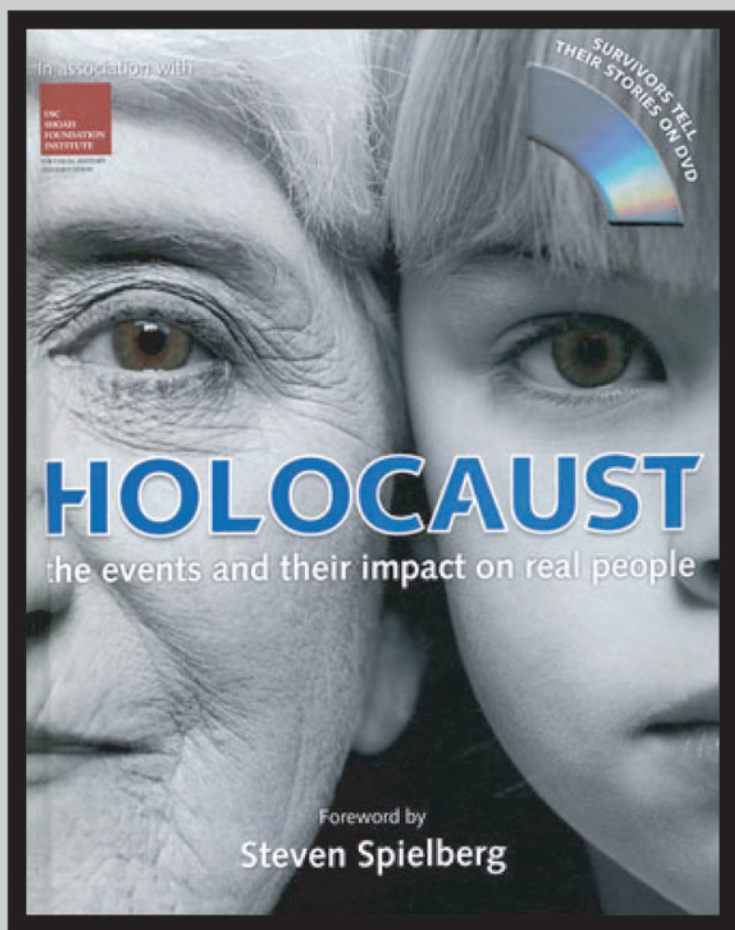


HOLOCAUST



Teacher's Kit



Classroom 5-Day Mini-Unit:

Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People – An Overview

Curriculum Connections:

This unit addresses curriculum standards in history, social studies, social science, Holocaust studies, language arts, English, and media studies.

Lesson Preparation:

- ∞ Review text and DVD components of *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* before starting this unit.
- ∞ Cue DVD to appropriate Video Segments before class begins.
- ∞ Prepare copies of student handouts for distribution

Rationale:

This lesson provides a general overview of the history of the Holocaust as represented in the multimedia publication, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*. Students will gain a basic understanding of the Holocaust and a familiarity with the DK publication by exploring the written and video material.

Student Objectives:

- ∞ Students will learn the basic chronology of the Holocaust, starting with the Nazi rise to power, through the establishment of Nazi ghettos and the Nazi “final solution,” and concluding with the post-war period in the late 1940’s.
- ∞ Students will learn about pre-war Europe and about Jewish culture before the Holocaust.
- ∞ Students will examine the effect that the Holocaust had on individuals and societies in the post-war period.
- ∞ Students will learn about the Holocaust by watching first person testimony of Holocaust survivors and other witnesses.
- ∞ Students will learn about the history of the Holocaust through primary and secondary source materials.
- ∞ Students will compare and contrast history and contemporary experience, the experiences of others and their own experiences, and different source materials.

Requirements:

Materials:

- ∞ DK Publication, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* (text and DVD)
- ∞ Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- ∞ Student Handouts:
 - Testimony Viewing Worksheet*
 - One History of Hate*
 - Experiencing the Holocaust*
 - Making Connections*
 - Coping in the Aftermath of the Holocaust*

Time:

5 classroom periods

Techniques and Skills:

Journal writing, interpreting quotations, vocabulary building, small group work, reading for information, large group work, analyzing visual history testimony, examining historical chronology, organizing information, multimedia literacy, analyzing primary and secondary

sources, comparing and contrasting information sources, critical thinking, responsive and creative writing, creative thinking, oral presentation, and research skills.

Procedures:

Day I

1. Share the following prompt with your students. You may write it on a chalkboard, chart paper, or you can hand it out to each student:

“Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.”

-Albert Einstein

2. Allow 10 minutes for students to “free write” using this quote as a prompt.
3. After 10 minutes, ask students to stop writing. Point out that the prompt they were writing about was attributed to Albert Einstein.
4. Ask the class what they know about Albert Einstein. Allow 5-10 minutes for a brief discussion, charting students’ answers on the chalkboard or on chart paper.
5. Explain to the class that Albert Einstein was a Jewish scientist, and was born in Germany in 1879. In 1933, Einstein emigrated to the United States because of the Holocaust. As a Jewish person, it was unsafe for him to stay in Europe. It was unsafe because Adolf Hitler, the leader of Germany at that time, and his political party, the Nazi party, were using their power to put their racist ideas into practice in Germany. Even though Albert Einstein won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921, one of the most prestigious awards in the world, his life was in danger because he was a Jew.
6. Inform the class that over the next few days, they will be learning about the Holocaust.
7. Explain that the term “Holocaust” refers to the state-sponsored murder of Jews and other groups by the Nazis during World War II. The Nazis began with racially discriminatory laws in Germany, and slowly expanded until they had attempted to kill all European Jews. In addition to the Jews, the Nazis also targeted Roma (Gypsies), people with disabilities, and some of the Slavic people. They also persecuted people with different political beliefs and behaviors, including Jehovah’s Witnesses, Homosexuals, Communists, and people who did not agree with the Nazi government.
8. Divide the class into 5 groups. Assign each group one of the following sections from the text *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*:
 - i) The Jews of Europe (pages 8-9)
 - ii) The Origins of the Jews (pages 10-11)
 - iii) The Jews of Sefrad (pages 12-13)
 - iv) The Jews of Ashkenaz (pages 14-15)
 - v) Jewish Life in Europe (pages 22-23)
9. Instruct each group to take 10 minutes to read the pages together, and then to prepare to present what they read to the rest of the class. Allow each group 3 minutes to present.
10. For homework, students should read *The World of the Shtetl* (pages 16-17) in the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*.

