

# Lesson Plan: Holocaust Poetry

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# Lesson Plan

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  3. Reading
  4. Affective–Cognitive Break
  5. Experience Report
  6. Formal Analysis
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  8. Homework
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# 1. Brainstorming



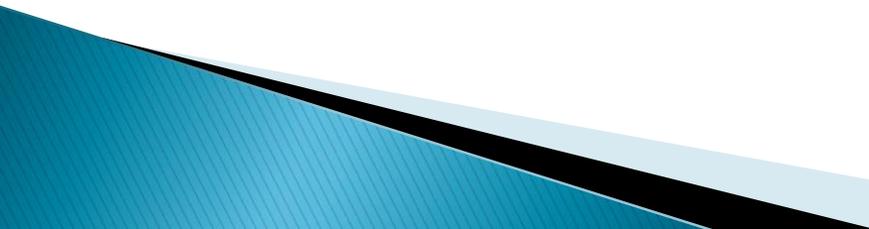
# 1. Brainstorming

- ▶ Teacher asks pupils
  - How often and in what situations have you heard one of the following or similar expressions:
    - “It’s not fair!”
    - “That’s unjust!”
  - Have you ever witnessed or heard about violent crimes?

# 2. Introduction



# 2. Introduction

- ▶ Teacher presents to pupils:
    - Summary of mandatory readings from Anne Frank's diary (previous lesson plan)
    - What do you know about the violent crimes against the Jews under the Nazi regime from your history lessons?
    - Basic definition and historical facts about the Holocaust
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# 3. Reading



# 3. Reading

- ▶ Teacher reads four Holocaust poems
  - ▶ Pupils listen carefully
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# 4. Affective–Cognitive Break



# 4. Affective–Cognitive Break

- ▶ Teacher takes a break of 10 seconds or so after every poem
- ▶ Pupils get an opportunity to open themselves to the effects of the poem on them

# 5. Experience Report



# 5. Experience Report

- ▶ Teacher asks pupils to give their experience reports
  - Who are the people in the poem?
  - Where are they?
  - What have they experienced?
  - What do you recognize in the poem?
  - What do you feel and think while listening to the poems?

# 6. Formal Analysis



# 6. Formal Analysis

- ▶ Teacher writes questions on the blackboard
  - main subject matter, themes and motifs
  - basic thoughts and feelings expressed
  - figurative language and stylistic devices
  - form, verse, stanza, rhyme and rhythm
  - etc.
- ▶ Pupils form four groups of 4–5 members and each group chooses a leader

# 6. Formal Analysis

## Holocaust (Barbara Sonek)

We played, we laughed  
we were loved.

We were ripped from the arms of our  
parents and thrown into the fire.

We were nothing more than children.

We had a future. We were going to be lawyers, rabbis,  
wives, teachers, mothers. We had dreams, then we had no  
hope. We were taken away in the dead of night like cattle  
in cars, no air to breathe smothering, crying, starving,  
dying. Separated from the world to be no more. From the  
ashes, hear our plea. This atrocity to mankind can not  
happen again. Remember us, for we were the children  
whose dreams and lives were stolen away.

# 6. Formal Analysis

**Why**

(a holocaust poem)

Cody Lee

I wake up in the  
morning  
and the pain begins,  
Starvation, beatings,  
disease  
when will it ever end...

There is blood on my  
elbows  
and blood on my  
knees,  
my clothes are torn  
I just want to be free...

I am what I am  
I guess thats why I'm  
here,  
I've been here three  
months  
And I'm numb with  
fear...

I pray to God  
and ask him why,  
what did I do  
to deserve to die...

# 6. Formal Analysis

Ruth Dykstra

## What I Don't Know

What you don't know can't hurt,  
they say.

I disagree.

Did they know?

How awful, how hateful?

The ghettos, the camps, the  
chamber, the stars?

That made you feel, so  
different, so sad.

As if, you weren't human,  
anymore.

The lives taken, those spared,  
Will be changed forever.

Those that saw and then, saw no  
more,

Those that saw again and again.

