

North Carolina's first Women's Holocaust Memorial, "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots," an original sculpture by Victoria Milstein honors the strength and resilience of all women. It honors not only the thousands of women and children who were killed in an Einsatzgruppen action in Liepaja, Latvia on December 15, 1941, but also Eva Weiner and Sofia Guralnik, the brave women who saved their children, Shelly Weiner and Raya Kizhnerman, by hiding them in Nazi-occupied Poland for almost two years. Installed on April 18, 2023, in LeBauer Park in Greensboro, NC, the monument is the focus of these lesson plans, created to assist teachers in helping students understand the importance of memorializing the Holocaust and honoring those who suffered during this dark time in history. These classroom-tested lessons were created as a collaborative effort by veteran Holocaust educator and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Teacher Fellow Laurie Schaefer and renowned artist Victoria Milstein, the creator of the "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" sculpture. These lessons can each be taught on their own or as a unit in English, Social Studies, or Arts classes and can be adapted to both middle and high school classes. Field trip plans are also included as one of the lessons if teachers are able to bring students to the memorial in downtown Greensboro.

LESSON 1:

SPIRITUAL RESISTANCE: SHE WOULDN'T TAKE OFF HER BOOTS

This lesson is meant to help students understand the historical and cultural background of Liepaja, Latvia and the Einsatzgruppen killing action that took place there. Learning the history of this town and these people is one way to battle indifference. The photograph that inspired the memorial "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" comes from the killing action in December of 1941 and will be analyzed in this lesson. Students will be able to synthesize their knowledge and

their reactions to what they learn through a written culminating activity that they can share with their peers. This lesson has two versions for different student audiences. For students in middle school, it is recommended that teachers use the version of the lesson without the video of the killing action in Liepaja, as students of this age are not ready to process the graphic nature of the film. Teachers in high school should use discretion as well when choosing which version of the lesson to use, as some high school students may also not be ready to view it. Teachers who have been able to provide an extensive study of the Holocaust before these lessons, especially in an elective course, may be in the best situation to help their students process the video and survivor testimony. Making responsible methodological decisions in which version of the lesson to use for your students is the first step in this lesson.

Teacher Preparation:

- Animated Map of Einsatzgruppen from USHMM
- Einsatzgruppen Holocaust Encyclopedia Article from USHMM
- Einsatzgruppen Background from Yad Vashem
- Liepaja The Valley of Communities from Yad Vashem

Student Handouts:

- Presentation: "Spiritual Resistance: She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" (with video)
- Student Handout for "Spiritual Resistance: She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" (with video)
- Presentation: "Spiritual Resistance: She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" (without video)
- Student Handout for "Spiritual Resistance: She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" (without video)

Objectives:

- Students will learn about the culture and life in Liepaja before the occupation of the Germans.
- Students will understand the process and impact of the Einsatzgruppen actions in Liepaja from June to December in 1941
- Students will analyze the photograph of the women who are the focus of the memorial and discuss the impact of their actions and how it is connected to spiritual resistance.
- Students will synthesize their knowledge of the history, culture, and spiritual resistance in Liepaja into a written product.



LESSON I: SPIRITUAL RESISTANCE: "SHE WOULDN'T TAKE OFF HER BOOTS" LESSON PLAN CONTINUED

Length of Lesson:

2 class periods

USHMM Guidelines:

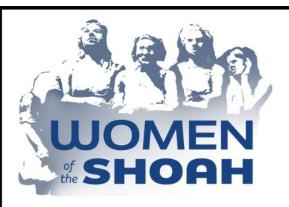
- #2: The Holocaust was not inevitable.
- #9: Translate statistics into people.
- #10: Make responsible methodological choices

Sources:

- <u>USHMM</u>
- Yad Vashem
- Women of the Shoah

Synopsis of Lesson:

