



***Teaching Tolerance and Social Justice By Examining the Ideological Implications of World War II and the Holocaust***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Language Arts/Social Studies 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Keywords:** Social Justice, Tolerance, Propaganda, Holocaust, World War II, Peace, and Fairness

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** This unit is designed for fifth grade students as a way to integrate reading skills and social studies content. After completing the unit the students will be able to discuss the causes and effects of World War II and the Holocaust in depth using academic vocabulary. They will be able to take the knowledge they have gained during this unit and apply it to modern times of war and peace. They will be able to explore what constitutes war from different perspectives, while being able to express empathy for victims and those who are victimized. In relation to World War II and the Holocaust, the students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up against prejudice and injustice in the world. Finally, I hope that they will be able to make social decisions in today's world, and fight for nonviolent ways to end war.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to fifty students in fifth grade*

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# **Teaching Tolerance and Social Justice By Examining the Ideological Implications of World War II and the Holocaust**

**Heather Almaraz**

## **Introduction**

This unit is designed for fifth grade students as a way to integrate reading and social studies curricula. After completing the unit the students will be able to understand specific academic vocabulary that relates to World War II and the Holocaust. During this time period the students will identify and understand multiple accounts of war and peace and be able to analyze different perspectives on this issue, relating their new knowledge to life today. They will be able to use detail and examples from various articles, biographies, media sources, and books about World War II and the Holocaust when explaining what the text says explicitly (close reading) and when drawing inferences based on what they have read. They will be able to compare and contrast first and second hand accounts of World War II and the Holocaust, and write summaries of events that occurred from different viewpoints. They will compare different types of literature about World War II and the Holocaust with an emphasis on theme, and social justice. The students will understand how pictures, illustrations, and propaganda can influence individual perceptions of war and peace. Finally, the students will be able to engage in collaborative discussions with partners through literature circles.

I am currently in my third year of teaching. I taught sixth grade my first year and fifth grade for the last two years. I teach at Lebanon Road Elementary School in Charlotte, North Carolina. Lebanon Road Elementary is located in Mint Hill within an urban population sector of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. The school motto is Learn, Respect, Excel. Teachers and students are encouraged to be leaders and take an active role in their learning. Teachers lead the professional development and students' lead collaborative book clubs, science labs, and math workshops. Lebanon Road Elementary is a Title 1 school with approximately eight hundred and fifty students enrolled. All of our students receive free breakfast and lunch. The ratio of students to teachers at Lebanon Road Elementary is 18:1. Student population at Lebanon Road Elementary is diverse, with a racial makeup of: African American (39.6%), Hispanic (32.6%), and White (23.7%). We also have several subgroups including economically disadvantaged, students with learning disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and students on the autism spectrum.

The class for which I am writing this unit is quite diverse. This group includes twenty two students: Seven with learning disabilities in reading, six who are reading below grade level proficiency, and nine who are reading on grade level. My class is composed of thirteen girls and nine boys. I have eight African American students, five multi-racial students, five Hispanic students, and four White students. Most of these students have entered fifth grade with little understanding of the causes and effects of World War II and the Holocaust. They

have a difficult time with social skills, problem solving, and working in collaborative groups. They respond well to direct instruction and modeling of social skills, along with positive reinforcement. My classroom is quite diverse in culture and learning styles. I believe that differentiation for students is the best way to effectively reach all of my students and challenge them effectively. This unit will be applicable to fifth grade instructors who want to teach social justice through the eyes of war and peace, highlighting, multiple perspectives, propaganda, and ways to negotiate nonviolent options in today's society.

## **Rationale**

I chose to teach this topic because most of my students are sheltered and unaware of the historical perspectives on war and peace. Many do not know what it means to have empathy for victims or those who have been victimized by war. They have never really thought of the causes and effects of World War II and the Holocaust, and how changes that were set in motion during this time period have affected their daily lives and continue to do so. Most students in fifth grade have had some exposure to the Civil War, and the Civil Rights Movement, but only as a lesson on rights and freedoms in America. I really want to challenge these students to think critically, from multiple perspectives, about what war and peace means to them, what war does to people, the country, and how it effects us in our world today. To do this, I will reference Charlotte Teachers Institute Seminar, Peace Education, utilizing the Nel Nodding's novel, Peace Education, How We Come to Love and Hate War, specific seminar discussions, and articles that speak about the realities of war and destruction. Also, I will reference and discuss how specific media sources work in conjunction with propaganda to influence how one thinks and acts during times of war and peace.

