

I Never Saw Another Butterfly...

Teaching Activities

We sincerely hope you will use what you can, file what you must, and hopefully your students will learn that the Holocaust is much more than statistics—it is ALL of the following:

- **Tolerance and Acceptance**
- **Courage and Heroism**
- **Family**
- **Promise/Legacy**
- **Nature of Man**
- **Integrity**
- **Personal and Collective Morality**
- **Responsibility**
- **Compassion Rather than Apathy**
- **Persistence**
- **Hope**

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This activity can be found online at
<http://www.hmh.org/minisite/butterfly/activity1.html>

Objectives

This set of activities should demonstrate to children that very few children survived in Terezin. The butterflies were hung in front of the class with such beauty, such hope, only to be cut down for no reason. The butterflies that survived the cutting are usually not the most beautiful, not the biggest, and not the brightest. Just like the children of Terezin, death of the children was random. The most beautiful did not live, nor did the biggest.

Make sure your students understand that many dreams died with the children of Terezin, dreams just like their own. Point out that one of the children (butterfly) could have been a Michael Jordan. One could have been the person that cured AIDS.

Ask the students what the butterflies did wrong that caused them to die? Why was their butterfly targeted with death? Ask the students who could have helped their butterfly live?

Explain to children that not only were these children's rights taken from them, but also their dreams, their lives, and their legacy. Ask students if anyone has ever experienced having their rights taken from them? How do we prevent such occurrences from happening today?

The answer you want your students to have is that the children of Terezin, just like the 1.5 million children that died in the Holocaust, did nothing to be persecuted. They all had dreams, they all had hopes, and they all lost them in Terezin, the place where butterflies don't live.

Activity I

Read aloud the poem, "[The Butterfly](#)," (p.32 of the book).

Have it on a transparency so the students may read along with you.

Questions to discuss:

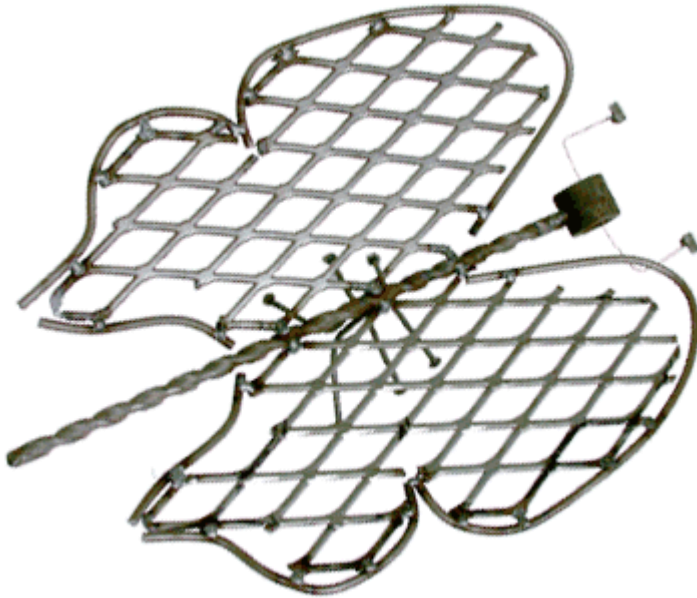
1. Who do you think wrote this poem?
2. What experiences do you think generated this poem?
3. To what is the poem referring?
4. How does this poem make you feel?



Activity II

Introduce the book *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* by discussing with students the information found in the "Epilogue" of the book (pp. 59-60).

For a shortened assignment, let them read the back cover of the book. Discuss with students their feeling and thoughts about what has been read.



Activity III

Assign a poem to each student to read from *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. After the student has read the poem and feels comfortable with it, each student should discuss their poem with a neighbor. Students will then prepare an oral interpretative reading of the poem.

After several readings silently, ask students to see if they can find any examples of hopes, dreams, and fear in their child's poem.

Students will begin to feel comfortable with their poem and be able to relate to its author and the words the author wrote.

Activity IV

Give the students many sheets of colorful paper, glitter, glue, scissors and string. (Any decorative items will do.) Have the students create a butterfly that is a representative of the author of their own poem. Students should write the name of their child on the butterfly if the child's name is available.

Have the students prepare to discuss why they chose the enhancements of each of their own butterflies. (It is important to let each child be creative and encourage them to make whatever butterfly they feel comfortable making.)

Then with string, have the students hang their butterflies from the ceiling on string. (You may use a hole punch to make a place to attach the string to the butterfly.) Every student's butterfly (soul of the author of their poem) should be displayed.

By the end of the class period you will have many bright and beautiful butterflies hanging from the ceiling that represents the children of Terezin.



Activity V

Students will get attached to their butterflies and it won't be unusual for them to bring others into the classroom to see their butterflies.

After they are comfortable with having the butterflies hanging, (could be several minutes to several days) have students give their oral interpretative reading of their child's poem. Have the student come to the front of the class and read their poem aloud.

Students may want to ask questions about the poem. The teacher should turn to page 96 of the book. This part of the book tells the fate of each child. After the child completes the reading, tell the class the destiny of each child. If the child dies (out of 15,000, less than 100 live) have the student walk up and cut down their butterfly.

Children will be shocked and disappointed when they learn the fate of their butterfly. Few butterflies will remain hanging from your ceiling by the end of the class period.

