

Responding to the Unthinkable

Introduction to the Holocaust

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Grade Level	10th – 11th Grade	**Time Frame**	110 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	2-3 periods
Course	U.S. History, World History		

Essential Question

What were the events that led to and occurred during the Holocaust, and how did the world respond to it?

Summary

This is a lesson used to provide context for the Holocaust prior to teaching about the involvement of the United States and other Allied nations in the Nuremberg Trials. Students will watch a short film about the Holocaust called "Pigeon" and comment about what they notice. Next, students will use a timeline of the Holocaust to analyze the events individually and as a whole. They will then examine the experiences of Holocaust survivors and/or victims and write about them.

Snapshot

Engage

Students identify what they already know about the Holocaust by participating in a Collective Brain Dump activity.

Explore

Students watch a short film about the Holocaust called "Pigeon" and comment about what they notice.

Explain

Students use a timeline of the Holocaust to analyze the events individually and as a whole. They organize their observations with a Fishbone diagram.

Extend

Students examine the experiences of a couple of Holocaust survivors and victims and write about them.

Evaluate

Students reflect on what they have learned by completing a How Am I Feeling? What Am I Thinking? exercise.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR201: Locate basic facts (e.g., names, dates, events) clearly stated in a passage
CLR301: Locate simple details at the sentence and paragraph level in somewhat challenging passages

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

I&A 301: Understanding the task and writing with purpose. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Generate a somewhat clear thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue -Respond to other perspectives on the issue

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Modern World History)

MWH.C.6.6.C: Examine the effects of the Shoah (Jewish Holocaust) through eyewitnesses such as inmates, survivors, liberators, and perpetrators.

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Modern World History)

USH.C.5.3: Summarize America's reactions to the events of the Shoah (Jewish Holocaust).

Attachments

- Fishbone—Responding to the Unthinkable - Spanish.docx
- Fishbone—Responding to the Unthinkable - Spanish.pdf
- Fishbone—Responding to the Unthinkable.docx
- Fishbone—Responding to the Unthinkable.pdf
- Guided Notes—Responding to the Unthinkable - Spanish.docx
- Guided Notes—Responding to the Unthinkable - Spanish.pdf
- Guided Notes—Responding to the Unthinkable.docx
- Guided Notes—Responding to the Unthinkable.pdf
- Holocaust Timeline—Responding to the Unthinkable - Spanish.docx
- Holocaust Timeline—Responding to the Unthinkable - Spanish.pdf
- Holocaust Timeline—Responding to the Unthinkable.docx
- Holocaust Timeline—Responding to the Unthinkable.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Responding to the Unthinkable.pptx

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Guided Notes handout (attached; optional; one per student)
- Holocaust Timeline document (attached; several copies per class)
- Fishbone handout (attached; one per student)
- ID Cards Classroom Set from USHMM (optional; linked; one set per class)
- Full List of ID Cards (optional; linked)
- Student devices with internet access
- Pens/pencils
- Paper (two per student)

15 minutes

Engage

Begin the lesson by displaying **slide 3**. Ask students to take out a piece of scrap paper. Let students know that they will participate in a Collective Brain Dump activity. They will have 2–3 minutes to write down everything they know about the Holocaust.

After the students have finished writing, arrange them into groups of three. Instruct them to share their lists with the others in their group. Make sure the students know that they should add any new information they learn from their classmates to the lists they have created.

After the small groups have had about 5 minutes to share their lists with each other, have a brief whole-class discussion about the activity. Invite a few volunteers to share their lists with the rest of the class. Once students have shared their lists, conclude this portion of the lesson by briefly reviewing the essential questions and lesson objectives on **slides 4–5**.

20 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Guided Notes

For the remainder of this lesson, students will take notes as they participate in several different activities. You have two different options moving forward: 1) Ask students to fold a piece of paper into quarters. For the upcoming activity, they will label the top two rectangles on the front of the paper "I Notice" and "I Wonder." Have students fill in the other rectangles on their papers gradually throughout the lesson and consult additional teacher's notes later in this lesson for guidance; or 2) Pass out copies of the optional attached **Guided Notes** handout and instruct students to fill in the top two rectangles.

Display **slide 6**. Tell the students that they will be participating in an I Notice, I Wonder activity. Direct the students' attention to the top two quarters of their Guided Notes sheet. Tell students that they will be watching the short film *Pigeon*. Explain that, as students watch the film, they should take notes in the top-left quarter about the details they notice in the film.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=UyeAYtI1Xzw

Play the film for students by clicking the embedded video in **slide 7**. If there is difficulty accessing the link, the film is also available at this site. However, you will need to create an account with Facing History & Ourselves in order to access it.

Once the film has ended, let students know that they have an additional five minutes to reflect on the film and write in the top-right quarter any questions they might have about it. After they have reflected, call on a few volunteers to share what they are wondering about. Ask those students to think about what they might be able to do in order to answer their "wonderings."

