

Teacher Collaboration Project

Introduction

For this project, I chose to work with Cynthia Brawley, who has been teaching ninth grade English at Canton McKinley's Freshman Academy for nine years. We agreed to collaborate on a unit she calls "*The Holocaust/Racism and the Struggle to Survive*." For this project, Miss Brawley has a small collection of trade books, including *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, *Number the Stars*, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, *The Other Victims: first person stories of non-Jews persecuted by the Nazis*, *Flowers on the Wall*, and *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*, that she uses in addition to the textbook. During this collaboration, we will incorporate technology and visuals, as well as some audio and video resources. This will provide an opportunity for me to practice my skills as a library media specialist, as well as benefiting Miss Brawley by providing her with a diverse selection of media resources to use when teaching this Holocaust unit.

Learner Analysis

As mentioned before, all the students doing this project are in ninth grade. They mostly come from lower socioeconomic levels. McKinley High School is an urban, inner-city environment which means that some of the students are homeless, some come from families with drug and alcohol problems, many come from broken families, and there are many behavior and discipline issues. Miss Brawley teaches a wide range of ability levels, from honors students to remedial and all those in between. Each class period lasts ninety minutes and the students come every other day. I have included components in this media collection that will address several

different learning styles that these students may prefer including verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

These students, at varying levels, possess some pre-requisite skills and knowledge which will enable them to be successful in learning and understanding this unit of instruction. They have some prior experience making inferences and predictions. They can compare and contrast using Venn diagrams. They understand the basic organization of an essay. They have a basic understanding of story plot structure. They are able to establish the main idea of a passage. They possess basic computer skills and generally know how to navigate the internet. And, they have some experience evaluating the accuracy of electronic resources.

Proposed Media and Rationale

1. ***Schindler's List*** (Video)-Chosen because it shows a historically accurate portrayal of how Jewish people were treated during the Holocaust, yet is sensitive enough for young viewers.
2. ***Memory of the Camps*** (Video/Website)-Chosen because it contains actual footage from the Nazi death camps of the Holocaust and is extremely moving and insightful.
3. ***America and the Holocaust*** (Video/Website)-Chosen because it will help students see how problems occurring outside of the United States should be given as much importance as those within.
4. ***Museum of Tolerance-Children of the Holocaust*** (Website/Visuals)-Chosen to relate the experiences of children who lived during the Holocaust.
5. ***United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Learning Materials and Resources for Students*** (Website/Audio/Video)-Chosen for its comprehensive collection of information about the Holocaust presented in a great variety of media formats.

6. *Holocaust Survivors* (Audio/Visual/Website)-Chosen so that students can listen to the moving stories of survivors of the Holocaust.
7. *A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust-Nazi Propaganda Illustrations* (Visuals)-Chosen to introduce students to the power of propaganda.
8. *Deathly Silence: Everyday People in the Holocaust-Teaching Guide* (Electronic Publication)-Chosen because it provides a good list of lesson plans and activity ideas to use while teaching this unit.
9. *The Holocaust—A Guide for Teachers* (Website)-Chosen to provide teachers with new ideas to incorporate into the teaching of the Holocaust unit.
10. *The Anne Frank Center USA, Education Resources* (Website)-Chosen because it provides information about Anne Frank, and supplemental resources to use while teaching her diary.

Media Summary for Miss Brawley

Unit Title: The Holocaust/Racism and the Struggle to Survive

Major Themes: war, racism, apathy, human survival, the power of love and fellowship

Grade: Appropriate for 9th grade

Subject Areas Integrated: English/Social Studies

Time: This unit will be taught over approximately three weeks.

Goals:

- Understand story sequence/sequence of events
- Discover themes in literature and across genres
- Examine and evaluate propaganda
- Evaluate author's point of view/bias

- Make inferences and predictions
- Gain an understanding of and utilize narrative writing conventions
- Summarize main ideas of passages

Academic content standards:

- Explain and analyze how an author appeals to an audience and develops an argument or viewpoint in text.
- Identify similar recurring themes across different works. Formulate writing ideas and identify a topic appropriate to the purpose and audience.
- Compose narratives that establish a specific setting, plot and a consistent point of view, and develop characters by using sensory details and concrete language.
- Use revision strategies to improve the style, variety of sentence structure, clarity of the controlling idea, logic, effectiveness of word choice and transitions between paragraphs, passages or ideas.
- Formulate open-ended research questions suitable for investigation and adjust questions as necessary while research is conducted.
- Organize information from various resources and select appropriate sources to support central ideas, concepts and themes.
- Communicate findings, reporting on the substance and processes orally, visually and in writing or through multimedia.

