

# Holocaust Education Week

## Lesson Plan



### **Butterfly Poem: 50 minutes**

**Grades 4-5**

**Created by Rachel Lenerz**

#### **STANDARDS:**

**SS.5.HE.1.1**

Define the Holocaust as the planned and systematic state-sponsored persecution and murder of European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945.

**LAFS.K12.SL.1.2**

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**LAFS.K12. R.3.7**

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

**LAFS.K12.SL.1.1**

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**GRADE LEVEL(S):4-5**

**TOTAL CLASS TIME: 50 minutes**

#### **ESSENTIAL QUESTION:**

**How do we honor and remember those who lost their lives during the Holocaust so that part of history is never again repeated?**

## **LEARNING GOALS:**

- ✧ Students will understand what the Holocaust was and when it took place.
- ✧ Students will understand how the expression through the arts (poetry) by children of concentration camps during the Holocaust impacts us today.
- ✧ Students will understand how symbols represents ideas.
- ✧ Students will create symbols to help remember our past and create a kinder future.

## **RESOURCES/MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- ✧ The Butterfly by Pavel Friedmann (included below)
- ✧ KWL Chart (included below)
- ✧ Butterfly Cut-outs (included below)
- ✧ White Cardstock
- ✧ Laminator and laminating sheets
- ✧ Glue, scissors, string
- ✧ Glitter, colored paper, any decorating materials you are comfortable with

## **BEFORE INSTRUCTION:**

- ✧ As a class, complete a KWL chart on the Holocaust (included below)
- ✧ Discuss what the Holocaust was (\*\*edit for grade level appropriateness\*\*):
  - The Holocaust was the systematic, state -sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators.
  - The Nazis came into power in Germany in January 1933
  - They believed that the Germans belonged to a race that was “superior” to all others
  - They claimed that the Jews (and others such as Gypsies as well as people who had physical or intellectual disabilities) did not meet the “superior race” criteria and were perceived to be a threat to the German community
- ✧ Discuss that to exterminate the “inferior” individuals, especially the Jews, the Nazi’s, under Hitler’s leadership, created concentration camps, forced-labor camps, and death camps.
- ✧ One of these camps named Terezin was unique among concentration camps. This transit and ghetto labor camp was also used as a fake city of safety and as a ruse to fool the Red Cross and the rest of the world. Approximately two hundred thousand people passed through Terezin of which fifteen thousand were children. Of those children, only 132 were known to have survived. The camp inmates’ determination to preserve tradition, music, art, education, and all that creates culture amidst these appalling conditions is beyond remarkable. These poems and other artist creations were hidden at Terezin inside mattresses and stuffed in cracks between the walls of houses. They were recovered after the war.

### **DIRECT INSTRUCTION:**

- ✿ Hand out a copy of the poem: The Butterfly
- ✿ Tell students to look for symbols that represent ideas. Symbols are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. Sometimes, symbols seem to just naturally emerge during an event or a time period in history.
- ✿ As a class, read through The Butterfly.
- ✿ Tell students: “The Butterfly” is a poem written by young man, Pavel Friedmann, while he was imprisoned in the Terezin Concentration Camp. Pavel Friedmann’s haunting and beautiful poem is featured in, “... I Never Saw Another Butterfly,” a compilation of artwork and writing by children imprisoned at Terezin. The poem was found in the camp at the end of the war, and its publication has resulted in the image of the butterfly emerging as an unforgettable symbol of the Holocaust.
- ✿ Friedmann was deported to Auschwitz on September 29, 1944, where he died.

### **COLLABORATIVE WORK:**

- ✿ Have students turn and talk to their shoulder partner about the symbols they found and what they think they mean. (2 minutes)
- ✿ Afterwards, discuss as a class the symbol of the butterfly. Guide students to understand: The butterfly symbolizes all good things in life, but also reminds us that life is fragile. The butterfly also serves as a symbol of hope. Friedmann’s poem though it evokes some frightening images, also shows us beyond fear, the children of the Holocaust still had hope.
- ✿ Brainstorm a list of colors, shapes, words, and symbols that represent feelings and emotions associated either with the children of the Holocaust, or how you would like to remember or honor them. You might also consider including a relevant quote from a poem, song, or text.

### **INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:**

- ✿ Students will use the butterfly cut outs as a template to create their own symbols to remember the children of the Holocaust.
- ✿ Using the gathered materials, have the students create a butterfly that is a representative of the poem. They can write words or symbols, color, etc. to create their visual representation.
- ✿ Have the students prepare to discuss what their butterfly represents based on how they decorated them. (It is important to let each child be creative and encourage them to make whatever butterfly they feel comfortable making.)
- ✿ Then, you can laminate the butterflies so they will last longer.
- ✿ Finally, with string, have the students hang their butterflies from the ceiling on string or you can hand them on a tree or fence near the daffodil garden or even just outside for World Kindness Day. (You may use a hole punch to make a place to attach the string to the butterfly.) Every student’s butterfly (soul of the author of their poem) should be displayed.
- ✿ The butterflies represent the children of Terezin.

**POEM: The Butterfly**  
**by Pavel Friedmann**

The last, the very last,  
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.  
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing  
against a white stone...

Such, such a yellow  
Is carried lightly 'way up high.  
It went away I'm sure because it wished  
to kiss the world goodbye.

For seven weeks I've lived in here,  
Pinned up inside this ghetto  
But I have found my people here.  
The dandelions call to me  
And the white chestnut candles in the court.  
Only I never saw another butterfly.

That butterfly was the last one.  
Butterflies don't live in here,  
In the ghetto.

<b>K</b> (What we Know)	<b>W</b> (What we Want to Know)	<b>L</b> (What I learned)