Day II

1. Begin class by asking students to review their free writing assignment from the previous class (reflections on the Albert Einstein quote). Allow 10 minutes for volunteers to share what they wrote with the class.
2. Lead a large-group discussion about the quote and the homework assignment, using the following questions as a guide:
 - i) What do you think Albert Einstein was trying to say with this quote?
 - ii) How does this quote relate to the information about the history of the Jews that we read in class yesterday?
 - iii) How does this quote relate to what you learned about the European shtetls in your reading last night?
 - iv) In your life, what sorts of things “count” that “can’t be counted?”
 - v) Based on last night’s readings on shtetls, what sorts of aspects of shtetl life might “count” that “can’t be counted?”
3. Explain to the class that they are about to see segments of testimony given by Holocaust survivors, excerpted from longer interviews conducted by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute. Tell the class that they will be referencing these segments in activities later in class and for homework. For this reason, they may wish to take notes as they watch the video segments. They may use the *Student Handout: Testimony Viewing Worksheet* for this purpose.
4. Play *Video Segments: The Jews of Europe* and *Nazi Rule* (total running time: approximately 8 minutes). Access the *Video Segments* by selecting “The Jews of Europe” from the main DVD menu.

Note: Optionally, students may benefit from reading short biographies of each of the survivors before they watch the *Video Segments*. Biographies of Bernard Schuster, Peter Hersch, Emma Mogilensky, Thea Rumstein, Michelle Cohen-Rodriguez, and Leone Hilton are located on pages 178-181.

5. After viewing the DVD, conduct a whole-class discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - ∞ How do Bernard Schuster and Peter Hersch describe their childhoods? What feelings do they communicate in their testimony?
 - ∞ When does Peter Hersch remember anti-Semitism starting in his home town?
 - ∞ Both Peter and Bernard describe life as being challenging. Yet they both recall their childhoods being joyous and fulfilled, not stressed or unhappy. Why do you think this is so?
 - ∞ Why is Emma Mogilensky’s realization about her teacher’s involvement in her classmates’ anti-Semitic behavior important?
 - ∞ How are the memories of Thea Rumstein, Michelle Cohen-Rodriguez, and Leonie Hilton similar? What emotional memories do each of these survivors communicate? What is the importance of these emotions?
6. For homework, students should complete *Student Handout: One History of Hate*.

Day III

1. Begin by reading The Idea of The Ghetto (pages 58-59 in the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*) as a class. Lead a short discussion of the reading, using the following questions as a guide:
 - ∞ What was a Nazi ghetto?
 - ∞ Why did the Nazis confine Jews to ghettos?
 - ∞ Where did the Nazis get the idea for ghettos?
2. Remind the class that they are about to see segments of testimony given by Holocaust survivors, excerpted from longer interviews conducted by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute. Remind the class that they will be referencing these segments in activities later in class and for homework. For this reason, they may wish to take notes as they watch the video segments. They may use the *Student Handout: Testimony Viewing Worksheet* for this purpose.
3. Play *Video Segment: The Ghettos* (total running time: approximately 7 minutes). Access the *Video Segment* by selecting “The Ghettos” from the main DVD menu.

Note: Optionally, students may benefit from reading short biographies of each of the survivors before they watch the *Video Segment*. Biographies of Henry Greenblatt, Thea Rumstein, Felicia Carmelly, and Peter Hersch are located on pages 178-181.

4. After viewing the DVD, conduct a whole-group discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - ∞ How did Henry Greenblatt describe the Warsaw Ghetto? What did he do as a child to help his family?
 - ∞ According to Thea Rumstein, how did living conditions in Theresienstadt undermine the health conditions there?
 - ∞ Thea says that one thing that stands out in her memory is that despite the hardships of the ghetto, families were still together, people still wore their own clothes, and they had their hair. Why is this important? How do you think this affected people in the ghetto, psychologically and physically? Why?
 - ∞ What does Felicia Carmelly’s description of the treatment of the corpses in the ghetto tell you about the state of the community and individuals’ psychological state?
 - ∞ What are the main emotions and experiences that Peter Hersch recalls when he describes being transported out of the ghetto?
 - ∞ How does Peter describe arrival at Auschwitz?
 - ∞ What are the main emotions and experiences that Thea recalls when she describes being transported out of the ghetto?
 - ∞ How does Thea describe arrival at Auschwitz?
5. Divide the class into small groups or pairs. Give each student a copy of *Student Handout: Making Connections*.
6. Instruct students to work together in their pairs or small groups to complete the “Video” and “Text” columns on the handout, referencing the *Video Segment: The Ghettos* and Chapter Three: The Ghettos (pages 58-77 in the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*). Allow 15-20 minutes to complete this activity.

7. Come back together as a whole group, and take 5 minutes to share a few volunteered responses with the class.
8. For homework, students should complete the “Examples from Your Life” column on the *Student Handout: Making Connections*.

Day IV

1. Begin by providing an opportunity for students to share their responses on the *Student Handout: Making Connections*. This can be done in pairs, small groups, as a whole class, or by using the fishbowl method. Allow approximately 10 minutes for discussion.
2. Ask for a volunteer to read the first paragraph on page 79 of the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* aloud:

“The word Holocaust usually evokes images of mass murder in gas chambers. While it is true that most victims were killed in this way, it was not the original Nazi plan. The idea of death camps probably came gradually. Early in the Holocaust victims were killed in smaller numbers, less regularly, and using several different methods, and this paved the way for death camps.”

3. Ask for a volunteer to read the first paragraph on page 114 of the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* aloud:

“The Holocaust was allowed to happen because there were very few attempts to stop Nazi plans or to save the victims. While some Jews had a chance to escape, most countries would not take them and protests from Jewish groups were rarely successful. But there were acts of great bravery as people clung to life – non-Jews who helped Jews, Jewish and non-Jewish people who fought the Nazis, and people who escaped the death camps.”

4. Explain to the class that today they will be learning about some of the many and varied experiences that befell the victims and the survivors of the Holocaust.
5. Explain to the class that they are about to see segments of testimony given by Holocaust survivors, excerpted from longer interviews conducted by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute. Tell the class that they will be referencing these segments in activities later in class and for homework. For this reason, they may wish to take notes as they watch the video segments. They may use the *Student Handout: Testimony Viewing Worksheet* for this purpose.
6. Play *Video Segments: The Murder of the Victims, Clinging to Life, and The End of the War* (total running time: approximately 15 minutes). Access the segments by selecting “The Murder of the Victims” from the main DVD menu.

Note: Optionally, students may benefit from reading short biographies of each of the survivors before they watch the *Video Segments*. Biographies of Felicia Carmelly, Aniela Ania Radek, Lola Putt, Claire Boren, Alexander Van Kollem, Vera Gissing, Peter Hersch, and Leon Bass are located on pages 178-181.

7. After viewing the DVD, distribute *Student Handout: Experiencing the Holocaust* to each student. Review the handout with the class. Explain that the experiences on the handout do not represent EVERY Holocaust experience, but that they are some of the more common Holocaust experiences.

