



LESSON PLAN: Displaced Persons' Camps after the Holocaust

1 Explain to students that a critical issue that arose after liberation was that of the displacement of survivors. To introduce this topic, distribute the **Displaced Persons** handout and instruct students to read the text and answer the questions at the bottom of the page. [Optional: Have students work on the assignment in pairs or small groups.]

2 Review the **Displaced Persons** handout and the questions together and then introduce students to **Malka Baran (bio)**, **Daniel Geslewitz (bio)**, and **Ester Fiszgop (bio)** before showing their clips of testimony. Use the following questions to continue the discussion about displaced persons' camps:

- What does Malka Baran say she did in the DP camp?
- What does Malka say brought her “back to life”?
- What are some of Daniel Geslewitz’s memories of the DP camp?
- How were the examples of life in the DP camp that Daniel describes an indication that the survivors were trying to reestablish themselves and trying to rebuild their lives?
- How does Ester Fiszgop describe her experience in an Italian DP camp?
- In her testimony, Ester says, “I started under the penalty of death—that was my beginning, and then I finished with the penalty of death and I got five years of retirement.” What do you think Ester means by this statement?
- Ester says that “no one complained.” Why do you think no one complained, despite the horrible conditions?

3 Divide the class into six groups. Distribute copies of the photographs from the **displaced persons' camps** to each group. Have students study the photographs and share their initial observations with others in their group. Prompt students to think about how the photographs represent the choices that survivors made following liberation (e.g., to go on with their lives despite what they had suffered and lost).

4 Assign each group one of the “lenses” below and instruct them to study the photographs again from this particular lens (e.g., If you were a _____ in this camp, what would you notice? How would you explain what you are seeing in the photographs? How might you propose to solve problems that displaced persons might be facing?)

Lenses

- Psychologist
- Policymaker

- Sociologist
- Artist
- Doctor
- Educator

5 Have each group select a reporter to share the discussion points made regarding each “lens.” Encourage students to listen for differences in perspective depending on the lens in which the photographs were viewed.

6 Conclude this lesson with a discussion about the obstacles that survivors faced following liberation and what they did to rebuild their lives. Include the following questions in this summarizing discussion:

- After all that the survivors went through, what kind of attitudes toward humanity could they have had?
- What kind of behaviors could they have developed?
- Would survivors, in your opinion, have been justified had they become criminals and thieves? Explain your thinking.
- From what you read and heard in the testimonies in this lesson (or unit), what kind of attitude did most survivors adopt? What are the possible reasons for this attitude?

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME: 60-90 MINUTES