To schedule a field trip or reserve free classroom resources please contact:
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Responsible Teaching of the Holocaust

The Holocaust is a challenging subject to teach. The complexity of its history and the emotionally sensitive nature of the material may present difficulties, but the rewards are worth the effort. Many students find the study of the Holocaust to be compelling and it contains important lessons for our times. As a result, the decisions you make about what material to include and what methods to use will have significant consequences, not just for the success of your unit, but also on your students’ personal and academic development. It is of critical importance to consider the rationale for teaching about the Holocaust, so that your activities will support your goals. There are several excellent reasons worthy of consideration:

- The Holocaust is an extraordinarily well-documented and significant chapter in the history of the modern world. To exclude it from the curriculum would be a gross distortion of history. Additionally, neglecting to teach about the Holocaust would support the Nazi goal of eliminating their victims (in this case, from our memory and study).

- The way people acted during the Holocaust reveals much about human behavior in general. This holds true for the good and the heroic, as well as for the evil or indifferent. It also holds true for the present, as well as the past.

- The Holocaust reveals the dangers inherent in all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Learning about the Holocaust can help students understand problems that have existed in our own history and society. It can also help strengthen their resolve to confront those problems in a straightforward and positive way.

- Learning about the Holocaust can help students gain a fundamental respect for human rights and for the dignity of all people. It can help them see that diversity among people is a source of strength, not a weakness. It can also help them recognize that diversity does not negate the common bonds of humanity shared by all.

- Students may learn through their study of the Holocaust that each person is responsible for his/her own actions, and that everyone can have an impact on events and on the people around them.

- The Holocaust was implemented by a Nazi regime that also sought to suppress all political opposition. Hopefully, this will impress upon students the necessity of supporting and safeguarding our own democratic values and institutions.

- Holocaust education is a required part of the curriculum. In April 1994, the Florida Legislature mandated the study of the Holocaust in Florida public schools. The language of this mandate is quite specific in expressing the legislature's intent.

In addition to understanding the rationale for Holocaust education, it is equally important to understand how to teach about it responsibly. Teaching about the Holocaust demands responsibility in four distinct areas: responsibility to students, to the community, to the victims, and to historical truth.
Responsibility to Students:

Learning about the Holocaust should be beneficial to the intellectual, emotional, social, and moral development of students. This goal should inform every decision you make regarding the content of your unit and the methods you use to teach and evaluate. The following suggestions may provide some guidance:

- Encourage students to use their study of the Holocaust to examine issues of contemporary relevance, both societal and personal.
- Encourage students to resist and reject attitudes of prejudice and to value people as individuals.
- Help students to value diversity rather than be threatened by it.
- Engage students in activities that encourage higher level thinking skills.
- Create affective as well as cognitive goals.
- Give students plenty of opportunities to respond creatively to what they have learned.
- Avoid using graphic images and descriptions of Nazi brutality for shock value. Although graphic photos and accounts have documentary value, their indiscriminate use can have negative consequences. On one hand, they appeal mostly to prurient interest and on the other, they may traumatize sensitive students. In either case, the end result is a desensitizing effect that distances students from an empathetic understanding of the victims.
- Don’t try to replicate the experiences of victims through simulation activities. Instead, seek to evoke empathy through recognition of common ground. (Note: Simulations tend to trivialize the experiences of the victims. If a simulation could be created that would accurately recreate Holocaust experiences, it would be so traumatic that it would be inappropriate as an educational activity.)

Responsibility to the Community:

One of the goals of Holocaust education should be to inspire students to see themselves as members of an inclusive community. Holocaust education should therefore be characterized by the following traits:

- It should play a role in preparing students for responsible citizenship by teaching respect and concern for others.
- It should unite people, rather than divide them into competing groups.
- It should help students be more attentive and sensitive to other histories of persecution that they will study in school (and also those they may not).
- It should respect the right of people to define their own identities, not seeking to impose group identities arbitrarily as the Nazis did.
- It should foster an appreciation for the democratic values and institutions that support a free society.
Responsibility to the Victims:

Nazi ideology did not recognize the Jewish people as members of the human family. They portrayed them through propaganda as sub-human. They created policies that denied them basic human rights and dignity. They characterized the killing program as a health measure analogous to the eradication of a disease. In light of this reality, one of the main goals of Holocaust education must be to restore recognition of their victims' humanity. Holocaust education must:

- Teach that Nazi anti-Semitic and racist ideology was harmful and false.
- Show that specific Nazi stereotypes and accusations that portrayed Jews and other targeted victims as a threat to Germany were not true.
- Recognize victims individually and collectively as human beings.
- Reject the temptation to blame the victims for their predicament.
- Honor the memory of the victims by seeing them primarily as people with complex and multi-faceted lives, not merely as victims.
- Acknowledge that the victims did resist the Nazis (using the methods that were possible and seemed to make the most sense at the time).
- Allow the victims voices to be heard through oral and written testimonies.

