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Strategies to counter antisemitism

A handbook for educators

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SHORT SUMMARY

A mapping of promising practices for addressing antisemitism through education

Education is the first line of defence against hate and prejudice. By targeting the root causes of hate ideologies, deconstructing the stereotypes that underlie them from an early age, and promoting inclusive models, education is the keystone of a holistic approach to combating discrimination. Tackling antisemitism through education requires tailored content that addresses its complex, shifting and multilayered forms, both past and present.

Acknowledging the topic's complexity and the paucity of resources available to education stakeholders, this concise guide aims to provide a roadmap for policymakers, curriculum developers and educators on current approaches and initiatives. It presents ten educational practices, each grounded in academic literature and illustrated by a promising educational initiative that operationalizes core pedagogical principles. The handbook is built around the three core learning domains which inform UNESCO's approach to Global Citizenship Education: cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural learning.

Conceived as an accessible operational guide for practitioners, this resource sets out to start a larger conversation about the needs of educators for tackling contemporary forms of antisemitism. It aims to encourage investments in high-quality empirical research that can pave the way for a better approach to combat antisemitism.

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"Since wars begin in the minds of men and women it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed"

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Foreword

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Antisemitism continues to evolve and spread, threatening the security of Jewish communities and undermining the foundations of inclusive and democratic societies.

Confronting this challenge is not only a matter of protecting those directly targeted, but of safeguarding the values of human rights, social cohesion and peace for all.

At UNESCO, we believe education must be at the centre of this response. Schools are uniquely placed to build resilience against prejudice by equipping learners with knowledge, empathy and civic responsibility. The 2023 UNESCO Recommendation on Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development highlights the prevention of discrimination, racism and antisemitism as a core priority and underlines the role of education in building inclusive, resilient societies. Many educators, however, still find antisemitism a difficult subject to address and often lack the tools and support needed to teach about it effectively.

This handbook was developed to respond to that need. It brings together ten selected good practices from Europe and the United States, each grounded in real educational experience and organized around the cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural dimensions promoted by global citizenship education. Together, these examples illustrate how different approaches – from complementing Holocaust education with lessons on contemporary antisemitism, to engaging with local Jewish history and strengthening media and information literacy – can make a tangible difference in classrooms.

The initiatives presented here form part of UNESCO's broader commitment to countering antisemitism through education. They complement other resources in this series, including an analysis of how Jews, Judaism and antisemitism are represented in European learning materials, and a survey of teachers' preparedness to address antisemitism in schools. Taken together, these publications provide policy-makers, curriculum developers and educators with a solid basis for action.

By presenting practical inspiration for action, this handbook seeks to guide and empower those on the front line of education. Our collective goal is clear: to enable young people to develop the skills and values they need to resist hatred and to help build peaceful, inclusive and resilient societies.

Stefania Giannini
Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

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We are also extremely grateful to the authors and practitioners of the ten educational initiatives showcased in this publication and would like to thank them for sharing their experience in the course of handbook preparations. It is owing to their efforts that we are able to present examples of good practices addressing contemporary antisemitism through education:

Mohammed Ali Amla, Solutions Not Sides, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

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Michał Bilewicz, Forum for Dialogue/University of Warsaw, Poland

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Executive summary

- There is **an urgent need for interventions in the area of critical antisemitism education**: it is underfunded, under-researched and under-prioritized. Governments, ministries of education and human rights or anti-racism organizations should be dedicating more of their efforts to this issue.
- This handbook provides a roadmap for **policy-makers, curriculum developers and educators across the world** in the search for good practices in the area of critical antisemitism education. It can serve in the process of developing long-term programmes and curricula, but also stand-alone events, pilot projects or lesson plans, in accordance with the UNESCO 2023 Recommendation.
- The handbook highlights **ten educational practices**, providing background for each of them based on supporting academic literature. Each practice is illustrated by a promising educational initiative.
- Each part of the handbook reflects one of the **three core learning domains** which inform UNESCO's approach to Global Citizenship and Peace Education: cognitive (knowledge), socio-emotional (attitudes and values), and behavioural domain (skills and competencies).
- When developing **knowledge of antisemitism**, educational initiatives should teach how to identify and recognize it. This involves introducing learners to the history and evolution of antisemitism, its varied forms and patterns, its impact on Jewish people, and its destructive effects on societal bonds and democratic structures.
- When developing **positive attitudes and values related to addressing antisemitism**, educators should use authentic human stories, show how antisemitic hate affects real people in a real way, and create empathy, respect and solidarity in learners. It is also important to show learners how to deconstruct bias and prejudice, including their own.
- When developing **autonomous skills and competencies to act against antisemitism** and other types of hate, learners need to take a proactive attitude against antisemitism, discrimination and hate speech in online and offline interactions, advance their skills of effective communication and building mutual trust, and develop their media and information literacy.

Introduction

A void in educational practice

Educational systems are increasingly aware of the importance of directly addressing antisemitic hatred in the classroom. In line with the UNESCO 2023 Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, educational materials and resources should 'actively aim to challenge and eradicate underlying prejudices and stereotypes and contribute to overcoming their consequences.'[1] However, while this handbook showcases some promising practices in this area, they are not representative of the state of critical antisemitism education worldwide. There is currently an urgent lack of educational interventions, as critical antisemitism education is under-funded and underprioritized. Education authorities should focus their attention on educating against and about antisemitism, making significant investments to commission high-quality empirical research, create educational programmes, and provide training to teachers in order to help them deal with the topic in their regular practice. In particular, they should include education against contemporary antisemitism, and about antisemitism which can arise in the context of discussing the conflict in the Middle East. Moreover, this field would also benefit from greater activity on the part of human rights and anti-racism organizations in the fight against antisemitism. Without an active multiplication of efforts, young people are unprepared to understand, deconstruct and resist rising manifestations of antisemitic acts and attitudes.[2]

Handbook aims and approach

When designing age- and context-appropriate educational interventions against antisemitism, policy-makers and educators are faced with a range of challenges. With a wide array of educational resources addressing antisemitism available, it can be difficult to choose the one that matches specific needs and expected learning outcomes. Not all of the resources on offer respond to the changing reality of contemporary antisemitism or reflect the diversity of national perspectives and experiences. This publication provides a roadmap for policy-makers, curriculum developers, and educators across the world in the search for good practices when addressing antisemitism through and in education.

The handbook highlights ten educational practices, providing theoretical background for each of them based on supporting academic literature. Each practice is then illustrated by an educational initiative, carefully selected during a review of practical resources for its unique approach, up-to-date content, and suitability to address (directly or indirectly) contemporary antisemitism. The review is based on a study – to date, the most comprehensive of its sort – conducted by the Segerstedt Institute at the University of Gothenburg in 2020-2021 and funded by the Swedish

1 https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-education-peace-and-human-rights-international-understanding-cooperation-fundamental?hub=87862

2 https://www.euronews.com/2025/05/08/antisemitic-incidents-surge-across-europe-and-the-world-adl-report-shows

Ministry of Education, which systematically mapped educational initiatives between 1945 and 2020 to prevent antisemitism and raise awareness about the Holocaust.

Further essential information was collected during interviews with expert practitioners and organizations from the field of critical antisemitism education who were responsible for developing the programmes and resources presented in the handbook. Each of the unique case studies used in the handbook offers a wealth of insight, expertise, and pedagogical knowledge, and while each illustrates a selected theme, this should be understood to highlight one of the many dimensions and strengths that each of the case studies represents.

How to use this handbook

The handbook is intended as a focused resource for policy-makers, curriculum developers and educators. It can serve in the process of developing long-term educational programmes and curricula, but also stand-alone events, pilot projects or lesson plans. By presenting good practices for addressing antisemitism through education and illustrating them with a range of effective examples of applied educational programmes and resources, the handbook provides information on both the content and methodological approaches. The portfolio of ten practices and case studies offers inspiration and encouragement, concrete solutions and advice, and represents a range of modern pedagogical strategies. The handbook seeks to provide a clear and concise, yet comprehensive, overview, while also being a useful tool for deepening the understanding of specific practices and educational interventions.

