

Lesson Plan – Short-term and long-term impacts of the Holocaust on Jewish people

Introduction

Student age range: 14-16

Subject: History

Time required: 50 minutes

Overview:

It is important to recognise that the impacts of the Holocaust did not end with Liberation. Jewish survivors continued to feel the physical and emotional impacts for many years, and in some cases, for generations. Impacts included physical illness, the loss of family, displacement, trauma and cultural loss. Broader impacts also include the growth of the Diaspora and the establishment of the State of Israel.

Essential questions:

- What were the impacts of the Holocaust on Jewish people?

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about the short-term and long-term impacts of the Holocaust.
- Students will understand that the impacts of the Holocaust lasted well beyond the end of World War II.

Key issues/concepts:

- Continuity and change
- Cause and effect

Materials:

Worksheet – Impact on Jewish People

Handout – Impact on Jewish People

Sticky notes and pens

Teaching notes:

Just as every victim had a different experience of the Holocaust, the impact of the Holocaust was different for every survivor. Teachers should ensure that students recognise this, and also understand that although there are no universal truths, there are some significant common themes.

Glossary:

- Liberation
- Diaspora
- Displaced Persons' (DP) Camps

Lesson Instructions

ONE – Liberation (5 minutes)

Teacher exposition: in 1944 and 1945, the Allies began to win the war, and push the German armies back, towards pre-war German borders. As the Allies reclaimed land, particularly in Poland, they liberated the camps in those areas. So for Jewish survivors, the war ended at different times, depending on when the Allied armies arrived.

Teacher introduces the focus for the lesson: Impacts of the Holocaust on Jewish people.

TWO – Impacts card activities (35 minutes)

1. Students cut out the cards on the [Worksheet – Impact on Jewish People](#).
2. Students find the card to match each of these headings, and write the heading on the card:
 - Diaspora
 - Poor health
 - Destruction of culture
 - Displacement
 - Reformation of Jewish identity
 - Psychological trauma
 - Lack of education
 - Intergenerational trauma
 - Loss of communities
 - Loss of families

- Economic devastation
 - DP camps
 - Loss of future potential
 - Breakdown of religious life
 - Loss of trust in government and society
 - Establishment of the State of Israel
 - Post-war antisemitism
 - Legal and Human rights development
3. Class discussion about the impacts. Teacher may use these discussion prompts:
 - a. Are there any impacts which you hadn't thought of before?
 - b. Which do you think were the most difficult for survivors to cope with?
 - c. Can you identify different categories of impacts (eg physical, emotional, personal, community, religious)?
 4. Students arrange the cards into two piles: short-term impacts and long-term impacts. Discuss observations.
 5. Students read the testimonies on the [Handout – Impact on Jewish People](#). Beside each testimony, students write the impacts which are discussed in the testimony.

FINISHING UP - Resilience (10) minutes

On a sticky note, students write an observation about resilience, based on the lesson today. All students put their sticky notes on the board/wall. Teacher reads out some of the observations.

Modifications:

Step Two, the Impacts card activity, can be done as individuals or in small groups. Teachers can choose to have students write directly on the board, rather than using sticky notes.

Extension activity: Write a single page summary of current understanding of the impact of intergenerational trauma on the children and grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors.

Extension activity: Use images from the internet to create a visual storyboard of life in a DP camp after the Holocaust.

Related lessons

After this lesson, we recommend you teach about Holocaust Centres, Memorials and Museums. You can find this, and other Holocaust lesson plans, at [this link](#).

[Click here](#) to see a suggested plan for teaching a full unit about the Holocaust.