

The Holocaust Traveling Trunk Project is an educational program that aims to provide middle school students with an immersive learning experience about the Holocaust. It utilizes a hands-on, multidisciplinary approach to teach the history and lessons of this tragic event. This project is based on the concept of the Smithsonian's traveling trunks and aims to develop a collection of themed trunks that explore various elements of the Holocaust. The trunks contain a wide range of items such as artifacts, original source documents, multimedia resources, literature, and interactive activities. These resources aim to give students a thorough understanding of how the Holocaust has influenced history, culture, and society.

Summary of the Project: Objective: The project is to provide middle school pupils with knowledge of the Holocaust through an examination of its historical background, the experiences of Jewish communities, the emergence of Nazi Germany, living conditions in ghettos and concentration camps, acts of resistance and rescue, and the consequences of liberation. Every trunk is meticulously selected to correspond with Nevada's Social Studies standards and incorporates links to art, music, literature, and personal histories, resulting in a captivating and unforgettable learning experience.

Trunks

Trunk 1. Life Before the Holocaust: Jewish Culture and Communities

- **Objective:** To teach students about Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust, emphasizing the richness of the culture and the diversity of Jewish communities.

Trunk 2. The Rise of Nazi Germany: From Democracy to Dictatorship

- **Objective:** To help students understand the political and social changes that led to the rise of the Nazi regime.

Trunk 3. Life in the Ghettos

- **Objective:** To give students insight into the harsh realities of life in the ghettos established by the Nazis.

Trunk 4. The Concentration Camps: Daily Life and Survival

- **Objective:** To educate students on the conditions in concentration and extermination camps.

Trunk 5. Resistance and Rescue

- **Objective:** To highlight the bravery of those who resisted Nazi oppression and those who helped rescue Jews.

Trunk 6. The Aftermath: Liberation and Memory

- **Objective:** To explore the liberation of the camps, the survivors' experiences post-war, and the importance of memory.

Trunk 7 The Global Impact of the Holocaust: Immigration and Other Affected Countries

- **Objective:** This trunk explores the global ramifications of the Holocaust, focusing on the experiences of Jewish refugees, the response of different countries to the crisis, and the broader effects of the Holocaust on nations beyond Germany. Students will learn about the challenges faced by those who sought refuge, the immigration policies of various countries, and how different nations were impacted by or responded to the atrocities of the Holocaust.

Trunk 8 Exploring Genocide Beyond the Holocaust: Armenia, Bosnia, and More

- **Objective:** This trunk will provide primary sources, artifacts, books, multimedia, and hands-on activities to help middle and high school students explore the causes, impacts, and lessons of European genocides beyond the Holocaust, with a focus on the Armenian and Bosnian genocides.

Trunk 9 Indigenous Genocides: A legacy of Resistance and Resilience

- Objective: This trunk will explore the genocides and forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples, focusing on American Indian history while including Indigenous genocides from other regions such as Canada, Latin America, and Australia. The materials will help students analyze the historical events, policies, and lasting effects of Indigenous genocide, as well as Indigenous resistance and survival.

Trunk 10 Human Rights and Genocide Trunk

- Objective: This trunk takes the theme of “never again” and depicts the work of “ever again.” The secondary trunk has information on the Declaration of Human Rights as it applies to situations past and present. Opportunities to explore human behavior from the standpoint of the bystander, victim, perpetrator, rescuer and upstander are illustrated. Explore the Armenian genocide, Cambodia, Rwanda, and The Balkans, as well as HR issues in South Africa and the Japanese American Internment.

[Teaching Trunks | Illinois Holocaust Museum](#)

[Holocaust Center for Humanity - Teaching Trunks](#)

[Teaching Trunks - The Florida Holocaust Museum](#)

[Trunks - Holocaust Museum Houston](#)

[Educator Trunks — The Holocaust Memorial Museum of San Antonio](#)

[Georgia's Holocaust Education Project - Claims Conference](#)

Trunk 6: The Aftermath – Liberation and Memory (Middle School Edition)

Possible Materials to Include

1. Primary Sources & Reproductions (Age-Appropriate)

- **Survivor Stories (Audio & Video Clips)** – Selected, short, middle school-friendly survivor testimonies from organizations like the USC Shoah Foundation or the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.
- **Liberation Photos (Carefully Curated)** – Photos from the liberation of concentration camps with guided discussion questions to ensure students process them appropriately.

