

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.