Many teachers are reluctant to explore the history of the Holocaust with their students because of the perceived difficulties in teaching the subject. They are overwhelmed by how to convey the scale of the tragedy, the enormity of the numbers involved, and the depths to which humanity can sink. They wonder how to move their students without traumatizing them; they worry about their students' possible reactions to this subject and how to deal with "inappropriate" behavior in the classroom, such as giggling or expressing anti-Semitic and racist remarks.<sup>1</sup> This is the very reason I am motivated to find a way to teach the causes and effects of World War II and the Holocaust through multiple perspectives on war and peace in today's society. I wanted to develop a unit that teachers would be able to use in the classroom to help guide a new generation of students to care actively about justice, and equality. I want my students to understand how World War II and the Holocaust impacted cultural values and global relations around the world, learn the importance of perseverance, and learn how to negotiate in nonviolent ways. I believe that in teaching this unit, I will provide students options and the skills necessary to move beyond violence. In life there is tension and disagreement. The question is, can we as productive, social citizens, learn to empower each other to solve our problems nonviolently? I hope I can answer this question for my students.

## **Content Objectives**

My objectives are driven by the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts for fifth graders. My main focus in this unit is for students to understand and talk about texts with themes that deal with social inequality and conflict. I want them to be able to make connections to the struggles of the characters in the text and develop a sense of empathy. They should be able to distinguish between first and second hand accounts and verbalize the pros and cons of both types of accounts in relation to World War II and the Holocaust. I want them to take notice of the way the illustrations are used in a text to convey mood, a sort of close reading of the pictures in a text. I also want them to be able to close read the text when citing evidence to support their opinions and discussion points.<sup>ii</sup> Students will infer different character's motivations, feelings, and how they change throughout the text, by citing evidence from the text to support their answer.

I will also be using the North Carolina Essential Standards for Social Studies to integrate the topic of war and peace and the themes of social justice and perseverance. The students will analyze the impact of major conflicts, battles and wars on the development of our nation through the read aloud and assigned literature. The students will understand conflict and how war may influence a nation's political, social, economic development, how conflict may result in compromise, how battles influence the direction and outcome of wars, and how war can transform society. With the above mentioned character work, they will be able to point out characteristics such as perseverance, that helped these people overcome their struggles during war time in comparison to a country in peace. I also want them to compare the roles of minorities in our society from the Civil War through World War II and the Holocaust. They will be doing some collaborative group research, along with the timeline that we create from the activities and sources used throughout this curriculum unit.

## **Teaching Strategies**

In this unit, I will focus on culturally responsive teaching practices. Culturally responsive teaching practices should include the following teacher characteristics: Sociocultural conscious, recognizing that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality, and that individual perception is based on location and social order; the teacher has affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing differences as problems to overcome; the teacher sees themselves as both responsible for and capable of bringing about educational change, making schools more responsive to all students; the teacher understands how learners construct knowledge; the teacher knows about the lives of his or her students; and the teacher uses his or her knowledge about students' lives to design instruction that builds

on what they already know while stretching them beyond the familiar.<sup>iii</sup> As stated earlier, Lebanon Road Elementary is a school with a diverse population, which provides the appropriate environment to implement culturally responsive teaching strategies. The following strategies incorporate the demographic base of the school and will provide students with several opportunities to demonstrate meaningful learning experiences while incorporating different learning styles. I will use role-playing with vocabulary to help solidify the meaning of words such as *war, peace, discrimination, social justice, equality, propaganda, and tolerance*. By having the students collaborate and design their own skits, the students connect their emotions to actions, building meaningful vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. I will also have students develop semantic maps, or mind maps, and vocabulary gloves to learn how these words are connected to other words and life experiences. Semantic maps, or mind maps, and vocabulary gloves are two strategies supported by education and memory research for teaching Common Core State Standards for vocabulary.<sup>iv</sup> These strategies also promote student directed learning and teacher facilitation by having the students develop their own mind maps and vocabulary gloves. This will allow students to empathize with their peers, the characters in books, and the situations they will encounter during class discussions of texts and media.

