

**Teaching Reading Skills with a Holocaust Memoir:
Four Perfect Pebbles by Lila Perl and Marion Blumenthal Lazan**

**An Instructional Unit Created by
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for The Midwest Center for Holocaust Education**

Introduction

My name is Laura Patton. I am a secondary-certified language arts teacher and reading specialist. I've taught 7th and 8th graders in the Shawnee Mission School District for the past 20 years. I taught this unit as I was writing it during the 2004-2005 school year. It was impossible for me to write in formal, 3rd person language. Therefore, I have written the materials in my natural voice – informal and 1st person. I would not begin to think that this unit is the best way to teach either a Holocaust memoir or reading skills. It's just one way I tried to help my students become better readers during one particular school year. For me, teaching has always been an act of continuous improvement. I am always looking for new and better ways to help my students learn. I intended this unit to be used primarily by language arts teachers who had never taught the Holocaust before. I wanted it to be a way for teachers to dive in to this challenging subject matter and feel some degree of comfort. I encourage any teacher who uses these materials to adapt them as they see fit.

Intended Audience

This unit was designed for use in an 8th grade remedial reading class; therefore, the objectives have a heavy focus on reading skills. It could easily be used in English, Communications, or Communication Arts classes for 7th or 8th graders. Although I do not personally recommend teaching the Holocaust below 7th grade, *Four Perfect Pebbles* is one of the few Holocaust books that I would even consider teaching to 6th graders.

Time

My class periods are 45 minutes long. It took me 48 class periods to teach the entire unit. I have tried to indicate on the overview chart and in the lesson plans which lessons are optional. In a few cases, I added lessons as I taught the unit in order to address the specific needs of my students. I have tried to indicate on the overview chart and in the lesson plans which lessons are optional or intended to be taught as needed. At a bare minimum, I believe it would take 36 class periods to teach this unit.

One of the reasons it is so effective to teach the Holocaust in a language arts class is that we can spend more time on the content than our social studies colleagues. Even though it took me an entire quarter to teach the unit, I accomplished eight of the objectives in my curriculum and gave the students opportunities for repeated practice of many important skills.

Resources Needed

All of the books and videos needed to teach this unit are available from the resource center of the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education. Please call MCHE at (913) 327-8190 for information about the hours during which the resource center is open and the procedure for checking out materials. I would also advise you to check on the availability of resources within your school district. Except for a classroom set of *Tell Them We Remember*, everything else I needed was available within the Shawnee Mission School District.

I did not specifically use USHMM's guide, *Teaching About the Holocaust: A Resource Book for Educators*, in my lesson plans. However, I would highly recommend that you read pages 1-8, page 14, and pages 17-43 before you begin – especially if you are teaching the Holocaust for the first time. This guide also has information about services that USHMM provides and a wonderful bibliography and videography.

One bit of advice - I have discovered that the competition for resources increases dramatically in the spring of each school year. History teachers are more likely to teach the Holocaust in the spring because that is when they get to the mid-1900's in chronological order. As a language arts teacher, I am not limited to a time sequence for instruction. The Holocaust is interesting enough to students that teaching it mid-year really makes the long, dreary days of winter fly by.

- A classroom set of *Four Perfect Pebbles* by Lila Perl and Marion Blumenthal Lazan
- A classroom set of *Tell Them We Remember* by Susan D. Bachrach
- One copy of *The World Must Know* by Michael Berenbaum (for teacher reference)
- One copy of *Teaching About the Holocaust: A Resource Book for Educators*
- VHS or DVD: *Marion's Triumph*
- VHS or DVD: *The Camera of My Family*
- VHS or DVD: *Heil Hitler – Confessions of a Hitler Youth*
- VHS or DVD: *One Survivor Remembers*
- VHS or DVD: *The Courage to Care*

Organization of the Binder

This unit is comprised of 27 lessons, each requiring 1 or 2 class periods. Each lesson plan and the instructional materials that accompany it are located behind the numbered tabs. The lesson plans, answer keys, and transparencies are all color-coded in green. Blue was used for reference materials that may be helpful to the teacher. Worksheets that need to be copied for student use are printed on white paper and located in plastic sleeves. PLEASE make sure that you put the materials away in good order for the next teacher to use. Each page is marked with a footer, which includes the lesson number to make it easier to keep the pages in order. A CD-ROM is provided for your use. This disk contains all of the files created for this unit. You will need to save the files to your own computer and then edit them as you wish.

Proficient Reader Research

Throughout the unit, I have referred to reading skills that proficient readers use to comprehend text. Because I work with students specifically because their reading skills are weak, teaching the behaviors and skills of proficient readers is the primary focus of the unit. However, ALL teachers – no matter their subject area – need to take part in helping students become good readers. I would recommend that you familiarize yourself with the body of research about these skills. To this end, may I suggest the following books?

7 Keys to Comprehension by Susan Zimmermann and Chryse Hutchins

This book is extraordinarily easy to read. It is intended for parents as well as teachers and avoids the use of educational jargon. It contains clear examples of the seven skills and recommends books that can be read at home and in the classroom to practice each skill. Read Chapter 1 for a quick overview of the seven keys.

I Read It, But I Don't Get It by Cris Tovani

This book was written by a high school teacher and has very practical suggestions about teaching comprehension skills to older readers. It is also an easy and enjoyable read.

Mosaic of Thought by Ellin Oliver Keene and Susan Zimmermann

This text is a bit more challenging to read, but it is a foundational work. The previous two books were published after this one and built upon the body of knowledge conveyed in this text. I would recommend starting with the other two books, and then, if you like what you read in those texts, read this one next.

Feedback Forms

I have never written my lesson plans for such a wide audience. I am curious to know what worked for you and your students and what did not. I'm curious to know how you adapted the lessons for your own needs and what you added or deleted. I would appreciate any suggestions you might have about how to improve this unit – either to make it stronger instructionally or more user-friendly. When you are finished with the unit, I would appreciate it if you would fill out a feedback form and mail it or return it with the binder to MCHE.

“The study of the Holocaust is, or should be, a search for humanity through the study of inhumanity...”

Samuel Totten on page 16 of *Teaching Holocaust Literature*

Samuel Totten’s words ring true for me. I didn’t enter the teaching profession because I lived and breathed to teach people how to diagram a sentence, identify the types of figurative language, or analyze a persuasive argument. I wanted to be the kind of teacher that J.L. Brimeyer was for me both my Freshman and Senior years of high school. J.L. did teach me to love literature, but mostly J.L. taught me to think, to formulate my own values, to act with integrity, to regard other people with both respect and compassion, and to love life. In my career, I have tried to emulate J.L., and I hope that I have touched students’ lives in the same positive ways he touched mine. Because of J.L., I have always made it a higher priority to teach my students than teach my subject. Teaching Holocaust literature has been a perfect vehicle through which I can do both.

I first became involved in Holocaust education when I had the opportunity to attend a workshop for teachers at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in February of 1997. Isak and Ann Federman sponsored this workshop in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary. I was so moved by what I experienced at the workshop and so overwhelmed by the Federman’s generosity that I felt an obligation to share what I learned in my classroom. To fail to do so was to betray the trust I felt the Federman’s had placed in me and the other workshop participants whom they sponsored.

The Federman workshop led to a frenzy of reading and learning through courses offered by the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education. In 1999-2000 I was asked to join the MCHE teaching cadre. My participation in cadre led to more courses, more reading, participation in a workshop conducted by the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous in New York City, another trip to USHMM, and an association with some of the most gifted educators I have ever had the pleasure to work with. My involvement with MCHE has been one of the most enriching experiences of my professional career.

The development of this unit has been a labor of love. I hope that, in some small way, it repays to the Federmans the generosity and kindness they showed to me. I hope it will help Jean Zeldin recoup some of the investment she has made in my professional development during the years I have been in the cadre.

Most of all, I hope that this instructional unit will give the educators who use it a place to start. I remember feeling very overwhelmed when I began teaching the Holocaust in my classroom. There was so much to know, and so much to teach, and so many resources to use – it was hard to know where to begin. For a teacher who is just beginning to incorporate Holocaust instruction into his or her curriculum, I hope I can ease the way. I’ve tried to provide everything you need to teach a variety of language arts curricular objectives and state standards using a Holocaust memoir as your vehicle. Of course, you will want to adapt, add, and delete lessons to suit your own needs. But I hope this will serve as a blueprint from which to work. I wish you success!

Laura Friedman Patton
15 February 2005

Four Perfect Pebbles – Unit Overview

Lesson	Periods	Status	Task
1	2		Survey the text.
2	2		Chapter 1
3	2		Chapter 2
4	2		Vocabulary for Chapter 2
5	2		History of Antisemitism
6	1-2		Building Schema: Jigsaw Readings from <i>Tell Them We Remember</i>
7	1		Putting the Pieces Together and Re-read Chapter 2
8	2	Optional	Video: <i>Camera of My Family</i>
9	2		Chapter 3
10	1	Optional	Video: <i>Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth</i>
11	4		Chapter 4: Guided Practice Summary by Sections
12	2		Chapter 5: Independent Practice Summary by Sections
13	1-2	As Needed	Ch.5: Sorting and Sequencing Ideas for Summary
14	1		Re-read Chapter 1 and Connect with Chapter 5
15	1-2		Read Chapter 6
16	1-2		Read Chapter 7
17	1		Video: <i>Marion's Triumph</i> – Review Chapters 1-7
18	2		Building Schema: Note-taking Over Readings from <i>Tell Them We Remember</i>
19	1		Chapter 8: Summary by Sections - Assessment
20	1		Chapter 9 & Epilogue
21	2	As Needed	Re-Teach Chapter 8 Summary
22	1		Test: Summarizing Chapter 9 by Sections
23	1		Finish Video: <i>Marion's Triumph</i> Chapters 5 – End
24	2	Optional	Video: <i>One Survivor Remembers</i>
25	2	Optional	Video: <i>The Courage to Care</i>
26	1		Final Unit Exam
	48	(36)	Total Periods for Unit: 36 to 48 - Depending upon the use of optional and “as needed” lessons.

Kansas Standards Applicable to Holocaust Instruction in the 8th Language Arts Classroom

Standard 1: Learners demonstrate skill in reading a variety of materials for a variety of purposes.

- *Benchmark 1:* The proficient reader comprehends whole pieces of narration, exposition, persuasion, and technical writing.

By the end of 8th grade:

Indicator 1 – Make inferences from text.

Indicator 6 – Summarize the text.

Indicator 8 – Identify the author’s point-of-view.

Indicator 11 – Compare and contrast ideas and concepts from multiple sources.

- *Benchmark 5:* The proficient reader draws conclusions supported by text.

By the end of 8th grade:

Indicator 3 – Locate evidence that supports conclusions drawn from a single text.

Standard 3: Learners demonstrate knowledge of literature from a variety of cultures, genres, and time periods.

- *Benchmark 3:* The proficient reader demonstrates knowledge of the effects of time periods on literature.

By the end of 8th grade:

Indicator 1 – Connect main events in literature to historical context.

Missouri Standards Applicable to Holocaust Studies In Communication Arts

Knowledge Standards in Communication Arts

In Communication Arts, students in Missouri public schools will acquire a solid foundation which includes knowledge of and proficiency in...

2. reading and evaluating fiction, poetry, and drama.
3. reading and evaluating nonfiction works and material (such as biographies, newspapers, and technical manuals).
4. writing formally (such as reports, narratives, and essays) and informally (such as outlines, notes).
5. comprehending and evaluating the content and artistic aspects of oral and visual presentations (such as story-telling, debates, lectures, multi-media productions).

Performance Standards

Goal 1: Students in Missouri public schools will acquire the knowledge and skills to gather, analyze, and apply information and ideas. Students will demonstrate within and integrate across all content areas the ability to...

1. develop questions and ideas to initiate and refine research.
2. conduct research to answer questions and evaluate information and ideas.
5. comprehend and evaluate written, visual, and oral presentations and works.
7. evaluate the accuracy of information and the reliability of its sources.

Goal 2: Students in Missouri public schools will acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom. Students will demonstrate within and integrate across all content areas the ability to...

3. exchange information, questions, and ideas while recognizing the perspectives of others.

Goal 4: Students in Missouri public schools will acquire the knowledge and skills to make decisions and act as responsible members of society. Students will demonstrate within and integrate across all content areas the ability to...

3. analyze the duties and responsibilities of individuals in societies.

Shawnee Mission School District
Curricular Objectives for 8th Grade Reading / Communications
Applicable to *Four Perfect Pebbles* Holocaust Unit

- 1078.04 Develop appropriate reading strategies: predicting, question/clarify/summarize/predict, previewing, KWL, SQ3R, graphic organizers.

- 1078.05 Apply comprehension strategies to a variety of written materials: identify characteristics of basic literary genres, consider purpose and effectiveness, understand inference, recognize main ideas and supporting details, differentiate facts and opinions, sequence events, predict outcomes, distinguish between relevant and irrelevant details, identify speaker/point-of-view.

- 1078.06 Apply reading strategies to varied materials.

- 1078.07 Interpret visual and auditory information: listen to and view materials from a variety of sources.

- 1078.08 Compose multi-paragraph papers, including a summary of a reading or visual selection.

- 1078.10 Acquire new vocabulary through reading.

- 1078.11 Utilize encoding/decoding skills.

- 1078.16 Apply Communication skills to respond to literature, engage in class discussions, and participate in cooperative groups.

NOTE: I have listed the objectives for the curriculum I teach. Similar objectives can be found within the curricula of other language arts courses.

Lesson 1: Survey the Text

2 Class Periods

**Reading Skills: Activating Relevant Prior Knowledge
 Questioning**

Purpose:

Surveying the text before reading allows students to gather background information about the text and activate prior knowledge they may have about the Holocaust. It also helps the students generate questions about the text that set a purpose for reading and motivate students to read.

Materials Needed:

One copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student
An overhead machine, blank transparency sheets, and overhead markers
OR A tablet of chart paper and markers

Process:

Work together as a whole-class group. As you work through the steps of the survey, ask the students to share background knowledge they have and questions that occur to them. Make a T-chart on transparency sheets or chart paper. On the left side, record the students' questions; on the right side, record background information that the students share. Keep these notes for during and at the conclusion of the unit.

These are the things to notice during the survey:

- Notice the title and sub-title. Ask students what ideas they connect to the word "Holocaust" in the sub-title.
- Notice the authors' names.
- Look at the photos on the covers. Notice how the portrait is set over a background photo.
- Read the excerpt and summary on the back cover.
- Notice the photo facing the title page inside the book and the caption underneath it.
- Notice the copyright date.
- Read the dedications.
- Read the Table of Contents.
- Flip through the book and look for the two sections of photos. Look at the photos and read the captions.
- Read the Prologue.

Example Questions:

- Why is the book called Four Perfect Pebbles?
- Who are the people in the background picture on the cover? Are they getting on a train? Where are they going?
- How old was Marion when her family was first affected by the Nazis?
- How old was she when she was liberated?
- Did all of the family survive?
- If the family escaped to Holland, why weren't they free of the Nazis?
- Why is one of the chapters titled "The Greatest Disappointment"? What was this disappointment?
- Why is Chapter 7 titled "Freedom and Sorrow"? If you were free, wouldn't you be happy?
- Was the family able to stay together or were they separated during their imprisonment?
- What was the yellow star in the photo used for?
- What was the "Hitler Youth"?
- What was Kristallnacht?
- Why was the synagogue blown up?
- Why was Walter Blumenthal imprisoned at Buchenwald?
- What was Westerbork? Why did the Blumenthals live there?
- What is typhus?
- What is a "Youth Aliyah" home?
- Why did the family go to Peoria?

NOTE: See photocopies of the responses from one class as an example of what a completed chart might look like.

Lesson 2: Chapter 1

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Creating Sensory Images**
 Making Connections
 Questioning

Purpose:

Proficient readers have a movie going in their heads while they read. They use their imaginations and sense memories to make the reading “come alive.” Poor readers frequently don’t know that they should be using their senses as they read. The result is that their words on the page remain flat and lifeless for them. They need modeling and practice to activate their senses while they read. In Chapter 1, the authors of *Four Perfect Pebbles* have used many descriptive words to help readers imagine how Bergen-Belsen might feel, smell, look, sound, and taste. My goal is to help my students use these prompts to make the experience of reading the chapter a surround-sound, Technicolor, multi-sensory experience.

Materials Needed:

A copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student
A sheet of newsprint or blank copy paper for each student
Every student will need a pencil for drawing

Process:

Read the chapter aloud and ask the students to follow along in their own texts. At intervals, stop reading and ask students to practice using sensory images and asking questions. Depending on how familiar students are with thinking about what they read, you may need to “Think Aloud” to model for the students how good readers create sensory images and ask questions as they read. To facilitate the development of visual images, the students could draw the pictures that form in their minds as a result of reading certain passages of text. You will need to pause every so often to give them some drawing time.

