

ARTHUR AND ROCHELLE BELFER

Exemplary LESSONS

i n i t i a t i v e

LEARNING FROM THE EARLY STAGES OF THE HOLOCAUST

PREPARING FOR THE LESSON

Overview and Background

This lesson was originally developed for onsite use with student groups after they visited the Museum's Permanent Exhibition.

The history of the Holocaust is a powerful subject for pedagogical examination of human behavior and basic moral issues. It also provides an occasion for exploring what it means to be a responsible citizen of the nation and the world—an issue that is at the core of education in the United States.

Through study of the history of the Holocaust, students may learn that:

- Democratic institutions and values are not automatically sustained but rather must be appreciated, nurtured, and protected;
- Remaining silent about or indifferent to the suffering of others or to the infringement of civil rights may perpetuate these problems;
- The Holocaust was not a historical accident—it occurred because individuals, organizations, and governments made choices that fostered hatred, legalized discrimination, and ultimately allowed mass murder to occur.

Study of the Holocaust may also help students learn to identify early warning signs of genocide.

This lesson underscores the importance of questioning, personal responsibility, and critical thinking about world events.

Purpose of Lesson

In this lesson, students will develop visual literacy skills and refine their ability to analyze primary sources by examining photographs from the early years of the Holocaust. Students will be asked to describe the events of the Holocaust, assess whether these photos provided a warning about the genocide that was to come, and identify what the precursors to genocide are. Students will utilize higher-level critical thinking skills by reflecting on their own obligations as citizens of a democracy and by identifying effective methods for presenting information to enlighten and involve the public.

GRADE LEVEL

7–12

GRADE-LEVEL APPLICABILITY

7–12

SUBJECTS

WORLD HISTORY,
AMERICAN HISTORY,
EUROPEAN HISTORY,
GENOCIDE STUDIES,
SOCIAL JUSTICE

TIME REQUIRED

ONE OR TWO CLASS PERIODS

Student Objectives

- Learn to analyze and describe a historical image.
- Investigate possible actions and warning signs that may precede genocide.

Student Activities

- Examine primary source images.
- Investigate Nazi methods of persecution during the Holocaust.
- Craft a message to convey warning signs of the persecution of a group or minority to the public.
- Explore different methods for disseminating information and mobilizing others to take action.

Printed Materials

- Student Hand-Out
- Teacher Resource Sheet
- Student Worksheet

National Archives Worksheets

- Document Analysis: http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/written_document_analysis_worksheet.pdf
- Poster Analysis: http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/poster_analysis_worksheet.pdf
- Cartoon Analysis: http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet.pdf

The Museum's Online Resources

- The Holocaust Encyclopedia: ushmm.org/wlc/en/
- The Committee on Conscience: ushmm.org/conscience/
- Topics to teach: ushmm.org/wlc/article.php?lang=en&ModuleId=10007262
- Photo Archives: ushmm.org/research/collections/photo/

Additional Online Resources

- The Campaign to End Genocide: endgenocide.org
- Genocide Watch: genocidewatch.org
- United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: unhchr.ch
- STAND: standnow.org
- GI-net: genocideintervention.net
- Early Warning Signs Lists: preventgenocide.org/Undocs/KofiAnnanActionPlanToPreventGenocide7Apr2004.htm
- Genocidewatch.org/8stages2006.htm

LESSON

Narrative

Distribute several photographs to be analyzed by students; depending on the class size, you may use up to 13 photos. You may want to organize students in groups and give one photo to each group or give each group several photos from which to choose. You may opt to cut the captions from the Teacher Resource Sheet and affix each one to the back of the appropriate photograph, or you may distribute the entire list of captions to students.

Activity #1

Ask students to analyze their photographs using the Student Worksheet and the appropriate Museum Photo Archives worksheets.

Activity #2

Ask students what the photographs tell them about Nazi persecution that occurred before the Holocaust. How could this information have been made available and to whom? Ask them to complete the Student Hand-Out.

Activity #3

Ask students to describe their photographs to the rest of the group or class. What events or attitudes might have led to the actions depicted? Were they government-sponsored events, or were they generated by individuals or the community? Ask students to arrange the photographs in chronological order and to note any patterns.

Discussion Question

Which of the events or actions depicted in the photographs could have warranted a response from other countries in order to prevent genocide from occurring?

(The teacher should place the events in historical context, as no one knew for certain at the time what would happen in the 1940s.)

