

The Crocus Project

Teacher's Handbook





























Organization of the Jews in Bulgaria









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About the Crocus Project

The Crocus Project is a free project for school pupils and young people aged ten years and older. It began as an Irish initiative in 2005 and has now spread to twelve European countries. It is our ambition that all member states of the European Union will participate in the Crocus Project.

Holocaust Education Ireland provides yellow crocus bulbs to plant in autumn in memory of one and a half million Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust and thousands of other children who were victims of Nazi atrocities. The yellow flowers recall the yellow Stars of David that Jewish people were forced to wear under Nazi rule. The crocuses bloom around the time of International Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January).



When people admire the flowers, the young people can explain what they represent and what happened to the children. Participating in the Crocus Project is a tangible way to introduce young people to the subject of the Holocaust and to raise awareness about the dangers of racism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination. They learn the importance of inclusion and respect for all people regardless of their ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religious beliefs.

This Crocus Project - Teacher's Handbook, provides background information and suggestions to assist in the successful implementation of the programme. Teachers should modify the language, taking into consideration the age of their pupils, their levels of understanding, previous knowledge of the subject and any local circumstances or sensitivities that may apply.

The Facebook Crocus Club is a secure online forum administered by Holocaust Education Ireland where participants can share their experiences of the project and post photographs, comments and reflections. It provides a platform where members can make new friendships at home and abroad with other schools, groups and individuals.

We plant yellow crocuses to remember all the children who perished in the Holocaust. In this way, they are not forgotten and their memory and their stories are passed to future generations.

Crocus Ambassadors

Once you have participated in the Crocus Project, you become a Crocus Ambassador. By sharing your experience of participating in the project you will encourage new friends, schools and youth groups to join in the Crocus Project. In this way, the number of participants grows every year.

Scan the QR code to download the Certificate of Participation or visit holocausteducationireland.org/crocus-project.

Download the Certificate of Participation:



Background to the Holocaust

The Holocaust was the systematic murder of six million Jewish people and hundreds of thousands of other victims, by the Nazis and their collaborators.

After suffering defeat in the First World War (1914–1918), Germany was left with many economic and social

problems. Thousands of people were hungry and out of work. The German people hoped that their political leaders would solve their problems.

Hungarian Jews before being loaded into cattle cars on their way to concentration camps.

During the 1930s, the National Socialists, or Nazis as they became known, said they could solve Germany's problems. They became very popular and formed a government in 1933. Their leader was Adolf Hitler. The period between 1933 and 1945 is often called the 'Nazi Era'. It is the period when the Holocaust took place.

Hitler and the Nazis did not like anyone objecting to their ideology or policies. They persecuted people from ethnic minorities and of different cultural backgrounds, nationalities or religions, and they also targeted the weak and the vulnerable such as people with disabilities. They made life for all of these people particularly difficult. It suited the Nazis to make these people scapegoats – someone they could blame for their problems. Their main target of blame was the Jewish people, whom they persecuted with extreme cruelty. The Nazis' persecution' of Jews, known as the Holocaust, was one of the most shameful periods in twentieth century European history.

In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and the Second World War began. The German army soon swept through most of Europe.

The Nazis sent hundreds of thousands of Jewish people from all over Europe into ghettos, concentration camps, slave labour camps and death camps. Other people were also imprisoned in these camps where they suffered from brutality, cold, starvation and disease. In the death camps, people were murdered by poison gas. Six million Jewish people were murdered by the Nazis including one and a half million Jewish children.



It is very important that we never forget this terrible period in European history between 1933 and 1945. We must make sure we do not allow anyone or any group of people to murder or harm others because they do not like them or do not agree with their views.



Learn these new words:

collaborators

ethnic minorities

ghettos

ideology

orphan

policies

scapegoats

vulnerable



You can view the definitions for these new words on the Holocaust Education Ireland website.



been like to feel

Discuss with class.

