Hidden Teens, Hidden Lives: True Stories of Teens in the Holocaust

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Theresa M. McCormick
Auburn University

This lesson uses Hidden Teens, Hidden Lives: True Stories of the Holocaust, to help students explore life for children and teenagers during the Holocaust. Students utilize primary sources consisting of diary entries and World War II documents to examine life under the Nuremberg Laws for individuals of the Jewish faith. Students then examine Jim Crow laws in the South during the same era to compare and contrast various aspects of life for children and teens living under oppression.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NCSS Notable Trade Books Title:</th>
<th>Hidden Teens, Hidden Lives: True Stories of Teens in the Holocaust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written by Linda Jacobs Altman</td>
<td>Notable Trade Book for 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berkley Heights, NJ</td>
<td>Enslow Publishers, Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Level: Middle School to High School</td>
<td>ISBN 978-0-7660-3271-2</td>
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<td>This lesson is designed for upper elementary and middle school students, grades 5-7</td>
<td>Lesson Time: 2-3, 45-minute class periods</td>
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| Book Summary: | Hidden Teens, Hidden Lives: True Stories of Teens in the Holocaust examines the lives of several individuals before and during World War II. The events leading up to the Holocaust and living conditions during this time are told through diary entries of actual teens. The book follows these teenagers as they describe hiding and fleeing their homes, highlighting neighbors and strangers who helped them survive the Holocaust. The book concludes with some of the teenagers’ accounts of their lives immediately following World War II. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NCSS Standards:</th>
<th>II. Time, Continuity and Change</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. Individual Development and Identity</td>
<td>V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials:</th>
<th>World War II time line dates and events (for student groups)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WW II time line dates and events (for front of class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yarn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paper clips</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diary entries from Hidden Teens: Hidden Lives</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Translated copies of the Nuremberg Laws</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copies of Jim Crow Laws</td>
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</table>

**Objectives:**

At the conclusion of the lesson students will:
- Identify important dates connected with World War II
- Evaluate living conditions for Jewish children and teens during WW II.
- Critique the Nuremberg Laws.
- Compare and contrast Nuremberg Laws and Jim Crow Laws.

**Procedures:**

**Exploration/Introduction:**

1. Begin by asking students what they know about the World War II in Europe and the Holocaust.
2. Tell students that they are going to have an opportunity to use their previous knowledge to identify some important dates surrounding WW II in Europe.
3. Provide each group with a packet containing date cards, events, yarn, and paper clips and one or two large event cards for the class timeline.
4. Give student groups approximately 10 minutes to organize the dates on their individual timelines.
5. As students work, hang the yarn across the front of the classroom and places the year cards on the timeline.
6. Have each student group place their event card on the timeline in what they believe to be the correct place. Inform the students, that they may not move another group’s event card, even if they disagree with its location.
7. Have the class discuss the timeline and reaches consensus.

**Development:**

1. The teacher divides students into 5 groups.
2. Each group is given diary entries from one individual (Yehuda Nir, Ezra Ben Gershom, Anita Eckstein, Anne Frank, and David Landau) from *Hidden Teens, Hidden Lives*.
3. The groups read the entries and discuss life for the individual and each group shares the story of their individual.
4. Lead a class discussion about life for Jewish children during WWII in Europe.
   - What were the greatest difficulties for Jewish children and why?
   - How did life differ for Jewish children than non-Jewish children?
Expansion:

- How was their life different from your life?

(5) Explain to the class that many aspects of life for those of the Jewish faith were governed by the Nuremberg Laws and provides students with original and translated copies of these laws.

- Translated version available at: http://frank.mtsu.edu/~baust8h/nurmlaw2.html
- Nuremberg race charts available at: www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline.nurem-laws.htm

(6) In small groups students discuss how these laws would impact daily life and compare and contrast life for those subject to and not subject to the Nuremberg Laws, completing Venn Diagrams to organize their thoughts.

(7) Student groups share their diagrams and the teacher discusses life under the Nuremberg Laws asking students to critique the laws and to evaluate their fairness.