- **Excerpts from Diaries & Letters** – Age-appropriate excerpts from teenage survivors such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* (post-liberation sections) and *Rutka’s Notebook*.
- **News Articles from 1945** – Modified articles that describe the world’s reaction to the liberation of the camps.
- **Illustrated Maps of DP Camps & Europe After WWII** – Easy-to-understand maps showing how survivors were displaced and where they relocated.

2. Books & Graphic Novels (Middle School-Friendly)

- *I Will Come Back for You: A Family in Hiding During World War II* by Marisabina Russo (Good for younger middle schoolers)
- *Survivors Club: The True Story of a Very Young Prisoner of Auschwitz* by Michael Bornstein & Debbie Bornstein Holinstat
- *When the World Was Ours* by Liz Kessler (A novel about survival and post-war experiences)
- *Rescuing the Children: The Story of the Kindertransport* by Deborah Hodge
- *Maus I (Young Reader Adaptation)* by Art Spiegelman

3. Hands-On Artifacts & Interactive Activities

- **Replica DP Camp ID Cards** – With blank spaces for students to imagine what their information might have been if they were a survivor.
- **"Suitcase of Memories" Activity** – A small suitcase with artifacts representing items Holocaust survivors might have taken with them when starting new lives (e.g., passport replicas, small toys, photos, ration cards). Students can reflect on what they would take if they had to flee.
- **Memory Stones** – Students decorate and write on small stones, inspired by the Jewish tradition of leaving stones at gravesites to remember the deceased.
- **“What Would You Do?” Reflection Cards** – Scenario-based discussion cards prompting students to consider the dilemmas faced by survivors (e.g., “You are given the opportunity to move to a new country. What would be your biggest concern?”).
- **"Letter to a Liberator" Activity** – Students write letters thanking WWII soldiers who liberated the camps, fostering empathy and historical thinking.

4. Teaching Guides & Curriculum Materials

- **Middle School-Friendly Lesson Plans** – Inquiry-based lessons focusing on survivor stories, rebuilding after the war, and the role of memory in history.
- **Timelines & Visual Aids** – Interactive, color-coded timeline of Holocaust events from liberation through the founding of Israel.
- **Guided Reflection Booklet** – Includes survivor quotes, questions, and spaces for students to draw or write their thoughts.
- **“Who Helped?” Profiles of Rescuers and Liberators** – Short, engaging stories about people who aided survivors, such as U.S. soldiers, the Red Cross, and Oskar Schindler.

5. Multimedia & Technology

- **USB Drive with Preloaded Survivor Interviews** – Featuring age-appropriate testimonies and footage of the camps’ liberation.
- **Interactive Google Earth Map (If Digital Access is Available)** – Showing the locations of DP camps, where survivors relocated, and memorial sites today.

6. Commemoration & Memory

- **Memorial Posters & Informational Pamphlets** – About sites like Yad Vashem and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.
- **"Why We Remember" Activity** – Students create a project on the importance of Holocaust remembrance, incorporating survivor stories, artwork, and poetry.
- **Classroom Memory Wall Kit** – A simple kit with materials for students to design a classroom memorial, including a wall of reflections or a symbolic tree of life.

Estimated Budget Breakdown

Category	Specific Items	Estimated Cost
Primary Sources & Reproductions	Letters, maps, photos, articles	\$250
Books & Graphic Novels	5-6 middle school-friendly books	\$150
Hands-On Artifacts & Activities	Replica ID cards, ration cards, memory stones, suitcase activity	\$350
Teaching Guides & Lesson Plans	Timelines, booklets, scenario cards	\$250

Multimedia & Technology	USB drive with survivor interviews, Google Earth guide. Canvas integration	\$350 - \$1,200
Commemoration Materials	Posters, reflection booklets, Memory Wall Kit	\$200
Storage & Shipping	Durable trunk, packing materials	\$300
Shipping Costs	Shipping to multiple schools (estimate per trunk)	\$100 - \$500
Teacher Training	Stipends for 4 teachers to attend training (\$200 each)	\$800
Presenter Stipend	Training facilitator	\$1,000
Travel for Training	Mileage, lodging, per diem (if training is in-person)	\$2,500
Stipend for Lesson Material Development	Compensation for creating lesson guides and activities	\$3,000- \$5,000
Total Estimated Budget		\$5,250 - \$9,500+

