Text Set for World History II

I. Topic: The Holocaust

Grade: 10
II. Introduction

This text set consists of eight diverse books, which provide students of World History II with a unique look at the Holocaust outside of the approved class textbook. Through augmenting the material contained in the textbook with this text set, students will be able to make connections to Jewish and German people who experienced the horrors of the Holocaust first hand. Since each book within the text set contains main characters close in age to tenth graders, students will be able to make personal connections with many of the thoughts and feelings of main characters in the text set. By reading this text set students will experience the Holocaust through the eyes of twelve members of Hitler Youth, one German boy, one German girl, a German military battalion, two Jewish adolescents/young adults, and an outsider’s historical research findings.

In an effort to ensure that the schema of all students are activated and that diverse range of student reading levels are considered, this text set contains books ranging in the sixth grade reading level up to the twelfth grade/colligate reading level. Through appealing to readers of various levels each student will have a chance to connect with the books in the text set. By making personal connections with the Holocaust unit, students will be more likely to remember important information, which will be tested on the World History II SOL test. After reading this text set students will be able to make connections between the political, social, and historical aspects of the Holocaust. This text set is a unique way to bring interest and excitement to the study of one of the darkest events in world history,

SOL Connection

WH II. 10

The student will demonstrate knowledge of political, economic, social, and cultural developments during the Interwar Period by

b) Citing causes and assessing the impact of worldwide depression in the 1930’s
   o Nazi Party’s growing importance in Germany; Nazi Party’s blame of European Jews for economic collapse.
c) Examining events related to the rise, aggression, and human cost of dictatorial regimes in Germany, and identifying their major leader, Adolf Hitler.
   - Inflation and depression
   - Democratic government weakened
   - National Socialism (Nazism)
   - German occupation of nearby countries

WH II. 11

The Student will demonstrate knowledge of the worldwide impact of World War II by
b) Examining the Holocaust
   - Genocide: The systematic and purposeful destruction of racial, political, religious, or cultural group
   - Totalitarianism combined with nationalism
   - History of anti-Semitism
   - Defeat in World War I and Economic Depression blamed on German Jews
   - Hitler’s belief in the master race
   - Final Solution – extermination

II. The Text Set

1. Night
   Grade 8
   Biography

a. Introduction and Summary

   This book is a short biography, which will help students to understand life as a Jew in Germany during the Holocaust. Night will fulfill the SOL requirement of “examining the Holocaust” through Wiesel’s story of life in the concentration camps and the effects of genocide and anti-Semitism on Jewish people as well as the state of Germany. Told through the eyes of a teenage boy, students will be able to connect with the author’s age and emotions.

   Night is Elie Wiesel’s personal account of life as a Jewish teenager in two German concentration camps (Auschwitz and Buchenwald) in 1944. Throughout the story readers learn of the hardships and terrors of life as a Jewish prisoner. Despite horrific memories of the death of his family, friends and childhood, Wiesel addresses the fact that he never gave up hope in the worst of times, and that the Holocaust, its meaning and victims must never be forgotten.

b. Rational
This text will be used to engage my most reluctant learners because the story is told through the eyes of a teenage boy, which is approximately the age of World History II students. Due to the uncertainty of Wiesel’s daily life within German death camps, students’ interest in what happens next in the story will be peaked. Through the eyes of Wiesel, students will be able to put themselves in Wiesel’s shoes as a teenager during the peak of the Holocaust death camps and imagine how they might react if they were living in the same situation and conditions. With numerous historical facts embedded within one man’s personal account of the Holocaust, students will not feel as if they are being force feed facts from a textbook.

c. Usage of Text

The text will be used inside the classroom in the connection with the approved textbook, and SOL. By using the text to augment the students overall understanding of the events that led to the cause of the Holocaust, they will be better able to understand Wiesel’s feelings and experiences throughout the story. *Night* will be used in the assistance phase of the PAR since the reading of the text will be done inside the classroom. Use of anticipation guides, and guided reading activities such as read alouds should be implemented to ensure complete comprehension. Some independent reading assignments may be used as homework, and will be discussed in class.

d. Readability

The readability of this text is based on the Fry Graph and supplemented with the Bader Analysis. When calculated using the Fry formula, *Night* achieves a readability level of 3.2. While the writing style of the text makes it easy to read, and comprehend, the content of this text is more appropriate for someone with the emotional stability and understanding of someone in the adolescent age/grade. Upon applying the Bader to this text, I have determined the appropriate readability of this text is grade 8.

