

# Unit #6: Liberators and Moral Responsibility

Content Area: **Social Studies**  
Course(s): **Holocaust Studies**  
Time Period: **First Marking Period**  
Length: **1.5 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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The first part of the unit will provide a conceptual overview of the Holocaust concentration camp experience from an interdisciplinary perspective using testimonies of American Liberators. As American forces pushed into Nazi occupied Europe, they uncovered the depths of inhumanity and cruelty. It should be stated that not only American forces liberated concentration camps but British and Soviet forces did as well. This unit of study will focus on American Liberator testimony given at Kean University. Unprepared to unearth evidence of the Nazi Final Solution, Liberators responded in various ways. Some reacted with anger while others repressed the sights of sheer depravity. In the totality of war, Liberators had witnessed the horror of battle but experientially little could parallel the surreal horror of a concentration camp.

The second part of the unit is designed to help students analyze society's moral codes and to assess a range of related issues of conscience and moral responsibility. Students will examine the meaning of personal responsibility, values and morality and consider whether there is a relationship between the level of one's education and being a responsible, moral person. They will study the difference between a crime and a war crime and analyze the purposes and results of the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal as well as more recent trials of World War II Nazis.

## STAGE 1- DESIRED RESULTS

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### 2016 New Jersey Student Learning Standards- Social Studies

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SOC.6.1.12.A.11.e	Assess the responses of the United States and other nations to the violation of human rights that occurred during the Holocaust and other genocides.
SOC.6.1.12.D.11.d	Compare the varying perspectives of victims, survivors, bystanders, rescuers, and perpetrators during the Holocaust.
SOC.6.1.12.D.11.e	Explain how World War II and the Holocaust led to the creation of international organizations (i.e., the United Nations) to protect human rights, and describe the subsequent impact of these organizations.
SOC.6.2.12.A.4.c	Analyze the motivations, causes, and consequences of the genocides of Armenians, Roma (gypsies), and Jews, as well as the mass exterminations of Ukrainians and Chinese.
SOC.6.2.12.A.4.d	Assess government responses to incidents of ethnic cleansing and genocide.
SOC.6.2.12.D.4.i	Compare and contrast the actions of individuals as perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers during events of persecution or genocide, and describe the long-term consequences of

genocide for all involved.

## **Essential Questions**

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- What do Liberator testimonies collectively reveal about the Nazi state-sponsored Final Solution?
- What do the testimonies reveal about the physical, emotional and psychological condition of Survivors upon liberation?
- How do the concepts of human depravity, prejudice and discrimination inform viewers of contextual history?
- Can complete justice ever be achieved?

## **Enduring Understanding**

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- Individuals can understand the importance of historical events over time.
- Human response to drastic societal change is often varied.
- Recognize the challenges set forth in the testimonies in regards to moral courage, education and activism.
- Cruelty and compassion, meanness and kindness, bystanders and courage to care of individual human beings provide a powerful legacy for future.

## **Students will know...**

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### **Key Ideas and Concepts**

Students will be engaged in lessons that relate to the end of the Holocaust and its aftermath. They will define the role of the liberators and their role in the Holocaust. Students will also define the role of DP Camps and survivors "return to life" after the liberation. Students will also assess responsibility for the Holocaust through the ideas of perpetrators, collaborators, and bystanders. Lastly, students will be introduced to the controversial issue of Holocaust denial.

## **Possible Misunderstandings**

- The Allies knew the full extent of the concentration camp system.
- The liberation of the camps was an easy process.
- The “Return to life” for most Jews was simple.
- The Nuremburg trials provided complete justice for the Holocaust.
- The Nuremburg trials were the only trials for the Holocaust.

## **Identify key terms:**

Allies, bystander, crimes against humanity, death march, displaced persons’ camp (DP Camp), Holocaust Denial, liberation, liberator, Nuremburg, perpetrator, refugee, “return to life”, survivor, victim, war crime.

