

# Teaching about the Holocaust “FOLLOW UP”

---

Marija Gabelica, History teacher  
Koprivnica High School  
January, 2016.

## GOALS:

- Attempt to answer what happened to the majority of European Jews using photographs, testimonies and historical sources, and how it was humanly possible?
- Develop interest and improve knowledge of the Holocaust, genocide and the suffering of people in World War II

## Outcomes:

- Students will find out what happened to European Jews and their families during WWII by analysing pictures and testimonies
- Establish the differences between camps and name the most significant
- Using material sources and photographs try to explain what happened in those death camps and what the Holocaust was
- Attempt to answer about the photographers' motivation to take these photographs (purpose and method)
- Compare the positions of victims and perpetrators, i.e. explain who was who and why?

# What we do and how

- **History Lessons in the classroom, (2nd and 3rd grade)**

- They analyse photos, maps, testimonies (material and audio)

- Classroom Themes: The Nazis' rise to power (Nazi rule, ideology, life of minorities under Nazi regime, The Final Solution (Deportations, final solution, death camps), NDH...

- **Cooperation with the English teacher**

- In English class, students translate testimonies from the book *The Auschwitz Album* (Yad Vashem) and several poems

# Exhibition

- Travelling Anne Frank exhibition (A.F. House from Amsterdam) organised by Hermes
  - In our school from 18.-25.1
- Students are “curators” and take all classes from our schools through the exhibition, along with students from other schools in Koprivnica





# History lessons

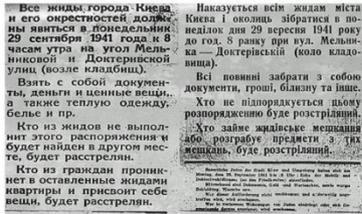
- 1. Nazi rule
  - The Nazi rise to power
  - Gathering of Jews through reading the sources and questions
- 2. Audio Testimony
- 3. Team work – Anne Frank exhibition (20)
  - (in the school's main hall)
  - (Hermes organisation in cooperation with the Anna Frank House from Amsterdam)

# Individual tasks:

- Essay
  - Students write an essay on how they felt (after hearing the lecture on deportations and the Final Solution)
- Righteous Among the Nations –
  - Each student has to choose one Righteous, read about their life and the life of those they had saved
  - On a big poster (in all final year classes) we write down their names and the names of people saved

# In lessons I use

## 2. Gathering of Jews \*



Handout September 28, 1941.  
in Russian, Ukrainian with German  
translation

- *“All Yids<sup>1</sup> of the city of Kiev and its vicinity must appear on Monday, September 29, by 8 o'clock in the morning at the corner of Mel'nikova and Dorozhnytska streets (near the Viis'kove cemetery).  
Bring documents, money and valuables, and also warm clothing, linen, etc. Any Yids who do not follow this order and are found elsewhere will be shot. Any civilians who enter the dwellings left by Yids<sup>1</sup> and appropriate the things in them will be shot”*

- Multiperspective
- Newspaper articles
- Photos
- Documents
- Testimonies
- Maps

- *“The difficulties resulting from such a large scale action—in particular concerning the seizure—were overcome in Kiev by requesting the Jewish population through wall posters to move. Although only a participation of approximately 5,000 to 6,000 Jews had been expected at first, more than 30,000 Jews arrived who, until the very moment of their execution, still believed in their resettlement, thanks to an extremely clever organization.”*

Report of the commander of  
the Einsatzkommando, 2 days after

- With what are the difficulties encountered Nazis?
- Why the Jews did not flee?
- Where they thought they were going

# Audio testimonies

- Testimony of Bjanka Auslander, Sarajevo
- Clip 3 and clip 4
- [https://sfi.usc.edu/lessons/deportacija-stanovni%C5%A1tva-ndh-usta%C5%A1ke-logore#o\\_jg7411w4](https://sfi.usc.edu/lessons/deportacija-stanovni%C5%A1tva-ndh-usta%C5%A1ke-logore#o_jg7411w4)



- After hearing a testimony answer questions:
  - Who was Bjanka and where was she from?
  - Who came for them and why?
  - Who was she with? What did they carry with them?
  - Where did they take them?
  - Describe the conditions in which she travelled.
  - What did she travel by?
  - Did they know where they were going?

