

LESSON PLAN

Call to Action

Students will create and build upon a working definition of resistance. To do so, students will read a poem on resistance and a call to action written by Abba Kovner.

 30-60 min  Grades 5-8

DOMAIN	SUBJECT	TOPIC
The Holocaust	Resistance	Resistance in Ghettos

Enduring Understanding

Resistance came in all forms. Stealing food, hiding, fighting, and spreading information were all ways in which people resisted the Nazis.

Essential Questions

1. Do you have to be a fighter in order to be part of the resistance?

Readiness

 15 min

Start by defining resistance for the class: “The refusal to accept or comply with something; the attempt to prevent something by action or argument.”

Next, ask students to work in groups of three to create a working definition for resistance. A working definition is one that builds in meaning as they receive information and gain clarity on the topic.

In these same groups, have students read through the poem “[Resistance Is...](#)” from Facing History and Ourselves. Ask the class if they would want to alter or add to their definitions of resistance after reading it. Give them a few minutes (no more than 5) to add to their working definitions.

Input

 20 min

Divide the class into groups of three to read through the [Pronouncement by Abba Kovner](#) from Echoes & Reflections. Let students know that Abba Kovner wrote this manifesto while at the Vilna ghetto in an attempt to stage an uprising.

Have one student from each group read through the text out loud as the others follow in silence. Then have each group discuss the questions below. Have one student in each group take notes that include the significant points of their discussion.

1. What was the objective of the manifesto? How do you think Kovner wanted people to respond?
2. What is he asking the ghetto’s inhabitants to believe, and what is he asking them not to believe?

Ask the groups to read through the passage once more. This time, having them focus on the language and answer the following questions:

1. What metaphors, words, or phrases does Kovner use to convince people that Ponary is not a labor camp?
2. Which words or phrases have the most impact?

Output

 10 min

Have each group review the first definition of resistance that they wrote at the beginning of the lesson. Still in their groups, encourage them to discuss whether or not they think they need to make more changes after analyzing Abba Kovner's call to resistance. Give them a few minutes to do so.

Ask each group to share their definition of resistance and explain what revisions they made and why.