



UK-JHF Lesson

University of Kentucky-Jewish Heritage Fund
Holocaust Education Initiative

Lesson Title:

**Paideia Seminar for excerpt from
The Sunflower by Simon Wiesenthal**

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Lesson Overview

Suggested Grade Level	10th-12th
Time Required	Part 1/Day 1: 60 min. Part 2/Day 2: 45-60 min. Part 3/Day 3: 30-60 min.
Subject	English/Language Arts
Relevant Courses	English 2, 3, or 4
Kentucky Curriculum Standard(s) Addressed	<p>RI. 11- 12.1: Cite relevant and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>C. 11-12.2: Compose informative/explanatory texts to examine and/or convey complex ideas, concepts and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content.</p>
Summary/Rationale	The purpose of this lesson is to engage students with a complex and difficult text about the Holocaust. Through a scaffolded discussion protocol, students will interact with one another to analyze the text. They will demonstrate their understanding of the text in the seminar style discussion as well as in a formal essay they write.
Featured Materials/ Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paideia Seminar Plan • Copies of the excerpt from <i>The Sunflower</i> by Simon Wiesenthal
Essential Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is forgiveness? • Who can decide if a person deserves to be forgiven? • How do a person's beliefs affect the way they see the world?
Learning Outcomes	<p><i>After this lesson, students will be able to . . .</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine central ideas of a text and analyze their development. • Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of the text in discussion and in writing. • Compose an informative essay that conveys complex ideas clearly and effectively.
Teacher Planning and Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Familiarize yourself with the facilitation process for a Paideia Seminar 2. Read the text in advance and determine potential discussion questions 3. Practice wait time & charting a discussion 4. Write group or individual goal options on the board (or use the attached slideshow)

	5. Arrange student desks in a circle, oval or square so that everyone can see one another
Lesson Created By	Renee Ross , Woodford County High School <i>Woodford County Schools</i>

During the Lesson

Instructional Sequence

Day 1: Building background and making connections

1. **Inspectional Read:**
Ask participants to letter the paragraphs and number the lines or sentences.
2. **Provide Background Information:**
Provide students with limited background information (because the purpose is to engage with the text in a close-reading style).

“The Sunflower” is a memoir written by Simon Wiesenthal in 1969. Wiesenthal is a Holocaust survivor who wrote his memoir to convey moral issues of the Holocaust. This excerpt speaks to ghetto life for children during the Holocaust.”
3. **Define and state the purpose for the seminar:**
“A Paideia seminar is a collaborative, intellectual dialogue about a text, facilitated with open-ended questions. The main purpose of the seminar is to arrive at a fuller understanding of the textual ideas and values of ourselves, and of each other.”
4. **Describe the responsibilities of the facilitator and participants:**
“I am primarily responsible for asking open-ended questions, and I will take a variety of notes to keep up with the talk turns and flow of ideas. I will help move the discussion along in a productive direction by asking any follow-up questions based on my notes. I am asking you to think, listen, and speak candidly about your thoughts, reactions, and ideas. You can help each other do this by using each other’s names. You do not need to raise your hands in order to speak, rather, the discussion is collaborative in that you try to stay focused on the main speaker and wait your turn to talk. You should try to both agree and disagree in a courteous and respectful manner.”
5. **Have participants set a personal goal:**
“Now please reflect on how you normally participate in discussions as a group. What goal can you set for yourself that will help the flow and meaning of the seminar? Please consider the list of personal participation goals.”
 - To speak at least three times
 - To refer to the text (Textual evidence)
 - To ask a question
 - To speak out of uncertainty
 - To build on the ideas of others
6. **Establish a group goal:**
 - To use names of classmates
 - To speak at least three times
 - To refer to the text (Textual evidence)
 - To ask a question
 - To speak out of uncertainty
 - To build on the ideas of others

7. Have students label paragraphs:

Ask students to label their paragraphs A, B, C, etc & then confirm everyone had the same letters (they will refer to the paragraphs by these letters when they discuss the text) Sometimes I even ask students to number the sentences, if the text is short enough to make it worth our time.

8. Ask students to read the text:

Ask students to read through the text one time without stopping to annotate or mark it

9. Underline a word or phrase:

Ask students to skim the piece a second time and underline one word or phrase that they find to be most powerful.

10. Read aloud the word or phrase:

Ask each student to read aloud the one word or phrase that resonates with them most. When they get ready to read they should say "paragraph C, then pause for 5 seconds so everyone in the room can find that paragraph before they read the phrase.