Proposed Media:

1. *Schindler's List* (Video). Universal Studios, 1993.

- This film, produced and directed by Steven Spielberg, is based on the true story of a German businessman who employed over 1000 Polish Jews in his factories

during the Holocaust in order to save their lives. The movie was adapted from the novel *Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally.

- This video can be checked out from Stark County District Library or most local video stores.

Suggested use: Show the movie clip of Schindler's List that depicts Jews being evicted from their homes by the Nazis. Then have students write about which items they would choose to take with them if they were in a similar situation. Then discuss the writings as a class to look at the differences. Were only useful items included? Why or why not?

2. ***Memory of the Camps*** (Video/Website). PBS Video, 1985.

- This film is a disturbing documentary showing scenes from the liberation of various German concentration camps during the Holocaust. Originally filmed by British and American cameramen in 1945, this film was never seen until 40 years later, in 1985, when it was broadcast by Frontline on PBS. The companion website, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/camp/> (accessed on October 5, 2008), has a teacher's guide, FAQs and more.
- This video is available for viewing online with Windows Media Player or RealPlayer. The computer lab must be reserved in advance.

Suggested use: Have students, in groups, choose one of the 8 camps depicted in the film and prepare a brief report to the class explaining the significant events at that camp. Then show students a few carefully selected segments of the film. Ask them to write about the differences between hearing about the camps and actually seeing the camps on film. The contrasts should be stark.

3. ***America and the Holocaust*** (Video/Website). PBS Video, 1994.

- This is a film showing how America failed to open its doors to the victims of the Holocaust due to numerous political and social factors of the time. It shows how leaders and common citizens preferred to ignore the injustices and continued to engage in anti-Semitic prejudices. This film also has a companion website at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/holocaust/tguide/index.html> (accessed on October 2, 2008).
- This film is available for purchase on DVD from www.shoppbs.org for \$19.95 and is also available via inter-library loan from Stark County District Library.

Suggested use: Compare the coverage of local, national, and world news in your local Sunday newspaper. How is the news of trouble in countries where the United States is involved reported differently than in countries where it isn't? What can students infer from the placement of different articles within the paper? What can they infer from the differences in headlines and the amount of space allotted to different issues? What do they think the newspaper reflects about our society? Its values? Its interests? (This activity was selected from the companion website's Teacher's Guide.)

4. ***Museum of Tolerance-Children of the Holocaust*** (Website/Visuals)

<http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/pp.asp?c=arLPK7PILqF&b=249685> accessed on October 8, 2008.

- This website provides photographs and biographies of hundreds of children of the holocaust.
- The computer lab must be reserved in advance.

Suggested use: Read about, then discuss as a class what it was like to be a Jewish child during the Holocaust. As a class, create and perform a reader's theater script based on

Jewish children of the Holocaust. Place students in groups and have them develop a character and dialogue. Then put them all together to create the final product and have students volunteer to read the various parts.

5. ***United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Learning Materials and Resources for Students*** (Website/Audio/Video) <http://www.ushmm.org/education/forstudents/resource/> accessed on October 8, 2008.

- This website utilizes many types of media for students to use to learn about the Holocaust including photographs, print, video, audio and more. A Holocaust encyclopedia, identification cards, personal histories, chronology, and family guide are just some of the features of this comprehensive site.
- The computer lab must be reserved in advance.

Suggested use: Do a class KWL. Students list what they know and what they want to know about the Holocaust. Compile a list of class questions. Students will answer their own questions by doing online investigation. Questions and answers will be discussed as a class.

6. ***Holocaust Survivors*** (Audio/Visual/Website) <http://www.holocaustsurvivors.org/> accessed on October 8, 2008.

- This website provides both the written stories and audio-taped oral interviews of six Holocaust survivors including a death train escapee, prisoners of war, labor camp prisoner, and a hidden child. Photographs of the survivors and their families are also available.
- The computer lab must be reserved in advance.

Suggested use: Use as an introduction to the narrative writing assignment. Students will write a narrative from the perspective of a Holocaust victim. Explain to students that they may choose to be anyone they want to be. However, they need to base their background and experiences on *real* situations gleaned from the reading and course study they have previously done.

7. ***A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust-Nazi Propaganda Illustrations*** (Visuals)

<http://fcit.usf.edu/holocaust/arts/ARTPROP.HTM>

- Here are four pictures of anti-Semitic, Nazi propaganda. Two will be used for this lesson. One depicts a snake smothering a young virgin. The snake is decorated with Jewish stars. The other depicts a “Jewish” octopus with its tentacles encompassing and injuring territories on a globe.

