



The Boxcar - Lesson Plan w/Michigan State Standards (Holocaust Memorial Center TAG - Ingham ISD)

Title	The Boxcar - Inference and Impressions While Using Primary Sources
Content area	English Language Arts/History
Suggested grade level	8-10
Suggested timeframe	Two to three 45-minute class sessions
Developed by	Wendy Vanbeelen and Kelly Cruce
Content standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1.B Support claims using reasoning and evidence to demonstrate understanding of topic/text, using credible sources ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1 Cite textual evidence that supports analysis of what text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate to the current discussion ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement; qualify or justify own views and understanding and make connections in light of

	<p>evidence and reasoning presented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources ● Public Act 170 of 2016--Public law mandating Holocaust & Genocide education, requiring six (6) hours of Holocaust & Genocide education to be delivered to students in social studies classes between grades 8 and 12, including but not limited to the Holocaust and Armenian genocide.
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Historical Context

Information needed/Holocaust topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of primary and secondary resources ● What it means to infer and interpret ● Background on the “final solution,” including some knowledge of the treatment of the Jews and other “undesirables,” ghettos, and concentration camps
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Recommended contextualizing resources	<p>Recommended Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● USHMM (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum) ● Yad Vashem ● Facing History and Ourselves ● Echoes & Reflections
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Goals & Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● connect a primary source (the boxcar) to textual sources that support writing and discussion opportunities about the Holocaust CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1.B, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2,CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C ● analyze a primary artifact (the boxcar) to highlight the human story with diverse discussion and perspectives CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D

Upon completion of this lesson, students will understand:

- the importance of using multiple sources in making inferences about the past
- that the past is remembered in multiple ways (physical artifacts, written experiences, media interpretation)
- the difference between primary and secondary sources.

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- identify the difference between primary and secondary sources.
- use prior knowledge, observation, and historical information to draw inferences.
- compare and contrast primary and secondary sources to analyze historical events and situations.
- use text evidence to support their ideas during class discourse.

Procedure

Day One

1. Briefly review the four senses that will be used in this lesson (touch/feel, smell, sight, and hearing), definition of inference, and the difference between primary and secondary sources. Consider showing or listing examples of each (e.g., Anne Frank's diary versus the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*).
2. Present the [boxcar artifact in picture form](#). Students list three initial observations about the artifact with their small group. Gather information on student prior knowledge of boxcar use during the Holocaust. Together, estimate the dimensions of the boxcar (length x width x height). Depending on time, students could discuss their estimate, diagram their estimate, or use tape or other objects to lay out their estimated dimensions. Class shares observations and estimates.
3. Students consider the physical aspects of the boxcar. What does it look like? What might it smell like? Describe the possible texture of the wooden boxcar. What materials may have been used in the construction of the boxcar? What types of sounds might be related to the boxcar? Partners pair/share ideas. What questions about the boxcar is the class left with (create chart)?

4. Have a taped outline of the boxcar length and width on the floor to show students the actual dimensions (29'10" long x 9.08' wide x 13'5" high). Discuss the number of people that were transported in a space that small. What might be some challenges they endured? **Please NOTE: Do not have children step into that space. It is strictly to show the space dimensions. Otherwise, it teeters on a simulation, which is not advised in any Holocaust educational delivery.**
5. Examining experiences of the boxcar: Divide class into groups of 4. Assign one student to each of the senses (sight, sound, touch, smell)
6. Each group will read their assigned excerpt and interview clip (see resource list below) related to the transport experience. Students will annotate/note places in the text and clip where their assigned sense is demonstrated. Groups will post their findings via post-it notes on a poster or virtually on Jamboard.
7. Class discussion comparing the similarities and differences of the survivor excerpts. **What were the commonalities between the survivor testimonies? What were some of the differences? What can we infer about the experience of transport? (exit ticket)**

Day Two

1. Reflect on yesterday's activity through oral and written expression outlets, share and discuss exit ticket and student answers from the previous day
2. Show the "[Auschwitz Album](#)" video. Student reflection: **how did the video and written excerpts help to illuminate the human experience? Why is this important?** Possible format as a think-write-pair-share.
3. Student written reflection: **How did we remember the past in this activity? Why is it important to use multiple sources (survivor experiences and the boxcar) when analyzing an event?** This would create a good segue into the next part of Holocaust study which would be about the camps.

Materials & Resources Used (if applicable)

Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Photo of the boxcar from HMC ● Copies of written survivor accounts of transport and arrival for annotation ● Student journals/paper or technology for reflection and quickwrites ● Painter's tape for boxcar activity
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Resources

- [Auschwitz Album](#) video clip
- Copy of written survivor excerpts about transport (see below)
- Survivor video clips about transport (see below)

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/oral-history/fritzie-weiss-fritzshall-describes-deportation-in-cattle-car-to-auschwitz> (video)

<https://memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/recollection/#display-asset|27095> (video)

<https://memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/recollection/#display-asset|28264> (video)

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-survivors/first-person-conversations-with-survivors/first-person/helen-goldkind-arrival-at-auschwitz> (audio)

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-survivors/first-person-conversations-with-survivors/first-person/susan-taube-deportation-to-the-riga-ghetto> (audio)

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-reflections-testimonies/behind-every-name-a-story/irene-blasz-csillag> (written excerpt)

<https://memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/recollection/#display-asset|35584> (written excerpt)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tJMZiISDWQDZUIhWu0-1C-7T2WtA0BXJn27pgl1c3-E/edit?usp=sharing> (written excerpt)

<https://www.testifyingtothetruth.co.uk/viewer/fulltext/105864/en/> (written excerpt)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jfFTIjLUfS213F5URe83K88nvIKUKh3/view?usp=sharing> (written excerpt)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zs2pOmMaKFdLefpTURzDZ9ik0UDCLPcu/view?usp=sharing> (written excerpt)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wAtmWzpmxAgIZjD_9WV8J2Hb-qA8vMel/view?usp=sharing (written excerpt)