

## LESSON PLAN

TITLE: Matilda Kalef -- Three Promises.

TEACHER'S NAME: Joanna Prodromidou

SCHOOL'S NAME: Intercultural High School of Thessaloniki

PRIMARY CATEGORY THE LESSON BELONGS TO: History (Holocaust, WWII) and Greek Literature

LEVEL AND AGE OF STUDENTS: 2<sup>nd</sup> Class of High School. Age 16-17

TOTAL REQUIRED TIME TO TEACH THE LESSON: Six hours.

PERSONAL INFORMATION: I am a Greek literature teacher in high school in Thessaloniki. My students and I took part in a competition that was organized by the Ministry of Education and the Jewish Museum of Greece in March 2015 and in January. We made videos about the Shoah and we subsequently won the competition. As a result, we visited the concentration camps in Auschwitz-Birkenau. I then attended the seminar that was organized by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel from the 3<sup>rd</sup> till the 10<sup>th</sup> of July in 2015. I also have attended two seminars on Holocaust studies organized by Centropa; the first in Vienna, Prague and Berlin in July 2016 and then in Budapest and Belgrade in July 2017. During the last two years I have attended several seminars in Thessaloniki and Kavala that were organized by Centropa and the Jewish Museum of Greece. In November 2015 and 2016 my students and I took part in the Crocus Project. Together, we created videos about the Jews who lived in Thessaloniki, about the Holocaust of Jews, about Kindertransport, and about a Holocaust survivor. In October 2017 I attended another seminar in Thessaloniki «The Holocaust as a starting point: comparing and sharing».

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON PLAN: We shall start out by using a film by Centropa: Matilda Kalef -- Three Promises, due to the fact that it touches different topics, such as consequences of war, upstanders and altruism. The students will learn that the Holocaust is a reminder of the consequences of prejudice and intolerance and of the dangers of silence and apathy. For that reason, the topic is both timely and teachable. They will also learn about people who risked their lives in order to save others. I shall use photos of the Kalef family, the biography of Matilda, personal photos and other sources. Each group of students will be creative, since they will write newspaper article or design a blog, create timeline in the context of the Holocaust, a Holocaust glossary, express their views through prose, poetry or drawing, create a poster, a video and power point, and then they will present their work in front of the whole class.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: 1. This particular lesson is suitable for teaching about the Holocaust, since students will have the opportunity to learn that the Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. Moreover, students will be informed that more than 90% of Belgrade's Jewish families were murdered during the Holocaust.

2. Besides being informed about the Holocaust, the most significant notion that teachers will impart to students is the notion of altruism. The primary concept that students should remember is the importance of taking care of other people's welfare as well as of helping

others without expecting anything in return. In my opinion, nothing is more important than teaching compassion, since teaching empathy, altruism and compassion to school children benefits the classroom environment.

## GOALS:

The students will:

- Acquire a broad range of historical knowledge and understanding.
- Learn about the Sephardic Jews and about Spanish Jews, who had been expelled from Spain in 1492.
- Acquire knowledge of the Serbian Jewish World since they will learn that 10,000 Jews were living in Belgrade and 80% of them were Sephardic Jews. The rest - around 20% Ashkenazi were from northern Europe.
- Be taught the dangers of prejudice, intolerance, militarism, and totalitarianism.
- Understand the relations between characters and events.
- Realize that silence and indifference towards the victimization of any person or group encourages the efforts of the perpetrator.
- Gain knowledge about the Holocaust.
- Understand that the Holocaust wasn't an accident in history. It happened because individuals, groups and governments made choices to allow prejudice, discrimination, hatred and violence to occur.
- Learn that specific Nazi stereotypes and accusations that portrayed Jews and other targeted victims as a threat to Germany were not true.
- Gain knowledge about the people who resisted the nazis and those who became rescuers.
- Learn what a bystander is and what is an upstander.
- Study and understand the problems that have also existed in Greek history and society.
- Learn that each person is responsible for his/her own actions and that everyone is capable of having an impact on the people and events that surround them.
- Understand the necessity of supporting and safeguarding their own democratic values and institutions.
- Become aware of a tale of love and war in Serbia.
- Reflect on the role and responsibilities of individuals, groups, and nations when confronting human rights violations and genocidal acts.
- Think about the use and abuse of power, and the implications for a society that violates civil and human rights.
- Learn to help other people.
- Respect others regardless of their religion and the country they come from.
- Be open minded and fight against racism and prejudices.
- Be creative.
- Obtain the ability to communicate ideas clearly, fluently and confidently both orally, by giving presentations, and in writing, by producing essays and reports.
- Learn to critically evaluate texts, films and other information.
- Improve their historical analysis skills.
- Conduct research using different types of tools and sources, gathering, interpreting, analysing and organising information.
- Learn to cooperate with other students and be able to work effectively, organize work, and manage time and resources effectively.

- Understand human behavior, since the way people acted during the Holocaust reveals a lot about human behavior in general.
- Recognize how lives can be changed by people and events.
- Analyze a photograph, making observations and inferences.
- Connect the photographs with the historical context in which they were produced.
- Be encouraged to resist and reject attitudes of prejudice and to value people as individuals.
- Be prepared to be responsible, by teaching respect and concern for others.
- Study other histories of persecution.
- Develop articles to demonstrate their knowledge.
- Learn the importance of doing the right, when nowadays so many people are doing the wrong. Under these circumstances they will learn to be on the right side of history in the future.
- Become aware of ethical and unethical uses of power.
- Raise and examine key issues regarding individual responsibility.
- Be confident in exploring different approaches and exercising personal responsibility.
- Present independent opinions, using arguments that are well-written, clearly expressed, coherently organised and effectively supported by relevant evidence.
- **Understand that the Good always wins and the Bad loses.**

#### SOURCES:

- Matilda Kalef -Three Promises - a film by Centropa.  
[http://www.centropa.org/centropa-cinema/matilda-kalef-three-promises?subtitle\\_language=](http://www.centropa.org/centropa-cinema/matilda-kalef-three-promises?subtitle_language=)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfTGles7IWA> (The film has Greek subtitles)
- Photos of this family <http://www.centropa.org/pictures-stories?type%5B%5D=photo&title=Cerge&donor=41000#collapsed>
- Biography of Matilda Cerge: <http://www.centropa.org/biography/matilda-erge>  
<http://www.centropa.org/photo/matilda-erges-family-list>
- google.gr
- Worksheets
- <http://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/chrysostomos-karreri>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl\\_Lutz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Lutz)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFzNi8Kbnl0&t=560s>
- Personal photos.
- Photos of memorials of upstanders.
- Library and online resources.

#### THE LESSON

1. Motivating the students:

During the first class teacher shows these three photos to the students:



In order to help them the teacher asks the following questions:

1. Is a photo worth a thousand words? Why?
2. Where do you think the photographs were taken?
3. Who do you see in the photos?
4. How could these people be related?
5. What are the expressions on their faces?
6. When were these photos taken?
7. Who, do you believe, are the photographers of these photos?
8. Why were these photographs taken?
9. What is absent in these pictures?
10. What is the story of these people?

After hearing students' answers, the teacher explains what these photos portray. The picture on the left shows two girls, Breda and Matilda, before the war. They were wearing dresses called "dirndls", which were in Austrian fashion. The photo was taken in Belgrade in the 1940s. The picture in the middle shows a brave Catholic priest, Father Tumpej, who saved these two girls during the Holocaust in Belgrade. He established the parish on Banovo Brdo and worked there for a long time. He helped everyone, including Jews and Communists. The photo on the right shows Breda and Matilda nowadays. The photo was taken in Belgrade in July 2017.