Also explain that each experience is not mutually exclusive, meaning one person might have had more than one of the experiences listed on the sheet.

8. Students should complete the handout using the remainder of class, and for homework, if necessary. The information needed to complete the handout can be found in the *Video Segments* they've seen (they may use their *Testimony Viewing Worksheets* as a reference), as well as pages 56-149 in the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*.

Day V

1. On the chalkboard, or on chart paper, write the following prompts:
 - ∞ Responsibility
 - ∞ Coping
 - ∞ Remembering
 - ∞ Trauma
 - ∞ Loss
 - ∞ Why?
 - ∞ Starting Over
 - ∞ Forgiveness
 - ∞ Accountability
 - ∞ Learning from the Past
2. Begin with a "free-write." Ask students to spend 10 minutes writing down their thoughts about the last four class periods. They may use the prompts that you listed on the board to get started, or they may write about any other topics or questions that come up for them.
3. After about 10 minutes, allow some time for students to share what they've written. You may do this in a large group, asking for volunteers, or you may break the class into pairs for sharing, to encourage everyone to debrief with a peer.
4. After the class has had a chance to discuss their writing and their feelings about what they've learned about the Holocaust thus far, explain that they'll be spending today's class learning about how individuals and societies have coped in the aftermath of the Holocaust- starting with the time immediately after the war ended, up until today.
5. Begin by brainstorming definitions and connotations for the following two terms. Chart student responses on the chalkboard or on chart paper as "word-webs."
 - ∞ Individual
 - ∞ Society
6. Ask for examples of challenges or issues that might have faced individuals after World War II ended. Students may consider the victims, as well as the perpetrators, collaborators, bystanders, and rescue and aid providers.

Note: Example student responses might include post traumatic stress, poverty, loneliness, loss of family, loss of culture, fear, mistrust, shame or remorse, legal punishment, disease.

7. Ask for examples of challenges or issues that might have faced society after World War II ended. Students may consider countries and communities where the war took place, as well as other countries around the world – for example, Poland, Germany, the United States, Israel, England, and Russia.

Note: Example student responses might include: large groups of displaced persons, economic depression, world perception, lack of food.

8. Remind the class that they are about to see segments of testimony given by Holocaust survivors, excerpted from longer interviews conducted by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute. Remind the class that they will be referencing these segments in activities later in class and for homework. For this reason, they may wish to take notes as they watch the video segments. They may use the *Student Handout: Testimony Viewing Worksheet* for this purpose.
9. Play *Video Segment: Aftermath* (total running time: approximately 3 minutes). Access the segments by selecting “Aftermath” from the main DVD menu.

Note: Optionally, students may benefit from reading short biographies of the survivors before they watch the *Video Segment*. Biographies of Peter Hersch and Renée Firestone are located on pages 178-181.

10. Conduct a short discussion about the video, using the following questions as a guide:
 - ∞ What do you learn about Peter Hersch’s individual reactions to the Holocaust from watching his testimony clip?
 - ∞ What do you learn about Renée Firestone’s individual reactions to the Holocaust from watching her testimony clip?
 - ∞ What can you infer about society in the wake of the Holocaust from Renée’s testimony clip?
 - ∞ What can you infer about society in the wake of the Holocaust from Peter’s testimony clip?
11. Ask for volunteers to read each of the quotes from *Voices: Nazis on Trial* on pages 170-171 of the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* aloud.
12. Ask the class how they feel after hearing these words. Ask them how they think the world, the victims, the perpetrators, and the bystanders could continue on after such an atrocity has occurred.
13. Pose the following questions to the class, and allow time for a discussion:
 - ∞ What is needed in order for a society to heal after such an event?
 - ∞ What is needed in order for an individual to heal after such an event?
 - ∞ What do you think “healing” means? Does it mean forgiving? Forgetting? Why, or why not?
 - ∞ Do you think it is possible to heal after such an event? For an individual? As a global society?
14. Distribute *Student Handout: Coping in the Aftermath of the Holocaust* to each student. Review the handout with the class. Explain that they should consider all of the individuals and societies that were left to cope with the aftermath of the Holocaust – including victims, perpetrators, bystanders, rescue and aid providers, camp liberators, and future generations of people born after the Holocaust.
15. Let students know that if they disagree with the placement of any of the types of coping on the Venn Diagram, they may write why they disagree, and where they think it should be placed, on the back of their handout. Additionally, they may want to add more types of coping to the handout that aren’t included already.

16. Students should complete the handout using the remainder of class, and for homework, if necessary. The information needed to complete the handout can be found in the *Video Segments* they've seen (they may use their *Testimony Viewing Worksheets* as a reference), and pages 150-185 in the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*.

Student Handout: *Testimony Viewing Worksheet*

Directions: Use the grid below to take notes as you watch testimony.

Name of Survivor or Witness	Summary of What Was Said in Segment	Responses, Reactions, Connections, and Thoughts on The Segment

Student Handout: *One History of Hate*

Directions: Place the following historical events in chronological order by numbering the boxes next to each event. Then, write the year in which the event took place in the space provided after each description. You can find the answers on pages 24-55 in *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*.

- Ⓜ Adolf Hitler becomes leader of Germany. _____
- Ⓜ A Jewish cemetery in Herrlisheim, France, is desecrated with swastikas. _____
- Ⓜ A law is passed that states that Jews are only allowed to sit on public benches marked “For Jews.”

