

Lesson Plan – The Creation of Holocaust Centres, Memorials and Museums

Introduction

Student age range: 14-16

Subject: History

Time required: 50 minutes

Overview:

This lesson address Holocaust centres, memorials and museums, and asks students to consider why it is important to remember the Holocaust. Students will recall all their prior learning during the Holocaust unit, and apply it to the design of a Holocaust memorial.

Essential questions:

- What is the purpose of Holocaust centres, memorials and museums?
- What are the relevant considerations in designing Holocaust centres, memorials and museums?

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn the value of Holocaust centres, memorials and museums.
- Students will learn the relevant considerations for designing appropriate and meaningful memorials.

Key issues/concepts:

- Perspectives
- Significance

Materials:

Whiteboard and markers

Worksheet – Memorials and Museums

Presentation – Memorials and Museums

Pens

Teaching notes:

This lesson is the last in the Holocaust learning unit developed by the Sydney Jewish Museum. As such, it serves as a summary for the unit. When designing their memorials in Step Three, students should be drawing on all they have learned. The lesson also underlines the purpose of the unit, by asking students to reflect on why it is necessary to keep memories of the Holocaust alive.

The memorial design task utilises a design task template. The first steps of the process, which involve defining the problem and researching the solutions, are covered by Steps One and Two of the lesson plan.

Glossary:

- Commemoration
- Memorialisation

Lesson Instructions

ONE – Why commemorate the Holocaust? (5 minutes)

Teacher writes the question on the board: why are we learning about the Holocaust? As students respond, teacher can record responses on the board. Responses might include:

- To remember what happened during the Holocaust
- To honour the victims – those killed, as well as survivors
- To create places to remember the murdered victims, because most of them have no graves.
- To ensure the mistakes of the past are not repeated (“Never again”)
- To learn about the effects of racism and bias
- To learn about the importance of our civic choices

Teacher concludes by saying that for all these reasons, there are Holocaust centres, memorials and museums around the world.

TWO – Exploring Holocaust memorials (10 minutes)

Teacher shows the examples of Holocaust memorials in the **Presentation – Memorials and Museums**. For each example, the teacher asks:

- What is the main emotion here?

- What is the main message?
- How is the emotion/message being conveyed? What techniques have the designers used?
- Is there anything that particularly works or doesn't work about this example?

THREE – Design Task (30 minutes)

Students use the process on the [Worksheet – Memorials and Museums](#) to design a Holocaust Memorial.

FINISHING UP

Students finish the sentence: “Three reasons why it is important to memorialise the Holocaust are...”

Modifications:

Teachers may choose to give students longer than one lesson to complete the design task. Take two lessons or more, or give students homework time to complete their designs. Students may like to present their designs in class, and teachers could use the task to display student work in the classroom or school library.

Teachers may also choose to encourage students to build their memorial in 3D.

Additional Resources

[New Yorker Article](#): Why is it so hard to build a Holocaust Memorial in London?

Related lessons

Sydney Jewish Museum has developed lesson plans to support the teaching of a complete unit about the Holocaust. [Click here](#) to see all lesson plans.

You can also see a plan for a complete unit of learning about the Holocaust at [this link](#).