

Unit 4: The Holocaust
Honors 7th Grade Language Arts
24 Class Meetings

Updated May 2026

Essential Questions

- How do people survive great atrocities?
- To what extent do people have control over their lives?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: The resilience displayed by those who lived through the Nazi's brutal reign shows the strength of the human spirit. Those who escaped the Holocaust did so through cunning, daring, and the sheer unwillingness to give in to the evil around them.

- Interpret first person accounts of the Holocaust.
- Connect the lessons of the Holocaust to contemporary global situations.

EU 2: We can control our actions and our reactions, but we cannot control what happens in the world around us or the people that may walk in and out of our lives. All of these factors affect who we are, so in essence, we are constantly changing based on the environment which surrounds us.

- Analyze how ideas and events influence individuals.
- Connect the events in *Surviving the Angel of Death* to the themes of tolerance, acceptance, and inclusion.

EU 3: Narratives provide a way to share real or imagined experiences and/or events in writing.

- Engage in the writing process to write a narrative which mimics the experience of the Holocaust.

Standards

Common Core State Standards:

- **RL.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RL.7.3** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
- **RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.
- **RL.7.6** Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.
- **RL.7.7** Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).
- **RI.7.3** Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).
- **RI.7.9** Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

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- **W.7.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- **W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.7.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
- **W.7.8** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **W.7.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).
- **SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
- **L.7.1** Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- **L.7.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- **L.7.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- **L.7.4** I can determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words using many strategies.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

- Competency 1:** Write effectively for a variety of purposes.
- Competency 2:** Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.
- Competency 3:** Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.
- Competency 4:** Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.
- Competency 5:** Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

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Unit Content Overview

1. Holocaust

- Learn background information about the Holocaust and WWII.
- **Vocabulary:** Holocaust, Shoah, resistance, genocide, ghetto, concentration camp, anti-Semitism, Gestapo, Kristallnacht, killing Center, Aryan, Kapo, Adolf Hitler, Dr. Josef Mengele, yellow star, synagogue, Final Solution, partisans

2. *Surviving the Angel of Death*

- Read the book which contains short stories about people who were children during the Holocaust and their many different stories of survival.
- **Vocabulary:** bedlam, admonished, squalor, propaganda, deprivation, latrine, meager, dehumanizing, pervasive, anguish, autopsies, infirmary, putrid, imperative, emaciated, atrocities, liberation, merriment, conceal, disheveled, malnutrition, yearned, amnesty.

3. Survivor Stories

- Search Holocaust survivor databases for a story to interpret and share with peers.

4. Grammar

- Types of Sentences (Simple, Compound, Complex, Compound/Complex) Run-ons, Fragments

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Social Studies
- Advisory
- Art
- Theater

Daily Learning Objectives with *TWPS*

Students will be able to...

- Examine and synthesize several aspects of the Holocaust to build background knowledge. ***
 - *When you get home from school today, you are told that you have ten minutes to pack a backpack and leave your home. What would you take with you and why?*
- Investigate a children's story to determine how it is an allegory for the Holocaust.
 - *How is the book, *Terrible Things*, an allegory for the Holocaust?*
- Interpret a person's background/history to make an inference about their survival.
 - *Do you think your person survived the Holocaust? Explain why or why not.*
- Analyze how the elements of a story interact with each other. *
 - *Who would your parents entrust with your upbringing if they couldn't do it?*
- Analyze how diary entries helped to tell the stories and experiences of people in the Holocaust.
 - *What do you notice about this entry? What kind of feeling do you get from this writer? Explain.*

