

LESSON PLAN

AMPLIFYING VOICES:

Creating TikTok Videos to Highlight Stories



English



USA



Biographies



14-18 years



90 min

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AMPLIFYING VOICES: Creating TikTok Videos to Highlight Stories



Objectives

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

1. Analyze primary source testimonies from Holocaust survivors and summarize key details and themes from survivor oral histories.
2. Reflect on the importance of combating hate and fostering empathy.
3. Create a thoughtful, inquiry-based TikTok video that accurately reflects a survivor's testimony while fostering critical thinking and empathy.
4. Navigate social media with intention and become an ethical consumer of social media.

Aligned Standards (California Common Core)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

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Context

This lesson introduces students to the power of survivor testimony as a primary source for Holocaust education. Students will engage critically with survivor oral histories from both Holocaust Museum LA and SHOAH STORIES portal. They will then create inquiry-based TikTok videos as a reflective, creative medium to honor and amplify survivor voices. This project fosters digital literacy, creativity, and empathy. This lesson can be an in-classroom assignment or a long term research assignment.

What is Tik Tok?

TikTok is a short-form video platform where users create and share content ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes, with an algorithm that prioritizes engagement over follower count. It is particularly popular among Gen Z and Millennials, making it a valuable tool for Holocaust education by reaching students where they already are. The platform allows museums and memorial sites to share survivor testimonies, highlight artifacts, and provide historical context in an accessible and engaging way. By leveraging storytelling and emotional impact, TikTok can help combat misinformation and Holocaust denial, ensuring that accurate, expert-backed content reaches a broad audience.

Materials

- SHOAH STORIES Portal: <https://shoahstories.org/>
- Survivor testimony videos (hyperlinked TikTok videos):
 - [Idele Stapholtz](#)
 - [Trudie Strobel](#)
 - [Eva Trenk](#)
 - [Joshua Kaufman](#)
 - [Zenon Neumark](#)
- [Google Slides \(Lesson Overview\)](#)
- [Handout 1: Prepare to Hear a Survivor](#)
- [Handout 2: Survivor Testimony Reflection](#)
- [Handout 3: Tik Tok Planning Guide](#)
- [Handout 4: Tik Tok Video Rubric](#)
- Devices with TikTok app and internet access

Differentiation

Provide graphic organizers for English learners and students needing additional support to outline key ideas and themes.

Pair students to foster collaboration, especially for those who benefit from peer learning.

Allow advanced learners to incorporate historical context and additional survivor testimonies into their projects for deeper analysis.

Assessments

Contributions to chart paper or poster boards during the gallery walk (formative). Written reflections or group discussions analyzing the testimonies (summative).

[Survivor Testimony Reflection](#) (formative).

Final TikTok video (summative). [Tik Tok Video Rubric](#) evaluates creativity, historical accuracy, critical thinking, and emotional impact.

LESSON PLAN

Introduction

 10 min

- Begin by framing the importance of survivor testimonies in understanding history.
- Have students complete [Prepare to Hear a Survivor](#)
- Show one of the provided TikTok videos as a model, discussing its emotional and historical significance.

Main Activity

 65 min

1. **Exploration** (15 minutes): Students watch the assigned TikTok videos in small groups and take notes using the [Survivor Testimony Reflection](#)
2. **Discussion** (15 minutes): Groups share key takeaways, themes, and questions about the testimonies.
3. **Planning** and Storyboarding (20 minutes): Students outline their TikTok video, including key survivor quotes, visuals, and message using [Tik Tok Planning Guide](#)
4. **Video Creation** (15 minutes): Using their devices, students create and edit their TikTok videos. Encourage accuracy and respectful representation of survivor stories.

Options for videos:

- A "then vs. now" reflection: What I thought I knew vs. what I learned.
- A summary of one impactful story, artifact, or fact from their exploration.
- A message about why Holocaust education matters.
- Why learning from the past is important.
- What they are inspired to do.

Closing

 15 min

- Students share their TikTok videos in small groups or with the class.
- Conclude with a reflective discussion: How does sharing survivor testimonies through TikTok impact the way we engage with history?

Supplemental Resources

- [Voices of History Program by Holocaust Museum LA](#)
- [Bloomberg Connects app](#)
- [Serious TikTok: Can You Learn About the Holocaust in 60 seconds?](#)
- [Performing Death and Trauma? Participatory Mem\(e\)ory and the Holocaust in TikTok #POVCHALLENGES](#)

Survivor Reflection and Planning Guide for TikTok Creation

This guide will help you reflect on the Holocaust survivor testimony you studied and plan your TikTok video. Your goal is to create a respectful and impactful video that amplifies the survivor's voice, educates others, and honors their experience.