As I begin the read aloud for this unit, *Number the Stars*, I will incorporate two specific strategies to foster whole class discussions. First, I will use the Socratic Seminar to help facilitate discussions. The goal of the Socratic seminar is for students to help one another understand the ideas, issues, and values reflected in a specific text. Students are responsible for facilitating a discussion around ideas in the text rather than asserting opinions. Through a process of listening, making meaning, and finding common ground student's work toward shared understanding rather than trying to prove a particular argument. A Socratic seminar is not used for the purpose of debate, persuasion, or personal reflection, as the focus is on developing shared meaning of a text.<sup>v</sup> The Socratic seminar is a great way to get students to discuss concerns and issues in a non-threatening environment. We will discuss and examine personal values in regards to culture and heritage, and discrimination. In addition, I will incorporate a "Funny Fortune" activity that will help the students work with unfamiliar words in the text, build vocabulary, and facilitate a safe environment for classroom discussion.<sup>vi</sup>

Another strategy that I will use is literature circles. Literature circles are small groups of students brought together to share a book. Literature circles teach students how to talk with peers respectfully about a shared text. It also allows students to compare and build ideas about a shared text.<sup>vii</sup> My students are still developing social skills and it is crucial that I ensure the books are engaging and thought provoking so that the literature circles will be successful in guiding them to think about their personal beliefs. The books will be centered on World War II and the Holocaust. The students will have the opportunity to read and participate in literature circles based on their independent reading levels as a way to differentiate instruction. All the books that are used for the literature circles will also be available in the classroom library so students may chose to read them or reread

them at any point in the year. To correspond with the topic of War and Peace other books will be available and on display in our classroom library for independent reading and research.

I will also be integrating technology through the use of videos and Chrome Books. The students will use the Chrome Books to respond to specific literature circle questions, and to view specific videos. They will then be able to compare the firsthand account of a Holocaust or World War II survivor to the fictional account from the classroom read aloud. I will use Appalachian State University's Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies to access the following video, *Susan Cernyak-Spatz Gives a Talk Titled "Nazi Perpetrators Through The Eyes of the Victims."*<sup>viii</sup> Students will then understand how listening to the firsthand account helps them better understand the fictional account. They will also take on the role of a character of their own choosing from the classroom read aloud and write a journal entry as that person. Writing from a different viewpoint is a great way to build those critical thinking skills and helps students to realize how point of view can shape a text. This will allow me to see that they really understand that character's emotions and struggles during the Holocaust and help them to develop empathy for those who face discrimination. I will then introduce the idea of human perspective, propaganda, and the use of art and photography, comparing and contrasting how human perspective can influence how we think, act, and feel during times of war and peace. I will reference the seminar discussions topics from Peace Education, such as, the Susan Sontag article, "Looking at War," photography's view of devastation and death, Nel Nodding's influential perspective on war and destruction, and specific discussions on propaganda. In addition, I will reference the book, *Hitler's Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow* to show how explicit forms of propaganda can influence human perspective and beliefs.

The last set of strategies that I will use are modeling, anchor charts, and read aloud. These strategies build upon each other so I have grouped them together. Read aloud will be used to model my thinking for my students. The expectations that are modeled during read aloud will also be transferred over to the literature circles. Anchor charts are a great way to record thoughts and reading strategies while modeling for students. They will provide visual support and reminders for students as we travel through the unit. It is important that my students have repeated exposure to modeling of reading strategies so that they are successful when they read independently. The read aloud book is where I will develop discussion questions so that all students, regardless of reading levels, can participate in the Socratic Seminar.

### **Classroom Activities**

For the unit opener I wanted to start with an inquiry activity. I would suggest putting students in small groups, no more than four in each group. Give each group poster paper

to write on. Tell the students that they will write *Culture and Heritage* in the middle of the poster paper. Each group will have about ten minutes to brainstorm ideas about what they think culture and heritage means by comparing ideas and definitions from their peers to their own lives. As each group shares, I will point out how there are similarities and differences among all of us, and that it is important to keep this in mind as we begin our unit. I will then compile the answers onto a classroom anchor chart. The anchor chart will remain in the classroom throughout the unit as a reminder of the importance of individual differences in all of us. Next, select four or five photographs that depict World War II, and the Holocaust, both positive and negative examples, print them out, and place them in an envelope for each group. Explain to students that the envelopes contain clues to the next unit of study and that their job is to work together to figure out what they will be learning about. Allow them about ten minutes to look at and discuss the photographs. Then have each group write a two-sentence summary about what they think they will be learning. The students should focus on the setting and really look for clues in the picture, along with any emotions that the photos might evoke. Looking at photographs, or pictures will set the stage for sharing real thoughts and opinions on war and peace. It is said that most men like war, or at least they find “some glory, some necessity, some satisfaction in fighting” that most women do not seek or find.<sup>ix</sup> The photographs or pictures will help dispel the stereotypes and push students to think on higher levels. After each group shares their thoughts, discuss each picture and its significance in the new unit.

