

English 355 Assignment II

Resource Package for *Rose Blanche*

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Summary of Resources

1. Images from a Historical Archive (holocaustpictures.org)

- teacher chooses several real holocaust images to show the students
- students choose an image and a point of view that they would like to take
- points of view could include: Jewish child, German child, Nazi man, foreign soldier or another point of view that they think of - encourage creativity!
- students write a brief narrative of the scene, from the perspective they have chosen
 - images and text are shared with the class, prompting discussion about point of view and narrative in the context of the Holocaust

2. *Spielzeugland (Toyland)* short film

- Stage a 'film screening' of *Spielzeugland* in class
- Following this, students will be broken up into small groups of 'critics', in which they will evaluate the film on several points and collaborate to create a brief film review.
- Questions to consider: "What similarities/differences of experience can you draw between the film and *Rose Blanche*?" "Is the film's portrayal of life in Nazi Germany realistic?" "Is the film valuable as a historical source?" "What biases, if any, do you see?"

3. *Naomi's Road* by Joy Kogawa.

- novel by famed Japanese-Canadian novelist and poet Joy Kogawa
- Children's adaptation of Kogawa's novel *Obasan* (1981). *Noami's Garden* was published in 1986, and tells the story of a Japanese-Canadian family's internment in B.C. during the Second World War from the perspective of a young girl
- aim is for to give students the opportunity to explore some of the themes in *Rose Blanche* from a Canadian perspective
- students will work in pairs to complete a short R.A.F.T. writing assignment using the title character of either *Rose Blanche* or *Naomi's Road* as their adopted perspective
- the students will then join up with another pair who wrote their R.A.F.T. assignment with the other book (eg. pair up with *Naomi's Road* if wrote R.A.F.T. on *Rose Blanche*) and work in group of 4 to analyze some differences and commonalities between the two. Write a one page summary/analysis.

4. Websites

- pages such as "In Search of the Heroes," and the "Holocaust Memorial Museum" are useful tools for students to access before and during their reading of *Rose Blanche*
- students should be shown the strengths of each site, and how they might be able to use them to develop their understanding of the text
- before reading *Rose Blanche*, students can be given guiding questions specific to the Holocaust that they can answer from the websites

5. Guest Speaker

- The purpose of a guest speaker is to encourage students to make connections between the experiences of protagonist *Rose Blanche* with the experience of Canadians privy to state injustices.
- As a pre-reading strategy, students will compose questions for the guest speaker to further explore the themes and ideas such as silence, helplessness, and healing.
- While composing questions, students will exercise critical thinking skills such as brainstorming, accessing background knowledge, establishing criteria for “good” questions, and exercise habits of mind including empathy and openness.

Resource 1: Images from the Holocaust

PLOs: English Language Arts 10

****C3** - write imaginative develop ideas - connect/adapt form/experiment language/engage, demonstrate insight

****C12** - experiment with style in writing/representing, enhance meaning/artistry - syntax/fluency/diction/POV/literary/artistic devices

****C13** - experiment with form, enhance meaning/artistry - organize ideas, text features, visual/artistic devices



One of the main features of *Rose Blanche* is its profound imagery. Readers spend just as much time taking in the meaning of the images and analyzing the details as they do reading the words. Symbolically, the story changes point of view, but the style of the images remains consistent, showing how the magnitude of each event of the Holocaust is heavily based on interpretation.

Using real images from the Holocaust, students can create their own narratives of the events. Suggest some perspectives that they could take, such as a German soldier, a foreign soldier, a Jewish child, a German child, etc. Encourage them to think of an original point of view that may not have been discussed already. With this point of view, students are asked to write a narrative that connects to the picture. The assignment allows students to extend their thinking about the core text and connect the themes to other examples of the real-world issue.

Students should share their image and their narrative with others, or the class as a whole, providing an explanation for why they chose their image and the reasoning for their personal text. Holding students accountable for their writing encourages them to think critically about *Rose*

Blanche. This assignment can be used as either formative or summative assessment, but it is likely more beneficial as a formative assessment, because students are still learning about the major themes behind the text and the thoughts and opinions of their other classmates.

Resource 2: *Naomi's Road* by Joy Kogawa

Our group is taking a cross-curricular approach by incorporating elements of both the Social Studies 11 and English 11 curricula into a unit of study on the Holocaust. Our primary text for the English component of this unit is *Rose Blanche* by Roberto Innocenti. *Naomi's Road* is a supplementary text and it will help us to meet the following prescribed learning outcomes from Social Studies 11:

1. Assess Canada's role in World War II and the role's impact on Canada.
2. Assess the development and impact of Canadian social policies and programs related to immigration, the welfare state, and minority rights.