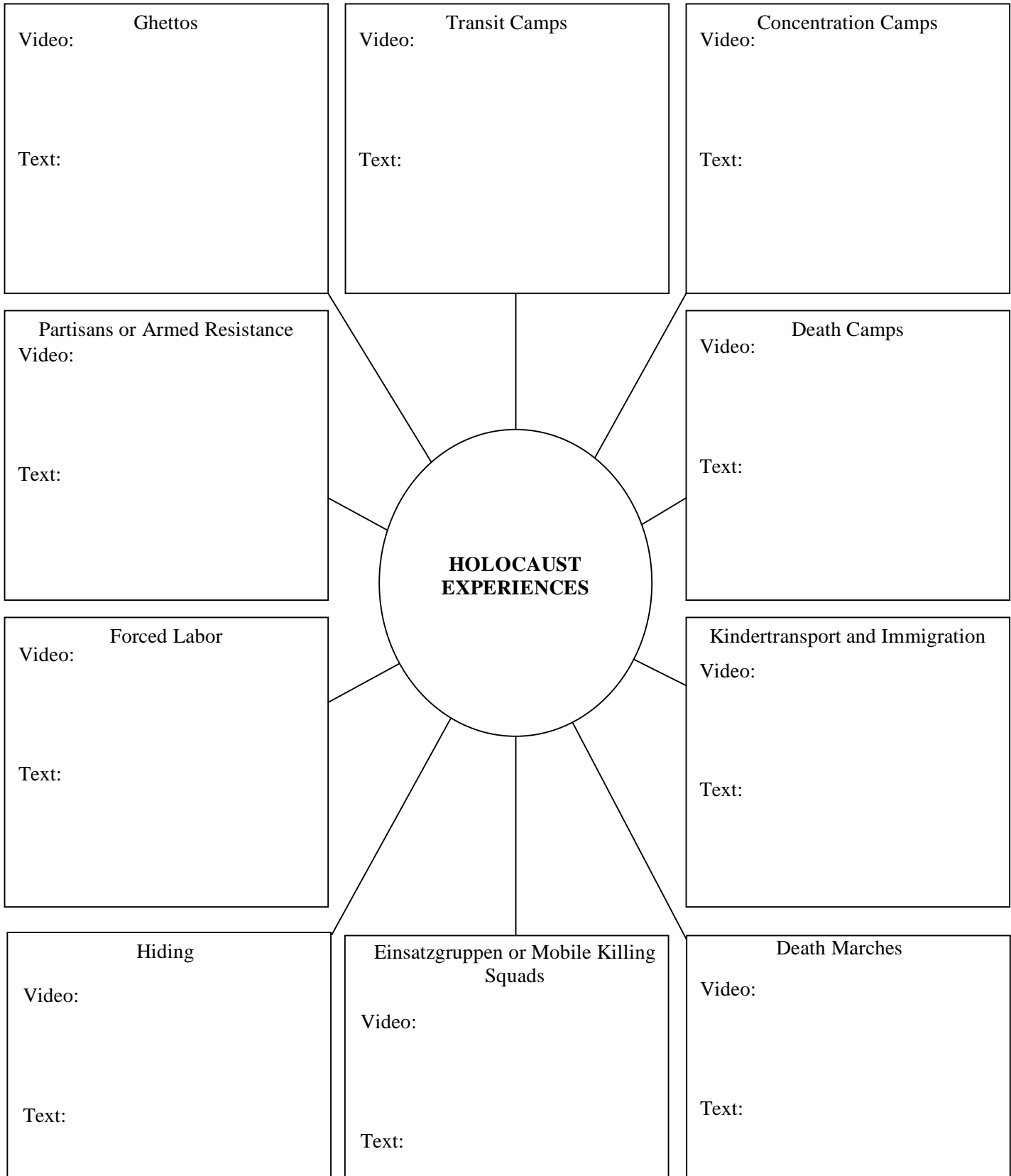
- Ⓜ A European religious leader states “Jews’ houses [should] be razed and destroyed.... [they must learn that] they are not masters in our country.” _____
- Ⓜ Mobs kill 96 Jews, wound hundreds more, and destroy thousands of Jewish businesses, and synagogues in a pogrom to be known as Kristallnacht. _____
- Ⓜ World War II begins when Germany invades Poland. _____
- Ⓜ One of the first Nazi concentration camps, Dachau, is established. _____
- Ⓜ A Jewish officer in the French army is convicted as a traitor, despite the lack of evidence against him. The trial, resulting political scandal, and exposure of rampant anti-Semitism that ensues is known as The Dreyfus Affair. _____
- Ⓜ The Nazis use Germany’s losses in World War I, and the economic depression that resulted from that war, to build anti-Semitic sentiment in Germany. _____
- Ⓜ Hitler refuses to shake the hands of black athletes at the Olympics. _____
- Ⓜ Hitler is named Time Magazine’s man of the year. _____
- Ⓜ The first Nazi ghettos are established. _____
- Ⓜ The deportation of Jews to death camps from ghettos in Poland begins. _____
- Ⓜ An official census publicly states that 35,000 Jews were decorated for bravery in the German Army. _____

Student Handout: *Making Connections*

Directions: For each theme, find a relevant example from the *Video Segment: The Ghettos*. Write a description of the example in the VIDEO column. Then, find an example in Chapter Three: The Ghettos (pages 58-77) and write a description of that example in the TEXT column. Finally, try to think of a connection between the theme and your own life, or contemporary events, and write a description of that example in the last column.

THEME	EXAMPLES FROM THE VIDEO	EXAMPLES FROM THE TEXT	EXAMPLES FROM YOUR LIFE
Culture and Community			
Resistance and Standing Up			
Family			
Fear			
Perseverance			
Dignity and Self-Respect			
Importance of Education			
Religion and Spirituality			
Learning from the Past			
Helping Others			

Directions: Write a brief summary of one example from the text and one from the DVD of *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* that relates to each experience below.



Student Handout: *Coping in the Aftermath of the Holocaust*

Directions: Describe each of the types of coping, below, using specific examples from the text and/or video, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*. Be sure to explain how each type of coping relates to individuals, society, or both.

INDIVIDUAL

Artistic Expression:

Material or Psychological Loss:

Displaced Persons Camps:

Immigration:

Memorials:

Responsibility/ Accountability:

War Crimes Trials:

Material/ Social Loss:

SOCIETY

Classroom Module:
History In One Voice: Peter Hersch

Curriculum Connections:
This unit addresses curriculum standards in history, social studies, social science, Holocaust studies, language arts, English, and media studies.

Lesson Preparation:

- ∞ Review text and DVD components of *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* before starting this unit.
- ∞ Cue DVD to appropriate *Video Segments* before class begins.
- ∞ Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution

Rationale:
This lesson will provide students with an opportunity to learn about one person's experience of history by watching clips from his visual history testimony. In doing so, the lesson attempts to personalize history, and explore the power of personal narrative.

Student Objectives:

- ∞ Students will learn about the medium of first person testimony by watching a testimony, and by interviewing their peers.
- ∞ Students will learn about one person's experience of the Holocaust by watching and reading excerpts from a Holocaust survivor's testimony.
- ∞ Students will analyze primary and secondary source materials dealing with the Holocaust.
- ∞ Students will explore the importance and the treatment of the individual within society.
- ∞ Students will explore the personal narrative as a vehicle for learning about history, and telling a compelling story.

Requirements:

Materials:

- ∞ DK Publication, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* (text and DVD)
- ∞ DVD Player and TV or Monitor
- ∞ Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- ∞ *Student Handouts*:
 - Biography of Peter Hersch*
 - Peter Hersch – A Lifeline*
 - Journal Writing - The Individual*
 - Thinking in Themes*
 - Interviewing Peers*

Time:

2 class periods

Techniques and Skills:

Reading for information, analyzing visual history testimony, large group work, small group work, interpreting quotations, journal writing, vocabulary building, examining historical chronology, organizing information, multimedia literacy, analyzing

primary and secondary sources, comparing and contrasting information sources, critical thinking, interviewing skills, responsive and creative writing, creative thinking, oral presentation, research skills.