- Begin by printing the Student Handout for Spiritual Resistance: "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" and projecting the Google Slides Presentation for the lesson to work through the lesson together. There are two versions of the handout since one version of this lesson includes a video of the killing squad action in Liepaja in July of 1941. Teachers should use discretion in choosing whether or not to show this video to their students. It is not recommended that middle school students view the video, but some high school students may also not be ready to see the graphic images in this film.
- First, have students respond to the quote from Elie Wiesel about indifference and share their reaction to it by initially writing their response on the handout and then turning and talking with a partner about their thoughts before a whole class discussion. This quote is part of the memorial in Greensboro on the camera that visitors can look through to see the memorial.
- Show the photographs of Liepaja in the past and the present on the next few slides of the Google slides presentation and lead a whole class discussion about what they can learn about the town from the map and the two photographs of the town. Point out the details on the map and in the photographs that help them see why this town was such an important conquest for the Nazis, including the port that the town had a port that allowed movement of troops.
- Play the video of Max Solway as he talks about life in the town before the Nazi occupation and have students record two things that they learn and one quote from the testimony that resonated with them. Follow that by going over the timeline on the next slide of the occupations and events in Liepaja up to the first Einsatzgruppen action in the town in July of 1941.
- Next, share the testimony of Sigrid Quick and have students record two observations of what life was like when the Nazis
 came into the town on her wedding day. Also have them record one quote that resonates with them and discuss what they
 learned from her testimony.
- Follow that with the information about the women's prison and how it was used as a holding place for those who were about to be killed by the Einsatzgruppen. Have students make a word cloud in the space using the key words from the slide from both the information and the survivor testimony.



LESSON I: SPIRITUAL RESISTANCE: "SHE WOULDN'T TAKE OFF HER BOOTS" LESSON PLAN CONTINUED

- For this next part, it is important that you use your best judgement as a teacher as to whether or not the video is something that your students should watch. This rare footage shows a mobile killing unit during a massacre in Liepaja, Latvia in July of 1941. It is the only film we have of any killings during the Holocaust and thus is graphic in nature. If you choose to use it, have students record their thoughts and reactions on the handout one word at a time to help them process what they are seeing.
- Consider having students choose one of their five words that they chose to describe what they saw and go around the
 classroom and just have each student share their one word to gauge emotions and reactions and follow up with any
 discussion that may help them process.
- Then, have the students listen to the interview with the videographer of the film and record five more words to communicate their reactions to what he says in the two excerpts from the interview. If needed, have students do the same thing as with the film and choose one word to share with the class to debrief what they heard and learned.
- Both versions of the lesson involve the testimony of Max Solway, who escaped by crawling out of the mass graves. Have students record the details of his escape or quotes from his testimony and discuss as a whole group.
- After sharing the next part of the timeline and the next two killing actions in the town, print off the photographs on slides 18-22 on full sheets of paper and then break the class up into five groups, giving each group one photograph. Have them record two details that they notice in the photo and one emotion that they see in the photo or feel about the photo after discussing the photo as a group. These photographs were taken by the Nazis during the December 1941 killings of the women and children in the town.
- Go through each photograph as a class and have each group share their observations about the details and the one emotion that they shared. Students should record the details from the other groups' analysis as well on their handout.
- On the next slides in the presentation, reveal the photograph used for the memorial one section at a time, having students draw what they see in each section and discussing the details that they are noticing as each section is revealed. Lead them through a discussion about the photograph as it is revealed and how spiritual resistance is present in the photograph. They can add notes about the photograph in the space underneath where they are drawing.
- On the next slides, share how the evidence of what the Nazis did in Liepaja was rescued and how others resisted by assisting Jews in the area by hiding them. The notes for the stories are in the note part underneath each slide.
- If students have not already learned about the "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" exhibit in Greensboro, NC, then share the video and pictures of where the monument is and how the victims are currently memorialized in Liepaja and have students create one final word cloud to summarize what they learned about the monument's purpose and placement.
- As a culminating activity, have students create a found poem that encapsulates all that they have learned in this lesson using their notes, word clouds, and one-word reactions to create multiple stanzas to tell the story of the people of Liepaja. Have students share their poems with each other, present to the class, or do a gallery walk of the poems.



