

Lesson Title: Survivors: Rebuilding Lives, Families, and Communities

<b>Lesson Details:</b>		
<u>Unit:</u> The Aftermath	<u>Duration:</u> One to two 45-50 minute class periods; one to explore Holocaust survivor testimonies (in-person or online), and one for group presentations of individual survivor oral reports. If possible, allow students time outside of class to prepare for group presentations.	
<b>Lesson Notes for Teachers:</b>		
<p>The survivors of the Holocaust faced many difficulties in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust. The physical and emotional challenges they confronted were enormous. Gradually, most were able to rebuild their lives, and reestablish families and communities. Nevertheless, the past, and all that was lost, should never be forgotten. Students can learn a great deal from the lives and testimonies of Holocaust survivors. This lesson provides that opportunity.</p> <p>Holocaust survivor testimonies are used most effectively when they tell the full-life stories of the survivors. In other words, these oral histories put the events of the Holocaust into context. They show that the events were experienced by people with real lives and personalities, who had hopes and dreams for the future very much like our own. When testimonies give us insight into the lives of families and communities before the Holocaust, they become more powerful. When they deepen our understanding of the religious, cultural, educational, and social lives of those who would later become victims, they bring the criminal nature of the Holocaust into sharp relief. When they also focus on the later lives of survivors, many of whom are our neighbors, they make it easier for us to recognize our common bonds of humanity.</p>		
<b>Design Questions/Lesson Focus/Marzano Elements:</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can/do people rebuild their lives after experiencing catastrophic loss?</li> <li>How does the rebuilding process differ if the loss is the result of intentional abuse, rather than a natural disaster?</li> <li>What responsibility does the larger society have in assisting the rebuilding process?</li> <li>What does it mean to belong to a community? How can community be regained once it has been lost?</li> <li>What can be learned from the experiences of people who had to rebuild lives, families, and communities after catastrophic loss?</li> </ol>		
<u>X</u> Introducing New Knowledge DQ2 Main Element: 11 – Helping students elaborate on new content	<u>X</u> Deepening or Practicing DQ3 Main Element: 20 Helping students revise knowledge	<u>X</u> Generating Hypotheses DQ4 Main Element: 22 - Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypothesis generation and testing
<b>Focus Standards/Benchmarks:</b> Please note – These lessons are designed to be flexible for use in a variety of Florida-approved middle and high school Social Studies and ELA courses. With minor adaptations, the activities described in the lesson may be used in a variety of settings. Only a few of the standards and benchmarks listed below will be used in any particular class. Teachers should choose the main skill and content standards/benchmarks that are most applicable for the courses they teach.		
<p>LAFS.K12.R.3.7-Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.</p> <p>LAFS.K12.SL.2.4-Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>LAFS.68.RH.1.2-Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</p> <p>LAFS.68.WHST.3.7-Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of</p>		

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exploration.  
 LAFS.68.WHST.3.9-Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.  
 SS.912.A.6.3 Analyze the impact of the Holocaust during World War II on Jews as well as other groups.  
 SS.912.A.7.16-Examine changes in immigration policy and attitudes toward immigration since 1950.  
 SS.912.W.7.6 Analyze the restriction of individual rights and the use of mass terror against populations in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and occupied territories.  
 SS.912.W.7.7 Trace the causes and key events related to World War II.  
 SS.912.W.7.8 Explain the causes, events, and effects of the Holocaust (1933-1945) including its roots in the long tradition of anti-Semitism, 19th century ideas about race and nation, and Nazi dehumanization of the Jews and other victims.  
 SS.912.W.7.11-Describe the effects of World War II.  
 SS.912.W.8.6-Explain the 20th century background for the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948 and the ongoing military and political conflicts between Israel and the Arab-Muslim world.  
 SS.912.W.9.2-Describe the causes and effects of post-World War II economic and demographic changes.

**Daily Learning Goal and Scale (Student-friendly language)**

Students will research testimonies and other accounts from Holocaust survivors to assess the challenges they faced rebuilding their lives, to analyze their reflections on their lives and experiences before, during, and after the Holocaust, and to evaluate the impact of their testimonies on students and society-at-large today.

<u>2.0 Simpler Content</u>	<u>3.0 Target</u>	<u>4.0 More Complex</u>
<p>Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List difficulties from survivor testimonies that enumerate the challenges they faced in the aftermath of the Holocaust.</li> <li>List actions taken by survivors from their testimonies to describe how they rebuilt their lives after the Holocaust.</li> <li>Identify the role of survivors in helping people to remember and learn from the Holocaust today.</li> </ol>	<p>Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpret survivor testimonies to understand the challenges they faced in the aftermath of the Holocaust.</li> <li>Analyze survivor testimonies to understand the processes by which they rebuilt their lives after the Holocaust.</li> <li>Evaluate the role of survivors in helping people to remember and learn from the Holocaust today.</li> </ol>	<p>Students will:</p> <p>Create a model for the delivery of assistance to survivors of catastrophic loss that takes into account the actual and perceived needs of the survivors over short and longer terms and also the need to create support for these efforts in the (non-victim) society-at-large.</p>

**Formative Assessment Strategies/Monitoring for Desired Effect:**

- Teacher observation and questioning of groups and individuals at each step of the instructional process and during transitions between activities.
- Teacher use of probing and redirecting questions based on the experiences of Holocaust survivors as related in recorded testimonies and/or other presentation formats.
- Student written and oral discussion responses to the experiences of Holocaust survivors as related in recorded testimonies and/or other presentation formats.
- Exit Slip: Ask students to respond to the following scenario:  
 Imagine that you have a friend in another school who has never studied about the Holocaust and doesn't know that there are any survivors living in the United States. Write a brief postcard to your friend telling about the experience of meeting a Holocaust survivor (or viewing an oral history testimony). Write a few sentences to explain your feelings about the experience and what you think was the most important

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lesson you learned.

