

# **Introduction to the Holocaust**

Lesson Plan I for  
English Language  
Learners

# Alignment with Canadian \*Historical Thinking Standards:

## 1. Primary Source Evidence and Historical Perspectives:

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- a. “Taking historical perspective means understanding the social, cultural, intellectual and emotional settings that shaped people’s lives and actions in the past.”
- b. This lesson uses testimony, primary sources, which allow learners to take perspectives.
- c. “Primary sources must be...set . . . in their historical contexts and make inferences from them to help us understand more about what was going on . . .”

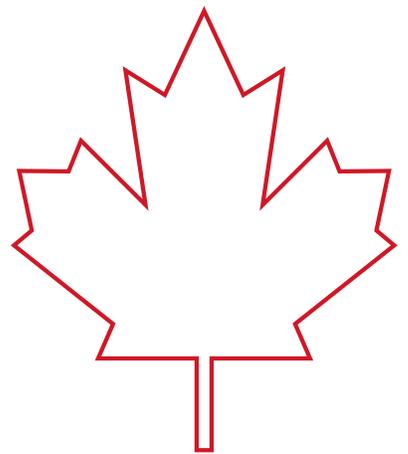
## 2. Historical Significance and Ethical Dimensions:

- a. “We should expect to learn something from the past that helps us to face the ethical issues of today.”
- b. “A historical person or event can acquire significance if we, the historians, can link it to larger trends and stories that reveal something important for us today.”
- c. This lesson demands that learners take the particularistic testimonies and experiences of the Holocaust survivors so that learners can identify acts of evil around the world and choose stand against it.  
\*historicalthinking.ca

## Suggested Tasks

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1. Using the maple leaf as the background, select at least 6 quotes from the survivors that describe their life as they immigrated to Canada after the Holocaust and add them to the maple leaf. Be sure to include the survivors’ names.
2. Create a “found poem” using survivor testimonies. Choose words/phrases from the testimonies that resonate with you. Combine them in a poem. Do not add extra words. The poem should consist exclusively of survivors’ words.
3. Create a monument to remembrance from the words of the survivors’ testimonies. Choose a medium, shape, and intersperse the testimony in and around the monument.
4. Make a T-chart and on one side write quotes of the survivors. On the other side, write or illustrate your thoughts, reflections, and feelings about this quote. Include at least 5 quotes.



# Quotes

# My Reflections



# Lesson Plan for Adult English Language Learners

## (Lesson 1)

### About this Guide:

This educational program is designed to provide concise background information on the Holocaust for the English Language Learner. Using the recorded testimony of Holocaust survivors through the USC Shoah Foundation's IWitness platform, students will learn about how the Holocaust affected individuals, families and communities. As the instructor, you might choose to have them focus on the portions of testimony that deal with immigration and integration experiences. Many survivor testimonies describe what it was like to come to Canada and to learn a new language, customs and find employment. These can be powerful learning moments for your students.

The activities are designed to engage learners so that they will develop additional vocabulary while learning about the Holocaust and how survivors integrated into Canadian society.

We welcome your feedback, questions and suggestions so that we can continue to share ideas to effectively teach about the Holocaust.

### Enduring Understanding:

Jews who survived the Holocaust rebuilt their lives. One place they chose to immigrate and settle was Canada.

### Learning Targets

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1. Students will be able to discuss the events of the Holocaust which led to the survivors immigrating to Canada.
2. Students will be able to discuss the challenges that faced the newly-arrived immigrants.
3. Students will be able to make connections to their own immigration experiences.
4. Students will be able to use target vocabulary accurately.

