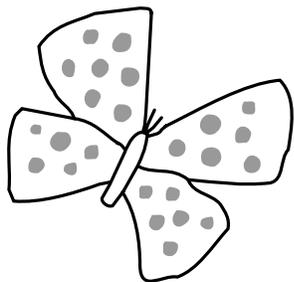


Rushcart Players

STUDY GUIDE



The Last, The Very Last ... Butterfly



INTRODUCTION

Teaching the Holocaust in a sensitive fashion poses difficult challenges. This study guide is designed to help teachers provide a gentle introduction to Holocaust Education and a framework for discussion of the stage production, **"The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly."**

Divided into two sections, the guide first offers background information and a scenario of **"The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly."** The second section provides factual data to increase awareness and understanding of major issues — moral, political, historical and cultural — that contributed to the tragedy of the Holocaust. It includes sequential documentation and definitions of these issues along with vocabulary terms and suggestions for classroom discussion in connection with each point under consideration.

Concepts, discussion points and activities suggested in this guide may easily be adapted and tailored to the age, grade and Holocaust awareness level of your students.

WHY STUDY THE HOLOCAUST?

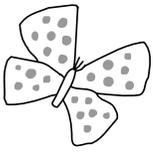
The lessons learned from the Holocaust are universal and can be applied to examples of injustice and tyranny found throughout world history. Studying the Holocaust exposes students to "one of the central tenets of education in the United States: to examine what it means to be a responsible citizen."¹

Through the study of the Holocaust students will gain understanding of the roots of prejudice, the tragedy of genocide, the importance of courage in the face of injustice, the value of individual actions of heroism. Ultimately, this exploration can further moral and ethical development of thought and behavior.

Holocaust education will assist students in gaining cognitive skills such as reading and listening for a point of view and hidden assumptions, evaluating evidence for a given viewpoint, analyzing propaganda techniques, solving hypothetical problems and recognizing generalizations that can lead to prejudicial stereotyping.

¹"TEACHING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST: A Resource Book For Educators." United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. (Note: This is an invaluable guide and resource for educators. It can be obtained along with other services and programs, free of charge, by contacting: Resource Center, Division of Education, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington DC 20024-2126; by calling: (202)488-2661; or by sending email to: education@ushmm.org. For more information, visit: www.ushmm.org.)

*Introduction and Background Information
About*



The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly

*A Musical Presentation
Assembled and Directed by Ruth Fost
Music by Larry Hochman*

INTRODUCTION

The mandate to include Holocaust Education in the curriculum of New Jersey's schools coincides well with Pushcart Players' objective to craft engaging, theatrical works designed to provide a sensitive introduction to this difficult subject. In **"The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly,"** we utilize the art, poetry and narrative of children of the Terezin Concentration Camp whose work was found after the war. This choice was made for a number of reasons.

First, because the work itself contains all the elements of fine drama — wonder and beauty, wit and wisdom, laughter and yearning. Second, the writing and drawings have an immediacy and accessibility for young people because they were, after all, created by children. A third motivation was the belief that the material can serve as springboard for gentle discussion for young children and deeper investigation for older students.

Perhaps the most compelling reason of all was to pay tribute to these gifted young artists — most of whom perished — by bringing their work to life on stage. Their talent, courage, spirit and determination endure. Their art leads not only to questions and inquiry, but serves also as a powerful source of inspiration and perspective for young people today.

SUMMARY

"The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly" is a Holocaust remembrance piece designed for young audiences from age 10 through high school. Adapted for the stage and movingly underscored with music, sound and visual media, **". . . Butterfly"** is a collection of poems, narrative and drawings created by children who passed through the Terezin Concentration Camp between the years of 1942 and 1944.