To help the students activate other senses, you may need to describe how you imagine the situation and show how you connect it to your own prior experience. For example, I have memories of camping places where there were no modern plumbing facilities. In other words, I have been in an outhouse. I can magnify this smell in my memory to help myself imagine the communal outhouse described on page 3. Every student can imagine the smell of dirty clothes and unwashed bodies; they just have to remember what their clothes smell like after soccer practice! How would the boards of the bunk feel? What would the soup taste like? Start describing how you imagine these things and watch the reactions on your students’ faces!

Suggested Stopping Points:

I've included references to photos that may be helpful to you and your students as you try to visualize the scenes described in the text.

- At the end of paragraph 2 – Ask students to sketch in their journals the way they imagine the “three-decker bunks” would look that “ran the length of the barrack.” This might be a situation where students might use prior knowledge if they have ever seen a picture of the bunks where prisoners slept in a Nazi concentration camp. After students have a moment to draw their pictures, you could show them photos to build background knowledge for students who haven't seen such photos before.

Photo Reference: TTWR – pages 93, 54-55
WMK – page 193

- The last full paragraph on page 3 and the next paragraph that continues onto page 4 have a description of the outhouse and what the prisoners would have to do to relieve themselves. Ask students to draw a picture of how this communal outhouse might look. They could also imagine what the prisoners smelled. The sensory images are unpleasant, but the text lends itself well to forming strong images.
- The second-to-the-last paragraph on page 4 tells about *Appell* or roll call and the paragraph that runs from page 4 to 5 describes the electrified barbed wire surrounding the camp, the guards, the dogs, and the searchlights. The paragraph does not mention guard towers, but I asked the students how the guards would use the searchlights to keep watch on the perimeter of the camp. They were able to infer that there would be guard towers along the fence. Ask them to draw how they think these things might look.

Photo Reference: TTWR – pages 54-55
WMK – pages 136

If you have a copy in your school library, Surviving Hitler by Andrea Warren has a photo on page 79 of a guard tower and a portion of fence at Auschwitz. Be sure to read the caption under this photo and explain about the grass. On the back cover, there is a view from the guard tower.

It is important for students to realize that skillful authors anticipate questions that readers will ask and provide the information needed to answer many of those questions. Students must learn to recognize when this happens in a text. Pages 7-9 of Chapter 1 explain why the book is called Four Perfect Pebbles. This question should be among those raised during the survey process. Take time to discuss Marion's search for four perfect pebbles. Is this just a silly child's game? What other questions do they have about the chapter? You could continue the list of questions and background knowledge started in Lesson 1.

At the end of this lesson, I wanted the students to notice something about the structure of this text and effective writing. In the lingo of the “Six Traits” used to evaluate samples for the Kansas Writing Assessment, this book offers a good example of “organization.” Chapter 1 is a strong lead for the rest of the book. I asked the students to look ahead at the first two pages of Chapter 2 and notice that its content was going to go backward in chronological order; it begins with how Ruth and Walter met each other. I asked the students why the author might have started the book with an incident from the chronological middle of the story. They didn’t get where I was going with my question until I asked it a new way: What would their impression of the book have been if the family history in Chapter 2 had been first? Would they have wanted to keep on reading? They said “No.” They agreed that Chapter 1 was compelling; it increased their curiosity about Marion’s story and caused them to want to continue reading the book.

NOTE: A teachable moment presented itself as we were working through Chapter 1. The students asked me if people tried to escape from the camps. Others wanted to know why the prisoners didn’t tunnel under the fence to get out. I shared with them that in addition to patrolling the perimeter with dogs and using searchlights from towers to watch the fence-line, the Nazis also used a technique called *collective responsibility* to discourage resistance. Please read the following passages to familiarize yourself with this concept:

Reference: WMK – page 171

NOTE: Later in the unit during Lesson 24, students will have the chance to make connections between Four Perfect Pebbles and One Survivor Remembers, the film memoir of Gerda Weissman Klein. In the film, Gerda describes how she occupied her mind by deciding whether she would have a red or blue dress for the celebration she imagined she would have after the war. She speaks about how important it was to have imagination – some way to occupy your mind - in order to survive. Help the learners make a connection between Gerda’s debate about her dress and Marion’s search for the pebbles.

Lesson 3: Chapter 2

2 Class Periods

**Reading Skills: Monitoring Comprehension
 Questioning**

Purpose:

Chapter 2 briefly covers many key concepts: Jewish life before the Holocaust, antisemitism, the Nazi rise to power, persecution of Jews and others under Nazi rule, and the Nuremberg Laws. Within the scope of a memoir, the book does a good job giving an overview of important background information and showing how the Blumenthal family was affected by historical events. However, it contains lots of unfamiliar vocabulary. I expected there would be many parts of this chapter that my students would not understand. The chapter also introduces concepts that I would like to develop to a deeper degree.

Materials Needed:

One photocopy of Chapter 2 for each student

Two highlighters of different colors for each student

Process:

Because I predicted that the chapter would pose some comprehension challenges, I selected “monitoring comprehension” as a target skill. I wanted the students to become conscious of which parts of the text they understood and which parts they didn’t. I gave each student a photocopy of the chapter and both a pink and yellow highlighter. I told them that they should mark everything that they understood with pink and everything that confused them in yellow. Every word of the chapter needed to be one color or the other by the time they were finished. They needed to be ready to summarize and explain all of the parts they marked with pink. In addition, I asked them to be aware of the questions that the text prompted them to have and write down at least three of those questions in the margins close to the passage that elicited the question. After explaining the task, the students had about 30 minutes of the first period to work. The students needed 20 - 40 minutes of time during an additional class period to finish. Therefore, plan a non-mandatory activity that the students can work on quietly if they finish before their classmates.

Warning!: After students complete this assignment, you will need to allow yourself time to evaluate their work. Lesson 4 builds on the work done in Lesson 3.

Lesson 4: Vocabulary for Chapter 2

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Building Vocabulary**
 Building Schema

Purpose:

After Lesson 3, I collected the photocopied chapters and evaluated them. I was looking for the passages the students highlighted in yellow to show their confusion. I also read the questions they wrote in the margins. As I evaluated their work, I kept two lists: one of problematic vocabulary words and the other of questions. I discovered that the primary source of confusion was the students' lack of familiarity with words used in the chapter. I felt that there would be no point in discussing concepts and questions until we had dealt with critical vocabulary, so I chose to attack that next. The following list contains the words in Chapter 2 that my students did not understand.

merchant (p.10)
bookkeeper (p.11)
ranted (p.12)
denounced (p.12)
*political party (p.12)
parliament (p.13)
prosperity (p.13)
woes (p.13)
frenzied (p.14)
**antisemitism (p.14)
long-smoldering (p.14) – look up “smolder”
prejudices (p.14)
*fanned into flames (p.14)
boycott (p.15)
*der Fuhrer (p.16)
spurt (p.17)
regime (p.18)
quota (p.19)
*emigrate (p.19)
*immigrate (p.19)
annexed (p.21)
allotted (p.21)

* These are the terms I explained to students rather than asking them to look the words up in a dictionary.

** The author uses the spelling *anti-Semitism*. This is common in older texts. I've used the spelling recommended by USHMM. They advise writers not to use the hyphen and capital letter because to do so may lend credence to the idea that Jews can be defined as a race. See the enclosed news article by Michael J. Jordan titled “The semantics of anti-Semitism.”

In several cases, the students were confused about words that the author quite clearly defined in the text. I think the problem was that my students didn't understand the conventions of text well enough to pick up on the context clues the author gave them. I needed to explain to my students that definition context clues are one way that authors help readers with terms they anticipate the reader won't understand. Then I had them look back at the text with me and I showed them the context clues for the following words. Another convention I needed to explain is that when authors want to show that a word is from another language they often will use italics.

Reichstag (p.13)

Chancellor (p.15)

Iron Cross (p.15)

swastika (p.17)

Judenrein (p.18)

Schutzstaffeln or SS (p.18)

affidavit (p.21)

Tante (p.22)

Materials Needed:

One copy of "Ch.2 Vocabulary Note Sheet" for each student

A dictionary for each student

A copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student

A transparency copy of the note sheet and blank transparency sheets

Overhead markers

An overhead projector

Process:

I wrote each vocabulary word and the page number where it appeared on an index card. I gave each student one of these index cards and asked him/her to look-up that word in a dictionary. After reading through all of the dictionary definitions for that word, students were asked to locate the word in Chapter 2 and look at the context surrounding it. They were instructed to write down the definition that best matched the meaning of the word in the text.

After allowing time for using the dictionary, each student was then asked to go to the overhead to teach his/her word to the class using the following procedure. First, the presenter wrote the dictionary definition of the word on the overhead. Students were asked to copy the definition onto their own note sheets. Second, the presenter helped the class locate the word in the chapter and read aloud the sentence in which the word appeared while the class read along silently. Each student took a turn sharing his/her word with the class. I supplied definitions for any of the "left-over" words if I didn't have a student to assign to every word. I collected the index cards that I used to assign the words so that I could use them in my other classes.

After the students shared their assigned words, I shared the definitions for the words on the list marked with an asterisk. I used the same procedure they followed.

I took a moment to explain why I write the word *antisemitism* without the hyphen and capital letter. A transparency copy of Michael J. Jordan's article is available in the binder for this purpose. I also told them that defining *antisemitism* and learning about its history would be the topic of Lesson 5.

The last step of this lesson was to teach the group of unknown words for which the author gave strong context clues. The technique I used is explained in the notes preceding the final word list.

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.2
Vocabulary – Student Notes

Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

merchant (p.10)

bookkeeper (p.11)

denounced (p.12)

ranted (p.12)

*political party (p.12)

parliament (p.13)

prosperity (p.13)

woes (p.13)

frenzied (p.14)

*antisemitism** p.14

long-smoldering (p.14)

prejudices (p.14)

*fanned into flames (p.14)

boycott (p.15)

*der Fuhrer (p.16)

spurt (p.17)

regime (p.18)

quota (p.19)

emigrate (p.19) – to leave one country to settle in another

immigrate (p.19) – to enter and settle in a foreign country

annexed (p.21)

allotted (p.21)

Check the context clues in text for these words:

Reichstag (p.13)

Chancellor (p.15)

Iron Cross (p.15)

Swastika (p.17)

Judenrein (p.18)

Schutzstaffeln or SS (p.18)

affidavit (p.21)

Tante (p.22)

Four Perfect Pebbles

Ch. 2 Vocabulary – Answer Key

merchant (p.10) – a person whose business is buying & selling goods for profit

bookkeeper (p.11) – someone who keeps track of what is bought and sold for a business

denounced (p.12) – to accuse publicly; to inform against

ranted (p.12) – to talk or say in a loud, wild, extravagant way; to cry or shout violently

*political party (p.12) – a group of people working together to establish or promote the principles of government and public policy that they hold in common; the party usually seeks to elect candidates that represent their views

parliament (p.13) – a group of people who make decisions of government & public affairs; similar to the U.S. Congress

prosperity (p.13) – the condition of having good fortune, wealth, and success

woes (p.13) – troubles; misery

frenzied (p.14) – wild or frantic outburst of feeling or action

*antisemitism** (p.14)

long-smoldering (p.14) – to burn or smoke without flame; to have feelings of suppressed anger & hatred

*fanned into flames (p.14) – an analogy comparing a fire with how the Nazis aroused suppressed, but long-standing, antisemitism within the German people

prejudices (p.14) – judgment or opinion formed before facts are known

boycott (p.15) – to refuse to buy, sell, or use

*der Fuhrer (p.16) – German word for “leader”

spurt (p.17) – a sudden gushing

regime (p.18) – a form of government or rule; a political system

quota (p.19) – the number or proportion that is allowed or admitted

emigrate (p.19) – to leave one country to settle in another

immigrate (p.19) – to enter and settle in a foreign country

annexed (p.21) – to incorporate into a country, state, or city the territory of another country, state, or city

allotted (p.21) – to give or assign one’s portion of a larger amount of property, assets, resources, or tasks

Context clues given in text:

Reichstag (p.13) – the German parliament or governing body

Chancellor (p.15) – similar to a prime minister, the chief executive of a parliamentary government

Iron Cross (p.15) – a medal of honor awarded to German soldiers during WWI

swastika (p.17) – a symbol of ancient origin; used by the Nazis as a symbol of their party and antisemitism

Judenrein (p.18) – German word meaning to be rid of or totally free of Jews

Schutzstaffeln or SS (p.18) – an elite group of military men started as a protective service or guard for Hitler and other Nazi party leaders; later the SS oversaw and guarded the concentration camps; they were ruthless terrorists; they wore black uniform shirts

affidavit (p.21) – a written guarantee from a sponsor that a new immigrant would be cared for financially by that sponsor and would not become a burden on the social services of the new country

Tante (p.22) – German word for aunt

Students' Questions about Chapter 2:

- What was the Nazi party? (p.12)
- What does it mean to “overthrow the government”? (p.12)
- How did Hitler and the Nazi party gain control of Germany’s government?
- What does “splintered politically” mean? (p.13)
- What was the “worldwide depression”? (p.13)
- **Why did Hitler pick on Germany’s Jews? Wasn’t he a Jew? (p.14)**
- Why was so much attention paid to the Jews when they made up such a small percentage of the German population? (p.14)
- Why did Walter volunteer for the German Army? (p.15)
- Why would anyone throw stones at a baby’s carriage? (p.16)
- What would happen to a person who was seen entering a Jewish store? (p.16)
- What was the Hitler Youth? (p.17)

- What was the purpose of the marching song? (p.17)
- What was the purpose of the Nuremberg Laws? (p.17)
- What is an Aryan? (p.17)
- How would anyone know who was Jewish and who was non-Jewish in order to prohibit marriages? (p.17)
- What and where is Palestine? (p.19)
- Why did Germany annex Austria? (p.21)
- Why would it take more than a year to get a visa? (p.22)

Lesson 5: History of Antisemitism

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: Building Schema

Students often ask questions like “Why did Hitler hate the Jews?” It is important for them to understand that Hitler and the Nazi party could not have murdered 6 million Jewish people if antisemitism had not been hard-wired into European culture over thousands of years of time. Hitler believed that Jews were an inferior race, but many others in his society also held that belief. I do not mean in any way to absolve Hitler of the evil he committed; I simply think it is ridiculous to blame one man alone for the murders of millions of people. Hitler could not have done what he did without the help of many willing perpetrators and the lack of opposition from many bystanders. I also think it is important for them to understand that antisemitism was not unique to Europe; it was also rampant in the United States. Antisemitic attitudes among the leaders of the U.S. State Department caused officials to deny the full quota of visas allowed under immigration laws in effect at a time when Jews were desperate to escape Nazi-controlled countries.

Antisemitism is a difficult concept to teach because it is complex and spans an immense amount of time and many locations. It is very hard to avoid over-simplifications and generalizations in the process of explaining it to students. Over the years, I have tried several ways to succinctly teach the history of antisemitism and have not yet found the perfect method. During this unit, I tried to teach it using the chapter on antisemitism in *Tell Them We Remember*. This did not work very well. I think the chapter is too abstract for my reading students to grasp the concepts.

I fell back upon a tried and true cloze reading that I created when I first began teaching the Holocaust and have revised several times since. There are several reasons why I like to use this reading. First, it helped me feel that I was sharing accurate information with my students when I wasn't very confident about my own mastery of the content. It also helped keep me on track; I didn't have to worry about forgetting an important point I wanted to make. Second, it helped make a lecture-style lesson more interactive. It was a way to hold students accountable for listening carefully without overburdening them with note-taking. Third, it prevented the inaccuracies that sometimes happen when students take notes. I wanted them to have something that they could keep and refer to in the future. I will include this cloze reading with the materials for this lesson so that you may use it too. However, as I've already stated, I am not convinced this is the very best way to teach antisemitism. I encourage you to try other methods of teaching this content, and please share with me what worked for you!

Materials Needed:

One copy of “The Roots of Antisemitism” for each student

A transparency copy of “The Roots of Antisemitism”

Overhead markers

An overhead projector

Process:

As you read through “The Roots of Antisemitism,” fill in the blanks on the transparency as you go and ask students to do the same on their copies. I have found it most effective to allow questions as we go. I also feel free to stop and elaborate at any points where I feel it would be helpful. Usually I can complete the cloze reading in two class periods.

