



Remembrance & Art



DESCRIPTION

In *Darkness into Life*, photography and art offer a special glimpse into the private memories of 20 Alabama Holocaust survivors, revealing stories of childhoods past, lost family and friends, despair and sadness, cruelty beyond belief, bravery, the joys of liberation, and new lives in Alabama. Through thought-provoking images accompanied by educational narratives, students gain a richer understanding of the history of the Holocaust and its impact on these individuals and their families.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- [Darkness into Life traveling exhibit](#) or [Darkness into Life online exhibit](#)
- Paper and pencil
- Various art supplies (colored pencils, crayons, markers, construction paper, etc.)

ACTIVITY: 60-MINUTE CLASS

STEP 1

- Begin by asking students to volunteer what they currently know about the Holocaust*
- Show the BHEC [video](#), *Why Should We Remember?* (8 minutes)

STEP 2

- Write the following quote on the board: "Art does not reproduce what is visible; it makes things visible." – Paul Klee, artist. Ask students to take a few minutes to independently write what the quote means.
- Students share their answers aloud and the class discusses.
- Ask students to discuss in pairs (or independently write) what possible connections there may be between art and the Holocaust.

STEP 3

- Explain the value/purpose of art by referring back to the Paul Klee quote and the students' answers. You may add the power of art to convey understanding to especially difficult subjects, such as the Holocaust.
- Explain the video mentions Alabama Holocaust survivors, and the students will be exploring their stories through the exhibit: *Darkness Into Life*
- Introduce *Darkness Into Life*. Help students see the connection between creating art and the art featured in *Darkness Into Life*.

STEP 4

- Students choose 5-8 paintings or photographs (depending on available time) that stand out to them. Students first write a description of what is happening in the artwork. Then, students explain why the art is impactful. Students may do this individually or in pairs/groups.

ASSESSMENT

- Students create their own artistic interpretation of what they have learned. They may choose to focus on one survivor, a theme they found throughout the stories, etc. Student interpretations should be in the form of a drawing, painting, poem, or other creative medium approved by the teacher. Let students know the goal is not to recreate the art they have seen but to create their own art/perspective. Remind them: Art does not reproduce what is visible; it makes things visible.
- Students also write an artist's statement that describes their creation and the story it tells**

NOTES

*We recommend you implement this lesson as an addition to other Holocaust lesson plans

**Have students begin in class and complete at home or complete in another class period

STUDENT ARTWORK CONTEST

Teachers are encouraged to [submit student artwork to the BHEC](#) for the chance to be featured in an art installation for Birmingham's annual Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) program on April 28, 2022 at Temple Beth-El.