



A Gypsy in Auschwitz

Lesson 5: Choices and Moral Courage

Lesson Plan for Grade 9-12, World History or U.S. History

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OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Students will explore how they might act in certain situations presented in *A Gypsy in Auschwitz*.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

1. 9-12.WH.28. Synthesize historical information to create new understandings.
2. 9-12.WH.29. Use a variety of source materials to compare and contrast treatments of the same topic
3. 9-12.WH.30. Examine historical events from the perspectives of diverse groups, including Indigenous peoples, national, regional, racial, ethnic, class, and gender, sexual orientation, and differently abled

OBJECTIVES

1. Interpret personal narratives to understand the complexity of human choices and place individuals on a response spectrum based on their actions and motivations.

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Excerpts from *A Gypsy in Auschwitz*: I used this version: Rosenberg, Otto. *A Gypsy in Auschwitz: How I Survived the Horrors of the "Forgotten Holocaust."* Monoray,

2022.

2.

a. *I recommend:*

- i. Ch. 1 pg 13-15 *"While we were living in Sandbacher Weg ... things calmed down a lot after that."*
- ii. Ch. 2 pg 19 *"At four or five one morning..."*
- iii. Ch. 3 pg 35-36 *"In 1938, the police or the SA...It had a jolly ring to it."*
- iv. Ch. 3 pg 51 *"The threats became...whisk them away to their wagon"*
- v. Ch. 4 pg 58-59 *"My triumph was short lived...I literally didn't have a place at the table."*
- vi. Ch. 4 pg 62 *"The police let their dogs bite anyone they caught, and would dole out beatings of their own before bringing them in."*
- vii. Ch. 5. pg 75-76 *"My uncles had all been in the military...he ended up in Auschwitz, too."*
- viii. Ch. 5 pg 82-83 *"On another occasion, a block leader...that bread will save my life."*
- ix. Ch. 5 pg 95 *"I ended up working for a Pole...no longer acted as a deterrent."*
- x. Ch. 6 pg 116-117 *"They had already rounded up the Russian Sinti...noticing the sound of machine-gun fire or gunshots."*
- xi. Ch. 6 pg 118-119 *"We had prepared for this moment...This was a dangerous situation for the SS."*
- xii. Ch. 8 pg 138 *"One day when I was sneaking my shovel...He never got them back." (This is a good example of how victims in turn victimized others.)*
- xiii. Ch. 8 pg 147 *"The hangman was a kapo at the camp, who had been told that if he hanged the three men, he would be free to go home. He did as he was asked."*

1. *There are many other examples that you can use throughout the book, these are just what stood out to me. Please, use your judgement as you know your class best.*

3. 4 signs reading: resist, help quietly, stay silent, collaborate

VERIFICATION

Steps to check for student understanding

1. Discussion

ACTIVITY

Describe activity that will reinforce the lesson

Prior to this lesson- students should read through chapter 9.

You will have excerpts of the memoir. You can read them one at a time or have students read them.

Cards (resist, help quietly, stay silent, collaborate) will be in different locations around the room.

When you have read the excerpt, you will ask students to go to the card where they think those who were there would have fallen on that spectrum

As a class, have students discuss why they made the choice they did. Encourage them to use evidence from the memoir or historical evidence to support their responses.