Those forced to leave,

Those forced to stay,

Those forced to be somewhere  
in the middle.

There was no way out, no  
escape.

Only to live,

Only to die.

# 6. Formal Analysis

## To My Friends

Dear friends, and here I say friends the broad sense of the word: Wife, sister, associates, relatives, Schoolmates of both sexes, People seen only once Or frequented all my life; Provided that between us, for at least a moment, A line has been stretched, A well-defined bond. I speak for you, companions of a crowded Road, not without its difficulties, And for you too, who have lost Soul, courage, the desire to live; Or no one, or someone, or perhaps only one person, or you Who are reading me: remember the time Before the wax hardened, When everyone was like a seal. Each of us bears the imprint Of a friend met along the way; In each the trace of each. For good or evil In wisdom or in folly Everyone stamped by everyone. Now that the time crowds in And the undertakings are finished, To all of you the humble wish That autumn will be long and mild. (Anonymous)

# 7. Synthesis



# 7.Synthesis

- ▶ Group leaders give short summaries on their findings about their poems
- ▶ Teacher leads a forum discussion of the following questions with all pupils
  - What do you think and feel about the situation of the characters from the poems?
  - Do the survivors need and want to talk about their experiences? Why or why not? Are the survivors able to talk about them?
  - Why do they express themselves through poems?
  - What is the meaning of these poems? What is their message?
  - Why do we need to commemorate their experiences?

# 8. Homework



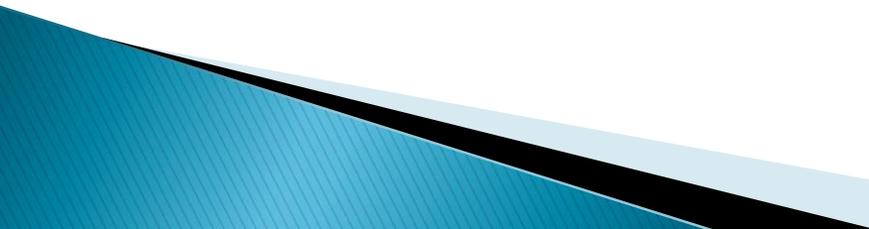
# 8. Homework

- ▶ Teacher gives pupils written homework assignment:
  - Write a letter to a Holocaust survivor!
  - Describe what you think and feel about the Holocaust!
  - Tell them what you learnt from their poems!

# 9. Subject Correlation



# 9. Subject Correlation

- ▶ History
  - ▶ Croatian Language/Media Culture
  - ▶ Religious Studies
  - ▶ General Education
  - ▶ Music
  - ▶ Visual Arts
  - ▶ German Language and Literature
  - ▶ ...
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# History