# 1. ARRIVAL

- Photo Analysis
  - I ask them to try to describe photos
  - Questions about photos (who is on the photos, what the yellow star represents, how many people there were, did they have any luggage...
  - Map analysis
- Reading Testimonies (Primary source)
- Questions

## ARRIVAL TO CAMPS



Jews who have just arrived on a train at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp





# Photo Analysis

- Describe the photos!
- Who are these people? Where are they going? Have they got any luggage?
- How are they treated?
- Why have they got a yellow star?
- Do you think they know where they are going?
- How did they describe the scenes, pace, sounds and smells upon arrival?
- What do you think happened to those people?

## MOTIVATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER

- Who took these photos? For what purpose?
- Can you see SS officers?
- Why can't we see any dogs and rifles?
- Can you explain the difference between the photos and Helena Cytron's descriptions?

## 1. ARRIVAL TO AUSCHWITZ Testimonies

- “And we arrived to Auschwitz. As soon as they opened the doors, prisoners in striped uniforms came on to the train and they started to yell that we should all leave everything and go down — we all must go out, leave everything in the train. My brother-in-law by some miracle had still a watch. So he — you know, he asked them first, “tell me what’s going on here.” And downstairs we just heard a lot of screaming and, yelling in German. [...] My sister — as soon as they opened the door, she ran down with her little boy; because Danny was crying and it was suffocating in that train it was terrible, terrible journey. People were fainting. We were pulling out you know, smelling salts to revive people. It was unbelievable to describe just the journey itself, so we were already very glad when we arrived. We thought, “This is, at least can’t be worse than what we experienced.”*
- Just as we arrived at Auschwitz, the terrible shouting started: “Alles Raus!” “Everyone out!” “Hurry up!” Everything happened very fast, accompanied by shouting, and by the time we gathered ourselves up, and we could once again stand on our feet (for our feet had become paralyzed from sitting), the beatings began. From the minute we got to the door, anyone who could not jump quickly was whipped, and there were SS personnel and dogs. As soon as we got off the trains, they asked us to throw [the rest of] our jewelry onto the side of the road — whatever people still had: small earrings, a watch — for they had taken away our jewelry long before
- Helena Cytron
- Cecile Klein-Pollack\*

## Survivals

### Cecile Klein-Pollack

- Born in 1925 in Jasina, Czechoslovakia (a region under Hungarian rule at the time), she was on the train with Lili Jacob. From Auschwitz she was taken to Holleischen camp in the Sudeten region and was liberated there by the British Army. She married in August 1945, moved to the United States and had three children.*

*Helena Cytron was born in 1922 in Czechoslovakia. In Spring 1942, when she was twenty years old, she was deported to Auschwitz in one of the first transports from Slovakia. While in the camp, she worked in different labor groups, among them “Kommando Kanada.” Because of this work she managed to save her sister, Shoshana, from death. In 1945, she participated in the death marches, and with the liberation she and her sister immigrated to Israel. She had two children, and lived in Tel-Aviv until her death in 2006.*

### Batya Druckmacher

*Born in Lodz in 1914. Before the war, she was a housewife, and in the Lodz ghetto she worked as a nanny. She arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau in August 1944, and by the end of the war had survived Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau and forced labor camps in Germany.*

### Feige Sauberman

*Born in Klementow in 1922. She was sent from forced labor in a BMW factory for car production in Munich to Auschwitz-Birkenau. From Auschwitz she was sent to Bergen-Belsen, and three other camps until she was liberated.*