'different'?

Non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust

Roma and Sinti

The genocide of the Roma and Sinti people took place during the Holocaust. Thousands were rounded up, forced into ghettos and deported to concentration camps and death camps. Roma were also murdered in the German-occupied territories of the Soviet Union. In the Romani tradition, stories are passed on verbally from one generation to the next. This makes it difficult to know exactly what took place. It is estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000 Roma and Sinti people were murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. Today, there are new generations of Roma and Sinti people who are attending schools and universities. They are researching and recording what happened to their people and writing it down for posterity.

Amalie Schaich was a Sinti girl, one of four children born to Roma parents in eastern Romania. The Schaichs had done nothing wrong but the family was torn apart by the Nazis. In 1944, Amalie was sent to the 'Gypsy Camp' in Auschwitz where many died from maltreatment, cold, starvation and disease. Amalie survived Auschwitz, the war and the Holocaust.



The European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma is on 2nd August every year.

People with disabilities

The Nazis murdered thousands of people with intellectual or physical disabilities because they considered them to be inferior or 'unworthy of life'. More than 300,000 people with disabilities in Germany and Austria were murdered by the Nazis.

Manfred Bernhardt was born with intellectual disabilities

in 1929 to a happy, family in Dortmund, Germany. When Manfred was thirteen, his parents, were persuaded to send him to Aplerbeck specialist children's hospital, where they were promised he would be well cared for. It is believed Manfred was included in the programme to murder people with disabilities. In June 1943, he died under suspicious circumstances.



Germany, 1930s.

Polish and Slavic peoples and other ethnic minorities

Hundreds of thousands of Polish and Slavic peoples were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis. Two million Poles as well as thousands of Belarusians, Slovenes, Black people, mixed race people, and members of different ethnic minorities were all targeted. The Nazis believed they were inferior and should be removed from German society. Thousands were deported to concentration camps where they died of brutality, cold, hunger and disease. Thousands of Polish children were kidnapped and taken to Germany to be raised as Germans.

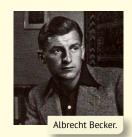




Photo of mixed race girl used in lectures on race and health in Germany.

Gay people

Homosexuality remained a criminal offence in Germany and most European countries until the 1960s and later. The Nazis targeted gay men and lesbians, who they said were in direct conflict with German



ideals. They sent gay men to concentration camps where they were subjected to harder work, less food and more brutal treatment than other prisoners. Thousands were murdered or died from the appalling conditions. After the war, many gay men were sent back to jail, not taking into account the years they spent in Nazi camps. Due to public attitudes, gay men found it difficult to tell their

stories and few came forward to share their experiences. Albrecht Becker was an artist and theatre director. He was openly gay, and, from 1935, he was imprisoned in several concentration camps. He survived the war and the Holocaust.



Ireland website

There were thousands of political victims and Christian victims who opposed the Nazis and helped Jews.
They too were victims of the Holocaust.

Why we plant yellow crocuses

Sadness and hope

We plant yellow crocuses to remember one and a half million Jewish children and thousands of other children who died in the Holocaust. The yellow colour of the flowers reminds us of the yellow Stars of David that Jews were forced to wear under Nazi rule. The flowers remind us of all of the children who perished in the Holocaust.

Hundreds of thousands of children were murdered by the Nazis, but many survived. The children who survived are mostly grandparents today. They have passed on their stories to their children and grandchildren. Their stories must never be forgotten. We must tell them to our own children.

When the crocuses bloom at the beginning of spring, we remember the children who died. But the beautiful flowers also remind us that, even after the most terrible events, new life begins again and we can hope that things will be better than they were before. The flowers remind us that there is still beauty in the world and hope for our future. Planting the flowers is sad, but it is hopeful too. Eventually we hope that children from all over the world will plant yellow crocuses in memory of all the children who died in the Holocaust.



