

Centropa Lesson

Centropa film: The Years Make Their Own

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School: Petar Pop Arsov Primary School

Overview information

Type of school: Primary public school in Skopje, Macedonia

Subject taught: English as a foreign language

Grade level of students: 8th-9th (aged 13-14)

Integration of subjects: History and English as a foreign language

Total durations: Two 40 minute lessons

Background lesson information

This lesson is intended for final year students of primary education (aged 13-14) since World War 2 and the Holocaust is included in Macedonian primary school educational programme in that period. Furthermore, students' English language competences correspond to both the requirements and the expected result of the lesson at this age.

Lesson Aims/Objectives

History:

- Learn about Second World War in Europe/the world
- Learn about Second World War in the Balkans/in Macedonia
- Learn about the Holocaust in the world
- Learn about the Holocaust of the Macedonian Jews
- Learn about life of Macedonian Jews after the Holocaust

English language:

- Practice reading comprehension skills
- Practice speaking skills
- Practice writing skills

- Practice grammar/use of narrative tenses: The Past Simple, The Past Continuous and the Past Perfect Tense

- Practice new vocabulary

General/Universal aims:

- Increase students' multicultural and multiethnic awareness

- Combat Anti-Semitism, nationalism and any other type of national, religious, cultural or ethnic prejudice

- Increase students' awareness for empathy

- Increase students' awareness that people should help each other in time of crisis (righteous gentile)

- Develop students' ability for critical opinion

- Increase students' awareness that the Holocaust is one of the most horrifying events in the history of mankind that should never happen again

- Increase students' motivation for better learning by using films and modern technology in the classroom

Resources:

- Centropa web site: www.centropa.org

- Link for the Centropa film : The Years Make Their Own

http://www.centropa.org/centropa-cinema/beno-and-roza-kamhi-years-make-their-own?language=mk&subtitle_language=en

- Historical map of the Balkans in the Second World War

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Axis_occupation_of_Yugoslavia,_1941-43.png

- Map of former Yugoslavia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sfrj.png>

- Printed material with English language exercises

- Computer, LCD projector, screen, speakers

Lesson One

Introduction: The students were given a pre-lesson task by their history teacher which was carried out as a group work activity. They were divided in four groups to research these topics (one topic per group).

Group 1: The occupation of Yugoslavia by the Axis Allies

Group 2: The occupation of Macedonia

Group 3: Fascist Bulgaria and the Anti-Semitic measures in Macedonia

Group 4: The Holocaust in Macedonia

Note: The aim of the pre-lesson task is a short introduction of the students to the topic of the film and its historical background. They are not expected to deliver long and elaborate presentations in the introductory part of the lesson.

Activity one (10 minutes): A representative from each group makes a short oral presentation of the group's pre-lesson task. Historical maps of the Balkans in the Second World War and a map of former Yugoslavia are displayed on the screen.

Considering that this is the history part of the lesson and the fact that students' English language competences in speaking and listening comprehension are very diverse in each class, students present their homework task in Macedonian/their mother tongue.

Main part:

Activity 2 (20 minutes): The teacher gives a brief introduction to the Centropa film "The Years Make Their Own". Students watch the film.

Activity 3 (5 minutes): This is the English language part of the lesson. The teacher delivers printed material containing part of the script of the film and an English language exercise for each of the four groups. The students read the text and complete the exercises (they work individually).

The Script, part 1:

Where we came from

Here is a picture of my father Mentesh Kamhi and this is my mother Berta. Dad was a wheat trader and he liked to have coffee in a cafe by the river with his friends after work, Jews and non- Jews. He got along with everybody. I also grew up in Bitola, but I don't have a single picture to show you my family. But I remember how my friend and I would stroll carefree through the streets of Bitola and go out into the hills to hike. It was a wonderful