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- Create a narrative that expresses the experience of going through the Holocaust. **
 - *What events can we take from the reading so far to use in our Holocaust diaries?*
- Investigate primary source documents to determine America's response to the Holocaust.
 - *Hope can be a powerful tool for survival. There were many instances during her imprisonment at Auschwitz when Eva could have succumbed to death. But Eva did not give up; instead, she relied on strength and determination that she never had to use before. When have you used hope, strength, and determination to push through a difficult situation? Explain.*
- Assess a variety of sentences to determine the sentence type.
 - *"The Holocaust was not only a Jewish tragedy, but a human tragedy." What does this quote mean? What are your thoughts?*
- Interpret words, phrases, and images to determine how the Nazis used propaganda to push their ideology.
 - *How do messages in the media (including television, the internet, film, radio, etc.) influence people's beliefs, feelings, and actions?*
- Analyze the theme of *Surviving the Angel of Death*.
 - *What did you learn about the Holocaust from Eva's story? What impacted you most from Eva's story and why? What do you hope to remember?*
- Compare the documentary about Eva to her novel.
 - *Eva makes the statement, "Anger is a seed for war. Forgiveness is a seed for peace." What do you think about this statement? Do you agree with it? Explain.*
- Interpret and formulate conclusions about a Holocaust victim's background and history. **
 - *Why are these stories so important? Why do we need to read stories from Holocaust survivors about their experiences?*
- Research a Holocaust survivor's story and illustrate it on a butterfly rendering that represents them and their story. **
 - *What is one question you have about the survivor you are researching?*
- Present their Holocaust survivor butterfly project.
 - *What does it mean to be a good audience member?*
- Evaluate and compare the ways in which different people were able to survive the Holocaust. **
 - *What does it mean to forgive? Is it easy for you to forgive people or do you hold grudges?*
- Connect to the Holocaust through a simulation activity.
 - *Finish this statement and explain the situation: I will never forget the day ...*
- Explain what life was like as a prisoner in Auschwitz.
 - *We started this unit with Irene's story and will end it today with Kitty's story. What is the most important take away you have about the Holocaust?*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Small group instruction
- Guided notes
- Modeling
- Student-led instruction
- Anchor charts

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- Think-Pair-Share
- Journaling
- Graphic Organizer
- Accountable Talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals
- Audiobooks

EL Differentiation Instruction:

- Verbal: Prompting, questioning, elaborating, facilitate higher level thinking skills
- Explicit modeling
- Guided and independent practice
- Small group instruction
- Strategic grouping
- Key Vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- KWL charts
- Venn diagrams
- Sequence writing
- Reinforcing contextual definition
- Providing correct pronunciation by repeating student's response
- Predicting and inferring
- Directed reading-thinking activities (DR-TA)
- Glossaries
- Chunk and Chew
- Sentence starters
- Word banks
- Google Translate

Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Holocaust survivor profile
- Reading check quizzes
- Nothing left activity response
- Journal responses
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Do Now
- Grammar practice
- Graphic organizers
- Homework

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- Performance Task- Holocaust Journal
 - Holocaust Journal Rubric

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Reading Check #1 (Ch. 1-9) (EU1, EU2)
- Reading Check #2 (Ch. 10-Epilogue) (EU1, EU2)
- Performance Task: Holocaust Journal (EU1, EU2, EU3)
- Holocaust Survivor Butterfly Project (EU1, EU2, EU3)
- Sentences test

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: Holocaust Journal

Description: Students will read the book, *Surviving the Angel of Death*. During the reading, students will take notes on the experiences of Eva Mozes. Using Eva's experiences, students will create journal entries that mimic the experiences they are reading about. Students will be required to have a minimum of ten entries in their journal and each journal entry needs to be at least a page in length. Their journal should also have several sketches/illustrations that relate to the entry. (EU1, EU2, EU3)

Evaluation: Holocaust Journal Rubric

Unit Resources

- *Surviving the Angel of Death* (Eva Mozes Kor and Lisa Rojany Buccieri)
- *I'm Still Here: Real Diaries of Young People in the Holocaust* (Lauren Lazin)
- *Salvaged Pages* (Alexandra Zapruder)
- *The Path to Nazi Genocide* (USHMM)
- *The Terrible Things* (Eve Bunting)
- *Talking to the Past* (60 Minutes)
- *Eva: A7063* (Ted Green)
- *Surviving the Holocaust* (Fairfax County Schools)
- "Holocaust and Rwandan Genocide Survivors Work Together to Educate Against Hate (New York Times)
- "Surviving the Holocaust" (Erin Cobb)
- "It's For You to Know That You Forgive, Says Holocaust Survivor" (NPR)
- "Kristallnacht: The Beginning of the Holocaust" (Students of History)
- Holocaust Scholastic Magazine
- Internet Data Bases
- Laptops
- SBAC Prep Online
- Pear Assessment

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