The play begins in the present, narrated by Alena Synkova, one of the few survivors of the children of Terezin. She carries a brief case found after the war. It is filled with poems and drawings created by the children of Terezin who received secret schooling during their stay there. Leafing through the artwork evokes powerful memories of this

terrible, but true story now known as the Holocaust. Alena explains to the audience that "for many years the world did not want to talk about or even think about this dark chapter of history, but now we know the time has come when we must . . . so that you, the keepers of the future, can examine the past and be certain that such a thing will never again happen to humanity."

". . . Butterfly" continues with a series of flashbacks, in the form of poems, some set to music, some illustrated by enlargements of drawings and paintings on slides that provide colorful backdrops and accessible visualizations of life in the Terezin "ghetto." As the story line develops we become familiar with certain key characters, such as the very special teacher, Friedl Dicker Brandeis, who "saw that the children needed a form of artistic expression as a way to moderate the chaos of their lives." We also become connected and care deeply about Alena and Petr whose friendship develops into a teenage romance during the two years they spend together at work and study in Terezin.



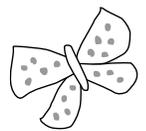
The broad range of style and treatment of subject matter in both the poems and drawings is compelling. It illustrates the feelings, hopes and dreams of children growing up in a place with "little food, clothing or comfort, enclosed by barbed wire and Nazi soldiers standing guard." While the work tells a few of many stories of the Holocaust, it also honors the memory of "those who created the colors and the words" while serving as a voice of reminder, of truth and hope.

CONTENT

"The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly" is divided into several sections. The content of each is described below:

Prologue - The title song (and metaphor for the play) is sung by the two actors who will play all roles. The lyrics are from a poem, written by Pavel Friedmann, June 4, 1942. (Born in Prague, 1921; deported to Terezin 1942; died in Auschwitz 1944.)

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.

The prologue continues with an introduction of the characters, background information on Terezin and some facts about the Holocaust. Carefully selected slide projections supported by musical underscoring and sound effects provide visual interest and enhance understanding for young viewers.

THE STORY - This section contains a number of poems that describe Terezin and then moves on to several scenes in the classroom of Friedle Dicker-Brandeis. The classroom offers the opportunity for a wider range of moods and views in the writing and artwork presented. The poems (some have been adapted with music as songs) are :

- *AT TEREZIN* by "Teddy," (no further information)
- *THE WAY THINGS ARE* a creative effort by several children identified as "Kosek, Lowy and Bachner" (estimated ages 10-12; no further information)
- *IT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT* by Miroslav Kosek, (Born 1932, deported Terezin 1942, died in Auschwitz 1944 at age 12)
- *HOMESICK* 1943, (Anonymous)
- *AN EVENING IN TEREZIN* by Eva Schulzova (Born 1931, died Auschwitz 1943 at age 12)
- *THE CAMPFIRE* by Anna Lindtova (Born in Prague, 1930, deported to Terezin 1942; died in Auschwitz, 1944, age 14)
- *LISTEN* by Alena Synkova (Born in Prague, 1926, deported to Terezin 1942; Alena survived and returned home after liberation.)
- *TEREZIN* by Mif written in 1942 (re-dated 1944, seventh line altered in pencil from "two years" to "four years;" no further information on Mif)
- *I'D LIKE TO GO ALONE* by Alena Synkova (see above)
- *THE LITTLE MOUSE* by Miroslav Kosek (see above)
- *THE WORLD IS FULL OF LOVELINESS* (Anonymous)

CONCLUSION - In this final section the play climaxes with Petr Fischl's moving narrative "*We Got Used To Standing*" in which we see the bleakness of life in Terezin. Staged with interpretive movement, we see Petr being "taken away" and Alena's anguish at the loss of her friend. With the help and inspiration of her teacher, Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, and by remembering her promise to Petr to "stay strong, survive and tell the world this story. . ." Alena resolves to hold on to her faith and hope. The play ends on an optimistic note with a poem, "*On A Sunny Evening*," written by a group of children determined to survive — the last lines underscoring this theme:



The world's abloom and seems to smile.
I want to fly but where, how high?
If in barbed wire, things can bloom
Why couldn't I? I will not die!