## **Students will be able to...**

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- describe the emotional ramifications of liberation for Jews at the end of World War II
- describe the complex emotional ramifications of liberation for the Allied soldiers who liberated the camps following the defeat of the Nazis
- name the serious difficulties and immediate needs that survivors faced after liberation
- explain the purpose of the displaced persons camps and what life was like for people living in these camps
- define collaborator and collaboration within the context of World War II and the Holocaust
- explain the role of the railroad system in the implementation of the “Final Solution”
- differentiate between the concept of “guilt” and “responsibility” in the action or inaction of individuals or groups during the Holocaust
- explain the purpose and outcomes of the Nuremburg trials as well as other war crimes trials that took place after the war

## **STAGE 2- EVIDENCE OF LEARNING**

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## **Formative Assessment During Lesson**

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- 3- Minute Pause
- A-B-C Summaries
- Analogy Prompt
- Choral Response
- Debriefing
- Exit Card / Ticket
- Hand Signals
- Idea Spinner
- Index Card Summaries
- Inside-Outside Circle Discussion (Fishbowl)
- Journal Entry
- Misconception Check
- Observation
- One Minute Essay
- One Word Summary
- Portfolio Check
- Questions & Answers
- Quiz
- Self-Assessment
- Student Conference
- Think-Pair-Share
- Web or Concept Map

## **Authentic Assessments / Unit Activities**

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- Students will work collaboratively to research and create a presentation on one of the many war crimes trials following the Nuremburg trials.
- Liberator Primary Source Testimonies w/ assessment questions (Kean University)
- Displaced Persons Camps Testimonies w/ assessment questions (ER)
- DP Camp photograph analysis (ER)
- Return to Life Testimonies w/ assessment questions (ER)
- The Tenth Man (Return to Life story) (ER)
- Assessing and Defining Responsibility (USHMM)
- Salitter's Report (Railroad) (ER)
- War Crimes Trial Testimonies (ER)
- Holocaust Denial Activity (ER)

## **STAGE 3- LEARNING PLAN**

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### **Instructional Map**

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- Introduction to Liberation
- Liberator Testimonies
- Displaced Persons definition and Camps and activities.
- The “Return to Life” definition and activities.
- Guilt and Responsibility Activities
- Defining the Nuremberg Trials
- Holocaust Denial and Activities
- War Crime Trial Assessment Project.

### **Modifications/Differentiation of Instruction**

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#### **Modification Strategies**

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- Extended Time
- Frequent Breaks
- Highlighted Text
- Interactive Notebook
- Modified Test
- Oral Directions
- Peer Tutoring
- Preferential Seating
- Re-Direct

- Repeated Drill / Practice
- Shortened Assignments
- Teacher Notes
- Tutorials
- Use of Additional Reference Material
- Use of Audio Resources

## **Differentiation Strategies**

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### **High Preparation Differentiation**

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- Alternative Assessments
- Choice Boards
- Games and Tournaments
- Group Investigations
- Guided Reading
- Independent Research / Project
- Interest Groups
- Learning Contracts
- Leveled Rubrics
- Literature Circles
- Multiple Intelligence Options
- Multiple Texts
- Personal Agendas
- Project Based Learning (PBL)
- Stations / Centers
- Think-Tac-Toe
- Tiered Activities / Assignments
- Varying Graphic Organizers

### **Low Preparation Differentiation**

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- Choice of Book / Activity
- Cubing Activities
- Exploration by Interest (using interest inventories)
- Flexible Grouping
- Goal Setting With Student

- Homework Options
- Jigsaw
- Mini Workshops to Re-teach or Extend Skills
- Open-ended Activities
- Think-Pair-Share by Readiness, Interest, or Learning Style
- Use of Collaboration
- Use of Reading Buddies
- Varied Journal Prompts
- Varied Product Choice
- Varied Supplemental Materials
- Work Alone / Together

## **Horizontal Integration- Interdisciplinary Connections**

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Language Art: Literature, Poetry from the time period

Fine and Performing Arts: Art, Plays, Movies from the time period

Science & Technology: Scientific or Technological advances made during the time period

Math: Analysis and manipulation of statistics or other numeric information

## **Vertical Integration- Discipline Mapping**

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The Holocaust and Genocide course is typically offered during the Junior or Senior year of High School. Students will have been exposed to courses of study in United States Geography (Grade 4), World Geography (Grade 5), United States History- Settlement through Constitutional Ratification (Grade 6), United States History- Early Republic through Reconstruction (Grade 7), World History 8 (Beginning of Human Society through Expanding Exchanges and Encounters), World History HS (The Emergence of the First Global Age through Contemporary Issues), United States History I HS (Revolution through Progressive Era), and United States History II HS (Imperialism through Contemporary Issues). The skills outlined in the Common Core State Standards have been developed and expanded upon so that students reaching the 11th and 12th grades can successfully address the demands required of them.

## **Additional Materials**

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- [Holocaust and Genocide: The Betrayal of Humanity Part 1](#)
- [Holocaust and Genocide: The Betrayal of Humanity Part 2](#)
- [Echoes and Reflections](#)
- [Facing History](#)
- [IWitness](#)
- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum](#)
- [Yad Vashem](#)