Section 1: Reflection on Survivor Testimony

Take some time to think deeply about the testimony and complete [Survivor Testimony Reflection](#)

- Survivor's Name:
- Key Event(s) Described:
- Emotions Expressed by the Survivor:
- Emotions you felt listening:
- Key Quote(s) That Stood Out:
- Why Is This Story Important?

Reflective Questions:

1. What feelings did the testimony evoke in you?
2. How does hearing a personal story impact your understanding of the Holocaust compared to reading about it in a textbook?
3. What lessons can we take from this testimony for today's world?

Section 2: Planning Your TikTok Video

Use this [TikTok Planning Guide](#)

1. Message and Theme

- What is the main message you want your audience to take away?
- How will you connect this message to the survivor's story?

2. Content Elements

- **Visuals:** What images or video clips will you include?
(e.g., historical photos, meaningful symbols, captions)
- **Text and Audio:** Will you use narration, quotes, or music? What tone will they set?

3. Structure

- How will you organize your TikTok? (e.g., start with a key quote, include visuals)

of the survivor, end with a call to action or reflection.)

- Will you include a hook to grab attention? What will it be?

Section 3: Sensitivity and Responsibility

Creating a TikTok video about the Holocaust requires sensitivity and care. Reflect on the following:

- **Respect for the Survivor:** How does your video honor the survivor's voice and experience?
- **Accuracy:** Are all facts and quotes in your video correct and attributed properly?
- **Empathy:** Does your video foster understanding and compassion for the survivor's experience?
- **Cultural Awareness:** Does your video avoid stereotypes, oversimplifications, or sensationalism?

Tips for Ethical Storytelling:

1. Avoid using humor or trivializing the subject.
2. Use visuals and music that reflect the gravity of the story.
3. Double-check all facts and quotes for accuracy.

Section 4: Peer Feedback

Before finalizing your TikTok, share your draft with a peer or teacher and ask:

1. Is the message clear and impactful?
2. Does it respect the survivor's story?
3. Are there any elements that might unintentionally misrepresent or oversimplify the Holocaust?

Make sure to complete the rubric handout to help guide peer feedback.

Section 5: Final Reflection

After creating your video, consider these questions:

1. What did you learn from this process about Holocaust survivors and storytelling?
2. How might your video inspire others to learn more about this history?
3. How does this project change the way you think about using social media?



Name:

Date:

Directions: Your objective is to produce clear and meaningful short format videos in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Use the rubric below to peer review your classmates' videos and write down how they can improve.

Category	4	3	2	1
Historical Accuracy	All information is factual, well-researched, and accurately attributed.	Minor factual errors or unclear attribution.	Several factual issues; attribution missing.	Lacks historical basis.
Message & Theme	Message is clear, powerful, and deeply connected to testimony.	Message is present and linked to story.	Message is vague or not well supported.	Message unclear or missing.
Creativity & Engagement	Uses visuals, audio, and narrative structure in innovative and engaging ways.	Mostly creative and holds audience attention.	Limited audience awareness, content not well-adapted.	No consideration of audience, content irrelevant or confusing.
Sensitivity & Reflection	Honors the survivor's voice with empathy and care; reflection shows deep understanding and learning.	Generally respectful with thoughtful reflection.	Some tone or reflection issues; lacks depth.	Disrespectful or no meaningful reflection.
Overall Score	16-14	13-10	9-6	5-1

KEY TIMELINE OF THE HOLOCAUST



Glossary

Aktion (Action): German word meaning “campaign” or “mission.” Used by Nazi officials for the purposes of deportation or execution of Jews.

Antisemitic/Antisemitism: Hostility toward or hatred of Jews as a religious or ethnic group, often accompanied by social, economic, or political discrimination.

Artifact: A historical object used to understand and connect to past events.

Aryan/Aryanism: The term the Nazis developed to identify the “pure, German race.” The term was used to describe non-Jewish objects and belongings such as “aryan homes” and “aryan papers.” Identification papers at that time were required to state a person’s identity as a Jew or non-Jew. For Jewish people to have “aryan papers” meant that they were in possession of false identity papers that did not label them as Jewish. People were required to always carry identification papers and often had to present them to Nazi officials, Gestapo, and police. If identification papers appeared to be questionable, the person could be arrested, interrogated, beaten, or sent to a concentration camp.

Aryanization: The expropriation and plundering of Jewish property by German authorities and their transfer to “aryan” ownership.