Background Reading:

I used three sources of information as I wrote this cloze reading; these are referenced on the last page. I recommend that you refer to Barbara Rogasky’s book *Smoke and Ashes* first because it is the easiest to read of the three. Also, it is available in many school and public libraries as well as at the MCHE Resource Center.

Another good synopsis of the history of antisemitism can be found in Lesson 3 of *Life Unworthy of Life: A Holocaust Curriculum*. You can check this out from the MCHE Resource Center. Look in the large ring binder; it has a black and white photograph of a camp uniform on the cover. The article is titled, “Brief History of Antisemitism.”

I would also recommend that you read pages 10-16 of *The World Must Know*.

A Brief History of Antisemitism
[Patton – revised 2/2005]

Christianity and Judaism are often seen as different faiths, but ironically, the first Christians were observant _____ who believed that Jesus was the Messiah for whom the Jews had been waiting. In fact, the word “Christian” means _____. These early Christians were a small sect of the larger body of Judaism; it was possible to be both _____ and _____ at the same time.

It was not until a Jewish man named Saul of Tarsus experienced a life-changing vision that a separation began to form between Jews and Christians. Saul, who came to be known as _____ of the New Testament, was a very successful missionary. In the years before Jesus lived, there were two categories of religious belief in the world. Pagan cultures, such as the ancient Greeks and Romans, worshipped _____ and were known as _____. The Hebrew, or Jewish, people believed in only one God and were waiting for Him to fulfill a promise to send a _____, a redeemer who would create an earthly paradise. Paul felt that there should be one universal, or _____, church that believed in Jesus as the Messiah. He worked to convert both Gentiles and Jews to the belief that Jesus was not just a great Jewish prophet, but God’s own son who would give them access to a heavenly paradise rather than an earthly paradise. Paul was a very

good missionary. As he converted followers to Christianity, he widened the gap between Jews and Christians; eventually they came to be seen as separate faiths.

As the Christian church grew, it became more powerful. During the _____, the decrees of the church influenced all aspects of life and were obeyed by both common men and kings. The simple faith of Jesus became complicated and rigid. The Christian church believed that it knew the only _____ and any differences in religious thought were seen as destructive. Because they refused to _____, life for Jews in Europe during the Middle Ages was miserable. They became _____ for every sort of problem. Jews were blamed for the death of the _____; this crime was so horrible that people believed Jews were capable of committing any type of evil act. They were accused of _____ and causing the _____ that killed millions of people. It was also believed that Jews murdered _____ in order to use their blood during religious ceremonies; this was known as the _____.

Many laws were created to prevent contact between Christians and Jews. For example, Jews could not _____ or hold public office. They were not allowed to practice _____ nor _____. They could not marry Christians and were forced to wear _____ in public to

identify themselves. In addition, Jews were forced to live in

_____, designated areas separate from Christians.

Periodically, Jews became the target of violent acts. Jews were often expelled from countries, among them _____, _____, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and _____. Some Jewish children were kidnapped and raised as Christians. Some Jews were _____ because they would not convert to Christianity. Sometimes entire Jewish communities were destroyed.

Although he was sympathetic to Jews in his earlier years,

_____, the founder of Protestantism, became violently anti-

Jewish later in his career. In 1542 he wrote, "Their synagogues should be

_____ ... Their homes should be likewise broken down and destroyed. ... Let us drive them out of the country for all time."

While Jews were hated, they were also _____ by the Christian community. Christians believed that it was a sin to

_____. Therefore, Jews filled an important need in the society by loaning money to non-Jews who needed this service.

Jews also were used by those in power to _____. This is probably the historical basis for myths such as "All Jews are rich" and "Jews are stingy with money." Jews valued education and created schools within their own communities.

In a time when most people were illiterate, most Jewish men

could _____ Yiddish, a derivation of the Hebrew language.

Because of their ability to communicate in a common language with Jews in many European countries, some Jews _____ and conducted _____ for the nobility. They became middlemen who sent and received information throughout Europe.

In the mid-1700's, Europe moved out of the Middle Ages in to the Age of _____. Then, in _____ the French Revolution began. Napoleon's conquest over Germany and other parts of Europe exported the French ideals of freedom, _____, and brotherhood. "Wherever French guns boomed..., _____ walls fell; wherever members of Napoleon's family assumed the thrones vacated by fleeing rulers, Jews emerged from centuries of _____" (Botwinick). Following Napoleon's defeat, the movement toward a more liberal society was reversed, and Jews once again faced familiar restrictions and oppression.

When Napoleon conquered _____, the people were particularly outraged that _____ was extended to Jews. They strove to redefine themselves and restore a sense of _____ and _____ that Napoleon had robbed from them. Under the leadership of men like Johann Fichte, Friedrich Jahn, and the composer Richard Wagner, the Germans began to create a sentimental, mystical concept of German-ness. They believed that "true" Germans – the " _____ " – were simple people

descended from the Teutons, the pagan people who originally inhabited Germany. The proponents of German _____ believed that being truly German was not just a matter of citizenship. They felt that German people had a unique quality and that _____ could never be truly German.

The word _____ was first used in 1873 in the book, The Triumph of Jewry Over Germanism, by Wilhelm Marr. This marked an important change in how Jews were perceived. Before then, Jews were thought to be dangerous because of their _____. However, it was thought possible for them to change for the better; they could choose not to be Jews. But after Marr's book, Jews were thought of as a _____. If Jews were a race by birth, then they could not change and they were fundamentally different from everyone else. A book titled Foundations of the Nineteenth Century, published in 1899, claimed that all of the good in civilization came from the _____. The best examples of this blond and blue-eyed master race were the _____. The book also promoted the idea that the bad in society came from the Jews, or _____. (These terms were misused; the words Aryan or Semite identify language groups – not races.) Combined with a swelling sense of nationalism that excluded Jews, these racist ideas about Jews laid the foundation for antisemitism to become a _____ force.

In Germany during the late 1800's and early 1900's, many political parties were competing for controlling power. Politicians learned that supporting antisemitic policies was a good way to gain _____. Anti-Jewish speeches and books became common, and antisemitic politicians were elected to the _____, the German legislative body.

_____ was born in Austria in 1889 and moved to Germany in 1913. Obviously he was influenced by antisemitic attitudes of the society in which he lived.

After Germany lost World War I, the country was in turmoil. They were embarrassed in the world community, their government was ineffective, the economy was suffering from a terrible _____. People were out of work, poor, and hungry. Many new political parties claimed to be the answer to Germany's problems. Most of these parties were extremely _____, _____, anti-government, and _____. Hitler joined one of these political parties that eventually came to be known as the National Socialist German Worker's Party, the _____. Hitler helped the party grow because of his magnetic personality and ability as a _____.

During the mid-1920's, Hitler, and the Nazi party tried to _____, but they failed.

Hitler was sentenced to _____ years in prison, but served only _____ months. During this time he wrote his book,

_____ , which became the bible of the Nazi movement. It is very dull and difficult to read, but it spells out the theories and plans for the future that the Nazi's put into effect when they took power. Hitler was obsessed with the idea of _____. He felt that the _____ race was superior to all others and that the _____ race was the most inferior. Hitler called the Jews names such as _____, _____, _____ and _____. He wrote, "World War I might not have been lost if some twelve or fifteen thousand of the Hebrew corrupters of the people had been _____ before or during the war" (Rogasky). The Holocaust stands as evidence that he meant every word he said. However, it is important to remember that Hitler could not have murdered millions of Jewish people alone. He had to have many accomplices and many bystanders who were as antisemitic as he was.

REFERENCES:

Botwinick, Rita Steinhardt. A History of the Holocaust: From Ideology to Annihilation. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996.

Dawidowicz, Lucy S. The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945. New York: Bantam Books, 1975.

Rogasky, Barbara. Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust. New York: Holiday House, 1988.

A Brief History of Antisemitism (Key)
[Patton – revised 2/2005]

Christianity and Judaism are often seen as different faiths, but ironically, the first Christians were observant **Jews** who believed that Jesus was the Messiah for whom the Jews had been waiting. In fact, the word “Christian” means **follower of the Messiah**. These early Christians were a small sect of the larger body of Judaism; it was possible to be both **Jewish** and **Christian** at the same time.

It was not until a Jewish man named Saul of Tarsus experienced a life-changing vision that a separation began to form between Jews and Christians. Saul, who came to be known as **Paul** of the New Testament, was a very successful missionary. In the years before Jesus lived, there were two categories of religious belief in the world. Pagan cultures, such as the ancient Greeks and Romans, worshipped **multiple gods** and were known as **Gentiles**. The Hebrew, or Jewish, people believed in only one God and were waiting for Him to fulfill a promise to send a **Messiah**, a redeemer who would create an earthly paradise. Paul felt that there should be one universal, or **catholic**, church that believed in Jesus as the Messiah. He worked to convert both Gentiles and Jews to the belief that Jesus was not just a great Jewish prophet, but God’s own son who would give them access to a heavenly paradise rather than an earthly paradise. Paul was a very good missionary. As he converted followers to Christianity, he widened the gap between Jews and Christians; eventually they came to be seen as separate faiths.

As the Christian church grew, it became more powerful. During the **Middle Ages**, the decrees of the church influenced all aspects of life and were obeyed by both common men and kings. The simple faith of Jesus became complicated and rigid. The Christian church believed that it knew the only **truth** and any differences in religious thought were seen as destructive. Because they refused to **convert to Christianity**, life for Jews in Europe during the Middle Ages was miserable. They became **scapegoats** for every sort of problem. Jews were blamed for the death of the **Jesus**; this crime was so horrible that people believed Jews were capable of committing any type of evil act. They were accused of **poisoning wells** and causing the **plague** that killed millions of people. It was also believed that Jews murdered **children** in order to use their blood during religious ceremonies; this was known as the **blood libel**.

Many laws were created to prevent contact between Christians and Jews. For example, Jews could not **own land** or hold public office. They were not allowed to practice **law** nor **medicine**. They could not marry Christians and were forced to wear **cloth badges** in public to identify themselves. In addition, Jews were forced to live in **ghettos**, designated areas separate from Christians.

Periodically, Jews became the target of violent acts. Jews were often expelled from countries, among them **England, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Germany**. Some Jewish children were kidnapped and raised as Christians. Sometimes Jews were **burned at the stake** because they would not convert to Christianity. Sometimes entire Jewish communities were destroyed. Although he was sympathetic to Jews in his earlier years,

Martin Luther, the founder of Protestantism, became violently anti-Jewish later in his career. In 1542 he wrote, “Their synagogues should be **set on fire** ... Their homes should be likewise broken down and destroyed. ... Let us drive them out of the country for all time.”

While Jews were hated, they were also **needed** by the Christian community. Christians believed that it was a sin to **loan money and charge interest (usury)**. Therefore, Jews filled an important need in the society by loaning money to non-Jews who needed this service. Jews also were used by those in power to **collect taxes and other fees**. This is probably the historical basis for myths such as “All Jews are rich” and “Jews are stingy with money.” Jews valued education and created schools within their own communities. In a time when most people were illiterate, most Jewish men could **read and write** Yiddish, a derivation of the Hebrew language. Because of their ability to communicate in a common language with Jews in many European countries, some Jews **managed businesses** and conducted **trade** for the nobility. They became middlemen who sent and received information throughout Europe.

In the mid-1700’s, Europe moved out of the Middle Ages in to the Age of **Enlightenment**. Then, in **1789** the French Revolution began. Napoleon’s conquest over Germany and other parts of Europe exported the French ideals of freedom, **equality**, and brotherhood. “Wherever French guns boomed..., **ghetto** walls fell; wherever members of Napoleon’s family assumed the thrones vacated by fleeing rulers, Jews emerged from centuries of **humiliation**.” (Botwinick). Following Napoleon’s defeat, the movement

toward a more liberal society was reversed, and Jews once again faced familiar restrictions and oppression.

When Napoleon conquered **Germany**, the people were particularly outraged that **equality under the law** was extended to Jews. They strove to redefine themselves and restore a sense of **pride** and **self-esteem** that Napoleon had robbed from them. Under the leadership of men like Johann Fichte, Friedrich Jahn, and the composer Richard Wagner, the Germans began to create a sentimental, mystical concept of German-ness. They believed that “true” Germans – the “**volk**” – were simple people descended from the Teutons, the pagan people who originally inhabited Germany. The proponents of German **nationalism** believed that being truly German was not just a matter of citizenship. They felt that German people had a unique quality and that **Jews** could never be truly German.

The word **antisemitism** was first used in 1873 in the book, The Triumph of Jewry Over Germanism, by Wilhelm Marr. This marked an important change in how Jews were perceived. Before then, Jews were thought to be dangerous because of their **religious beliefs**. However, it was thought possible for them to change for the better; they could choose not to be Jews. But after Marr’s book, Jews were thought of as a **race**. If Jews were a race by birth, then they could not change and they were fundamentally different from everyone else. A book titled Foundations of the Nineteenth Century, published in 1899, claimed that all of the good in civilization came from the **Aryans**. The best examples of this blond and blue-eyed master race were the **Germans**. The book also

promoted the idea that the bad in society came from the Jews, or **Semites**. (These terms were misused; the words Aryan or Semite identify language groups – not races.)

Combined with a swelling sense of nationalism that excluded Jews, these racist ideas about Jews laid the foundation for antisemitism to become a **political** force.

In Germany during the late 1800's and early 1900's, many political parties were competing for controlling power. Politicians learned that supporting antisemitic policies was a good way to gain **votes**. Anti-Jewish speeches and books became common, and antisemitic politicians were elected to the **Reichstag**, the German legislative body. **Adolf Hitler** was born in Austria in 1889 and moved to Germany in 1913. Obviously he was influenced by antisemitic attitudes of the society in which he lived.

After Germany lost World War I, the country was in turmoil. They were embarrassed in the world community, their government was ineffective, the economy was suffering from a terrible **depression**. People were out of work, poor, and hungry. Many new political parties claimed to be the answer to Germany's problems. Most of these parties were extremely **patriotic**, **anti-democratic**, anti-government, and **antisemitic**. Hitler joined one of these political parties that eventually came to be known as the National Socialist German Worker's Party, the **Nazis**. Hitler helped the party grow because of this magnetic personality and ability as a **public speaker**.

During the mid-1920's, Hitler, and the Nazi party tried to **take over the government**, but they failed. Hitler was sentenced to **five** years in prison, but served only **nine** months.

During this time he wrote his book, **Mein Kampf (My Struggle)**, which became the bible of the Nazi movement. It is very dull and difficult to read, but it spells out the theories and plans for the future that the Nazi's put into effect when they took power. Hitler was obsessed with the idea of **race and racial purity**. He felt that the **Aryan** race was superior to all others and that the **Semitic (Jewish)** race was the most inferior. Hitler called the Jews names such as **parasite, maggot, vermin, and snake**. He wrote, "World War I might not have been lost if some twelve or fifteen thousand of the Hebrew corrupters of the people had been **poisoned by gas** before or during the war" (Rogasky). The Holocaust stands as evidence that he meant every word he said. However, it is important to remember that Hitler could not have murdered millions of Jewish people alone. He had to have many accomplices and many bystanders who were as antisemitic as he was.

REFERENCES:

Botwinick, Rita Steinhardt. A History of the Holocaust: From Ideology to Annihilation. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996.

Dawidowicz, Lucy S. The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945. New York: Bantam Books, 1975.

Rogasky, Barbara. Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust. New York: Holiday House, 1988.

Raul Hilberg's Three Types of Antisemitism

“You may not live among us as Jews.”

(Religious Anti-Judaism)

- Emphasis on the conversion of Jews to Christianity
- After conversion, Jews accepted as full members of society
- Canon law dictates the persecution of Jews
- Jews viewed as deniers of and killers of Christ

“You may not live among us.”

(Secular Antisemitism)

- Jews segregated from the majority population, often in ghettos
- Belief that Jews have inherent biological characteristics and will not change
- Shift toward racial antisemitism supported by scientific advances and the pseudo-sciences of Social Darwinism and eugenics in the 18th century
- Resentment of Jewish participation in economic and social life of Europe following the Enlightenment and the 18th century revolutions

“You may not live.”

(Racial Antisemitism)

- Racial antisemitism firmly entrenched and supported by pseudo-sciences
- Judaism now perceived as a biological race – Jews who convert to Christianity or do not practice their religion are still considered Jews
- Patterns of persecution already well established – Nazi propaganda amplifies and manipulated patterns already in place
- Culminated in Nazi plans to kill all European Jews

Without the long-standing Christian mistrust of Jews, the Holocaust could probably not have happened. Antisemitism had been “hard-wired” into the consciousness of European culture for thousands of years. Hatred of Jews did not start with Hitler.