The aim of using *Naomi's Road* as a supplementary text is to bring some of the horrors of the Second World War home, as it were, by providing students with a tool to examine the internment of Japanese-Canadians in B.C. during the Second World War. *Naomi's Road* is short novel written for an audience between 8 to 12 years old and therefore would not take much time for most grade 11 students to read. After students have read *Naomi's Road*, they will:

- A. Combine a lecture from the Social Studies teacher with a class-wide discussion to further advance their understanding of Canadian policy towards Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War.
- B. join with a partner and complete a short R.A.F.T. writing assignment from the perspective of either *Rose Blanche* or *Naomi*. (Details of the assignment will be given in class. For a description of R.A.F.T. writing, see "What is R.A.F.T. writing on the following page). An equal number of pairs in the class need to write from the perspectives of these two characters.
- C. Join their pair with another pair who wrote their R.A.F.T. assignment from the other perspective ie. *Naomi* pair will team up with *Rose Blanche* pair. In groups of 4, analyse each other's R.A.F.T. writing and look for common themes as well as differences in the perspectives of the two characters. The group of 4 will collectively write a one-page summary of their analysis.

What is R.A.F.T. Writing?

- R.A.F.T. writing is a form of exploratory representation in which the student adopts a specific role and represents information to a defined audience on a given topic. The format can take

several forms including, but not exclusively, writing. Potential formats include a speech, a diary entry, a travel guide, a public service announcement, a news or advice column, a letter.

- R.A.F.T. stands for Role, Audience, Format, Topic.

Resource 3: *Spielzeugland* (Toyland) Short Film

In creating a cross-curricular unit surrounding the Holocaust, our group considered several texts and resources that would supplement student learning in both English and Social Studies. As a complement to the storybook *Rose Blanche* by Roberto Innocenti, I chose to explore the short film *Spielzeugland* (Toyland) by Jochen Alexander Freydank. The film, much like *Rose Blanche* focuses on the experience of a child living in Nazi Germany, mirroring the characters of the young Heinrich and his Jewish friend, David.

In this lesson I chose to focus on the following PLO's from ELA 8-12:

A1 – Interact and collaborate to support, extend, explore, gain perspective, respond and analyse, new perspectives.

C2 - write purposeful **information texts** that express ideas and information to explore and respond, record and describe, **analyse** and explain, speculate and consider, argue and persuade, engage.

Lesson

Following a group discussion of the story *Rose Blanche*, and a cursory lesson on the Holocaust, we will stage a 'film screening' of *Spielzeugland* in class.

Next, students will be broken up into small groups of 'critics', in which they will evaluate the film on several points and collaborate to create a brief film review.

Questions for students to consider: "What similarities/differences of experience can you draw between the film and *Rose Blanche*?" "Is the film's portrayal of life in Nazi Germany realistic?" "Is the film valuable as a historical source?" "What biases, if any, do you see?"

Students will then share their reviews with the class via dropbox, or they may choose to submit their film critiques to IMDb or similar site.

Resource 4: Websites

PLOs: English Language Arts 10

*B6 - during reading, apply strategies to construct meaning - refine predictions, infer, summarize, clarifying meaning

*B7 - After reading, strategies to extend meaning - reflect predictions, consider purpose, conclude,

summarize/synthesize, identify style

Online tools such as websites can provide students with useful information about the core text. The information is presented in a unique, interactive way that is accessible to a diverse group of learners. With a growing emphasis on technology, teachers should be taking advantage of online resources and incorporating them into their pedagogy as much as possible.

Listed are two examples of websites that can be used to enhance the study of *Rose Blanche*.

1. *In Search of Heroes* <http://www.graceproducts.com/>
 - is based on the an award-winning series, *In Search of Heroes*, that recreated legendary histories of heroes, for children of all ages
 - provides an interesting list of children who lived through the Holocaust, and their stories
 - includes photographs
2. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum <http://www.ushmm.org/>
 - website based on the Museum, located in Washington, DC.
 - is highly accessible to students, includes many language options

After showing students the websites, encourage them to access them before and during their reading of *Rose Blanche*. Guiding questions about the Holocaust, in which students can answer by browsing the sites and consulting *Rose Blanche*, should also be provided and collected for formative assessment. Students should also consider using the websites as a starting point for finding additional information (ie. secondary sources), for later forms of summative assessment.

Resource 5: Guest Speaker

Purpose of text:

The purpose of a guest speaker is to encourage students to make connections between the experiences of protagonist Rose Blanche with the experience of Canadians alive during state injustices. In this way, students can broaden their understanding of themes such as silence, helplessness, and healing, studying different mediums and different cultural contexts.

Paired with a pre-reading strategy, the speaker will complete the following objectives:

Relevant PLOs

English Language Arts 12

A1: interact and collaborate in pairs and groups to

- support the learning of self and others
- explore experiences, ideas, and information
- understand the perspectives of others

B5: before reading and viewing, select and use a range of strategies to anticipate content and construct meaning, including

- interpreting a task
- setting a purpose accessing prior knowledge
- generate guiding questions

Socials 11

Apply critical thinking to make reasoned judgments about a range of issues, situations, and topics.

Class Activities and Connections to PLOs

As a pre-reading activity, students will generate a list of questions to ask the guest speaker. In the process they will be asked to access their prior knowledge regarding the speaker's past (Japanese internment, residential schools, etc) as well as their understanding of thematic ideas of silence, helplessness, and healing as explored in the unit to help generate their questions. More, students will be asked to use critical thinking skills such as brainstorming, accessing background knowledge, establishing criteria for "good" questions, and exercise habits of mind including empathy and openness.