POLISH CITIZENS IN KL AUSCHWITZ

LESSON OBJECTIVES AND SCRIPTS

The History of Polish citizens in KL Auschwitz

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Introduction – the description of the content-related concept for the lesson

The lesson for which we present this script consists of two parts. The first part is a film titled "Witnesses. Polish citizens in KL Auschwitz." The second part of the lesson are classes conducted by a teacher based on the material prepared by the International Centre of Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust: a multimedia presentation prepared on the Prezi platform and a handout for group work.

The fate of Polish citizens in the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp KL Auschwitz--Birkenau is presented through the lives of six young people: Zofia Łyś, Rutka Laskier, Bogdan Bartnikowski, Marian Turski, Czesław Kempisty and Edward Paczkowski. The lesson's six Heroes were chosen because of their age during the II World War which was similar to the age of students attending the lesson. The goal here is to arouse empathy in the students towards people whose biographies they will analyse, and to encourage them to reflect on the tragic fate of an individual during the war.

Target group – 14–18 year old students

Work time – 2 x 45 min

In order to conduct a lesson, the teacher will need:

- A laptop, a projector, and loudspeakers.
- A fast Internet connection.

Teaching material:

- A film entitled: "Witnesses. The citizens of the Second Republic of Poland in Auschwitz", directed by Mirosław Krzyżkowski, 2018.
- A multimedia presentation in Prezi program (establish the internet connection to the presentation prior to the beginning of the lesson).
- 6 worksheets containing: The biographies of the six lesson Heroes, photographs of them from war times or post-war times depending on the sources available, a contour map of the Second Republic of Poland and a timeline [Appendix No 1].
- 10 "Reflection Worksheets" containing a message from each of the former camp prisoners, a photograph of each one of them, a short biography, the task for students to carry out and recommended memoir literature ("Find out more") [Appendix No 2].

Work methods and conditions:

- Supervised work (with a film, a source text, a map, statistical material and a timeline)
- Plenary discussion
- Group work

Premise for lesson objectives:

Students will:

- be aware of the diversity of the pre-war Polish society;
- understand how the cruelty of war affected the fate of all Polish citizens, including that of children and youth;
- know the magnitude of terror during German occupation;
- know the reasons why various groups of the Polish population were imprisoned in KL Auschwitz;
- understand that suffering became an experience for all KL Auschwitz prisoners;
- recognise the basic rules of analysing various information sources and associating information obtained from them;
- have an opportunity to experience reality through the testimony of a witness to history;
- have an opportunity to learn about the fate of individual people;
- develop the skills of group work and skills to present information to a group.

POLISH CITIZENS IN KL AUSCHWITZ

Lesson No 1

Note: The timeline for this lesson is the presentation prepared on the Prezi platform

- The teacher presents a title slide of the project "Polish citizens in KL Auschwitz"; He tells students that during the first lesson they will watch a film, and during the second lesson they will work in groups based on source material.

Slide No 1

- Note before starting the film.

  The teacher orientates the students' observation by asking the following questions:

1. What did Oświęcim look like before the war? What were the relationships between Christians and Jews living there like?
2. What was national socialism and how did Hitler come into power?
3. Had there been any other concentration camps before the war broke out?
4. When did the war break out and when did the Germans decide to open Auschwitz concentration camp?
5. What was originally on the territory where KL Auschwitz I (mother camp) was opened?
6. When did the first transport of prisoners come to the camp, where was it from and who was in the first transport?
7. What were the reasons for enlarging the area of KL Auschwitz in 1941, what work were the prisoners forced to perform?
8. What were the main groups of victims of KL Auschwitz after its extension and what happened to them?
9. What work were KL Auschwitz prisoners forced to carry out?

Time | 5 min

Slajd No 2

- The teacher starts the film entitled "Witnesses. The citizens of the Republic of Poland in KL Auschwitz". Students acquire basic knowledge of the history of setting up the camp and the running of the camp.

Time | 35 min

Slide No 3

- After watching the film, the teacher asks several of the students to talk about how they feel having watched the film. Then the teacher talks about the film by answering the questions he had asked before the film was shown.

Time | 5 min

Lesson No 2

Note: The timeline for this lesson is the presentation prepared on the Prezi platform

Introduction:

- The next part of the presentation is a statement by Andrzej Kacorzyk, the director of the International Centre of Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust.

Time | 2 min

Slide nr 4

More details:

- The teacher divides the class into 6 groups. Each group receives a set of handouts with a presentation of one person (Appendix No 1 "Worksheets").