- The progression of antisemitism according to Raul Hilberg.
- Additional notes from Jessica Rockhold at MCHE and Laura Patton

Lesson 6: Building Schema for the Holocaust

1-2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Building Schema**
 Identifying Main Ideas

Purpose:

I wanted to help students gain historical context for the events described in Chapter 2, and I needed a fairly fast way to do this. This activity also allowed the students to practice determining the most important ideas in a nonfiction chapter with the help of their classmates.

Materials Needed:

A copy of *Tell Them We Remember* (TTWR) for each student
A copy of “Main Ideas Map” for each student
3 transparency copies of “Main Ideas Map”
3 transparency pens

If you want students to have a complete set of notes, each student will need two more copies of “Main Ideas Map.”

Process:

Randomly assign students one of the following chapters from TTWR. Try to assure that the number of students to each chapter is as equal as possible.

Group A	“The Nazi Terror Begins”	pages 10-11
Group B	“The Boycott of Jewish Businesses”	pages 14-15
Group C	“The Nuremberg Race Laws”	pages 18-19

Give each student a copy of TTWR and a copy of the graphic organizer. Explain that they are each to read the chapter that has been assigned to them. While they read, they should be looking for the most important ideas in the chapter. Explain that in nonfiction text, a good reader often looks for the Five W’s and H – who, what, when, where, why, and how. The Main Ideas Map also contains a space for explaining the importance or significance of the historical events. I like to think of this as “So what?” – Why was this information important enough to include in this textbook about the Holocaust? Give students 15-20 minutes to read the chapter and take notes.

After the students have had a chance to work independently, have them gather in homogeneous cooperative groups. In other words, all the people assigned to reading A should gather as a group; likewise for the students who read B and C. Give each group one transparency copy of the graphic organizer and an overhead pen. Tell them they have an additional 10-15 minutes to compare their notes and reach consensus about the main ideas of the chapter. They should then write these key ideas on the transparency and prepare to explain these ideas to the rest of the class.

Each group will take a turn sharing the main ideas of their chapter with the rest of the class using the transparency they have prepared as a visual aid. These short presentations should take 5-10 minutes each. You may want to give the students additional copies of the graphic organizer and ask them to take notes on Antisemitism is a difficult concept to teach. It is important to teach it well, and I do not believe that I have yet found the best way. the main ideas for the other chapters that they did not read. For the sake of time, I did not do this. I simply asked them to listen to each other carefully. I did not expect mastery of these concepts; I intended for this activity to simply be an introduction to the historical background.

A variation of the sharing step of this lesson would be to reassign the students to heterogeneous cooperative groups. In other words, one person from Group A, one person from Group B, and one person from Group C would meet together to exchange information. This method would hold all of the students accountable for explaining the main ideas of the information they read to two other classmates.

Lesson 7: Putting The Pieces Together & Re-reading Chapter 2

1 Class Period

Reading Skill: **Monitoring Comprehension**
 Synthesizing
 Fix-Up Strategies

Purpose:

Lessons 4, 5, and 6 were all designed to build the students schema for the Holocaust. I wanted to introduce them to this term and its meaning. I also wanted them to experience reading Chapter 2 again from a whole new vantage point. They are not any longer quite the same people they were the first time they read Chapter 2; they know more now than they did before. I felt that reading the chapter again would help them see for themselves the changes they had made in their own knowledge bank and degree of understanding.

Process:

To introduce the concept of *schema*, I told them that learning was like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Every new bit of information they learned fit together with other pieces of information they had already learned. Each piece helped make a complete picture. I asked them if they had ever put a jigsaw puzzle piece in the wrong place and had to move it or if they had ever gotten a piece from a different puzzle mixed in to the puzzle they were working on. They said “yes.” I told them that building schema was the same way. Every once in awhile, they would discover that they had filed a piece of learning into a place where it didn’t quite belong and they might have to rearrange some pieces. All the while I was talking with the students, I put together pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together on the overhead as a visual demonstration of the analogy I was making verbally. (You could also draw a jigsaw puzzle on a transparency sheet while you talk.) Then I reminded the students of all the things we had done in class since reading Chapter 2: the vocabulary work, the notes on the history of antisemitism, and the readings from TTWR. I told them that all of those activities built their schema for the Holocaust.

I explained to the students that what I wanted most for them as readers was to equip them with skills that they could use to solve their own comprehension problems. I told them that nobody understands everything that he reads. (I gave them an example from my life – financial statements from investment companies!) So the most important thing is not that you immediately understand everything that you read, but that you know how to fix your comprehension problems when you don’t understand. I asked them if they could have looked up the words they didn’t know in Chapter 2; they said “yes.” I asked them if they could have gone to a teacher, a parent, or the USHMM website to find out about antisemitism; they said “yes.” I asked them if they could have looked for another Holocaust history book to help themselves understand the concepts in Chapter 2 that they didn’t understand; they said “yes.”

I asked the students to take a brief look at the definitions on their Chapter 2 vocabulary note sheets. Then I put the list of questions back on the overhead for them to read again. Then I asked the students to re-read Chapter 2. They could choose to read from the photocopy they had already highlighted, or they could read clean copy from the book. Either way, I asked them to notice what they understood better on the second reading and what questions they still had.

After allowing them time to read, we took a few minutes to discuss their reactions to the re-reading. There was a unanimous sense among my students that they understood much better this time than last time. They also felt that their questions changed quality. Before, their questions were about information that was essential to understanding the chapter. After re-reading, their questions were more a matter of curiosity and a desire to keep reading and keep learning to find out the answers; they were motivational.

Lesson 8: *The Camera of My Family*
Optional Lesson

1 Class Period

Reading Skill: Making Text-to-Text Connections
Building Schema

Purpose:

The Camera of My Family is a short film (19 minutes) that tells the story of a photographer who discovers that many of the members of her family died in the Holocaust. The film is useful to show the lifestyle of an assimilated German Jewish family and allows many comparisons with the Blumenthal family in *Pebbles*. Some of these connections points are:

- Patriotic Germans – Jews by religion only
- Successful family business
- Served German army in WWI
- Political and economic turbulence in Germany after WWI
- Nazi attempt to overthrow the government/ Hitler jailed
- Economic depression increased overt antisemitism & helped Nazis gain power
- Personal experiences with antisemitism
- Hitler becomes Chancellor/ Democracy destroyed
- Effects of the Nuremberg Laws (although that term is not used in the film)
- Kristallnacht
- Fleeing to Holland to await emigration
- Aryanizing Jewish property

Materials Needed:

A VHS or DVD of *Camera of My Family*

One copy for each student of “Connections Chart for *Four Perfect Pebbles* and *The Camera of My Family*”

Process:

Give each student a copy of the note-taking chart. Ask them to look at the comparison points in column one and the information that has already been completed in column two. Tell the students that they are going to watch a video about a German Jewish family that can be compared in many ways to the Blumenthal family. As they watch, they are to take brief notes in the third column. Their task is to make text-to-text connections; in this case, they will find many similarities between the two families.

The Camera of My Family is only 19 minutes long and it is densely packed with information. You may wish to pause the tape periodically to let students catch-up on their notes. Or you may wish to rewind the film and show it again to help students catch details the second time that they missed on the first viewing. It would also be well worth the time to have a bit of question-and-answer and discussion time following the film.

The main concept I wanted my students to understand after watching this film is that life for Jews in Germany before Hitler was generally good. German Jews were often well assimilated into German society. They were patriotic and served in WWI in greater proportion than their actual percentage of the overall population. There were poor Jews, and middle-class Jews, and wealthy Jews. Like many Germans, the Blumenthals and the Wallachs developed their own successful family businesses. They took vacations, celebrated holidays, and went to school. All in all, they weren't really much different from us!

Name: _____ Hour: _____ Date: _____

Connections Chart for *Four Perfect Pebbles* and *The Camera of My Family*

Key

Points to Compare	<u>Four Perfect Pebbles</u>	<u>The Camera of My Family</u>
Family Roots in Germany	Hoya – small town. Business started 1894 by Walter’s parents.	
German Assimilation/ Patriotism	Assimilated – 44 Jews of 3,000 people in Hoya.	
Service in WWI	Walter served 4 years. Awarded the Iron Cross.	
Occupation	Family business – shoes & clothing.	
Lifestyle	Financially comfortable. Lived in 2 floors above store with grandparents.	

Experiences of Antisemitism	1933 Boycott hurt family business. Rocks thrown at Albert's baby carriage.	
Experiences of Nazi Persecution	Boycott started loss of business. Nuremberg Laws: lost citizenship	
Kristallnacht 9 November 1938	Walter arrested. Car confiscated.	
Escape from Germany	Started emigration process 1938. To Holland in 1/1939 to wait for US visa.	
Financial Circumstances	Sold business for only a small portion of its worth. Many possession taken during departure inspection.	
Outcome	Trapped in Holland.	

Name: _____ Hour: _____ Date: _____

Connections Chart for *Four Perfect Pebbles* and *The Camera of My Family*

Key

Points to Compare	<u>Four Perfect Pebbles</u>	<u>The Camera of My Family</u>
Family Roots in Germany	Hoya – small town. Business started 1894 by Walter’s parents.	Catherine Hanf Noren – narrator. Mother was a Wallach. Born near Munich, Germany in 1938. Family had lived in Germany for many generations: Great x3 Grandfather Abraham lived in German Jewish ghetto.
German Assimilation/ Patriotism	Assimilated – 44 Jews of 3,000 people in Hoya.	Thought of themselves as Germans; Jews in religion only. Loved Bavarian folk art and culture – basis of family business.
Service in WWI	Walter served 4 years. Awarded the Iron Cross.	All of men in Wallach family served in WWI.
Occupation	Family business – shoes & clothing.	Wallach House of Folk Art started in 1929 by Grandfather Moritz in Munich. Owned textile mill in Dachau.
Lifestyle	Financially comfortable. Lived in 2 floors above store with grandparents.	Prosperous. Comfortable lifestyle. Large family; large home; large garden. Vacations with family.

Experiences of Antisemitism	1933 Boycott hurt family business. Rocks thrown at Albert's baby carriage.	Grandfather Moritz taken hostage during Nazi attempt to overthrow the government in 1923. Called "Jew" even by gardener employed by family. Prejudiced gym teacher.
Experiences of Nazi Persecution	Boycott started loss of business. Nuremberg Laws: lost citizenship	Felt many effects of Nuremberg Laws. Nazis confiscated grandparents' furniture and folk art.
Kristallnacht 9 November 1938	Walter arrested. Car confiscated.	Wallach store windows sprayed with acid. Grandfather hid in mountains. Cousin sent to Dachau. Father arrested.
Escape from Germany	Started emigration process 1938. To Holland in 1/1939 to wait for US visa.	Many of Wallach family were able to go to U.S. Catherine's family went to Holland; then Australia in 1938; then U.S. approx 1947.
Financial Circumstances	Sold business for only a small portion of its worth. Many possession taken during departure inspection.	Grandfather was cheated out of his prosperous business when it was "Aryanized." Grandparents arrived in U.S. with only \$10 of German money.
Outcome	Trapped in Holland.	Some of family escaped. Many members of extended family perished in Holocaust.

Lesson 9: Chapter 3

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Making Connections**
 Building Schema
 Asking Questions

Purpose:

As the students read Chapter 3, I want them to be aware of their thinking and actively work to make text-to-text connections with the concepts they have learned from *Tell Them We Remember*, the antisemitism cloze reading, and *The Camera of My Family*.

Materials Needed:

One copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student
One photocopy of “Double Entry Diary for Chapter 3” for each student
A transparency copy of the DED
Overhead markers
An overhead projector

Process:

Give each student a copy of the “Double Entry Diary” and a copy of the book. If your students are not familiar with using a Double Entry Diary, plan to read the start of the chapter along with the students and pause to model the comprehension skills you want them to practice. I have given you a chart with a few examples of the kinds of thinking that you might model.

After you get the students started, you may choose to have them finish working through the chapter in pairs or on their own. It may take more than one class period to complete the initial reading and DED. During the next class period, ask students to share their thinking in small groups or with the whole class. I have found that students who struggle with comprehension benefit from the positive modeling of their peers.

Name: _____ Hour: ____ Date: _____

Double Entry Diary for Chapter 3 of *Four Perfect Pebbles*

Directions: As you read Chapter 3, be thinking about what you have already learned about the Holocaust. When you encounter text that reminds you of information that you have encountered before, pause to make a few notes about that connection. If a question occurs to you as you read, pause to make a note of it. If you read something that you recognize is new information for you, make a brief note. Use the codes shown on the chart below to label the type of thinking you are recording.

On page #, I read...	C: I made a connection with... Q: I had a question about... N: This is new information for me...

DED for Chapter 3 Continued

On page #, I read...	C: I made a connection with... Q: I had a question about... N: This is new information for me...

Name: _____ Hour: ____ Date: _____

Double Entry Diary for Chapter 3 of *Four Perfect Pebbles*

With a few examples.

Directions: As you read Chapter 3, be thinking about what you have already learned about the Holocaust. When you encounter text that reminds you of information that you have encountered before, pause to make a few notes about that connection. If a question occurs to you as you read, pause to make a note of it. If you read something that you recognize is new information for you, make a brief note. Use the codes shown on the chart below to label the type of thinking you are recording.

On page #, I read...	C: I made a connection with... Q: I had a question about... N: This is new information for me...
p.24 “On August 17 a law was passed that forced all Jewish females to take the middle name of Sarah. All males were to be given the name Israel... all passports and other documents... must also be marked with a large letter J.	C: I made a connection with TTWR: “The Nuremberg Race Laws.” I remember it explained that these laws were passed to make in easier for the police to identify Jews.
p.25 “The expulsion of thousands of Jews... One deportee, Zindel Grynszpan... sent a postcard to his son... Herschel, who... shot the first official her met, Ernst vom Rath... On November 9, vom Rath died...	N: I didn’t know that the Nazis used the murder of Ernst vom Rath as an excuse for Kristallnacht.
p. 28 “They asked for Papa by name... ‘Get dressed and come with us.’”	C: I remember in <i>Camera of My Family</i> that several family members were arrested during Kristallnacht.

Lesson 10: Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth
Optional Lesson

1 Class Period + Follow-Up Discussion Time

Reading Skills: Making Connections
Building Schema

Purpose:

Heil Hitler: Confession of a Hitler Youth is the video testimony of Alfons Heck. Heck was a devoted member of the Hitler Youth. His testimony touches upon many concepts of Holocaust study including the following:

- The elation of German citizens of the Rhineland when the region was remilitarized on March 7, 1936.
- Racial science classes taught to him in school. Heck’s understanding of belonging to the “master race.”
- Heck’s memories of watching the antisemitic film, *The Eternal Jew*.
- Joining the Hitler Youth and the Hitler Youth oath.
- Attending the Nazi Party Rally in Nuremberg as a Hitler Youth. Heck was one of 50,000 boys chosen to attend out of the 8 million members of the Hitler Youth. He left that he belonged to “a vast and important movement” and “belonged to Hitler, body and soul.”
- Heck’s impressions of Kristallnacht, which he calls “a frenzy of hatred.” He describes the destruction of a synagogue and desecration of Torah scrolls. He watched violence toward people he had known all of his life. He says that Kristallnacht was “the end of German innocence. We could not maintain that we didn’t know what was in store for the Jews.”
- Heck describes the first deportation of Jews from his hometown. He describes his indifference to their fate feeling that it was “such a shame that they were Jews.” He felt the deportations were a just measure – necessary for the survival of Germany.
- Heck discusses a few pivotal points in the war and the role of the Hitler Youth in the war effort. He describes the Hitler Youth as the last ditch defense of Germany’s home territory and the elation of his unit when they shot down an Allied plane. He says that he was not afraid to die because of his fanaticism. He had been indoctrinated to win the war or die. Even after Hitler’s suicide, the Hitler Youth kept on fighting.
- He describes being captured by the Allies and being forced to watch films of Nazi atrocities. He could not accept the truth of what he was seeing and began to laugh. He describes being treated harshly by his Allied captors.
- Heck tells about going to Nuremberg to listen to evidence against the defendants during the War Crimes Trials. He was particularly interested in the testimony of the leader of the Hitler Youth who said, “I have trained youth for a man who became a murderer a million times over.” Heck says that he felt implicated in the murders because he had served Hitler just as fanatically. He also felt a deep sense of betrayal and realizes that he was the victim of a kind of brainwashing.

- At the conclusion of the film, Heck says that the Nazis perpetrated a form of child abuse upon millions of German children.
- At the conclusion of the film, Heck gives a chilling warning about whether or not he thinks the Holocaust could happen again.