Assimilation: The process by which a person or group of people adapt to another culture’s way of living and are absorbed into the dominant culture of society. Following emancipation, Jews, particularly in cities, often culturally assimilated into the way of life and traditions of the dominant groups around them.

Audience: The group of people who can view content being shared online. Such as followers who like, comment, or share content.

Boycott: Social protest against a group of people or organization, many times aligning with certain ideals.

Browsing: The time spent searching for particular information on the World Wide Web. When using your web browser such as Google Chrome or Firefox, you can search anything you need on the internet.

Child Survivor: A Child Survivor is an individual who was under the age of 18 either at the start or end of the Holocaust and survived extraordinary circumstances.

Clickbait: Social media content creators who use specific words or pictures to attract a users’ attention and prompt them into clicking on their links to view their content. Usually used as a deceptive tool, clickbait is very often used in social networks like YouTube where the number of views increases because of the title or

thumbnail image given to a video.

Concentration Camp: Concentration camps served many different functions, but they were all part of the overarching objective to murder the European Jewish community. Concentration camps included transit camps, forced labor camps, and death camps. These were places of intense dehumanization, mistreatment, and death. Historians estimate that there were over 40,000 Ghettos and Camps across Europe.

Content: Information, products, videos, photos and all the data shared on social networks. Content is often created for varying purposes such as: establishment of brand awareness, sharing of educational or informational data, or personal profiles.

Cyberbullying: Sending threatening or intimidating messages, images, or videos through the internet.

Database: Any organized information controlled by a management system in a computer. A typical company database may comprise tables of a set of information on products, employees, and other records.

Death Camp: The Nazis established 6 death camps, all of which were in Poland (Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor, Belzec, Treblinka, and Auschwitz-Birkenau). People were murdered at all camps, but at death camps, people were taken en masse straight from arrival to be murdered.

Deportation: Forced transfer of Jews to ghettos, concentration camps, or killing centers. When being deported long distances, Jews were generally forced into cattle cars without food, water, proper ventilation, or toilets.

Digital responsibility: refers to using technology in an appropriate, constructive way for oneself and others.

Displaced Persons (DP) Camps: A temporary facility for Survivors after the war, mainly established in Germany, Italy, and Austria. These camps were intended to help former prisoners of concentration camps by providing aid, food, medicine, or a place to live. DP camps are where Survivors began to rebuild their lives.

Domain Name: The identifying name of an internet site. Examples: google.com, lapl.org, etc.

In terms of domain extensions, ".com" stands for "commercial" and is typically used by for-profit businesses, ".org" stands for "organization" and is mostly used by non-profit groups, while ".gov" stands for "government" and is reserved for official government websites.

Einsatzgruppen: Mobile killing units. These SS units (divided into four groups: A, B, C, and D) followed the advancing German Army during Operation Barbarossa. With the assistance of auxiliary units and the Wehrmacht (Nazi Germany's army), these killing squads systematically murdered Jewish populations across Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Latvia.

Emancipation: Freeing a group of people that have been restricted socially and legally by the ruling class. Early European countries to grant emancipations were France (1791), Greece (1830), and Great Britain (1858). Despite Jews receiving civil equality in these countries, antisemitism and discrimination remained rampant in many parts of Europe.

The "Final Solution" (Endlösung): A euphemism for the extermination of the Jewish people.

Follower: A person who can see the content being shared on a social medium. Once the content is shared, they will be able to react to social media posts which in turn are most likely to appear on their feed.

Genocide: Coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944, the term describes the deliberate and systematic attempted to destroy the existence of a group of people, often a national, racial, ethnic or religious group.

Gestapo: The Nazi Secret State Police. Established in Prussia in 1933, its power spread throughout Germany after 1936, when it was incorporated into the SS. In German-occupied territories Gestapo held the role of "political police," arresting actual and perceived enemies of the Nazis without judicial review.

Ghetto: The term "ghetto" has roots in 16th Century Venice, Italy when the closed Jewish Quarter of the city, called the Geto Nuovo (New Foundry) was established in 1516. "Geto" became the foundation for the term "ghetto." When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, approximately 3 million Jews lived in Poland. The Nazis began plans for the ghettoization of Polish Jews shortly after.

GIF: short for Graphics Interchange Format, is a concept developed by a computer scientist in which animations are shown for a few seconds. GIFs are frequently used in chat rooms and comments. If you are angry, why not use the famous frowning baby face GIF and let people know *exactly* how you feel.

Hashtag: A word or unspaced phrase preceded by the hash symbol (#) used to add context to a message and allow users to track topics and keywords. It is used on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+ and Pinterest.