Responsibility to Truth and Accuracy:

Over the years, myths have arisen regarding the Holocaust. Some of these have attained widespread acceptance with the public. Perpetuation of these distortions, or failure to debunk them, will seriously hinder the ability of teachers and students to derive meaningful lessons from study of the Holocaust. To avoid misconceptions:

- Respect the complexity of this history. Avoid over-generalizing about events or groups. A variety of factors made the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust possible. A single explanation is not sufficient. There is no such thing as all Germans or all Jews. All perpetrators did not act from the same motives. All Jews did not experience or respond to events in the same way. Accurately portraying this complexity helps students to reject stereotypes.
- Teach about the victims of the Holocaust who were not Jews, but avoid trying to compare victimization. While it is useful to show why the Nazis targeted various people for persecution, it is not appropriate to compare the suffering of victims by group. All victims suffered. The position and treatment of the Jews was unique because of the place they occupied in Nazi ideology and because all Jews were targeted for elimination, not because their suffering was qualitatively different.
- Teach about the people who resisted the Nazis and those who became rescuers. Though they did not constitute a high percentage of the population, their actions illustrate that humane, courageous, and civilized behavior was possible under Nazi rule.
- Avoid stereotypes that "demonize" the perpetrators (or to a lesser extent, the bystanders). Demonizing the perpetrators strips them of their human identity, making it difficult to learn lessons from their choices.
Holocaust Education: The Florida Legislative Mandate

On April 29, 1994, the Florida Legislature mandated that instruction on the Holocaust be included in public schools. The language of the mandate reveals the intent of the Legislature.

Florida Statute # 1003.42(g) – Required Instruction

"Members of the instructional staff of the public schools, subject to the rules and regulations of the state board and of the school board, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction the following:

The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions."

This mandate does not limit instruction on the Holocaust to any grade level or academic subject. Inclusion of Holocaust studies may be spread throughout the curriculum in a variety of appropriate areas. To fulfill the terms of the mandate, a comprehensive Holocaust education program would ideally encompass the following six approaches:

1. A presentation of the history of the Holocaust:
   a. As a calculated and systematic program which culminated in mass murder.
   b. As a turning point in human history.

2. An investigation into human behavior that:
   a. Recognizes the common ground between those involved in the Holocaust and humanity at large.
   b. Analyzes the factors that influence individual and group behavior.
   c. Avoids oversimplification of complex issues and identities.
3. A study of prejudice that includes:
   a. The many manifestations of prejudice (i.e. racism, sexism, age discrimination, antisemitism, religious discrimination, etc.).
   b. The ways in which prejudice develops, functions, and spreads.
   c. The short and long-term effects of prejudice on individuals and societies.
   d. Strategies for prejudice reduction.

4. Recognition of pluralism as the model for our society, in which:
   a. Diversity is valued.
   b. Tolerance of diversity is a positive quality.
   c. Respect for the rights of others is the responsibility of all Americans.

5. An exploration of what it means, to be a responsible and respectful person.

6. An investigation of democratic values and institutions that recognizes:
   a. The fundamental differences between democratic and non-democratic systems.
   b. That democratic values and institutions can be nurtured and protected only through the continual efforts of concerned, engaged citizens.

The Holocaust was an extraordinarily complex period in history. It defies broad generalizations and easy explanations. Some instructional methods that may be well suited for other subjects are inappropriate for the teaching of the Holocaust. Careful thought and planning are needed to ensure historical accuracy and sound methodology. A good Holocaust studies program will provide students with an understandable and compelling narrative. It should provide a broad view of the subject, while at the same time affording the opportunity to encounter individual lives. It must also place the people and events of the Holocaust in appropriate geographic and historical contexts. Finally, it should offer student’s plentiful opportunities to reflect on personal and collective applications for the lessons learned.

Obviously, most teachers will not have the time to explore all of these issues within the context of a single Holocaust unit. Most will choose to focus on those aspects of the topic most closely related to their course curriculum. Hopefully, students will study about the Holocaust in a variety of classes throughout their years in school and will have many opportunities to learn and apply its vital lessons.
Holocaust Center Education Services

Field Trips: to the Holocaust Center consisting of a museum tour and a film presentation are available free of charge. Programs are flexible according to the needs of each student group. Details about the field trip program are contained in this guide.

School Presentations: Guest speakers are available to come to your school for a presentation on the Holocaust. Many topics are available and may be customized according to need.

Holocaust Survivor Testimonies: There are limited opportunities for local Holocaust survivors to share their personal experiences and reflections with students at schools or at the Holocaust Center. When survivors are not available to present testimonies in-person, the Center can assist schools in accessing oral histories online.

Teaching Trunks: which contain class sets of books, audio-visual and reference materials, and curriculum guides are available for checkout. There are separate elementary, middle, and high school trunks. Class sets of popular books are also available. Reservations should be made at least six weeks in advance to ensure availability.

Yom Hashoah Creative Arts Contest: The Holocaust Center sponsors an annual art and writing contest which is open to all Central Florida students. The theme is announced in the fall and the contest is scheduled so that the winners may be honored at the annual Yom Hashoah commemoration in April or May. There are separate judging categories for elementary, middle and high school entries.

Teacher Professional Development: Teacher training is available at the Holocaust Center throughout the year. Sessions may also be scheduled at school sites. Sessions of varying length and content may be arranged according to the needs and interests of the participants. A comprehensive Summer Institute is offered at the Holocaust Center each June.

Special Programs and Exhibits: The Holocaust Center hosts special art and history exhibits and film screenings throughout the year. There are also yearly commemoration programs for Kristallnacht and Yom Hashoah. These exhibits and programs are open to the public. Teachers and students are invited to attend.

Prejudice Reduction Education: Individually tailored education programs are available for people who have developed attitudes of prejudice or have become involved in bias crimes or hate group activities. These programs are confidential and may be voluntary or court mandated. For more information about this program, please contact Mitch Bloomer at 628-0555 x 283.

UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying initiative: The Holocaust Center offers a middle school bullying prevention program designed to empower students to respond effectively when they witness bullying behavior to help promote a safe and respectful school environment. This program is described in detail at http://www.holocaustedu.org/bullying-prevention/
The Holocaust Center’s Field Trip Program

Scheduling a Field Trip:

You may reserve a field trip date by calling Mitch Bloomer at 628-0555 x283. A request may also be faxed or sent via e-mail. The following information will be needed when you call:

1. a preferred date and at least one alternate date
2. approximate times for arrival and departure
3. the approximate number of students and chaperones
4. information about any special needs of the group or individual students
5. any request for specific content to meet your curriculum needs

Field trips are available throughout the school year, but high demand during certain periods may make finding an open date difficult. March, April, and May are very popular for field trip bookings. Dates coinciding with special exhibits are also in high demand. If you want to schedule your trip during one of these periods, please try to call as far in advance as possible.

Components of the Field Trip Program:

The standard field trip lasts two hours and consists of a museum tour, a question and answer session, and a film presentation. The duration and content of each part are flexible according to your needs.

The Museum Tour:

Students are given the opportunity for individual exploration of the exhibits at the beginning of the museum tour. The museum contains photo and text displays, art works, artifacts, and short video presentations. Temporary exhibits are periodically on display in the museum, as well. The length of time dedicated to individual viewing is flexible according to the needs and developmental level of the students. A guided tour is then given highlighting key themes expressed in the museum displays. Students are encouraged to ask questions throughout the guided tour program. More information about the museum exhibit is given in the next section of this guide.

The Film Presentation:

This portion of the field trip program is conducted in the Holocaust Center’s Film and Exhibit Hall. The standard film presentation is designed to highlight the survivors’ perspective. If you prefer, you may request a specific film title or topic. The Center has many titles to choose from. This part of the field trip experience will also include a viewing of the special art or history exhibit that is currently on display. The Center also features exhibits that are on temporary loan from Holocaust museums or art galleries from around the world.
Customizing the Field Trip Experience:

The goal of the Holocaust Center is to make the field trip as meaningful as possible. The program has been designed with maximum flexibility in mind. The number of students you may bring varies from 1 to 160. The duration of your stay may be shorter or longer than the standard two hours. Activities besides those already described may be planned. The tour and film presentations may be tailored to the specific needs of your group. When you schedule your field trip, all of these possibilities may be arranged.

Details:

- **Cost:** There is no charge for the field trip program.

- **Transportation:** Transportation must be arranged by the teacher privately or through the school district. At least ten days prior notice is usually required. Costs may vary greatly depending on distance and carrier.