- . . . *WE GOT USED TO STANDING* . . . by Petr Fischl (Born in Prague, 1929; deported to Terezin 1943; died in Auschwitz 1944 at age 15)
- *THE GARDEN* by Franta Bass (Born in Brno, 1930; deported to Terezin 1942; perished in Auschwitz 1944 at age 14)
- *TEARS* by Alena Synkova (see above)
- *UNTITLED* by Alena Synkova (see above)
- *FEAR* by Eva Pickova (Born Nymburk, 1929; deported to Terezin 1942; perished in Auschwitz 1944; at age 15)
- *ON A SUNNY EVENING* Anonymous (Written in 1944 by the children in Barracks L318 and L417, ages 10-16 years)

EPILOGUE - In these final moments, the actors appear once again as they did in the opening to offer a few concluding remarks. Attribution is then given to each of the artists/writers whose work was included in the presentation by "credits" on the screens and voice overs of names. This segues into a reprise of the title song, "*The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly.*"

BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO ASSIST IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

THE HOLOCAUST DEFINED



The word Holocaust literally means "massive destruction by fire." It now refers to "a specific event in 20th-century history: the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims — six million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny." Although the Holocaust took place during World War II, it is important to remember that the war did not cause the Holocaust. Instead, the genocide of the Holocaust had its roots in attitudes and behavior which existed throughout history and which still exist in the world today.

STEREOTYPES & PREJUDICES

Genocide is the most extreme expression of prejudice. It is the final step in a continuum of actions that are worthy of discussion. The first step is discrimination or racially biased treatment of certain groups of people. The second is



isolation, such as the physical segregation of minorities in isolated or separate areas (neighborhoods, schools, etc.) The third step is persecution, followed by dehumanization and violence. Genocide is the ultimate expression of this persecution.

RELATED TERMS

Bigotry - Intolerance for the beliefs of others, particularly those of minority groups.

Genocide - The use of deliberate, systematic measures calculated to bring about the destruction of a racial, political or cultural group.

Ethnocentrism - The belief that one's ethnic, religious or political group is superior to all others.

Persecution - The oppression and/or harassment of people based on their race, religion, color, national origin, or other distinguishing characteristic.

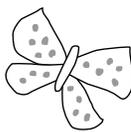
Prejudice - An unfavorable opinion formed against a person or group based on a stereotype.

Stereotype - A generalized image of a person or group, which does not acknowledge individual differences and which is often prejudicial to that person or group.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Have students keep a log of their television watching for a week, recording all instances in which they feel a character is being portrayed as a stereotype.
2. Have students complete the following sentences and then form small discussion groups to compare their answers and discuss any prejudice or bigotry evident in their responses. Further explore what factors (e.g. television, newspapers, parents' attitudes, friends' opinions) led to those responses.

- A. All athletes are . . .
- B. All people on welfare are . . .
- C. All homosexuals are . . .
- D. All vegetarians are . . .
- E. All men who wear earrings are . . .
- F. All Asians are . . .
- G. All Politicians are . . .
- H. All women are . . .
- I. All skateboarders are . . .
- J. All women with blond hair are . . .



JUDAISM

Judaism was the first major religion based on monotheism and all major western religions have their roots in Judaism. The central tenet of Judaism is that God made a special agreement or covenant with the prophet Abraham, from whom all Jewish people are descended. That covenant provided that the Jews would be blessed with love and protection if they remained true to God's laws and worshipped God.

Jewish worship and study usually takes place at a synagogue and religious services include prayer and reading from the Torah. Services are led by a rabbi and assisted by a cantor



who leads the chanting and songs which accompany prayer. Observant Jews are required to observe kosher dietary laws and may not eat certain foods such as pork and shellfish nor mix dairy and meat products at the same meal. The Jewish Sabbath and holidays traditionally begin at sunset on the evening before the day of observation. Humanitarianism, study and cohesive family life are basic to Judaism.