Procedures

Day I

1. Distribute *Student Handout: A Short Biography of Peter Hersch*. Allow 10 minutes for students to read it silently, or, alternatively, ask for volunteers to read it aloud.
2. Explain to the class that they will be learning about the Holocaust through one person's experience of it.
3. Conduct a short discussion about the biography the class just read, for comprehension purposes, using the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - ∞ How old was Peter when he and his family were deported to the Munkács ghetto?
 - ∞ How many people were in Peter's immediate family? How many of the people in his immediate family survived the war?
 - ∞ What sorts of things did Peter enjoy as a boy, before the war?
 - ∞ How many camps was Peter in? How many death marches did he endure?
 - ∞ How old was Peter when he was liberated at the end of the war?
 - ∞ Where does Peter live now? How many people does he name in his family now?
4. Explain to the class that for the remainder of this lesson, they will be exploring excerpts from an interview that was conducted with Peter Hersch by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute.
5. Explain to the class that they are about to see and read segments of testimony that they will be referencing in activities later in class and for homework. For this reason, they may wish to take notes as they watch and read the segments. They may use the *Student Handout: Peter Hersch – A Lifeline* for this purpose.

Note: There are 7 testimony segments from Peter Hersch's testimony featured in the multimedia publication, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*. Four segments appear on the DVD, and three are transcribed in the text of the book. For the purposes of this lesson, the class should read and view these testimony segments in chronological order. To access the segments that appear on the DVD, select "Play All" from the main DVD menu, and cue the DVD to the appropriate chapters, listed below. The chronological order of the segments is as follows:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Video: | Peter describes his life before the war | DVD Chapter 3 (1½ min) |
| 2. Transcribed: | Peter describes his life in the ghetto | Text Page 69 |
| 3. Video: | Peter describes the cattle train | DVD Chapter 12 (1½ min) |
| 4. Transcribed: | Peter describes arriving at Auschwitz | Text Page 72 |
| 5. Video: | Peter describes a death march | DVD Chapter 23 (1 min) |
| 6. Transcribed: | Peter describes returning home | Text Page 159 |
| 7. Video: | Peter describes his life in Australia | DVD Chapter 26 (¾ min) |

6. Watch and read each of the segments in chronological order as a class. After each segment, allow a few moments for students to take notes on the right hand side (“Descriptions From Peter’s Testimony”) of their *Student Handout: Peter Hersch – A Lifeline*.
7. After the class has taken notes on all seven testimony segments, divide them into pairs.
8. Allow 15 minutes for students to work with their partners, completing the left hand side of the *Student Handout: Peter Hersch – A Lifeline* (“Historical Information From the Text”). Students should use the book, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* to find historical context for each of the testimony segments listed.
9. To guide the students in their pair work, write the following guidelines on the chalkboard or on a piece of chart paper:
 - ∞ What information can you find that clarifies what Peter is saying?
 - ∞ What information can you find that provides background to what Peter is saying?
 - ∞ What information can you find that supports details that Peter has mentioned?
 - ∞ What information can you find that provides context to what Peter is saying?
 - ∞ What information can you find that answers questions about what Peter is saying?
10. For homework, students should write in their journals or notebooks using the following prompt. The prompt can be found for copying and distribution to each student on the *Student Handout: Journal Writing - The Individual*.

“The writer John Steinbeck wrote in his novel, East of Eden: “And this I believe: that the free, exploring mind of the individual human is the most valuable thing in all the world. And this I would fight for: the freedom of the mind to take any direction it wishes, undirected. And this I must fight against: any idea, religion, or government which limits or destroys the individual.”

- ∞ What do you think is the importance of the individual in society, and in history?
- ∞ What can you learn about history through the specific experiences of an individual, that you could not learn otherwise?
- ∞ How do you think Steinbeck’s commentary on the individual relates to Peter Hersch’s experiences in the Holocaust?
- ∞ How do you think Steinbeck’s commentary relates to the Holocaust in general?
- ∞ What is important to you, personally, about individuality?
- ∞ How do you protect the freedom of the individual in your own life?”

Day II

1. Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group one of the following themes:
 - (i) Starting over
 - (ii) Fitting In/ Not Fitting In
 - (iii) An Unknown Future
 - (iv) Truth and Lies
 - (v) Making Sense of Experience
2. Conduct a short discussion, using the following questions as a guide, and mapping responses on the chalkboard or chart paper. Encourage students to refer to the *Student Handout: Peter Hersch: A Lifeline* that they completed yesterday in class.

- ∞ Can you think of two or three times in Peter’s life when he “started over,” either by choice, or by force?
 - ∞ How did Peter fit in with his neighbors as a child? How was he different?
 - ∞ Can you relate these experiences to something you’ve experienced, or observed, in your own life?
 - ∞ How does the theme “Truth and Lies” relate to Peter’s experiences during the Holocaust? How does it relate to society today?
 - ∞ What sorts of emotions do the term “the unknown” conjure? Why is the theme “an unknown future” so important in the context of Peter’s life? How does it relate to your life?
 - ∞ In his last testimony segment, Peter tries to make a little sense of what happened to him. What does he say? Is he able to make sense of his history? Can you?
3. Distribute *Student Handout: Thinking in Themes*. Allow 15-20 minutes for students to work in their groups, completing the *Student Handout*.
 4. Reconvene as a large group and discuss the *Student Handout: Thinking In Themes*. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - ∞ What did you learn about history through Peter that you haven’t learned in your previous studies of the Holocaust and World War II?
 - ∞ Why is it important to listen to individual stories when studying history?
 - ∞ How has Peter affected the way you think about the Holocaust and World War II?
 - ∞ How has Peter affected the way you think about individuals and individual experiences?
 - ∞ How has Peter affected the way you think about your own experiences and actions?
 5. Explain that in the next activity, the class will explore the medium of first person testimony by taking their own testimonies.
 6. Break the class into pairs. Allow 5-10 minutes for each student to “interview” his partner, using the questions on the *Student Handout: Interviewing Peers*.
 7. For homework, students should write a short first person narrative in their partner’s “voice,” using the information they gleaned from the interviewing activity.
 8. Students may exchange narratives in class the following day and answer the questions on Page 2 of *Student Handout: Interviewing Peers* as an assessment and reflection activity.