The handbook's ten educational practices are structured into three sections, reflecting the three core learning domains of Global Citizenship and Peace Education which inform UNESCO's approach: the cognitive domain (knowledge), the socio-emotional domain (attitudes and values), and the behavioural domain (skills and competencies).[3]

Box 1: Domains of education

- **The cognitive domain focuses on developing knowledge about antisemitism, prejudice and discrimination, such as understanding its history, evolution, patterns and impact on Jewish people and human rights and the rule of law.**
- **The socio-emotional domain focuses on developing positive attitudes and values related to addressing antisemitism, humanizing the victims of discrimination, and fostering respect, solidarity and empathy for them within the broader framework of global citizenship.**
- **The behavioural domain focuses on developing the skills and competencies needed to empower learning to take action against antisemitism, such as effective and empathetic communication, media and information literacy and civic participation**

3 UNESCO (2015). Global citizenship education: topics and learning objectives. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993

Each of the three parts of the handbook focuses on one of these domains, translating them into concrete learning outcomes, and illustrating each of them with promising practices provided by a case study. The three domains work together in synergy, and all three should be considered when developing new resources or curricula. While other domains may be considered elsewhere (for example, the ideology-critical domain), they have been selected with the target group of school students in mind.

Box 2: Learning domains

Learning domains	Learning outcomes	Good practices
Cognitive domain KNOWLEDGE	Identify and recognize antisemitism.	1. Incorporate local lessons about contemporary antisemitism Case study: ABC on Antisemitism (Terraforming)
	Understand causes, evolution and impact (historical and contemporary) of antisemitism on societies and minority groups.	2. Complement Holocaust education with lessons about contemporary antisemitism Case study: the Gringlas Unit (Echoes & Reflections) 3. Educate about antisemitism alongside other types of hate Case study: Fără Ură (Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust)
	Understand the diversity of Jewish life, culture and history.	4. Engage with local Jewish heritage Case study: Stereotypes (Jewish Museum of Prague)
Socio-emotional domain ATTITUDES AND VALUES	Develop empathy and a sense of solidarity and shared humanity with victims of antisemitism and hate speech.	5. Use storytelling to humanize the victims of prejudice Case study: Stories That Move (Anne Frank House)

Socio-emotional domain ATTITUDES AND VALUES	Understand and deconstruct one's own biases and prejudices.	6. Challenge the prejudice, challenge the perspective Case study: HerStories (Centropa) 7. Use empathic curiosity. Case study: CoExist (UEJF, SOS Racisme and FAGE)
Behavioural domain SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES	Develop a proactive attitude against antisemitism, discrimination and hate speech in online and offline interactions.	8. Bridge gaps within communities Case study: School of Dialogue (Forum for Dialogue) 9. Teach how to communicate outside one's bubble Case study: Solutions Not Sides 10. Develop media and information literacy against antisemitism Case study: Antisemitism and Youth (University of Duissberg-Essen)

Part I: What is it? Understanding antisemitism and Jewish history and culture

Within UNESCO's approach to Global Citizenship Education, the first of the three core domains of learning focuses on acquiring **knowledge** and developing critical thinking and analysis skills. In order to address antisemitism, educational programmes and resources need to provide information about what constitutes antisemitism in order to allow learners to identify and recognize it around them. This involves teaching about the history and evolution of antisemitism, its varied forms and patterns, its impact on Jewish people, and its destructive effects on societal bonds and democratic structures. It also means educating non-Jewish learners about Jewish life in the past and present, breaking with stereotypical representations.

Good practice 1. Incorporate local lessons about contemporary antisemitism

Recommendations and challenges

All too often, antisemitism is presented as a distant phenomenon that existed only in the past or in extremist fringe circles. All too often, the learners' representations of antisemitism are limited to the Holocaust or to medieval faith-based discrimination, leaving significant historical blind spots and, most notably, neglecting to properly account for the persistence of antisemitism after 1945. As a result, learners might find it difficult to recognize contemporary forms of antisemitism, especially since they can often be implicit and normalized in attitudes, slogans, or jokes. It is therefore useful to employ recent examples of antisemitism, and to discuss the antisemitic concepts, stereotypes or tropes which are most prevalent these days.

As they are sometimes entwined with a familiar cultural context, it can be challenging to separate the antisemitic misconceptions or stereotypes that have taken root within it. However, this can be done using a neutral, fact-based approach that is sensitive to the local setting and that builds understanding instead of being polarizing.

→ **See also: 'Addressing anti-semitism in schools: training curriculum for secondary education teachers', (UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR, 2020). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374866?posInSet=2&queryId=b47e20f5-8e73-42ad-a35f-52e534986f51**

Background

Incorporating lessons of contemporary antisemitism into educational initiatives is beneficial for more reasons than one. Naturally, learners are much more likely to encounter it in their everyday life, compared to examples of historical antisemitism. But teaching about contemporary forms of hate is also practical due to the way we acquire and retain knowledge: by anchoring new information to existing, real-world information.[4] Learners already have knowledge of the reality that surrounds them – cultural references, current global or national events, the dynamics of social media communication, or the impact of artificial intelligence. Educational interventions can use this knowledge as a framework of reference for lessons about contemporary antisemitism,[5] and teach learners to recognize antisemitic prejudice in recent cultural texts, in social media comments or internet memes, or in content generated by AI.[6]

Such lessons can be contextualized further if they take into account not just time but place as well, discussing examples of contemporary antisemitism which are specific to the learners' country or society.

4 McLellan, H. (1996). *Situated learning perspectives*. Educational Technology.

5 UNESCO (2020). Addressing anti-semitism in schools: training curriculum for secondary education teachers. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374866

6 See also: UNESCO (2024). AI and the Holocaust: rewriting history? The impact of artificial intelligence on understanding the Holocaust. https://doi.org/10.54675/ZHJC6844

Box 3

Case study: ABC on Antisemitism – Terraforming

Overview

An online reference resource containing key facts for understanding contemporary antisemitism in both the international and Serbian context.

Structure

The twenty-five topics covered by the website have been selected based on the authors' knowledge of the forms which antisemitic prejudice takes in present-day Serbia and can be related more broadly to the Balkan context. However, antisemitism is never presented as a regional or national problem, rather as a prejudice which can happen everywhere, which is detrimental to all, and which we can all fight together.

The topics range from general (*What is antisemitism?, How is antisemitism expressed?*) to those discussing specific aspects of antisemitism, its impact or its relation to other phenomena (*Conspiracy theories, Antisemitism as the 'canary in the coalmine,' How are the victims of antisemitism affected?, Antisemitism and the internet, Antisemitism and nationalism* and more). Each topic is presented on the website in a concise frame (comparable in size to a social media post, with more information available after clicking a 'Read more' button). Each frame is fact-based and uses plain language, but also a catchy, social media-ready style of phrasing.

Development

The website was developed in 2024 with a specific audience in mind, and in response to specific events. Following the Hamas attack on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023, its creators at the Serbian NGO Terraforming noted not just the increased visibility and intensity of antisemitic incidents in Serbia, both online and offline, but also the virtual lack of condemnation of such incidents and lack of support for the few counter-initiatives. They also observed the absence of current, widely available educational resources on contemporary antisemitism that would be specific to the Serbian audience.

Experts at Terraforming subsequently collected examples of media and social media discourse surrounding these incidents and analysed them through the lens of antisemitic disinformation. Using insights from the research stage, they conceived a project to address antisemitic stereotypes and misconceptions they found. They created a Serbian-language reference resource about antisemitism which provides key information on the topic, readily available online.