Hanna Lehrer from Munich wearing the yellow star. Born in 1936, she was deported to Riga in Latvia where she was murdered, aged six years.







Planting crocuses

Crocus bulbs are planted in the autumn between mid-September and mid-November. Spring comes at different times in different countries. It does not matter too much when the flowers bloom: the important thing is that they are planted in memory of the children who died in the Holocaust and that when the flowers appear, we are reminded of them. We are also reminded how important it is to accept and value people from all cultures and ethnicities.

In the garden



Primary School No. 12 Kornela Makuszyński in Otwocko. Poland.

Plant crocus bulbs approximately 15cm deep in good soil. Water and leave until the flowers begin to pop up in the spring. You may wish to mark the crocus garden with string around the outside. Some schools have planted the bulbs in the shape of a Star of David.

Flower bowls

In some countries, where it is too cold in winter and there is too much ice and snow to plant the crocus bulbs outdoors, they can be planted indoors in bowls and flower boxes. The bulbs should be

planted as described above. When they start to produce shoots, place them indoors in front of windows but not near the heaters!



Window boxes or flowerpots









- Place some broken pottery or stones in the bottom of the container.
- Fill with rich soil or compost.
- Plant bulbs.
- Water and cover with black plastic (like a bin liner) and leave outside. Otherwise, place in a cool dark place (like a shed or garage) until the end of December.
- Remove the plastic covering and check that the window box has not dried out. Water if necessary.
- Place in front of window.



with students from Hansfield ETNS, Dublin.

Charting the Crocus Project



The Crocus Project Chart



September	October	November	December	January	February	March
Late September: bulbs are planted	Checked bulbs,	Checked bulbs, nothing happening	Green tips start to appear in the soil	Yellow buds starting to appear	Crocuses are in bloom	42 crocuses
	nothing happening					bloomed this year

- 1. Read pages 2-5 as a class and discuss.
- 2. Choose a place to plant the crocus bulbs. Note the date and location on the chart.
- 3. Write a list of everyone who planted the bulbs on the chart.
- 4. Post photographs in The Crocus Club group. Include one of the photos on the chart.
- 5. For 6–8 weeks nothing will appear to be happening. In some countries, things might happen sooner or later than in other countries. Use this time to plan a Holocaust Memorial Day event or project in your school.
- 6. Eventually, the green tips of the crocuses will appear. Note the date on the chart. Take photographs of the sprouting bulbs, post them in The Crocus Club group.
- 7. Yellow buds will then appear. Take photographs of the first buds appearing.

- 8. The buds will soon become beautiful yellow crocus flowers. Take photographs of the crocuses blooming and post them in The Crocus Club group.
- 9. Count the number of crocus flowers and note it on the chart.
- 10. Crocuses multiply every year, thus the number of crocuses increases. As more people from around the world become involved in planting the bulbs, the number of flowers grows too. Eventually there will be more than one and a half million crocuses blooming around the world in memory of all of the children who died in the Holocaust.



Download The Crocus Project chart by scanning the QR code or visit holocausteducationireland.org/crocus-project

Righteous Among the Nations

Righteous Among the Nations is a title awarded to non-Jewish people who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. The title was inaugurated in 1963 by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Remembrance Authority in Israel, and since then more than 27,000 people have received the award. These people come from different countries, cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. All were united in their desire to help



Learn more about the Righteous Among the Nations here.



Learn more about the Kindertransports here.

their fellow human beings. There are thousands of Jewish people alive today who owe their lives to these courageous people. You can learn about the Righteous Among The Nations on the Yad Vashem website.

Individuals

Mary Elmes, an Irish woman from Cork, was in Vichy, France during the war. She and her colleagues worked with Quaker organisations and saved hundreds of Jewish children from deportation to Auschwitz.

Irene Sendler saved 2,500 children from the Warsaw Ghetto.

