Declaration, Dec 1942 and Bermuda Conference, April 1943: Both indicate that the outside world did have very good and accurate knowledge about the Holocaust as it was unfolding. Public pressure led to a conference to explore what could be done, but with negligible results.

Details of the Bermuda Conference can be found at https://perspectives.ushmm.org/item/summary-of-bermuda-conference-recommendations

[11] "The Voyage of the St Louis," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/voyage-of-the-st-louis

FATE OF HUNGARIAN JEWS

Hungary had been an ally of Nazi Germany, but when it sought peace with the Allies, Germany occupied the country in 1944. Subsequently with the approval of Hungarian leaders and the assistance of its police and others, 440,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where about 320,000 were killed.

Arrow Cross members shoot Jews on the bank of the Danube https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/budapest

National Archives and Records Administration, College Park Copyright: Public Domain

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat in Budapest, was instrumental in saving the lives of thousands of Hungarian Jews, with the assistance of diplomats from several other countries and the U.S. government. He issued protection certificates to Jews and created safe houses for them. For more on Wallenberg and his fellow rescuers see: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/raoul-wallenberg-and-the-rescue-of-jews-in-budapest

With the tacit approval and diplomatic authority of the Salvadoran consul in Switzerland, George Mandel-Mantello, a Hungarian Jew, launched an effort to rescue thousands of Jews across the continent. More information on his story can be found here https://www.ushmm.org/collections/the-museums-collections/curators-corner/george-mandel-mantello-and-his-mission-to-rescue-europes-jews

THE DECISION NOT TO BOMB AUSCHWITZ

Allied forces (comprising primarily Great Britain and its colonies, the United States and the Soviet Union) were made aware of the plan to murder Hungarian Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau before the deportations began. Based on evidence provided by two escaped Jewish inmates, Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler, Allied governments had a clear idea of Nazi killing operations in Auschwitz as well as maps of the camp complex. While some Jewish organizations in the United States of America and elsewhere requested the US government to bomb the camp and the railway lines leading to it, the US did not do so. The US War Department stated that "such an operation could be executed only by the diversion of considerable air support…now engaged in decisive operations elsewhere and would in any case be of such doubtful efficacy that it would not warrant the use of our resources."

For basic information see: https://www.auschwitz.org/en/history/informing-the-world/the-issue-of-bombing-auschwitz/

See also "The United States and the Holocaust: Why Auschwitz Was Not Bombed," https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-united-states-and-the-holocaust-why-auschwitz-was-not-bombed

For a timeline of the fate of Jews in Hungary and how it impacted Elie Wiesel see https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Timeline-Elie-Wiesel.pdf

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The Holocaust was a global event with global ramifications;
- The failures of the international community to come to the aid of Jews;
- At the time, there were no agreed-upon international rules for the protection of refugees; these failures during the Second World War contributed to their development;
- To think about why the international community was reluctant to act, even when evidence of the deaths camps was presented;
- To emphasize that there were instances of international solidarity and assistance.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- *The Last Days* is a documentary on the deportation of more than 400,000 Hungarian Jews in the waning months and days of the Third Reich. It interviews five survivors and provides context for the "hunting" of the Jews in Hungary. The film also shows the afterlives of the survivors from different walks of life.

Link to Film: https://www.netflix.com/in/Title/21477429

What could Americans have known about the Holocaust- https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-united-states-and-the-holocaust

The Challenges of Escape, 1938-1941: https://www.ushmm.org/teach/holocaust-lesson-plans/challenges-of-escape-1938-1941

