
FOR THE CLASSROOM

The Complete Lesson Pack

Four Holocaust lessons built around song, ready to teach.

Every module here is built the same way: listen first, then give the history, then open the discussion. Nothing requires prior knowledge of the Holocaust, and every factual claim carries its source at ceceliamargules.org so your students can check it and cite it.

IN THIS PACK

- Lesson 01: “Mira” — Ages 12 and up · 45 minutes · The children of the Holocaust
- Lesson 02: “Rainbow in the Night” — Ages 14 and up · 60 minutes · Denial and evidence
- Lesson 03: “Ani Ma'amin” — Ages 13 and up · 45 minutes · Faith under the worst conditions
- Lesson 04: “Shmor” and the Last Witnesses — Ages 12 and up · 45 minutes · What happens when the witnesses are gone

“Mira”

Ages 12 and up · 45 minutes · The children of the Holocaust

"Mira was her name. From the town of Łódź she came. She was just a little girl, in her happy childish whirl."

THE STORY BEHIND IT

Mira was Cecelia's aunt, the youngest child of the Bik family of Łódź. She was taken to Auschwitz as a child and murdered there. Cecelia was born after the war, into the space Mira left, and wrote this song so that her aunt would have something more than a date. The melody was recorded by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach.

THE HISTORY TO TEACH ALONGSIDE IT

Approximately 1.5 million Jewish children were murdered in the Holocaust. Łódź held the second largest ghetto in occupied Poland and was liquidated in August 1944, with most of its remaining population deported to Auschwitz Birkenau.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CLASS

- The song gives us a name, a town and one image of a girl playing. Why might that reach us more than the number 1.5 million?
- Cecelia never met Mira. What does it mean to grieve someone you never knew?
- What would you want written about you, if only four lines survived?

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8J-AEZMpT0>

CLASSROOM NOTES

“Rainbow in the Night”

Ages 14 and up · 60 minutes · Denial and evidence

THE STORY BEHIND IT

Released in 2011 and described as the first music video to depict the Holocaust. Cecelia wrote and produced it with director Danny Finkelman, it was sung by Cantor Yaakov Lemmer, and it was filmed on location in Kraków and at the Majdanek concentration camp. It follows a Jewish family from ordinary life into the camps.

THE HISTORY TO TEACH ALONGSIDE IT

The film was made in part as a response to Holocaust denial. That makes it a natural entry point into a harder discussion: how do we know what happened? Photographs, transport lists, gravestones, memoirs and survivor testimony are all evidence, and each type can be examined for how and why it was created.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CLASS

- Why would an artist answer denial with a song rather than an argument?
- What is the difference between a film that shows history and a document that proves it? Do we need both?
- The crew filmed at a real camp. What responsibilities come with that?

CLASSROOM NOTES

“Ani Ma'amin”

Ages 13 and up · 45 minutes · Faith under the worst conditions

"I believe with complete faith in the coming of the Messiah, and even though he may delay, I will wait."

THE STORY BEHIND IT

“Ani Ma'amin” is an old declaration of faith that Jews are documented to have sung on the way to the camps. Cecelia composed her own setting of it. In September 2023 it was released again in an arrangement that blends the previously unreleased voice of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach with the young singer Eli Levin. It has since been heard more than a million times.

THE HISTORY TO TEACH ALONGSIDE IT

Spiritual resistance is part of the historical record alongside armed resistance: prayer, teaching children in secret, keeping a diary, singing. A class that only learns about victims and perpetrators is missing what people did to stay human.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CLASS

- What does it mean to sing about faith while being taken to your death? Is that resistance?
- A melody recorded decades ago now sings with a living artist. What does that say about how memory travels?
- Are there songs your own family carries across generations?

CLASSROOM NOTES

“Shmor” and the Last Witnesses

Ages 12 and up · 45 minutes · What happens when the witnesses are gone

THE STORY BEHIND IT

Cecelia's song “Shmor” was performed by Gad and Benny Elbaz together with Saul Dreier, a survivor of Auschwitz who took up the drums in his nineties and formed a band. A survivor is not only someone who was there. He is someone still making music in front of you.

THE HISTORY TO TEACH ALONGSIDE IT

The generation of survivors is leaving us. Within a few years there will be no one left who can say “I was there.” This is the exact question the site is named after: who is the last survivor, and what happens the day after.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CLASS

- What is the difference between hearing a survivor and reading about one?
- When the last witness is gone, who becomes responsible for the story?
- What would you ask a survivor if you had one hour, and how would you record the answer?

CLASSROOM NOTES