world then even though my family was very poor. My grandfather and my father died when I was very young. We had to live with my aunt Mato and her husband Bencion. This is her son Beno. Almost all the Jewish families from Bitola could trace their roots to Spain. And each of the Jewish quarters had its own synagogue. There were three Jewish sections of town and we called them by their Ladino names: La tabane, La kalaze and Ciflik where the poorest Jews lived. On Friday evenings before the Jewish Sabbath the poor Jews of Bitola would go from house to house with a sack. Some people would give them flour, others gave them money, others gave them food. By the 1930s we were so poor we had to drop out of school. Dario enlisted in the Royal Yugoslav Army in the officer's school and I went to work for a man who repaired rifles. When we were teenagers we started our Has homer has air Club – a leftist Zionist youth club, and the translation was the Young Guards. We met every day and Has homer was all about moving to Palestine and starting a real Jewish state. I joined the Has homer for two reasons. Pepo Kamhi was like a role model for me and I had a crush on his sister Roza. We had a library at Has homer and this is where I learned about the world. This is where my horizons expanded before I even saw the next valley. The first time I went on a train was when we went to one of Has homer's scout camps – a moshav, they call it. Hundreds of Jewish kids from all over Yugoslavia gathered. We did that every year. We cooked our own food, we sang Hebrew songs. This was the first time I slept away from home, under the stars. It was the first time I bathed in a clear sparkling river. We spent hours around a campfire discussing books, ideas, politics. Even what was going on in Germany.

Exercises below the text (one for each group):

Group 1:

Are these statements true or false?

- ☞ Roza Kamhi's family was rich
- ☞ Her father died when she was very young
- ☞ The poorest Jews from Bitola lived in La Tabane
- ☞ Beno enlisted in the Yugoslav Royal Army
- ☞ Beno joined the Has homer club because he wanted to go to Palestine
- ☞ Jewish kids from all over Macedonia gathered in scout camps
- ☞ Beno travelled for the first time by train when he went to the scout camp

Group 2:

Answer these questions:

- ☞ What did Roza's father do for a living?
- ☞ Which were the Jewish sections in Bitola?

- ☞ What did the poor Jews used to do on Friday evenings before Sabbath?
- ☞ What did Roza and her friends use to do in their free time?
- ☞ How did the Jewish kids spend their time in the scout camps?

Group 3:

Find a word in the text for these definitions:

- ☞ to walk in a slow relaxed way
- ☞ someone whose behavior people copy because of admiration
- ☞ to have romantic feelings about someone
- ☞ a large bag made of strong cloth
- ☞ the grain that bread is made from
- ☞ to leave school before the course finished

Group 4:

Put the verbs in the correct tense : Past simple, Past continuous or Past perfect

It (snow)outside and Stojan's store (be)directly across from the police station. We (hear)that they (go to take)the Jews away, so Stojan (hide) us. We (look)out of the shops and we (watch) the Bulgarians throw Jewish families out of their houses and drag them into the streets. And then....there (be)silence. We (hear)they (take)them to the Monopol - tobacco factory. Why they (be) sent there? Then we (hear).....that the trains (come).....and (take) everyone north. That (be) all we (know).....!

Conclusion and homework:

Activity 4 (5 minutes): Students present their work group by group. Correct answers are explained and discussed in terms of spelling, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar etc.

Homework: Use “The Years Make Their Own” film and other sources from the web site www.centropa.org to write a short essay in English on the following topics (students are divided in three groups):

**Life of Macedonian Jews before World War II*

**The Holocaust of the Macedonian Jews*

**Young Macedonian Jews fight back Nazi occupation*

Lesson two

Introduction (10 minutes): Some students read aloud the essays they wrote for homework. The teacher uses a check list/an instrument to evaluate the writing skills of each student that reads.

Main part (20 minutes):

- Students are divided in 5 -6 groups according to the topic of their homework.
- They use IT/the computers in the classroom to search the Centropa website and the internet for good photos related to the topic of their homework essays.
- Each group makes a short and simple power point presentation consisting of parts of their homework essays and photos that correspond to the written text.

Conclusion (10 minutes): Representatives from separate groups show their power point presentations. The teacher uses a check list/instrument for evaluation of the speaking skills of the students who deliver presentations.