**Work Plan for English Project**

**"20th Century Europe, as seen from Palestine-Israel"**

*9th Grade Gifted Class, Leo Baeck Junior High School – Haifa*

*Teacher: Yonathan Bar-On[[1]](#footnote-1)*

**The main idea:**

Students will learn about historical events that took place in Europe in the 20th century, and see how those events were covered by newspapers in mandatory Palestine and (after 1948) Israel. After that, the students will interview one or more family members/friends who were alive at the time of the events. The students' findings will be presented in a paper and a video.

**Objectives:**

* Having students enjoy working on a meaningful project and take pride in its results;
* Having students get (re)acquainted with aspects of academic work (looking for information, using primary and secondary sources, summarizing and paraphrasing, preparing and conducting an interview, writing a paper, preparing and giving a presentation);
* Having students engage in historical research;
* Having students work in English (and Hebrew);
* Having students present their findings in various formats (writing, visual and oral presentation, video);
* Having students use resources of Centropa (in particular, Centropa videos);
* Having students use online resources of Israel's National Library.

**Working methods:**

* Students work in pairs. Since there are 19 students in this class, one student will work on his own or join a pair of students.
* Each pair should have at least one student who works at the upper-intermediate level with the vocabulary units.
* Except for some of the introductory activities, most of the work on the project will be done through pair-based self-study, with pairs sharing the relevant results of their work with the other students (in class and through a Facebook group-page). The main task of the teacher will be to guide students and give them explanations where and when necessary, and to help them edit their own work.

**Duration of the project:**

Approximately half a semester. One hour a week will be spent in class on the project (computer classroom, high school library, Sunday). The rest of the work will be done outside of the classroom, in the students' own time. The project is started by the end of the first semester, and will be finished before or right after the Pesach holiday.

**Phases of the Project:**

1. Introduction: Explaining the objectives, the working methods, the phases of the project, the use of primary and secondary sources.
2. Watching 3-4 Centropa films in class and discussing them. Students will watch at least one more film at home, and write a short reflection on it.
3. Making a list of historical events mentioned in the various films.
4. Learning about the main events and developments in Europe and the Yishuv in the 1930s-1940s (frontal teaching, self-study, and sharing acquired knowledge).
5. Each pair chooses one or two films that will form the basis of their work.
6. Narrowing down main research question(s), defining places and periods, choosing sources (esp. newspapers), writing a basic work plan for the paper.
7. For each pair, the teacher approves the choice of the paper's subject, the list of sources, and the paper's basic layout.
8. Research (based on secondary and primary sources).
9. Writing the paper.
10. Interviewing family member(s) and/or family friend(s) about one or more of the historical events mentioned in the paper.
11. Based on the paper, and on the interview, students write a script for a short video. The interview itself can – but does not have to – be a part of the video.
12. Preparing the video.
13. Presenting the paper and/or the video in class (optional: screening of the videos in front of family members and other guests)
14. Evaluation.

**Sources and resources:**

* Centropa (www.centropa.org), introductory films:
* 'Introduction' (about Centropa)
* 'Maps, Central Europe and History'
* Centropa, biographical films:
* 'From Frankfurt to Tel Aviv' (Erna Goldmann, Germany)
* 'A Suitcase Full of Memories' (Lilli Tauber, Austria/England/Poland)
* 'Married Twice in a Lifetime' (Leon Anzhel, Bulgaria)
* 'My Escape from Prague' (Jindrich Lion, Czech Republic)
* 'Europe without Borders' (Laszlo Nussbaum, Romania)
* The National Library of Israel, 'The Digital Library' (http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/Pages/default.aspx):

Historical Jewish Press (http://www.jpress.org.il/view-english.asp), maps, audio, video material

* Secondary material from the Leo Baeck high school library

**Final products:**

* A short (5-10 pages) research paper, which will be submitted to the teacher
* In the paper, students describe 3-5 historical events that appeared in the movies that they chose, and analyze how those events were covered in three or four different Yishuv/Israeli newspapers
* The interview, which is included in the paper.

Plus:

* A short (5-10 min.) video in which the students present the subject of their paper, and the findings of their research. All visual means and effects can be used.

**Comments:**

* While the Holocaust forms a central part of 20th century history, students are encouraged to focus (also) on other aspects of that history.
* The final results of the project will be in English. Students can use Hebrew sources, and the interview can be conducted in Hebrew, Russian, Rumanian, or any other language, as long as English subtitles are provided.
* Students hand in a draft of their work (both the paper and the video) to the teacher, who gives comments and suggests ideas for improvement. The grade will be based on the final versions of the paper and the video, edited and corrected by the students themselves.

**Evaluation**

NB: Deadlines, where necessary, will be determined in the course of the project, in consultation with the students. Failing to submit and present assignments on time will result in a deduction of up to 20 points off the final grade, unless the teacher specifically grants an extension of a deadline to a pair, e.g. because of personal circumstances of one of the team's members. As important as grades might be, the main goal of this project is for the students to learn, to enjoy their learning, and to obtain meaningful, lasting results that they can take pride in and that they can share with others.

**Rubrics for the teacher's evaluation**

**Language (paper): 40 points (maximum (\*))**

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rich and original vocabulary; good use of synonyms, connectors (but, therefore, because, although, etc.), lexical chunks, etc. | 15 | Not very rich and original vocabulary, not very good use of synonyms, connectors, lexical chunks, etc. | 12 | Poor vocabulary, hardly any (proper) use of synonyms, connectors, lexical chunks, etc. | 8 |

**Mechanics (spelling/grammar)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Good; few spelling/grammar/  punctuation mistakes | 15 | Medium; some spelling/grammar/  punctuation mistakes. | 12 | Poor; many spelling/grammar/  punctuation mistakes. | 8 |

**Style**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rich and original use of metaphors and other stylistic tools. | 10 | Metaphors and other stylistic tools are used here and there, but not in a rich and original way. | 7 | Hardly any metaphors and other stylistic tools are used. | 4 |

(\*): All numbers mentioned here indicate the maximum number of points for that category. For instance, if you use a rich and original vocabulary you can receive up to 15 points for vocabulary, if your vocabulary is poor and you hardly use any synonyms, connectors etc., your will receive no more than 8 points for that category.

**Content and sources (paper and video): 40 points (maximum)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rich and original content. | 15 | Content is rich but not very original.  OR  Content is original but not very rich | 10 | Content is neither rich nor original. | 5 |
| Sufficient number (7 or more) and rich variety of sources are used. | 10 | Small number (3-6) and/or small variety of sources are used. | 7 | Fewer than three sources are used. | 5 |
| Good and efficient use of sources. | 15 | Satisfactory use of sources. | 10 | The sources are used neither well nor efficiently. | 5 |

**Video: 20 points (maximum)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The video is well made, original and convincing. | 20 | The video is rather well made, and either original or convincing.  OR  The video is rather well made, quite original and convincing. | 16 | The video is not well made, and neither original nor convincing. | 8 |

1. The basic idea for this project was discussed by David Behrman, Victor Gurevich, and Yonathan Bar-On at the Centropa Winter Seminar, 10-11 December 2012. A basic lesson plan was then worked out by David Behrman and Yonathan Bar-On, each of whom adapted it for the specific needs of his class(es) and lessons. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)