Peter Hersch was born Pinchas Herskovics on July 2, 1930, in Loza, Czechoslovakia. His father, Efraim, was a merchant, and his mother, Rachel, was a homemaker. Peter grew up in Loza with two brothers and three sisters. He attended both public school and religious school, or *heder*. Peter enjoyed celebrating holidays with his extended family, and was friendly with the non-Jewish people in his hometown - until Hungary annexed the region in 1938. After the annexation, anti-Semitism increased. Peter and the other Jewish children were segregated from the rest of the students in public school. At one point, Peter was forced to defend his brother, Hersch Leib, when an anti-Semitic teacher attempted to hit him.

In April, 1944, when the Germans arrived in Hungary, Peter and his family were deported from Loza to a brick factory ghetto in nearby Munkács. The family was forced to leave Peter's older brother Moshe behind because he was recovering from an operation. Moshe did not survive the war. After staying in the Munkács ghetto for several weeks, Peter and his family was deported by cattle train to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp in Poland. Peter, his father, and his sister Helen were selected for forced labor. Peter's mother and three younger siblings were killed. His father was eventually selected to work in the *Sonderkommando*. The *Sonderkommando* were prisoners who were forced to work in the gas chambers and crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau. These prisoners worked for a period of time and then were periodically executed. Peter's father did not survive the war.

After a few weeks, Peter was transferred from Auschwitz to the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. Peter then went on a death march to the Gusen concentration camp, also in Austria. Later, he was moved to the St. Georgen concentration camp, also known as Gusen II. In Gusen II, Peter worked in an underground mine. He and the other prisoners were often forced to stand naked in the snow during roll call. Peter suffered from frostbite and was once beaten for sleeping during his shift. In 1945, Peter was taken on a death march to the Gunskirchen concentration camp. On May 4, 1945, American soldiers liberated the camp.

After liberation, Peter stayed in the Wels displaced persons camp in Austria. He became very ill and was cared for by American soldiers. After Peter recovered, he returned to Loza to find that his family's home had been destroyed. Peter then traveled to Romania and Hungary to search for relatives. Eventually, he went back to Loza and was reunited with one of his cousins, Ephraim, and Ephraim's wife, Blanca. The three cousins traveled to Munich, Germany, to get valid passports so they could travel.

After an unsuccessful attempt to go to Palestine, Peter immigrated to Australia in 1948. He settled in Sydney and married his wife, Rosie. He attended a technical college and worked in the textile industry before opening his own business. While living in Australia, Peter discovered that his sister Helen had survived the war, and was living in the Soviet Union. Helen later moved to Israel. Peter has three children, and one granddaughter, named Emily.

Student Handout: *Peter Hersch - A Lifeline*

Directions: Take notes on each segment of Peter Hersch's testimony in the spaces provided on the right. Use the spaces on the left to take notes on the historical context for each segment. Historical information can be found in the correlating chapters in the text, *Holocaust – the events and their impact on real people*.

Historical Information from the Text		Descriptions From Peter's Testimony
	Looking Back	
	Starting Over	
	On a Death March	
	In a Nazi Death Camp	
	Transport to a Nazi Camp	
	Life in the Nazi Ghettos	
	Jewish Life in Prewar Europe	

Student Handout: *Journal Writing – The Individual*

Directions: Write in your journal or notebook using the following prompt and questions as a guide.

The writer John Steinbeck wrote in his novel, East of Eden: “And this I believe: that the free, exploring mind of the individual human is the most valuable thing in all the world. And this I would fight for: the freedom of the mind to take any direction it wishes, undirected. And this I must fight against: any idea, religion, or government which limits or destroys the individual.”

- ∞ What do you think the importance of the individual in society, and in history is?
- ∞ What can you learn about history through the specific experiences of an individual, that you could not learn otherwise?
- ∞ How do you think Steinbeck’s commentary on the individual relates to Peter Hersch’s experiences in the Holocaust?
- ∞ How do you think Steinbeck’s commentary relates to the Holocaust in general?
- ∞ What is important to you, personally, about individuality?
- ∞ How do you protect the freedom of the individual in your own life?

Student Handout: Interviewing Peers

Directions: Interview your partner using the questions on page 1, below. You may ask follow-up questions to get more details, if necessary. Get as many details as possible. Then, write a narrative based on the interview.

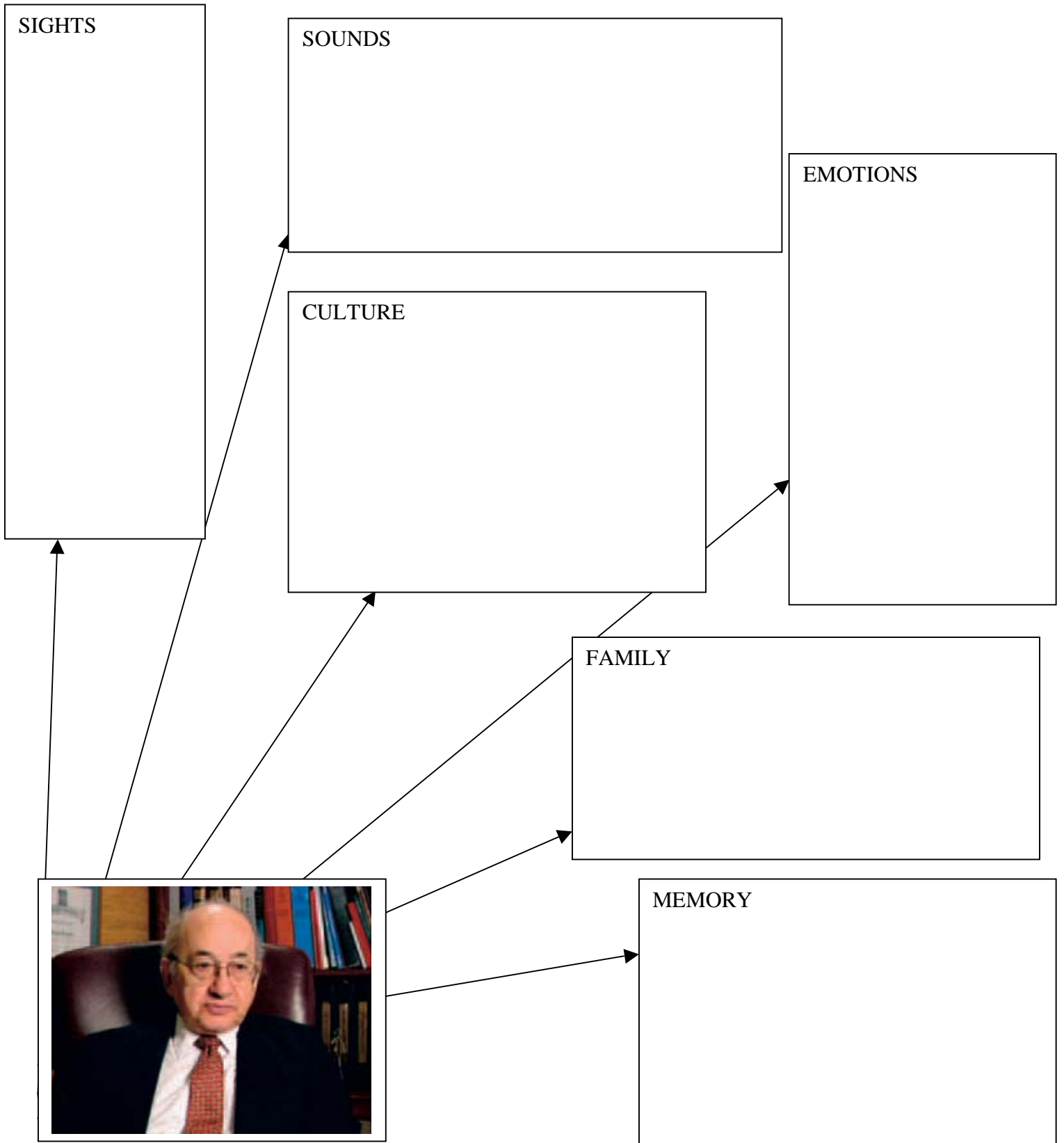
1. Describe your family.
2. Describe a typical day in your life.
3. What do you like about school? What do you dislike?
4. What do you do for fun, after school and on the weekend?
5. How would you describe yourself? Why would you describe yourself that way?
6. Describe a happy memory.
7. Describe a memory that is not so happy.
8. What do you value? What do you believe in?
9. How would you like to change the world?