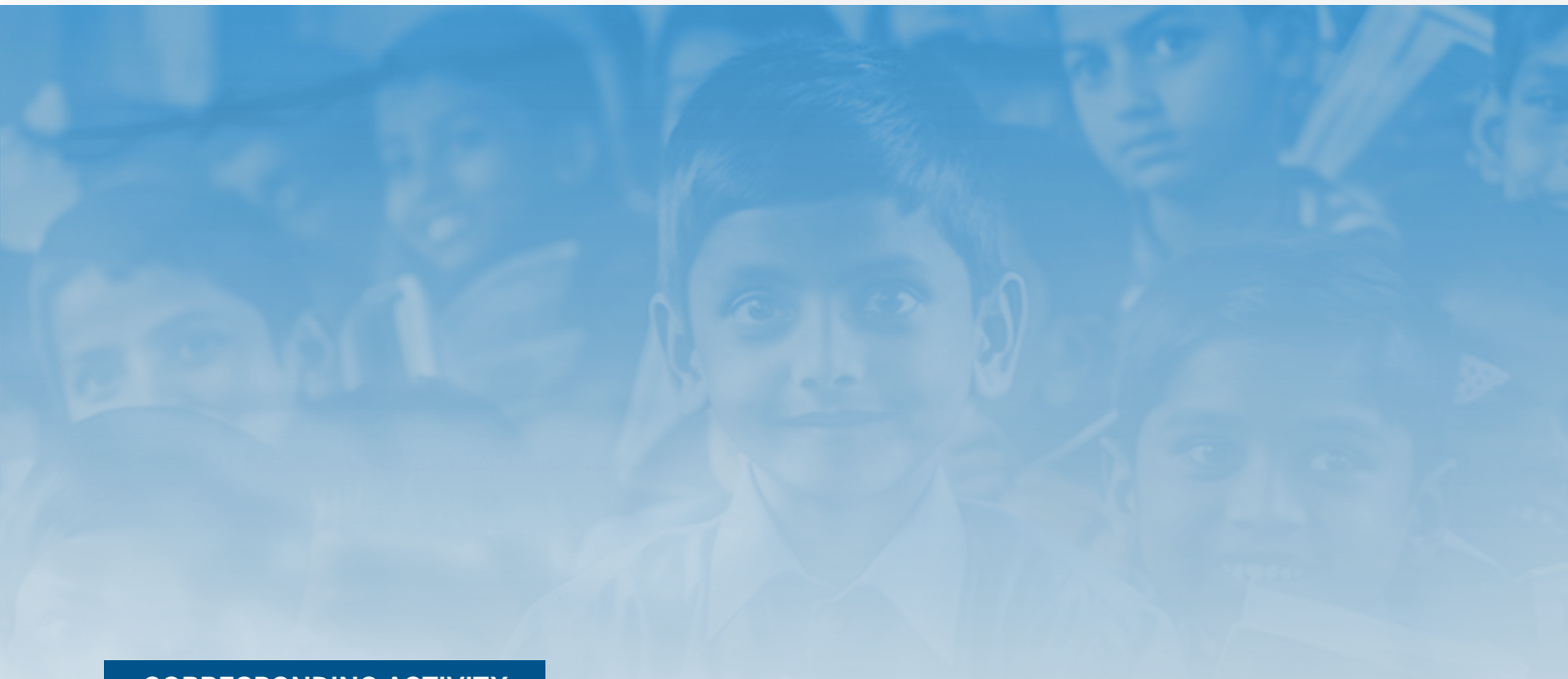
The Righteous Among the Nations, honored by Yad Vashem, are non-Jews who took great risks to save Jews during the Holocaust. The database can be accessed here https://righteous.yadvashem.org/?/search.html?language=en and other related information here https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/about-the-righteous.html

LESSON PROMPTS

Why were international powers reluctant to help Jews?

What does this reluctance tell us about the international community at the time?

How has the Holocaust impacted international conventions in the period following the Second World War?



CORRESPONDING ACTIVITY

Critically Analyzing Propaganda

This activity provides an opportunity for students to dialogue and reflect on the ways in which propaganda affected society during the Holocaust and how it continues to affect people today. Students will engage in a hands-on activity analyzing examples of propaganda from State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda. They will synthesize and understand how and why Nazi propaganda worked through an opportunity to practice critical analysis of messages. This lesson reinforces media literacy skills.