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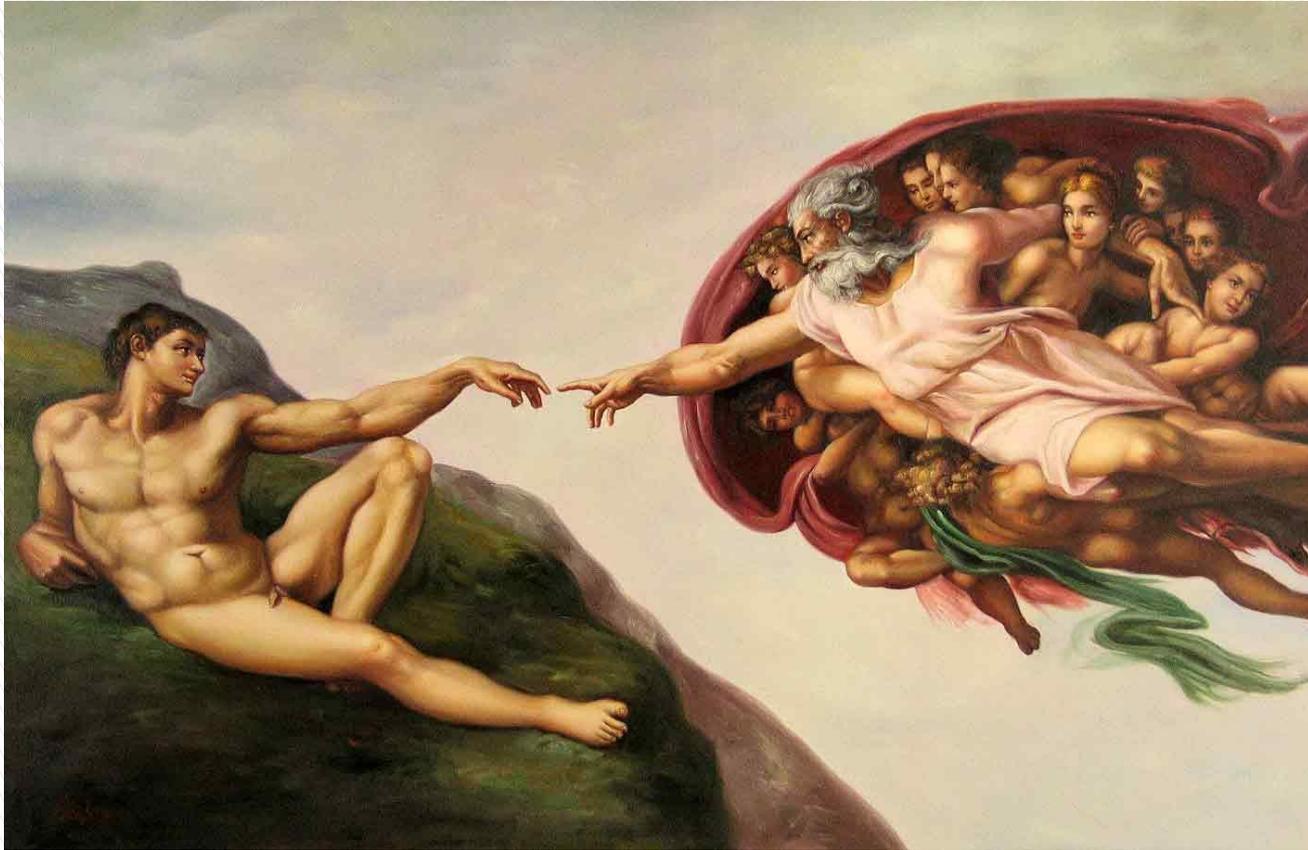