North Carolina's first Women's Holocaust Memorial, "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots," an original sculpture by Victoria Milstein honors the strength and resilience of all women. It honors not only the thousands of women and children who were killed in an Einsatzgruppen action in Liepaja, Latvia on December 15, 1941, but also Eva Weiner and Sofia Guralnik, the brave women who saved their children, Shelly Weiner and Raya Kizhnerman, by hiding them in Nazi-occupied Poland for almost two years. Installed on April 18, 2023, in LeBauer Park in Greensboro, NC, the monument is the focus of these lesson plans, created to assist teachers in helping students understand the importance of memorializing the Holocaust and honoring those who suffered during this dark time in history. These classroom-tested lessons were created as a collaborative effort by veteran Holocaust educator and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Teacher Fellow Laurie Schaefer and renowned artist Victoria Milstein, the creator of the "She Wouldn't Take Off Her Boots" sculpture. These lessons can each be taught on their own or as a unit in English, Social Studies, or Arts classes and can be adapted to both middle and high school classes. Field trip plans are also included as one of the lessons if teachers are able to bring students to the memorial in downtown Greensboro.

LESSON 2: FORGETTING IS DANGEROUS

This lesson introduces students to the importance of Holocaust monuments and memorials and how artists design them to honor not only the memory of those who suffered, but also to communicate the lessons humanity should learn and apply to our world today. Using four Holocaust memorials from around the world as case studies, students will work in groups to analyze artistic elements, purpose, and persuasive techniques that the artists used to impact visitors. The desire to provide appropriate, meaningful memorials about the Holocaust began even before the end of the war in Europe in May of 1945. The challenge of how to honor the memory of those who were so brutally murdered and move future generations to act when they see human rights violated has been accepted by many artists in the decades following the Holocaust. This lesson helps students understand the importance of memorials by studying four artists or groups and the history and purpose of each memorial crafted for four different communities and shared with the world.

Teacher Preparation:

• Notes from the Artist: Victoria Milstein

Student Handouts:

- Presentation: Forgetting is Dangerous: Advocating for Memory
- Student Handout for Forgetting is Dangerous: Advocating for Memory

Objectives:

- Students will research four different Holocaust memorials from different countries, evaluating them for purpose, point of view, effectiveness, and core message.
- Students will understand the importance of memorials as a response to the dilemma of how to memorialize the Holocaust.
- Students will learn how memorials about the Holocaust can help combat antisemitism.

Length of Lesson:

• 1 class period, Approximately 90 minutes

USHMM Guidelines:

- #7: Avoid romanticizing history.
- #9: Translate statistics into people.



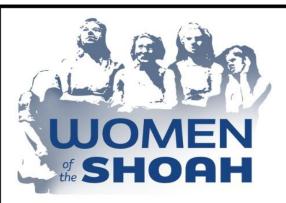
LESSON 2: FORGETTING IS DANGEROUS CONTINUED

Sources:

- Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach
- Architectuul
- <u>Eisenmann Architects</u>
- Arch Daily
- Greensboro News and Record
- Yad Vashem
- Gariwo
- Women of the Shoah

Synopsis of Lesson:

