



Sharing the Art and Story of Holocaust Survivor Esther Nisenthal Krinitz

GUIDE TO USING THE LESSON PLANS

Esther Krinitz's story of survival and perseverance can be a valuable teaching tool, resonating with students aged 10 and older. From learning about the events that led to World War II (WWII), to familiarizing students with the use of primary sources, to encouraging students' civic engagement, these materials will provide you and your students many pathways to teach and learn.

Esther's story is also available through multiple channels: individual images of her artwork on the Art and Remembrance [website](#) and the [Fabric of Survival: An Interactive Gallery](#) (a Sutori), a book, [Memories of Survival](#), and a film, [Through the Eye of the Needle](#), where Esther's own voice can be heard, along with those of her daughters and expert commentators.

We designed these materials to be interactive by using both her story and artwork, and to give students the opportunity to learn about important issues across the curriculum. Whether you teach English, fine arts, or social studies, you will find entry points for meaningful ways to teach about WWII, the Holocaust, social justice and the importance of storytelling. These lessons also provide a way to engage students in discussions around current events, such as immigration and recent wars and conflicts.

We also understand that educators have limited time, so these lessons and activities were designed to easily fit into what you are already doing. Every lesson can be taught separately or along with suggested lessons. You can continue to use materials you are already using and supplement with these lessons.

Many of the lessons include supplemental classroom-ready material on the free web-based resource, [Sutori](#). The supplemental material on Sutori can be projected on a white board or can be used 1:1 in classrooms.

The lessons are coordinated with [Common Core State Standards](#), and suggested curricular connections for enrichment or extension. Lessons are written for implementation in Grades 5-12, with some modifications.

Together, the lessons build essential skills for critical thinking, understanding primary resources, contextualizing current events, appreciating the importance of storytelling, and engaging young people in active participation in their community.

We hope that you will keep in touch and let us know how you have made these lessons, tools, and resources an important part of your teaching tool kit. All of the [lesson plans](#) can be copied and shared for non-commercial use--we encourage you to share them freely with friends and colleagues.

HOW THE MATERIALS ARE ALIGNED:

Art & Remembrance resources are organized around five core themes:

- Social Studies/ History
- English/ Language Arts
- Art Appreciation and Art Integration
- Social Justice/ Civic Engagement
- Jewish Studies

Each theme can be taught alone or in combination of any other lesson/ activity.

We strongly recommend using the materials on the free resource [Sutori](#) to accompany the lessons and activities.

GETTING STARTED:

Think about the best way to implement Art & Remembrance in your classroom and/or school. You don't have to be teaching WWII to use these materials; they are designed for all teachers interested in exploring current issues or diving into the past and learning from one individual's heroism. Collaborate with colleagues to build a plan for implementation that works for your setting, your strengths, and your challenges.

Some options for implementation include:

- Begin the school year (or any time in which you first start using the resource) with a screening of *Through the Eye of the Needle*.
- Have students visit the virtual gallery of Esther's artwork.
- Make sure to have multiple copies of *Memories of Survival* in your classroom or school library.
- Use current events like immigration, refugees, human rights as a complementary topic.
- Work with a local museum, educational institution or other resource/expert in your community.
- As part of a professional development training, have your staff/colleagues do one of the lessons/activities.

ANATOMY OF A LESSON:

To help you quickly get the information you need for planning, each lesson includes:

- Lesson Title and Description
- Resources: The materials and technology you will need
- Subject Areas and Grade Levels: Most lessons are cross-curricular and we listed all of the possibilities
- Topics: Each lesson is tagged with related subjects
- Duration: Estimated amount of time to complete the lessons/activities
- Overview: Brief summary of background information and/or teaching tips for a successful lesson
- Objectives: List of student outcomes for the lesson

- Common Core Standard Alignment: Includes anchor and grade-level specific standards
- Essential Questions: Tiered open-ended questions to get you and your students started and to inspire critical thinking
- Main Activity: Outlined to be flexible and to suit your style of instruction.
- Curricular Connections: Optional extensions to connect the lesson to your core curriculum and modifications
- Handouts: Handouts and other resources are found within the lesson plans (pdfs) and can also be found on the free Sutori resources that accompany most of the lessons.

Several of the lesson plans include graphic organizers that you can distribute to students for them to complete by hand. However, to make it easy for students to do their assignments on computer and submit in digital form, the graphic organizers are also available as [fillable PDFs](#).

FACILITATION TIPS AND GUIDELINES:

Your students will learn as much, if not more, from the classroom discussion inspired by Esther's art and story. They will learn about important events in history, as well as current events that parallel past events. Debriefing will be important, since students will be making many connections and will be learning empathy along the way.

Take time to learn more about the Holocaust and survivor stories. As you prepare for each lesson, visit the supplemental videos, articles and questions.

Although we have provided essential questions, it is important to modify the goals to your students' levels. Here are some tips:

- Build a timeline or a supplemental vocabulary list within the classroom.
- Promote reflection through journal writing, classroom discussions, and the integrated arts activities.
- Match pairs and groups thoughtfully. Based on your classroom dynamics and the levels of your students, the lessons and activities can be done independently or in small groups or pairs.
- Discuss behaviors which make working together effective and ineffective – shared responsibility vs. one person doing more than others, arguing vs. expressing opinions with respect, interrupting vs. allowing time for all in the group to speak and participate.
- Prepare spaces conducive to the lessons. Many of our lessons work well in circles or in small groups. Others require technology or art supplies and will need open space in which to do so.
- Foster inclusion and diversity through your classroom materials, make appropriate adaptations and make resources easily available.
- Engage families in every way possible. Share the resources and lessons through your regular communication and consider homework that reflects the lessons. Invite families to learn about Esther Krinitz and to feel comfortable talking about current events that parallel those issues.

ENGAGE:

We encourage you to [give us feedback](#) and ask questions--we want your materials to be shared, and your input is vital. Please share these lessons and your modifications and outcomes with other teachers.

Finally, we encourage you to [subscribe to updates](#) about our educational resources and workshops and to visit the [Art and Remembrance](#) website to learn where her artwork can be seen on exhibit.