



#WeRemember: Learn from the Past to Protect the Future,

January 27th, International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD)

Lesson plan for grade 6, prepared by Mina Cohn, Chair of CHES modified by Alyssa Novick, Vice Chair of CHES

1. If the Holocaust hasn't been taught yet, it should be introduced.

Ask students if they have heard of the word "Holocaust" and accept answers. Use a modified version of the USHMM definition that is age appropriate. Clarify any vocabulary. ([Link A](#))

The Holocaust was the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators did not occur in a vacuum. It was the product of unchecked hatred and collective silence. It started with legislation, propaganda, etc., but escalated to the mass murder of Jews, often, but not exclusively in specially-built camps.

What is International Holocaust Remembrance Day?

Some background about International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD):

- <https://www.un.org/en/outreach-programme-holocaust/page/2026>
 - <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/observance>
 - <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/international-holocaust-remembrance-day>
2. Ask the students if they heard of the word, "Auschwitz". Explain and/or elaborate on what it was and why we remember it on that particular day. *
 3. Discuss what Auschwitz-Birkenau was: The largest of the death camps where about 1,100,000 Jews were murdered, Auschwitz-Birkenau was both a labor camp and a center for the systematic murder of Jews by means of Zyklon B gas. It was equipped with several extermination facilities and crematoria.

4. When was Auschwitz-Birkenau established?

Auschwitz-Birkenau is located in the southeast of Poland; it was established in 1940 following the Nazi occupation of Poland. Initially it was a concentration camp for Polish political prisoners, but it soon became a prison for a number of other nationalities. Eventually between 1942-1944 it became the main mass extermination camp and labor camp where Jews were killed for their so-called racial origins.

5. When was Auschwitz-Birkenau liberated?



The Auschwitz-Birkenau camp complex was liberated by the Soviet Red Army on 27 January 1945. Tragically, by then approximately 1,100,000 Jews, 70,000 Poles, 25,000 Sinti and Roma, and some 15,000 prisoners of war from the USSR and other countries had been murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

6. What does Auschwitz-Birkenau serve as now?

Today, Auschwitz-Birkenau is open to the public as the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. It tells the story of the largest mass murder site in history and acts as a reminder of the horrors of genocide.

- <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/auschwitz>
- <https://www.auschwitz.org/en/>

Activities for Students:

1. Discuss with your students why this date was chosen as International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD). <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/observance/>

- <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/>

#WeRemember activity:

Tell the students that they can make a significant difference through a simple task that can be done virtually. The **#WeRemember Campaign** started several years ago by asking the public to carry out a simple, yet meaningful task: Write the words “#WeRemember” on a sheet of paper, take a picture holding the sign, and post it to social media using the hashtag #WeRemember. Here is a link to [short video](#) (2017) explaining the project.

- Have students write the words “#WeRemember” on a sheet of paper.
- Ask students to take a picture on their phone holding the sign.
- Students should post their picture with the sign to social media using the hashtag #WeRemember.
- Students who have a family connection to the Holocaust are invited to use a photo of their relatives on the poster.

Contributions submitted to social media will be posted on a screen at Auschwitz-Birkenau on January 27th. See below examples of signs with #WeRemember and a featured student project.



#WeRemember



#WeRemember

Artwork by a student of Irv Osterer at Merivale High School displayed at Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of the #WeRemember campaign.



Artwork by students at Manor Park Public School for International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

