

MINI UNIT TITLE : Ben Steiner – Child of the Holocaust

<https://shadowsofshoah.com/ben>

Years	Level	Duration	Teacher	Classroom
9-10	5	3-5 periods		

Social Sciences Strands

- **Identity, Culture and Organisation:** *Students learn about society and communities and how they function, about the diverse cultures and identities of people within those communities, and about the impact of these on the participation of groups and individuals.*
- **Continuity and Change:** *Students learn about past events, experiences, and actions, and their changing interpretation over time, to understand about the past, the present, and possible futures.*
- **Social Enquiry:** *Through social inquiry, students ask questions, gather information, and examine the background to important societal ideas and events, explore and analyse values and perspectives relating to these ideas and events; and develop understandings about issues and the ways that people (themselves and others) make decisions and participate in social action.*

Social Studies Achievement Objectives

Through this process, and in a range of settings, students understand that:

- cultural interaction impacts on cultures and societies.
- people move between places, which has consequences for the people and the places.
- ideas and actions of people in the past have had a significant impact in shaping people's lives and identities in New Zealand's developing society.

Specific Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- understand how different cultures can impact negatively and positively on individuals who may be part of a group perceived as different.
- understand how people adjust or adapt to difficult situations when cultural interaction occurs.
- understand how migration can be a solution to situations where cultural conflict is endemic or unable to be mitigated.
- explain how one person's life has been shaped by circumstances beyond their control and how the actions of others have helped improve their life situation.

Additional Curriculum areas

- English

Setting:

- New Zealand
- Europe

Perspective:

- The Past (History)
- The Present
- The Future.
- Equality
- Rights
- Multicultural

Key Competencies focus:

- managing self
- relating to others

also relevant

- participating and contributing
- thinking
- using language, symbols, and texts.

Values focus:

diversity, as found in different cultures, and their responses to hardship and oppression.

equity, which means fairness and social justice; how to achieve this in an unjust situation.

community and participation, for the common good; respect for ourselves, for others, and for human rights;

integrity, which involves being honest, responsible, and accountable and acting ethically.

Concepts:

Anti-Semitism, choiceless choices, concentration camp, Communism, culture, cultural interaction, eugenics, Holocaust, human guinea pig, migration, Nazism, prejudice, racism, refugee, stereotype.

Social Inquiry processes

Teaching and Learning

Pedagogy

<p>Ask questions, gather information and background ideas, and examine relevant current issues.</p> <p>Explore and analyse people’s values and perspectives.</p> <p>Ask questions, gather information and background ideas, and examine relevant current issues.</p> <p>Explore and analyse people’s values and perspectives.</p> <p>Consider the ways in which people make decisions and participate in social action.</p> <p>Reflect on and evaluate the understandings they have developed and the responses that may be required.</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In groups, mind map what the students think ‘cultural interaction’ is. b. Make a list of different ways each group and individual’s perception of their own and other cultures may have influenced their mind map. c. Each group do a brief presentation of their mind map and ideas to the whole group – the class responds by noting ideas they did not have etc. d. In the course of the presentations individuals may tell their stories, and/or do this at the end of the group discussion. <p>Further research before the next lesson – read the resources given or look them up online/moodle/google docs etc. (see the resources/references below)</p> <p>Possible activities (note - students may generate their own valid activities)</p> <p>These may be done by individuals or small groups researching together then shared with the whole group to draw out their significance. For some a goal should be decided first – e.g. How could these things happen? What could have prevented these things? How would we react in these circumstances?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a short drama to re-enact some of the elements of the story. b. Map the journeys Ben’s family made, whether forced or voluntary. c. Create an annotated timeline to show significant events in this story. d. Complete an I chart (Inquiry) or 5W+H analysis of questions generated by the students. e. Do a PMI chart to try to understand the events described. f. Do a problem/barrier/solution chart to analyse different events. g. Create a poster, art or poem to express your feelings about these events. h. Analyse the events in light of the UNDHR. i. Each person or small group choose one part of the story and do deeper research on it (an inquiry), to be presented later to the group. j. Compare Ben’s life before and after the war. k. Research the impact the Jewish community has had on New Zealand’s society. l. Research the impact WW2 and the Holocaust had on Europe and the World. 	<p>Making connections to prior learning and experience</p> <p>Creating a supportive Learning Environment</p> <p>E-learning and pedagogy</p> <p>Encouraging reflective thought and action (metacognition)</p> <p>Enhancing the relevance of new learning</p> <p>Facilitating shared learning</p> <p>Providing sufficient opportunities to learn</p> <p>Teaching as inquiry</p> <p>E-learning and pedagogy</p>
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Fertile questions – 3-level guide