### Target Vocabulary

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- a) **Holocaust:** The Holocaust happened between 1933-1945. It was when six million Jews were murdered by Nazis and the people who helped them. It happened in Europe.
- b) **Raoul Wallenberg:** Swedish diplomat who saved many Hungarian Jews by providing them with Swedish protective passports.
- c) **Wallenberg Day:** In 1985, in recognition of his humanitarian deeds, Canada declared Raoul Wallenberg its first honorary Canadian citizen. January 17 is designated as Canada's national day to honour his memory.
- d) **International Holocaust Remembrance Day:** A memorial day for all the victims of the Holocaust. It was designated by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/7 on 1 November 2005 during the 42nd plenary session.
- e) **Jew:** A Jew is a person who practices Jewish laws, rituals, customs, and celebrates Jewish holidays.
- f) **Nazi:** A Nazi is a person who followed Adolf Hitler and his ideas during the Holocaust. Often these followers belonged to the Nazi political party that held extreme nationalistic views and believed in the concept of an Aryan "master race" that was destined to rule.
- g) **Perpetrator:** A perpetrator is someone who starts trouble. The Nazis and those who helped them are the perpetrators.
- h) **Victim:** A victim is someone who is hurt by someone else. The Jews and others who the Nazis targeted are known as the victims.
- i) **Bystander:** A bystander is someone who does nothing to help while the perpetrator hurts the victim. The bystanders are the countries and individuals who did nothing to help Jews during the Holocaust.



### Educator's Tip:

The USC Shoah Foundation's IWitness testimonies are ideal for introducing your students to new vocabulary and checking for comprehension.

Consider using the following excerpts with your students to have them discover how Holocaust survivors experienced Canada in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.

Anita Ekstein - Clip # 121  
Vera Schiff - Clip # 138  
Max Elsen - Clip # 200

j) **Aryan:** A term used by the Nazis to describe someone of pure German "blood." The term developed as part of a racial ideology that claimed that the so-called Aryan race was a "master race".

k) **Propaganda:** Information presented in a biased slant that is designed to influence and shape public opinion and behavior about specific topics.

l) **Ghetto:** A ghetto is a place where Jews were forced to live by the Nazis and the people who helped them. The ghettos were dirty and there was not a lot of food or medicine. Jews could not leave without permission.

m) **Concentration Camp:** Concentration Camps are prison camps where Jews, and other victims of the Nazis, were confined without regard for the legal process of a democracy. They had to work for the Nazis very long hours and did not get a lot of food or medicine. Conditions in the camps were overcrowded and harsh. The Concentration Camps were surrounded with barbed wire and Nazis walked around with dogs and guns to be make sure nobody tried to escape.

n) **Labour Camp:** Forced-labour camps were established in many lands occupied by the Nazis, often in cooperation with German industry. The Jewish inmates were forced to work 10 - 12 hour days under very harsh conditions, receiving no pay.

o) **Rescuer:** A rescuer is a person who made a decision to get involved and chose to make a difference. During the Holocaust, there were non-Jews who risked their lives and the lives of their families to save Jews by hiding them, feeding them, and helping them in any way they could.

p) **Liberator:** Liberators are the soldiers from different countries who freed the Jews from the prison camps after the Holocaust and World War II ended.

q) **Liberation:** Liberation means the time when the Allies freed the Jews from the death camps and concentration camps. Liberation happened at different times for different Jews.

r) **Survivor:** A survivor is a Jew who did not die during the Holocaust. Survivors were able to stay alive.

s) **Displaced Person (DP):** After the Holocaust, the survivors were displaced people, which means they did not have a place or a home to go back to after the Holocaust ended.

t) **Displaced Person Camp (DP Camp):** After the Holocaust, the survivors lived together in camps (not prison camps) that were set up by the liberators. They lived there for a long time until they could find a new country to go to and start a new life.

u) **Emigrant:** Emigrants are people who leave their home country and move to a different one. They are emigrants when they leave their home country and immigrants when they enter a new country.

v) **Immigrant:** An immigrant is a person who leaves his country and moves to a new country. It is hard for an immigrant to be in a new country where he does not know many people or speak the language.

