

'After the War' History lesson 3: What was the Holocaust?

What happened to the Jews of Europe during the Second World War?

Lesson objective: To secure knowledge and understanding about the Holocaust. To explore the experiences of some of 'The Boys' during the Holocaust.

Starter / Stimuli: photographs

Use the images in slides 3 & 5 as stimuli. Share the photographs without the captions in the first instance. Students can examine these as a class or in smaller groups. Encourage them to consider the following questions: What can you see? Who is in the photographs? What are they doing? What do you think is happening in these photographs? Who might have taken these photographs? Why might they have been taken?

Discuss student responses to these photographs as a class. Then share the photographs again with your students, alongside their captions (slides 4 & 6) and the contextual information about them (slide 7). Encourage students to answer the following questions (slide 8): 'What can we learn from these photographs about what happened to Jewish people during the Holocaust? Why do you think Henryk Ross thought that it was important to take these pictures? Why do you think that he had to hide them? What questions do you have?'

*Throughout the lesson encourage student enquiry. It is likely that students will have lots of questions as they work through this lesson / these lessons: 'What questions do you have?' These can be shared with the class as they progress through the lesson and / or recorded to return to and reflect upon at the end of the lesson/s. Reassure students that these questions will be explored and revisited and that they are going to find out more about what happened during the Holocaust.

Extracts from 'After the War'

These extracts (slides 9 & 10) contain Yossi's memories of the deportation from the ghetto and conditions in the camps. Students could read these independently or as a class. Encourage students to answer the following questions (slide 11): 'What can we infer from these extracts about the experience of deportations? What can we infer from these extracts about the conditions for prisoners in the camps? What questions do you have?'

Testimony of 'The Boys'

Testimony is a spoken or written statement describing an event or experience. Here students will use a selection of short written testimony from 'The Boys', the child Holocaust survivors upon whom the central characters in the novel 'After the War' were based upon (slides 12 - 15).

Students could work through the testimonies in small groups, each student reporting back upon one of the testimonies. As they work through them students should be encouraged to answer the following (slide 16): 'What can we learn from this testimony about what conditions were like in the camps? Write a list of the difficulties that 'The Boys' faced in these conditions. What questions do you still have?'

Historical context: context card 3 ‘Europe’s Jews in the Second World War.’	<p>Share context card 3: ‘Europe’s Jews in the Second World War.’ with your students. This can be read together as a class or independently. Student should write or discuss their responses to the following questions (slide 17):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When did the mass killing of Jewish people begin? Where did these murders take place?2. When and where was the first Nazi death camp established?3. When were the majority of Europe’s Jews murdered?
Applying knowledge and understanding	<p>Drawing upon all of the knowledge and understanding gained throughout the lesson students should respond to the following question (slide 18) :</p> <p>What was the Holocaust?</p> <p>Students could write a definition of the Holocaust, a class definition or produce a piece of extended writing.</p>