This film is riveting. It is very unusual to hear from a former Nazi who does not try, in any way, to defend or deny his involvement with the Nazis. Heck accepts full responsibility for the role he played in the Holocaust. He is committed to educating people so that history might not repeat itself.

Materials Needed:

A VHS or DVD of *Heil Hitler: Confession of a Hitler Youth*

Process:

I have tried in the past to give students a note-taking assignment to complete as they watch this film. I have found that the assignment mostly just gets in the way. The film is so engaging that I never have problems with students who do not pay full attention. It is also loaded with details, so the task of taking notes is ominous. I generally choose to just show the film and trust that the main ideas will stick with the students.

One strategy you might try is to choose a few points where you pause the film to discuss concepts conveyed to that point. Be aware, however, that you will not be able to show the entire film in one 45-minute class period if you stop. If you show the entire film in one period, be prepared to do some follow-up discussion the next class period or interspersed with other lessons throughout the unit.

Lesson 11: Chapter 4

3 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Determining Importance
 Summarizing**

Purpose:

Being able to determine the important and less important ideas in text is an essential reading skill – especially when working with non-fiction text. The act of summarizing requires prioritizing ideas and then conveying them in a manner that does not replicate the author’s original language. Chapter 4 offers a wonderful opportunity for the teacher to model and for the students to practice these skills.

I felt that it would be nearly impossible for students to summarize an entire chapter at once; I knew their skills were not sophisticated enough to handle that big a task. Therefore, I divided the chapter into sections that I thought were manageable. I also looked for groups of paragraphs containing related ideas to make the process easier for the students. These sections are noted at the end of this lesson plan.

In addition, a sample summary of the sections has been provided for your reference. Please do not regard my section-by-section summary of this chapter or any others as the absolute authority about the ideas that should be included. All summaries are a reflection of choices that were made about which ideas were important enough to include. These choices are, to some extent, a matter of judgment and opinion; this is what makes summarizing a difficult skill to teach. Your greatest challenge in teaching summarizing will be explaining to your students the reasons why you made the choices you made – both to include certain pieces of information and to leave out others. My reasoning for including some ideas but not others may not exactly match your reasoning.

Materials:

Each student will need a book or photocopy of Chapter 4 with stopping points marked. An overhead projector, blank transparencies, and overhead markers.

Process:

The teacher and students will work through this chapter together. The teacher will provide lots of modeling and support in the beginning. As the students demonstrate increasing mastery of the skills, the teacher will gradually withdraw support and push students to work with increasing levels of independence.

Read section #1 aloud while the students read along. Think aloud about the main idea(s) of the section. Then write a sentence or two that summarizes this section. Repeat this process for sections #2 and #3.

When you feel that the students are ready, read aloud while they read along. Then ask them to write a sentence or two that summarizes the main ideas of the section. Monitor the students as they work. After allowing a few minutes of work time, show the students your summary of section #4 and ask them to check it against their own work. Clarify and explain as needed. Continue in this same way for several more sections until you feel the students are ready to take another step toward independence.

The next step for Chapter 4 is to assign the students several sections at once to read and summarize on their own before checking. Decide how large a portion to assign for independent work based on your judgment of your students' proficiency.

The last step of this lesson is to have the students consolidate their section-by-section summary into a final summary of the chapter. Related ideas should be grouped together into paragraphs. Tell the students that it is permissible to change the order of ideas from the section-by-section summary in order to group them together. It is also okay to delete some ideas that may have been important in their section but may not be as important in the over-all view of the chapter.

This final summary was an important diagnostic tool. I found that most students simply recopied their section-by-section summaries. Frequently, they used no paragraph breaks at all. Some ideas may have been important within a particular section but were not so important in comparison with other sections of the chapter. In other words, some ideas made the preliminary cut for the section-by-section summary but not the final cut for inclusion in the chapter summary. My students did not get this. They did not delete less important ideas or rearrange related ideas so as to group them together. I realized that they were lacking the skills needed to perform these tasks; therefore, I designed the lesson for Chapter 5 to address these needs.

Sections – Chapter 4

1. Page 45 “On arriving in Rotterdam...” to page 46 “...she cried all the time.”
2. Page 46 “After three months...” to page 47 “...pour into the country.”
3. Page 47 “In the fall of 1939...” to page 48 “...longed-for visa for America.”
4. Page 48 “We worried...” to page 49 “...be on our way!”
5. Page 49 “While Ruth and Walter...” to page 50 “...puppy on a leash.”
6. Page 50 “In those early months...” to page 51 “...my appreciation.”
7. Page 51 “Spring was...” to page 51 “...for the answer.”
8. Page 51 “On May 10...” to page 52 “...in the Netherlands.”
9. Page 52 “At first the changes...” to page 54 “...went into hiding.”
10. Page 54 “At Westerbork...” to page 54 “...every twenty-four hours.”
11. Page 55 “What did we know...” to page 55 “...refused to believe them.”
12. Page 55 “On July 15...” to page 56 “...strolled on the boulevard.”
13. Page 56 “As the months went by...” to page 57 “...room to breathe.”
14. Page 57 “It was now a little more...” to page 59 “...no gas chambers.”
15. Page 58 “When, on January thirtieth...” to page 59 “would be different.”

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.4
Summary by Sections

1. The Blumenthal family lived in several refugee camps after arriving in Holland. (January 1939) (14 words)
2. After three months, the family moved to Gouda, Holland to work in a camp for refugee children. Meanwhile the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and Poland in September 1939. This caused more refugees to look for a safe haven. (40 words)
3. Late in 1939 the Blumenthals arrived at Westerbork refugee camp. They had a small house in which they could live as a family. Ruth and Walter worked; there was some schooling for the children. (34 words)
4. In January 1940 the Blumenthals received their visas for America. They made reservations on a ship scheduled to leave Holland in March 1940. (23 words)
5. At Westerbork families visited and children played. The Blumenthals lived as normal a life as is possible in a refugee camp. (21 words)
6. Food at Westerbork was “plain but plentiful.” Luxuries like sweets were rare. (12 words)
7. The Blumenthal’s date for sailing to America was postponed until June 1940. In April, the Nazis invaded Denmark and Norway. (20 words)
8. In May 1940 the Nazis invaded Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. The warehouse in which the Blumenthals possessions were stored was destroyed. There was no longer any hope that the family would sail for America from Holland; they were caught in the Nazis trap. (44 words)
9. Westerbork gradually became more crowded. The Nazis imposed policies in Holland similar to those they had imposed on German Jews: registration of businesses, loss of jobs and school, property confiscated, yellow star, teenagers “called up” for “work camps.” (38 words)
10. On 1 July 1942 the Germans took over command of Westerbork. Watchtowers and barbed-wire fences were installed. Daily roll calls began. The name was changed to “Police-Supervised Transit Camp, Westerbork.” The camp began to function as a center for deporting Jews to killing centers like Auschwitz. (47 words)
11. Rumors about death camps, like Auschwitz, were spreading around Westerbork the summer of 1942. Most people didn’t want to believe them. (21 words)

12. Starting 15 July 1942, one or two trains left Westerbork each week. On each train 1000+ people were loaded into freight cars with only buckets for toilets. (27 words)
13. Westerbork became very crowded as Jews were rounded up, processed through the camp, then shipped East. The Blumenthals were forced to share their small house with another family. (28 words)
14. Walter applied, through the International Red Cross, to be exchanged for German POW's and allowed to immigrate to Palestine. (19 words)
15. In February 1944, the Blumenthals left Westerbork for Celle, Germany where they hoped the exchange process would happen. Marion was 9 and Albert 11; they had lived at Westerbork for four years. (32 words)

Approximately 400 Words Total

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.4
Summary

The Blumenthal family lived in several refugee camps after arriving in Holland in January 1939. Meanwhile the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and Poland in September 1939.

Late in 1939 the Blumenthals arrived at Westerbork refugee camp. They lived as a family in a small house. Ruth and Walter worked, and the children received some schooling. During their free time, families visited and children played. Food at Westerbork was “plain but plentiful” although luxuries like sweets were rare.

In January 1940 the Blumenthals received their visas for America. They made reservations on a ship scheduled to leave Holland in March; however, the shipping company postponed their sailing date until June 1940. In April, the Nazis invaded Denmark and Norway.

In May 1940 the Nazis invaded Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. The warehouse in which the Blumenthals possessions were stored was destroyed. The family lost hope that they would sail for America from Holland; they were caught in the Nazi’s trap.

On 1 July 1942 the Germans took over command of Westerbork. They installed watchtowers and barbed-wire fences and began daily roll calls. The camp’s name was changed to “Police-Supervised Transit Camp, Westerbork.” It became very crowded as Jews were rounded up and processed through the camp; therefore, the Blumenthals were forced to share their small house with another family. The camp began to function as a center for deporting Jews to “the East.” Rumors about death camps, like Auschwitz, were spreading around Westerbork the summer of 1942, but most people didn’t want to believe them. Starting 15 July 1942, one or two trains left Westerbork each week. On each train 1000+ people were loaded into freight cars with only buckets for toilets.

Walter applied, through the International Red Cross, to be exchanged for German POW’s and allowed to immigrate to Palestine. In February 1944, the Blumenthals left Westerbork for Celle, Germany where they were hope the exchange process would happen. Marion was 9 and Albert 11; they had lived at Westerbork for four years.

Approximately 335 words

Lesson 12: Chapter 5

2 Class Periods

**Reading Skills: Determining Importance
 Summarizing**

Purpose:

In Chapter 4, the students were gradually weaned from teacher assistance for their section-by-section summary. For Chapter 5, I wanted to assess their ability to summarize short sections independently.

Materials:

A photocopy of Chapter 5, with sections marked, for each student.
Students will need notebook paper and pens or pencils.

Process:

I predicted that my students were not yet skillful enough to summarize a whole chapter or decide for themselves where the text seemed to cluster into groups of related paragraphs. Therefore, I once again gave them a photocopy of Chapter 5 with periodic stopping points marked. (See the notes about section divisions at the end of the lesson plan.) I asked the students to stop reading and summarize each section of the text before they went on to the next section. I allowed one day for this part of the assignment; anything not finished in class was assigned for homework. This part of the task they were able to do fairly well.

The next day, I asked the students to re-write their section-by-section summaries into a chapter summary. I told them that they were welcome to delete some ideas from their section-by-section summaries and not include them in the chapter summaries. I also told them to feel free to rearrange or re-group ideas. I allowed one class period for this activity.

When I read the final summaries for Chapter 5, I realized that the students had simply rewritten their section-by-section summary into one continuous block of text. They did not group similar ideas together unless they happened to appear in consecutive order in their section-by-section summary. They did not use paragraph breaks. They did not combine sentences. They did not delete sentences that were not important in the “big picture” view of the chapter. Based on how poorly they performed, I decided to give them instruction and support for this final step of Chapter 5. Lesson 13 builds on the work done in Lesson 12. It would not need to be taught if your students were able to complete the whole-chapter summary satisfactorily.

Sections – Chapter 5

1. Page 60 “As the Blumenthals approached...” to page 61 “...east toward Germany.”
2. Page 61 “The camp to which...” to page 63 “...take us to Palestine.”
3. Page 61 “In May 1944...” to page 65 “...the slightest effect.”
4. Page 65 “We went on...” to page 66 “...for the moment.”
5. Page 66 “One of the most frightening...” to page 67 “...Auschwitz ovens.”
6. Page 68 “Bergen-Belsen...” to page 68 “...with every breath.”
7. Page 68 “Slowly, starting with...” to page 69 “...latrine dug in the mud.”
8. Page 69 “For the Blumenthals...” to page 70 “...the growing hunger.”
9. Page 70 “By the early months...” to page 71 “...food was survival.”
10. Page 71 “One evening...” to page 72 “...but not our lives.”
11. Page 72 “Medical treatments...” to page 73 “...were not among them.”

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.5
Summary by Sections

1. The Blumenthals felt uneasy as they boarded the overcrowded train for Celle, Germany in February 1944. They feared that their train had no special status and were worried about being sent back to Germany as prisoners. (36 words)
2. The Blumenthals arrived at Bergen-Belsen where the conditions there were far worse than those at Westerbork. They were still hopeful that they would soon be exchanged for German POW's. (30 words)
3. In May 1944 the names of the exchange Jews were announced. The Blumenthals did not hear their names called. When Walter approached the Nazi officer to politely inquire if a mistake had been made, he was beaten. The Nazi's refusal to honor the Palestine certificate was their greatest disappointment and the end of all their hope. (57 words)
4. The Blumenthals tried their best to survive daily life at Bergen-Belsen. Ruth was lucky to have a job in the kitchen where there was some chance to gather extra food. Once a guard gave an apple to Albert, which he shared with the family. This small gesture of kindness was a "flicker of light in the darkness." (58 words)
5. At Bergen-Belsen, the prisoners were forced to take monthly showers. They had heard rumors of gas chambers that looked like showers at Auschwitz and were afraid that the showers at Bergen-Belsen might be the same. (37 words)
6. Bergen-Belsen had a crematorium to burn the bodies of prisoners who died of starvation, exhaustion, and disease. As the camp became more crowded and death rates increased, the crematorium could not keep up with the bodies. Bodies were sometimes burned in open pits, buried in mass graves, or piled up aboveground. (53 words)
7. After D-Day in June 1944, the Nazis began to lose the war. To hide their crimes from the advancing Allied forces, the Nazis began to move prisoners into Germany. Bergen-Belsen became even more overcrowded. (35 words)
8. The winter of 1944-1945 was especially difficult for the Blumenthals because it was bitterly cold. Also, food was scarce, and there was not enough water for drinking - much less for bathing or washing clothes. Their clothes and hair were infected with lice. (43 words)
9. Rations were far less than the 600 calories-per-day that the inmates had received previously. The death toll continued to increase because of the horrid conditions and lack of food. In addition, typhus, a disease carried by lice, spread throughout the camp. (43 words)

10. In April 1945, Mama and Marion made a fire in their bunk and cooked some soup. When the soup was almost done, they heard guards approaching. As they tried to hide what they were doing, they spilled the soup on Marion's leg, but she did not cry out. (48 words)

11. On 9 April 1945, the Blumenthals were loaded on a train heading east. They had no idea where they were going or why. The soup burn on Marion's leg was infected and oozing pus. On 15 April 1945, six days after the Blumenthals left, the British liberated Bergen-Belsen. (45 words)

Aprox. 500 words

Lesson 13: Chapter 5

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Sequencing Ideas**
 Grouping Related Ideas
 Summarizing

Purpose:

When I read the final summaries for Chapter 5, I realized that my students were not able to make the leap from summarizing section-by-section to summarizing a whole chapter. They didn't know how to sequence ideas in a logical way. And they did not seem to know how to group similar ideas together into paragraphs. Those two skills are the focus of this lesson. Lesson 13 builds on the work done in Lesson 12. It would not need to be taught if your students were able to complete the whole-chapter summary satisfactorily.

Materials:

Photocopies of "Ch.5 Summary Cut-Apart."

These need to be cut into strips and place in an envelope. Each pair of students needs an envelope of containing sentence strips for the entire chapter summary. Transparencies of "Ch.5 Summary Cut-Apart" and "Ch.5 Summary OH"

Process:

I began by giving the students some feedback about their performance on the whole chapter summary. I started by telling them that deciding what's important is a really difficult skill and that they were making progress toward mastering it. I used the analogy of a target in darts or archery to illustrate the idea that I was seeing improvement in their choice of the ideas they included in their summaries. They were hitting the inside rings; they just weren't hitting the bull's eye yet. I also told them that what's important depends, in part, on the reason for their reading and summarizing. Because we were reading a memoir rather than a history book, our main purpose in reading and summarizing is to learn about and re-tell what happened to the Blumenthal family.

Next, I told the students that although I was seeing improvement in their choices about which ideas to write down, they were still having difficulty grouping related ideas together and sequencing ideas. The purpose of today's lesson was to help them practice those skills.

I divided the class into groups of two and gave each group an envelope filled with sentence strips. Together, the sentences made up my final summary of Chapter 5. Their job was to decide which sentences were related closely enough to make up a paragraph. And then, after figuring out which sentences went together to form each paragraph, they needed to arrange the paragraphs into a logical order.

Caution: This activity took more than one class period. I had to give the groups paper clips to secure the sentences that they thought went together. They packed everything back into the envelope and wrote their names on the outside so that they could easily pick up where they left off.

The next day, they finished grouping and sequencing. We talked about the fact that there could be very reasonable differences in the sequencing decisions groups made – especially concerning details. However, since the memoir is in chronological order, it would be most logical for the summary to also be in chronological order.

