THEMATIC COLLAGE ACTIVITY

The Holocaust

Adapted from USHMM Teacher Fellowship Program

There are many ways that an educator can utilized the collage activity in their classroom. Students can be grouped based upon gender, ability level, some other important factor, or at random. Each group is given the entire collection of photographs, which should be more than what they will actually utilize. This particular collection incorporates various topics dealing with the Holocaust, such as propaganda pieces, scientific posters, family pictures, prisoner pictures, and so forth. The students are to create a collage out of a select amount of pictures (you can choose depending upon how many you give them to use-perhaps half of the amount) that follows a theme that they select and deem important. They are to arrange their pictures on a poster board or large paper in a schematic that follows their theme-if the theme is chronological, then the pictures should be in chronological order. They can place them in a web design with one picture as a focal point while the others circle around it, a flow chart, or any other structure that they decide is suitable. As they create the collage, they are to keep in mind that they will need to justify orally why each picture was selected for the collage. Students should generate discussions within their group as they select and discard pictures that match their theme. Finally, they should title their collage based upon the theme. Each group will then present their collage describing the overall theme, pictures chosen, and rationale for each picture.

This activity can be utilized as an opening activity to a unit in an effort to determine prior knowledge, a closing activity to summarize a unit, concept or topic, or for any purpose the educator deems useful.