



Teachers' Notes

Holocaust Unit

Bystander

Before the Lesson Begins

- Print out Resources A, B, C & D
- Provide sheets of sugar paper & marker pens
- Print out copies of pledge cards

Resources not provided

- Pens
- Paper

Lesson Overview

The focus of this lesson is the idea of bystanders/upstanders and what it means to be classed as either. The aim is to empower students to think about how they personally can be upstanding.

Introduction

Discussion Guidance

1. Slide 2

Bystander

- *Dictionary* - A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part.
- *FYFThesaurus* - A person who withholds their participation at a negative event they are present at whilst not being directly involved. They may be emotionally affected by what they see, but for various reasons refrain from becoming personally involved.

Upstander

- *Urban Dictionary* - A person who stands up for his or her beliefs. A person who does what they think is right, even if they are alone. A person who is not a bystander.
- *FYFThesaurus* - A person who voices dissent for a negative event or incident that does not directly involve them. A person who actively champions or supports a needy cause.

- ##### 2. During the Holocaust, some people chose to act in positive ways and saved lives whilst others chose to act negatively, or not to act at all.

Section 1: Bystander

Activity Guidance

Resource List

- Resource A – The rape of Kitty Genovese.
- Resource B – The murder of Ilan Halimi.
- Resource C – The accidental death of a young Chinese Child.
- Resource D - The Holocaust.

NB: The aim of this activity is to allow the groups to consider how taking positive action can create positive outcomes, by examining real life scenarios where Bystanders did not act. Therefore, you should guide them towards imagining their case studies scenarios ending with positive outcomes resulting from the positive actions of an Upstander.

Section 2: Why do people become Bystanders?

Discussion Guidance

1. The Holocaust is an extremely complex subject, and especially so when it comes to the question of blame. There were certainly situations where bystanders could have chosen to be upstanding, both in an individual and group situations – for example; during the early 1930s, German & Austrian people could have attempted to group together to overthrow the Nazi government (e.g. Like the Arab Spring). Additionally, during different stages of the Holocaust (e.g. Ghettoisation), it was possible that individuals/groups could have attempted to save people from persecution – however, there are certain stages of the Holocaust where it would be much harder/impossible to attempt to help the persecuted (e.g. Individuals already taken by German soldiers, and those taken away in Cattle cart trains & concentration/death camps.)
2. People shared Nazi/anti-Semitic beliefs.
 - People were afraid of the repercussions; which, during the Holocaust, was death.
 - People prioritised their personal safety & that of their own families over that of strangers.
 - People chose to ignore what was occurring.
 - People assumed someone else would take responsibility.

- 3 The same answers as Q.2, but in today's context (e.g. Instead of the fear of death, it can be fear of association or being persecuted in turn. And instead of sharing Nazi beliefs, people can harbour alternative bigoted views.)
- 4 This question is for personal reflection – please don't pressure students to share their thoughts unless students volunteer of their own accord.

Section 3: Being an Upstander

NB: Slide 6 – This clip is an interview with Miroslawa Gruszczynska; a Righteous Among the Nations. With the help of her family, she saved the lives of Jewish People during the war. Righteous Among the Nations is an award given by Yad Vashem in Israel to honour non-Jewish people who saved the lives of Jewish people during the Holocaust.

NB: Slide 7 – This is a description in Miroslawa's own words about what happened to those she helped save after the war.

Discussion Guidance

1. 24,356 people were Upstanders during the Holocaust
2. The Holocaust was a very dark period in history and the presence of Righteous Among The Nations (RATN) gives us hope for humanity. The fact that people were brave and resourceful enough to save innocent lives despite extreme outward oppression demonstrates what each one of us as individuals are capable of.
3. The overwhelming response from RATN, is that they could not be bystanders to others' murder or oppression. They identified with others on a human level, despite their differences.
4. Allow students to share their stories if they wish.

Section 4: Upstander and Me

Activity Guidance

Before taking part in this activity, stress to the class that at all times, it is important to consider personal safety. Being an Upstander does not necessitate putting yourself at risk. Additionally, keep the responses anonymous within the discussion to avoid embarrassment or singling out of pupils.

NB: Pledge Cards - Once more, stress that no violent or dangerous behaviour is condoned.