Impact

Following the launch of the ABC on Antisemitism website, Terraforming has developed a mobile exhibition promoting the project. It now accompanies events held by the organization in order to spread knowledge about the website but also to reach an offline audience, which creates opportunity for feedback. Terraforming is also planning to gauge impact through an online survey and in-person meetings with school teachers, educators from museums or archives, and journalists. The authors also hope that the resource will be used by others to create further educational interventions.

Key strengths

- The resource is conceptualized as a clear, practical and relatable way to learn the basics.
- It builds understanding of antisemitism and empathy for its victims, without stigmatizing or accusing a specific group of antisemitic prejudice.
- It is accessible to the general public, but can also be used by media professionals, policy-makers, and education professionals.

→ **See also: https://antisemitizam.rs/abc-o-antisemitizmu/**

Good practice 2. Complement Holocaust education with lessons about contemporary antisemitism

Recommendations and challenges

Another way of bringing the topics of Jewish life and antisemitism closer to learners is to show the continuity between historical events and today's reality. When teaching about the Holocaust, we should discuss it in the context of events and attitudes that both preceded and followed it and highlight links between historical antisemitism and its contemporary forms. A particularly important dimension relates to antisemitism directly linked to the experiences of the Holocaust (called secondary antisemitism): when Jewish people are blamed for the Holocaust, or when the facts of the genocide are relativized, denied or distorted. Another way to enhance lessons about the Holocaust is to highlight stories of resilience and solidarity, shifting away from a narrative of passive Jewish victimhood. Jewish people have rich and complex biographies, and Jewish life and culture has continued for centuries; neither the individuals nor the group should be reduced only to their victimhood.

Within the history of antisemitism, the Holocaust represents nevertheless the most radical and systematic manifestation of genocidal antisemitism. Contextualizing it and placing it on a timeline of antisemitism which continues until today should not erase its singularity.

→ **See also: 'Countering Holocaust denial and distortion through education: a guide for teachers' and Countering Holocaust denial and distortion through education: lesson activities for secondary education' (UNESCO, 2025). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000392455**

Background

The Holocaust was the organized, systematic persecution and murder of six million European Jews by the Nazi regime, its collaborators and allies over more than a decade in the first half of the twentieth century.[7] To this day, it is one of the darkest chapters in human history, and it has had huge repercussions for European identity, values, and culture. Lessons about the Holocaust should

7 USHMM (2025). Introduction to the Holocaust. https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust

be an integral part of school curricula and extracurricular programmes in history,[8] social sciences and citizenship education.[9]

Educational initiatives can successfully combine this with lessons about present-day antisemitic prejudice, showing continuity between past and present, and highlighting the parallels between historical and contemporary antisemitism in terms of both the content (antisemitic stereotypes or tropes) and form (language or imagery).[10] Complementing Holocaust education with lessons about contemporary antisemitism is an opportunity to emphasize the impact of the former, and historicize and contextualize the latter.[11] It is also a chance to discuss the issues of Holocaust denial and distortion, which emerged during the Holocaust and are present in modern-day discourse.

Conversely, teaching about the Holocaust as a disconnected, stand-alone historical event means that it seems more distant to younger generations of today. This becomes increasingly important over time, as fewer and fewer Holocaust survivors are present in our communities.

Box 4

Case study: The Gringlas Unit – Echoes & Reflections

Overview

An online set of classroom resources for learners aged 11-18 about Jewish life and antisemitism. The unit raises awareness of the ways in which the past connects with the present.

Structure

Within the unit, students learn about the history of Jews, Judaism and Israel, reaching into the present day. Through video recordings they can meet Holocaust survivors as well as Jewish people from younger generations. In addition to videos, the unit contains handouts, discussion questions, maps and activities, which can be used individually or treated as a ready-to-use lesson plan. In total, the unit covers an estimated 150-180 minutes of classroom time.

The Holocaust is discussed alongside post-war events and biographies, showing the complexity of antisemitism and the richness of Jewish experience and identity. Historical antisemitism is linked with contemporary stereotypes of conspiracy theories, helping learners understand new forms of old prejudice and identify antisemitism encountered in their community or on social media today. The unit provides knowledge and fosters critical thinking, but it also hopes to inspire the reflection that prejudice destroys social bonds and democracy, and to encourage learners not to be bystanders but to take responsibility to respond to and prevent antisemitism.

8 Hale, R. (2020). 'It made me think how I should treat others and how I should help people who need it': The complexities of exploring the impact of Holocaust education. *Oxford Review of Education*, *46*(6), 788-803.

9 Stevick, D. (2018) How does education about the Holocaust advance global citizenship education? https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000261969

10 Laqueur, W. (2006). *The changing face of antisemitism: From ancient times to the present day*. Oxford University Press.

11 UNESCO (2013). Why teach about the Holocaust. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000218631

Development

The Gringlas unit bears the name of a Jewish family. Only two of its members – brothers Joseph and Sol – survived the Holocaust, and video recordings of their testimonies are included in the resources. The unit is part of the broader project Echoes & Reflections developed in partnership with ADL, the USC Shoah Foundation and Yad Vashem. The work on the unit started seven years ago; in that time, it has been shaped by both scholars and teachers and re-evaluated on a yearly basis based on feedback from the advisory committee, from surveys, and from teachers who act as the programme's ambassadors. In 2023, the unit was updated to incorporate the results of a year-long study, and in 2024 further edited to include mentions of the Hamas attack on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023.

Impact

Prepared with North American audiences in mind, it has succeeded in reaching schools across many parts of the United States of America, where teachers often use the entire unit to teach students about both Jewish life and antisemitism. High numbers of downloads are evidence of interest, suggesting that schools see the need to include the topics into their classes, and regularly collected feedback confirms that students connect to human stories, show higher levels of empathy, and report greater confidence and knowledge when it comes to topics of Jewish life and antisemitism.

Key strengths

- The unit is accessible and easy to use – it is available online, free to download, and requires minimal preparation.
- It links historical and contemporary expressions of antisemitism.
- It encourages critical thinking and reflection.

→ **See also: https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-11/**

Good practice 3. Educate about antisemitism alongside other types of hate

Recommendations and challenges

Teaching about antisemitism can also be made more relatable to learners if the topic is discussed in relation to other types of hate. Not all learners have first-hand experience of antisemitism, but it is likely that they identify with another community, and perhaps they (or someone they know) have been the target of another kind of discriminatory or hateful behaviour. Talking about contemporary antisemitism alongside racism, anti-Muslim prejudice, xenophobia, anti-Roma prejudice, misogyny or anti-LGBTQI prejudice is also an opportunity to consider the commonalities and differences, and to reflect on the fact that each of our individual identities can have many facets.

This is also a chance to consider and address the issue of how different groups perceive prejudice against others depending on their own experience of trauma, persecution or identity-based discrimination. Without erasing the specific historical and cultural dynamics of each type of hate ideology, it is nevertheless recommended to embed them into a unifying human rights-based framework that emphasizes the universality of values such as human dignity.

→ **See also: 'Addressing conspiracy theories: what teachers need to know' (UNESCO, 2022). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381958**

Background

While each identity-based prejudice has its unique character and history, different types of prejudice can overlap and follow similar patterns such as othering or dehumanization.[12] This means that work against prejudice, including educational interventions, can take a more holistic approach,[13] being careful to avoid simplifications and assumptions about the individual experiences of the victims. Research can also help identify the community-specific issues, and tailor teaching resources and programmes to the issues particularly prevalent in the community.

It is worth noting here the socio-psychological concept of competitive victimhood, which refers to a situation where different groups compete over who has suffered more, or whose suffering is more acute, more legitimate, or more deserving of sympathy.[14] It often arises in contexts of trauma or conflict, and may be triggered by discussions of identity-based prejudice, whether they focus on one or more types.[15] Competitive victimhood can make mutual understanding or self-reflection more difficult, therefore it is vital to consider whether it might affect the target audience of an educational intervention.

Finally, different identities are not necessarily mutually exclusive, meaning that an individual or a group might experience more than one type of identity-based prejudice at the same time.[16] Including this intersectional dimension when formulating educational interventions can help reach a broader audience.