To introduce the vocabulary for the new unit, give each group a list of two or three words. Explain to them that they are going to look up the definition for the words and then think of a way to act out a scenario that demonstrates the meaning of a word. To model this for students use the word *discrimination*. Have several students help you act out a scenario in which the class is at recess. The boys are playing football and you ask to join the game. The boys tell you that you cannot play because you are a girl and girls cannot play football. The class will probably say that this is unfair and may need a little help in determining that it is discrimination because the boys are excluding the girl based on her gender. Research suggests that teaching vocabulary within the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is an essential component of standards-based curriculum alignment. Acting out word meanings activates students’ procedural memory, which stores information that is repeated, such as multiplication tables, song lyrics, and words and definitions.<sup>x</sup> As you act out *discrimination*, model your thinking aloud for them and allow them to share their thoughts and personal responses. This is also a great activity to build empathy for others.

For the opening social studies lesson, I will create a KWL chart with a fourth column labeled, “Is it true?” It is important for the teacher to dispel any misinformation the students may have about World War II and the Holocaust as the unit progresses.<sup>xi</sup> I will then access prior knowledge by asking students what they already know about World War II and the Holocaust. The students work with their shoulder partner to discuss their ideas and then write them on Post-it notes. Students will likely have misconceptions

about the Holocaust. I suggest that students post what they “know” rather than share it out loud so that students don’t hear the misinformation and take it as truth. I will post the students’ prior knowledge in the Know column of the KWL chart (what I know, what I want to know, what I learned). I will then mark the statements that are true in the true column and share those orally with the class. I will give the students a brief amount of information about the Holocaust and World War II, so that the students are curious and able to generate questions about the unit. The students will then write an “I wonder” question on a Post-it note. For example, “I wonder how long World War II lasted?” Or, “I wonder what happened to children during the war?” Then, I will pass out copies of quotations and book passages that are related to the unit. As I read the selections out loud, students will record an “I wonder” question on a Post-it note. Student’s responses will be placed on the KWL chart in the “W” column for what I want to know.<sup>xii</sup> The class will reference this chart throughout the unit as we generate more questions and record what we have learned about World War II and the Holocaust.

To introduce the students to the concept of literature circles and Socratic seminar, I will use the classroom read aloud text, *Number the Stars*. During the interactive read aloud, I will model and teach specific reading strategies such as predicting, character analysis, and close reading. After each read aloud session, students will have the opportunity to practice think, pair, write and then share out their ideas in a small group setting. This will help to build classroom community and the open environment necessary for the Socratic Seminar and literature circles.

I have the read aloud schedule and questions for each day listed below.

Day 1:

Pre-Reading activities will include reviewing the brief discussion on World War II and the Holocaust along with the KWL chart that the class generated. The students will then watch a video clip of the true account of an actual Holocaust survivor. The novel, *Number the Stars*, will then be introduced while students make predictions of what the book will be about and how this relates to our unit. Video Clip:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/9878904/Helgas-Diary-Holocaust-survivor-Helga-Weiss-relives-her-story.html>

After introducing the book, the students will look at a map of Europe during World War II, and locate Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. Then the students will look at a World Atlas to understand where the United States, specifically North Carolina, is in relation to where Europe is during this time period.

<http://www.mapsofworld.com/europe/>

Read aloud chapter one.

*Chapter One Questions:*



The students will respond to each question in their reading response section of their reader's notebook. Then they will discuss and share their responses with their shoulder partner.

- Why wasn't Kirsti scared of the soldiers like Annemarie and Ellen were?
- Who are the Resistance fighters?
- Why do you think the family cannot have butter or sugar for cupcakes?

Day 2:

Review chapter one. Discuss answers from chapter one as a class. Read chapter two aloud to the class focusing on the characters and how they interact with each other.

*Chapter two Questions:*

The students will respond to each question in their reading response section of their reader's notebook. Then they will discuss and share their responses with their shoulder partner.

- Who is Lise? What happened to her?
- Why did Kling not fight the German soldiers?

Day 3:

Review chapter two. Share answers from chapter questions as a class and read chapter three. Model how to make text to self-connections while reading.

*Chapter Three Questions:*

The students discuss chapter three questions in their group and then write their responses in their reader's notebook.

- Why did the Germans close Mrs. Hirsch's store?
- Why was Annemarie worried about Ellen?

Day 4:

Review the answers from chapter three questions as a class and read chapter four. Model with anchor charts how to create a character sketch for Annemarie and Ellen. Make sure the students understand that the character traits they select for the sketches must have evidence from the text to support it.