During the second class the teacher briefly introduces a Centropa film. The film is Three Promises and can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfTGles7IWA>. The film preserves a largely unexplored chapter of the Holocaust. Before watching the film, the teacher gives students the questions that are written below, so that they have time to think about them. Then, the entire class watches the film, although they will see it in their groups. Since film has Greek subtitles the students will not find it so difficult to watch the film. Example of discussion questions are the following:

1. What story is being told?
2. What order is the story told in?
3. What part of the film did you find the most powerful? What made it powerful? (Was it the story itself or how the story was told?)
4. How did the filmmaker choose to tell the story (with words, music, and images)?
5. What part of this story do you think is most important if you were going to tell this story to someone else? Why?
6. What is the most important message of this story?
7. Which person did you like most and why?
8. How did you feel while watching the film?

Under these circumstances the students, even the weaker ones, have understood the film and they are ready to work with their groups.

In the third and fourth class a teacher divides student into six groups of four. In each group at least one student should have a good level of English. Each group has different worksheets. The teacher gives the worksheets to each group and answers the questions that students might have.

## **WORKSHEETS**

### **1<sup>st</sup> GROUP / WRITERS**

- First watch the film Matilda Kalef -- Three Promises by Centropa  
[http://www.centropa.org/centropa-cinema/matilda-kalef-three-promises?subtitle\\_language=with english subtitles](http://www.centropa.org/centropa-cinema/matilda-kalef-three-promises?subtitle_language=with%20english%20subtitles) or  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfTGles7IWA> with Greek subtitles.
- Write a newspaper article or create a blog.
- Decide with the other members of your group what to include.
- If you write an article do not forget to:
  - create a title that will grab your reader's interest,
  - decide which facts and figures will ground your story,
  - write what is at the heart of your story,
  - find something that sums the article up in a few words, and
  - write your conclusion.
- If you create a blog do not forget to:
  - be creative and original,

- design your blog not only to tell Matilda's story to your classmates but, moreover, to create a stimulating and informative educational resource for school students and others interested in building their historical knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust.
- In your article or your blog you need to focus on the Jewish life before the war, the everyday life of Jews during the Holocaust and their lives after the end of World War II.
- You will present your work to the whole class.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> GROUP: TIMELINE CREATORS

- First read the biography of Matilda Cerge <http://www.centropa.org/biography/matilda-gerge>.
- See the photos of this family <http://www.centropa.org/pictures-stories?type%5B%5D=photo&title=Cerge&donor=41000#collapsed>
- After reading the biography create a timeline of Matilda's life in the context of the World War II and the Holocaust.
- Decide with the other members of your group what to include.
- Present the facts in chronologically using the dates.
- Do not forget to:
  - select photographs from this family,
  - select events from the biography that have relevance to either World War II or the Holocaust,
  - write the years,
  - write events from the World War II, and the Holocaust, and
  - write the Anti-Jewish Laws.
- You will present your work to the whole class.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> GROUP: POSTER CREATORS

- First visit: <http://www.centropa.org/photo/matilda-gerges-family-list>
- Download the family tree.
- Design a poster.
- Decide with the other members of your group what kind of poster do you want to create.
- One idea is to create the family tree of Matilda in form of the poster.
- If you create the family tree do not forget to:
  - put empty rectangles on the tree and write the names of the family members who are missing. This tree could correspond to any family murdered during the Holocaust.
- Think about the message you would like to pass on about the Holocaust and note that your poster should be original and unique and demands no further explanation.
- You will present your work to the whole class.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> GROUP: POWER POINT AND VIDEO CREATORS

