



Young Audiences of Massachusetts
Experience. Understand. Create. Connect.

Educational Materials

(Please forward to teachers)

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Terezin, Children of the Holocaust
Target Grades: 7-12

The problems of hatred, prejudice and indifference are present in our communities and in our schools. In a moving and inspiring performance featuring young actors, *Terezin: Children of the Holocaust* provides an historical context within which to examine these critically important issues. Inspired by the art and poetry of the children of Terezin, playwright and director Anna Smulowitz, the daughter of Auschwitz survivors, wrote the play in order to sustain the memory of the victims, including her many family members who did not survive. The play depicts two days in a cell at Terezin or Theresienstadt, a concentration camp outside of Prague that imprisoned many European Jews, including over 15,000 children.

It is the story of six of these children, and chronicles the last two days of their lives before being deported to their deaths at Auschwitz. While the play suggests the grim reality of what lies ahead, it is also a portrait of the hope that children naturally possess, and how these particular children achieved a triumph of spirit through their personal relationships and their artwork.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. Students will consider key questions regarding the Holocaust.
2. Students will realize that man's inhumanity to man can surface in a variety of historical circumstances.
3. Students will recognize that genocide is a threat to all humanity and the loss of one group is a loss to all.
4. Developing a dialogue about modern day prejudice, discrimination and xenophobia. Students will recognize that racial slurs and ethnic jokes are stepping stones on a long road, which in the end may lead to genocide.
5. Students will recognize that bystanders make an active choice that may result in escalating harm to others.
6. Students will understand that prejudice has had a long history and is still alive today.
7. Students will understand the danger of blind obedience to authority.
8. Students will understand that when tyranny prevails, individuals can make a difference by acts of moral courage.
9. Students will carry the message that acts of genocide cannot happen again.

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PRE-ACTIVITY: Journal Writing

TIME: 3 lessons, 1 hour each

Create a journal of personal reactions to the Holocaust. Suggestions for journal entries: "I did not know that ... " "I couldn't believe that ... " "If I were - I think I would ... " "When I think that this person - is similar to – because..." "This event is similar because..."

PRE-ACTIVITY: Holocaust, history & overview

TIME: 3 lessons, 1 hour each

MATERIALS/PREPARATION: Educationworld.com

TIME: Two weeks

STEP 1: To become familiar with lessons from the Holocaust as it pertains to today's social/political climate. Introduce map of Europe as a setting for the Holocaust. Students familiarize themselves with those areas in Europe and the economic times.

STEP 2: Discuss: Nuremburg Laws & Antisemitism

Kristallnacht "Night of the Broken Glass"

Invasion of Poland. Decrees for Jews. Begin Deportation All European Countries

Yellow Stars, ghettos, mass deportation. Destruction of Jewish life in general.

STEP 3: The final solution-watch video "Last Days" Stephen Spielberg; or see "Schindler's List"

Read and discuss Elie Wiesel book "Night".

STEP 4: Poetry of the Holocaust

Children's art and poetry from Terezin Camp. Read book "I Never Saw Another Butterfly"

STEP 5: Share and discuss student art and poetry reflections.

Extensions:

1. Exhibit of Terezin's children's art and poetry work.
2. Exhibit of student's art and poetry work.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) Journal writing reflections on Terezin art & poetry
- 2) Journal writing reflections on student's art & poetry



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POST-ACTIVITY: Art & Poetry

TIME: 3 lessons, 1 hour each

Have students view, read, and discuss the art and poetry created by the children of Terezin, as seen in the production "Terezin, Children of the Holocaust" Suggestion: Use poems and drawings from "I Never Saw Another Butterfly".

POST-ACTIVITY: Discussing Discrimination and Prejudice

TIME: 2-3 lessons, 1 hour each.

STEP 1: Discussion of prejudice as experienced in students' schools and communities and the nation.

STEP 2: Exercises in racial understanding and misconceptions. For example, an exercise where the main statement is "One thing you might not know about me as an African-American is" or "One thing you should know about me as an African-American is..." various other social groups, anthropological groups can be substituted for African-Americans.

STEP 3: Other forms of discrimination based on gender and sexual preference.

STEP 4: Discussion and illustrations of bullying and cyber-bullying.

STEP 5: Discussion on role of the bystander.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Develop plan for confronting bullying and cyber-bullying in their schools and communities.
2. Implement plan and evaluate.

RESOURCES:

Utilization of current media/TV journalism/magazines

Report and discussion on examples in these resources in the students and school community setting

Reflection and discussion about experiences seeing the play "Terezin, Children of the Holocaust"

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ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:

We are student actors ages 7 through 18, from various Newburyport area elementary, middle and high schools. We have studied acting for some years, and have studied the Holocaust and various social justice issues in order to take part in the terrorism project.