

"I may have to disobey my government, but if I don't I would be disobeying God."

-Chiune ‘Sempo’ Sugihara

Nobody asked who was Jewish and who was not. Nobody asked where you were from. Nobody asked who your father was or if you could pay. They just accepted each of us, taking us in with warmth, sheltering children, often without their parents-children who cried in the night from nightmares.

-Elizabeth Koenig-Kaufman, former child refugee in Le Chambon-sur Lignon

(Jewish children in Le Chambon-sur Lignon, France-United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)

Conspiracy of Goodness Curriculum; How 6 Diverse Groups and Individuals saved others during World War II

Rationale:

The purpose of this lesson is to provide students with diverse, historical examples of individuals and groups who helped Jews hide from the Nazis. The lesson provides an opportunity for students to decide how they will act when they see peers acting in the role of oppressor and oppressed.

Objectives:

* Students will see how people from six diverse religious backgrounds, nationalities, and cultural-political beliefs worked to save Jews from the Nazis
* Students will learn that people sometimes act *selflessly* in the best interest of others and not to be rewarded.
* Students will examine the motivations of non-Jews, both religious and irreligious, who risked their own lives to save others
* Students will apply situational-based lessons; to act or not when others are being targeted and treated unfairly

Requirements:

World map to show Poland, Japan>>Lithuania, Germany, Le Chambon France, England, Czechoslovakia, Albania and Florida, USA for perspective

Cut-outs of Key words for activity (see Master Copy provided)

Story summary boards for each (included)

Techniques and Skills:

Group work, listening, analyzing, interpreting, defining terms, application of historical events

Key Words:

Passive/Active Bystander/Upstander Selfish/Selfless Hero/Heroine

Key Concepts:

Identifying when someone is oppressing or victimizing another

Determining if one will help (rescue) or not (bystander) or engage in same behavior (oppressor)

Assessing how to help either passively or actively

Understanding one’s motivation to assist others (selflessness)

Weigh selflessness versus their sense of hero/heroine if they assist

Lesson Procedures:

Part I. Set up

* Break students into groups of 2-4
* Assign Key Word packets to each group to define during discussion
* Discuss the keywords defining them and relating them to issues they may see at school

Part II. Learning about Le Chambon sur-Lignon, Max Schmeling, Irena Sendler, Chiune Sugihara, Nicholas Winton, and Albania Besa

* Assign Le Chambon sur-Lignon, Max Schmeling, Irena Sendler, Chiune Sugihara, Nicholas Winton, and Albanian Besa stories to groups so that there are two groups working on each story
* Give students time to read and discuss within their group
* Each group should write the name of their person/village/ group on their map
* Each group should decide which of the key words are appropriate to their story and affix them to the map
* Coloring is encouraged for students to express characteristics of the person/village/group they were assigned
* Have Le Chambon sur-Lignon groups tell the story to the rest of the class, showing their map
* Have Max Schmeling groups tell the story to the rest of the class, showing their map
* Have Irena Sendler groups tell the story to the rest of the class, showing their map
* Have Chiune Sugihara groups tell the story to the rest of the class, showing their map
* Have Nicholas Winton groups tell the story to the rest of the class, showing their map
* Have Albanian ‘Besa’ groups tell the story to the rest of the class, showing their map
* Each group hearing the new story may write brief notes
* Discuss by group what they will do in the event that they see their peers acting as an Oppressor. Will they by a Bystander or Resistor? Can be rhetorical question depending on group willingness to share
* Ask; why did Max Schmeling do what he did? Why did Irena Sendler do what she did? Why did Chiune Sugihara do what he did? Why did Nicholas Winton do what he did? Why did the Besa Albanians do what they did?

Timeline

1 classroom period

We can provide training and materials access for teachers wanting 2 days or greater

We can offer a culminating assembly-wide approach or an assembly-wide approach

Lesson handout masters:

Key Word cut-outs (photocopy and cut out words in advance)

Teacher answer sheets:

Key Words defined

World map with answers identified

Identifying story characters by key words

What motivated them?

Sunshine State Standards:

LACC.5.L.3.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibility from a range of strategies

1. Use context (e.g. cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase
2. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) both print and digital, to find pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases

LACC.5.RI.1.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text

LACC.5.RI.2.6 Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent

LACC.5.RL.1.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g. how characters interact)

LACC.5.SL.1.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts,* building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly

1. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles
2. Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others

Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions