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“Three Promises”, Breda and Matilda Kalef

Aimed at the high school students of the third and the fourth year (aged 17 and 18)

Type of school: public school, gymnasium

Duration – 2 lessons (90 min)

Lesson aims:

- preservation of the memory of the Holocaust victims and righteous among gentiles; evoking the students’ sensibility to the pain and suffering of other people
- understanding and connecting the previous knowledge about Nazism to tragic events and personal destinies in the context of general political events
- enabling a student to watch, receive and interpret the film
- developing the students’ critical opinion

Methods: pair work, group discussion

Lesson results:

The student will:

- have an emotional relationship with the victims and their biographies
- understand the personal destinies of the victims in the context of the general political events
- be able to come to certain conclusions and present them by watching and analyzing the film

Lesson aids: audio-visual aids

Lesson materials: pieces of paper containing questions, an empty piece of paper for answers

Teacher's activities:

The teacher:

- prepares the materials
- organizes the students in pairs
- hands out the materials
- delivers
- helps the students who ask for help
- integrates the lesson and points out what is the most important

Students' activities:

A student:

- listens to the teacher's delivery
- analyzes the film, based on the questions asked
- makes conclusions (on their own and in pairs)
- delivers
- asks questions

Teacher's literature:

www.centropa.org

<http://www.centropastudent.org/?typ=subtitel&fLang=ENG&movID=47&nID=78&q=m>

Guide for teaching about the Holocaust, the Union of Jewish Communities of Belgrade, Platoneum, Novi Sad, 2012

Righteous among the Nations – Serbia, M. Fogel, M. Ristic, M. Koljan, Jewish Community Zemun, Belgrade, 2010

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The Lesson

Activity one (10 minutes): the teacher begins the lesson by reminding of the previously acquired knowledge about Anti-Semitism in Europe, up until the moment that Hitler came to power

1. When did Hitler come to power?
2. From the very moment he came to power, the Nazis' racial ideology was systematically introduced. This ideology became legal in 1935. What was the name of the law and what did it state?
3. What is *Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass)*? When did this happen?
4. What was stated in the document named *The Regulation of the Military Commander in Serbia of 31 May 1941 (Verordnungsblatt des militärbefehlshabers in Serbien)*?
5. Where were almost all of the Serbian Jews interned by the end of 1941? (What was the name of the concentration camp and where was it located?)
6. When did the responsible for these acts inform their superiors that “the Jewish question in Serbia was solved”? What did that mean?

Activity two (8 minutes): The teacher gives a set of questions to each pair of students (handout 1, 2, or 3) and provides them with some general information about the film.

Now you are going to watch “Three Promises”, the film about the Kalefs. The film depicts the fate of a respectable, once very big, Jewish family from Belgrade – their lives before the Nazis came to Belgrade, their sufferings and deaths in the Holocaust, and the life stories of two sisters who survived because their mother managed to do “the impossible”. The film was directed by Srefan Sablic, and you will surely recognize that one of the narrators is voiced by our famous actress Jelisaveta Seka Sablic.

Before watching the film, read the questions you are required to answer.

Activity three (20 minutes): The students watch the film.

Activity four (15 minutes): The students answer questions, consult each other and write down the final answers.

Activity five (27 minutes): The teacher reads the questions out loud (starting from the first set) and the students answer. Each student should be given the opportunity to give an answer. To make the discussion flow, use the questions:

Who agrees with this? What do you mean when you say that? What do the others think about...

Activity six (10 minutes): The teacher addresses all the students:

1. After you have seen the film, you notice that there are three parts or periods that it depicts. Name the three parts or periods.
2. Why is the film titled three promises? State them.
3. Have the promises been kept?
4. What is the base of all the promises? (Life, the triumph of life)

The teacher writes the answer to the last question on the black board because it represents the essence of the lesson.

Questions for the students

Set 1:

1. Name the two groups of the Jews who live in Serbia.
2. Which group do the Kalefs belong to?
3. When were the Jews expelled from Spain?
4. How many centuries back can the Kalefs trace their roots in Belgrade?
5. Did the members of this family get married only within the Jewish community? Give an example.
6. In what part of the town do the Kalefs live? What is the name of their street? What do you know about this part of the town?
7. What do the Kalefs do for a living?
8. Where was the biggest shop located and when was it founded?
9. What organizations did the Jews have in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia before The Second World War?

Set 2:

1. According to the film, when did the Jews start to feel worried about their wellbeing?
2. How are they informed about the changes in Europe?
3. Were there any family members who joined some forces? What forces were those?
4. Why do the Jews from the north seek refuge in Belgrade? What is considered to be “the north”?
5. What measures did the occupation authorities introduce as obligatory for the Jews? Do you remember the name of that document?
6. When was the Jewish hospital emptied? What happened to the patients and the staff?
7. Where did the girls, Matilda and Rahela Kalef, spend the war?
8. What is the name of the priest who saved the girls?

9. What was going on at the church in Banovo brdo? Describe.

Set 3:

1. Where did survivors of the Kalef family go after the war? What had happened to their house?
2. Did the authorities correct their decision to nationalize the property? When was that?
3. Which sister kept the name Father Tumpej had given to her and why?
4. What has Breda (Rahela) “done with her life” and why?
5. How did Breda Kalef make sure that Father Tumpej’s deed would not be forgotten?
6. How do we call people who saved the Jews from certain death during The Second World War?