- What aspects of the Nuremberg Laws were the most unfair to Jews? Why?
- How would you react if someone implemented laws like this today?

(1) Ask the students if they can think of any other times when laws, such as the Nuremberg Laws, may have been unfair to certain individuals in society.

(2) If students do not recognize the similarity to Jim Crow Laws, lead them to consider these statues.

(3) Divide the students into heterogeneous groups and provides student groups with copies of Jim Crow laws.

- Groups should be divided so that all students have an opportunity to participate in discussions.

(4) Ask the students to read the laws and discuss how these laws regulated the lives of African Americans.

- Compilation of laws available at: www.nps.gov.malu/forteachers/jim_crow_laws.htm

(5) After student groups have discussed the laws, the class comes together for a grand discussion.

(6) The class discusses life for African Americans under the Jim Crow laws and compares and contrasts the Nuremberg Laws and the Jim Crow Laws.

- What aspects of the Jim Crow laws were the most unfair?
- Why?
- How were Jim Crow laws the similar to Nuremberg Laws?
- How were they different?
How can we prevent something like this from happening in the future?

**Assessment**

Students will compose a 2-3 page paper that:
- Compares and contrasts at least two aspects of life under the Nuremberg and Jim Crow Laws.
- Discusses ways that citizens can prevent these types of laws from being implemented in the future.

**Suggested Extension Activities:**
- Invite a Holocaust survivor to visit the class.
- Have students watch Holocaust survivor testimonies available from the National Holocaust Museum or the Holocaust Museum. Houston websites
- Schedule a field trip to a Holocaust Museum

**Additional References & Web Links**

**Web-Based Resources:**
- The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
  www.ushmm.org
- Holocaust Museum Houston
  www.hmh.org
- The Anti-Defamation League
  www.adl.org
- Yad Vashem
  www.yadvashem.org
- USC Shoah foundation Institute for Visual History and Education
  www.usc.edu/schools/colleges.vhi

**Children’s Literature Resources:**

**Authors**

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## Rubric for Compare / Contrast Paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Poor 0-4 points</th>
<th>Needs Work 5-6 points</th>
<th>Good 7-8 points</th>
<th>Excellent 9-10 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of life under Nuremberg and Jim Crow laws</td>
<td>Writing doesn’t address life under Nuremberg or Jim Crow laws</td>
<td>Addresses 1 aspect of life</td>
<td>Addresses 2 aspects of life</td>
<td>Addresses more than 2 aspects of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compares laws</td>
<td>Does not use supporting evidence from each set of laws</td>
<td>Uses 1 piece of evidence from each set of laws</td>
<td>Uses at least 2 pieces of evidence from each set of laws</td>
<td>Uses at least 3 pieces of supporting evidence from each set of laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrasts laws</td>
<td>Does not use supporting evidence from each set of laws</td>
<td>Uses at least 1 piece of supporting evidence from each set of laws</td>
<td>Uses at least 2 pieces of supporting evidence from each set of laws</td>
<td>Uses at least 3 pieces of supporting evidence from each set of laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discusses how to prevent future laws</td>
<td>Does not provide examples or cannot give any current USA laws</td>
<td>Provides examples but cannot give specific current USA laws</td>
<td>Provides at least one example using current USA laws</td>
<td>Provides at least two specific examples using current USA laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>7 or more grammar and/or spelling mistakes</td>
<td>5-6 grammar and/or spelling mistakes</td>
<td>2-4 grammar and/or spelling mistakes</td>
<td>0-1 grammar and/or spelling mistakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

Class Timeline

Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany

First concentration camp-Dachau-established

Nuremberg Laws (anti-Jewish laws)

Germans in Denmark, southern Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France

Mass killing of Jews, Poles, Russians, Gypsies, and others

Beginning of WWII

Pearl Harbor attacked by Japan

Allied invasion of Normandy

Hitler commits suicide
Germany surrenders

**Student Timeline Information**

1930

1935

1940

1945

Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany

First concentration Camp (Dachau) established

Nuremberg Laws (anti-Jewish laws)

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Germany surrenders