More information on how to conduct the activity can be accessed here https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Critically-Analyzing-Propaganda.pdf

LESSON 4:
Jews in the diaspora

HISTORY OF JEWS IN INDIA

The "Jewish Gandhi" A.B. Salem leading services circa 1960 at the Paradesi Synagogue in Cochin. Photographer: the late Helen Sirkin.

Picture credit: Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins Published: Kenneth X. Robbins and Marvin Tokayer. Western Jews in India. p.108

The lesson will give a brief history of the Jews in India, beginning with the acceptance of the Bene Israel Jews in Kerala, and going on to emphasize their contributions to Indian society and culture through the ages. This will include the establishment of iconic synagogues such as the Chendamangalam Synagogue in Ernakulam (1420), Paradesi Synagogue in Cochin (1568) and the Gate of Mercy Synagogue in Bombay (1796). The Chendamangalam Synagogue is a wonderful example of religious syncretism and harmony in India.

The Bene Israels are the oldest Jewish community in India and their contributions to Indian life and culture will be discussed, along with that of the Baghdadi Jews in Kolkata. The name Bene Israel means "The Children of Israel" and according to their tradition they were members of the Lost Tribes of Israel. They were, according to one version, shipwrecked off the coast of Konkan in 175 BC. According to one theory, the second group, the Cochin Jews, came to South India with King Solomon's (King of ancient Israel as per the Hebrew Bible and Old Testament; known for his wisdom) merchants. Documentary evidence of Jewish settlement in South India can be found in the Cochin Jewish copper plates written in ancient Tamil script. The third distinctive community were the Baghdadi Jews who came mainly from Iraq, and also from Syria and Persia. They settled in Bombay (the House of David Sassoon) and Calcutta (the Ezra family).[12] A fourth Jewish community in India are the Bnei Menashe, who claim to be one of the Lost Tribes of Israel. Today there are about 5,000 practicing as Jews in North East India and across the border in Myanmar.[13]

The lesson refers to the life of prominent Jews in India such as Walter Kaufmann, Maurice Frydman, Sulochana, the Sassoons, and Gen Jacob. Jews in Bollywood such as Sulochana, artists such as Magda Nachman, and teachers and educationists such as Gerda Philipsborn have left an indelible mark on Indian life. Their lives are indicative of the value that refugees bring to their adopted country and that diversity and multiculturalism have always been a strength of Indian society. A glimpse of Jewish societies in India also highlights the fact that whether as early immigrants to India or as refugees from Hitler's Europe, Jews were not merely victims but active agents who enriched the communities they made their own in India. For example, Walter Kaufmann composed the signature tune for All India Radio, Gerda Philipsborn was one of the founding faculty of

[12] Details of Jewish communities in India are taken from Shalva Weil, "From Persecution to Freedom: Central European Jewish Refugees and their Jewish Host Communities in India," in Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Voigt, edited, *Jewish Exile in India, 1933-1945* (New Delhi: Manohar in association with Max Muller Bhavan, 2005), pp. 64-84.

[13] http://www.bneimenashe.com/index.html

Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi, Alex Aronson taught English in Visva Bharati University, and General Jacob accepted the instrument of surrender from General Niazi after the defeat of Pakistan in the 1971 Indo-Bangladesh War. Born in Vilnius, Yusuf Hamied, whose grandparents perished in the Holocaust, came to India as a child. As Chairman of CIPLA, Hamied was responsible for the creation and distribution of generic HIV AIDS drugs that saved the lives of millions in the global south.

Kaufmann was an ethnomusicologist with an abiding interest in Indian music. His two works *The Ragas of North India* (1968) and *The Ragas of South India* (1976) indicate his interest. His last book, *Altindien* (Ancient India) was published in 1981 in Germany. Agata Schindler writes of this book: "He wrote a book about the music of a country which offered him exile and protection from the 12 years of National Socialism in Europe. The book has been published in the country which caused him to flee from his homeland 50 years before. But finally, after almost half a century, he could enjoy his work again in his mother tongue, which was German."[14]

General JFR Jacob, the Baghdadi Jew who was the hero of the Bangladesh Liberation War as well as serving as Governor of Goa and the Punjab. Photograph gifted by General Jacob to Kenneth Robbins.

