

## How do authors use form and genre?

Amidst widespread conversation about the effectiveness and challenges of teaching about fictionalised Holocaust texts in the classroom, this lesson aims to work with students in an English context to explore discuss conventions of genre, audience and form and their impact on writing about the Holocaust. This is done in reference to two texts, the non-fiction historical writing of Martin Gilbert's *The Boys*, and the historical fiction work *After the War* by Tom Palmer. Whilst this is an English lesson which focuses on objectives based on the English national curriculum, you could make connections with History, Citizenship and Religious education, which are explored further down the page.

**Lesson objective:** To explore how authors tell a similar story using different forms and genres.

<p><b>Starter (Slide 1)</b></p>	<p>To pre-teach or revise the key vocabulary for the lesson, introduce your young people to definitions of <b>form</b> and <b>genre</b>. As students may confuse these terms, be explicit about the differences between them and try to reinforce this difference in your feedback and teaching.</p> <p>Explain that in this lesson we are going to be studying two different texts which tell the same story – one is a fictional story based on the other, which is a factual memoir. We are going to look at how a <i>memoir</i> and <i>historical fiction</i> can tell a similar story in different ways.</p>
<p><b>Discussion</b></p>	<p>On the board, show slide 2, which displays the covers of several stories about the Holocaust aimed at young people.</p> <p>Ask the students to feedback which they're familiar with and see if they can identify the <i>form</i> or <i>genre</i> of any of these texts. What are the purposes of each of these <i>forms</i> and <i>genres</i>, and who is their intended <i>audience</i>? How do the covers help us work out which <i>genre</i> or <i>form</i> they belong to?</p> <p>If we wanted to learn factual information about the Holocaust, which <i>forms</i> and <i>genres</i> might be most useful? If we wanted a story set during the Holocaust, which <i>forms</i> and <i>genres</i> might be most useful?</p>
<p><b>Analysis</b></p>	<p>As a class, close-read both texts, particularly focussing on how they are similar or different in relationship to their <i>genre</i> or <i>form</i>, and how these decisions can effect a reader. Have students annotate their own copy as you go. You may wish to discuss tone, audience, features, person and structure – and link back consistently to how this fits the genre and form of each text.</p> <p>To support you in this, an annotated copy of each text is provided with key elements you may wish to draw out or question about when working with your students.</p>

<b>Bringing it together (Slide 4)</b>	With your students having completed the close-reading, use these questions as a plenary to the learning: 1) Identify three key differences between <i>historical fiction</i> and <i>memoir</i> based on these texts (ie, <i>Works of historical fiction often use figurative language whereas memoirs seldom do</i> ) 2) How does each work to affect the reader? 3) What are the key advantages of each genre? How do they complement each other?
<b>Extension</b>	To build on your work analysing genre and form in this lesson, in future lessons you may wish to move towards composition, asking students to write their own work of historical fiction which includes the features of the genre which have been identified in this lesson.