*Chapter Four Questions:*

The students discuss the similarities and differences between Annemarie and Ellen. Then the students answer chapter four questions in their reader's notebook.

- Why did Ellen come to stay at Annemarie's house?
- What are the girls supposed to tell the soldiers if they come to the house? Why?

Day 5:

Review chapter four questions as a class and read chapter five. Add to the character sketches for Annemarie and Ellen. Have students make inferences about the character based on the character sketches you have created as a class. This is a great place to stop and discuss the types of discrimination that have been noted in the book so far. Make sure to focus not only on segregation, but the way that the characters treat anyone who is viewed as different.

*Chapter Five Questions:*

The students discuss different types of discrimination in their group and then answer the questions for chapter five in their reader's notebook.

- Describe the soldiers who come to the door.
- What did Mr. Johansen do to convince the soldiers that Ellen was Lise?

Day 6:

Review chapter five as a class and read chapter six. Create a Venn Diagram of the Rosen family and the Johansen family based on student feedback. Discuss bravery and pride, and how these character traits are portrayed throughout the book.

*Chapter Six Questions:*

The students discuss the similarities and differences between the Rosen family and the Johansen family in their groups. The students talk with their shoulder partners about the questions for chapter six, and then answer the questions in their reader's notebook.

- Why do you think Papa spoke in code to Uncle Henrik on the phone?
- How did Kirsti scare everyone on the train?

Day 7:

Review chapter six and discuss the answers to the questions for chapter six as a class. Read chapters seven and eight.

*Chapter Seven and Eight Questions:*

The students discuss the questions for chapter seven and eight with their shoulder partner and then respond in their reader's notebook.

- Why do you think they've come to Uncle Henrik's house?
- What do the soldiers do with the farmer's butter?
- Why do you think Annemarie's Mama would lie about Great-Aunt Birte?

Day 8:

Review chapter seven and eight and discuss the answers to the questions for both chapters in small groups. Then share the answers and discuss as a class. Read chapter 9.

*Chapter Nine Questions:*

Chapter nine questions will be answered as a class, modeling how to make inferences.

- Do you agree with Uncle Henrik that it is easier to be brave if you do not know everything? Explain your answer. Model making inferences through a character's thoughts and actions based on what Uncle Henrik says. Then have the students practice with the strategy using Papa and his phone conversation with Uncle Henrik.
- Who arrived? What do you think is going to happen?

Day 9:

Review chapter nine and student feedback on making inferences about character development. Read chapter ten.

*Chapter Ten Questions:*

The students will work with their shoulder partner to answer the questions and make inferences.

- Why did Mama say the casket was closed? Do you think this is the truth? Have students focus again on making inferences about a character based on their actions.

Day 10:

Review chapter ten and student answers for chapter ten as a class. Read chapter eleven.

*Chapter 11 Eleven Questions:*

The students work with their shoulder partner to come up with an appropriate inference for the following quote, "He didn't seem to be hurt. Maybe just his pride"? Then they respond in their reader's notebook.

- What was inside the coffin? What is it for?
- What did Annemarie's Mama mean by "He didn't seem to be hurt. Maybe just his pride"?

Day 11:

Review chapter eleven and discuss student answers as a class. Have the students talk with their partner about pride and what that means to them. How far would you go in the name of pride? Read chapter twelve. At this point in the read aloud, have the students start making connections to themselves and the world. What does it mean to have pride in your family or pride in your country? Are we able to connect these feelings of pride to times of war and peace?

*Chapter Twelve Questions:*

Students will respond in their reader's notebook and show evidence from text to support their answers.

- Where do you think the Rosen's will go?
- What do you think happened to Mama?

Day 12:

Review chapter twelve and the whole class discussion on pride. Have the students answer the after chapter twelve questions below to prompt them to think more critically about pride and what that means during the World War II and the Holocaust and in today's society.

*After Chapter Twelve Questions:*

The questions are assigned to groups to answer in their reader's notebook, and then the groups share their answers with the class.

- Annemarie described many different sources of pride. Which do you think gives the strongest feeling of pride? Explain your answer.
- What is your greatest source of pride? Why is this your choice?
- How far would you go to protect your family and your country? Is this pride?
- Would you consider the Germans treatment of Jews an act of pride?
- What is discrimination?

Day 13:

Review the after chapter twelve questions and the student responses. Read chapters thirteen through fifteen. Model how to make inferences about the mysterious packet using evidence from the text to support your answer. Have the students practice making inferences about the contents of the packet using evidence from the text to support their answers.