Chrysostomos saved 275 Jews living on the island of Zakynthos by refusing to hand over a list of their names to the Germans. The only name he included on the list was his own.

Magda and André Trocmé of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France, the Huguenot village that hid Jews.

Businessmen

Oskar Schindler, German industrialist, saved some 12,000 Jews in Krakow.

Diplomats

Raoul Wallenberg, Swedish diplomat in Hungary, saved thousands of Hungarian Jews.

Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara, the Japanese consul in Kovno, Lithuania, defied Foreign Ministry instructions and issued more than 600 exit visas to Polish and Lithuanian Jews.



Mary Elmes



Irene Sendler



Chrysostomos



Magda & André Trocmé



Oskar Schindler



Raoul Wallenberg



Righteous Germans

Wilhelm Hosenfeld, an officer of the German army, became angered by the persecution of the Jews and helped as many as he could.

Righteous Arabs

Khaled Abdelwahhab of Tunisia saved Annie Boukris and her family by hiding them on his farm for several months.

Righteous Muslims

The Biçaku family of Albania saved twenty-six Jewish people by hiding them from the Nazis.

Countries

Denmark: The people of Denmark saved their Jewish community by ferrying them to safety in neutral Sweden.

Bulgaria: The people of Bulgaria refused to hand over their Jewish communities to the Nazis.

Heroic People

Hubert Butler, from Ireland, worked in the Vienna International Centre, organising visas for Jews and others fleeing Nazi tyranny. He helped more than 2,000 refugees reach Britain, Ireland, North America and other countries.

Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, from Ireland, was working in the Vatican, during the war years. He was part of a network who smuggled Jews and others out of Rome to safety.

Sir Nicholas Winton, English businessman, saved 669 Jewish children from Czechoslovakia by organising eight Kindertransports to the United Kingdom.



Wilhelm Hosenfeld



Khaled Abdelwahhab



The Biçaku family







Hubert Butler



Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty



Sir Nicholas Winton

Embracing Diversity and Celebrating our Similarities

Activities

Circle

Make a big circle of everyone in the class. Join hands and look at the circle. Does everyone look the same or do some look different from others?



Is everyone the same size? Has everyone the same colour skin? The same colour hair? Even though outward appearances may differ, the students will notice that everyone is an equal member of the circle. Does everyone practise the same culture or religion? Are there any Jewish children in the class? Do they look any different? Think how big the circle would be if the whole school joined hands.

Hands

Photocopy or photograph everyone's hands in the class or ask the students to trace their hands and colour them in. Cut out the 'hands'. Make a

collage in the shape of a circle



with everyone's hands just touching. See how similar the hands are, even though size and colour may be different.

Learn about other cultures

Design an activity to learn about the culture and traditions of everyone in the



class. Perhaps invite someone from a different religion or culture to talk to the class. Explore different traditions, religious festivals, public holidays, special foods, traditional dress, songs and folk tales.

Celebrate

Illustrate these diverse traditions in different ways: photographs, paintings, collages, music. Invite other classes to come along to see and



hear what your class has been doing. What do people of different traditions do to mark events such as: births, weddings, deaths, religious festivals, national holidays?

Symbols

Discuss symbols and symbolic gestures with the group. Prompt discussion about symbols and their meaning. Are there



references to symbols in the Crocus Project?

Commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day

International Holocaust Memorial Day is on 27 January every year. It is an ideal time for young people to share their experiences of the Crocus Project and what they have learned about the Holocaust with others. Ask the students to suggest how they would like to mark this important date. They may like to organise some readings, poetry, or music involving the whole class, a group, or even the whole school. Sometimes a special ceremony can be arranged. It can be simple, such as lighting a memorial candle in memory of the six million Jewish people who were murdered in the Holocaust and all of the other victims too. Morning assembly is a good time for everyone to come together and to listen and reflect on the Holocaust. But once they are encouraged to do so, the participants in the Crocus Project will come up with many suggestions on how they would like to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. It is very nice if these activities are student-led. Post photos and information in the Facebook Crocus Club group.