Optional Discussion Questions

Have any of these activities ever occurred in the United States? If so, how did other countries respond?

Can you discern from the photographs whether the actions occurred only in the locations depicted or whether they might have occurred at multiple sites simultaneously?

Is it important to determine if the actions depicted in the photographs were locally inspired or dictated by higher authorities? Provide examples to support your answers. What insight from this might you apply to events in the world today?

Can you tell from the photographs if the actions were mandated by law or whether participants undertook them voluntarily? Provide examples to support your answers. Why might these be important factors to consider?

What are some of the early warning signs of genocide? Are there obstacles that could prevent the outside world from responding to these signs?

Important Note

Please provide students with historical context for this lesson, including the scope and sequence of the events of the Holocaust. You may consult the following resources:

- Introduction to the Holocaust: ushmm.org/wlc/article.php?lang=en&ModuleId=10005143
- Animated map: ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/maps/
- Definition of "genocide": ushmm.org/conscience/history/

Optional Activities

- Teachers may opt to have the whole class look at one photograph together to develop a common approach and vocabulary before separating students into groups. The photo could be from the Holocaust or from another historical era. A worksheet is provided for you to guide students in this activity.
- Ask students to find other images on the Museum's Web site that they think depict warning signs of the Holocaust.
- Ask students to find images from the Museum's Web site, elsewhere on the Web, or another source that depict another conflict situation or genocidal event occurring. In what ways is the information conveyed in these images similar to that in the images from the Holocaust? In what ways is it different? What additional information would one need to obtain before determining whether a similar risk of genocide exists in the community or society depicted?

Assessment

Students will be assessed on the accuracy and thoroughness of their answers and ideas as they express them on the student hand-out.

Teachers may choose to ask students to present their work to the class as a speech or as part of a debate.

ARTHUR AND ROCHELLE BELFER

**Exemplary
LESSONS**
i n i t i a t i v e

**LEARNING FROM
THE EARLY STAGES
OF THE HOLOCAUST**

STUDENT HAND-OUT

GATHERING AND USING EVIDENCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1. Choose the photograph that you feel best illustrates a message that you would want other people to know.
2. Describe the photograph in your own words.
3. Explain what you would like others to learn from the photograph.
4. How might the photograph have been used to alert others to what was happening in Germany?

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

Alert the National Conscience

Create a headline and caption that you think would effectively explain the photograph if it were to appear in a prominent American newspaper.

Influence Policymakers

Choose a policymaker (e.g., a Congress person, the President of the United States, a State Department official, etc.) to whom you would like to send the photograph along with an accompanying letter. What would you like this person to know and do? Write several paragraphs of the letter.

Stimulate Worldwide Action

Think of ways the photograph could be used to raise world consciousness. Which organizations or people do you think it would be important to reach in order to effect global change?

LEARNING FROM THE EARLY STAGES OF THE HOLOCAUST

TEACHER RESOURCE SHEET

PHOTO CAPTIONS

Please note that a worksheet number appears after each photograph caption. Teachers and students may enter this number into the search bar of the Museum's online Photo Archives at ushmm.org/research/collections/search/php to learn more about the photo as well as access links to similar images and topics.

An SA picket stands in front of the Jewish-owned Tietz department store wearing a boycott sign that reads "Germans defend yourselves; don't buy from Jews!" April 1, 1933. [Photograph #11300] USHMM,

COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATOR, COLLEGE PARK



The sign reads "The City of Hersbruck. This lovely city of Hersbruck, this wonderful spot on earth, was created only for Germans and not for Jews. Jews are therefore not desired here." May 4, 1935. [Photograph #86302] USHMM, COURTESY OF HANS CHERNEY

[Photograph #86302] USHMM, COURTESY OF HANS CHERNEY



Three Jewish businessmen are paraded down Bruehl Strasse in central Leipzig, carrying signs that read "Don't buy from Jews; Shop at German stores!" 1937. [Photograph #20210] USHMM, COURTESY OF WILLIAM BLYE

[Photograph #20210] USHMM, COURTESY OF WILLIAM BLYE



Austrian Nazis and local residents look on as Jews are forced to get on their hands and knees and scrub the pavement. Spring 1938. [Photograph #03741] USHMM, COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS

[Photograph #03741] USHMM, COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS

ADMINISTRATOR, COLLEGE PARK



View of Nuernberger Tor, one of the entrances to the University of Erlangen, on top of which a banner has been placed stating that Jews are not desired there. November 10, 1938. [Photograph #04366] USHMM,

COURTESY OF STADTARCHIVE UND STADTMUSEUM ERLANGEN



A page from an antisemitic coloring book featuring a portrait of a Jew drawn by the German caricaturist known as Fips. Ca. 1933–39.