e. References


2. Hitler Youth
   Grade 8
   Autobiography

   a. Introduction and Summary
This text is a short piece of literature with a wealth of interesting facts and stories from children who grew up during the height, and decline of Germany’s most notorious leader, Adolf Hitler. Through the eyes and voices of Hitler Youth (specifically 12 children) students will easily be able to make connections to the classroom textbook while augmenting their knowledge of the growth of Nazism throughout the youth of Germany. Students will further be able to make better connections, and acquire a better understanding of important historical events, which led to the power, and demise of Hitler, and the Holocaust. Each child’s personal account of growing up Nazi illustrates to students how influential Hitler was on Germany during the 1930s and 1940s.

b. Rationale

This book will engage the most reluctant learners because it gives students the point of view of Nazism through the eyes of children close in age to students taking World History II. Written in an easy to read style, students will easily find themselves wanting to read ahead to learn what happens next in each child’s life. With the addition of many powerful photos, maps of Germany, as well as German propaganda, students can imagine themselves standing alongside the men, women, children, and towns within the photographs. 

Hitler Youth will not only activate schema for all students, but will provide an excellent bridge to textbook learning.

c. Usage of Text

Hitler Youth will augment the official classroom text and will be used in the review phase of PAR. Due to the text’s readability level, it will be assigned as an outside classroom text to be read independently. To ensure that all students understand the text’s main ideas, reading comprehension worksheets will be used as homework assignments and will be thoroughly discussed in class. Group or paired in-class activities may be used to compare, and contrast each of the twelve children’s stories, and pictures within the text, to spark more interest in the Holocaust unit.

d. Readability

The Readability of this text is based on the Fry Graph and supplemented with the Bader Analysis. According to both Fry and Bader, Hitler youth achieves an overall reading level of grade 8. The text could easily be understood by a reader proficient through grade 6, the sensitive content within the text makes it more appropriate for the upper middle school, or high school student. Through reading the book independently students will have the self-satisfaction of interpreting the book on their own. Since reading comprehension worksheets will be assigned along with the classroom discussions, and group work, any discrepancies in understanding will be corrected.
e. Resources


3. Hitler’s Beneficiaries
Grade 12
Historical Non-fiction

a. Introduction and Summary

This book provides students with an in-depth overview of why, and how anti-Semitism, and Hitler’s regime came to power in German, and constructed one of the most horrific events in World History; the Holocaust. Through reading this text students will achieve a thorough understanding of events leading to the descent of Germany as a democratic nation into a staunch socialist dictatorship while addressing the Standards of Learning topics WHII.10 sections b and c, and WHII.11 section b.

b. Rationale

This text will be used to engage the most reluctant learners because it addresses German history leading up to the Holocaust, and until its end. Unlike many other texts written about the Holocaust, this book gives readers an unbiased point of view. Typically Holocaust texts are written from a Jewish or German point of view, and tell readers about their story of survival. This text provides a nice balance to survivor stories. Another benefit of this book is that it will provide students with the information of a textbook without dry and boring textbook verbiage.

c. Usage of Text

Since this book is ranked at the Grade 12 reading level it will pose as a challenging read for most students in a World History II class. This text would best be used independently in an advanced (honors, AP, or IB) history class where students are accustomed to advanced reading and rigorous assignments. However, in order to help aid students in their comprehension of the text, the teacher must apply all instructional phases of PAR. Vocabulary sheets and brainstorming should be used to help students prepare for reading the text while guided reading, anticipation guides, and background knowledge activities will be used to help assist students in understanding the text. Finally, to help students review what they have learned, the teacher should utilize graphic organizers, classroom discussions, and group activities to ensure comprehension. If allowed by the school, this text should be used as the official classroom test, and should not be used for out of classroom assignments.
d. Readability

Based on both the Fry graph and the Bader analysis the reading level of this text is calculated to be Grade 12. The book utilizes many German words and references to geographic locations that some students may be unfamiliar with, and will need classroom instruction to understand. At times, the text can be dense, and will need to broken down into everyday language from its scholarly tone. Students who are at a more advanced reading level, such as the collegiate level will find this book as an interesting alternative textbook to a basic text, while experiencing what a college history text will be like.

e. Resources


4. Survival in Auschwitz

   Grade 9

   Biography/Historical Nonfiction

   a. Introduction and Summary

   This text is a short piece of literature which gives readers an up close and personal account of one man’s experience of life in Germany’s most notorious death camp of the Holocaust; Auschwitz. Primo Levi’s story will help students understand the severity of the treatment and punishment inflicted upon the Jews, as well as the various tactics prisoners used to survive life in a death camp. Students will also get a better understanding of genocide through Levi’s vivid recollection of watching German officers label prisoners as “workers” or as candidates for the crematorium. WH II. 11 of Virginia Standards of Learning will be thoroughly addressed in this book.

   b. Rationale

   This book will engage the most reluctant learners because it gives students a detailed account of how people of vast backgrounds, and languages attempted to communicate with one another, and with German officers in the Auschwitz camp, while keeping readers guessing who will live to see another day or not. Students will also feel an emotional connection to the main characters in the story as well as Levi because he speaks of the children, adolescents, adults and families within the camp. Historical facts of the Holocaust are indirectly woven in Levi’s story so that students will not realize they are learning history through a personal story.
c. Usage of Text