Picture credit: Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins Published: Kenneth X. Robbins South Asian Muslim Regimes and Jewish "Golden Ages". p.246.

HOW POLISH REFUGEES FOUND A HOME IN INDIA

Boleslaw (Bolek) Rembaum, whose family was murdered at the Treblinka death camp, traveled with other Polish refugees including his cousin Bernard (Butcho) Salomon through Russia to Vladivostok and onto Calcutta via Japan and Shanghai. He became an integral member of the Jewish community of Calcutta and celebrated the day of his arrival in Calcutta as a holiday.

Shaar Hashamalm Synagogue - Bene Israel Synagogue in Thane, Maharashtra

Picture credit: Courtesy Ezra Moses and Shaar Hashamaim Synagogue. Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins

A group of Polish Jews including Max Khodorovsky (1917-1988), who later as Menachem Savidor became speaker of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), escaped to Kobe and docked in Calcutta hoping to get to Palestine. Khodorovsky found the Judean Club in the telephone directory. His call was answered by Ikey Hallen who "knew a Polish woman, married to an Indian minister, who arranged immigration papers for all thirty of them". They were housed and fed at the hostel of the Jewish Girls' School and entertained on the eve of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot at Sir David Ezras' home. They had already experienced welcomes by Baghdadi Jews in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Penang but nothing prepared them for their reception in Calcutta. Dr. Shumert wrote that "for two years we wandered and suffered, sleeping on straw pallets, hungry for days at a time, until we reached Calcutta as frightened, lost refugees. And then we found ourselves dining in a huge palace... I can say with certainty that all the refugees who reached Calcutta enjoyed the hospitality of Sir David Ezra".[15]

Maharaja Digvijaysinhji of Jamnagar was instrumental in setting up a refugee camp for about 1,000 Polish children at Balachadi, of whom 18 were Jews. The

[14] Agata Schindler, "Walter Kaufmann: A Forgotten Genius," in Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Voigt, edited, *Jewish Exile in India, 1933-1945* (New Delhi: Manohar in association with Max Muller Bhavan, 2005), p. 98.

[15] Kenneth Robbins, "Baghdadi Jews and Holocaust Refugees in Calcutta," PowerPoint Presentation.

David Sassoon and his sons.

Picture credit: Public domain. Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins

Polish Government in exile in London paid for the construction of the Balachadi camp. The camp was maintained by the Polish Children Fund, subscribed by some maharajas, business enterprises, and wealthy individuals.

Most states in India were looking for professional persons, especially physicians, rather than groups of children. In 1942, the Maharaja told a Polish interviewer that he was "deeply moved and distressed by the suffering of the Polish nation (especially the children)...I am trying to do whatever I can to save the children, as they must regain their health and strength after these dreadful trials". One factor was his personal relationship with the Polish pianist-patriot Jan Paderewski, who was a family friend.

Maharaja Digvijaysinh's help was officially acknowledged by the Polish government for the first time on April 16, 1989, when a high-ranking Polish government official, the Deputy Chairman of the Council of State, Dr. Tadeusz Szelachowski, unveiled a large bronze memorial plaque commemorating the generous spirit of the Jamsaheb. The figures on this monument show a woman in a sari holding a small child while another child clings to her.[16]

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To recognize that Jews and Jewish communities existed and have thrived in India;
- To know that refugees from Nazi occupied Europe found refuge in India;
- To understand the values of hospitality and solidarity;
- To think of the murder of European Jews not only as an European issue, but a global one.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- "Little Poland in India" is a film that captures how Maharaja Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji Jadeja of Nawanagar helped Polish refugee children during the Second World War, children who were separated from their parents or orphaned during Hitler's invasion of Poland.
  Link to Film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIPq-8RZxxM
- Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Voigt, edited, *Jewish Exile in India, 1933-1945* (New Delhi: Manohar in association with Max Muller Bhavan, 2005)

[16] Kenneth Robbins, "The Camp of Polish Refugee Children at Balachadi, Nawanagar." *Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies* 4: 95-117.