- First visit <http://www.centropa.org/pictures-stories?type%5B%5D=photo&title=Cerge&donor=41000#collapsed>
- Then visit [https://www.google.gr/search?site=&source=hp&q=breda+kalef&oq=breda+kalef&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3..0i19k1.980.4938.0.5725.12.11.0.0.0.187.1479.0j11.11.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..1.11.1469.0..0j35i39k1j0i131k1j0i10i42k1j0i22i30k1j0i13k1j0i13i30k1j0i22i30i19k1.RvIEUwy-0K4](https://www.google.gr/search?site=&source=hp&q=breda+kalef&oq=breda+kalef&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0i19k1.980.4938.0.5725.12.11.0.0.0.187.1479.0j11.11.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..1.11.1469.0..0j35i39k1j0i131k1j0i10i42k1j0i22i30k1j0i13k1j0i13i30k1j0i22i30i19k1.RvIEUwy-0K4)
- Visit [https://www.google.gr/search?q=matilda+kalef&oq=matilda+kalef&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3..0i30k1.35333.38815.0.39826.12.12.0.0.0.182.1421.0j9.9.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..3.8.1244...0j0i7i30k1j0i8i7i10i30k1j0i10k1j0i7i10i30k1.DoO8iEF9L1o](https://www.google.gr/search?q=matilda+kalef&oq=matilda+kalef&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0i30k1.35333.38815.0.39826.12.12.0.0.0.182.1421.0j9.9.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..3.8.1244...0j0i7i30k1j0i8i7i10i30k1j0i10k1j0i7i10i30k1.DoO8iEF9L1o)
- Find photographs from the above-mentioned sites.
- Make a power point presentation in which you describe the family life before and after the Second World War using photographs and Matilda's comments.
- Create a video in moviemaker from the perspective of Andrej Tumpej, who saved the girls using photographs from the above sites. You could use music from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFzNi8Kbnl0&t=560s>, where Breda Kalef is singing from 08.49 'until 21.18' or the music of your choice.
- You will present your work to the whole class.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> GROUP: LEARNING ABOUT UPSTANDERS

- First read the part of the biography of Madilda <http://www.centropa.org/biography/matilda-erge> that writes about Andrej Tumpej:

[Andrej Tumpej] was an exceptional man. He hid two [other] Jewish girls. Up in Banovo Brdo there was a German cemetery. This was in 1942. During the day they hid in the cemetery and at night they came to him. He gave them a place to sleep in one big hall so that they didn't freeze. Imagine this, then he, who had good relations with the Serbian priests, through them got these two papers that they were Serbian women going to work in Germany. With this, I think, he thought he helped save them. He obtained all that for them. When they got to the train station as two Serbian women to go work in Germany, a Volksdeutscher [11] recognized them and turned them in. They were arrested and transported. We never saw them, and I don't know their names. He told us this during the war. After this the Germans locked him up for one, two, three months in Belgrade. He also hid Dr. Vajs, a pediatrician. She was with the Partisans. She also came to him in Banovo Brdo and slept in the big hall. He helped everyone a lot. He died after the war, but I don't remember what year. When he was in prison a German asked him, 'How could you dare to do this, to hide Jewish girls?' and he answered, 'And tomorrow if you were in that kind of situation I would do the same for you.' He was a great man and he got along very well with the Serbian priests too. They hugged and kissed when they met each other. There was no hatred. He was a man in the true sense of the word.

Exceptional. We have a picture with him after the war with a group of kids.

- Read <http://www.centropa.org/photo/father-andrej-tumpej>
- Read <http://www.centropa.org/photo/matilda-gerge-and-others-father-andrej-tumpej>
- Read <http://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/chrysostomos-karrer>
- Read [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl\\_Lutz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Lutz)

- See the photograph of Carl Lutz memorial in Budapest:



- also see this photograph of Mayor Loukás Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos memorials:



- As you can understand, Andrej Tumpej, Carl Lutz, Mayor Loukás Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos were upstanders. An upstander is the person, who speaks out and takes action in protest and in defense of persons or groups who are being harassed, persecuted, and generally victimized by another person, group, or government.
- More specifically, Mayor Loukás Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos refused Nazi orders to turn in a list of the members of the town's Jewish community for deportation

to the death camps. Instead they desecrated the town's 275 Jews in various rural villages and turned in a list that included only their own two names. Carl Lutz is credited with saving over 62,000 Jews in Budapest. That is the largest rescue operation of Jews of the Second World War.