*Chapters Thirteen Through Fifteen Questions:*

The students answer the questions and practice making inferences in their reader's notebook.

- What do you think the packet is? Why is it so important?
- Do you think there was something more than the handkerchief in the packet? Explain.

Day 14:

Review chapters thirteen through fifteen. As a class, make an inference chart that shows three columns: Clues From the Text, What I Know, and What I Can Infer. Designate a certain Post-It color for each student group. Have the students come up and label the chart with their Post-Its. Discuss as a class. Read chapter 16.

*Chapter Sixteen Questions:*

The students respond in their reader's notebook.

- Who does Peter work for?
- What do the Fishermen do for the Resistance?
- What did the handkerchief do?
- Do you think Annemarie will ever see Ellen again? Explain?

Day 15:

Review chapter sixteen and the questions from chapter sixteen. Read chapter seventeen.

*Chapter Seventeen Questions:*

The students respond in their reader's notebook.

- What happened to Peter?
- What happened to Lise?
- Where had Annemarie hidden Ellen's necklace?

Day 16:

Review chapter seventeen and student responses to the questions. Have students collaborate in groups to discuss the underlying theme of the novel and how it relates to our unit of study. Then discuss as a class.

As a culminating activity for the read aloud text, we will create a class timeline with illustrations and pictures of the events related to World War II and the Holocaust that are discussed in the text. I will allow students to work in pairs or individually to research more information on the events in the book before creating the timeline.

My learning goals for the Literature Circles are for the students to become familiar with the events that led up to World War II and the Holocaust; to “read” closely and pay attention to any illustrations or pictures that may help them understand how different people were portrayed by different authors while gathering clues about the time period; and to become familiar with vocabulary and specific terms in the unit, such as segregation, discrimination, anti-Semitism, pride, and fairness. They are also expected to use reading strategies to make connections, question, predict, and visualize. The books that I plan on using for this are: *My Brother’s Secret* by Dan Smith, *Hana’s Suitcase: A True Story* by Karen Levine, *Yours, Anne: The Life of Anne Frank* by Lois Metzger, and *The Butterfly* by Patricia Polacco.

To introduce literature circles for this unit, I will show the class each book and give a brief summary. The students will have a chance to write down their top choice and why they want to read that book. I will use these preferences, along with their independent reading levels, to help me create the literature groups. Those students with learning disabilities or who are reading below grade level will be provided audio support. As a whole group, we will review the students’ role in literature meetings and the teacher’s role so that they know they are responsible for discussing the text and that I am there to facilitate when necessary. One strategy that I like to use to ensure that all students participate in the discussion is, “Put Your Two Cents In”. Students are given two pennies to use as talking pieces. The students are divided into groups of four; each student takes a turn by putting one penny on the center of the table and sharing his or her idea. Once everyone has shared, each student then puts one more penny in and responds to what someone else in the group has shared. For example, “I agree with \_\_\_ because...” or “I don’t agree with \_\_\_ because...” Once everyone has had a chance to share, they can redistribute the two pennies and move on to the next topic. This protocol is used to integrate *Culturally Responsive Learning* inside the classroom.<sup>xiii</sup> This strategy has worked really well in the past for students who do not like to talk and especially for those who love to dominate the discussions.

During literature circles students have different roles within each group that help ensure that students are working collaboratively: Discussion Director, Memory Maker,

Illustrator, Word Worker and Summarizer. The Discussion Director develops the questions that the group needs to discuss and he or she is responsible for facilitating the group's discussion. The Memory Maker finds the passages that are memorable, puzzling, funny or important for the group to reference and read closely. The Illustrator draws what he or she reads. It could be a cartoon sequence or a diagram of some type. The Word Worker looks for words that are worth remembering or looking up. The Summarizer prepares the summary of the reading for that day. These students are allowed to choose the format in which they do the summary. I also require all students to use sticky notes to mark places in the text that they wish to discuss with the group. They should have at least two of these "talking points" marked before coming to the meeting.<sup>xiv</sup> The following are the books selected for the literature circles, including specific questions and discussion topics.

*My Brother's Secret by Dan Smith*

- Discuss the theme of the book
- Discuss the setting of the book, Germany during World War II
- How does the setting relate to our unit of study?
- How do Karl's feeling change about the Hitler Youth and serving his country?

*Hana's Suitcase: A True Story by Karen Levine*

- Discuss the theme of the book
- Discuss the setting of the book, Tokyo, Japan, 2000
- How can you connect the setting to our unit of study?
- How can you relate to, or connect with Hana Brady?