Sentence Frames:

● 1. During the Holocaust

●

● 2. When (insert survivor's name) was young, s/he

●

● 3. When Holocaust survivors immigrated to Canada,

●

● 4. The Holocaust survivors hope we remember and learn that

●

●

Now, try writing your own sentences based on the information covered, or use this space for your "Found Poem."

**Assessment:** In pairs, students will discuss the testimonies they heard/read, using the sentence frames and the target vocabulary correctly. Students will use the turn'n' talk method for having a conversation.

## Learning Extensions:

During the Holocaust, the world was divided into two: those countries that chose to rescue Jews and provide haven and safe passage and those countries that did not.

Research one or more of the following countries to see how they chose to help Jews fleeing Nazi persecution:

### 1. Albania:

In 1934, Herman Bernstein, the United States Ambassador to Albania, wrote:

“There is no trace of any discrimination against Jews in Albania, because Albania happens to be one of the rare lands in Europe today where religious prejudice and hate do not exist, even though Albanians themselves are divided into three faiths.”

### 2. The Code of Besa:

Besa is a code of honor deeply-rooted in Albanian culture and incorporated in the faith of Albanian Muslims. It mandates a moral behavior so absolute that refusal to adhere to it brings shame, dishonor, and disgrace to oneself and one's family. The Code of Besa requires that one take responsibility for the lives of others during their time of need. In Albania and Kosovo, at grave risk to themselves and their families, Muslims sheltered both the Jews living in their villages and cities, as well as thousands of Jews fleeing the Nazis from other European countries.

### 3. Meet:

a. Destan and Lime Balla

b. Brothers Hamid and Xhemal Veseli

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/besa/balla.asp>

(source: <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/besa/introduction.asp>)

Resources

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/besa/introduction.asp>

<http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/c.tmL6KfNVLtH/b.7500305/>

### 4. China:

Feng-Shan Ho, the Chinese Consul-General in Vienna, was given the title of Righteous Among the Nations for his humanitarian courage in issuing Chinese visas to Jews in Vienna in spite of orders from his superior to the contrary.

(Source: <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/ho.asp>)

Jews Escaped to Shanghai and Survived the Holocaust

<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005589>

### 5. France:

Pastor André Trocmé was the spiritual leader of the Protestant congregation in the village of Le Chambon sur Lignon in the département of Haute-Loire in Southeastern France. His predecessor, Charles Guillon, had been elected mayor of the town in the early 1930s, and André Trocmé took over as spiritual leader of the congregation. When in June 1940 France was occupied and the Vichy regime was formed, Trocmé urged his congregants to shelter persecuted fugitives of “the people of the Bible.” In so doing, he followed in the footsteps of Guillon, who had educated the congregation in this spirit. This policy and the generosity of spirit of many congregants made Le Chambon and the surrounding villages a unique refuge in France, where many Jews, children and entire families, survived the war.

(Source: <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/trocme.asp>)