Directions: After reading the narrative your partner wrote about you, reflect on the experience by answering the questions, below.

1. Was your partner's narrative accurate, or inaccurate? Describe.
2. How did it feel to see yourself portrayed in this way?
3. What did your partner learn about you that surprised you? Something that you did not necessarily say, but that came through in your tone or body language?
4. What did you learn about yourself by reading your partner's narrative?
5. How were your partner's descriptions different than, or similar to, the ways you would have described the same things?
6. What would you add to your partner's narrative?
7. How did reading your partner's description of you change your perspective on the narrative that you wrote? How do you think your narrative was accurate? How do you think it was inaccurate?

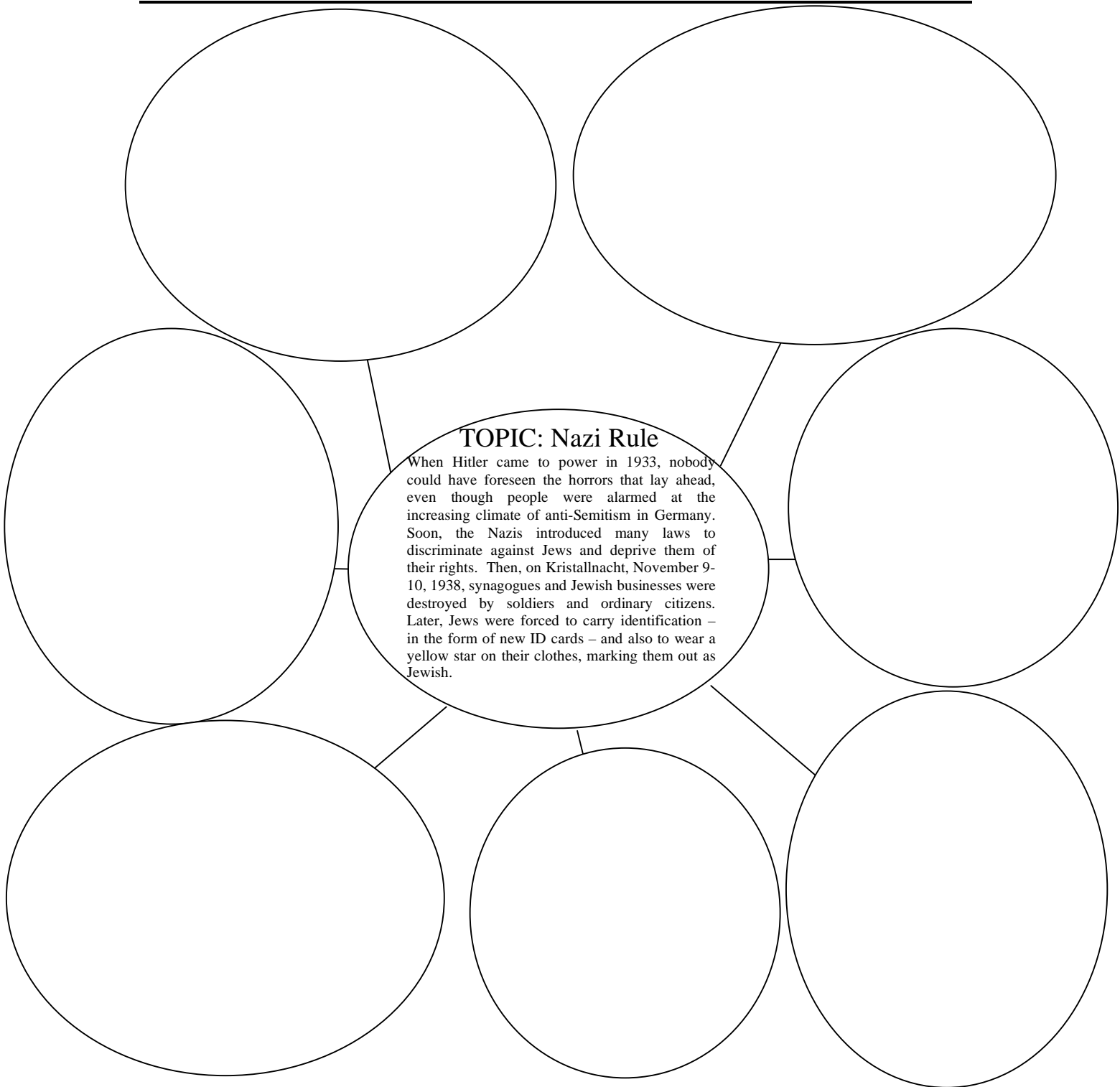
Student Handout: *Bernard Schuster*

Directions: Fill each circle with a relevant detail you noticed while watching Bernard Schuster's testimony about his childhood in the shtetl.



Student Handout: *Deepening Understanding With Primary Sources*

Directions: In each empty circle, describe one personal detail, image, story, or emotion that you heard in the testimonies featured in *Video Segment: Nazi Rule* from the DVD, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*. You may also use examples from the additional testimony transcriptions that can be found on pages 40-41 and 50-51 of the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*.



Directions: Answer the following questions about primary and secondary sources.

1. What kinds of historical information can you learn from a primary source (such as witness testimonies, letters, or diaries) that you could not learn from a secondary source such as a textbook?