RELATED TERMS

Covenant - A holy agreement between G-d and man.

Kosher - From the Hebrew for "proper" or "correct," it usually refers to food or anything prepared under the proper ritual supervision.

Monotheism - The belief in one God.

Polytheism - The belief in multiple Gods.

Rabbi - From the Hebrew for "my master," a Jewish scholar or religious leader.

Talmud - The oral tradition which serves as the authority in Jewish law.

Torah - Literally meaning "teaching," it consists of the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Arrange to visit various places of worship in your community. Compare/contrast the architecture, internal layout, ritual objects, paintings, windows and other objects of art found in these buildings.
2. Discuss the history, practices, holidays and festivals of Judaism and compare/contrast (finding similarities and differences) with those of other religions.
3. Invite a Rabbi or the director of your local Jewish Community Center to visit your classroom and discuss the traditions of Judaism and issues that affect Jews in contemporary life.



CLASSICAL ANTISEMITISM

The precise meaning of *antisemitism* is a complex and scholarly issue for debate. The term antisemitism was first used and popularized by a German journalist, Wilhelm Marr in 1879, intended to highlight a biological-racial approach to anti-Jewish sentiments. Whatever the precise term, there is ample evidence that prejudice, isolation and persecution of Jews predates Marr and his use of the word, antisemitism, by more than 2,000 years. For most of recorded history, the Jewish people had been the subjects of conquerors, such as the Persians, Greeks, Babylonians, Assyrians and Romans. Most Jews refused to assimilate and convert to the religion of their conquerors. Instead they maintained their own rituals and customs and over time these customs were misunderstood and became suspect and even threatening. As Christianity grew in strength and Rome became the center of Christian theology and governance, civil rights for Jews were often curtailed by the Church. Some examples of this include:

- a. **The Justinian Code** - an edict of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian which was designed to negate civil rights for Jews.
- b. **The Crusades** - a series of nine holy wars launched by the Catholic Church and aimed at liberating the Holy Land of Palestine from the infidels.
- c. **The Inquisition** - a tribunal established in the 13th Century by the Catholic Church and designed to suppress heresy and convert Jews to Christianity.
- d. **The Protestant Reformation** - A breaking from the Catholic Church by Martin Luther in the 16th Century. Luther stated that all Jews should be expelled from Germany, synagogues should be burned to the ground and all Jewish books should be seized.

RELATED TERMS

Assimilation - To accept the culture of another group while giving up one's own.

Civil Rights - The rights of full legal, social and political equality afforded to all citizens.

Heresy - A belief or opinion which differs from accepted doctrine.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Have students research newspaper accounts of recent acts of anti-Semitism.
2. Have students research the policies of the National Conference of Christians and Jews; the Anti-



Defamation League.

3. Discuss characters from literature and popular culture who held a minority belief and who were forced to choose between honoring that belief or acceding to the wishes of the majority. What are the consequences of either action?
4. During the Crusades, religious zeal resulted in the persecution of thousands of innocent people. What other historical episodes reflect crimes against humanity in the name of religion? How are those actions consistent with the beliefs of that religion? Could this type of thing happen today? Discuss.

MODERN ANTISEMITISM



Modern antisemitism is rooted in racist rather than religious considerations. During the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe, known as the Enlightenment, the common philosophy was that human reason and scientific research could solve all problems. This challenged the rule of the Church while also attacking Jews for their mystical and religious practices. At the same time, there was a rise in nationalism and people with a shared culture, language, history, race and value system were bonding together into political and economic entities with geographical boundaries which are today known as nations. Observant Jews, who maintained their own cultural and linguistic identity, were seen as a threat to this nationalistic movement. Nationalism and antisemitic sentiments swelled in France when a Jewish military officer, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, was arrested

in 1894 for selling state secrets to Germany. He was convicted and deported, although later proved innocent. The case sharply divided France and resulted in violence against Jews. In Russia, Jews were only allowed to live in settlements in Bologos, the Crimea, Bessarabia and the Ukraine and pogroms were routinely carried out to keep Jews contained and isolated. Nationalism in Germany soared when an essay written in 1879 by French philosopher Arthur de Gobineau was translated into German, stating that all civilization flowed from the white race and that the jewel of this race was the Aryan. Jews became the scapegoat for German economic failures and were blamed for Germany's defeat in World War I. The German Worker's Party issued a platform claiming that Jews were not German "Volk."