The last step of the lesson was checking group work against the original. I put a transparency of the cut-apart version of the summary on the overhead for the pairs to see how closely their sequence matched the version I wrote. Then I showed it to them the way it would look if the sentences of the paragraphs were written together – a final draft. I asked them to notice which ideas I grouped together into paragraphs. We talked about the differences between their versions and mine and the reasons for these differences.

NOTE: Any time I model my work for students, I try NOT to hold my work up as the definitive answer. I try to approach my students from the point-of-view of a more-experienced learner/ reader/ writer who has simply had more opportunity to practice than my students have had. I like to think of my modeling language skills for students as an apprentice - master craftsman relationship. I try to help them understand that, although there certainly will be high degrees of similarity between two different summaries of the same chapter, there is almost always more than one way to successfully accomplish the task. I simply try to show them one way it could be done.

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.5
Summary: Cut-Apart

The Blumenthals felt uneasy as they boarded the overcrowded train destined for Celle, Germany in February 1944.

They feared that their train had no special status and were worried about being sent back to Germany as prisoners.

The train took the family to Bergen-Belsen where the conditions there were far worse than those at Westerbork.

However, they were still hopeful that they would soon be exchanged for German POW's.

In May 1944 the names of the exchange Jews were announced.

The Blumenthals names were not on the list.

When Walter approached the Nazi officer to politely inquire if a mistake had been made, he was beaten.

The Nazi's refusal to honor the Palestine certificate was their greatest disappointment and the end of all their hope.

The Blumenthals struggled to survive daily life at Bergen-Belsen.

Ruth was lucky to have a job in the kitchen where there was some chance to gather extra food.

Once a guard gave an apple to Albert, which he shared with the family. This small gesture of kindness was a "flicker of light in the darkness."

At Bergen-Belsen, the prisoners were forced to take monthly showers.

They had heard rumors of gas chambers that looked like showers at Auschwitz and were afraid that the showers at Bergen-Belsen might be the same.

Bergen-Belsen had a crematorium to burn the bodies of prisoners who died of starvation, exhaustion, and disease.

As the camp became more crowded and death rates increased, the crematorium could not keep up with the bodies.

Bodies were sometimes burned in open pits, buried in mass graves, or piled up aboveground.

After D-Day in June 1944, the Nazis began to lose the war.

To hide their crimes from the advancing Allied forces, the Nazis began to move prisoners into Germany.

Bergen-Belsen became even more overcrowded.

The winter of 1944-1945 was especially difficult for the Blumenthals.

It was bitterly cold.

The camp was horribly overcrowded.

Daily rations were far less than 600 calories per day.

There was not enough water for drinking, bathing, and washing clothes.

The inmates' clothes and hair were infected with lice.

In addition, typhus, a disease carried by lice, spread throughout the camp. The death toll continued to increase because of the horrid conditions and lack of food.

In early April 1945, Mama and Marion made a fire in their bunk and cooked some soup.

When the soup was almost done, they heard guards approaching.

As they tried to hide what they were doing, they spilled the soup on Marion's leg.

Because she did not cry out, the guards did not find out what they had been doing.

Within a short time, the burn became infected and Marion could not walk on the leg.

On 9 April 1945, the Blumenthals were loaded on a train heading east.

They had no idea where they were going or why.

On 15 April 1945, six days after the Blumenthals left, the British liberated Bergen-Belsen.

Aprox. 491 words

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.5
Summary

The Blumenthals felt uneasy as they boarded the overcrowded train destined for Celle, Germany in February 1944. They feared that their train had no special status and were worried about being sent back to Germany as prisoners. The train took the family to Bergen-Belsen where the conditions there were far worse than those at Westerbork. However, they were still hopeful that they would soon be exchanged for German POW's.

In May 1944 the names of the exchange Jews were announced. The Blumenthals names were not on the list. When Walter approached the Nazi officer to politely inquire if a mistake had been made, he was beaten. The Nazi's refusal to honor the Palestine certificate was their greatest disappointment and the end of all their hope.

The Blumenthals struggled to survive daily life at Bergen-Belsen. Ruth was lucky to have a job in the kitchen where there was some chance to gather extra food. Once a guard gave an apple to Albert, which he shared with the family. This small gesture of kindness was a "flicker of light in the darkness."

At Bergen-Belsen, the prisoners were forced to take monthly showers. They had heard rumors of gas chambers that looked like showers at Auschwitz and were afraid that the showers at Bergen-Belsen might be the same.

Bergen-Belsen had a crematorium to burn the bodies of prisoners who died of starvation, exhaustion, and disease. As the camp became more crowded and death rates increased, the crematorium could not keep up with the bodies. Bodies were sometimes burned in open pits, buried in mass graves, or piled up aboveground.

After D-Day in June 1944, the Nazis began to lose the war. To hide their crimes from the advancing Allied forces, the Nazis began to move prisoners into Germany. Bergen-Belsen became even more overcrowded.

The winter of 1944-1945 was especially difficult for the Blumenthals. It was bitterly cold. The camp was horribly overcrowded. Daily rations were far less than 600 calories per day. There was not enough water for drinking, bathing, and washing clothes. The inmates' clothes and hair were infected with lice. In addition, typhus, a disease carried by lice, spread throughout the camp. The death toll continued to increase because of the horrid conditions and lack of food.

In early April 1945, Mama and Marion made a fire in their bunk and cooked some soup. When the soup was almost done, they heard guards approaching. As they tried to hide what they were doing, they spilled the soup on Marion's leg. Because she did not cry out, the guards did not find out what they had been doing. Soon the soup burn on Marion's leg became infected and oozed pus.

On 9 April 1945, the Blumenthals were loaded on a train heading east. They had no idea where they were going or why. On 15 April 1945, six days after the Blumenthals left, the British liberated Bergen-Belsen.

Aprox. 490 words

Lesson 14: Re-Read Chapter 1

1 Class Period

Reading Skills: **Making Connections**
 Using Sensory Images

Purpose:

After we read Chapter 1, we discussed an organizational technique the authors used for this book. The incidents in Chapter 1 actually happen in the middle of Marion's story. We discussed the fact that moving this very compelling chapter to the front of the book was an effective way to hook the reader. Chapter 1 relates the Blumenthal family's experiences at Bergen-Belsen, and, chronologically, describes the same time period as Chapter 5.

My purpose for this lesson is very simple. I want the students to connect the information in Chapter 1 with what they just read in Chapter 5. They originally read Chapter 1 out of its context. I want them to put the chapter back into context.

Materials Needed:

One copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student

Process:

For this chapter, I simply asked the students to re-read Chapter 1 for the reasons stated above. I asked them to be aware of the sensory images they created as they read. I also asked them to add the details in Chapter 1 with the details of Chapter 5 to create a complete and vivid picture of what daily life was like at Bergen-Belsen.

NOTE: I did not have the time for a creative activity, but this might be a good point to add one if you wished to do so. Asking students to create a drawing or painting, a map of the camp, an imaginary diary entry for Marion, or some other sort of project would allow them to capitalize on their sensory images and use another type of intelligence to process the information about the Blumenthals' experience at Bergen-Belsen.

Lesson 15: Read Chapter 6

1-2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Monitoring Comprehension**
 Questioning
 Using Sensory Images

Purpose:

For this chapter and Chapter 7, I wanted to simply allow the students to read without interruption. One of the dangers I feel I need to guard against as a reading teacher is beating all of the fun out of reading with relentless skills lessons. I want my students to have the experience of being so engrossed in a book that they don't really notice the work they are doing to decode and comprehend. I felt that at this point, they were hooked and just wanted me to get out of their way. We had also just finished really tough summarizing lessons with Chapters 4 and 5. I was afraid I would have mutiny if I tried any more tough skills lessons at this point!

Materials Needed:

One copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student
A few small sticky notes for each student

Process:

The main thing I asked my students to do while they read was to be aware of any places where their understanding broke down or where they had questions. When this happened, I asked them to 1) write the question or a note about the confusion onto a sticky note, 2) mark the note with their initials, and then 3) stick the note in the margin near the text that prompted the note. This procedure allowed me to quickly flip through the books to see what sorts of questions they had and where they got confused. I also asked the students to "turn on the movie cameras" and consciously create sensory images as they read.

Lesson 16: Read Chapter 7

1-2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Monitoring Comprehension**
 Questioning
 Using Sensory Images

Purpose:

Just as Chapter 6, for Chapter 7 I wanted to simply allow the students to read without interruption. One of the dangers I feel I need to guard against as a reading teacher is beating all of the fun out of reading with relentless skills lessons. I want my students to have the experience of being so engrossed in a book that they don't really notice the work they are doing to decode and comprehend. I felt that at this point, they were hooked and just wanted me to get out of their way. We had also just finished really tough summarizing lessons with Chapters 4 and 5. I was afraid I would have mutiny if I tried any more tough skills lessons at this point!

Materials Needed:

One copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student
A few small sticky notes for each student

Process:

The main thing I asked my students to do while they read was to be aware of any places where their understanding broke down or where they had questions. When this happened, I asked them to 1) write the question or a note about the confusion onto a sticky note, 2) mark the note with their initials, and then 3) stick the note in the margin near the text that prompted the note. This procedure allowed me to quickly flip through the books to see what sorts of questions they had and where they got confused. I also asked the students to “turn on the movie cameras” and consciously create sensory images as they read.

Lesson 17: Begin video *Marion's Triumph*

1 Class Period

Reading Skills: Making Text-to-Text Connections

Purpose:

Marion's Triumph is 49 minutes long – too long for me to show completely in one class period. When I was teaching this unit in 2004-2005, we finished Chapter 7 just before Winter Break. After the break, I felt that the students needed some help to recall what they had read in Chapters 1-7. Especially because we had labored over building schema in the beginning and summarizing Chapters 4 and 5, the distance in time between starting Chapter 1 and finishing Chapter 7 was fairly long. I wanted them to regain a sense of the story as a unified whole. Even if Winter Break had not occurred at this point, I still feel that this would be a good point to show the first part of the video version of Marion's story. Of course, showing the first part of the film could be moved to some other time during the unit.

Materials Needed:

A VHS or DVD of *Marion's Triumph*

Process:

I did not feel it would be necessary to hold the students accountable for paying attention to the film. They were eager to watch it. Therefore, I did not make any type of note-taking guide for this lesson. I simply asked them to watch and listen closely. We watched approximately 30 minutes of the film. I stopped around the point of the story where the family was liberated from the death train. We took a few minutes to discuss questions and observations. I also asked them whether the visual images they saw in the video supported the sensory images they imagined as they read.

Lesson 18: Building Schema for the Holocaust

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Determining Main Ideas**
 Note-taking
 Making Connections
 Building Schema

Purpose:

Obviously a memoir is focused on the experiences of one person or one family. A reader cannot expect to get a comprehensive understanding of a historical event from a memoir. It's hard to get a comprehensive understanding of the Holocaust from one Holocaust history book! Because the Holocaust happened over so many years and in so many places, it is very complicated history. Chapters 4 and 5 of *Four Perfect Pebbles* mention the transports to "the East," and Auschwitz, and the gas chambers that looked like showers. I think the authors do an admirable job of providing some historical context within the confines of a memoir. However, I want my students to know more about what happened to the people who did not survive the Holocaust to write a memoir.

Materials:

Each student will need a copy of *Tell Them We Remember*.

Each student will also need a note-taking sheet for *Tell them We Remember*.

Process:

Give each student a copy of *Tell Them we Remember* and a note-taking sheet. Tell them that their task for the next two class periods is to learn what happened to most of the people whom the Blumenthals watched board the transport trains from Westerbork. They will need to decide which ideas in each chapter are the most important and, therefore, ought to be written on the note-sheet. The note-sheet gives them prompts to make this process easier. For the most part, the prompts are listed in the same order the information is given in the text.

It took my students two class periods to complete this assignment. Because we had been working on identifying main ideas, I did not let my students work with a partner on this task. I wanted to see what they could do on their own. I checked the notes myself before we went over the answers in class. Of course, it would be an option to allow students to work together in small groups to do the work or to check their work after they finished independently.

I took some time on an additional day to discuss the main ideas from *TTWR* with the students and help them connect the ideas to what they had already read in *Pebbles*. My students also had a lot of questions that we took class time to discuss.

Background Reading:

I would recommend that you read the following pages of *The World Must Know* for your own information. I think it will help you answer your students' questions. It also is an excellent source of photos to show the students.

Deportations	pages 112-117
Resettlement in the East	pages 119-122
Implementing the Final Solution	pages 122-123
Killing Centers	pages 123-124
Who Shall Live and Who Shall Die	pages 124-127
Prisoners of the Camps	pages 127-130
Slave Labor	pages 130-133
Auschwitz	pages 133-137
Murder by Gas	pages 137-143
Why Wasn't Auschwitz Bombed?	pages 144-145
Face-to-Face with Death: Shoes	pages 145-147
Tattooing and Shearing	pages 147-149
Body Disposal	pages 149-150

Notes for Tell Them We Remember

“On the Train” pp.50-51

“At the Killing Centers” pp.52-53

“Auschwitz-Birkenau” p.54-57

“Prisoners of the Camps” pp.58-59

Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

1. Describe the conditions on the trains.

2. Describe the selection process that happened as soon as the trains arrived at the camps.

3. Describe what happened to those who were selected to die.

4. Describe what happened to those who were selected for work at Auschwitz.

- Entrance Sign:

- Induction into the Camp:

- Housing:

- Food:

- Work

- Escape:

- “Medical” Experiments:

- Death – “_____ through work”:

5. Describe the Nazi’s “Other Victims” – people who were not Jewish:

Notes for Tell Them We Remember

“On the Train” pp.50-51

“At the Killing Centers” pp.52-53

“Auschwitz-Birkenau” p.54-57

“Prisoners of the Camps” pp.58-59

Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

1. Describe the conditions on the trains.

- Crammed into boxcars
- No Bathroom facilities
- No ventilation or light
- Unbearably hot in summer and freezing cold in winter
- No food or water except what people brought with them.

2. Describe the selection process that happened as soon as the trains arrived at the camps.

- Immediately after unloading, deportees were ordered to form a line
- Men separated from women and children
- SS officer made a quick visual judgment of whether a person was strong enough to work
- Victims ordered to the left or right; they had no idea what that meant

3. Describe what happened to those who were selected to die.

- Babies and children, pregnant women, the elderly, the handicapped, and the sick were selected to die
- Told that they would be taken to showers to get rid of lice before they entered the camp
- Told to remove clothes, shoes, valuables
- When all were inside the “shower” room, the door was locked
- Zyklon B gas, an insecticide, was piped into the gas chamber
- When all the victims were dead, prisoners selected for work removed the corpses, shaved hair, removed gold tooth fillings, loaded bodies into crematoria for burning

4. Describe what happened to those who were selected for work at Auschwitz.

- Entrance Sign:
“*Arbeit Macht Frei*” = “Work makes one free”
- Induction into the Camp:
Hair shaved
Tattooed prisoner registration number on left forearm
Striped uniform - pants and jacket or dress
- Housing:
Crowded barracks that had no windows, insulation, or heat
No bathroom – only a bucket
Wooden bunkbeds – 5 or 6 people in a single bunk

- Food:
Watery soup made with rotten vegetables and (sometimes) meat
A few ounces of bread and a bit of margarine
Tea or a bitter drink resembling coffee
- Work
Inside the camp – kitchen workers, barbers, sorting clothing/ shoes/ personal belongings
Outside the camp – coal mines, rock quarries, construction projects, digging tunnels and canals, shoveling snow off roads, clearing rubble from air raids
Factories – private companies “hired” slave laborers from the Germans to build things such as automobile and aircraft engines
- Escape: almost impossible
Electric barbed-wire fences surrounded the camps and killing centers
Guards with machine guns & automatic rifles stood in watch towers
- “Medical” Experiments:
Cruel “medical” experiments
Josef Mengele experimented on twins and dwarfs – including children
One goal was to find better treatment for German soldiers and airmen
Also wanted to find better ways to sterilize people the Nazis considered “inferior”
- Death – “extermination through work”:
Most prisoners survived only a few weeks or months
When they were too ill or weak to work they were killed in gas chambers

5. Describe the Nazi’s “Other Victims” – people who were not Jewish:

- Political prisoners – Communists, Socialists, trade unionists
- Common criminals
- Gypsies – like Jews, targeted for systematic murder because they were considered an inferior race
- Jehovah’s Witnesses
- Homosexuals
- Captured Soviet soldiers

Lesson 19: Chapter 8

1 Class Period

Reading Skills: **Determining Importance**
 Summarizing

Purpose:

Chapter 5 was the last time I asked my students to practice their summarizing skills. This is a very important skill, and my students are far from mastering it. Therefore, I wanted them to practice again. I also wanted to use this chapter to assess their skills.