- Prepare for the lesson by printing the student handout for the lesson and projecting the Google slides presentation. Also share the Google slides presentation with students through a learning management system such as Canvas or Google Classroom. Begin with the class in one whole group.
- Model a discussion of the first memorial in Miami Beach with the class by first leading them through the questions in the column entitled "Analyzing and Reacting to the Memorial." Use the photo on the first slide and the following three slides to help answer the questions just based on inferences they can draw from the photographs.
- Then play the video on the slide about the creation of the memorial and explore the other links as a class to answer the rest of the questions on the page about the details of the memorial, the author's purpose and point of view, as well as the final question of how this memorial can combat antisemitism.
- Next, divide the class into six groups by having them count off and then move to work with their number group. Give each group one of the memorials to learn about (there will be two groups for each memorial) and have them follow the same pattern as when it was modeled for the class by exploring the photographs, then the links on the first slide for the memorial. They should discuss as a group what they learned and answer the questions together. Give them fifteen minutes to complete this activity.
- Have the groups combine with their partner group with the same memorial and compare their answers to the questions, adjusting as they see different points of view.
- As a class, go through the other three memorials, having the groups report out on their findings and having the other groups take notes and answer the questions as you go through each memorial.
- Finally, have each individual student answer the final question about which memorial do they believe is the most effective in advocating for the memory of the Holocaust and combatting antisemitism.



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LESSON 3: WITNESSING DEFIANCE: VISITING THE MEMORIAL

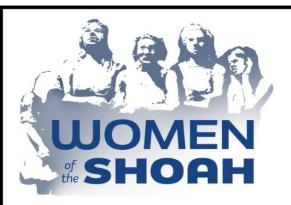
If you are close enough to Greensboro, NC to visit the memorial, this lesson will provide information about how to organize a field trip to take students to visit the memorial in Lebauer Park and the International Civil Rights Museum in downtown Greensboro, NC. You can also coordinate with the artist, Victoria Milstein, to meet your student group at the memorial. Each school system has its own procedures for organizing field trips, so the guidelines provided here are just suggestions about how to start the process. Since there may be situations where some students cannot go on the field trip or where you are too far away to drive to the memorial, lesson plans and handouts for exploring it in the classroom are also included.

Teacher Prep for the Field Trip:

- Fill out county field trip request form
- Reserve activity buses
- Reserve tickets at the International Civil Rights Museum
- Find bus drivers
- Get substitutes for yourself, chaperones, and bus drivers
- Contact Victoria Milstein (the artist who did the memorial) to see if she can meet your group at the memorial on the day of the field trip to answer questions (vcarlin60@gmail.com).
- Send out Student Permission Form for Field Trip to gather teacher and parent signatures
- Collect money from students to cover cost of tickets to the museum, gas, and bus drivers
- Assign students to buses
- Gather materials (see below) and copy handouts to take on the field trip
- Send email to staff with list of students who are attending the trip and who is absent

Materials:

- Felt tip pens of different colors for the visual journal
- Blankets for students to sit on and write or draw
- Face masks for the International Civil Rights Museum
- Journals for students
- Example Student Permission Form for Field Trip



LESSON 3: WITNESSING DEFIANCE: VISITING THE MEMORIAL LESSON PLAN CONTINUED

Student Handouts:

- Witnessing Defiance: Field Trip Itinerary, Visual Journal, Monument QR Codes
- Witnessing Defiance: Classroom Activity, Visual Journal, Monument QR Codes

Objectives:

- Students will explore the memorial, noting the details that convey the message of defiance.
- Students will research related topics about the memorial through the links provided at the memorial.
- Students will learn about the purpose of the memorial, point of view of the artist, and how the memorial helps combat antisemitism.
- Students will reflect on the importance of spiritual resistance not only during the Holocaust but also today through writing and sketching in their visual journals.

Length of Lesson:

• 1 full school day for the field trip or 1 class period for the classroom activity

USHMM Guidelines:

- #2: The Holocaust was not inevitable.
- #9: Translate statistics into people.