12 Kalmar, I., & Ramadan, T. (2016). Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Historical and contemporary connections and parallels. In *The Routledge Handbook of Muslim-Jewish Relations* (pp. 351-371). Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315675787-18/anti-semitism-islamophobia-ivan-kalmar-tariq-ramadan

13 ISD, B'nai B'rith International (2022). Online Antisemitism: A Toolkit for Civil Society. https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/online-antisemitism-a-toolkit-for-civil-society/.

14 Bilewicz, M., & Liu, J. (2020). Collective victimhood as a form of adaptation. *The social psychology of collective victimhood*, *120*.

15 Gebert, K. (2014). Conflicting memories: Polish and Jewish perceptions of the Shoah. *Holocaust education in a global context*, 28. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000225973

16 Achinger, C. (2023). Jews and other 'others': Identity and constellation in intersectional and Critical Theory. *Critical Theory and the Critique of Antisemitism*, 91.

Box 5

Case study: Fărăură.ro – Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust

Overview

This Romanian-language online resource educates about antisemitism and anti-Roma hate, presenting and deconstructing examples from social media.

Structure

The website Fără Ură (Romanian for No Hate) has been tailored specifically to a Romanian audience. It not only uses cultural references which will be most recognizable to Romanians, but also addresses two types of hate, antisemitism and anti-Roma prejudice, based on the insight that both of them are present in contemporary Romanian society.[17] The website covers 39 false claims, which can be filtered by category (anti-Roma, antisemitic, conspiratorial, economic, denialist, racist and religious). Selecting one of the claims reveals a clear and accessible explanation why the claim is inaccurate, and the topic can be explored further through examples ('What examples do we have?') and advice ('What can we do?'). Authentic examples are taken from social media and meticulously deconstructed point by point, modelling how antisemitism and anti-Roma prejudice can be spotted and how false claims can be identified, contested and countered. The advice section contains encouragement to take action in order to expose or combat prejudice, practical tips, as well as downloadable visual materials and links to an online form and a Facebook group, which can be used to report examples of hate.

Development

The prevalence of antisemitism and anti-Roma hate was observed by experts at the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust during a period of monitoring prejudice in Romanian-language social media spaces. They noticed that these two types of hate are both highly normalized, albeit in different ways – antisemitic statements tended to be more implicit and accompanied by rationalizing attempts, while anti-Roma claims were more explicit and violent. These alarming results prompted the idea of an educational project that would reflect the most recurrent themes in the monitored antisemitic and anti-Roma discourse.

Impact

The website can be used by anyone. Authors of the project are particularly interested in reaching students and teachers – the Institute has been promoting it as a source of information for both – and the website has been successfully used as a classroom resource.

Key strengths

- The website shares knowledge of contemporary antisemitism and anti-Roma prejudice, both of which are highly relevant to the national context.
- Each antisemitic or anti-Roma claim is debunked and illustrated with authentic examples from social media, then deconstructed.
- The website is visually striking, uses simple and accessible language, and is free to use by anyone with knowledge of the Romanian language.

17 Popoviciu, S., & Tileagă, C. (2021). Roma Prejudices in the European Union: Responses to structural inequality. In *The Routledge international handbook of discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping* (pp. 90-103). Routledge.

→ See also: https://faraura.ro/

Good practice 4. Engage with local Jewish heritage

Recommendations and challenges

To further contextualize knowledge of antisemitism and Jewish life, educational initiatives can highlight the common denominators between the learners and the people they are learning about – shared place of origin, nationality, or local identity. Introducing learners to the Jewish history of their country, town or community can be an excellent starting point for discussions of both historical and contemporary antisemitism experienced within these spaces. For Jewish and non-Jewish learners alike, it can be a way to develop a stronger sense of identity and connectedness.

A potential challenge of this approach is that learners might find it difficult to accept the role non-Jewish members of their community may have played in antisemitic persecution. This can be prevented by focusing on proactive attitudes to fighting and preventing contemporary antisemitism.

→ See also: 'Addressing hate speech through education: a guide for policy-makers' (UNESCO, 2023). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384872

Background

Heritage sites are often used in education as a framework for history lessons,[18] with visits to sites of historical atrocities, such as Holocaust-era concentration camps, suggested as an opportunity to contextualize events described in school textbooks and to tell stories of suffering as well as stories of heroism and perseverance.[19]

But educational interventions can also draw on places, artefacts and institutions central to Jewish life, rather than Jewish victimhood. Introducing learners to local Jewish heritage – artistic, cultural or architectural – connects them to a part of their community they may know little about, a community with a rich and varied legacy. When learners learn about the persecution suffered by this community as a result of antisemitic prejudice, they can have a better understanding of this experience. Similarly, learning about any community helps appreciate and contextualize their experience of prejudice, and lessons based in local heritage might also create space for talking about overlapping national and ethnic identities.[20]

18 Stolare, M., Ludvigsson, D., & Trenter, C. (2021). The educational power of heritage sites. History Education Research Journal, 18(2). https://doi.org/10.14324/herj.18.2.08

19 Heyl, M. (2014). Historic sites as a framework for education. *Holocaust Education in a Global Context*, 87. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000225973

20 Kushner, T. (2012). *The Jewish Heritage in British History: Englishness and Jewishness*. Routledge.

Box 6

Case study: the Stereotypes programme – the Jewish Museum of Prague

Overview

Workshops for 15- to 17-year-old students, run by the museum in schools. The workshops comprise a dynamic discussion session and a visit to the museum.

Structure

A workshop begins with an interactive one-hour session, comprising five activities that trigger conversations on a range of topics. The discussions cover the themes of human rights, free speech and its ethical and legal limits (especially in the context of social media), prejudice experienced by others – often by people the students have not interacted with before – or even prejudice experienced by the students themselves. While each workshop aims to equip students with knowledge about stereotypes and prejudice, it also encourages them to think critically and form their own opinions when faced with complex issues they hear about on the news or read about on social media. Students are welcome to share experiences and ask questions, and the programme holds space to talk about other types of hate present in contemporary Czechia as well as anti-Roma, anti-Vietnamese, anti-LGBTQI and more. Including a range of topics in the workshop means that students are more likely to understand antisemitic prejudice and relate to people it targets. At the end of each session, they are asked what they have learned and which aspect of the workshop seemed particularly important.

To strengthen the learning experience, the discussion is followed by a visit to one of the parts of the museum (the Maisel Synagogue, the Pinkas Synagogue, the Spanish Synagogue, the Klausen Synagogue, the Ceremonial Hall of the Prague Jewish Burial Society, the Old Jewish Cemetery, or the Robert Guttmann Gallery). For some students, this might be the first opportunity to learn about the history of Jewish life and heritage in Czechia, and to ask questions about the past and present of Czech Jews.

Development

The programme, Stereotypes, has been running for ten years. It first began as an outreach programme for vocational schools across Czechia, following the observation made by the Jewish Museum of Prague experts that the vocational curriculum rarely covers the topic of antisemitic prejudice, even though vocational students are as likely to be affected by it as other people their age. Vocational schools were also less likely, on average, to take students on museum visits. To address these gaps in the curriculum, the museum developed workshops which would give students an opportunity to learn about antisemitism and other prejudices, but also about the rich history of Jewish life in their country. Over time, the programme has expanded to other secondary schools in Czechia as well.

The programme has been shaped by the expertise of many educators, as well as feedback received from students and schools over the years. Each year, the Museum uses the survey results to redesign the workshops for the new school year, alongside findings from the annual report on antisemitic incidents in Czechia. These two sources provide insights into the most relevant contexts and topics. These have included culture and sports (students may not always be able to recognize antisemitism normalized in humour or in football chants), as well as global events (in the past few years, levels of antisemitic incidents in Czechia have been fuelled by anxiety around the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine, conflict in the Middle East, or higher numbers of refugees across Europe).