Materials:

Each student will need a copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* or a photocopy of Chapter 8 with the sections marked in the text.

Process:

The process is probably a familiar routine by now. Ask students to read the chapter stopping to summarize each section as they go.

I used the next class period to read these summaries while the students worked on Lesson 20.

Sections for Chapter 8:

1. Page 102 “Once more...” to page 102 “...we were stateless.”
2. Page 102 “Marion’s memories...” to page 105 “... unhappy and undeserving.”
3. Page 105 “The stay with...” to page 107 “... school in Amsterdam.”
4. Page 107 “Ruth, meantime...” to page 109 “... function normally.”
5. Page 109 “Ruth finally completed...” to page 110 “... originally intended.”
6. Page 110 “Again it was necessary...” to page 111 “... needed to be added.”
7. Page 111 “What an exciting time...” to page 112 “...suit her perfectly.”
8. Page 112 “On the evening...” to page 113 “... by the Russians.”

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.8
Summary by Sections

1. The surviving Blumenthals returned to Holland after their liberation in 1945 as “displaced persons”. Ruth was a widow at age 37 with two children to support and no financial resources.
2. The family lived at first in Amsterdam with Walter’s cousins, Gerda and Ernst de Levie. Although there were still shortages of goods, Tante Gerda managed to obtain a new dress for Marion and she tasted chewing gum for the first time.
3. Next the Blumenthals lived in a shelter for displaced persons. Albert made his Bar Mitzvah. To prepare for emigration to Palestine, Albert and Marion were sent about an hour away to a Youth Aliyah to learn Hebrew and the Orthodox religion.
4. Ruth stayed in Amsterdam with Walter’s sister, Rosi, and studied to be a beautician and manicurist. Uncle Ernst arranged for Marion to have surgery to correct her crossed eyes.
5. After Ruth completed her training, she bought a bicycle so that she could travel to the homes of her clients. The Blumenthals could only visit each other about once each week, and Marion missed her mother. As the date for departure for Palestine drew closer, they learned that only the children would be allowed to go and that they would be traveling illegally. Ruth did not want to take the risks involved, so she began to investigate the possibility of going to the US instead.
6. Once again Ruth had to obtain an affidavit and a visa for the US. The Holland-America Line still had record of the Blumenthal’s payment for four passengers in 1938; therefore, most of the cost of their passage for three in 1948 was covered.
7. The Blumenthals sailed for New York in April 1948.
8. They were on deck to see the Statue of Liberty when the ship sailed into New York harbor on April 23, 1948 – exactly three years after their liberation from the death train.

327 words

Lesson 20: Chapter 9 and Epilogue

1 Class Period

**Reading Skills: Monitoring Comprehension
 Questioning**

Purpose:

For Chapter 9 and the Epilogue, I wanted to simply allow the students to read the conclusion of the story without interruption.

Materials Needed:

One copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* for each student.
A few small sticky notes for each student.

Process:

The main thing I asked my students to do while they read was to be aware of any places where their understanding broke down or where they had questions. When this happened, I asked them to 1) write the question or a note about the confusion onto a sticky note, 2) mark the note with their initials, and then 3) stick the note in the margin near the text that prompted the note. This procedure allowed me to quickly flip through the books to see what sorts of questions they had and where they got confused.

Lesson 21: Re-Do Chapter 8 Summary

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: **Determining Importance**
 Summarizing

Purpose:

I was not satisfied with my students' performance on their summaries of Chapter 8. They did not make wise decisions about which information was the most important. I felt like I needed to drop back and punt! In other words, we needed to work on summarizing skills again. You may not need to complete this lesson with your students.

Materials:

Each student will need a copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* or a photocopy of Chapter 8 with the sections marked in the text.

Process:

I started with a pep talk. I wanted to increase their motivation to learn this difficult skill because I was not confident that they really had given me their best effort the first time they summarized Chapter 8 back in Lesson 19. I told my students, who are 8th graders, that summarizing is an absolutely essential skill that they will be expected to perform frequently and independently in high school. I told them that the fastest way I can find out if my students get the point of a reading assignment is to ask them to summarize it. I told them that it is an absolutely crucial comprehension skill.

I also told them that summarizing is an essential skill on-the-job. I gave them examples of how I have to summarize in the course of doing my job. I gave them other examples from other jobs. Bosses don't want to know the nitty-gritty details. Most of the time, they want to know the bottom line... Which textbook would be the best to adopt and why? Which phone company should be hired to provide service to the company? Which investment plan is the best? What is the plan for meeting a customer's needs? We also use summarizing in social situations... What was the movie about? What happened at the game? What was the main point of the governor's speech?

Coincidentally, just before I taught this lesson, I came across the following passage in *Mosaic of Thought* by Keene and Zimmermann:

 Though our memories of being asked to summarize might not be fond, research ... has long indicated that teaching children to summarize is a helpful tool in teaching reading comprehension. The research confirms what we know through experience and common sense: Proficient readers are able to summarize as a way of helping them recall what they read and then communicate it to others.

 We also know that as they reach the upper grades, students are expected to summarize more frequently; and upper-grade teachers express frustration about their students' underdeveloped summaries, particularly for nonfiction.

I read this passage to my students, mostly because I wanted them to know that I was not alone in my opinion that summarizing skills are important.

Next, I felt that the students needed a more concrete way to decide which ideas were important enough to include in the summary. I really struggled with this. I had to analyze my own thinking process so as to better understand how I decide what's important in text. Then I had to figure out the words I could use to communicate my decision-making process to my students.

I told them that a good writer doesn't waste words telling about things that aren't necessary. So, in a sense, everything in the text is important. However, when you summarize, you can't and don't want to re-tell everything. I told them that it helps me to think about sorting ideas into one of two categories: need-to-know and nice-to-know. The nice-to-know things help make the text interesting; they give you ways to connect the text to your own experiences and make it come alive with sensory images. If you didn't have some nice-to-knows in the text, it would be like reading an encyclopedia article or a summary! The text would be boring.

Next, I gave the students some examples of nice-to-know ideas in Chapter 8. Many people in their initial summaries of Chapter 8 told about how Marion drank beer. This seemed to stand out to my students because of its novelty and its difference from our culture. I asked them to put themselves in Marion's shoes. After living through years of cruelty, starvation, and deprivation, could they imagine how Marion would feel drinking an icy cold beverage at an army hospital where her infected leg was being treated and where people acted toward her with kindness? I asked them if they could understand that it was the cold drink on a hot day and the kindness that made the memory so vivid for Marion. I shared with them a text-to-self connection I made with this passage. It reminded me of sipping cold beer from a juice glass that my grandmother poured for me while we watched the summer Olympics together when I was a kid.

The next paragraph of Chapter 8 offered another example of nice-to-know information. Any kid would get a kick out of standing with each leg in a different country. I remember standing with one leg on each side of the Mississippi River when I was a kid! These kinds of details make the memoir a memoir – a story told from memory. They make the text more interesting and easy to connect with. They help us relate with another human being who was a child far away and in a different time. They serve an important purpose, but they are not need-to-know pieces of information that ought to be included in a summary.

Then I shifted my focus to need-to-know ideas. I told the students that, since this book is a memoir, it tells about the experiences of one person and her family. Therefore, the most important question that a good summary should answer is "What happened to the Blumenthals?" I told them that in summarizing non-fiction, it is a good idea to look for the answers to the "wh questions." They could try filling in a sentence frame like this: *Who did what when where and why or how?*

At this point in the lesson, we began working together as a class summarizing section-by-section. I asked a student to read a section aloud. Then we stopped and used the sentence frame to summarize the main ideas of each section. This process took a lot of modeling and discussion. For each bit of information a student offered for inclusion in the summary, I tried to respond by explaining why I thought that piece of information was a need-to-know or a nice-to-know. The need-to-knows we included and the nice-to-knows we, for the most part, left out. If we included a nice-to-know in the summary, we discussed our reasons for doing so. As we worked, I turned the responsibility over to the students to justify their thinking.

I think it's important to note that a very high degree of trust needs to exist in the classroom for this type of activity to work well. Another fine point worth mentioning is that section six of this chapter deals with the process of getting the documents needed for US immigration. This process was explained more fully back in Chapters 2 and 3. The reader is expected to remember what he/she read in those earlier chapters and connect it with Chapter 8; my students had some trouble with this.

Four Perfect Pebbles Ch.8
Summary by Sections

9. The surviving Blumenthals returned to Holland after their liberation in 1945 as “displaced persons”. Ruth was a widow at age 37 with two children to support and no financial resources.
10. The family lived at first in Amsterdam with Walter’s cousins, Gerda and Ernst de Levie. Although there were still shortages of goods, Tante Gerda managed to obtain a new dress for Marion and she tasted chewing gum for the first time.
11. Next the Blumenthals lived in a shelter for displaced persons. Albert made his Bar Mitzvah. To prepare for emigration to Palestine, Albert and Marion were sent about an hour away to a Youth Aliyah to learn Hebrew and the Orthodox religion.
12. Ruth stayed in Amsterdam with Walter’s sister, Rosi, and studied to be a beautician and manicurist. Uncle Ernst arranged for Marion to have surgery to correct her crossed eyes.
13. After Ruth completed her training, she bought a bicycle so that she could travel to the homes of her clients. The Blumenthals could only visit each other about once each week, and Marion missed her mother. As the date for departure for Palestine drew closer, they learned that only the children would be allowed to go and that they would be traveling illegally. Ruth did not want to take the risks involved, so she began to investigate the possibility of going to the US instead.
14. Once again Ruth had to obtain an affidavit and a visa for the US. The Holland-America Line still had record of the Blumenthal’s payment for four passengers in 1938; therefore, most of the cost of their passage for three in 1948 was covered.
15. The Blumenthals sailed for New York in April 1948.
16. They were on deck to see the Statue of Liberty when the ship sailed into New York harbor on April 23, 1948 – exactly three years after their liberation from the death train.

327 words

Lesson 22: Final Evaluation of Summarizing Skills

1 Class Period

**Reading Skills: Determining Importance
 Summarizing**

Purpose:

The primary reading (and writing) skill that I have focused on in this unit is summarizing. I would like to get one final sample of work in order to assess my students' ability at this point in time. I did not ask the students to write a summary of the chapter in paragraph form because we had not practiced that skill enough. I wanted to see if they could choose the important ideas within sections of the chapter. If you feel your students are ready for this final step, of course you should push them to demonstrate their competence. My students were not ready and I knew it; I will have to continue practicing summarizing, giving them longer and longer passages and chapters to summarize at one time. I did, however, purposely chunk Chapter 9 into only six longer-than-usual sections.

Materials Needed:

Each student will need a copy of *Four Perfect Pebbles* or a photocopy of Chapter 9 with the sections marked in the text.

Process:

The students were told in advance that they would be summarizing Chapter 9 as a test of their skills; therefore, they would need to work independently. They were told that they would have one full class period to work.

On the test day, I made sure everyone had plenty of notebook paper and pens. I handed out *Pebbles* books, showed them the sections, and let them work. At the end of the period, I collected the tests to grade them.

Sections for Chapter 9:

1. Page 114 "The Veendam docked..." to page 115 "...impressed me so."
2. Page 116 "Like the Blumenthals..." to page 117 "...council in Peoria, Illinois."
3. Page 117 "Peoria..." to page 118 "...in an American community."
4. Page 118 "That very summer..." to page 120 "...tenth years of my childhood."
5. Page 120 "The following year..." to page 122 "...synagogue services."
6. Page 123 "The High Holy Days..." to page 124 "...Nathaniel Lazan."

Four Perfect Pebbles Chapter 9
Summary-by-Sections

1. After the Blumenthals arrived in New York City, they lived with Walter's sister, Clara, and her family for a short time.
2. The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HAIS) arranged for the family to live at a residence hotel in Manhattan until they found the family a more permanent place to live.
3. Although they knew nothing about Peoria, Illinois, the Blumenthals agreed to move there so that they could keep their HAIS sponsorship until they could support themselves financially.
4. As soon as they arrived in Peoria, all of the family members got jobs. When school started, Marion was enrolled in a fourth grade class because her English skills were still weak. For Hanukkah that year, Albert gave Marion a pair of nylon stockings. Marion was disappointed by the gift because it meant she was growing up even though she had never had a childhood.
5. The next year, life for the Blumenthal family improved. Ruth got a better job as a seamstress, and Albert and Marion helped support the family with jobs outside of school. The family was able to move into their own apartment. Marion made enough progress in English to enroll in the junior high the next school year. They began to feel more accepted and comfortable in Peoria.
6. When Marion was a sophomore in high school, she began dating a young college student whom she met at synagogue. His name was Nathaniel Lazan, and he became Marion's husband.

Approximately 245 words

Four Perfect Pebbles Chapter 9
Summary

When the Blumenthals arrived in New York City, they lived for a short time with Walter's sister, Clara, and her family. They registered with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HAIS) who arranged for the family to live at a residence hotel in Manhattan until they found the family a more permanent place to live in Peoria, Illinois. Although they knew nothing about Peoria, the Blumenthals agreed to move there so that they could keep their HAIS sponsorship until they could support themselves financially.

As soon as they arrived in Peoria, all of the family members got jobs. When school started, Marion was enrolled in a fourth grade class because her English skills were still weak. For Hanukkah that year, Albert gave Marion a pair of nylon stockings. Marion was disappointed by the gift because it meant she was growing up even though she had never had a childhood.

The next year, life for the Blumenthal family improved. Ruth got a better job as a seamstress, and Albert and Marion helped support the family with jobs outside of school. The family was able to move into their own apartment. Marion made enough progress in English to enroll in the junior high the next school year. They began to feel more accepted and comfortable in Peoria. When Marion was a sophomore in high school, she began dating a young college student whom she met at synagogue. His name was Nathaniel Lazan.

Rubric for Section Summary of
Chapter 9 *Four Perfect Pebbles*

Name: _____

Hour: _____

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5	Section 6
Included Need-to- Know Info						
Excluded Nice-to- Know Info						
Brevity and Grammar & Conventions						
Totals	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

3 = Excellent
A = 37+ points

2 = Adequate
B = 36-32 points

1 = Poor
C = 31-27 points

D = 26-22 points

Rubric for Section Summary of
Chapter 9 *Four Perfect Pebbles*

Name: _____

Hour: _____

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5	Section 6
Included Need-to- Know Info						
Excluded Nice-to- Know Info						
Brevity and Grammar & Conventions						
Totals	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

3 = Excellent
A = 37+ points

2 = Adequate
B = 36-32 points

1 = Poor
C = 31-27 points

D = 26-22 points

Lesson 23: Finish video *Marion's Triumph*

1 Class Period

Reading Skills: Making Text-to-Text Connections

Purpose:

Marion's Triumph is 49 minutes long – too long for me to show completely in one class period. Winter Break happened just after we finished reading Chapter 7. As I explained in Lesson 13A, I showed the first part of the film immediately after Winter Break as a way to remind the students about the part of Marion's story they had already read before they continued with the rest of the story. This strategy was successful. It allowed a quick review of Chapters 1-7, and it helped re-stimulate the students' interest and motivated them to continue reading. Even if Winter Break had not split the time as it did, I still would break the video into chunks as I did.

During this lesson, I simply wanted the students to finish watching the film and make connections between the book and the film. I did chose to back the film up to a more coherent starting point. I rewound to the point where the family arrived at Bergen-Belsen in hopes of being exchanged for POW's. (This starting point approximately matches Chapter 5 in the book.)

The film goes beyond the book and gives more information about Marion's life including a return trip she made to Germany. Although she was hesitant to do so, she went back to Bergen-Belsen, to Tröbitz, and to Hoya. She had surprising experiences in both Tröbitz and Hoya when she found that local citizens had taken care of the graves of her family members. At the end of the film, she also talks about her choice to have a positive attitude; I think her words are an important lesson for all of us.

Materials Needed:

A VHS or DVD of *Marion's Triumph*

Process:

I did not feel it would be necessary to hold the students accountable for paying attention to the film. They were eager to watch it. Therefore, I did not make any type of note-taking guide for this lesson. I simply asked them to watch and listen closely. We spent a few minutes at the end discussing their questions and the parts of the film they found most striking.

Lesson 24: One Survivor Remembers

2 Class Periods

Reading Skills: Making Text-to-Text Connections

Purpose:

Four Perfect Pebbles is useful for teaching many core concepts of the Holocaust, but it has one major short-coming. Students might conclude, after reading *Pebbles*, that most Jewish families were able to stay together during the years of the Holocaust and that most family members survived. These assumptions are false. I believe that it is important to dispel these ideas with a more accurate picture of the experience of most survivors. Most survivors were separated from their families, and most were lucky to have even a few other members of their families survive.