*The Butterfly by Patricia Polacco*

- Discuss the setting of the book, France
- What kind of connections can be made between this book and the class read aloud, Number the Stars?
- How does this book connect to our unit of study?
- How does the author symbolize the victims of war?

*Yours, Anne: The Life of Anne Frank by Lois Metzger*

- Discuss the setting of the book, Germany, 1933
- How does this book connect to our class read aloud, Number the Stars?
- Why did Otto Frank decide to leave Germany?
- How did Otto's feeling change towards his country?

I plan on using these books in literature circles for four weeks. The students will get a chance to read and discuss all four books (I will assign a book each week). After all the students have read all four books, then we will discuss them as a class. Next, we will talk about connections. Specifically, text to text, text to self, and text to world, connecting

how each book relates to our unit of study, World War II and the Holocaust. At this point the students will pick their favorite book and are asked to extend the story or write a different ending. These writings will help me to assess if the students are able to make inferences based on the information they have read and if they are able to empathize by imagining what they would do in that particular situation.

To teach perspective to the students, I plan on using the book *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*. After reading the book aloud, students will discuss how the story might have been different if someone else had told it. As a class we will brainstorm different people who could have told the story (Someone in the German army, a Holocaust survivor, or an American soldier). During the discussion on human perspective, I will introduce how propaganda was used during this time period to influence and intimidate the country's youth. We will discuss that how propaganda can contribute to the story being told through different lenses. Students will then select one person from our list and write about one small moment from the book from that perspective. They will then be able to meet with partners to share their different writings. I will have them compare and contrast the differences in perspective with their partners. We will then discuss additional questions that might be asked of the surviving Hitler Youth members. Students will then develop at least six interview questions that they want the Hitler Youth survivors to answer. The students will also come up with the answers, so that they can hold mock interviews with a partner. Each person will have the opportunity to be a Hitler Youth survivor and the interviewer. I will be able to assess how well the students understood what was going on during the time period by listening to the types of questions they are asking and how they are responding to the questions being asked. It will also give them a chance to understand the power of empathy.<sup>xv</sup>

As a culminating activity for the entire unit the students will return to the KWL chart created as the unit opener for social studies. The students will work in collaborative groups to answer the "I wonder" questions, and the "what I want to know" questions. Finally, as a class, we will reflect on the meaning of specific issues addressed in the unit, *Social Justice, Tolerance, Propaganda, Holocaust, World War II, Peace, and Fairness*, understanding what we have learned, and how we will move forward to make a difference in our lives and the lives of others.



## **Appendix 1: Implementing Common Core Teaching Standards and the Essential Standards for Social Studies**

RL5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. This standard is implemented during interactive read aloud and throughout the unit for discussion.

RL5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text. This standard is implemented during the interactive read aloud and during the literature circle segment of the unit.

RL5.6 Describe how a narrator or speaker's point of view influences how events are described. This standard is implemented when students are asked to compare different accounts of World War II and the Holocaust, during the read aloud on Hitler Youth: Growing up in Hitler's Shadow and the lesson on perspective, and throughout the unit to complete the KWL chart in class.

RL5.10 By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently. This standard is implemented throughout the unit when students are asked to analyze and read increasingly complex text through read aloud, media, and literature circles.

RI5.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. This standard is implemented when the students are asked to analyze and read four different books about World War II and the Holocaust, during the literature circle segment of the unit.

5.H.1.3 Analyze the impact of major conflicts, battles and wars on the development of our nation through Reconstruction. This standard is implemented as the students are introduced to World War II and the Holocaust with a KWL chart, and then eventually produce a class timeline to depict the important events during that time period.

5.G.1.4 Exemplify migration within or immigration to the United States in order to identify push and pull factors (why people left/why people came). This standard is

implemented as the students analyze the causes and effects of World War II and the Holocaust, identifying why the Jewish people were forced to relocate to other countries. Students are able to make connections to their life and the world we live in today.

## Resources

### Reading List for Students

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Hitler Youth: Growing up in Hitler's Shadow*. New York: Scholastic Nonfiction, 2005. This book explores how Adolf Hitler persuaded three and a half million children to join the Hitler Youth. I use this book to teach perspective and the power of propaganda in historical terms.

"THE BUTTERFLY." THE BUTTERFLY. Accessed October 30, 2015.  
[http://patriciapolacco.com/books/butterfly/butterfly\\_navigations.html](http://patriciapolacco.com/books/butterfly/butterfly_navigations.html). This is a story about World War II, and how such tragedy can unveil amazing courage in people. This book is used during literature circles.