2. What are the pros and cons of using primary sources in the study of history? What are the pros and cons of using secondary sources in the study of history?

Primary Source Materials	<u>PROS</u>	<u>CONS</u>
Secondary Source Materials	<u>PROS</u>	<u>CONS</u>

3. List 3-5 questions that you have, based on the testimonies from the *Video Segment: Nazi Rule*. They may be questions about content, or questions you'd like to ask the survivors.

Classroom Module:

Asking and Trying to Answer the Big Questions

Curriculum Connections:

This unit addresses curriculum standards in history, social studies, social science, Holocaust studies, language arts, English, art, and media studies.

Lesson Preparation:

- ∞ Review text and DVD components of *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* before starting this lesson.
- ∞ Cue DVD to appropriate *Video Segments* before class begins.
- ∞ Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution.

Rationale:

This lesson will encourage students to ask – and try to answer – the larger, philosophical questions that the study of the Holocaust raises, and will provide an opportunity for personal reflection on their feelings about this history.

Student Objectives:

- ∞ Students will explore the impact that the Holocaust has had on individuals.
- ∞ Students will explore the issues of responsibility and accountability as they relate to the Holocaust.
- ∞ Students will apply what they learned from history to their thinking about the present and the future.
- ∞ Students will have the opportunity to reflect on their emotional reactions to their study of the Holocaust.

Requirements:

Materials:

- ∞ DK Publication, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* (text and DVD)
- ∞ DVD Player and TV or Monitor
- ∞ Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- ∞ *Student Handout: Big Questions Theme Worksheet*

Time:

- ∞ 1 class period (plus an extension activity to be completed outside of class)

Techniques and Skills:

Journal writing, interpreting quotations, vocabulary building, small group work, reading for information, large group work, analyzing visual history testimony, examining historical chronology, organizing information, multimedia literacy, analyzing primary and secondary sources, comparing and contrasting information sources, critical thinking, responsive and creative writing, creative thinking, oral presentation, research skills.

Procedures

1. Explain to the class that they are about to see a video clip of a Holocaust survivor who survived Auschwitz. The segment was filmed at Auschwitz, in the 1990's, and is excerpted from a longer interview conducted by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute.
2. Tell the class that they will be referencing the content of this clip in activities later in class and for homework. For this reason, they may wish to take notes on the content and their reactions to it as they watch the video segment.
3. Play Renée Firestone's testimony clip from *Video Segment: The Aftermath* (total running time: approximately 1½ minutes) by selecting "The Aftermath" from the main DVD menu, and cuing it to Chapter 3.

Note: Optionally, students may benefit from reading a short biography of Renée Firestone before they watch the *Video Segment*. Renée's biography is located on page 180 of *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*.

4. After viewing the clip, conduct a short discussion, using the following questions as a guide:
 - ∞ How would you describe Renée's tone, or mood, in this clip?
 - ∞ What emotions do you detect from Renée in this clip?
 - ∞ Why do you think Renée say "it couldn't be true"?
 - ∞ When Renée says "we are all marked," what do you think she could be referring to?
 - ∞ When Renée says, "I learned something here, but I wonder whether the world learned anything" what could she be asking?
 - ∞ What do you think the world learned from the Holocaust? Why?
 - ∞ What do you think the world still must learn? Why?
 - ∞ How do you feel when Renée asks you, "Can you imagine? Can you imagine the millions that perished here?"
 - ∞ How would you answer her? Why?
5. Write the following themes on the chalkboard or on chart paper:
 - ∞ Responsibility and Accountability
 - ∞ Memory and Forgetting
 - ∞ Mind and Heart
 - ∞ Shaping the Future By Learning from the Past
 - ∞ Forgiveness and Understanding
6. Continue the discussion, using the following questions as a guide:
 - ∞ In this clip, how, or what, is Renée remembering? How or what is she forgetting?
 - ∞ In this clip, how is her mind's (intellectual) response to her experiences different than her heart's (emotional) response?
 - ∞ Does she think the present has been shaped by the past? Do you? How?
 - ∞ How does the theme "forgiveness" relate to Renée in this clip?
7. As a class, review the following pages in the text, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*. Discuss each reference as a large group, asking students to relate them to the themes on the board.

- ∞ The transcribed war crimes trials testimony on pages 170-171, particularly Josef Kramer’s statement shirking responsibility on page 170 (“I had no feelings carrying out these things, because I received an order.”), and the excerpt from Gideon Hausner’s opening statement on page 171, where he says “I will be their spokesman,” for the six million who perished in the Holocaust.
 - ∞ The various memorials and camp sites pictured on pages 174-175, particularly the inscription on the mausoleum at Majdanek pictured on page 175, “Let our fate be a warning for you.”
 - ∞ The “big questions” examined on pages 182-184, particularly the “lessons not learned” on page 183, and Elie Wiesel’s quote on page 184.
8. Divide the class into small groups. Assign each of the groups one of the themes. Distribute *Student Handout: Theme Worksheet* to each group. Take a few moments to review the handout with the class to ensure comprehension and answer their questions.
 9. Allow 15-20 minutes for students to work in groups, completing the handout.
 10. Reconvene as a large group to discuss the handout. Use the following questions to guide the discussion.
 - ∞ Share one of your group’s examples, and explain why your group chose this as an example that relates to your theme.
 - ∞ What was one of your group’s questions?
 - ∞ What was one of your group’s opinions?
 - ∞ What new or unusual definition did your group come up with for your theme?
 - ∞ What unexpected or creative example did your group find in the book or DVD for your theme?
 11. As a culminating activity, each group should complete the following project:

As a group, create an artistic response to our study of the Holocaust, centering on your theme. Choose one of the following media for your art project:

 - ∞ Visual art (collage, painting, sculpture, drawing)
 - ∞ Performance
 - ∞ Video
 - ∞ Music
 - ∞ Creative writing (poetry or prose)
 12. Tell students that their projects should reference both the video and the written components of *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*, and should reflect their group’s personal responses, reactions, and ideas about the history of the Holocaust that were studied in class. They might wish to use their completed *Student Handout: Theme Worksheet* to get started.
 13. At a later date, allow additional class time for each group to present their finished projects, and for the class to respond to them.

Student Handout: *Big Questions Theme Worksheet*

Directions: Working with your group, answer the following questions about your theme. Be creative, and “think outside the box!”

Theme: _____

Brainstorm as many definition(s) and connotation(s) for your theme as possible:

Collect examples from the book and DVD, *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People* that you think relate to your theme, and explain how you think they relate.

Describe Example <i>(be sure to include a page number or DVD chapter for each)</i>	Explain How Example Relates to Theme

List the group’s QUESTIONS about your theme. List the group’s OPINIONS on your theme:

Questions	Opinions