# Croatian Language/Media Culture



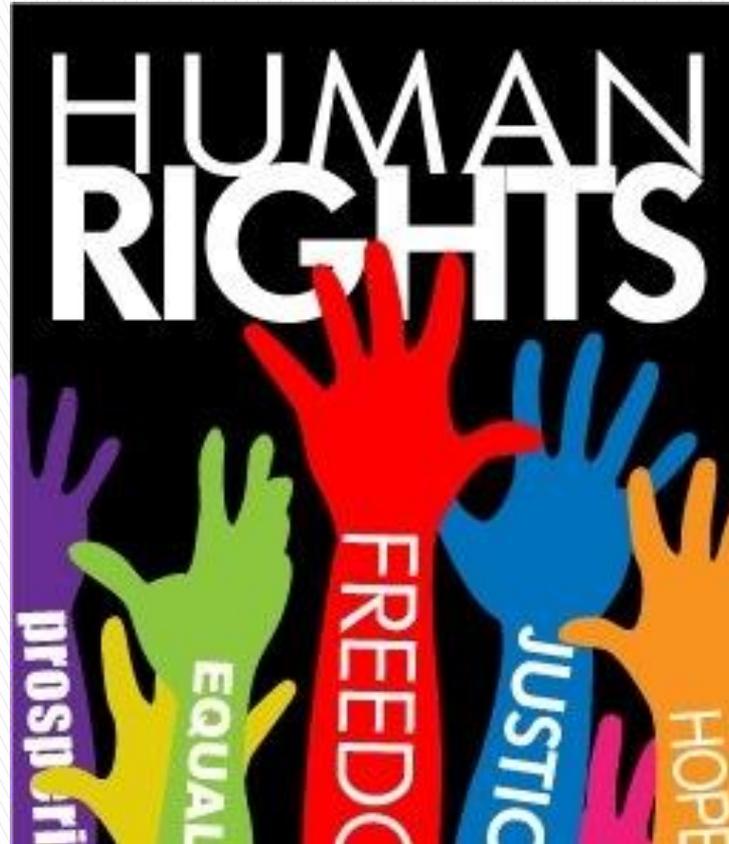
Steven Spielberg  
*Schindler's List*

# Religious Studies



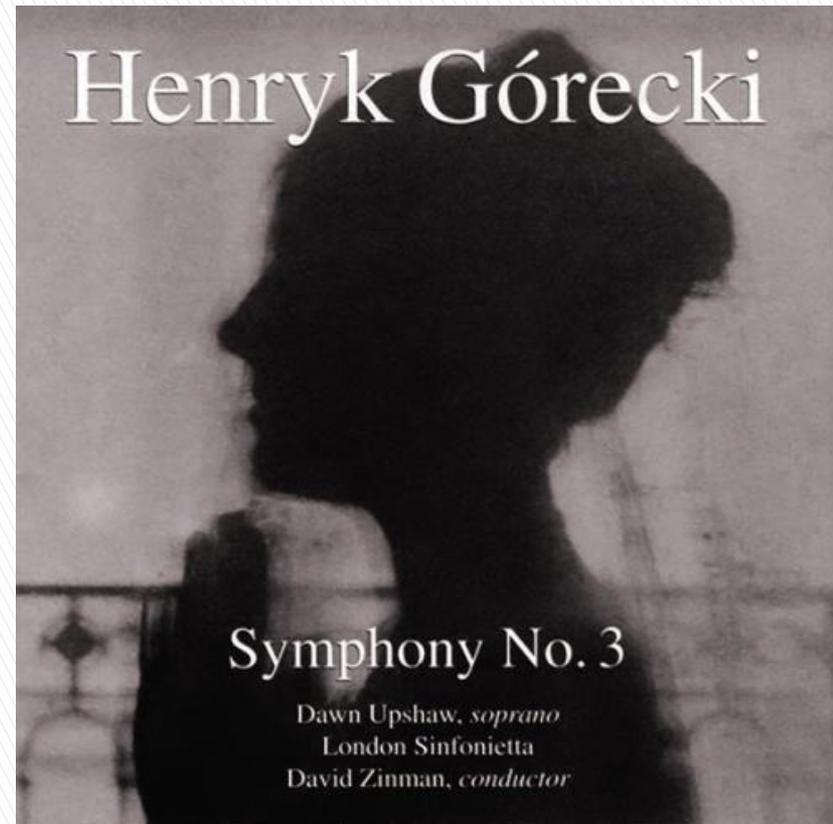
Man was created in the  
image of God

# General Education



Universal Declaration of  
Human Rights (1948)

# Music



Henryk Górecki –  
Symphony N°3

# Visual Arts: Anselm Kiefer



Your Golden Hair  
Margarete (1981)



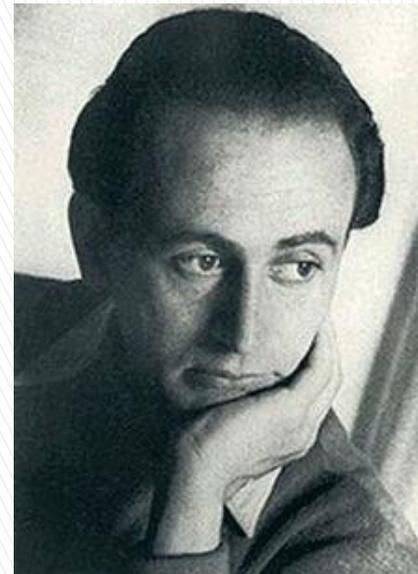
Sulamith(1983)

# German Language

## Death Fugue

Black milk of daybreak we drink it at evening  
we drink it at midday and morning we drink it at night  
we drink and we drink  
we shovel a grave in the air there you won't lie too cramped  
...

Paul Celan  
Death Fugue (1947)



# 10. Epilogue



# Henryk Górecki – Symphony N°3