"Levine, Karen: Hana's Suitcase." - Free Online Library. Accessed October 30, 2015.  
<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Levine%2c+Karen%3a+Hana's+Suitcase.-a0124077866>. This book is about how Hana Brady's suitcase arrived at the Holocaust Education Center in Tokyo, Japan. This book is used during literature circles.

Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989. This book is about the Johansen family taking in a friend of their daughters, Ellen Rosen, who is Jewish, during the German campaign to "relocate" all the Jews of Denmark. I use this book as our class read aloud during the unit.

Yeoman, Anita, and Carol Matas. *Daniel's Story by Carol Matas: A Novel Study about a Young Jewish Boy Who Survives the Horrors of the Holocaust*. Brechin, ON: Teacher TimeSavers, 2004. This book is about a fourteen-year-old Jewish boy named Daniel. His family is forced from their home in Frankfurt and relocated to the Nazi death camps of Auschwitz. This book is used during literature circles.

"Yours, Anne: The Life of Anne Frank." Barnes & Noble. Accessed October 30, 2015.  
<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/yours-anne-lois-metzger/1007045496?ean=9780439590990>. This book is about how Anne Frank and her family go into hiding during World War II. This book is used during literature circles.

## Bibliography for Teachers

Beers, G. Kylene, and Robert E. Probst. *Notice & Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2013. This book is used to integrate strategies for the interactive read aloud and close reading.

Brickman, Jacquelynn. "Lesson Ideas to Enrich Student Inquiry into the Holocaust | Scholastic.com." Scholastic Teachers. 1969. Accessed November 21, 2015. <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/lesson-ideas-enrich-student-inquiry-holocaust>. This source is used to supplement student inquiry during the unit.

"Center for Judaic, Holocaust, & Peace Studies." Videos. Accessed October 30, 2015. <http://holocaust.appstate.edu/node/126>. This video is used to introduce a true account of a Holocaust survivor.

"Department of Government and Justice Studies." What Is Social Justice? Accessed June 13, 2015. <http://gjs.appstate.edu/social-justice-and-human-rights/what-social-justice>. This source is used to access ideas and perspective on social justice.

"How to Teach about the Holocaust in Schools." Holocaust Task Force. Accessed November 21, 2015. <http://holocausttaskforce.org/>. This source is used to analyze negative and positive responses to teaching the Holocaust in school.

Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989. This source is used as the interactive read aloud for the unit.

Neamen, Mimi, and Mary Strong. *Literature Circles: Cooperative Learning for Grades 3-8*. Englewood, CO: Teacher Ideas Press, 1992. This source is used to help organize literature circles in the classroom.

Noddings, Nel. *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. This source is used to connect the Charlotte Teacher's Institute Seminar, Peace Education, to the curriculum unit.

"Number The Stars Discussion Guide | Scholastic.com." Scholastic Teachers. 1969. Accessed November 21, 2015. <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/number-stars-discussion-guide>. This source was used to access ideas for the interactive read aloud discussions.

Sontag, Susan. "Looking at War Photography's View of Devastation and Death." *A Critic at Large*, December 9, 2002. This source was used to connect the Charlotte Teacher's Institute Seminar with a portion of the curriculum unit on the power of media.

Sprenger, Marilee. "11 Tips on Teaching Common Core Critical Vocabulary." Edutopia. September 18, 2013. Accessed November 21, 2015. <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-ccss-critical-vocabulary-marilee-sprenger>. This source was used to access teaching strategies for Common Core Vocabulary.

Villegas, Ana Maria, and Tamara Lucas. "Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum." *Journal of Teacher Education* 53, no. 1 (2002): 20-32. doi:10.1177/0022487102053001003. This source was used to access additional information on Culturally Responsive Teaching in the classroom.

**Notes**

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<sup>i</sup> (Holocaust Task Force n.d.)

<sup>ii</sup> (Probst n.d.)

<sup>iii</sup> (Lucus 2002)

<sup>iv</sup> (Sprenger 2013)

<sup>v</sup> (Facing History Ourselves n.d.)

<sup>vi</sup> (Scholastic 1969)

<sup>vii</sup> (Strong 1992)

<sup>viii</sup> (A. S. University 2015)

<sup>ix</sup> (Sontag 2002)

<sup>x</sup> (Sprenger 2013)

<sup>xi</sup> (Brickman 1969)

<sup>xii</sup> (Brickman 1969)

<sup>xiii</sup> (Coventry n.d.)

<sup>xiv</sup> (Strong 1992)

<sup>xv</sup> (Scholastic 1969)