Survival in Auschwitz will be used as an in classroom text in the assistance phase of PAR. Since this book is geared for readers proficient through the grade 9 reading level, students who are not reading proficiently through this level may have some difficulty understanding the text. In order to help aid students at the instructional reading levels thoroughly understand the text anticipation guides, vocabulary, and reading comprehension worksheets should be provided, and discussed in class. The text should be used simultaneously with the official class text so that students cannot only understand the Holocaust on a personal level, but on an impersonal level as well. It is of importance to note that the book is still risky for readers at the frustration level even with reading aids.

d. Readability

The readability of the text was determined through the use of the Fry graph and the Bader readability test. Both the Fry and Bader test rated Survival in Auschwitz at the Grade 9 reading level. Because the book contains graphic content at times, each chapter should be discussed in class so that students will have the ability to express any concerns with the content of the text. If students have trouble comprehending the text, the teacher may chose to implement scaffolding techniques to ensure complete understanding of the book.

e. Resources


5. Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl
   Grade 6.5
   Biography

a. Introduction and Summary

This text consist of a collection of diary entries written by a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl, whose family sought refuge from the horrors of the Holocaust in a secret annex (attic) of an office building in Amsterdam. The book specifically addresses WHII.10 section c of the SOL’s because it shows readers how German occupation of various European countries spread anti-semitism across the continent. Students should easily be able to connect with Frank’s thoughts and feelings since students reading the text are approximately the same age as Frank, and would have difficulty being hidden away from the freedom of life, in order to
survive. Finally, students will understand what lengths Jewish families went to in order to avoid the horrors of concentration camps, ultimately to be caught.

b. Rationale

This text will engage the most reluctant learners because a girl near the age of students reading the text writes it in a letter/diary form. Students will easily be able to relate and understand the trials and tribulations Frank and her family experience living in close quarters for an extended period of time. Another aspect students will enjoy about the book is the suspense of wondering when or if the Gestapo will find Frank’s family. Throughout the book students will learn historical facts without the feeling they are reading a history textbook.

c. Usage of Text

This text will be used as an outside of class assignment because it is written in an easy to read form without the use of complex vocabulary, which is above the student’s comprehension level. In order to ensure that students understand the text, in class group discussions, and small presentations will be used as forms of review of the assigned reading. Since this text will be used in the reflection phase of PAR it is imperative that the teacher thoroughly explain the Holocaust to students before reading the book by using the official class textbook. After completing the text students should be able to relate to Anne Frank’s story to the overall study of the Holocaust unit.

d. Readability

The Fry Graph calculated the readability of this text to be at a grade 5 readability level. Due to Frank’s use of simple text, and first person perspective, students proficient through the grade 5 reading level should be able to understand the text. However, in order to help aid comprehension of the text by all students, the teacher should use in class activities or instruction, such as reading comprehension worksheets, class discussions or group presentations/interpretations of the text.

e. Resources


6. German Boy: A Child in War
Grade 9
Biography
a. Introduction and Summary

German Boy is the story of a ten-year-old boy and his family who fled from their home in order to survive war torn Germany in 1945. As readers follow Samuel on his family’s journey across Germany, it becomes evident that simply fleeing their hometown will not permit them to escape the horrors of Nazi control. In fact, fleeing their home brings more danger to Samuel’s family, and results in his mother doing the unthinkable in order to survive. The text will meet SOL criteria for World History II by addressing the effects and horrors of the Holocaust, and Nazi controlled Germany on a German family. Sections WHII.10 and WHII.11 of the Standards of Learning will be discussed.

b. Rationale

The text will be used to engage the most reluctant learners because it is told through the eyes of a ten-year-old boy, which is close to the age of the students that will be reading this text. Unlike a majority of stories about the Holocaust and its effects, this book provides students with the story of a German boy and his family who are trying to escape the horrors of Nazi controlled Germany. The book provides a unique look at life outside of concentration camps as opposed to the traditional Jewish death camp story, activating new schema on the Holocaust. Because the story is written in the first person point of view students will easily be able to connect with the book by imagining what they would do if they were in Samuel’s shoes.

c. Usage of Text

This text will be used as an outside of the classroom assignment, but will be supplemented by in class discussions on reading comprehension. Since the book is written on the without the use of complicated vocabulary, students should be able to have a good understanding of the text and its overall themes. To help ensure complete comprehension of the text, the review phase of PAR should be used. In class book discussions, and paired activities based on the books main themes will help aid in long-term memory of the material.

