

Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust

1. Define the term *Holocaust*.
 2. Contextualize the history you are teaching.
 3. Translate statistics into people.
 4. Strive for precision of language.
 5. Avoid simple answers to complex history.
 6. Just because it happened does not mean it was inevitable.
 7. Try to avoid stereotypical descriptions.
 8. Strive for balance in establishing whose perspective informs your study of the Holocaust.
 9. Make careful distinctions about sources of information.
 10. Do not romanticize history to engage students' interest.
 11. Be sensitive to appropriate written and audiovisual content.
 12. Select appropriate learning activities.
 13. Reinforce the objectives of your lesson plan.
 14. Avoid comparisons of pain.
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I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no person should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants killed by trained nurses. Women and babies shot by high school and college graduates. So, I am suspicious of education.

My request is:

Help your children become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths or educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

Sincerely,

Dr. Haim Ginott, Holocaust survivor, child psychologist and author