

Learning path 3 - Adapted for distance learning

Life stories

An introduction for educators With tips and extra information

Text in italics are taken from the online learning tool

What do the personal stories of individuals tell us about history? Let's explore the history of discrimination by looking at different stories.

Get to know the stories of ten people who have been affected by discrimination.

Aims

In this learning path learners:

- Get to know the stories of several people affected by antigypsyism, antisemitism, racism and discrimination against LGBT+.
- Reflect on positive achievements in addressing discrimination and the things that haven't changed.
- Gain skills to work with historical sources.
- Prepare a presentation for the larger group and get acquainted with a variety of stories from different periods in history.

Structure

This learning path consists of one track (lesson) with a number of steps.

- The learners are introduced to ten personal stories.
- They pick one for themselves and learn briefly about that person. The stories all deal with different forms of discrimination, such as antisemitism, racism, and discrimination against Roma and LGBT+.
- Each learner gets a collection of photos and quotes, to look into the story more deeply. A timeline of that person's life gives an overview. The learner prepares a presentation or writes an essay or story.

The historical biographies were chosen to contribute to intercultural historical learning. The focus is not on a particular period, though the Nazi era plays an important role in many of the lives presented here. The contextual information given is limited. The aim is to reflect on how personal lives are affected by discriminatory measures. Care has been taken to present people not only as victims but also as people with their own lives and identities.

Time: about 150 minutes (including homework)



Before starting

- Make sure learners know that their answers will be shared within the group. Exchange and discussion is central to the learning process. Each time your students login they will see the following pop-up:
Please be aware: the answers you give during assignments will be shared with your teacher and classmates in group work.
- As the topics discussed are personal, consider whether the atmosphere in the class feels safe and whether you can be sure that the learners will treat each other respectfully. Discuss this point with the class if you think this might be necessary.
- Often learners will only be able to continue if they have submitted one or more answers.
- Learners will need guidance on how much time to spend on each step. Taking the level of your learners into account, and the amount of time available it will be useful to indicate the available time. Tracks start with brief questions that serve as a 'warming up'. Keep the time spent on the first steps brief, so that there is more time for discussion later on.

Step 1 Keywords

Write down three words about how discrimination affects people's lives'.

Learners will return to their answers during the reflection step at the end of the learning path.

Step 2 Select a person

Choose someone you think looks interesting.

On the basis of a snap judgement, learners choose a person they think looks interesting. In the following steps they will learn more about this person.

Step 3 Your choice

Why did you choose this person?

Learners may choose a particular story for many different reasons. Having to articulate whether they chose because of a face or the tag line, for example, helps them realise that there are many different ways to make a first connection with a person.

Step 4 See – Think – Wonder

Look carefully at the picture and write down a few words for each of the three questions.

What do you see?

I think that ...

What questions do you have?

This exercise helps learners explore a source using the 'visible thinking' approach, distinguishing between what they see, what they think based on this, and what they would like to know. Learners explore a picture related to the story they picked. They are encouraged to look closely and think of questions. The technique makes use of their natural curiosity.

For more information go to [Visible Thinking](#) on the website.

Step 5 Life story

Read the life story.

Select three events you think were important and explain why.

Learners are given a short text with basic information about the person they chose.

All the texts are available in the file [Life stories](#).

Navigation

Most learning paths have several tracks. You as the educator will choose which path and track learners work with. Each track consists of several steps. Most steps include several screen pages – usually with a question, some information, and an assignment to work on in pairs or as a group. Learners can only go back a page if it is part of the same step, perhaps to look again at the question or to reread a text. The back arrow will not take learners back to previous steps. If this is necessary, the dropdown menu in the top left hand corner opens navigation through the whole track.

Glossary

Word highlighted in the text are explained in the glossary. It will depend on the level and interest of the learners, and the time available if they use the glossary extensively or not. In some cases the learners will be required to use the glossary. Consider which words you want to discuss with the whole class to make sure they have been understood.

Information and instruction

Extra information and instructions are sometimes provided in the top right hand corner of the screen. Make sure that learners are aware of this. They will sometimes need this information to complete an assignment.

Subtitles

Make sure to turn on the subtitles (click on the icon at the bottom right corner of the video screen to select the language) before learners start watching the film clip.



Step 6 Form a group

You will share 'your' life story in a group. Tell the group in two minutes about 'your' person and why you picked him or her.

If it is technically possible, students can work in digital groups and tell each other about their chosen person in a (video) chat.

Step 7 Choose a life story

Your group must now adopt one life story to present to the rest of the class. When you have agreed, write down the reasons why you agreed to pick that one. Why did you agree to pick this character? Look at all the sources carefully. As a group, choose a few you want to work with. Put together a presentation. Be creative. What elements of this person's life are particularly interesting? What is the significance of this life story today?

Although the assignment is set out for working in groups, for distance learning it is easier if they work individually or in pairs.

Each learner makes a presentation. They can choose their own format, perhaps a poster, a PowerPoint, an interview or an acted scene. Be clear what you want from the presentations.

Step 8 All voices matter

Before the presentations, let's discuss briefly who wasn't chosen and why all stories count.

You can skip this step in distance learning

Step 9 Showtime

Ready? Then it's time for your presentation!

Consider letting the learners share and discuss their presentations or stories in small groups or you can give individual feedback on the work they have done.

If the presentations are shared online with the whole class, you can ask, by (video) chat, if anyone wants to ask a question about the presentation. Or you can let your learners ask questions per email and discuss them with the class another time.

Step 10 Reflection

Look at the words you wrote in answer to the first question. Add a new thought and give an explanation. *Write down three new words about how discrimination affects people's lives.*

Teachers can see students' answers on the teacher dashboard (under student progress). You can give students individual feedback.