d. Readability

The readability of this text was determined to be grade 6 through the use of the Fry Graph, and level 8 by the Bader Analysis. Despite the book being written in first person point of view and few advanced vocabulary words, the content of this book raises its readability level to grade 9. By using the book as an out of the classroom text it is important for the teacher to provide reading comprehension worksheets to practice the skill of reading comprehension outside of the
classroom. If comprehension of the text is not being achieved on an individual basis, in class discussions and activities will clear up any discrepancies.

e. Resources


7. On Hitler’s Mountain: Overcoming the Legacy of a Nazi Childhood
Grade 6
Biography

a. Introduction and Summary

In this memoir, Hunt recounts growing up in Berchtesgaden- Hitler’s headquarters and experiencing what she thought was a normal German childhood. Hunt attends a school dominated by the Nazi regime, and becomes a member of Hitler Youth only to leave the group near the end of World War II. In 1945 at age eleven, Hunt decides to make a conscious effort to learn the truth about her Nazi upbringing. Through reading this text students will get a good understanding of how Hitler’s beliefs, and policies were able to gain support from ordinary German citizens, and how the Holocaust resulted from these actions.

b. Rationale

This text will be used to engage the most reluctant learners because it gives students insight into how Nazism and anti-Semitism were able to gain staunch support from ordinary Germans and the methods Hitler used to achieve this goal. Told in the first person point of view, students will easily be able to understand Hunts thoughts, and feelings as she tells the story of her Nazi childhood. Students should also be able to relate to how the beliefs of family, friends, and teachers strongly influence the beliefs of children as they grow up. This book directly discusses the WHII.10 and WHII.11 section b of the SOL’s.

c. Usage of Text

This book will be used inside and outside of the classroom as part of the preparation stage of PAR. By using the class textbook in conjunction with this book students will be able to clearly see how Hitler gained the support of the German people for one of the most horrific events of history, the Holocaust. Since the book is short and does not contain difficult vocabulary, teachers should be able to assign readings for homework, and be able to conduct class discussions or group activities to ensure comprehension of the text. One important activity to conduct before the reading of the text would be to explain and define German
words used within the text for students, as well as create a map of Germany with important geographic locations in the book located on the map.

d. Readability

This text scores a reading level of Grade 6 according to both the Fry Graph, and Bader Analysis. Students will be able to connect with the point of view of Hunt since they are relatively close in age to Hunt within the text. At times the content of the text is very emotional and profoundly thought provoking which provides students with a nice alternative to the traditional textbook. Main ideas and themes of the text are easy to follow, and comprehend. Should students have any difficulty understanding the text, class reading discussions, and scaffolding techniques employed by teachers should remedy any discrepancies.

e. Resources


8. Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution
Grade 10
Historical Nonfiction

a. Introduction and Summary

Ordinary Men is a short text which will give students insight into how ordinary German men turned from citizens into fighting machines for the Nazi cause. This book gives a unique perspective to the Holocaust and World War II since it focuses on the military aspects of Hitler’s final solution such as orders for town takeovers and mass killings. Also addressed in the text are the conflicting personal values of soldiers with the orders they were given to fulfill missions. Through reading this text, students will be able to understand the point of view of the war though soldiers eyes, while learning key concepts in WHIII.10 and WHIII.11 of the Standards of Learning, specifically Hitler’s final solution.

b. Rationale

This text will engage the most reluctant learners because it addresses the holocaust from the perspective of the soldier. Students will be able to clearly see how policies and plans masterminded by Hitler were put into action. Many of the soldiers in the German SS military at the time were around the age of the students who will be reading this text, therefore many students will be able to imagine themselves in the soldiers’ shoes while analyzing their feelings. Maps and
pictures provided in the text will also help aid students in thoroughly understating the soldiers’ positions and plans, unlike the generic pictures provided in textbooks, which often have no real relevance to the content of the unit.

c. Usage of Text

This book will be used as part of the Assistance phase of PAR. Since the text requires that the students reading level is proficient though Grade 10, it is imperative that the teacher use the text in the classroom because many students will be at the Grade 10 reading level. Covering the unit of the Holocaust thoroughly with the class textbook will help students to understand the sequence of orders the soldiers had to follow during their service in the military. Utilizing anticipation guides, brainstorming, guided readings, and graphic organizers the teacher can ensure that students at the Grade 10 level have a general understanding of the book, and its main themes and ideas.

d. Readability

The readability of this text was determined by using the Fry Graph, and supplemented by the Bader Analysis. The Fry Graph rated Ordinary Men at the Grade 10 reading level. Assistance will need to be provided by the instructor to ensure that students of various reading levels will be able to understand the text thoroughly while being able to relate the material back to the class textbook, and SOL requirements. Using vocabulary and reading comprehension worksheets would help ensure student understanding, and spark discussion. In an effort to further help students at the frustration and instructional reading levels relate the locations of military engagements, to the state of Germany; a geography lesson may be helpful.

e. Resources