Impact

The programme has been in place for a decade, in which time it has grown from strength to strength, gaining support and recognition. It has been able to quickly respond to the new challenges of contemporary antisemitism, and its success is evidenced by positive feedback from students and teachers, as well as an increased demand from schools.

Key strengths

- The workshops are highly engaging for their teenage participants and encourage discussion, reflection and critical thinking.
- A discussion on prejudice is followed by a visit to the museum, introducing the students to the history of Jewish life and heritage in Czechia.
- The programme is updated every year, based on results of school surveys and data from the annual report on antisemitic incidents.

Part II: How to respond? Developing empathy and deconstructing prejudice

The second part of the handbook, reflecting the domain of socio-emotional learning, highlights good practices for developing **positive attitudes and values** related to addressing antisemitism. This can be achieved by pedagogical approaches which share authentic human stories, show how antisemitic prejudice affects real people in a real way, and create empathy, respect and solidarity in learners.[21] It is also important to show learners how to deconstruct bias and prejudice, including their own.

Good practice 5. Use storytelling to humanize the victims of prejudice

Recommendations and challenges

Using the medium of storytelling when teaching about historical and contemporary antisemitism sheds light on first-hand narratives. Authentic stories are personal and unique, avoiding stereotypical representations. They can also be highly relatable and encourage learners to compare their own experiences to those of the person they are learning about – especially if their biographies have shared elements. When using the narrative pedagogy approach, it is therefore important to select stories that are likely to resonate with learners.

→ **See also: 'Mainstreaming social and emotional learning in education systems: executive summary' (UNESCO, 2024). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000391761**

21 UNESCO (2024). Mainstreaming social and emotional learning in education systems: policy guide. https://doi.org/10.54675/ORWD6913.

Background

Narrative pedagogy offers a powerful approach to teaching about prejudice by putting personal stories and lived experiences at the centre of learning. As learners engage with the narratives (in the form of autobiographical or fictional writing, live or recorded oral testimonies etc.), they develop an emotional connection to the story, the person who is telling it, and to the complex issues that have shaped it.[22]

When interacting with a story told by victims of prejudice, antisemitic or other, studies suggest learners' empathy increases, and so does their motivation to learn about the injustice behind the prejudice as well as its impact. Using storytelling allows learners also to examine their own attitudes and experiences, promoting reflection and self-awareness. Some effective educational projects are built around real-life stories, such as testimonies of Holocaust survivors,[23] while other interventions use fictional accounts.

Box 7

Case study: Stories That Move – Anne Frank House

Overview

A rich online database of video interviews with young people and accompanying lesson plans, worksheets and guidelines for teaching about diversity and contemporary prejudice. The resources are available in seven languages.

Structure

The free online toolbox contains a broad range of classroom materials, is easy to use, and does not require teaching experience or additional preparation, as its authors wanted to support school teachers in mainstream education with ready-to-use resources. The website allows logged users to search the stories by theme, follow learning paths, and interact with the resources, creating more engagement and ownership over the learning process for both teachers and students. While it supports blended learning, it can also be experienced as a standalone educational resource and encourage discussion.

The authors also wanted to reach as many learners as possible, and as a result the video interviews at the centre of the project feature a broad range of stories shared by teenagers and young adults from diverse backgrounds, including Jewish voices, talking not just about experiencing prejudice, but also about being an active citizen, their personal interests, lifestyles, background, religion, sport and more. The stories are current, authentic, international, and multilingual. They explore different facets of antisemitism through the lenses of their young protagonists, ranging from being the victim of antisemitic attacks or slurs to being held accountable for policies of the Israeli state. The video often starts with the protagonist sharing a personal anecdote or story, often related to their Jewishness, family history or values; thus, they are never reduced to their victimhood and appear as complex and multi-layered human beings.

22 Goodson, I., & Gill, S. (2011). *Narrative pedagogy: Life history and learning* (Vol. 386). Peter Lang.

23 Morgan, K. E. (2020). What Can Be Learned about Antisemitism from Holocaust Survivor Testimonies? A Narrative Inquiry Approach. *Journal of Social Science Education*, 19(3), 114-131.

Development

Initially developed by experts at the Anne Frank House and their partners for secondary school students aged 14 and older, over time the project proved useful also for adults, and it has been used in higher education settings as well since 2018. It has also expanded its international reach, helped by partner organizations, events and student exchanges across multiple countries, and new resources have been added since the Hamas attack on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023. It is funded by grants from the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union and the German foundation Remembrance, Responsibility, Future.

From the start, the pedagogical approaches behind Stories That Move have been firmly rooted in the ideas of encouraging empathy and raising awareness of prejudice. It has also fostered visible thinking – reflection and self-reflection – throughout the learning process. Another key concept that has informed the project's methodology has been that of competitive victimhood, prompting it to move from the concept of safe space towards brave space, that is helping learners discover how to discuss difficult issues across different communities and experiences without being hurtful to each other.

Impact

Engagement in the project is growing steadily, evidenced by increasing numbers of teachers from various countries registering on the website. At the same time, the project is evolving also in the direction of youth leadership programmes, international exchange programmes, and programmes for refugee students, especially in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with relevant resources also available on the website.

Key strengths

- The stories used in the project amplify the voices of young people, which makes it relatable for their peers, but at the same time spotlights the fact that antisemitism and other types of hate are very much a contemporary issue.
- The project encourages empathy, reflection and self-reflection.
- Website users can build their own lesson plan or follow suggested learning paths.

→ **See also: https://www.storiesthatmove.org/en/**

Good practice 6. Challenge the prejudice, challenge the perspective

Recommendations and challenges

Shifting the perspective from which an educational intervention addresses antisemitism or another type of hate, offers a fresh approach to the issue at hand. Similarly, combining multiple perspectives provides a new, more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of prejudice and the experience of its victims. Occasionally, it can help uncover a bias within traditional educational approaches and the ways they represent victimhood, for example in terms of the victims' gender, agency or biography. Often, it helps learners deconstruct their own biases and prejudices.

At the same time, it is important not to lose sight of the desired learning outcomes, and to keep the educational initiative focused and practical.

→ **See also: 'Unmasking racism: guidelines for educational materials' (UNESCO/Georg Eckert Institut, 2024). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388802**

Background

Self-reflection allows both learners and educators to address their limitations and blind spots. In some cases, they are the result of unconscious bias – attitudes that unintentionally shape our understanding, decisions or actions.[24] For educators, unconscious bias might result in limiting perspectives in their teaching. In the context of educating about and against antisemitism or other types of hate, this might mean that not all victims of prejudice are fully represented (there tends to be an over-representation of male and heteronormative experiences),[25] or that their experiences are presented in a one-dimensional way.

As mentioned before, storytelling is a powerful teaching tool which allows learners to connect with lived experiences of the victims of prejudice. A multi-narrative approach builds on this idea, allowing the learners to encounter different perspectives on the same events or problems instead of a single, authoritative version.[26] For example, they can explore the stories of Holocaust survival as told by people of different ages, genders, from different socioeconomic backgrounds, or from different countries. Alternatively, they can explore stories shared by victims of different types of identity-based prejudice. Multi-perspectivity amplifies diverse voices and invites learners to recognize the complexity of their experiences.

Box 8

Case study: HerStories – Centropa

Overview

The project uses multimodality to represent the diverse history of twentieth century Jewish life through the life stories of seven Jewish women from seven European countries.

Structure

In its first stage, HerStories was a virtual classroom project for educators worldwide on how to use authentic stories in their work. To this end, the project selected short excerpts of archival interviews with seven Jewish women, focusing on fragments which connected microhistories (individual biographies) with macrohistories (historical events they lived through). While all the women featured in the project endured the Holocaust and experienced antisemitic prejudice and persecution, the project shows them as more than victims of antisemitism. Their unique biographies are presented across many decades and various European countries (Czechia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Spain).

