





Artifact Cards

Artifact Activity

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SUBJECT: History, Jewish history, language arts, humanities

DURATION: 50 Minutes

GRADE: 7 & 8

SETTING: Classroom w/space to move

PURPOSE: Summative assessment *after* a unit on the Holocaust

OBJECTIVE: Through a series of activities, students will interact with artifacts and learn how they might have been used in 4 distinct types of Holocaust experiences. Students will be encouraged to recall and repeat an aspect of a survivor's story and share it with new learners.

Procedure

STEP 1: Each student randomly takes or is given an artifact card. (4 minutes)

There are 28 Artifact cards. The activity works with 4 to 28 students by having them take more than one card. Unused cards should be equally distributed from the 4 columns.

Survival Artifacts

Shoes
Water
Bread
Soup
Blanket
Coat
Uniform

Fighter Artifacts

Gun
Bullets
Knife
Axe
Grenades
Binoculars
Dynamite

Religious Artifacts

Siddur
Torah
Menorah
Tefillin
Shofar
Candles
Kiddush Cup

Artist Artifacts

Pencil
Paper
Paint
Clay
Typewriter
Violin
Guitar

STEP 2: Teacher says:

(12 minutes)

Think about all of the survivor testimonies we heard, read, and discussed. Think about one survivor who talked about a particular artifact. Repeat a survivor's short anecdote about your artifact and how it was used by that survivor so very long ago during the Holocaust. Find a partner; show each other your artifact and share your memory.....find a new partner and share your memory again, this time with even more details as you remember them;....Last time, find a new partner and share your now hopefully perfected survivor memory.

STEP 3: Teacher says:

(3 minutes)

All the artifacts you possess as a class can be divided into 4 main groups. Some of the artifacts can be considered the basic necessities required for survival. Some of the artifacts are the things survivors needed to fight the enemy. Some of the artifacts are religious items. The last group of artifacts were used to make art. Find a group of your classmates who have the same type of artifact as you.

However the students divide the artifacts into the 4 groups is fine, as long as there are equal numbers of artifacts in each group.

STEP 4: Teacher says:

(16 minutes)

We would like to have been able to send your artifacts back in time to the people who needed them.

- **For the group with survival artifacts, we are sending them to a concentration camp where food and clothing were scarce. Surviving was perhaps the greatest revenge, so let's help them.**
- **For the group with fighting artifacts, we are sending them to resistance fighters in the forest. Food and clothing were not as lacking, but weapons were always needed. There was no guarantee of survival, but at least they put up a fight.**
- **For the group with religious items, we are sending them to a ghetto in order to help perpetuate Jewish life. Religious leaders and teachers often took great risks and were caught, but they still managed to inspire many around them with hope.**
- **For the group with the art artifacts, we are sending them to artists in ghettos, in hiding, in camps, wherever they were found, with the understanding that these supplies might enable them to create a testimony that will live on long after they themselves are gone.**

The time machine can only take 4 artifacts from each group; decide among yourselves which ones we should send. One group member will present all of your items to the class, and another will explain which 4 you chose and why.

(Optional: Narrow the choices again to 3; to 2; each time, the groups must explain their choices.)

STEP 5: Teacher says:

(6 Minutes)

Let's see if we can identify each group of artifacts with one word or phrase that defines their use or purpose. (Elicit suggestions, such as **self-preservation, offensive resistance, religious inspiration, or personal creation as a form of defiance.)**

STEP 6: Conclusion/Summary: Teacher says: **We have learned about 4 of the many paths survivors followed, each important.** (4 minutes)

- **A famous survivor such as Elie Wiesel, who was fortunate enough to be able to survive on the meager rations of bread and soup he was given, defied the Nazis by the simple act of surviving and now has shared his story with millions of people.**
- **The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising will elicit pride for countless generations.**
- **Thousand of survivors relate that their most hopeful memories from those dark days was when the people came together to continue their traditions by lighting the menorah or blowing shofar.**
- **A simple work of pen on paper: Can anyone ever measure the impact Anne Frank’s diary and the poetry and paintings of the Ghetto Terezin have had on global consciousness about the Holocaust?**

STEP 7: Homework/Assessment: Teacher distributes the following assignment and responds to questions as necessary: (4 minutes)

Respond to one or more of these questions, in a well thought-out poem, song, short essay, drawing, or painting:

- Can you say that one of these paths touched you more than the others? Why?
- Which path do you think you will most likely remember and be able to tell to others who want to learn about the Holocaust? Why?
- Based on the testimonies discussed in class, compare two or more survivors’ experiences of using one or more of the artifacts.