Team 1\*  
Survivors’ testimonies :  
: Cecile Klein-Pollack, Helen Cytron  
Students translated them in English  
class

- On October 20, 1944, all Jews of the ghetto were sent to Auschwitz. We arrived there late at night, and sat in the boxcars until six o'clock in the morning. From far away we saw how they led men, barefoot and head-shaven, to work. These men begged us to throw them a piece of bread, because we, too, would someday be as they were. Then the panic started among the people. Some began to cry and the German Kapos, who were leading the men, hit them with sticks on the soles of their feet. We threw them bread without paying any attention to the Kapos who walked along accompanied by their dogs*
- On May 18, 1944, we arrived in Auschwitz. It was night. Despite the tortures and the despair each one of us was curious about our fate. The only source we had for information was the SS men accompanying us to Auschwitz. They gave evasive answers to our questions. Upon looking at the huge flame, we asked them whether it's a factory? They answered us with a cynical laugh, explaining that this was the kitchen where they make coffee for the workers. As we got closer to these flames, we immediately had the opportunity to understand what kind of a kitchen it was*

Feige Sauberman, Yad Vashem Archives, M49E/2518

# Teamwork



## Teams:

- assigned topics
- They had professional help by volunteer curators (also our school's students)

# Witnesses

We talk about witnesses and their experiences. Who were they?

## *LOCALS - Witnesses of time*

- Various witnesses : **observers, participants, helpers**
- Ordinary people, peasants, away from ideological debates
- They would pass by and see things
- Sometimes they were forced to watch executions (as a public display)
- Sometimes they were forced to help Nazis (digging graves to bury the bodies, collecting possessions of Jews, even had to prepare food for the Nazi army)
- Sometimes sympathetic, sometimes not
- Reward - forced to dig, and then to get clothes



# EXECUTION SITES OF JEWISH VICTIMS

INVESTIGATED BY

## YAHAD-IN UNUM

### SEARCH BY LOCATION

- Execution sites of Jewish victims
- Soon online



©2012 Yahad-In Unum | Terms of use

## Holocaust by the bullets – mass graves

YAHAD  
IN UNUM

Ижевск  
Izhevsk

Новгород  
Novgorod

Москва  
Moscow

Казань  
Kazan

Самара  
Samara

Polska  
Poland

Україна  
Ukraine

România  
Romania

Italia  
Italy







POEM  
*To the little Polish  
boy,*  
Peter Fishl

# “TO THE LITTLE POLISH BOY STANDING WITH HIS ARMS UP”

I would like to be an artist  
So I could make a Painting of you  
Little Polish Boy

Standing with your Little hat on your head  
The Star of David on your coat  
Standing in the ghetto with your arms up as  
many Nazi machine guns pointing at you

I would make a monument of you  
and the world who said nothing

I would like to be a composer so I could write  
a concerto of you  
Little Polish Boy

- I am not an artist  
But my mind has painted a painting of you

Ten Million Miles High is the painting  
So the whole universe can see you now  
Little Polish Boy

Standing with your little hat on your head  
The Star of David on your coat  
Standing in the ghetto with your arms up  
As many Nazi machine guns pointed at you

And the world  
Who said nothing

I'll make this painting so bright  
That it will blind the eyes of the world  
Who saw nothing

Ten Billion Miles High will be the monument  
So the whole universe can remember you  
Little Polish Boy

Standing with your little hat on your head  
The Star of David on your coat

III.

Standing in the ghetto with your arms up  
As many Nazi machine guns pointed at you

And the monument will tremble so the blind world  
Now will know

What fear is in the darkness

The world  
Who said nothing

I am not a composer  
But I will write a composition  
For five trillion trumpets  
So it will blast the ear drums  
Of this world

The worlds  
Who heard nothing

I  
am  
Sorry  
that  
it was you  
and  
not me

Author: Peter Fischl



ART