RELATED TERMS

Aryan - Originally used to denote a member of descendant of the prehistoric people that spoke Proto-Into-European. As used by the Nazis, the term refers to a non-Jewish Caucasian, especially of the Nordic type.

The Enlightenment - A European philosophical and cultural movement of the 17th and 18th centuries characterized by a belief in the supreme power of human reason; also called the Age of Reason.

Nationalism - The belief that the well-being of the nation is the highest - on the scale of political loyalties.

Platform - A statement of principles and positions issued by a political party.

Pogrom - A state organized persecution of a minority group.

Scapegoat - A person or group who is given the blame for the mistake or failures of others.

Volk - A German word for "people" or "nation." Nationalist Germans excluded Jews, Gypsies and other "non-Aryan" people from the German "Volk."

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Compare the 19th Century racial theories about Jews to theories expressed throughout history about African-Americans, Hispanics, East Asians, Koreans and Native Americans.

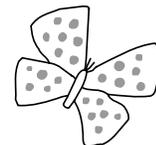
2. Help students make a list of problems that exist in their community and define who is responsible for each problem. Discuss what groups or individuals, if any, are really to blame and which are scapegoats. Sample problems could include: pollution, homelessness, drug abuse, violent crimes, inflation, AIDS, etc.



ADOLPH HITLER AND THE SEEDS OF WAR

Adolph Hitler was a charismatic demagogue who rose to power at a time of social, political and economic upheaval in Europe. He was an emotional speaker who combined a forceful oratorical style with propaganda to spread his view that Germans were racially superior to all others. Under his influence, the German Workers' Party changed its name to the National Socialist German Worker's Party, or Nazi Party, and the red flag with a swastika was adopted as the party symbol. After a failed attempt to gain power by force in 1923, Hitler was arrested and jailed during which time he wrote "Mein Kampf" ("My Struggle") which became the standard for Nazi racist and anti-Semitic ideology. Upon release from prison, he ran for President but lost to Paul von Hindenburg. In a political deal, he was appointed Chancellor and succeeded Hindenburg after his death in 1934. Hitler named himself "Fuhrer" and by 1939 annexed Austria and invaded Poland as the first step in his plan for world domination. France and England declared war in return, but most of Western Europe fell to the German war machine. Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941 and the United States entered the war in the same year. By 1944, the Allied Forces reclaimed occupied Europe, German cities

had been destroyed by bombs and Italy, Hitler's only major ally, had fallen. Although attempts were made on Hitler's life during the war, none was successful. He took his own life on April 30, 1945. His Third Reich, which he predicted would last 1,000 years, survived for only 12 and he died a broken and defeated man.



RELATED TERMS

Allied Forces - In World War II, the nations who by treaty formed an alliance to defeat Hitler. The primary forces were Great Britain, France the United States and the Soviet Union.

Demagogue - One who appeals to the emotions and prejudices of a particular group through impassioned public speeches and/or written propaganda.

Fuhrer - A leader, especially one exercising the complete power of an absolute tyrant.

Propaganda - Information that promotes a cause or injures/enhances the reputation of a group, individual or position and which is usually a lie or "bending" of the truth that suits the purposes of the author.

Swastika - An ancient symbol in the form of a twisted cross, adopted in the 1920's by the Nazi party.

