

Candles in the Dark

With this project, students analyze and apply their personal responses through poetry and film to a challenging and disturbing event—the Holocaust.

Project Description

This project works on many levels: as a platform for the development of empathy and internalizing of a text or area of study, as an exercise in the art and power of the written word, as a skill-building experience in technology, and as meaningful participation in the community of learners. The project also welcomes a variety of learning styles and strengths.

Students read the novel *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen. Students then visit the U.S. Holocaust Museum's website and do a site search for photos. They each choose a photo that particularly speaks to them, one that evokes empathy for concentration camp victims. Each student then uses AppleWorks to write a poem about the photo that they chose. A team of students uses a digital video camera to film each student reading their poem. The reader holds a candle and narrates the poem. Appropriate music, such as Jewish Klezmer music, can be added to the movie soundtrack. The photo is imported into iPhoto. All components are combined in an iMovie project. The video of the student with the candle and narration, the music, and the photo together create a powerful poetry project.

Note: Students can also produce and print a document in AppleWorks that combines the poem and the photo. The class can also create a website with links to the AppleWorks documents and the QuickTime movies.

Outcomes

After completing this project, students will be able to:

- Have empathy for people who are victims of injustice.
- Appreciate the strength of the human spirit in overcoming diversity.
- Understand (both historically and emotionally) the World War II era.
- Celebrate their own and classmates' poetry.
- Experience the power of having the world as their audience.

Technology Skills

After completing this project, students will be able to:

- Use the Internet to locate and download images.
- Use a digital video camera to film readings.
- Import video into iMovie and edit and create a movie.

Assessment Suggestions

A teacher-created rubric can be used to assess student work.

Tools and Resources

Books

Jane Yolen, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, 1990

Internet

- U.S. Holocaust Museum: <http://www.ushmm.org>
- Sample projects:
http://www.SEABURYhall.org/library/rhodara/super_dir/super00/top.html
- iLife How-To Guides: <http://www.apple.com/education/ilife/howto/>

Tools

Macintosh computers, projector, printer, digital video camera, tripod, Internet connection, iMovie, iPhoto, iTunes, AppleWorks

Technology Tip

Using the Ken Burns effect is a great way to present the photos for this project.

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