LESSON PROMPTS

Why do you think Jews found refuge in India? What does that tell us about Indian society of the time?

What were some of the contributions that Jews made to Indian society?

What are the advantages of living in a country with diverse peoples?

How is the Holocaust relevant today?

CORRESPONDING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Activity 1: Behind Every Name: Stories from the Holocaust

By examining true personal stories, told through short animations, students learn about unique individual experiences within the historical context of the Holocaust. This activity contains an extension to examine the role of artifacts in understanding history.

More information on how to conduct the activity can be accessed here https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Animations-Lesson-Plan.pdf

Activity 2: The Holocaust: History and Memory

In this activity, students engage in a virtual field trip to explore how the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum preserves and presents Holocaust history. The experience begins with an examination of how the museum building itself speaks about the Holocaust; it continues in 1938, five years after the Nazis came to power, with a presentation of artifacts and photographs in the main exhibition that illustrate how the Nazis identified, segregated, concentrated, deported, and killed millions of Jews during the Holocaust. The tour closes with a discussion of what it means to preserve history and act as a living memorial.

The Virtual Tour of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum can be accessed here https://www.ushmm.org/teach/teaching-materials/primary-sources-collections/virtual-field-trip

More information on how to conduct the activity can be accessed here https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Holocaust-History-Memory-Lesson.pdf

Related worksheet can be found here https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Holocaust-History-Memory-Worksheet.pdf

Concluding Activity to Evaluate Learnings from the Guide

LESSON: ANALYZING MEMES

Memes — attention-grabbing images with clever captions that pepper social media feeds — permeate our cultural discourse. While memes have the potential to replace thoughtful conversation and impede connections between different opinions, with proper scaffolding they can be the entry point for critical thinking.

Analyzing memes is a crucial aspect of combating hate speech, misinformation and disinformation in the digital age. This activity will allow students to develop a proactive approach in identifying, understanding, and addressing the various forms of hate speech expressed through this popular and influential medium.

More information on how to conduct this activity can be accessed here https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Meme-Lesson.pdf

Understanding the Impact of the Holocaust Education Guide

Evaluation Survey to be submitted by Educators to UNESCO on shs.ndl@unesco.org after completing all the lessons.

SECTION 1: KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM THE GUIDE

(The following questions are designed to help us understand if the Guide helped increase the students' knowledge on the Holocaust)

a. The knowledge and understanding within the classroom of why the Jews were targeted during the Holocaust has
   - Increased significantly
   - Increased slightly
   - Stayed the same

b. The knowledge of the warning signs of genocide and mass atrocities has
   - Increased significantly
   - Increased slightly
   - Stayed the same

c. The knowledge of social, economic, and political forces that enable and perpetuate violence has
   - Increased significantly
   - Increased slightly
   - Stayed the same

d. To what extent do you feel that perceptions have changed with regards to the Holocaust within your classroom?
   - Significantly
   - Somewhat
   - Not at all

e. In what ways has it changed?

f. Reflect on a specific experience shared by your students over the course of the module on Holocaust education. Describe the impact it had on you, considering the emotional and educational aspects. How has this particular experience influenced your teaching approach and strategies in conveying the historical and ethical dimensions of the Holocaust to your students?

SECTION 2: RELEVANCE TO EXISTING CURRICULUM

(The following questions are designed to help us understand if the Guide prepared you to effectively teach or contextualize educational content about the Holocaust to your students)

a. My knowledge of pedagogical approaches and classroom practices to teaching about the Holocaust has
   - Increased significantly
   - Increased slightly
   - Stayed the same

b. Can you describe some challenges or resistances to teaching about the Holocaust that you might have experienced from students within your classroom?

c. Do you feel better equipped to address misconceptions or denials about the Holocaust?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

d. Do you feel better equipped to navigate or respond to discourses that challenge the importance of Holocaust education in the country?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

e. What specifically from the Guide helped you to teach about the Holocaust to your students?

f. Is there any other topic or theme that you would like to be covered in this Guide?

