



“What were the ghettos and what did deportation mean?”

Introduction

It is now commonly accepted that the Holocaust evolved and emerged along a “twisted road” rather than following a straight path, and the policy of ghettoization is an important illustration of this. As a stage in the development of the Holocaust, the initial concentration of the Jewish population of Eastern Europe in ghettos and their ultimate deportation provides illuminating insights into how the thoughts and aims behind Nazi policy towards the Jews changed as the war progressed. By considering the experiences of those who lived in the ghettos we are also reminded of how the Holocaust was not committed by bullet or gas alone.

In itself, the following lesson does not constitute Holocaust education, but it does provide an example of how WW2history.com can be an invaluable resource to teachers delivering the Holocaust in schools. It is designed for use with pupils aged 13 and over, and has been primarily formulated in line with the National Curriculum for History Scheme of Work Unit 19: How did the Holocaust Happen? It can be used by teachers to meet the following requirements of the history programme of study for Key Stage 3:

Key Concepts: 1.1a, 1.1c, 1.2a, 1.3a, 1.4a, 1.5a, 1.6c

Key Processes: 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3a

Range and Content: 3a, 3b, 3i, 3j

Curriculum Opportunities: 4a, 4d, 4e

This lesson could also be used by teachers wishing to make cross-curricular links to Religious Education, English, Citizenship for it can meet the following requirements of the programme of study for Key Stage 3:

Religious Education

Key Concepts: 1.5a

Range and Content: 3i

English

Key Concepts: 1.1a, 1.1b, 1.2a, 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4c

Key Processes: 2.1a, 2.1e, 2.1f, 2.1g, 2.1h, 2.1i, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2d, 2.2e, 2.2f, 2.3a, 2.3o, 2.3r, 2.3s

Range and Content: 3.1b, 3.1e, 3.3b, 3.3d

Curriculum Opportunities: 4.1b, 4.1c, 4.1e, 4.1f, 4.2a, 4.2c, 4.3a,

Citizenship

Key Processes: 2.1c, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c, 2.2d

Curriculum Opportunities: 4a, 4c, 4i, 4j

Aims and Learning Outcomes

The lesson has two core aims:

- To encourage consideration of the role of the ghettos in the Holocaust

- To reflect on the experience of the ghettos and deportation

By the end of the lesson, all pupils will have expanded their historical knowledge and understanding of the ghettos and deportation. Most pupils will also have identified how the role of ghettos changed over time, recognised their importance to our comprehension of the Holocaust, and considered the human impact that ghettoization and deportation had. Some pupils will have reflected on what the policy of ghettoization reveals about the Holocaust, and used first-hand testimony to gain a deeper understanding of the genocide.

Materials

For this lesson the minimum teachers will require is a subscription to the WW2history.com website and a sufficient number of biography worksheets.

Starter Activity

- Depending on your subscription, play or ask pupils to listen to the audio recording of Estera Frenkiel's testimony. The teacher may wish to provide lower ability pupils with transcripts of this.
- Using Frenkiel's testimony, instruct pupils to produce a brief biography summarising her experiences using the biography worksheet.
- As a class, discuss what Frenkiel's story tells us about the ghettos and what deportation entailed.

Activity

- Explain to pupils the importance of the ghettos and deportation to our understanding of the Holocaust.
- Depending on your subscription, show or ask pupils to read the "Key Moment" text entitled "German Jews deported". Working individually, instruct pupils to convert this information into a flow diagram using their own words.
- In pairs, encourage pupils to consider some or all of the following questions:
Why was autumn 1941 a turning point?
What reasons did Hitler have for resisting and then agreeing to the deportation of German Jews?

Did the deportation of German Jews mean the Nazis knew what to they wanted to do with all of Europe's Jews?

Non-Jews either looked away from the deportations or watched "stony faced" – what does this tell you about non-Jews?

Why is the period between autumn 1941 and spring 1942 "one of the most crucial" in the history of the Holocaust?

Plenary

- Via an interactive whiteboard, play pupils the first paragraph of Alice Lok Cahana's testimony. Ask the class some, or all of the following:

What words can we use to summarise what deportation was like for Alice?

What do we learn about deportation from Alice's testimony?

"Nothing can be so bad like this cattle train" – what does this tell you about Alice's feelings/attitude?

There were various stages that lead to the Holocaust, and it was far more of a "twisted" rather than a straight road. At what stage would you place the ghettos and deportations?