Remind them not to elaborate on why they selected that word or phrase yet. The point here is to get everyone to share each word or phrase once first. Remind them that it's okay if the word or phrase they selected is the same as someone else (even if several people in a row pick the same word or phrase because that will tell us something about what we read).

11. Share why that word or phrase was chosen:

Ask students to share why they selected that word or phrase (spontaneous discussion).

- Encourage students to build on the ideas of others and let the conversation flow organically.
- Encourage students to ask questions of one another and remember that the point is for students to lead the discussion and the teacher is to facilitate.
- Remind the students that silence is okay even when it makes us uncomfortable. (If you wait long enough, they will typically be the ones to break the silence)
- Ask questions from the seminar plan as needed/desired
 - What is the symbolic significance of the child being named Eli?
 - What do you see about the contrasts between how the adults and children were treated in the ghetto?
 - What feelings and reactions does this piece evoke for you?
 - What does this text teach us about forgiveness?

NOTE: I like to end the discussion with students still having things they want to say rather than waiting for an extended lull. This is because it leaves everyone interested in thinking about the text after the conversation, and that thinking works well as you move to the writing following the discussion.

12. Self-assess their personal goal:

Have participants do a written self-assessment of their personal goal:

"As part of the post-seminar process, I would like to ask you to take a few minutes to reflect on your experience in meeting your goal set prior to the start of the discussion. Write a short note about how you did"

13. Group assessment:

Do a group assessment of the social and intellectual goals of the discussion:

"Now I would like us to talk together about how we did in relation to the group goal we set for ourselves (insert group goal). On a scale of one to five, five being ideal, how would you say we did? Why?" Discuss.

Ask: "Would anyone be willing to share their personal goal and reflection?"

Day 2: Transition to writing about the text we read yesterday

- 1. Provide prompt:**
Display the [prompt](#) or provide it on a handout.
- 2. Analyze the prompt:**
Ask students to analyze the prompt with a partner. What are they being asked to know and do in order to write the essay? Set a timer for students working together.
- 3. Share thoughts:**
Ask students to share their thoughts with the class.
- 4. Criteria & rubric:**
Display the criteria and rubric.
- 5. Discuss with partner:**
Ask students to discuss the criteria and rubric with their partner.
- 6. Share thoughts with class:**
Ask students to share their thoughts with the class.
- 7. Brainstorm writing ideas:**
Have students individually brainstorm ideas for writing in response to the prompt. Encourage them to recall the class discussion on day 1.
- 8. Draft a thesis:**
Ask students to draft a thesis statement (use the thesis generator or template, if necessary)
- 9. Get thesis approved:**
Have students get their thesis statement approved by the teacher before they begin drafting their essay.
NOTE: Some students will need further scaffolding for essay writing. Outlines and templates can be provided for students needing such support
- 10. Draft the essay**

Day 3: Today's focus will be on peer review and editing.

- 1. Review criteria & rubric:**
Review the criteria and rubric again together as a class.
- 2. Read essay aloud to partner for feedback, then switch roles:**
Ask students to read their essay aloud to their partner while their partner follows along, making note of expectations from the rubric as well as any editing for grammar and conventions that might be needed.
- 3. Make revisions:**
Ask students to make appropriate revisions to their essay based on revisions suggested by their partner.
- 4. Self-reflection:**
What type of changes did your partner suggest you make to your essay? Did you agree with those changes? Why or why not? How do you feel about your progress toward mastering the required criteria for your essay? Why do you feel this way?

Assessment(s)

- **Self-assessment:** Self-assessment includes returning to the goal set at the start of the seminar and asking students to write about whether or not they met their goal and why. Self-assessment also occurs after writing and reviewing the essay.
- **Peer-assessment:** Peer-assessment comes in the form of the peer editing and evaluation of the essay draft.
- **Teacher assessment:** Teacher assessment comes from the teacher charting the discussion (student responses and interactions).
- **Essay:** Essay ([prompt, criteria, and rubric on slides](#))

Links to Necessary Resources and Handouts

- **Seminar Plan:** The teacher should develop a [Seminar plan](#) for the discussion
- **Text:** The Sunflower by Simon Wiesenthal ([excerpt re-typed](#) for convenience)
- **Slideshow:** [Slideshow](#) directions for discussion

Following Up and Additional Resources

Suggested Modification for Accommodation

- Consider providing templates or outlines for students needing scaffolding with essay writing

Citations

Brown, Jean E., et al. *Images from the Holocaust: A Literature Anthology*. NTC Pub. Group, 1997.