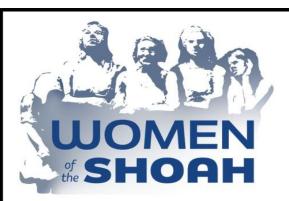
Sources:

- Women of the Shoah
- International Civil Rights Museum

Synopsis of Lesson/Trip:

Trip Lesson:

- Use the information in the Teacher Prep for the Field Trip to complete all of the details for the trip, using all of the forms that your school or county requires.
- Have students meet at the buses at the designated time and give them the handouts with the trip itinerary, instructions for what to do at the memorial, and some colored pens.
- When arriving at Lebauer park, drop students off by the food stands and suggest that the bus drivers park at the International Civil Rights Museum.
- Walk to the memorial, which is behind the gated children's park.
- Give students 15-20 minutes just to walk around the memorial, take photos of details that intrigue them, and scan the QR codes to hear the stories and information shared related to the memorial.
- Then, give students 10-15 minutes to reflect on their visual journal pages on the top half of the page, writing their thoughts, reactions, and questions in words or images with their pens. If you brought blankets with you, put them down on the ground for students to sit and reflect.



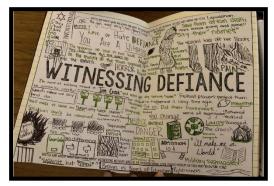
LESSON 3: WITNESSING DEFIANCE: VISITING THE MEMORIAL LESSON PLAN CONTINUED

- If the artist, Victoria Milstein, is there with you, have students ask her questions and have her share the process for making the memorial as well as what her vision is for maintaining the memorial and how she hopes it will impact visitors.
- It takes about an hour and fifteen minutes at the memorial to do all of this, so time it with your entry to the International Civil Rights Museum so you have 15-20 minutes to walk to the museum from the park.
- Once you walk to the museum (which may still require face masks), check in at the desk and then go watch the introductory film for the exhibit. This film is an hour long, so if you are limited in time, you may want to watch part of it and then go through the exhibit. While watching the film, have students begin to fill in the bottom part of the visual journal with examples of defiance and connections to their study of the Holocaust.
- When exiting the film, walk up the stairs and go to the right all of the way down the hall and begin at the lunch counter. As
 they go through the exhibit, students should continue to fill in their visual journals with the details of defiance that they see
 and connections to the Holocaust.
- When everyone gathers in the lobby at the end of the exhibit, have them pair up and share their visual journals and what they have learned today.
- Get back on the bus and go grab lunch before heading back to school! Consider a food court at the mall for lunch if you have a large group.

Classroom Lesson:

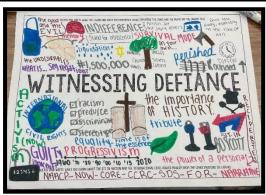
- Using the photograph of the memorial and the handouts provided above, have students use the QR codes and links to explore the resources available at the memorial to fill out the top part of the visual journal about the memorial.
- Then, using the links provided on the instructions page of the handout, have students explore the online exhibits from the International Civil Rights Museum to fill out the bottom part of the visual journal, detailing their thoughts, reactions, questions, and information learned through writing or sketches.
- Debrief with the whole class or pair up students to share their visual journals and explain connections that they drew from the memorial and the Holocaust and the International Civil Rights Museum.

Example of Visual Journal from Field Trip:

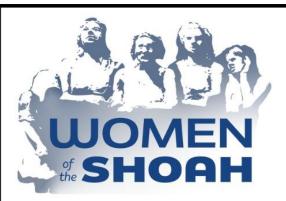


Shared with permission of Ava Shaw, student at Mount Tabor High School

Example of Visual Journal from Classroom Activity:



Shared with permission of Samantha Elliott, student at Mount Tabor High School



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LESSON 4: THE PAST IN THE PRESENT: CREATING A MEMORIAL

For this final lesson in the series, students will create their own memorial using a photograph from the Holocaust as their inspiration. From creating a plan and researching materials, cost, and locations to designing a 2D or 3D interpretation of the model, students will propose that their memorial be installed on their own school campus. Through presentations, gallery walks, or peer evaluation activities, students will share their memorials with their class and each class will vote on the memorials that they believe should be put on their campus. If a teacher wishes to pursue installing one of the memorials on the campus, ideas for how to fund it are also given at the end of the lesson plan.

