

Meet a Holocaust Survivor | Lesson Plan

How can learning about the Holocaust help us recognize the importance of standing up against hate and injustice in our world today?

Students will understand the Holocaust's historical significance, its lessons for today, and how courage and resilience are vital to standing against evil. They will also reflect on how to defend the persecuted and speak up for what is right.

Learning Objectives:

- Define the Holocaust and its impact on Jewish people and the world.
- Identify examples of courage and resilience during the Holocaust, including Miriam's survival story.
- Examine why it is important to speak up against evil and persecution.
- Reflect on how lessons from the Holocaust can apply to their lives today.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Holocaust:** The systematic persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazis during World War II.
- **Adolf Hitler:** The leader of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, known for initiating World War II and implementing policies that led to the Holocaust, the systematic persecution and murder of millions, primarily Jews, as part of his authoritarian regime.
- **Nazi:** A member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), a political party in Germany led by Adolf Hitler that ruled from 1933 to 1945. The party implemented policies that led to World War II and the Holocaust.
- **Genocide:** The deliberate attempt to destroy an entire group of people based on their race, religion, or ethnicity.
- **Concentration Camps:** Prison camps where Jews and others targeted by the Nazis were imprisoned, forced to work, and often killed.
- **Auschwitz:** A network of concentration and extermination camps operated by Nazi Germany during World War II, located in occupied Poland. It was the largest of its kind and a central site of the Holocaust, where millions of people, primarily Jews, were imprisoned, forced into labor, and murdered.
- **Yellow Star:** A symbol that Jewish people were forced to wear on their clothing by the Nazis during the Holocaust to mark them as different. It was used to isolate and discriminate against them.
- **Swastika:** A symbol that the Nazis used as their emblem, which became a sign of hate and fear during the Holocaust. Before the Nazis, it was used in some cultures as a symbol of peace or good luck.
- **Resilience:** The ability to recover from challenges or hardship.
- **Persecution:** Treating someone unfairly or cruelly, often because of their race, religion, or beliefs.

Scan to watch episode:



Educational Standards: CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.9, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2 CCRA.SL.4

Academic Subject Areas: Biography, Israel, Racism

What You'll Need

- Video: *Meet a Holocaust Survivor* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Meet a Holocaust Survivor* (Click [Here](#))
- Age-appropriate images of Holocaust events mentioned in the video (e.g., Hall of Names, concentration camps)
- Image of the swastika from the episode (see page 5 below)

Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Warm-Up: (15 minutes)

Set the Scene with a Scenario:

1. Have students imagine they are on the playground and see someone being picked on by a group of kids. Ask:
 - What would you do if you saw this happening?
 - How do you think the person being picked on feels if no one helps them?
 - Why might some people choose to stay silent instead of helping?
2. Emphasize that standing up for someone takes courage but can make a big difference.
3. Introduce the Holocaust: Show students the word "Holocaust" on the board and explain that it was the genocide of six million Jews during World War II.
4. Explain that during the Holocaust, many people stayed silent, and the consequences were much more serious.
5. Introduce key vocabulary words and definitions.
6. Show still images from the video (e.g., the Hall of Names, Jewish prisoners in a concentration camp) to help contextualize the terms.
7. Explain that students will learn about a Holocaust survivor, Miriam, and how her story helps us understand the importance of courage and standing against hatred.

Introduce Symbols and Their Meanings:

1. Continue with a thoughtful discussion to help students understand how symbols can carry both positive and negative meanings, focusing on those associated with the Holocaust, such as the swastika and the Yellow Star.
2. Begin with a quick and respectful discussion on symbols that students know well. Show visual examples like:
 - A heart (love, kindness)
 - A peace sign (harmony, unity)
 - A stop sign (warning, safety)
3. Begin a guided discussion by asking:
 - What do these symbols represent?

- How do these symbols make you feel when you see them?
4. Discuss how symbols can carry powerful messages, emotions, or ideas.
 5. Explain: *While some symbols make us feel happy or safe, others can cause fear, pain, or sadness because of the way they have been used.*
 6. Display an image of the swastika as seen in the video (on page 5 of this lesson plan). Ensure the tone remains respectful, emphasizing the seriousness of the topic.
 7. Guiding Questions for Discussion:
 - What do you think this symbol represents today?
 - The girls in the image appear to have a strong reaction to seeing it. Why do you think that is?
 - How might this symbol make someone feel, especially if they or their family were affected by the Holocaust?
 8. Provide Historical Context:
 - The swastika was an ancient symbol used in some cultures as a sign of good luck or peace.
 - However, during the 1930s and 1940s, the Nazis adopted the swastika as their official symbol. Under their regime, it came to represent hate, violence, and the persecution of innocent people.
 - Today, the swastika is widely seen as a symbol of hatred because of its connection to the Holocaust.
 9. Reinforce: Symbols can change their meaning over time depending on how they are used. The swastika is now a painful reminder of the harm caused by the Nazis.
 10. Show an image of the Yellow Star that Jewish people were forced to wear during the Holocaust.
 11. Provide Historical Context:
 - The Nazis made Jewish people wear Yellow Stars on their clothing to identify, isolate, and discriminate against them.
 - The star was meant to separate Jewish people from others and to encourage cruelty toward them.
 12. Guiding Questions for Discussion:
 - How do you think it would feel to be forced to wear something that marks you as “different”?
 - What does the Yellow Star tell us about how the Nazis treated Jewish people?
 - Why do you think symbols like this became tools of harm?
 13. Transition to the video and explain that they will now watch an animated episode about how the Holocaust was a tragic time in history when the Nazis used symbols like the swastika and Yellow Star as tools of persecution to harm Jewish people and others. Learning about these symbols helps us understand the importance of standing up against hate and injustice today.
 14. Display a copy of the “Meet a Holocaust Survivor Worksheet” and pass out worksheets to students. Instruct students to fill it out as they watch the video.

Watch and Complete: (20 minutes)

1. Watch the video.
2. Assist students with completing the worksheet alongside the video, encouraging note-taking and active listening.
3. Pause throughout the video to allow students to answer questions—especially short answer responses. If necessary, model short answer responses, restating the question and writing a complete sentence.

Wrap-Up: (10 minutes)

1. Allow students 10 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Collect as a formative assessment or discuss in class.
3. Ask students to share their responses to the Making Connections question.
4. Conclude with an open-ended prompt for students to reflect on how they can be the change they want to see in the world:
 - How do you think one small act of courage or standing up for someone could make a difference in the world?
5. Closing Message/Key Takeaway: *Today, we learned about the Holocaust and how important it is to remember what happened. The stories of Miriam and Hanna show us that courage and resilience can stand against even the greatest evil. Your actions—no matter how small—can help create a world where hate has no place and everyone feels valued and safe.*

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.