Influencer: A person who influences consumers online by promoting or discussing

products/services.

Interwar Period: The period of general peace between the conclusion of the First World War (1918) and the beginning of the Second World War (1939).

Kindertransport: After Kristallnacht in November of 1938, 10,000 Jewish children from the ages of 2 to 17 were allowed into the United Kingdom to escape the increasing violence.

Children were sent alone to Great Britain and placed in family homes or orphanages. Most never saw their parents again.

Kristallnacht: Usually referred to as the "Night of Broken Glass." It is the name given to the violent anti-Jewish pogrom of November 9th and 10th, 1938. Instigated primarily by Nazi party officials and the SA (Nazi Storm Troopers), the pogrom occurred throughout Germany, annexed Austria, and the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia.

Like: To show agreement with content or a post shared on a social media site such as Facebook, LinkedIn or Pinterest. It can serve to move the item up in news feeds or search engines, garnering more attention.

Meme: An illustration/photo or text that is intended to spread jokes/amusing ideas.

Multimedia: Using more than one type of media to convey a message. This can include any combination of text, audio, video, graphics or animation.

Nativism: Policies that prioritize the interests of native-born citizens as opposed to immigrants.

Nazi Party: Byname of the National Socialist German Worker's Party (NSDAP). The Nazi Party was founded in 1919 and was taken over by Adolf Hitler in 1920-1921. The party was focused on strong nationalistic ideology with antisemitic rhetoric. Following the failed Nazi coup in 1923, the party had about 55,000 members. However, with growing unemployment and poverty in Germany, Hitler manipulated people's plight for his own political gain. He became Chancellor ten years later and governed by totalitarian methods until the end of World War II in 1945.

News Feed: A live feed of updates and posts that appear in a central space on a social networking site. They are usually filtered by an algorithm which brings topics more relevant to a user to the top of the feed.

The Non-aggression Pact/Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact: The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (also known as the German-Soviet Non-aggression Pact), passed on August 23rd, 1939, and stipulated neutrality between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany while also secretly dividing the territories of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and

Poland between the two countries. In September of 1939, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia began occupation of their decided-upon territories (see Map #2 in the Artifact-Based Inquiry Worksheets). On June 22nd, 1941, Nazi Germany launched Operation Barbarossa, breaking the Non-aggression Pact, and invading the Soviet Union and land previously under Soviet occupation.

The Nuremberg Laws: The Nuremberg Laws (or Nuremberg Race Laws) defined German citizens as people “of German or related blood.” Although Judaism is a religion and a culture, the Nazis defined Jews as a separate race. German Jews who had lived in Germany for generations lost their citizenship, were denied basic rights, and prohibited from marrying or having relationships with German non-Jews.

The Nuremberg Trials: The first International War Crimes Tribunal. Judges from the Allied powers (United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union) presided over the Nuremberg Trials in 1945 and 1946, where 22 top officials from the Nazi party were tried for crimes against humanity. Twelve of them were sentenced to death for playing a direct role in the mass murder.

Operation Barbarossa: German code name for the attack and invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22nd, 1941. This operation created a two-front war for the Germans to fight and increased the number of Jews under German control. With the launch of Operation Barbarossa, and under the cover of war, the Nazi’s systematic mass murder of European Jews began.

Oral History: Stories or histories told by a person who experienced an event or time period first-hand.

Page: A dedicated space on a social networking site where content is displayed and managed by the owner, user, or administrator of that space.

Personal media: User-created material refers to grassroots works such as video, audio and text.

Platform: Is a website which promotes or sells products and services. Both buyers and sellers are connected through these platforms. Examples: Amazon, eBay, Esty, etc.

Pogrom: The organized destruction of a certain group of people. Used to describe acts of violence and persecution against Jews throughout history. The word is derived from Russian, implying “havoc” and “to harm.” Pogroms were carried out throughout the late 19th and early 20th century in Eastern Europe, inciting an influx of Jewish immigrants to Western European countries and America.

Post: Content uploaded on the internet. Examples: texts, videos, images, audio files.

Privacy Setting: A setting which determines how much of your information is shared either with the public or with the site owners. Privacy settings should be reviewed frequently as they change, often without notice.

Profile: In social media a profile is a page, a box or a blurb about either an individual or an organization.

Propaganda: The deliberate spreading of ideas, ideology, or information with the purpose of manipulating public opinion to gain support for one's own cause or to discourage support for another.

Public domain: Content which is free to be used by anybody, for any purpose. This could be because the creators chose to share it with the world for free, or it could be due to an expired copyright.