Level 1

- a. Who was Ben Steiner?
- b. Who were his parents?
- c. What did his family do to make themselves appear less Jewish?
- d. What type of camp was Auschwitz?
- e. What were the three selection lines for?
- f. Who was the doctor responsible for the medical experiments on people at Auschwitz- Birkenau?
- g. How did the Germans identify each prisoner?
- h. Name some people who put Ben in danger.
- i. Name some people who helped him survive.
- j. Which was the first army to liberate Auschwitz?
- k. Why did Ben have to leave Hungary?
- l. Which country did Ben go to as a refugee?

Level 2

- a. Could Ben have escaped from the Nazis?
- b. Why did Ben survive Auschwitz Birkenau?
- c. How did his parents manage to survive?
- d. After the war, why did Ben choose the new name, Steiner?
- e. Give examples of prejudice, stereotyping and anti-semitism in this story.

Level 3

- a. How successful were attempts to protect Ben? Why or why not?
- b. Did Ben's family try to change their **identity** as Jewish people?
- c. Was there any way the Jewish people could have convinced the Nazis to stop what they were doing? Why or why not?
- d. Explain ways in which the phrase 'choiceless choices' applies to his story.
- e. Compare Ben's life before and after moving to New Zealand.
- f. Why is it highly unlikely that such events could occur in New Zealand? Is it impossible?
- g. What are some options when we are confronted with racism and anti-Semitism?

Enhancing the relevance of new learning

Encouraging reflective thought

Encouraging reflective thought and action (metacognition)

ask questions, gather information and background ideas

explore and analyse people's values and perspectives;

consider the ways in which people make decisions and participate in social action;

reflect on and evaluate the understandings they have developed and the responses that may be required.

Resources/references

Shadows of Shoah resource – Ben Steiner

From Auschwitz to Auckland - <http://www.newsbeat.kiwi/2014/10/24/from-auschwitz-to-auckland-audio/> <http://jewishonlinemuseum.org/benjamin-steiner>

Assessment Schedule

Summative or formative assessment as determined by teacher or department; would usually be assessed formatively, for example as part of a wider unit on Holocaust, WW2, cultural interaction, etc.

Unit Evaluation (teacher)

Benjamin Steiner

Born 14 May 1935, Budapest, Hungary

I was nearly nine years old when I arrived at Auschwitz.

I was put in barracks with other children.

We had been selected for medical experimentation.

They measured our faces, our bones.

They took blood from us and gave us pills.

There were dwarves too. Some had a leg or arm amputated.

It was a disgusting mess.

To this day I have scars all over my torso.

I still suffer the effects of radio cobalt experiments.

We were like caged animals with no hope, no spirit.

We would be transported to the laboratory in a white ambulance.

On one occasion I moved too slowly when a German officer came to collect me.

I was dazed because of the operations and medication.

The officer began to beat me.

Ruth Steiner was one of the Jewish prisoners who cared for us. She was very kind.

As the officer began to hit me she held his arm.

"He's not well", she said.

The German took out his revolver and shot Mrs Steiner dead.

I thought that I would be killed too.

Mrs Steiner paid for her kindness with her life.

Years later I changed my name to Steiner.