Flags and map

Discussions

If possible, it is a good idea to sit in a circle for these activities. Prompt discussions about prejudice, discrimination and bullying so that the participants realise the importance of tolerance and respect for everyone in their class or group, in their school and in their lives at home and in their country. The Holocaust did not start with concentration camps and death camps, it started with words, taunting and bullying.

Read: Read one of the stories from the booklist and discuss.

Memory: To reinforce our memories, we need to think, and we need to do. When we think about what we have read or learned or done, it becomes part of our memory.

Think: When we participate in the Crocus Project, we think about the children who died in the Holocaust.

Do: We plant yellow crocus bulbs in memory of the children.

Remember: When the bulbs bloom, we think of the children again, and we remember how they died.

Activity

This is how Europe looked in 1930. Find out which countries were occupied by the Nazis. Colour them in one colour.

Can you find your own country on the map?

Was your country involved in the war? Or was it neutral?

Words

Draw up a poster of positive words and negative words that come to mind when participating in the Crocus Project and learning about the Holocaust.

Use a different colour for positive and negative words.

Discuss the meaning of the words. Add to the list each week.

Divide them into two panels, positive and negative.







The European Union

The Crocus Project: Remembering The Holocaust and Learning Lessons for a Contemporary Europe reflects the principles and values of the European Union (EU). These are based on human rights and the rule of law, and they demand respect for all EU citizens irrespective of their ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. The EU has put in place safeguards to protect all EU citizens from being harmed or from harming others.



Europeans do not want something like the Holocaust to happen again. Since the establishment of the European Union (formerly known as the European Economic Community) in the 1950s, Europe has mostly avoided further war and bloodshed and has managed a relatively peaceful coexistence with its neighbours. The EU strives to provide a secure environment and equality for all its citizens, fostering respect and tolerance among all its members. The EU was established under its current name in 1993, following the Maastricht Treaty. The Crocus Project is about remembrance and education about the Holocaust as well as awareness of the dangers of hatred, discrimination and prejudice. Through involvement in the Crocus Project, citizens learn about Europe's past and consider the importance of the EU today, appreciating a united Europe based on fundamental principles.

Remembrance and Education

The Crocus Project raises awareness of remembrance, European history and EU values promoting peace, reconciliation and well-being among all its citizens. It does this by encouraging participants to share their experiences of the project in the Facebook Crocus Club group and to develop new friendships and appreciation of all members. In this way, participants become aware of the role of the EU in defending democracy and freedom. As the number of participants in the Crocus Project increases each year, the number of bulbs planted will increase too. Eventually we hope there will be yellow crocus bulbs growing throughout the EU, not only recalling the tragic years of the Holocaust and the children who perished, but also encouraging hope and friendship.





2022 is the European Year of Youth, shining a light on the importance of European youth to build a better future.

Activities ICELAND FINLAND SWEDEN EU RUSSIA NORWAY ESTONIA **Member States** LATVIA LITHUANIA DENMARK **BELARUS** UNITED POLAND KINGDOM **NETHERLANDS** UKRAINE BELGIUM GERMANY CZECH REP. LUX. SLOVAKIA MOLDOVA HUNGARY AUSTRIA SWITZERLAND FRANCE ROMANIA SLOVENIA CROATIA BOSNIA AND Herzegovina SERBIA BULGARIA PORTUGAL NORTH Macedonia SPAIN ALBANIA TURKEY **CYPRUS**



AFRICA

Flags

MALTA

Identify the flags of each of the European countries.

Find the countries on the map of Europe.

Can you find your own country?

Make a list of the values and fundamental principles of the European Union.