24 Staats, C. (2016). Understanding implicit bias: What educators should know. *American Educator*, *39*(4), 29.

25 Waxman, Z. (2017). *Women in the Holocaust: a feminist history*. Oxford University Press.

26 Stradling, R. A. (2003). *Multiperspectivity in history teaching: A guide for teachers* (pp. 495–527). Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

The idea grew into a multimodal project, comprising multilingual exhibitions, a documentary film, teacher resources and training seminars, student workshops, and an international youth competition. The resources are compiled on the project website, including information about and images from the exhibition, an overview of events, a teaching compendium, worksheets for students, information on the historical background for each of the seven countries, external resources for teaching women's history, and more. While some of them have been tailored specifically for teachers or students with the aim of supplementing traditional Holocaust education curricula, most resources are intended for a broad audience.

Development

At the heart of the HerStories project, conceived by Centropa and developed with five partner organizations, is the idea of introducing students, teachers and the general public to female Jewish perspectives, often lacking from historical publications and educational resources despite the rich archival data on Jewish women's biographies through documents and testimonies. The authors of the programme strive to amplify Jewish women's voices, and women's voices in general. But the project also contributes to a better understanding of twentieth century European history overall and wants to start conversations around the events which have defined European identity and democratic values of today, providing a good starting point for educating about contemporary antisemitism.

The project also aims to represent the geographical and cultural diversity of Jewish experiences. Thanks to its international character, teachers using the resources in one of the participating countries are able to mirror these human stories across multiple national contexts, showcasing the interlocking influence of Europe-wide political and cultural dynamics, thus fostering interest in the history of the whole continent in addition to domestic history. Similarly, audiences attending exhibitions are introduced to broader European perspectives.

Impact

The importance of multi-perspectivity has been confirmed through both qualitative feedback, in which participants talk about the eye-opening experience of learning about historical events through women's eyes, and from an international viewpoint, and quantitatively – the numbers of exhibition visitors exceeded expectations and it is still generating further interest. The website invites institutions from the seven countries to express interest in hosting the exhibition.

Key strengths

- The project amplifies women's voices, often lacking from historical publications and educational resources.
- It is multimodal, multilingual and international.
- It contributes to a better understanding of twentieth century history and how it defined today's European identity and values.

→ **See also: https://www.her-stories.eu/en**

Good practice 7. Use empathic curiosity

Recommendations and challenges

Positive attitudes and values can be boosted by empathic curiosity – the interest in another person's thoughts and feelings, especially when they differ from or oppose our own. In an educational context, this curiosity should be encouraged not just between students, but also between the student and educator. Creating a space where learners are listened to without judgement is a foundation for better communication, reflection, and collaboration. However, while individual freedom of expression should be encouraged, it should not cross the line into hateful speech or dangerous behaviour.

→ **See also: 'Addressing anti-semitism in schools: training curriculum for vocational education teachers' (UNESCO & OSCE/ODIHR, 2020). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374868?posInSet=5&queryId=b47e20f5-8e73-42ad-a35f-52e534986f51**

Background

As humans, we rely on empathy for better communication, as it enables us to connect with others emotionally while maintaining a distinction between self and other.[27] Empathic curiosity (a type of sociable curiosity) encourages us to meaningfully engage across differences in our backgrounds, experiences or standpoints. Respectful exchange despite these differences helps us bond, build mutual trust, and foster self-confidence.[28]

This type of curiosity can be modelled by teachers in their communication with learners and actively practised by learners in the classroom setting. This can be done by creating a non-judgemental learning environment and allowing learners to ask questions and share ideas[29] but by also establishing lines which should not be crossed.

It is important to keep in mind that prolonged exposure to the suffering of others can result in empathic distress, a form of emotional burnout that can diminish the ability to empathize and engage with other people's experiences of distress and hardship. This will vary from one person to another, depending on their resources or preparedness, but should nevertheless be considered when developing educational interventions. This is why balance is key and distressing learning content (such as learning about crimes of atrocity and persecution) should be taught with particular care. Fortunately, research indicates that emotional resources can be relatively quickly replenished.[30]

27 Singer, T., & Klimecki, O. M. (2014). Empathy and compassion. *Current biology*, *24*(18), R875–R878.

28 Phillips, R. (2016). Curious about others: Relational and empathetic curiosity for diverse societies. *New Formations*, *88*(88), 123–142.

29 Kudo, I. & Hartley, J. (2017). Teaching (with) empathy and compassion in schools. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373485

30 Klimecki, O., & Singer, T. (2012). Empathic distress fatigue rather than compassion fatigue? Integrating findings from empathy research in psychology and social neuroscience. In B. Oakley, A. Knafo, G. Madhavan, & D. S. Wilson (Eds.), Pathological altruism (pp. 368–383). Oxford University Press.

Box 9

Case study: the CoExist programme – UEJF, SOS Racisme and FAGE

Overview

Free workshops for secondary school students aged 12-17 in cities, suburbs and rural areas of France. The workshops, moderated by volunteers from two partner organizations, aim to prevent, fight and deconstruct prejudice.

Structure

The two-hour educational modules are brought to the classrooms and moderated by two volunteers – one from the Union of French Jewish students (Union des étudiants juifs de France, UEJF), and one representing the organization SOS Racisme. During the opening activity, they present students with ten identity-related words (such as 'French,' 'Jew,' 'Muslim,' 'Arab,' 'Black,' 'man,' 'woman') and ask them to write down any associations they may have. The two volunteers then moderate conversations (among students and with the whole group) based on the associations the students have shared. This means that no two workshops are the same, and that the discussion addresses the preconceptions, experiences and reactions to current events the students have brought with them into the workshop. This helps the students confront the issues that are most relevant to their contemporary reality and reflect on their own prejudices.

At the same time, the guiding principles remain the same: a non-judgemental environment in which students are listened to, the goal of raising their awareness of what constitutes prejudice and how to deconstruct harmful stereotypes and narratives, and the involvement of the two volunteers – one Jewish, one not Jewish – to represent different perspectives. The workshops are coordinated with the help of teachers and heads of school, who are asked to provide their feedback following the intervention.

Development

The idea for the CoExist workshops was first conceived over twenty years ago as a joint initiative of two founding associations, UEJF and Convergences. Together, they set out to create a programme of classroom interventions to provide students of all backgrounds with equal opportunity education. Today the programme is developed by UEJF, SOS Racisme and the National Federation of Students' Associations (FAGE), with input from psychology and pedagogy experts, and institutional backing from the Ministry of National Education in France. The programme emphasizes the central role of its teenage participants at a time when many of them may feel disenfranchized. This builds their self-confidence, leading to valuable discussions and fostering empathy within the group. By working with schools in a range of locations, the programme is also able to reach students from a diverse range of backgrounds, religions and lifestyles, continuously motivating the programme's coordinators to adapt and grow.

Before they can moderate workshops, the CoExist volunteers (typically aged 18-25) are trained in facilitating potentially sensitive conversations and asked to reflect on their own prejudices. Each workshop is followed by a debrief with programme authors or heads of their organizations, and twice a year the volunteers participate in themed meetings, often in response to current events affecting the students. Each year, around 40 new volunteers join the programme.

Impact

CoExist has now supported schools as a prevention programme for two decades, addressing the issues of antisemitism, racism, sexism and xenophobia, as well as other types of identity-based hate. It is currently running around 250 workshops a year.

Key strengths

- The project emphasizes the agency of its teenage participants, building their confidence and fostering empathy.
- The workshops are often hosted by schools in suburbs and rural areas.
- Each workshop addresses the prejudices most relevant to the participants' own reality.

→ **See also: https://www.coexist.fr/**

Part III: What next? Developing a proactive attitude beyond the classroom

The third core domain of behavioural learning (which, as mentioned before, should be considered jointly with other domains), focuses on developing the **autonomous skills and competencies** needed to act against antisemitism and other types of hate outside the educational space. To do so, learners need to take on a proactive attitude against antisemitism, discrimination and hate speech in online and offline interactions, advance their skills of effective communication and building mutual trust, and develop their media and information literacy.