## Resources

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/ho.asp>

<http://www.jfr.org/pages/rescuer-support/stories/austria/-feng-shan-ho>

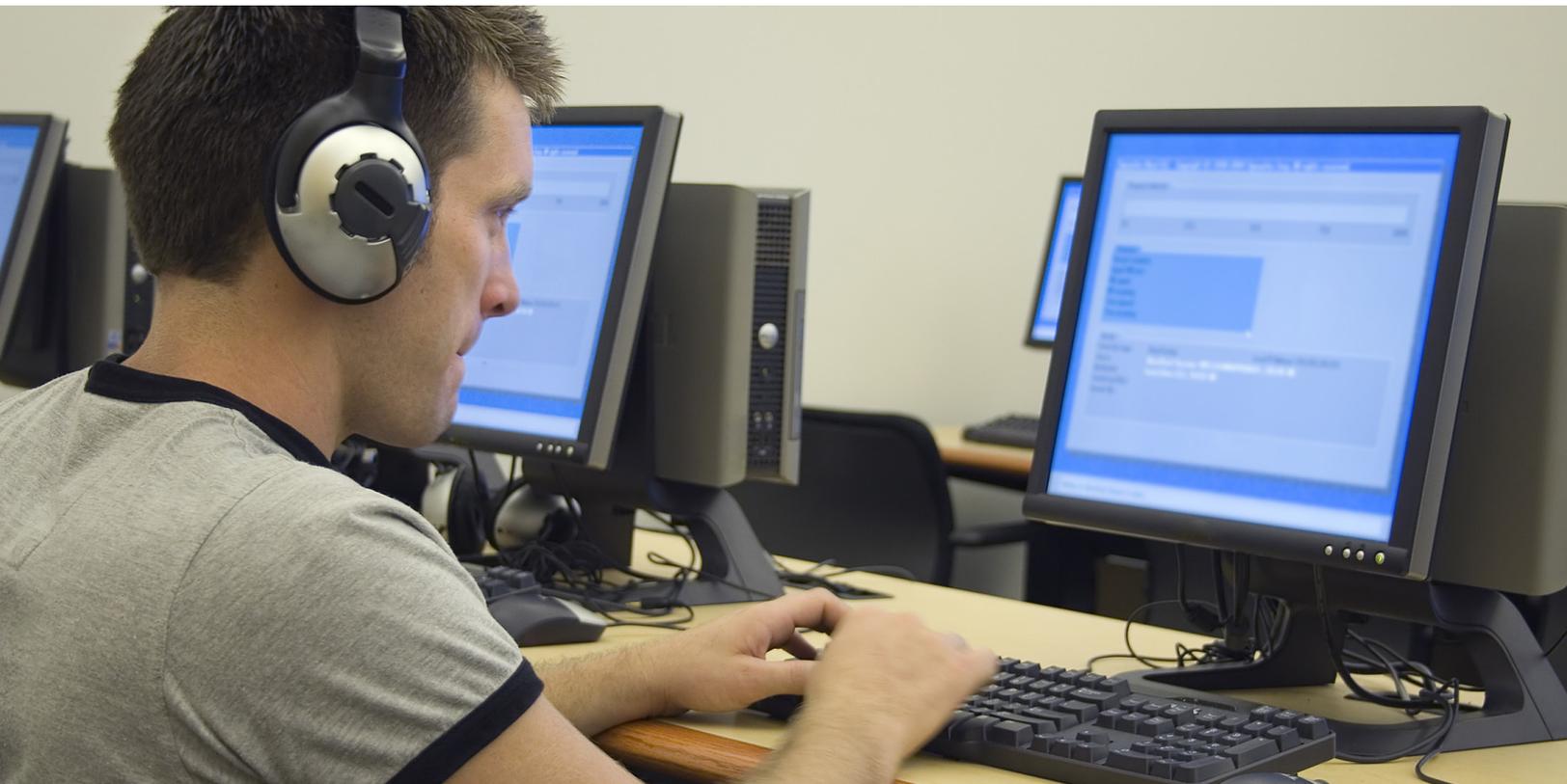
<http://www.shanghaijews.org.cn/english/article/?aid=64>

[http://www.yadvashem.org/download/about\\_holocaust/studies/altman\\_eber\\_full.pdf](http://www.yadvashem.org/download/about_holocaust/studies/altman_eber_full.pdf)

<http://www.projetaladin.org/holocaust/en/muslims-and-jews/muslims-and-jews-in-history/muslims-and-jews-in-history.html> (This website is available in English, French, Farsi, Arabic and Turkish)

[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/why\\_teach\\_holocaust\\_education/#.UsYDkWRDunF](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/why_teach_holocaust_education/#.UsYDkWRDunF) (This brochure is available in English, French, Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Arabic)

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/trocme.asp>



## Recorded Testimony:

USC Shoah Foundation **IWitness**

<http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/>

IWitness provides over 1,300 video testimonies, multimedia activities, and digital resources allowing you to participate actively in learning.

**Connects** students with the past

**Engages** them in the present

**Motivates** them to build a better future

For more information about our educational programs, contact:



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