- **Grade Level:** Standard field trips may be scheduled for classes from 5th to 12th grade. Trips for younger students are possible, but require a pre-visit conference to determine appropriate content for the presentation and exhibit viewing.

- **Parking:** Finding parking space for buses is difficult in the small parking lot of the Jewish Community Center. Buses may stay in the fire lane directly in front of the Holocaust Center if the drivers remain with them for the entire duration of the trip. If not, buses may park in the former tennis court lot to the west of the Holocaust Center or in the lot to the south of the Hebrew Day School.

- **Lunch:** Some teachers prefer to have students eat lunch while on the field trip. There are several fast food type restaurants in the vicinity. There are also two nice parks nearby. Maitland Community Park and Lake Lilly Park have picnic tables and rest rooms available. Arrangements must be made directly with the parks. For more information about Maitland City Parks, please call at (407) 539-0042.

- **Large Groups:** Field trips with over 70 students must be divided into two groups. One group will take the museum tour, while the other views the film presentation. The groups will then change places with each other and complete the field trip experience. This arrangement allows the Holocaust Center to host large groups without diminishing the content of the program.
Suggested Pre-visit Preparation and Post-visit Activities

The field trip is most meaningful when students can prepare for the visit and reflect on the experience afterwards. Preparation and reflection are appropriate in three areas:

I Background historical information:

It is not necessary for students to have completed a Holocaust unit prior to their visit. Some teachers prefer the field trip to be an introduction to their Holocaust unit. Others place it in the middle or make it a concluding activity. In any case, it is helpful for students to have some familiarity with the subject before their visit. **Students should be knowledgeable enough to ask informed questions.** A brainstorming session to create questions prior to the visit dramatically improves the quality of the Q&A session.

It is very helpful, but not required, that students are familiar with some basic vocabulary terms frequently used in descriptions of Holocaust history. Some of these are:

- prejudice
- discrimination
- racism (as a specific form of prejudice) [e.g. – All racism is prejudice, but not all prejudice is racism]
- propaganda
- persecution
- segregation
- boycott
- emigration
- expulsion
- ghetto
- concentration camp, labor camp, transit camp, death camp
- genocide (including the Nazi descriptive term “final solution”)
- liberation
- perpetrators, victims, bystanders, rescuers/UpStanders

It is also helpful for students to be familiar with the following history and geography terms:

- Jews, Judaism, Jewish people
- Terms describing non-Jewish victims (political opponents, religious dissenters, Sinti and Roma, people with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities, homosexuals)
- Germany (including Nazi Germany, which describes the nation from 1933-1945)
- Nazi Party (shortened version of the name of the National Socialist German Workers’ Party)
- Europe
- Eastern Europe (including specific nations, especially Poland and the Soviet Union [USSR])
- World War I (1914-1918)
- The Great Depression
- World War II (1939-1945)
- Axis Powers (mainly Germany, Italy, and Japan)
- Allied Powers (mainly Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States of America)

It helps when students are not confused by the terms listed above as they are used at the Holocaust Center, but this does not mean that students must memorize some or all of them prior to a visit. Teachers should introduce content and plan activities to prepare for the visit that are appropriate to their students’ readiness and the time available.
During a two-hour field trip, it is not possible to study the history of the Holocaust in depth. Much of what students will ultimately know about this history will be learned in the classroom before and after their visit.

The elementary, middle and high school trunks described earlier in this guide contain activities and information to give students a thorough background and may be borrowed from the Holocaust Center by request.

II Strategies for interpreting museum exhibits:

The following are a few suggestions for students who visit the museum. The goal is to create an understanding of the methods by which the museum tells the story of the Holocaust.

- Jewish victims of the Holocaust were persecuted because they were Jews, but how was this identity formed? Did it mean the same thing to the victims that it did to others? Did Jews agree among themselves as to its meaning? What other factors (besides Judaism) went into the formation of their personal and collective identities? Have students discuss their own identities. What factors will they consider to be important (age, gender, race, religion, nationality, family, personality, hobbies, etc.)? Will students agree or disagree as to the relative importance of each factor. Who has the right to define an identity for a person or group? With these questions in mind, explore the inadequacy of stereotypes to provide an understanding of complex human behavior and history.

- Have students construct a personal or family history using only photographs. Compare these with the pre-Holocaust photos of Jewish people on display at the Holocaust Center. Focus on the elements that they have in common.

- Ask students to identify a prized personal possession. Compare the responses with the types of items (such as the spoon in our artifact case) that were of value to those struggling to survive Nazi persecution.