Good practice 8. Bridge gaps within communities

Recommendations and challenges

Restorative pedagogy emphasizes establishing new relationships and repairing old ones, and it can help model respectful, empathetic and effective dialogue. However, these principles might feel abstract or distant to the learners if they are not illustrated by examples relevant to their own experience. This is therefore a great opportunity to explore relationships within their own community.

Learning about antisemitism or other types of hate affecting the cohesion of their local community nowadays makes these issues more tangible for the learners and tackling them more pressing. They can also take a much more active role in the process of creating and restoring such connections within their community, coming up with their own solutions and expanding their interests at the same time.

→ **See also: 'How does education about the Holocaust advance global citizenship education?'(UNESCO, 2018). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000261969**

Background

The concept of restorative pedagogy has broad applications; it refers to a set of educational approaches focused on healing ourselves and others and addressing both historical and current harm. It also seeks to address the reasons for that harm and aspires to cultivate the sense of shared responsibility for the future of the community.[31] When educating against antisemitism, restorative pedagogy can focus on gaps between the experiences of different members of the same community, give learners tools to explore them, and guide them in bridging the gaps.

Box 10

Case study: School of Dialogue – Forum for Dialogue

Overview

At the core of the project are workshops for secondary school students which aim to develop knowledge of local Jewish heritage, create a stronger local identity, and teach about contemporary antisemitism.

Structure

The Forum for Dialogue has created a series of workshops led by trainers – often university students of sociology or history – who travelled to local Polish schools and workshopped topics of Jewish culture and history (such as rituals, traditions, tombstone symbolism) in the past and present. In addition, they also taught participating students how to design a research project and asked them to conduct research of their own. Through interviews with elderly locals, visits to archives, documentary photography and more, students created walking tours, photo stories or film projects, extending their learning through practice.

As a result, students would begin to feel much closer to a part of their local history and culture that was previously unknown to them. This in turn helped them understand contemporary Jewish life and paved the way for regular contact with Jewish people, in Poland and abroad, whose ancestors were part of the community. This contact has served the extremely important purpose of humanizing Jewish people and introducing their varied experiences and lifestyles to a young audience.

Development

The School of Dialogue project, developed by an interdisciplinary group of experts associated with the Forum for Dialogue, was inspired by several observations made about small towns and villages in Poland. The first was the fact that many of them have sites of uncared for Jewish heritage and memory, such as abandoned Jewish cemeteries; the second that these parts of the country tend to report the highest levels of antisemitic attitudes and the third that there is a relative absence of innovative educational initiatives outside of large cities.

Authors of the project set out to reach school students (and later also teachers) in small towns and rural areas by addressing the lack of connection with the local Jewish heritage. This allowed them to bridge the gap between the Jewish and non-Jewish elements of the local culture and connect their past and present. This in turn became a foundation for educating against contemporary antisemitism, inspiring the programme's slogan 'Teaching about the past to ensure a better future.'

31 Damus, O. (2024). Regenerative and restorative pedagogy: The foundation of a new contract for cognitive justice. *Prospects*, *54*(2), 441–449.

Impact

In surveys conducted by the Forum for Dialogue, students declared a stronger sense of local identity and positive changes in attitudes towards Jewish people; some were even inspired to continue studying history at university level. Over time, the programme has maintained its success by involving local teachers, whose timespan at schools is not only longer (giving them the opportunity to repeat the workshops with new groups of students and to train junior teachers), but who are often better embedded in their communities and have more local knowledge than external trainers. In this way, teachers have become multipliers of the programme and continue to link the past and present experience of local communities through knowledge of their Jewish heritage, unique local identity and living history.

Key strengths

- The workshops provided learners with skills and opportunities to research local Jewish heritage.
- Students developed a stronger sense of local identity and improved attitudes towards Jewish people.
- The project has been established in local communities through the involvement of teachers.

→ **See also: https://dialog.org.pl/szkola-dialogu/en/school-of-dialogue/**

Good practice 9. Teach how to communicate outside one's bubble

Recommendations and challenges

Everyday communication often happens within *bubbles*, that is groups with shared backgrounds and views. This is true of interpersonal relationships, but, increasingly, the bubble is also our source of news about global or national events. Limited exposure to a broad range of experiences and narratives means greater cognitive discomfort when confronted with opposing views, and less opportunity to practice dialogue and build mutual understanding.

Effective communication despite personal differences can be achieved more easily in a safe and brave space, when there are positive models of overcoming prejudice and building mutual trust and respect.

→ **See also: 'Global citizenship education in a digital age: teacher guidelines' (UNESCO, 2024). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388812**

Background

Social media enables the creation of identity-based echo chambers, or bubbles, where we tend to connect mainly with people of similar backgrounds and beliefs (including prejudicial beliefs), strengthening social similarity and dependence on information circulated within these groups.[32] However, this is not a new phenomenon, as throughout centuries communities have coalesced around influential individuals or institutions, forming ideological, intellectual or cultural ecosystems

32 Kaakinen, M., Sirola, A., Savolainen, I., & Oksanen, A. (2020). Shared identity and shared information in social media: Development and validation of the identity bubble reinforcement scale. *Media Psychology*, *23* (1), 25–51.

within the broader society. Social media amplify this tendency, fuelled by algorithmically curated content, and by the immediacy of online communication.

It is therefore more important than ever to provide opportunities for productive and empathetic conversations outside this comfort zone; in particular, conversations on difficult topics and among younger people, for whom social media dynamics tend to be the most familiar. This can be achieved by modelling such dialogue, demonstrating that it has positive results, and encouraging others to follow the example.[33] There are also attempts to address radicalization through educational technology that allows engagement with diverse viewpoints to improve media and information literacy and resilience against conspiracy beliefs and existential uncertainty.[34]

Box 11

Case study: Solutions Not Sides

Overview

In-person secondary school workshops on antisemitism and anti-Muslim prejudice for students aged 15-18, led by speakers with Jewish and British backgrounds.

Structure

The formula of an in-person meeting with two young speakers, one each from a Jewish or Muslim background, has proved to be the biggest draw from the point of view of the students. The speakers' backgrounds give them first-hand experience of the issues of antisemitism and anti-Muslim prejudice, but in addition to sharing their individual perspectives, they also model interfaith dialogue and advocate for reaching across individual differences, overcoming contemporary hate, and holding leaders to account. Students are encouraged to ask questions and express their views, in keeping with the ideas of a safe and brave space.

Building understanding through humanizing encounters is a key framework of the programme, with details adapted to age group. Within this framework, the programme follows the 3E approach, consisting of exploration (preparation session run by teachers, where students watch a video on the history of the Middle East conflict, discuss it and note down questions for the speakers), empathy (humanizing experience of prejudice through in-person meetings with Israeli and Palestinian speakers and hearing their personal stories), and empowerment (through the workshops, students identify whether they lack knowledge, solutions, or another key element needed to build understanding).

Development

In its early iteration, the programme was developed by educational experts at Solutions Not Sides (SNS) for students at UK universities. After two pilot projects showed that the issues addressed by the programme should be introduced before university age, SNS was given a chance to work with secondary schools. Following focus groups with teachers, faith leaders and students, it was agreed

33 The New Community Foundation (2025). Dialogues: How do they work? https://www.ncf.org.pl/learnings/blog-post-title-two-r347c

34 Jugl, I. (2022). Breaking up the Bubble: Improving critical thinking skills and tolerance of ambiguity in deradicalization mentoring. *Journal for Deradicalization*, (30), 45–80.

that 15-18 was the adequate target age. The focus groups also frequently brought up the need for an interfaith approach in order to disrupt the communication happening within bubbles, that is groups with shared backgrounds and views, which can prevent exposure to differing narratives and experiences. Additionally, some teachers expressed some nervousness when it came to addressing the issues of prejudice themselves and preferred external speakers to run interventions on the topics.