Public media: Refers to any form of media that increases civic engagement and enhances the public good.

Reach: An indicator of the overall number of individuals following and visiting a site. The geographic location and frequency of visits by an individual are primarily used to evaluate reach.

Red Army: The military army of the Soviet Union.

Reposting: Sending other users or sharing content originally posted by another user on your online accounts. Also referred to as sharing.

Scapegoat: An individual or group unfairly blamed for problems not of their making.

Shtetls: The Yiddish word for "town." It refers to the small Jewish villages or towns, commonly found throughout Eastern Europe. Most, if not all, shtetls were destroyed during the Holocaust.

Social Media: Are works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment, such as a blog, podcast, forum, wiki or video hosting site. More broadly, social media refers to any online technology that lets people publish, converse and share content online.

Social Network: An online environment to share, communicate and play with your friends. Examples: Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat, etc.

SS: The SS (*Schutzstaffel*, or Protection Squads) was originally established as Adolf Hitler's personal bodyguard unit. It would later become both the elite guard of the Nazi Reich and Hitler's executive force prepared to carry out all security-related

duties, without regard for legal restraint.

Star of David (Magen David or Jewish Star): A symbol often used by Zionists before World War II. The Nazis utilized it to identify Jews, often requiring Jews in different countries under their occupation to wear a yellow or blue Jewish star on their clothes when in public. The implication of this was to identify, humiliate, and publicly shame Jewish communities and individuals.

Stereotype: A simplistic, firmly held belief about individual characteristics generalized to all people within that group.

Subscribe: An action performed to receive and follow updates posted by a specific social media user or page.

Synagogue: Jewish religious house of worship.

Testimony: A firsthand account or story provided by an individual who experienced an event.

Trending: A topic, video, or another type of content marketing that is extremely popular and widely discussed on the internet or on social media websites. Usually, if content is trending, it will appear at the top of a home page or as a recommendation.

Updates: In the context of social media, refers to new content being pushed out to inform an audience about news, updates, projects, successes, or anything else deemed worthy of sharing with the audience. The updates can be Tweeted, posted to Facebook, added to blogs, emailed or a combination of these actions.

URL: Short for Universal Resource Link, a URL is a unique address on the Internet which points to specific content. URLs beginning in http or https will direct the user to a website, while other types of URLs may refer to email addresses or other resources.

User: An individual or organization that utilizes social media platforms to share information, request feedback/input, and engage in conversations with their audience.

Viral: Content that has spread quickly and widely, often due to a high level of shares and exposure.

Wannsee Conference: On January 20th, 1942, fifteen bureaucratic Nazi Party and German officials met to discuss the logistics of what they called “the Final Solution to the Jewish Question,” the code name for the plan to murder 11 million European Jews. SS Officer Reinhard Heydrich led the meeting.

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: During Passover in 1943, the remaining Jews of the

Warsaw Ghetto learned that they were all to be deported to death camps. For almost a year, underground organizations made up of about 800 ghetto inhabitants had been preparing for the final deportations by stockpiling weapons and explosives. From April 19th to May 16th of 1943, Nazi soldiers and policemen fought with the ghetto's resistance fighters, ultimately burning the ghetto to the ground. This was the largest and most successful uprising in any ghetto during the Holocaust and demonstrated the Jewish people's continued will and fight to live.

Wehrmacht: Nazi Germany's unified armed forces. Soldiers invaded countries and coordinated with the SS in regards to the implementation of the Final Solution.

The Weimar Republic: Parliamentary democracy established in Germany from 1919 to 1933, following the collapse of Imperial Germany and preceding Nazi rule.

Wiki: A website that has the built-in functionality which allows users of the site to edit the content of the pages. Some wikis are set up to require membership to edit, or are locked to most people, while others are completely open to editing by anybody.

World War I: Also known as "The Great War" for its extreme destruction and introduction of modern weapons, such as the machine gun and lethal gas. Occurred from 1914 to 1918 and was won by the Allies – Russia, France and Great Britain (later joined by the US and Japan) – and lost by Germany and Austria-Hungary. Per the Treaty of Versailles, Germany paid reparations to the victorious Allies, lost territory and colonies, and was forced to accept complete blame for the war. This, coupled with the Great Depression, led to economic devastation as well as humiliation throughout Germany.

Xenophobia: The irrational and intense fear or dislike of foreign people.

Yiddish: Language spoken by much of the Ashkenazi European Jewish population. A mixture of Hebrew and German with Slavic influence. Primary language in shtetls and sometimes spoken at home by Jews that lived in cities. The majority of Yiddish speakers perished in the Holocaust.

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