Materials for Making Models of Memorials:

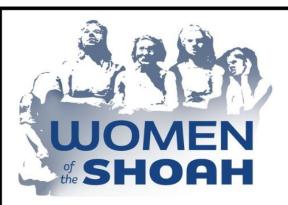
- Cardboard
- Tape (Scotch and masking tape)
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrushes
- Air dry clay
- Craft wire
- Canvas
- Foam board
- Drawing paper
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- White and black construction paper
- Scissors
- Hot glue gun

Student Handouts:

- Google slides Memorial Plan for Students
- Peer Evaluation Student Handout

Objectives:

Students will explore topics that they have studied from the Holocaust and find one historical photograph as
inspiration for their own memorial.



LESSON 4: THE PAST IN THE PRESENT: CREATING A MEMORIAL CONTINUED

- Students will research about one person, event, or group in the Holocaust and apply that research to a hands-on project that will benefit their school community.
- Students will use persuasive techniques and presentation skills to create a plan to convince others that their memorial should be installed on their school campus.

Length of Lesson:

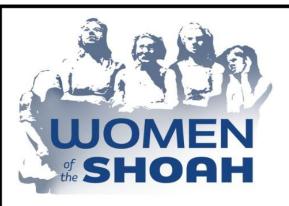
3-4 class periods

USHMM Guidelines:

- #7: Avoid romanticizing history.
- #9: Translate statistics into people.

Synopsis of Lesson:

- Begin this lesson by sharing a copy of the Creating a Memorial Plan Google slides presentation with each of the students and then have them follow the directions in the slide to research a specific topic, person, event, or group in the Holocaust and find a historical photograph that they will use as their inspiration for their own memorial.
- After each student has found the photograph and put in on the slide provided, then have them pair up with at least one other student and brainstorm ways that they can use that photograph to design a memorial that could be installed on their own school campus. The pairs should help each other consider whether it will be a 2D or 3D memorial and what kinds of materials that they would use to create the memorial, considering that they only have \$1,000 for the entire project.
- Once each student has a starting point, they should work through the rest of the slides in the presentation, building their plan for the memorial.
- After the plan is completed, students can then begin working on creating a small version of their memorial to bring the vision alive for potential donors. They can choose to draw or paint it, make a model, or even a black and white paper cutout model of it. Have materials on hand to help them work in class to create their models, drawings, or paintings. They can also work on it at home and bring it in a week later for presentations.
- Once students are done and have their Google slides plan and model/painting/drawing ready, either have them each present to the class or do a gallery walk with peer evaluations. Use the peer evaluation rubric handout linked in the lesson introduction. At the end of this activity, students will narrow all of the memorials down to their top three and then the one that they believe would be the best to put on their school campus. Use these votes to help determine which one memorial would be the best one to help students at your school connect to the lessons of the Holocaust and combat antisemitism.
- If you want to install the winning memorial on your campus, first talk to your principal to see what steps would need to be taken to get approval for this. It may involve talking to school board members, who may need to vote on approving it. Also, consider doing fundraisers for the memorial or writing a grant to get it funded. Asking students, staff, and community members to just donate \$1 each to raise money so that you have 1,000 people who supported it could also be a great way to get people involved and raise awareness about the topic and the project. See examples of projects on the next page.



Kindertransport Memorial



This memorial is meant to be cut out of sheet metal and installed in a common area at the school. The student did a 2D black and white paper cutout to give an idea of what it would look like.

Access the Google slides presentation here

 $Shared\ with\ permission\ of\ William\ Anderson,\ student\ at\ Mount\ Tabor\ High$

A Suitcase of Roses



Shared with permission of Haley Warren, student at Mount Tabor High

This 3D model made out of clay and paint is a creation of a memorial that would honor both the Kindertransport and the White Rose Movement.

Access the Google slides presentation here