- Have students make a list of pre-visit expectations. What do they think they will see and hear? What conclusions will be drawn? After the visit, have them reflect on the accuracy of their expectations.

- Information about the Holocaust comes from the victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and liberators. Ask students to consider how the quality and quantity of these sources will vary based on perspective and availability. When visiting the museum, ask students to categorize the items in the exhibits by source. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective in contributing to our understanding of this history?

- The museum displays are made up of primary sources, secondary sources, and artifacts. Each source type contributes to the understanding of the Holocaust in a different way. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each type? Some spoken or written accounts date from the period of the Holocaust. Others are recollections given later. How does this timing affect the nature of the information?
III Strategies for interpreting memorials and art works:

- Have students list as many memorials or monuments as they can. How are they similar? How do they differ? Does the identity or experience of the subject affect the type of memorial? How?

- Have students create a memorial to an individual or group of their own choosing. Compare these to the memorial displays at the Holocaust Memorial Center.

- Ask students to respond to the following questions about the memorial function of the Holocaust Center:
  1. What is the difference between study and remembrance? How can you “remember” something that occurred before you were born?
  2. Why is it important to remember the victims of the Holocaust?
  3. Should the victims be remembered primarily as victims or, more broadly, as people with diverse life experiences in addition to victimization?
  4. Are there any dangers or pitfalls involved in remembrance?

- Ask students to write/discuss their reactions to the field trip experience in personal terms. The following are a few sample prompts:
  1. Which display evoked the strongest emotional response in you? Describe your response and explain why the display moved you as it did.
  2. Describe the display that most clearly revealed the tragedy of the Holocaust to you.
  4. What personal responsibility does knowledge of the Holocaust impose on you?
Sample Writing Prompts

1. Many students have visited the Holocaust Memorial Center on a field trip. Before you begin writing, think about your field trip experience. Write to tell about what you learned during your visit to the Holocaust Center.

2. Most people keep photos that chronicle personal, school, and family history. People who were victims in the Holocaust had collections of photos, too. Before you begin writing, think about the pre-Holocaust photos of Jewish people you saw at the Holocaust Center. Write to tell what you learned about these people from their photographs.

3. Everyone wants to be known and remembered by family, friends, and community. Before you begin writing, think about how the Nazis tried to wipe out the memory of their victims. Write to tell why it is important for us to keep the memory of Holocaust victims alive.

4. Most people admire those who take risks to help others. They consider them to be heroes. Before you begin writing, think about a person (or group) who risked personal safety to rescue someone during the Holocaust. Write to tell the story of a rescuer or rescuer group during the Holocaust and explain why you admire him, her, or them.

5. Most people believe that prejudice and discrimination are wrong. Before you begin writing, think about the Nazis’ racist and antisemitic ideas and actions. Write to convince students at your school that prejudice and discrimination are wrong.

6. People resent being stereotyped, yet it is common in society. Students are sometimes victims of stereotyping at school. Before you begin writing, think about the ways that the Nazis stereotyped their victims. Also think about a time you were judged on the basis of a stereotype. Write to persuade a teacher or school administrator that stereotyping is unfair.

7. Some people have not had the opportunity to visit a Holocaust museum or to learn much about the Holocaust. Before you begin writing, consider the reasons why learning about the Holocaust has been important to you. Write to encourage a busy friend to visit the Holocaust Center and to learn about this history.
Holocaust Center Emergency Procedures

The safety and security of our visitors is our top priority. Please read the following emergency procedures and return the signed portion of this form to a Holocaust Center representative upon arrival to the museum. Please note—all school groups are required to have a complete list of students and chaperones at all times.

Fire
Evacuate to tennis court parking area.
Should the fire alarm sound during your visit, please direct students to the nearest exit door on the North side of the building and proceed to the lot next to the tennis courts. Students with physical difficulties that prevent them from using stairs will need to evacuate on the South side of the building. Once you have reached the tennis courts, please take attendance to ensure that everyone from your group is present.

Bomb Threat
Evacuate to buses
In the case of a bomb threat, a staff member will instruct your group to evacuate to the school buses. If the buses are deemed unsafe, students will be evacuated to Lake Sybelia Elementary School, located at: 600 Sandspur Rd. Maitland, FL 32751.

Active Shooter
Lockdown your room or proceed to the nearest lockdown area.
In an active shooter situation, a staff member will assist you in locking all doors. Gather students away from windows and doors and do not open your door unless instructed by proper authorities. Instruct students to remain quiet and stay where they are until given the all clear from authorities.

☐ I have read the Holocaust Center’s Emergency Procedures

X ________________________________

______________________________