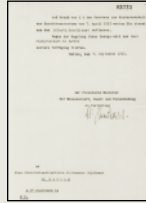
[Photograph #42034] USHMM, COURTESY OF SALO KLUGER

To learn more, please see the *Additional Translations sheet*.



Letter notifying Dr. Susanne Engelmann that she has been dismissed from her teaching position in compliance with the Civil Service Law of April 7, 1933. September 9, 1933. [Photograph #98629] USHMM, COURTESY OF

PETER ENGELMANN



A Jewish gentleman and his daughter cross the Stuttgarter Strasse bridge in Ulm, where a sign states “Jews are not desirable in Ulm.”

Ca. 1937. [Photograph #57854] USHMM, COURTESY OF TRUDY ISENBERG



A dog lies on a park bench that states “Only for Aryans.” March 1938.

[Photograph #63705] USHMM



Nazi propaganda poster advertising a special issue of *Der Stuermer* on “Rassenschande” (race pollution). Ca. 1935. [Photograph #32615] USHMM,

COURTESY OF DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM GMBH

To learn more, please see the *Additional Translations sheet*.



Germans pass by the broken shop window of a Jewish-owned business that was destroyed during *Kristallnacht*. November 10, 1938.

[Photograph #86838] USHMM, COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS

ADMINISTRATON, COLLEGE PARK



On the morning after *Kristallnacht*, local residents watch as the Ober Ramstadt synagogue is destroyed by fire. November 10, 1938.

[Photograph #04468] USHMM, COURTESY OF TRUDY ISENBERG



ADDITIONAL TRANSLATIONS



A page from an antisemitic coloring book featuring a portrait of a Jew drawn by the German caricaturist known as Fips. [Photograph #42034]

The caption at the bottom of the page asks “Do you know him?” In the upper left-hand corner is the der Sturmer logo featuring a Star of David superimposed over a caricature of a Jewish face. The caption under the star states that “without a solution to the Jewish question, there will be no salvation for mankind.”



Nazi propaganda poster advertising a special issue of Der Stuermer on “Rassenschande” (race pollution). [Photograph #32615]

The text says “Race Pollution. Since 1923, Julius Streicher has enlightened the public about race pollution. In 1933, the Fuehrer declared race pollution a crime, punishable by imprisonment. Nevertheless, thousands of race crimes continue to be committed in Germany by Jews. What is race pollution? Why did the Fuehrer

proclaim the Nuremberg Laws? Why do Jews systematically and in massive numbers, commit racial crimes against German women? What are the consequences of race pollution for the German maiden?

ARTHUR AND ROCHELLE BELFER

Exemplary
LESSONS
i n i t i a t i v e

**LEARNING FROM
THE EARLY STAGES
OF THE HOLOCAUST**

STUDENT WORKSHEET

INTERPRETING HISTORICAL IMAGES

Study the photograph for two minutes, forming an overall impression and then examining individual aspects. Then answer the following questions.

Photograph Subject

- Are there people in the photograph? _____
- How many? _____
 - Number of boys or men _____
 - Number of girls or women _____
- Describe the clothing worn.
- Describe people's facial expressions.
- Describe what the people are doing.
- Describe in detail any objects in the photograph.
- How are the individuals in the photograph using the object(s)?

Photograph Setting

- Can you tell when or where the photograph was taken?
- Estimated time of day: _____
- Estimated time of year: _____
- Outside or indoors? _____
- Describe in detail the place where the photo was taken.

Consider the eye of the photographer. He or she makes decisions about what will be framed within the camera's lens, predetermining even those images that appear to be spontaneous.

- Can you tell anything about the perspective of the photographer by what has been included or omitted in the photograph?

- Does the photograph seem spontaneous or posed?

- What do you think happened after this photograph was taken?

- What do you think might be happening outside the frame of the photograph?

Inferences

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from the photograph.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions

- What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

Caption Writing

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph, often detailing what is happening in the photo, where and when it was taken, and who appears in it. Using the information you've gathered above, write a caption for your photograph.

How do you think the caption would differ if it were published in a Nazi newspaper, a Jewish-German newspaper, and an American newspaper?