- “He who saves one life it is considered as if he has saved the whole world.” Explain how Andrej Tumpej, Carl Lutz, Mayor Loukás Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos exemplify this saying. You may express your views through a play, poetry or drawing.
- Write one letter that could be sent from Andrej Tumpej to Carl Lutz, one letter that could be written from Mayor Loukás Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos to Andrej Tumpej, and another one that from Carl Lutz to Mayor Loukás Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos. In these letters you would describe the actions they made, in order to save the Jews in three different countries.
- You will present your work to the whole class.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> GROUP: THE CREATORS OF HOLOCAUST GLOSSARY.

- First read <http://www.centropa.org/biography/matilda-gerge#Wartime>
- You can also visit a library and online sources.
- Research and find important terms, places, or names related to the history of the Holocaust.
- Create Holocaust ABC glossary.
- You can create your glossary in English or in Greek language.
- Decide with the other members of your group what to include.
- You can write one word or more for each letter.
- For each word you write, you will also need to write the definition that includes historical background.
- For example, you can write the word anti-Semitism from <http://www.centropa.org/biography/matilda-gerge#Wartime>, which means: ‘hostility to, prejudice, or discrimination against Jews’.
- Then write a text using as many words as you can from the glossary you have created.
- You will present your work to the whole class.

In the fifth and sixth class students will present their work to the whole class.

### 3. CONCLUDING ACTIVITY

After seeing all the presentations students are in a position to have a fruitful discussion about what it was like to research and present someone else's story. More specifically they will describe what kind of responsibility do they feel presenting it accurately and what were the challenges. In addition, they can say what was the most important to them in presenting the story and they may have a meaningful class discussion, sharing their experience, their

thoughts and their ideas. Under these circumstances, the teacher can understand what knowledge the students gained through the lesson.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Students can also:

- Make diagrams with the three promises (who made them, to whom and what were their promises).
- Write Matida' s diary during the Second World War.
- Visit Centropa' s website and see films from this country such as: Survival in Sarajevo.
- Visit Centropa' s website and read more biographies from this country.
- Make a timeline of the Nazi Occupation of Greece.
- Use atlases and other resources to locate on a map of Europe the locations of the concentration and death camps.
- Read of a Holocaust-themed book.
- Read and think critically. The Diary of Anne Frank
- Students discuss and write their reactions after reading “The Diary of Anne Frank“
- Write a letter to a foreign language newspaper in memory of victims of the Holocaust.
- Create a piece of artwork against War and anti-Semitism.
- Read/listen to a survivor’s story from the web and make a representation of that person's journey from before the Holocaust, during the Holocaust, and after the Holocaust.
- Discuss questions related to prejudice.
- Find out how the children were the victims of the Holocaust.
- Research: children in the ghetto.
- Compare articles about human rights.

## REFLECTION

The Holocaust is undoubtedly the most horrific event that took place in history. It is also one of the most important events in recent history. Yet, teaching the Holocaust in Greece is a recent chapter due to several reasons. The difficulty was to teach the Holocaust to students, who have heard only a few things about it. This lesson worked well, since most of my students were able to understand the magnitude of the suffering and I believe that they will build up strong morals to fight against a similar event happening in the future. I believe that all the members of the groups worked together. Many students decided to take part in the Crocus Project. They planted yellow Crocus bulbs in memory of the 1.5 million Jewish children, who perished in the Holocaust and thousands of other children who were victims of Nazi atrocities. The yellow flowers recall the yellow Stars of David that Jews were forced to wear under Nazi rule. One of my students told me that history is being repeated because, although the Holocaust was the single largest crime committed against mankind, but it most certainly wasn't the last one. The student gave the example of Serbia, which shows that he was influenced by the film. However, a few of my students were indifferent and they were not the weaker students, but those who were influenced by their parents' political views. I believe that these students may have learnt only a few things. Teachers can make other activities, for example

those mentioned on the pictures below. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2018 one of my students wrote on the blackboard #We Remember.

### CROCUS PROJECT