Group 1. Rutka Laskier – a Polish Jew from Będzin

Group 2. Zofia Łyś – a child from Zamojszczyzna (Zamość region)

Group 3. Bogdan Bartnikowski – deported person from the Warsaw Uprising [in 1944]

Group 4. Czesław Kempisty – minor and political prisoner from Ostrów Mazowiecka

Group 5. Marian Turski – a Polish Jew from Łódź

Group 6. Edward Paczkowski – a Polish Roma and political prisoner from Grabów

Students analyse the materials received.
They read the biography of their Hero and discuss it within their group. Then, they mark the route of deportation to KL Auschwitz of their Hero on the contour map and specify the length of time the person spent in the camp.

Time | 10 min

Slide nr 5

- Summary of the group work.

  Students answer questions asked by a teacher, from the perspective of their Heroes. **Note!** Not all the biographies include answers to each of the questions below. (This is intentional)

  The teacher decides on the number of the questions asked depending on the time available. The questions chosen should refer to life before the war, during the war, and after the war had ended.

1. Who went to school before the war?
2. Who had a lot of siblings?
3. Which family was religious?
4. Who knew more than one language?
5. Who was the youngest on the day of the outbreak of the war?
6. Who was engaged in conspiracy activity?
7. Whose father was in the army?
8. Who spent time in the ghetto?
9. Who went to prison and was tortured?
10. Who had to work during the war?
11. Who wrote a journal during the war?
12. Who had to leave his family house during the war?
13. Who was the earliest to be deported to KL Auschwitz?
14. Who was murdered in KL Auschwitz?
15. Who went to KL Auschwitz as a political prisoner?
16. Who was detained in the camp together with family members?
17. Who was tattooed on their forearm with a number?
18. Who had a registration photograph taken?
19. Who lost their relatives in Auschwitz?
20. Who was hungry in the camp?
21. Who was a victim of violence in KL Auschwitz?
22. Who was a witness to execution and death of prisoners?
23. Who was a witness of mass extermination of Jews?
24. Who went to other camps after KL Auschwitz?
25. Who was liberated in KL Auschwitz?
26. Who was liberated by the American Army?
27. Who returned to their hometown after the war?
28. Whose family met all together after the war?
29. Who went back to their family home after the war?
30. Who wrote a book after the war?
31. Who has been meeting with the youth up until now/who educates about KL Auschwitz?
32. Who is still alive today?

Time | 15 min

Lesson summary:

The teacher presents a synthesized summary of information presented by students based on the subsequent slides No 6, 7, 8 of the presentation showing it in the context of the Second World War and the history of how KL Auschwitz functioned.

- Second Republic of Poland Map – The teacher presents the places of origin of all six Heroes and their journey to KL Auschwitz. The information about all six Heroes is compared on one slide.

→ **Slide No 6**

- Timeline – The teacher presents the timeline in a similar way to the II RP Map to the students and draws their attention to the following aspects: the duration of the Second World War, the functioning period of KL Auschwitz, the moment of arrival and duration of imprisonment in KL Auschwitz of all six lesson's Heroes.

→ **Slide No 7**

- Animated diagram – The teacher presents the quantity of respective groups deported to KL Auschwitz (including RP citizens) with the help of this animated diagram and with the aid of the next biogram, confronts the total number of people murdered in KL Auschwitz (including citizens of the Republic of Poland.)

Note to a teacher

The teacher, in his commentary to the animation, should stress that 90% of all Auschwitz victims constituted Jews from different countries of Europe. Additional information is available at: http://www.auschwitz.org/historia/

Time | 10 min

→ **Slide No 8**

Conclusion:

- The summary of the lesson is an audio-video recording with the messages from all six Heroes (depending on the time left, the teacher can choose to show all of them or just some of them).

Time | 10 min

Slide No 9

Assignment:

- The teacher presents the "Reflection Worksheets" [Appendix No 2] and asks students to comment on the message contained in the worksheets. This assignment may be carried out in various forms, e.g. own commentary on the subject presented in the "Reflection Worksheets". Memoir literature provided in the worksheet may be useful in doing this assignment.

Time | 5 min

Slide No 10

Sources used for preparing Biographies and "Reflection Worksheets" of the heroes in the lessons

Biographies:

Rutka Laskier

1. "Rutka Laskier. Journal", Editor: Adam Szydłowski, Będzin 2008.
2. "The Secret Diary of the Holocaust", Documentary film directed by Alexander Marengo, 2009.

