



2017 HOLOCAUST SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM RECIPIENT HEATHER MACDONALD

Heather MacDonald is a teacher at Westview Secondary School in Maple Ridge, British Columbia. She teaches the Holocaust within her history, religion studies, social studies and global citizenship classes. In her classes, Heather tries to help her students understand and respect diversity.

YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION IN REVIEW

By participating in the CSYV Holocaust Scholarship Program, Heather had the opportunity to learn valuable pedagogical strategies and ways to approach the subject of the Holocaust with her students. She was then able to incorporate these strategies within her classes, which she designs for various disciplines. Last year, she introduced the study of the Holocaust through teaching grade 10-12 students about nutrition and health. Heather developed the lesson "How much should you be eating? A personal comparison to a concentration camp survivor." During the class, students were instructed to calculate their personalized daily calorie intake and compare it to the daily intake of camp inmates. Students were shocked to learn that prisoner's daily food intake was limited to some vegetable soup and half a piece of bread; far from enough to meet a person's essential nutritional needs. Students calculated that the inmates experienced a deficit of approximately 1,100 to 1,200 calories per day, which led them to understand why the prisoners' life expectancy was as short as three months.

Reading about food consumption in the camps, students also learned about the inhumane conditions prisoners were subject to, and how they would adapt to increase their chances of survival. For example, students were shocked to discover that prisoners did not have utensils or plates, often being forced to share a single soup bowl. To procure a spoon, a prisoner would need to swap at least half of their daily bread ration on the black market.

In order to convey to students just how devastating camp conditions were, Heather discussed the consequences of the survivors' experience of prolonged malnutrition and starvation on their lives today. To do so, she assigned her students an article titled "For many Holocaust Survivors, Effects of Wartime Starvation Still a Plague" by Luke Tress. The article analyses the repercussions of wartime starvation on survivors' post war lives. Students discovered that Holocaust survivors have higher rates of osteoporosis, cancer and other medical conditions, likely related to the starvation they experienced during the war. Following their completion of the assigned reading, students were asked to collaborate in groups with their peers to prepare a list of topics they found interesting about the article before sharing them with the class. This led to in-depth discussions about lasting health effects and other long-term consequences of the Holocaust on survivors' post-war lives.

In order to continue advancing Holocaust education, Heather is planning to incorporate a lesson about the Holocaust in her next year's leadership class. Drawing on the parallel between the humiliation of Jews during the Holocaust and today's world, Heather is thinking about a lesson covering bullying and how it can happen at school.



PRISONERS OF THE EBENSEE CONCENTRATION CAMP IN AUSTRIA, ONE OF THE PHOTOS HEATHER USES IN HER CLASS TO SHOW THE CONSEQUENCES OF MALNUTRITION IN THE CAMPS