

Holocaust Memorial Day assembly for secondary schools: The Holocaust



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST

The Holocaust and Henry Wermuth's life story

Teachers please note this assembly is suitable for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. We have not separated out for different age groups at secondary level to give you the flexibility to deliver the message to various types of assembly groups on and around 27 January 2018, as suits your school and needs.

We have provided a script and accompanying PowerPoint to support teachers in the delivery of key information and messages as required. Please feel free to adapt and vary the language and content as you see fit for your particular students.

Involving students in the assembly

Several students could be involved with the teacher in reading the script that we have provided below.

Drama

Henry Wermuth's life story is told in this assembly, and is also explored in our drama lesson plan. In advance of the assembly you could work with some students to present parts of Henry's story as performed scenes, or other creative ways of reading his story aloud.

You can find the drama resource at hmd.org.uk/educators.

Poetry

We have included a poem that can either be read aloud or played as a recording during your assembly. To access the recording please visit: hmd.org.uk/thebutterfly.

We have more poems for you to choose from in our *Poetry classroom activity*, which students could study in advance and read aloud in your assembly, maybe with some contextual information added.

You can find the Poetry resource at hmd.org.uk/educators.

Songs

If you have a school choir, please look at the song sheets we have produced this year at hmd.org.uk/songs. These songs are available for choirs and music groups to learn and perform, and could form part of the assembly.

Assembly script:

- **(Slide 1)** Display as students enter.
- **(Slide 2)** Today (27 January) is Holocaust Memorial Day. Holocaust Memorial Day is the day each year when we remember the six million Jewish people who were systematically persecuted and murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust.
- **(Slide 3)** On Holocaust Memorial Day, we also remember the other groups of people who were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis: Roma and Sinti people (gypsies), disabled people, gay people, Jehovah's Witnesses, political opponents and many others.
- **(Slide 4)** Holocaust Memorial Day is when we remember the millions of men, women and children, who have been murdered in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.
- **(Slide 5)** Genocide is when a group of people is targeted for destruction just because of who they are, such as their race or their religion.
- **(Slide 6)** Genocide does not happen out of the blue, it is the result of prejudice and persecution which sees a group treated differently from the rest of society. On Holocaust Memorial Day, we are reminded of what can happen when prejudice and persecution are left unchallenged, and of our responsibilities to stand against these processes when we see them in our own communities.

This graphic is from an A3 poster which is available in your free activity pack – hmd.org.uk. Don't worry about reading all the text on the slide within your assembly.

- **(Slide 7)** Henry Wermuth was a young Jewish man in Germany when the Holocaust began. I want to tell you his story.

Option: You can read either the full life story of Henry Wermuth or the shorter easy to read life story, depending on which is most appropriate for your audience. Both are provided at the bottom of this resource. Please see the notes above for ideas about how to include students in presenting Henry's story in your assembly.

- **(Slide 8)** Henry and his family were targeted, and murdered, simply because they were Jewish. People are still discriminated against today because of their religion, their race, their sexuality, or another element of their identity. Now that you have learnt about Holocaust Memorial Day, and heard Henry's story, I want to ask all of you to think about how dangerous discrimination can be.

- **(Slide 9)** At this very moment genocide is taking place in the region of Darfur, which is part of the country Sudan in Africa. Many of the people living there have been through unimaginable suffering, they have lost loved ones and have learned to live with death.
- **(Slide 10)** Let us all today commit to do something, no matter how small, to stand up against prejudice and the processes of persecution. Let's find out about where genocide is taking place, those affected by it and tell others what we learn.
- **(Slide 11)** We will end with a moment of reflection while we listen to the poem *The Butterfly*, written by Pavel Friedmann while he was imprisoned in a concentration camp. It is read by the actor Samuel Barnett.

The recording of Samuel Barnett reading *The Butterfly* can be found at:
hmd.org.uk/thebutterfly

- **(Slide 12)** End

Find out more...

HMDT's resources for educators: hmd.org.uk/educators
The Holocaust: hmd.org.uk/holocaust