Third Reich - The Third Empire. Hitler's name for his German empire following those of the Roman Emperors and the Emperor of Bismarck in the 19th Century.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss propaganda and identify instances of its use in contemporary society.
2. Compare the economic conditions in Germany during Hitler's rise to power with those in United States during the Great Depression of the 1930's.
3. Lead the class in a discussion of values and how they guide behavior. How do they change? How are they passed from generation to generation? Compare/contrast the differences between values we feel are important in a democracy and those values which were important to Adolph Hitler.

THE FINAL SOLUTION

Hitler ordered the systematic removal of property and rights of anyone who was considered less than "pure" or who was, in his terms, "undesirable." Jews experienced widespread discrimination under Hitler's decrees. They were barred from owning businesses or practicing law or medicine and required to carry identification cards and wear yellow Stars of David on their clothing. Terrorism reached a turning point on November 9, 1938, on the night known as Kristallnacht. During this organized pogrom, over 190 synagogues were



set on fire and 76 were burned to the ground. In the ensuing weeks, Jewish children were expelled from schools and Jews were rounded up and sent to live in ghettos. Many were then shipped in cattle cars to labor camps where they lived under brutally inhuman conditions. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were sent directly to gas chambers in death camps. By the end of the war, more than 6 million Jews had been killed along with another 5 million gypsies, homosexuals and other individuals who were labeled "undesirable" due to illness, mental and physical disabilities or ideological opposition to the Nazi movement.

RELATED TERMS

Deportation - The forced transport of people outside the area where they would choose to live.

Expropriation - The taking away of property of a person without permission or compensation.

Ghetto - A section of a city in which Jews were isolated, surrounded by walls; today the word is used to refer to sections inhabited by minorities which may have socio-economic rather than physical barriers.

Kristallnacht - November 9, 1938, the "Night of Broken Glass," with widespread Anti-Semitic riots.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Plan a field trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. or to a Holocaust Memorial Exhibit in your area.
2. If any of your students are descended from concentration camp survivors, and if they are comfortable doing so, have them share what they know of the experience of their grandparents and other relatives.
3. Invite a member or members of your community or surrounding communities who are Holocaust survivors to be guest speakers in your classroom or school.
4. Discuss other acts of genocide in world history and examine what actions students can take today when they read about an act of genocide occurring in a foreign land.

RESISTERS, RESCUERS AND BYSTANDERS

Throughout history the reaction patterns of the Jewish people to threats have taken various forms. This was also true during the Holocaust. There is documented evidence of armed and spiritual resistance in the ghettos and death camps, refuting the myth that Jews of Europe walked to gas chambers like "sheep to slaughter." Stripped of weapons and facing starvation and disease, the prospect of deportation combined with

offers of food was often an incentive for Jews to board trains which ultimately took them to their deaths. Those who did resist, either by running from the trains or by attacking their captors, faced certain death.

There are many reports of efforts of individuals and entire nations who took great risks. Some Jews escaped death by hiding in attics, cellars and closets of non-Jews, who themselves risked punishment by death if their actions were discovered by Nazis. In addition, the writings and oral histories of survivors of the labor and concentration camps are filled with accounts of sabotage. Often, material for the German war effort was mysteriously defective, the result of intentionally shoddy workmanship by Jewish slave labor. Armed resistance occurred in the ghettos of Tichin, Warsaw, Bialystok and Vilna and in the concentration camps at Treblinka,



Sobibor and Auschwitz. Although these efforts succeeded in killing German soldiers and in destroying German property, in most cases the Jews involved in the insurrections also perished as a result of their effort. There is no question that the silence and inaction of the world community in the face of the Holocaust resulted in the senseless deaths of millions of people.

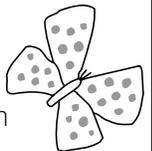
RELATED TERMS

Insurrection - Acts of revolt or rebellion against an established authority.