Over time, experiences from the programme have crystallized into teacher guides and classroom resources, freely available for download on the programme website. There has also been interest in adapting the workshops as part of workplace development for professionals in the media, arts and culture, and bringing them back into the higher education setting, where the programme originated. The interest from various directions may be related to the growing polarization and higher reports of both antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents.

Impact

The interest in the programme can also be measured through highly positive feedback. The three main outcomes correspond to the 3E approach: one is greater acceptance of complexity and opposing views, even if students' own views remain similar; another, humanization of opposing views; finally, active citizenship: students express intentions of following the attitudes modelled by the speakers and express hope in the existence of solutions. In addition, students develop the skills of active listening, creating safe and courageous spaces, bridge-building, depoliticization of conversations, deeper learning, and cross-cultural understanding.

Key strengths

- The formula of an in-person meeting with two speakers, one each from Israel and Palestine, often similar in age to their audience.
- Modelling interfaith dialogue within the same community and advocating against hate.
- Adaptability to different ages and educational contexts.

→ **See also: https://solutionsnotsides.co.uk/schools**

Good practice 10. Develop media and information literacy against antisemitism

Recommendations and challenges

Traditional education is not always effective for developing sufficient information literacy, media literacy, or social media literacy skills. But they are becoming vital competencies for learners growing up in a world which is highly saturated with information from both offline and online sources which is not always reliable and which does not always distinguish between fact, opinion, and prejudice.

In addition, more and more of this information is created and shared by generative AI apps, able to produce text and images quickly but not always subject to quality checks, especially since they have been made available for mass use. This has significantly contributed to the amount of biased and often harmful content, particularly online, making it paramount to teach learners how to recognize it and counter it.

→ **See also: 'AI and the Holocaust: rewriting history? The impact of artificial intelligence on understanding the Holocaust' (UNESCO, 2024). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000390211**

Background

Informational literacy is the ability to recognize the need for information, and to find, evaluate, and use it in a manner adequate to the context. This is particularly crucial nowadays when information flows freely from multiple sources, increasing in quantity but not in quality. However, national curricula rarely make space for fact-checking, information literacy, media literacy or social media literacy. Nonetheless, some education systems, such as in Finland, have pioneered digital literacy training in schools.[35]

The absence of direct media and information literacy or anti-bias training in curricula is not the only challenge faced by school systems. Additionally, there are structural issues that reflect the fact that, as in any social institution, education has in-built biases and power dynamics that it needs to overcome to become fully inclusive. Learning materials and textbooks sometimes fail to sufficiently challenge identity-based stereotypes, either through omission or oversimplification, and can lack balanced, impartial and nuanced representations of some minority groups.[36] Teachers are not always confident to discuss issues of contemporary antisemitism or other types of hate, as they may lack sufficient training. Similarly, learners might not have the confidence to ask questions and, as a result, they are often left with misconceptions and no tools to address them.

Box 12

Case study: Antisemitism and Youth – University of Duisburg-Essen

Overview

Research-driven and participant-centred workshops, during which teenagers and adults learn to deconstruct textual and visual examples of contemporary antisemitism and unlearn previously held prejudices.

Structure

The workshops have been informed by two central concepts, the importance of which was identified in the research stage of the project: deconstruction and participant-centred learning. During the workshops, the moderators introduce examples of antisemitic texts and images encountered on social media, but also in traditional media or history books, then model breaking them down and looking at them from various perspectives: cultural, social, historical or intersectional. They encourage the participants to take an active part in deconstructing examples,

35 Finland Education Hub (2023). Digital Literacy in Finnish Education: A Model for the World. https://finlandeducationhub.com/digital-literacy-in-finnish-education-a-model-for-the-world/

36 Concordă, E. (2018). Gender stereotypes in school textbooks. *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională*, *10*(4), 65–81.

to discuss them and ask questions. The sessions aim to convey the fact that antisemitic prejudice is, in many cultures, collectively inherited and normalized, but has to be individually unlearned. To this end, they create a space where participants can feel free to ask questions and make mistakes, as well as acquire new competencies.

The workshops avoid imposing expectations on the participants, and take into consideration their knowledge, level of media literacy, potential triggers, experience and socialization when facilitating conversations. The workshop moderator is therefore prepared to adapt to the participants, but also to diffuse polarization, break down difficult questions, accommodate emotional reactions, and handle problematic statements in a sensitive way. This behaviour not only helps the participants reach the expected learning outcomes but also provides a matrix for conversations on sensitive topics they might have in the future.

Development

In the first stage of the project Antisemitism and Youth, the team of researchers at the University of Duisburg-Essen conducted interviews with young people in Germany (aged 16-25) on their experience of education about the Holocaust, the German memory culture, and their encounters with Jews, Judaism and Israel.[37] One of the research aims was to examine the shape and impact of the educational experiences of the participants. The results revealed that the students lacked the ability to confidently identify antisemitism, despite the presence of antisemitic incidents in contemporary Germany. They also lacked the language to talk about it, and some reported being punished by their teachers for saying the wrong thing.

Consequently, the researchers set out to develop workshops which would train participants in recognizing expressions of antisemitic prejudice in language and images but also provide them with adequate and nuanced vocabulary to talk about it. In addition to secondary school students, the workshops have been adapted to university students and more broadly adult participants, and the project has also produced a handbook and a self-study module on recognizing antisemitism, available in two languages – German and English.

Impact

In post-workshop surveys, participants have reported higher awareness of antisemitic prejudice, and less anxiety around addressing it in casual conversation. However, the researchers are cautious about the results and the potential influence of the social desirability bias and stress the importance of continuing and expanding educational initiatives against antisemitism.

Key strengths

- The workshops teach deconstruction of antisemitic texts and images, considering them from a range of perspectives.
- They are rooted in recent empirical research conducted by authors of the programme.
- They provide space to unlearn prejudice as well as acquire new competencies.

→ **See also: https://www.uni-due.de/biwi/antisemitismus-jugend/**

37 Hübscher, M., & Pfaff, N. (2023). Ambivalence and Contradictions in Education against Antisemitism: Exploring the Views and Experiences of Young Germans. *Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism*, *6*(2), 15–28.

Annex

Glossary

Behavioural learning

The behavioural (or psychomotor) domain focuses on developing skills and competencies, such as effective communication, and media and information literacy.

Cognitive learning

The cognitive domain of learning focuses on developing knowledge.

Competitive victimhood

A concept which refers to a situation where different groups compete over who has suffered more, or whose suffering is more acute, more legitimate, or more deserving of sympathy. While the experience is sociopsychological and often arises in contexts of trauma or conflict, it can be cultivated for community mobilization and for political gain.

Empathic curiosity

A type of sociable curiosity which encourages individuals to meaningfully engage across differences in their backgrounds, experiences or standpoints.

Empathic distress

Diminished ability to empathize, emotional and physical exhaustion due to prolonged exposure to the suffering of others.

Media and information literacy

It empowers people to think critically about information and the use of digital tools. It helps people make informed choices about how they participate in peace building, equality, freedom of expression, dialogue, access to information, and sustainable development.

Learning domains

A category which represents a specific area of learning, typically classified as cognitive, socio-emotional or behavioural, each addressing different aspects of education and development.

Narrative pedagogy

An approach which places personal stories and lived experiences at the centre of learning.

Restorative pedagogy

An approach which emphasizes establishing new relationships and repairing old ones.

Socio-emotional learning

The socio-emotional (or affective) domain of learning focuses on developing attitudes and values such as respect, solidarity and empathy

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Strategies to counter antisemitism

A handbook for educators

This concise guide, developed by UNESCO and funded by the European Commission, aims to provide a roadmap for policymakers, curriculum developers and educators. It includes ten educational practices, providing background for each of them based on academic literature. Each practice is illustrated by a promising educational initiative that operationalizes the core pedagogical principles presented. The handbook is built around the three core learning domains which inform UNESCO's approach to Global Citizenship Education: cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral learning.

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