Suggested use: Use these visuals to discuss the theme of anti-Semitism and its Christian and economic roots. Pass out copies of these two pictures to students. Assign students to write two point-of-view guides. For one guide, they are to respond to the propaganda pictures from an Aryan viewpoint. For the other, they are to respond to the pictures from the perspective of a Jewish person.

8. ***Deathly Silence: Everyday People in the Holocaust-Teaching Guide*** (Electronic Publication). Plater Robinson, 1997, 5th Edition, Southern Institute for Education and Research at Tulane University.

http://www.southerninstitute.info/holocaust_education/dsindex.html accessed on October 5, 2008.

- This guide was created to aid teachers in developing lessons that address the Holocaust, the role of “innocent bystanders,” and how that historical tragedy relates to today’s world and can be used to promote tolerance.
- This guide is available for viewing online and can also be downloaded as a PDF.

Suggested use: To develop the meaning of discrimination, racism, and stereotypes, allow students to write about an event or time when they felt discriminated against. Provide a forum for discussing their feelings and analyzing the actions they took. Discuss the discrimination of immigrants to the United States during the era prior to the Holocaust. How does this compare with the discrimination faced by immigrants today? Are there differences in treatments of immigrants depending on their homeland, religious beliefs, or other factors? What can everyday people do to assist recent immigrants? (This activity was selected from the Lesson Plan section of the Teaching Guide.)

9. *The Holocaust—A Guide for Teachers* (Website). Gary Grobman, 1990.

<http://remember.org/guide/index.html> accessed on October 5, 2008.

- This is another extremely comprehensive guide for teachers to use while teaching a Holocaust unit. It is full of resources, activities, evaluations and much more for every aspect of the Holocaust including Hitler, stereotypes and prejudices, bystanders, resisters, and rescuers, the “final solution,” and more.
- The computer lab must be reserved in advance.

Suggested use: Use this guide to gather information on the role religion played in the persecution of Jews and Jehovah’s Witnesses during the Nazi regime. Discuss with students the religious, economic, and political reasons for the persecution. Allow students to choose the perspective of Jews, Jehovah’s Witnesses, or Nazis, and defend the actions

taken by the group. Provide opportunities for students to express their personal convictions regardless of the group they defended.

10. *The Anne Frank Center USA, Education Resources* (Website)

<http://www.annefrank.com/education/resources/> accessed on October 2, 2008.

- A collection of resources to be used by teachers when teaching the book, *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, and about the Holocaust. This collection includes many free downloads as Microsoft Word documents, Power Point presentations and PDFs.
- The computer lab must be reserved in advance.

Suggested use: Incorporating the book, and information on this website, students will learn about the importance of helping others in need. Students will share stories with the class about times when they helped someone and how it affected both their lives. Then, as a class, investigate local and world organizations that help those in need. Decide on one organization to assist and plan a day for the activity—be it a car wash to raise funds for flood victims, spending a day helping out at the local soup kitchen, collecting books, coats, supplies, or food for disadvantaged families and children, or another project decided upon by the class. Afterward, students will write a personal reflection on the experience.

Selected media and how it will be used

Together, Miss Brawley and I have decided to use six of the ten media that I suggested. The *Memory of the Camps* video is not going to be used because we determined it to be a bit too mature for this age group. Also, the *America and the Holocaust* video will not be used because there is really only enough time for one video to be shown during this unit. Miss Brawley agreed

to use the *Schindler's List* video and suggested activity as stated above. She is also interested in using *A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust-Nazi Propaganda Illustrations* and suggested activity, however instead of having students view the pictures on the computers, she would print out hard copies to hand out in class. This saves her the trouble of having to reserve the computer lab for another day.

Having students write a narrative essay is a main priority for this unit. However, instead of using just the one website associated with that activity, students would be encouraged to explore many. They can gather information from all of these sites to use in their essays. The list of websites, which will be presented to the students in a list, would include:

- ***Museum of Tolerance-Children of the Holocaust***
<http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/pp.asp?c=arLPK7PILqF&b=249685>
- ***United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Learning Materials and Resources for Students*** <http://www.ushmm.org/education/forstudents/resource/>
- ***Holocaust Survivors*** <http://www.holocaustsurvivors.org/>
- ***The Anne Frank Center USA, Education Resources***
<http://www.annefrank.com/education/resources/>

The two teacher's guides, *Deathly Silence: Everyday People in the Holocaust-Teaching Guide* and *The Holocaust—A Guide for Teachers*, will not be used simply because Miss Brawley has ample resources and limited time available to teach this unit. However, she has said that she will take note of them in case she needs to use them for future reference.