Possible Student Responses

I Notice: *The train station was located in France. The film seems to be taking place in the 1940s. There are Nazi guards on the train.*

I Wonder: *What was he mumbling when he realized he didn't have his papers? What did he have that made it a believable lie for the woman to step in? What does the death of the pigeon maybe foreshadow?*

30 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Timeline Preparation

Before the start of class, print and hang several copies of the attached **Holocaust Timeline** document either on the walls of your classroom or in the hallway. Students will be working in groups of three, so divide the number of students in your class by three to determine how many copies of the timeline you should print and display.

Teacher's Note: Guided Notes

If the students have folded scrap paper into quarters, they will label the bottom two rectangles on the front of the paper "I Notice" and "I Wonder." If you are using the handouts, students will fill in the rectangles labeled "I Notice (Timeline)" and "I Wonder (Timeline)."

Display **slide 8**. Explain to students that they will be using the I Notice, I Wonder strategy again, but this time, they will use it to analyze the **Holocaust Timeline** that you have placed on the wall.

Have students reassemble in the same groups of three as earlier in the lesson. Let them know that the timeline is three pages long, and each student in the group will be responsible for reading a different page of the timeline using the Jigsaw strategy. As each student is reading, they should take about five minutes to jot notes in the bottom-left quarter of the Guided Notes sheet about important details they notice on their page of the timeline.

Once students have finished writing what they have noticed, let them know that they will have another five minutes to share with the other members of their group what they learned in the timeline.

After students have finished sharing, instruct them to spend another five minutes silently reflecting on what they have learned. In the bottom-right quarter, they should write down anything they might still be wondering about the Holocaust. After they have reflected, call on a few volunteers to share what they are wondering about. Ask those students to think about what they might be able to do in order to answer their "wonderings."

Display **slide 9** and pass out copies of the attached **Fishbone** handout to every student. Explain to students that they will use the Fishbone strategy and incorporate the notes they have already taken to pinpoint six key events that led to the Holocaust. Take a moment to explain the layout of the handout to students. Once they select their six events, students will write them in the "Contributing Factor" boxes on the handout.

After about 10 minutes, have the whole class reconvene. Ask a few volunteers to share what they chose for their Fishbone diagrams and why.

35 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note: ID Cards

In this portion of the lesson, students will be using ID cards published by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to research a couple of survivors and/or victims of the Holocaust. You have the option of either printing out the cards or taking students directly to the website. The list of names below has been prepared by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum for classroom use: https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Timeline-Activity-Individual-Profiles.pdf

A list of all 600 Identification Cards is also available for use: https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/landing/en/id-cards

Teacher's Note: Guided Notes

If your students have folded scrap paper into quarters, they will turn their paper over and write “Name of Survivor/Victim” and “Experiences” in each of the top two rectangles, while making sure to leave room to write their findings. If you are using the handouts, students will be filling in the top two rectangles on the second page.

Display **slide 10** and explain that students will be researching two survivors or victims of the Holocaust. If you have printed out the **ID Cards**, randomly distribute them to your students. Otherwise, instruct your students to head to one of two websites: one prepared for classroom use by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum or the unedited list of many more victims of the Holocaust. You will want to ensure that each student selects a different individual to research, so make sure to ask each student who they have decided to research and ask them to consult different ID cards if necessary.

Let your students know that they will have about 20 minutes (10 minutes per card) to read about the individuals profiled in their ID cards. As they do so, they will write their observations in the top-left and top-right quarters of their handouts.

After the 20 minutes are up, ask your students to reconvene one more time in their groups of three. They will spend the next 10 minutes sharing what they learned with others in their groups.

Once students have finished sharing in their groups, have your class reconvene and ask a few volunteers to share what they learned with the class.

10 minutes

Evaluate

Teacher's Note: Guided Notes

If your students have folded scrap paper into quarters, they will label the bottom two rectangles on the back of the paper “How am I feeling?” and “What am I thinking?” You can keep the questions from **slide 11** on the board so students can reference them. If you are using the handouts, students will fill in the bottom two rectangles on the second page.

Display **slide 11**. Tell students that to end this lesson, they will be participating in an activity called How Am I Feeling? What Am I Thinking? Share with students the two questions on the slide and let them know that they will answer them in the bottom two quarters of their Guided Notes sheets.

Make sure students have about 10 minutes to write their responses. In order to assess their understanding of the content, collect their Guided Notes sheets along with their Fishbone handouts.

Resources

- Facing History and Ourselves. (2022, April 14). Pigeon. https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/pigeon
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Collective brain dump. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/111
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Fishbone. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1664
- K20 Center. (n.d.). How am I feeling? What am I thinking? Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/187
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I notice, I wonder. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Jigsaw. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/179
- Singer, M. (2015, October 6). Pigeon trigger film Holocaustmov [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/UyeAYtI1Xzw
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (n.d.). Identification cards. Holocaust Encyclopedia. https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/landing/en/id-cards
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (2015, January 16). *1389.4 Holocaust A* [Photo]. Flickr. https://www.flickr.com/photos/ushmm/16269109876/in/photostream/