### Lesson Sequence:

Introduction/Hook: (May be done with students individually or organized into small groups.)

Play the first six minutes of the video entitled, “The Return to Life in the DP Camps” ([http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/video/hevt\\_return\\_to\\_life.asp](http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/video/hevt_return_to_life.asp) or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Trs84VCuPRc>)

Ask students to list two to three problems that Jewish Holocaust survivors faced in the aftermath of the Holocaust and to also list two to three things the survivors did to try to overcome these problems. Have students record their answers during the video presentation, then discuss their responses together in their groups, or with the whole class, afterward.

### Instruction Steps:

Note 1: Whenever possible, students should be given the chance to hear to a Holocaust survivor in person. There can be no substitute for this experience. Online testimonies may be used to supplement this experience, but they should not be used to replace it unless no chance exists for the in-person testimony.

Note 2: There are two approaches that may be used when studying survivor testimonies. Online databases allow students to access single testimonies or testimony excerpts. Students may explore one survivor’s experience in depth or they may use more than one testimony to explore multiple perspectives.

Note 3: Many survivors, when they speak to student groups, end their testimonies with their liberation at the end of the war. You may choose to ask them to include testimony from the post-war, rebuilding period.

1. Introduce the topic of survivor testimonies by informing students that each one is personal and unique. Since survivors didn’t experience the Holocaust at within the same time frames, in the same places, or in the same way, their stories may vary widely. This is to be expected.
2. If students will have the opportunity to hear from a survivor in person, have them write down questions that they would like to ask beforehand. Remind them that survivors have concerns about dignity and privacy, just like anyone else. Help them understand the types of questions that are appropriate. If at all possible, speak with the survivor first to find out the extent to which he/she is comfortable answering questions. Also, remind students that telling their stories can be painful for survivors, even for those who speak frequently. If there is a Holocaust Center in your community, the Center’s staff may be able to help you arrange for a visit by a survivor.
  - a. If the opportunity for a survivor to speak in-person is not possible, you may choose to use a professionally produced video featuring one or more survivor interviews. One good choice is, “Looking Into the Face of Evil” (Available on Vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/28017782>)
  - b. If you choose to use brief testimony excerpts, you will find a very useful collection at the “IWitness” section of the USC Shoah Foundation website. (<http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/BrowseTopics.aspx>) The following topic headings will be particularly appropriate:
    - Displaced Persons Camps – 4 testimony excerpts
    - Liberation – 17 testimony excerpts
    - Post-War Life/Return to Life – 19 testimony excerpts
3. After students have heard a survivor testimony in person or have explored one or more testimony excerpts online, have them do follow-up research on the lives of survivors after the Holocaust. There is an excellent

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online exhibit produced by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum entitled, “Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951” <https://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/displaced-persons/menu.htm> If you are able to give students Internet access in class or in a media/technology center, then explore this site together. If not, perhaps some students with access at home could do a report as a class project. If you prefer, you may choose to use the Yad Vashem online exhibit entitled, “The Return to Life in the Displaced Persons Camps, 1945-1956: A Visual Retrospective” [http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp\\_camps/index.asp](http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp_camps/index.asp).

4. If you choose to include extra class periods for this lesson, assign students to working groups of 3 to 4 students. Have each group select a Holocaust survivor from the USC Shoah Foundation website and prepare a 5 (or more) minute presentation about their survivor’s experience to include brief information about the following topics:
- Biographical information (Date of birth, location before the Holocaust, other family members)
  - Life experiences before the Holocaust
  - Experiences during the Holocaust
  - Liberation
  - Rebuilding life after the Holocaust, including new homes, education, careers, marriage and family, etc.

You may choose separate research and presentation roles for each group member, or allow students to make those choices for themselves. Each student should do some of the research, but the presentation tasks may not need to include an “up front” role for each student. Depending on how much time you choose to allow for research (inside or outside of class time, you may require the inclusion of visuals and graphic representations in the presentations.

5. As a conclusion to this lesson, have students do the “exit slip” writing response described in the assessment section of this lesson plan.

**Adaptation/Differentiation Strategies:**

The teacher may identify key terms in the historical sources and in the survivor testimonies prior to use and introduce this vocabulary to the class before the lesson and/or to each group prior to their research.

The teacher may select specific testimonies to be used for research.

The teacher may provide the students with basic background information about the individuals they have selected (or been assigned) and their specific experiences to increase their familiarity with them as an aid to research.

The teacher may set different time limits on the presentations or alter the methods of presentation to keep the scope of the assignment manageable for the time available and appropriate for the developmental level of the students.

The teacher may allow for the inclusion of non-linguistic methods of presentation for students to report about their survivor’s experiences.

**Extended Learning:**

Students may also be interested in learning more about the personal stories of people who were victims of other genocides or periods of human rights abuse. The IWitness section of the USC Shoah Foundation also contains testimony from survivors of other genocides that students may use for further research.

Note: There are many valuable websites that may be used to study other genocides, but the same caution must be used as with Holocaust research. Every site is not of the highest quality and some may even contain genocide denial. Teachers should provide students with careful guidance when conducting online research.

**Resources and Materials:**

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1. USHMM Online Exhibit: “Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951”  
<https://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/displaced-persons/menu.htm>
2. Yad Vashem Online Exhibit: “The Return to Life in the Displaced Persons Camps, 1945-1956: A Visual Retrospective” [http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp\\_camps/index.asp](http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp_camps/index.asp)
3. The videotape “Looking Into the Face of Evil” (Available on Vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/28017782>)
4. The IWitness section of the USC Shoah Foundation website - <http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/BrowseTopics.aspx>
5. Computer workstations with Internet access