The video version of Gerda Weissman Klein's story, *One Survivor Remembers*, is a useful tool for allowing students to compare and contrast Marion Blumenthal's with that of another survivor. I believe Gerda's story more accurately reflects the general experience of Holocaust survivors. The video is appropriate for middle school students and can be shown in one class period. (It also won an Academy Award!)

Materials Needed:

A VHS or DVD of *One Survivor Remembers*

One copy for each student of the handout "Connections Chart for *One Survivor Remembers*"

Process:

First of all, be aware that the film is 39 minutes long. If your class period is 45 minutes long, as mine is, you will not be able to dally about getting started. This is not the sort of film that you want to finish the last five minutes of the next day!

Ask the students to preview the connections chart. They will need to be familiar with the information you are requesting so that they know what to watch and listen for. The information for *Four Perfect Pebbles* is already filled in; they are looking for comparable information for *One Survivor Remembers*. Warn the students that there will be some pieces of important information that the narrator will not say aloud; they will need to read the screen at times to get the information they need for the chart.

Show the film. Students should fill in details on the chart as they watch.

The next day, allow the students to get together in groups of 3-4 to compare and share information. It is pretty impossible to get all the information from just one viewing!

After a few minutes of small group sharing, bring the class together as a whole to check the chart and discuss the similarities and differences between Marion's story and Gerda's story.

Name: _____ Hour: _____ Date: _____

Connections Chart for *Four Perfect Pebbles / Marion's Triumph and One Survivor Remembers*

Points to Compare	<u>Four Perfect Pebbles & Marion's Triumph</u> Marion Blumenthal	<u>One Survivor Remembers</u> Gerda Weissmann
Family Home	Hoya, Germany	
Family Members	Father: Walter Mother: Ruth Brother: Albert Marion	Father: Mother: Brother: Gerda
Date & Age @ Nazi Occupation	Date: January 30, 1933 Age: Not born until 12/1934	Date: Age:
Togetherness/ Separation of Family Members	Westerbork: Lived Together Bergen-Belsen: Ruth & Marion separated from Walter & Albert Death Train: Family Together Liberation: Family Together	Brother - Deported: Father - Deported: Mother - Deported: Gerda – Deported: Age
Types of Camps	Westerbork: Refugee Camp Westerbork: Transit Camp Bergen-Belsen: Transit/ Concentration Camp	

Types of Camps (continued)		
Demonstrations of Kindness	Guard at Bergen-Belsen gave Albert an apple.	
Final Months & Days of Imprisonment	On a death train.	
Liberation	Place: Tröbitz, Germany By: Russian troops Date: April 23, 1945 Age: 10.5 Weight: 35 lbs.	Place: By: Date: Age: Weight:
Survivors of Family	Ruth, Albert, and Marion Walter died of typhus six weeks after liberation.	
Keys to Survival	Able to stay close to family – especially mother.	
Spiritual Resistance	-Game to occupy time: finding four perfect pebbles -Never gave up hope -Positive attitude	

New Life	Peoria, IL Married: Nathaniel Lazan 3 children 9 grandchildren	
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Name: _____ Hour: _____ Date: _____

Connections Chart for *Four Perfect Pebbles / Marion's Triumph and One Survivor Remembers*

Points to Compare	<u>Four Perfect Pebbles & Marion's Triumph</u> Marion Blumenthal	<u>One Survivor Remembers</u> Gerda Weissmann
Family Home	Hoya, Germany	Bielsko, Poland
Family Members	Father: Walter Mother: Ruth Brother: Albert Marion	Father: Mother: Brother: Arthur Gerda
Date & Age @ Nazi Occupation	Date: January 30, 1933 Age: Not born until 12/1934	Date: September 1939 Age: 15
Togetherness/ Separation of Family Members	Westerbork: Lived Together Bergen-Belsen: Ruth & Marion separated from Walter & Albert Death Train: Family Together Liberation: Family Together	Brother - Deported: Sent away for forced labor Father - Deported: June 28, 1942 Mother - Deported: June 29, 1942 Selection in Bielsko. Separated from Gerda. Sent out on trucks. Gerda – Deported: June 29, 1942 Age 18 Tried to rejoin mother. Picked up and thrown onto truck. “You are too young to die.” Soon on train with other teenage girls from Bielsko – friend Ilse; met Suse.
Types of Camps	Westerbork: Refugee Camp Westerbork: Transit Camp Bergen-Belsen: Transit/ Concentration Camp	Slave Labor Factory that produced fabric for the German military. Frau Kügler – Nazi guard Other places for slave labor. Worst was Märzdorf; thoughts of suicide

Types of Camps (continued)		
Demonstrations of Kindness	Guard at Bergen-Belsen gave Albert an apple.	Frau Kügler – saved her life. Allowed Gerda to stay in bed when sick, but came to get her up and working for a surprise inspection.
Final Months & Days of Imprisonment	On a death train.	On a death march. Began January 29, 1945. 3 months long. Lack of food. Exposure to winter weather without adequate clothing or shelter. Ilse died April 28, 1945. Suse died just before liberation.
Liberation	Place: Tröbitz, Germany By: Russian troops Date: April 23, 1945 Age: 10.5 Weight: 35 lbs.	Place: Volary, Czechoslovakia In an abandoned bicycle factory. By: American troops, Kurt Klein and another soldier Date: May 7, 1945 Age: 21 Weight: 68 lbs.; white hair
Survivors of Family	Ruth, Albert, and Marion Walter died of typhus six weeks after liberation.	Parents believed to have died at Auschwitz. Never learned what happened to Arthur. Kurt Klein's parents also believed to have died at Auschwitz.
Keys to Survival	Able to stay close to family – especially mother.	Able to stay close to friends: Ilse, Suse, Liesel Ski boots that her father insisted she wear saved her life on death march.
Spiritual Resistance	-Game to occupy time: finding four perfect pebbles -Never gave up hope -Positive attitude	Imagination. Occupied her mind with a debate over whether to wear a blue or red dress at the party she imagined having after liberation.

New Life	Peoria, IL Married: Nathaniel Lazan 3 children 9 grandchildren	Married Kurt Klein, her liberator. 3 children _____ grandchildren Currently living in Phoenix, AZ
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Lesson 25: *The Courage to Care*

2 Class Periods

Language Skills: **Listening**
 Summarizing
 Reflecting
 Discussing

Purpose:

My rationale for showing this film has more to do with my affective objectives for the unit than for my reading objectives. Consider the following words from Chaim Ginott, the author of *Between Parent and Child*:

Dear Teacher:

I am a survivor of a concentration camp.

My eyes saw what no man should witness:

Gas chambers built by learned engineers,

Children poisoned by educated physicians,

Infants killed by trained nurses

Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates,

So I am suspicious of education

My request is: Help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns.

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

I can teach the reading objectives of my curriculum with many types and topics of literature. I choose to use Holocaust literature because of its potential to open my students' hearts – to foster a larger sense of compassion for humanity. The film *The Courage to Care* is about people who possessed a sense of empathy and who acted on the content of their character. I hope that, by showing this film, my students may become more inclined to act with greater compassion.

Background Reading:

I would advise you to read the pages 156-157 “Rescue” and 159-160 “Le Chambon-sur-Lignon: A City of Refuge” in *The World Must Know*. These sections will give you helpful background information to share with your students. It is important to note that although “thousands of individuals risked their own lives to help Jews,” these thousands represent a very small percentage of Europeans affected by the Holocaust. The vast majority of people chose to remain silent and not interfere with the Nazis plans for their victims.

It would also be wise to read the information created by ADL that accompanies the film itself. I have included photocopies of this information just in case the printed guides are not attached to the film you obtain for use.

Materials Needed:

VHS or DVD of *The Courage to Care*

One copy for each student of the handout “*The Courage to Care: Notes and Reflection*”

Process:

Give each student a handout and explain that they are to use it to take notes during the film. Tell them that three of the people listed helped save Jewish lives during the Holocaust: Irene, Marion, and Magda. Odette and Emanuel are Jews whose lives were saved. Ask the students to make brief notes about each person’s story as they watch the film. Caution them that they will need to listen very carefully. All of the people featured are not native speakers of English, and some speak with accents. (NOTE: The people are not identified by name at the start of the film; they are identified by place. It would be helpful for the teacher to identify the subjects by name as each story begins.)

The film is narrated by Elie Wiesel, the author of Night. Mr. Wiesel makes important observations about rescuers. Instruct students to listen very carefully for these comments and record them in the first section on the back side of the note sheet. Mr. Wiesel’s voice is the very first you will hear in the film. After that, it is easy to identify.

You may find it necessary to stop frequently to allow students to catch up on their notes and to answer questions. The film is only about 29 minutes long, but I was not able to finish it in one class period because of the need to pause for clarification after each vignette.

The second question on the back side of the note sheet can be answered with information given in the film. The students will need to make connections between what each person says and then summarize what is similar about each person’s observations.

The last two questions on the note sheet are intended to promote personal reflection and class discussion. Students will need to have time during class or outside of class to complete these reflections before sharing their thoughts in class.

One last note, it is difficult to say what each of us would have done if we had been in the same situations as the people in the film. There were costly reprisals against anyone who was caught helping Jews. One thing I like about the film is how it shows that helping could be something as high-risk as hiding a family. But it also could be as relatively low-risk as vouching for a kid who didn’t have his papers. In the narration, Wiesel says that helping could even mean giving someone a bit of bread. In both *Four Perfect Pebbles* and in *One Survivor Remembers*, the protagonists share incidents where they were helped – the Blumenthals by a guard who gave them an apple and Gerda by Frau Kugler. These incidents helped victims maintain hope that there was some human kindness in a world gone mad.

The Courage to Care:
Notes and Reflection

Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

This film is about people who helped save Jewish lives during the Holocaust and about Jews whose lives were saved. Make notes about the stories of each of the people featured in the film.

Odette Meyers – Paris, France

Irene Opdyke - Poland

Marion Van Binsbergen Pritchard – Amsterdam, Holland

Emanuel Tanay – Cracow, Poland

Magda Trocmé – Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France

The film is narrated by Elie Wiesel, the author of *Night*. Mr. Wiesel is Hungarian Jew who survived Auschwitz and a death march. What comments does Mr. Wiesel make about the rescuers and why they chose to act as they did?

What reasons do the rescuers in the film give for helping Jews?

Why do you think the film is titled *The Courage to Care*?

Share your thoughts and feelings about the following quote:

“Courage is never alone, for it has fear as its ever-present companion. The greater the fear, the more courageous the action that defies it.”

- Sholomo Breznitz

The Courage to Care:
Notes and Reflections

Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

This film is about people who helped save Jewish lives during the Holocaust and about Jews whose lives were saved. Make notes about the stories of each of the people featured in the film.

Odette Meyers – Paris, France

- 7 years old when 13,000 Jewish women and children were rounded-up in Paris for deportation to Birkenau (Auschwitz II)
- Mother was active in resistance; Father was a POW
- Saved by the concierge of the apartment and her husband. She woke Odette and her mother at 5 a.m. and hid them in a closet in her own apartment. She then lied to the Nazis about their whereabouts.
- Mr. Henry took Odette by the hand and led her past the Nazis on the street to safety.

Irene Opdyke - Poland

- Worked for the Nazis serving meals & doing laundry. Asked by the Major to be his housekeeper. This request coincided with the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto.
 - Irene saw an opportunity to hide 12 Jews in the cellar of the Major's home.
 - She was caught by the Major and pleaded for the lives of the people
- NOTE: Irene's book *In My Hands* tells this story more completely. She agreed to become the Major's mistress in exchange for the lives of the 12 Jews.

Marion Van Binsbergen Pritchard – Amsterdam, Holland

- Witnessed the liquidation of a Jewish orphanage. Two women who tried to intervene were picked up and taken away with the children. Marion just watched. Her conscience was bothered by her inaction, so she vowed to help.
- She hid a Jewish man and his 3 children in a country home. Was caught by a Dutch policeman who collaborated with the Nazis. She killed him rather than risk his betrayal of the family in her care.

Emanuel Tanay – Cracow, Poland

- Parents arranged to hide him in a monastery, but he was denounced. Hid in an organ rather than sleeping in his room; therefore, he escaped capture the night the Nazis came to arrest him.
- On his own at age 14. Helped by a village elder when he was searched by the Nazis and found to have to ID papers. The elder vouched for him and paid the fine for not having the papers.

Magda Trocmé – Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France

- Husband was a Protestant minister. Set an example for the village to harbor Jews.
- Cousin Daniel was deported along with the Jews he was trying to protect when a boarding home/school was inspected.

The film is narrated by Elie Wiesel, the author of *Night*. Mr. Wiesel is Hungarian Jew who survived Auschwitz and a death march. What comments does Mr. Wiesel make about the rescuers and why they chose to act as they did?

- It was a natural thing to save people – to remain human
- The victims died not only because of the killers, but because others stood by and did nothing.
- “There is always a second in which the moral choice is made.”

What reasons do the rescuers in the film give for helping Jews?

- They had a deep-seated conviction that they had to do it.
- They were not making choices on reflection. They simply had to do it because that’s the kind of people they were.
- “Are you thinking that we are all brothers or not.” – Magda Trocmé
- “We all have memories of times when we should have done something a didn’t. And it gets in the way during the rest of your life.” - Marion Pritchard

Why do you think the film is titled *The Courage to Care*?

Share your thoughts and feelings about the following quote:

“Courage is never alone, for it has fear as its ever-present companion. The greater the fear, the more courageous the action that defies it.”

- Sholomo Breznitz

Lesson 26: Final Assignment

1 Class Period

Language Skills: **Reflecting**
 Summarizing
 Writing
 Synthesizing

Purpose:

This lesson is an end-of-unit assessment. I have created open-ended questions to help me determine whether students have internalized the key concepts I tried to teach about the Holocaust. I hope you will use these questions as a starting point for developing your own assessment tool that focuses on the concepts you emphasized.

Holocaust Unit
Final Assignment

Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

Imagine that you are having a conversation with a friend who knows that you have been studying the Holocaust at school. During the conversation, your friend asks you some questions that many people have about the Holocaust. How would you respond to these questions?

What was the Holocaust?

Why did Hitler and the Nazis target the Jews for persecution and murder?

In addition to Jewish people, who else died in the Holocaust?

Were all the victims murdered in gas chambers immediately after they arrived at camp?
Why or why not?

What was life in a concentration camp like?

How did some people survive?

After their liberation, were families able to be reunited? Why or why not?

Where did the survivors go after their liberation? How did they re-establish a more normal life?

Learning is defined as a change in knowledge, attitude, and behavior. In what ways have your knowledge, attitude, and behavior changed because of this unit?

What reading skills did you practice during your study of the Holocaust? What skills did you improve the most?

Do you think the Holocaust is a topic worth studying in school? Why or why not?

What questions do you still have about the Holocaust? What would you like to learn more about?

Teacher Feedback Form

February 2005

Dear Teacher:

I would appreciate having your feedback about this instructional unit. Please make a copy of the attached feedback form and complete it.

Please return your comments to Laura Patton in-care-of MCHE along with the materials you have checked out from the Resource Center.

If you prefer, you may email your feedback form to Jessica Rockhold, School Outreach Coordinator, at schools@mchekc.org or Laura Patton at laurapatton@smsd.org

Thank you for taking the time to let us know how you feel about this unit. Your comments will help us improve the materials and make them applicable to other teachers.

Sincerely,
Laura Patton

***Four Perfect Pebbles* by Lila Perl and Marion Blumenthal Lazan
Teaching Reading Skills with a Holocaust Memoir:**

**An Instructional Unit Created by
Laura Friedman Patton
for The Midwest Center for Holocaust Education**

What is your name? (Optional)

At which school and for which school district do you teach? (Optional)

What subject area and grade level do you teach?

What prior experience have you had teaching the Holocaust?

How long are your class periods and how many periods did you spend on this unit?

How well did the objectives of this unit match your curricular objectives or standards?

Please comment on the overall organization of the unit and the materials in the binder.

Please comment on the clarity of the individual lesson plans. Were these easy to use?
Why or why not?

Please comment on the worksheets, note-taking guides, and activities designed for student use. Were the directions to students clear? Did the student activities support your instructional objectives? How easy was it for you to modify or adapt the materials for your particular needs?

Are there any lessons in particular that need improvements? Which ones and what changes would you recommend?

Are there any lessons that were particularly effective for you? Which ones? Are there any changes you would recommend?

Were there any gaps or omissions in content or skills instruction that should be addressed in order to improve the quality of this unit?

What other comments could you share that would help improve the effectiveness of this unit?