

Holocaust Remembrance Day

January 27

Global Themes

- Social Justice

Overview and Purpose

This lesson is designed to teach children about Holocaust Remembrance Day and the specific rights of the child highlighted by this UN Day (all articles, in particular Article 2).

Background Information for Teachers

Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

www.vhec.org/teaching.html

Grades

4 – 8

Materials

Book entitled *Talking Walls* by Margy Burns Knight

Book entitled *Talking Walls: The Stories Continue* by Margy Burns Knight

Activity

- Begin by introducing January 27th as Holocaust Remembrance Day; a UN Day highlighted around the world. Ask if the students have heard of the Holocaust. Record the background knowledge of the students and acknowledge the sensitive nature of the topic.
- Read the page specifically about the Holocaust from the book *Talking Walls: The Stories Continue*.
- Discuss the importance of stories in the development of a person's identity. How was the right to an identity violated in the Holocaust? How did the walls preserve the identity of the victims many years later?
- Divide the students into groups and have each group read about one of the walls from the books. Have students prepare a brief summary of the story to share with the class, and ask them to point out the location of the story on a world map.
- Have each group answer the discussion questions below.
- Optional: Have groups prepare their own inquiry question based on the stories and prepare an action project based on their inquiry.

Discussion

Use the following questions taken from the books *Talking Walls* and *Talking Walls: The Stories Continue*.

Do walls talk? If they did, what would they tell us? Who built them? Why? Do you know about other walls? Are they visible or invisible? Do they tell stories? Do they need to stay up or come down? Do you build walls? Would you tear them down? Can you imagine a world without walls?

Extensions

Have students reflect on and/or write a response to the quote by Robert Frost on the inside title page of the book *Talking Walls*: “Before I built a wall I’d ask to know what I was walling in or walling out.”

After the Vancouver Canucks lost the Stanley Cup final game in 2011, riots broke out in downtown Vancouver. The following day the people of Vancouver came together and began a talking wall showing love for the city and the Canucks. Compare this wall to those in the book *Talking Walls*. Is it comparable? If so, how? If not, why not? Would you define the people who wrote on this wall as global citizens? Why or why not?

Information on the Vancouver wall is available at:

<http://www.straight.com/article-399830/vancouver/vancouverites-sign-wall-shame-after-stanley-cup-riot>

<http://vancouver.about.com/b/2011/06/22/museum-of-vancouver-will-save-riot-apology-wall.htm>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/vancouver-riot-wall/>

Additional Resources

Talking Walls Teacher’s Guide, ISBN 0-88448-106-9

Talking Walls: The Stories Continue Teacher’s Guide, ISBN 0-88448-168-9

Reading, Writing, and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word by Linda Christensen

TeacherVision website

teachervision.fen.com/holocaust/teacher-resource/6630.html

A Teacher’s Guide to the Holocaust

fcit.usf.edu/holocaust/default.htm

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

osce.org/odihr/44474