Resistance - Acts, both passive and active, which are not in compliance to the demands of an authority.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Have students research the lives and acts of courageous individuals who attempted to save Jews through World War II (e.g. Raoul Wallenberg, Dr. Jan Karski, Wladyslaw Bartoszeswki, Schindler and others.)
2. Show students the film "Voyage of the Damned" and discuss the story of the 937 European Jews who bought passage on an ocean liner, the S. S. St Louis, seeking refuge from Nazi terror. They were denied entry at the ports of Havana and Miami and forced to return to Europe where more than half of the passengers died in camps. How does the refusal to accept the Jews reflect on the governments of the U.S. and Cuba at that time? Are there any comparable immigration situations in the U.S. today that might be explored or considered?
3. Have students list incidents in their lives in which they came to the aid of someone who was being treated unfairly. Next to each incident, have them try to identify the emotions they felt (e.g. fear, pride, anxiety, etc.)



AFTER WORLD WAR II

Much of Europe was destroyed in the war. Railroads, bridges, water and sanitation systems, electric lines and other infrastructures were in ruins and millions of homes were reduced to rubble. Sixty million refugees were made homeless by the war. After the surrender of the Nazis to the Allied Forces, Germany was divided into four zones of occupation, controlled respectively by the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union. As camps were liberated, thousands of corpses were found. Survivors of the camps were in terrible condition both physically and psychologically and most were clinging precariously to life after years of hunger, starvation and enforced labor and mental abuse. Trials were held in Nuremberg in 1945 at which 21 top surviving Nazi leaders were convicted of war atrocities including conspiracy, crimes against peace and crimes against humanity. For many, the legal defense was that they were "only following orders." Similar trials followed, but only 20 percent of the estimated 150,000 Nazi war criminals were ever brought to trial. Many fled, eluding justice, and some even remain at large today. The State of Israel, declared a sovereign nation on May 14, 1948, opened its doors to all Jews and is a positive legacy of the Holocaust. However, soon after the creation of Israel, six Arab nations who were opposed to the establishment of a Jewish state, invaded with the intention of driving the Jews into the Mediterranean Sea. The invasion was repelled and a new nation was born, albeit into an atmosphere where peace is fragile even today. Neo-Nazi groups continue to exist in various parts of the world and some groups promote a revisionist view of history, insisting that the Holocaust never took place.

RELATED TERMS

Atrocity - An act which is shockingly brutal or outrageously cruel and barbaric.

Conspiracy - A plan, involving more than one person, to commit a crime.

Crimes Against Humanity - Crimes against individuals and groups such as enslavement and mass murder.

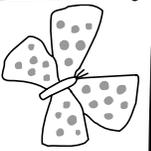
Revisionists - Those who rewrite history for political or ideological gain.



This study guide was jointly prepared by Susan Speidel, former Director of Education, Paper Mill Playhouse Education Department and Ruth Fost, Executive Director and Coordinator of Educational Programs for Pushcart Players, to accompany performances of "The Last, The Very Last . . . Butterfly" which had its opening performance at the Paper Mill Playhouse in May, 1997.

A portion of all proceeds will be contributed to the Terezin Museum in Czechoslovakia and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



1. Watch the films "Judgement at Nuremberg" and "A Few Good Men" with your students and discuss the legal defense of "following orders" as it applies to both films.
2. Read and discuss "The Emperor's New Clothes" for its implications of being swept along by the crowd.
3. Discuss whether or not neo-Nazis should have the right to form organizations, run for office and hold public rallies.
4. Have students research and write a report on the founding of the State of Israel and the ongoing quest for peace in the Middle-East.
5. Research the trials of Nazi war criminals Adolph Eichmann and John Demjanjuk. How are their cases similar and how are they different?
6. Read about Simon Weisenthal and his determination to pursue Nazi war criminals.

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A list of books on or relating to the Holocaust for Elementary School Children, as well as Middle and High School students can be sent upon request. An annotated bibliography and other resources (videos, films, etc.) are included in the resource book for educators, "Teaching About The Holocaust." We strongly recommend this excellent resource, available free of charge by contacting: Resource Center, Div. of Education, U.S. Holocaust Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington DC 20024-2126; (202)488-2661.