



Lesson 2: Word Splash

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Goal: Students will build vocabulary.

Activity: The teacher selects groups of 3 or 4 students. In the interest of helping students get to know each other, the teacher makes sure the groups are different from previous configurations.

Before she hands out the Word Splash, she reviews how Word Splash works:

You will read the 8-10 words scattered or “splashed” on the page. Some words will be new. Some may be familiar. Working together, you will discuss the words. Are some of them somehow connected? In what way? Maybe some words are opposites. Maybe some words are synonyms. Maybe one word “causes” or “leads to” another word.

Whatever the connection may be, you will draw lines connecting various words, and make brief notes on the lines.

For example, you might use the “equals” sign (=) to denote synonyms. You might draw arrows to show one word “leading to” another. The point is simply to connect as many words, in as many ways, as possible.

The teacher distributes the Word Splash handouts. The handouts may be on 8 ½ X 11” paper, but 11X17” paper offers more room for students to write. The Word Splash contains the following words:

Jews

Perpetrators

Anti-Semitism

Victims

Judaism

Resisters

Bystanders

Rescuers

As the teacher distributes one handout to each time, she offers reminders:

Help each other. Each one teach one! Do not use books. Use your prior knowledge. Make as many connections as you can. You know more than you think you know!

As the teams work, the teacher circulates, offering encouragement and guidance.

After 8-10 minutes (or fewer if the students are frustrated because they know so little), the teacher brings the students back together and gives an instruction:

All teams should post their word splash somewhere in the room. All teams should visit each word splash and read it carefully.

When everyone has seen all the work, the teacher leads a whole-groups discussion: *What did you notice? What similarities do we see? What differences? What's confusing? What words are still unclear?*

The teacher distributes the students' Holocaust journals, and she offers instructions:

Please record today's eight words, plus definitions.

She offers basic definitions:

Jews practice Judaism. Six million Jews, including 1 ½ million Jewish children, were murdered during the Holocaust.

Anti-semitism is the hatred of Jews. Anti-semitism began when early Christians asked Jews to convert to Christianity, and Jews declined to do so.

Judaism is the religion practiced by Jews. Judaism was the first monotheistic religion. Judaism is not a race.

Bystanders are people who witness actions and events but do not participate. During the Holocaust, Bystanders were those people who stood by and did nothing as Jews and others were persecuted.

Perpetrators are criminals. During the Holocaust, the people who persecuted Jews and others were the perpetrators.

Victims are the prey of perpetrators. During the Holocaust 6 million Jewish victims were murdered. Five million other victims were murdered. These non-Jewish victims included Gypsies, intellectuals, Communists, homosexuals, disabled people, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others.

Resisters are people who stand up to tyrants. Resisters defy unjust authority. Holocaust resisters acted defiantly in many ways. These acts of resistance included escape, prayer, espionage, armed struggle, the publishing of illegal materials, the reading of banned books, simple survival, and others.

Rescuers save others. Holocaust rescuers hid victims, or helped them escape to safety.

The journal work is completed and the teacher asks students to write any questions they might have on index cards. The teacher may answer questions today, or they may be held over until the next session.

The teacher ends with a challenge to her students:

Until we meet again, think about the words you've learned and what they mean in your life? Have you ever, in some way, been a perpetrator? Have you been a victim? A rescuer?

The teacher reminds her students that these important questions are rather personal and private in nature. She reminds students:

It's important that all of us examine our own lives. Being human requires all of us to look closely at our own actions—and inactions.

She thanks her students for their time and attention. She reminds them to jot down remaining questions on index cards; they will be answered the next time class meets.

Materials:

Pens/Pencils

Tape for Mounting

Word Splash handouts

Students' Holocaust journals