Zofia Łyś

1. Recording of an interview from the project "Oral History of Auschwitz" by the International Centre of Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust at Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. An interview conducted on 14 September 2006.
2. The Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Bogdan Bartnikowski

1. Bogdan Bartnikowski, "Childhood in a striped uniform", Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim 2016.
2. An interview from the "Oral History Archive" project by the Warsaw Uprising Museum. https://www.1944.pl/archiwum-historii-mowionej/bogdan-bartnikowski,1303.html [access: 17.05.2018]
3. The Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Czesław Kempisty

1. Czesław Kempisty, "Survive a day. Memoir of years 1941–1951", Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, Wrocław 1989.
2. Józef Witkowski, „Prof. dr Czesław Kempisty", [in:] Przegląd Lekarski, No 1, 1989.
3. The Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.
4. Private archives of Ewa Kempisty-Jeznach.

Marian Turski

1. Marian Turski, "My happiest day", Oświęcim 2011.
2. "My happiest day", directed by Michał Bukojemski, 2013.
3. Photograph archive from the period of Litzmannstadt ghetto provided by the director of the film "My happiest day". The original is available in Israel in the archive of Kibbutz named after Ghetto Fighters.
4. A contemporary photograph provided by the editorial office of "Polityka" weekly.

Edward Paczkowski

1. "Roma people sentenced to extermination", directed by Adam Sikora, Wiesław Gajda, 2008.
2. Interview recorded in the "Oral History of Auschwitz " project by the International Centre of Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust at Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. An interview conducted on 28 August 1988.
3. http://www.stowarzyszenie.romowie.net/Edward-Paczkowski-180.html [access: 20.04.2018]
4. http://dialogpheniben.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2.pdf [access 17.05.2018]

Karty Refleksji:

Batszewa Dagan

1. An interview conducted in the project "What to convey to the young generations – witnesses to history about education in the Memorial Place" implemented by the International Centre of Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust. An interview conducted on 5 March 2018.
2. Batszewa Dagan, "Imagination: Blessed Be, Cursed be : Reminiscences from There", Oświęcim 2009.
3. Batszewa Dagan's private archive.

Czesław Kempisty

1. Czesław Kempisty, "Survive a day. Recollections from the years 1941–1951", Wrocław 1989.
2. Józef Witkowski, „Prof. dr Czesław Kempisty", [in:] Przegląd Lekarski, No 1, 1989.
3. The Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.
4. Private archives of Ewa Kempisty-Jeznach.

Halina Birenbaum

1. "70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz", Editor: Bartosz Bartyzel, Paweł Sawicki, Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim 2015.
2. Halina Birenbaum, "Hope is the last to die", Oświęcim 2014.
3. The Press Office of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Israel Gutman

1. "Remembrance – Awareness – Responsibility" International Conference at the 60th Anniversary of the Founding of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim, 2–4 July 2007, Editor: Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, Krystyna Oleksy, Oświęcim 2007.
2. https://sztetl.org.pl/pl/biogramy/2759-gutman-israel [access: 17.05.2018]
3. The Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Janina Iwańska

1. A statement made during the International Conference "Remembrance – Awareness – Responsibility" on 5 July, 2017.
2. An interview conducted in the project "What to convey to the young generations – witnesses to history about education in the Memorial Place" implemented by the International Centre of Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust. An interview conducted on 5 March, 2018.
3. Janina Iwańska's private archive.

Marian Turski

1. A statement made during the International Conference "Remembrance – Awareness – Responsibility" on 5 July ,2018.
2. A speech during the Sixty Fifth Anniversary of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau Liberation on 27 January, 2010.
3. Marian Turski, "My happiest day", Oświęcim 2011.
4. Photograph archive from the period of Litzmannstadt ghetto provided by the director of the film "My happiest day". The original is available in Israel in the archive of Kibbutz named after Ghetto Fighters.
5. A contemporary photograph provided by the editorial office of "Polityka" weekly.

Edward Paczkowski

1. A speech during a meeting with youth from Germany in the Centre for Dialogue and Prayer in 2013. Chairperson: Joanna Talewicz- Kwiatkowska.
2. http://www.stowarzyszenie.romowie.net/Edward-Paczkowski-180.html [access: 20.04.2018]
3. http://dialogpheniben.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2.pdf [access: 17.05.2018]

Józef Garliński

1. Józef Garliński, "Fighting Oświęcim", London 1997.
2. The Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Roman Kent

1. "70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz", Editor: Bartosz Bartyzel, Paweł Sawicki, Auschwitz--Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim 2015.
2. https://iwitness.usc.edu/sfi/Data/EchoesData/EchoesBios/PDF/Kent.Roman.pdf [access: 17.05.2018]
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Witold Pilecki

1. "Witold's Report", Editor: Ks. Grzegorz Radzikowski SAC, Ząbki 2018.
2. Adam Cyra, "The Auschwitz Volunteer: Beyond Bravery", Oświęcim 2000.
3. https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witold_Pilecki#/media/File:Witold_Pilecki_in_color.jpg [access: 17.05.2018]