Appendix

This section references further questions, learning outcomes, and resources that teachers may wish to consider in their classes. The resources are linked to the lessons and offer additional information, contexts, and in-depth analyses that teachers and students may find useful.

Some questions that educators may consider while implementing this guide:

- What is the target age/grade for the lesson?
- What subjects will the module address?
- What materials are required?
- How much time is required to teach this lesson?

LESSON 1: Why did the Holocaust Happen? Nazi Racial Ideology and Antisemitism

(i) Teaching Materials on Propaganda: https://www.ushmm.org/teach/teaching-materials/propaganda

(ii) USHMM Deadly Ideologies Film and USHMM Encyclopedia article "Victims of the Nazi Era: Nazi Racial Ideology" https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/victims-of-the-nazi-era-nazi-racial-ideology

(iii) Addressing Anti-Semitism through Education: Guidelines for Policy Makers (UNESCO, 2018) https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000263702

(iv) History of Antisemitism and the Holocaust: Lesson Plan: https://www.ushmm.org/teach/holocaust-lesson-plans/history-of-antisemitism-and-the-holocaust

LESSON 2: Historical Overview: essential knowledge for teaching about the Holocaust

(i) The Path to Nazi Genocide: This film examines the rise of the Nazis to power and the involvement of ordinary people in the Nazi project. https://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust/the-path-to-nazi-genocide

(ii) "Seeing Auschwitz" exhibition: It focuses on how to read photos as evidence, why it matters who produced the image, what radically different perspectives emerge from different sources, and the ethics of representation.

(iii) History under attack: Holocaust denial and distortion on social media https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382159

(iv) Further Learning Outcomes for Lesson 2:

- Recognize that the Nazi concept of race targeted other groups for persecution and annihilation, including Roma, people with disabilities, Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, and Afro-Germans

- Learn that political opponents and others were targeted as enemies because either they opposed the Nazi regime or their behavior defied social norms under the Nazi regime
- Identify that Nazi persecution of Jews and others gradually increased over time
- Examine how the events of World War II and the Holocaust are intertwined
- Make inferences about the interrelatedness of time and geographic location to events and how that affected individuals and groups

(v) Timeline Activity Lesson Plans:
https://lessonplans.ushmm.org/timeline-activity/index.html#/

This resource can be used to explore the question of what was known and when, and what decisions were taken. Potentially plot the story of Zygielbojm as a layer to look more closely at news emerging throughout 1943, culminating in Allied declaration and then Bermuda, linking then both to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising as dual context for Zygielbojm's protest and suicide at international failure.

(vi) *Teaching to prevent atrocity crimes: a guide for teachers in Africa* (UNESCO: 2023):
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386136?locale=en

(vii) Tell me, Inge: An interactive Conversation with a Holocaust Survivor https://inge.storyfile.com/

LESSON 3: International Responses

Prompts for the overall lesson can include:

What were the motivations, fears, and pressures that shaped the international communities' responses to Nazism, war, and genocide?

How did the international community debate potential responses to Jewish persecution under the Nazi regime?

(i) For international responses teachers may consider the role of international aid organizations to highlight that groups and individuals were working to provide humanitarian aid. The American Friends Service Committee is one such example. Also worth noting that the work of Raoul Wallenberg was supported by the War Refugee Board.

(ii) What role did the British Empire play in World War II?

This might be a helpful resource to contextualize the global nature of the War.
https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/what-role-did-the-british-empire-play-in-the-second-world-war

LESSON 4: Jews in the Diaspora

(i) M Madhavan, a 28-year-old Malayali student from Mahe, was probably the only native-born Indian to be executed by Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime in a concentration camp during World War 2. Here is the fascinating story of this forgotten Indian hero.
https://www.thebetterindia.com/262757/michilotte-madhavan-mahe-executed-nazi-germany-france-world-war2-forgotten-hero/

Source: The Better India

(ii) In the documentary *Rafting to Bombay,* Israeli director Erez Laufer tells the story of his father's escape from the Nazis in Poland to India during WWII, against the backdrop of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks on the Chabad House.

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