

Teaching Film with Testimony

The Tattooed Torah

The short animated film, *The Tattooed Torah*, based on the beloved children's book by Marvell Ginsburg, brings to life the true story of the rescue and restoration of a small Torah from Brno, Czechoslovakia, confiscated by the Nazis during German-occupation (World War II). The film makes this difficult story of the Holocaust accessible to a younger audience.

In the film, the Torah is described as the most “precious possession” of the Jewish people and is a symbol that represents memories tied to cultural heritage, family, hope and resilience. When the film is taught with audiovisual testimony of survivors in IWitness who share memories of their experiences before, during and after the Holocaust, it more fully contextualizes the historical backdrop and enables young students to expand their perspectives about the events, decisions and personal impact presented in the film.



While the film engages student interest and captivates their curiosity, IWitness provides educators with interactive testimony-based resources to further students' understanding of the film's key themes. When paired together, these resources and strategies build critical literacy skills, cross-cultural understanding and social-emotional aptitudes. The guidelines below offer educators strategies for effectively teaching *The Tattooed Torah* with testimony for a primary student audience.

IWitness Strategies for Integrating Testimony

Access *The Tattooed Torah* on IWitness: [Visit IWitness to access the film and its trailer](#) as well as the connected testimony-based resources to contextualize the events and universal themes featured in the film.

Humanizing the Story: View and download short, curated clips of testimony that spark student discussion, reflection and analysis of survivors' memories and their experiences.

Tip: To accompany students' viewing of one or more clips of testimony, integrate an IWitness digitally fillable graphic organizer (available on the [Watch page](#)) to strengthen student comprehension and critical thinking.

Contextualize the Story: Guide students through age-appropriate interactive activities designed to introduce key historical aspects of the Holocaust and the universal themes addressed in the film.

Preparing to View the Film:

- Access and download the lesson, [Precious Possessions - The Tattooed Torah](#).
- Follow the testimony-based lesson, designed with our 4Cs (Consider, Collect, Construct, Communicate) pedagogy, to build students' historical background and understanding that the Torah is a precious possession to the Jewish people that is passed on generation to generation.

Viewing the Film: The Tattooed Torah (21:13 min)

- Complete the lesson [Precious Possessions - The Tattooed Torah](#).
- Access and play the film to engage students in the story of the tattooed Torah.
- Encourage students to draw connections between the themes conveyed in the film, the clips of testimony with which they engaged, and the relevance to their own lives.

After Viewing the Film:

- Access and download the lesson, [The Tattooed Torah - After Viewing](#).
- Follow the testimony-based lesson, designed with our 4Cs (Consider, Collect, Construct, Communicate) pedagogy, to broaden students' understanding of precious possessions and draw connections to examples in their own lives.