



2017 HOLOCAUST SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM RECIPIENT STEPHANIE MCCULLY

Stephanie McCully is an English Language Arts Teacher and Cycle One ELA Pedagogical Coordinator at Alexander Galt Regional High School in Sherbrooke, Quebec. She is responsible for curriculum design, the application of in-class learning situations, as well as the evaluation and administration of a number of different classes. While teaching about the Holocaust, Stephanie tries to demonstrate the relevance of the Shoah to contemporary world events. Stephanie believes it is as imperative as ever to communicate the importance of tolerance and kindness, and is confident she can help her students to make these connections and realizations for themselves by relating history to recent events.

YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION IN REVIEW

Stephanie's participation in the CSYV Holocaust Scholarship Program allowed her to design a unit on the Holocaust for Secondary 2, Grade 8 (ages 13-14) students at Alexander Galt Regional High School. The goal of the unit was twofold: first it aimed to develop a consistent teaching program on the Holocaust for all Grade 8 students and second, to convey to students the universal lessons of the Shoah. Stephanie partnered with other Grade 8 teachers to design the unit on the Holocaust. To develop the unit's program of study, she used resources from the CSYV Holocaust Scholarship Program. Stephanie developed her teaching materials with the aim of ensuring the effective transmission of key information and the unit's core message regarding the Holocaust.

The main goal of the unit is to encourage critical thought through the study of the Holocaust. By designing this unit, Stephanie aspired to help her students reflect on numerous themes, including the nature of anti-Semitism; the events of the Holocaust; the value of remembering the Shoah; the effect of the Shoah on Jews of all ages; what motivates ordinary people to commit atrocities; effects of prejudice and bigotry, and more. Stephanie intended to create lessons with a focus on real people in order to make the material relatable to students, building empathy and understanding. For this purpose, the unit requires that the students choose and study a novel from a suggested list of Holocaust literature, including such works as *The Cage* by Ruth Minski, *The Boy in The Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne, and *Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli. At the end of the class, students are required to present their chosen book to their peers, sharing their thoughts and impressions.



STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE 2018 AMBASSADORS OF CHANGE PROGRAM

In order to reinforce what they have learned in class, the Grade 8 students went to The Montreal Holocaust Museum, funded in part by a Culture in the Schools grant awarded to Stephanie. At the Museum, they had a rare opportunity to listen to a Holocaust survivor, an experience which Stephanie would now like to replicate annually at her school.

To further supplement the unit material, Stephanie allowed her students to participate in the 2018 CSYV Ambassadors for Change Program, which gathers high school students from across Canada to meet with Holocaust survivors in Ottawa. There the students take part in guided group sessions to explore the Holocaust and its relevance today. Participation in the program helps to connect the Grade 8 curriculum with themes in the Grade 9 curriculum, where students study the Holocaust in a manner which emphasises the importance of tolerance

and acceptance. Stephanie was recognized at the School Board's Council of Commissioners for the important learning experience which she is bringing to students through their participation in the program, and the opportunity it gives them to convey the message of tolerance to their peers.