

LESSON: Devorah Gutterman

Grade Level:

This unit was developed for secondary students. The approach and materials for this unit follow the [Age Appropriate Guidelines from the USHMM](#).

Subject:

History; English/Language Arts; Multi-disciplinary.

Rationale:

The stories of individuals during the Holocaust can help us understand various facets of history through the eyes of those who lived through it. This story helps to broaden understanding about the experience of a young Polish woman whose story of life on the run illustrates the challenges of hiding in Nazi-occupied Europe.

Overview:

Key Question(s):

- Who was Devorah Gutterman? What was her experience during the Holocaust?
- What were some of the challenges Devorah faced in her attempt to survive the Nazi occupation as a Jewish woman?
- How did Devorah demonstrate resilience in her path to survive the Holocaust?

Educational Outcomes. At the end of this lesson, the students will be able to:

- Define the Holocaust and related terms such as Shabbat, Nazi party, convent.
- Identify who Devorah Gutterman was and what her journey was like during the Holocaust.
- Compare and contrast information shared in text and in the podcast.
- Discuss the challenges Devorah faced in her attempt to survive Nazi occupation as a Jewish woman.
- Describe what it means to be resilient.
- Illustrate how Devorah demonstrated resilience during her life on the run during the Holocaust.

Teacher preparation

It's important for teachers to familiarize themselves with the [Pedagogical Principles for Teaching the Holocaust](#). We encourage teachers to familiarize themselves with background knowledge on the Holocaust by viewing this [site](#) at the USHMM and view the [Introduction to the Holocaust](#). Additional information on teaching about this topic can be learned from the full-length version of [The Path to Nazi Genocide](#).

In addition, we suggest:

- Prepare access to handout and student packet.
- Check access to related links.
- Consider having students complete the [What was the Holocaust? Activity](#).
- Identify any terms students may be unfamiliar with in the written text or the podcast.

Materials

- Devorah Gutterman's narrative in [To Life: The Past is Present](#)
- Devorah Gutterman Podcast: Hidden in Plain Sight

Lesson:

INTRODUCTION

1. If students have not previously discussed the Holocaust, begin with an overview of the term, Holocaust, as defined by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored, persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945 across Europe and North Africa. The height of the persecution and murder occurred during World War II. By the end of the war in 1945, the Germans and their collaborators had killed nearly two out of every three European Jews. The Nazis believed that Germans were racially superior.

They believed Jews were a threat to the so-called German racial community. While Jews were the primary victims, the Nazis also targeted other groups for persecution and murder. The Nazis claimed that Roma, people with disabilities, some Slavic peoples (especially Poles and Russians), and Black people were biologically inferior. The regime persecuted other groups because of politics, ideology, or behavior. These groups included Communists, Socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, gay men, and people the Nazis called "asocials" and "professional criminals."

For younger students, or students previously familiar with this event in history, you can utilize this shortened definition:

The state-sponsored systematic murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators. Sinti-Roma, Poles, people with physical and mental disabilities, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents were also targeted by the Nazis.

2. Share with students that today we will be learning about the story of Devorah Gutterman. Devorah was a young Polish Jewish mother who survived the Holocaust as a result of resilience. Ask students if they are familiar with the word resilience. If not, share a definition such as this one from the Oxford English Dictionary. Resilience is, “the capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.”
3. Once students have defined resilience, ask them to provide examples of resilience in their own lives or the lives of people they know.

RESEARCH/ANALYSIS/CREATION/COMMUNICATION

1. Explain to students that they will be assigned one of two ways to learn about Devorah - through a podcast or through a written narrative. Each group will seek to answer the following questions:
 - a. Who was Devorah Gutterman?
 - b. In 3-5 sentences, summarize Devorah’s experiences during the Holocaust.
 - c. What challenges did Devorah face in her attempt to survive the Nazi occupation as a Jewish woman?
 - d. What were some ways Devorah demonstrated resilience in her path to survive the Holocaust?
 - e. What were the advantages and disadvantages to learning about Devorah’s story through your assigned medium?
2. Task students to first review their sources and answers to these questions as individuals; then ask them to discuss the answers to these questions with others who shared their medium (text or podcast).
3. Once this initial period of sharing is complete, place students in heterogeneous pairs or small groups to discuss their answers to the questions. Have students place particular emphasis on discussing how their two mediums varied and what the experience was like for each individual.
4. Ask students to create an individual piece demonstrating the resilience Devorah shared during her path to survival - it should be a poem, a drawing, a song or other creative form of expression.
5. Have students display their pieces - either around the room or through a virtual gallery walk.
6. Give students time to view their classmates' work. Ask students to leave a compliment on each work they view.

CONCLUSION

1. To conclude the activity, ask students to reflect on the following in an exit ticket:

- a. What is one thing you learned about the Holocaust from this activity?
 - b. What is one thing you learned about resilience?
 - c. How does Devorah's resilience inspire you in your life today?
2. Have students turn in exit tickets physically or electronically.