

Secondary History Lesson – The Legacy of Hope, HMD 2010

Aims:

- To explore what is meant by the term 'legacy'
- To examine the forms that legacy can take
- What legacy means to understanding the past
- How a legacy might have a moral value

To explore the idea of how people with different backgrounds and experiences can contribute to society.

Starter:

Ask the students to write down the word "Legacy" in the centre of a piece of paper (**demonstrate** on a board for them) then ask them to write what they think the word means and what they think creates a legacy in boxes around the word.

After 5 minutes **ask** the class to contribute their ideas to the example on the board.

Ask what they think the term 'legacy' means to understanding or knowing about history.

Ask them to reflect on that during the next exercise.

Working in pairs or small groups

Provide each pair or group with the stories of Hugo Gryn, Denise Affonço and Oneg Shabbat.

Explain that two of the stories are from the Holocaust and one from Cambodia – briefly explain what the Holocaust was and explain that the events in Cambodia are further examples of one group's persecution and exploitation by another.

In the pairs or groups **ask** the pupils to discuss and then write down the following about each of the stories:

- Is there a central message to the testimony/story?
- What happens to some of the people in each of the stories?
- What are the different responses of people when presented with horrific acts?
- What do the stories tell them about why people choose to record what happened to them – even if it is bad?
- Is there a central message coming out of each of the stories if yes, what is it?
- Hugo and Denise both wrote books about what they experienced. What do you think they wanted as an outcome of their books?

Facilitate feedback from pairs or groups to the class.

Class discussion

Focusing on the story of Oneg Shabbat **explain** that the primary concern of Oneg Shabbat was to record what was happening and what was being destroyed – not just that the Nazis were killing people but all the things that people contribute and create.

Ask/Discuss

The Holocaust was not the destruction of 11 million individuals but the attempt to destroy a whole way of life?

Oneg Shabbat was created to record or remember a collective history or experiences – is it important then that it still contains the names of individuals?

All the stories make a request – that they are remembered so these sorts of things don't happen again. Do you think that knowing about what happened in the past helps people to avoid these things in the future? Give reasons for your answer.

Conclusion

Return to the legacy exercise at the start of the lesson. Do the stories they studied provide a legacy to (a) the people involved (b) the period in history?

Can individual actions be a legacy? All of the stories contain an idea or belief in 'hope' – can hope be a legacy? Does learning about the past fulfill an idea of hope or legacy?

Individual work

Choose one of the stories and use it to write a newspaper piece about the people affected by the Holocaust and Nazi persecution or about the genocide in Cambodia.

Write down an explanation of why learning about individual experiences of the past can contribute to our understanding of those events and provide lessons or hope to others.

Extension work

Find out about war crimes trials at Nuremberg and those taking place in Cambodia.

Consider and **explore** how an individual's desires and hopes can affect interpretations of history – write down your conclusions.

The Historical Association is an organisation which exists to support the teaching of history at all levels – from primary schools to universities, and everything in between. There is an enormous catalogue of resources, for both teaching and professional development, with Masters-accredited courses, available on our website. The HA has been campaigning for all children to receive a high-quality history education at school for over 100 years – and we always welcome feedback on our activities.