



Speak Up Speak Out

Primary Assembly - Suitable for Key Stage 2

This assembly is about a brave and wonderful man called Dr. Ludwig Guttman.

Resources:

- image of the [Speak Up, Speak Out symbol](#), either projected or using the poster available in our free [Campaign Pack](#)
- poem – [We Remember Them](#) by Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Riemer

Script:

Today we are going to learn about something called Holocaust Memorial Day. Have any of you heard about this before? This is the symbol for the day.

Each year on 27 January we learn about events that have happened in the past, sometimes in the last few years. Events that were very bad, where many people suffered but we hope we can learn from them and remember the people who lived through these terrible times and acted bravely.

This year the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day is **Speak Up, Speak Out** and I would like to tell you the story of a very brave man who lived around the time of the Second World War and did some amazing things.

Ludwig Guttman was born in 1899 to a Jewish family in Poland. He then moved to Germany. Ludwig was an active child, a keen sports player and Scout leader in his youth. He was a bright student with an interest in history and a burning ambition to be a doctor. In 1918, Ludwig volunteered at an accident hospital for injured miners and took on his first position in medicine.

At the hospital he met a patient who had been recently paralysed in an accident. When Ludwig began to make notes he was told by a senior physician 'don't bother'. Ludwig never forgot this patient and the experience left a deep impression on him.



Ludwig went on to study medicine at Freiburg University. He experienced bullying and racism on campus because of his religion and worked with other Jewish students to stand up for himself and others where possible. In 1924 he qualified as a doctor and looked for a position at a hospital. By chance, he found a vacancy in neurosurgery and quickly developed a reputation as an outstanding doctor in this field.

In 1933 as the German government changed, his position at the hospital was taken away from him because of his faith. Jewish people lost many of their rights at this time. So Dr. Guttman transferred to a Jewish hospital where he became director. As director, he protected Jews from deportation and imprisonment, claiming they were too ill to be moved. By 1939, the situation for German Jews had got worse and when Dr. Guttman was offered a chance to move to the United Kingdom with his family, he took the opportunity to emigrate from Germany.

Dr. Guttman's move to the UK most likely saved his life; later in 1939 World War Two began and Jewish people were no longer safe in Germany. He set about rebuilding his life and career in his new home. In 1943, Dr. Guttman set up the UK's first spinal cord injury centre at Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire.

Dr. Guttman became director of the new hospital and began overseeing the patients. Remembering his first experience with the paralysed man, Dr. Guttman looked at new methods of treatment at Stoke Mandeville. One of the avenues that Dr. Guttman explored was disability sports. After trialling several sports Dr. Guttman settled on a number of sports he wanted patients to experience in their recovery. The results were of obvious benefit; not only did patients undertake required physical therapy but they also re-established their confidence by taking part in competition. By 1948, Dr. Guttman had decided to organise the sports at the Stoke Mandeville Centre into a proper competition.

On 28 July 1948, the day that the London Olympics of that year opened, the first Stoke Mandeville games took place for disabled patients. The date was no accident – Guttman believed disabled people deserved recognition within society and the chance to demonstrate their capabilities. Within four years the annual Stoke Mandeville games had gathered so much popularity that in 1952, a team of Dutch disabled veterans competed against British patients. The event continued to grow in international recognition from there and in 1960 the games took place in Rome following the Olympic Games held there in that year.

What we now know as the Paralympics take place every four years after the Olympics and in 2012, the Paralympics will return to the place of origin, Great Britain. Athletes from around the world will compete in British venues, one of which will be the Guttman Stadium in Stoke Mandeville.

Dr. Ludwig Guttman was a brave and determined man. When in Germany he spoke out for others and tried to keep them safe. And when he was living and working in England, he used his voice and position to stand up for people with disabilities and created a platform to showcase their strengths internationally.

Ludwig was one of the lucky ones – moving to England most definitely saved his life. During this time though, millions of people were less fortunate and lost their lives. Today is a day to remember those people.

Poem

At the rising of the sun and at its going down

We remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter

We remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring

We remember them.

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer

We remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn

We remember them.

At the beginning of the year and when it ends

We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live;

for they are now a part of us

as we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength

We remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart

We remember them.

When we have joy we crave to share

We remember them.

When we have decisions that are difficult to make

We remember them.

When we have achievements that are based on theirs

We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live;

for they are now a part of us

as we remember them.

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