You can find out more by scanning the QR code or visiting europeanunion.europa.eu

Further reading and resources

There are numerous books written about children and the Holocaust. Some are true-life stories and some are fiction. Holocaust Education Ireland would encourage anyone who wishes to read these books with pupils to read them first and decide themselves if they consider them appropriate. Generally, for children under twelve years, we would suggest that stories are read as a class activity. Teachers and educators will wish to include stories relevant to the children in their own countries, and, again, we would urge careful consideration of all material before presenting it to the class. DVDs and websites should also be used under adult supervision.

Films

We would recommend that adults accompany students under fifteen to all Holocaust films and urge preparation before, and discussion after, the film. The Short Life of Anne Frank, gives an overview of the Nazis' rise to power and the persecution of European Jews. It is available to watch on the Anne Frank Trust UK.

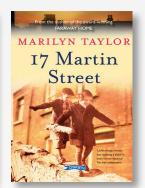
Books

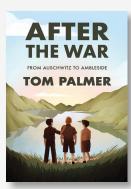
Scan the QR code to access Holocaust Education Ireland's booklist for age appropriate reading.

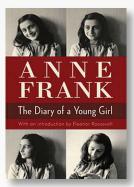


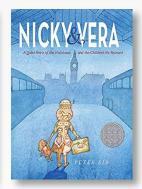
View the booklist suitable for children and young people here.

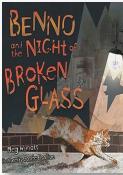












Websites

There are many websites about the Holocaust. They should be vetted by adults before being recommended to young people.

Some of the websites Holocaust Education Ireland recommends:



holocausteducationireland.org

remember.org

yadvashem.org

iwm.org.uk

ushmm.org

holocaust.org.uk

galiciajewishmuseum.org/en

sfi.usc.edu

The Crocus Club

We invite teachers to join The Crocus Club group on Facebook. Now you can share your pictures, stories and thoughts with other Crocus Project participants from across Europe.



The plight of refugees during the Holocaust and today

Whenever there is conflict, famine, or floods and other natural catastrophes, people flee and seek refuge in other countries. By 1938, persecution of Jewish people in Germany and Austria was so harsh that Jews were desperate to leave. As fears of a Jewish refugee crisis began to unfold, US President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, convened a conference in Évian, France. The thirty-two countries attending the conference were asked to accept Jewish refugees, but none of them were willing to do so. As a consequence, the Jews were trapped inside their own borders, and by the end of the war most of them had perished.



Today, hundreds of thousands of people are requesting asylum in Europe, and the leaders of European countries are trying to find ways to assist them. It is not easy to organise the absorption of so many people at one time, but the countries of Europe do not want to repeat the mistakes of the past. They want to find a way to help people who are fleeing war, famine and persecution. Many young students in Irish classrooms come from countries where there is conflict, repression, famine, and other hardships. We should be aware of this and address these issues with sensitivity.

The Holocaust and other genocides of the twentieth century

The Holocaust was one specific case of genocide, unprecedented in its attempt to destroy the Jewish people of Europe and all traces of Jewish culture, history and memory. The genocide of the Roma also took place during the Second World War, as did the murder of thousands of other minorities who were the victims of Nazi atrocities. Other genocides took place during the twentieth century:

- In Armenia, between 1915 and 1923, more than 1 million Armenians were murdered by the Turks.
- In 1970s Cambodia, some 2 million people died under the Khmer Rouge regime [of Pol Pot].
- In Rwanda, in 1994, up to 1 million Tutsi people were murdered by Hutu extremists.
- In 1995, in Bosnia, approximately 8,000 Muslim boys and men were massacred at Srebrenica by the Bosnian Serb army.

In all cases of genocide, people are targeted because of their ethnicity, religious, cultural, or political affiliations or their sexual orientation. Genocide occurs when discrimination, racism and hatred are allowed to fester and when people are denied human and civil rights. Therefore, it is important to respect each other's differences, and, when we see injustice, that we speak out.





Since the Holocaust, many more genocides have taken place around the world.







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