

General description of the module “The Wallenberg Lesson”

Recommended timeframe:

Very flexible, approximately: 4 x 45-60 – 120-150 mins.

Recommended target audience:

Grades 9-12

Context and Goal of The Wallenberg Lesson

2012 is the centenary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg and has been declared the Raoul Wallenberg Memorial Year. On this occasion we intended to provide a rich and useful educational material for teachers with the approach of personalization and using visual history about Wallenberg, heroism and the Holocaust. (See further notes in Introduction)

Pedagogical Philosophy

The module reflects a pedagogical philosophy which is based upon the belief that knowledge is constructed together. The teacher can and should have more information and skills in relation to some topics but the knowledge is constructed in the classroom together with the students. So their experience of everyday life, media contents and popular culture is a significant part of the educational process which is constituted by a cooperative approach. Moreover, this pedagogical philosophy considers value construction, ethical questions and social competencies as important as other educational knowledge and skills. Using this approach, teaching about the Holocaust is very much related to ethical questions and its goal is to develop students' attitudes and skills in trying to find answers in situations of discrimination. When teaching about the Holocaust, personal memories of the eyewitnesses have a specific role.

Teaching the Holocaust however is a very sensitive task, and it is important that you avoid hard pitfalls during the process. Here are several sources with a lot of useful guidelines about Holocaust education, including:

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Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research,
Guidelines for Teaching <http://www.holocausttaskforce.org/education/guidelines-for-teaching.html>

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust*
<http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/guideline/#methodological>

Lessons from the Holocaust <http://www.cls.utk.edu/pdf/holocaust/holocaust.pdf>

General Aims and Learning Objectives of the Module

- To portrait as a positive example the story of people ready to save the lives of others
- To present Raoul Wallenberg as a role model that may raise awareness of the students' responsibility to be upstanders in situations when people are discriminated
- To make students become familiar with the aspects of the Holocaust in Budapest in 1944
- To help students reflect on heroism in the past and today
- To picture that in the given historical situation survival met almost insurmountable difficulties without those actively helping.
- To help the students understand the value and meaning of memorials
- That the students analyze the testimonies of the survivors focusing on the moral value of the events, the behavior and attitude of the protagonists and then draw the conclusions together.
- To make students aware that social traumas leave an ineradicable trace in the life of the individual. This acknowledgment strengthens the social sensibility of the students, their sense of responsibility for social problems and their becoming active citizens.
- Holocaust education through the personal stories of survivors.

The content of the module (suggested topics, potential themes):

Opportunities to rescue lives during WWII, their grounds, methods, primarily through the activity of Raoul Wallenberg; the Holocaust; how prejudice and discrimination turn to atrocities and genocide; minority groups as targets of discrimination; heroes and heroism today, Raoul Wallenberg's example.

Main Competences:

Knowledge

- historical knowledge about the Holocaust in general, about Jewish life and communities in Hungary, about Budapest at the end of World War II, Arrow-Cross takeover
- Raoul Wallenberg's life and his activities in Budapest
- means of rescue: Schutz-Passes, protected houses, fake Arrow Cross actions etc.

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Attitudes

- empathy for the victims and survivors
- ethical sensibility about the attitudes of people during the Holocaust and related to current social problems
- value rescuers' attitude
- taking rescuers as role models
- critical reflection on heroism
- respect especially in discussions
- openness to different opinions

Skills

- cooperation
- assertive and clear communication
- critical thinking
- analyzing texts and symbols
- interpretation and evaluation of a speaker's point of view
- transmitting message through symbols
- arguing in discussion
- finding essential information and sharing it with others
- differentiating between fact and opinion

Tools and materials:

Board, chalk or whiteboard, projector, DVD player or computer, task sheets (paper, photocopier, stationery), materials provided in the DVD, materials for the memorials prepared by the students.

Teaching strategies and methods:

The module is based on the video interviews of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive. The module uses individual, pair and group work; classroom discussion, cooperative learning methods (especially Kagan's techniques and the Jigsaw Classroom), and teacher's explanation.

Proper project method is only offered as optional for further development, but the process contains a project-like task, too.

In group work, even if teachers do not use a proper cooperative learning method, they should try to help students distributing the different tasks/roles among themselves in the group in order to construct a mutual *interdependence* (for example: A - the leader of the discussion, B - takes notes, C - in charge of controlling time, D - communicates the results).

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Sources for the teaching strategies and methods:

The Jigsaw Classroom, <http://www.jigsaw.org/overview.htm>

Cooperative Learning <http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelearning.htm>

Kagan's Cooperative Techniques <http://www.kaganonline.com>

Cooperative Learning Institute (Johnson's approach) http://www.co-operation.org/?page_id=65

Project Method <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2337/Project-Method.html>

Project Method in slides:

<http://www.slideshare.net/jeena.aejy/project-as-a-method-of-teaching-presentation>

Module and curriculum connections

History or literature lesson, media lesson, ethics lesson, social studies class, discussion class, Holocaust module, project days and in relation to School Holocaust memorial day.

Prior Knowledge and Teacher Preparation

It is desirable that the students have already studied about the Holocaust. Teachers should investigate the knowledge of students related to the Holocaust. Students should be familiar with cooperative methods (or the teacher should introduce these methods in previous classes) and discussions. It helps if they have some experience in analyzing media content and/or popular culture.

Teachers can find all the necessary materials and links on this DVD to prepare for the steps of the module.

Organization and Educational Process of The Wallenberg Lesson

On this DVD you find some video clips and other resources that can be used in different ways. There is a coherent educational process proposed in the ***Content and process of the module: Detailed description*** document. The teacher is the leader of the process (so it is not a proper project strategy), but the students work in groups for a reasonable amount of time to construct a common knowledge. The cards (Card1 – Card5) help the group work. Groups should be the same during the whole process. Each group may receive a *notepad* from the teacher to collect their cards and to be able to review them. In the meantime, every student should have a personal notebook too, its use is explained in the lesson description. The cards prepare and accompany the interpretation of the video clips, and help students develop their own concept of memorial in the groups.

The students should relate to Wallenberg's figure not only as a group but also individually. The picture among resources and its use (Cf.: Step 4) serve this personal connection to him.

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The process is divided into Steps. The Steps are not classes, but flexible units and they can be organized in variegated ways. In Step 1 students familiarize with the topic of rescue, heroes and victims in general, and have first contact with Wallenberg image; in Step 2 they gain a basic knowledge about the context and about Raoul Wallenberg, and they start to think about their memorial. The creation of a memorial (of each group) is pivotal in the whole process. Through the memorial (and its creation), students can identify the messages they have drawn from Raoul's life and wish to transmit. In Step 3 the students learn in details what Raoul did in Budapest, and discover more about his personality as well. Raoul clearly appears here as a hero and role model. Finally in Step 4 we complete the picture by returning to Raoul's childhood and youth, to see him as a regular young man, too. In this way, we might somehow deconstruct the previous image of a hero, but in a positive way, arriving hopefully at the actualization that we can be heroes. Following this personal (the Photo with everyone's own secret notes!) and group journey and after reviewing the cards, the groups may create their Wallenberg memorials.

Assessment

How to assess student work is up to individual teachers and depends on how much of the module is implemented. However if the students prepare memorials, it is necessary to have an opportunity to present their works to their schoolmates, and in that occasion (or previously in the class) they should practice self-assessment and peer-assessment.