



South Carolina Council on the Holocaust

Recommendations When Teaching the Holocaust

1. Context Matters

Only an accurate, detailed, nuanced study of the Nazi rise to power and its societal context—and also of the active and passive choices of individuals who experienced this history—can help students understand that the Holocaust was not inevitable; it was the result of individual and collective decisions and complex motivations, including hate, fear, and self-interest.

2. Appropriate Pedagogy

Educators should aspire to create learning environments where students are supported to grapple with the enormous ethical and moral questions that are posed about the best and worst of human behavior. Knowledge in the absence of understanding the larger meaning is of limited value.

3. Connections to the Present

Too often, Holocaust history is used as a political weapon in the form of hastily constructed memes and inaccurate analogies that obscure more than they reveal. Helping students to see more accurate and relevant connections can assist them in analyzing and deconstructing these inaccuracies. As scholar Sam Wineburg has written, history can be “a tool for changing how we think, for promoting a literacy not of names and dates but of discernment, judgment and caution.”

See the full text of the recommendations provided above here:

[Recommendations for Teaching the Holocaust](#)

Additionally, for more detailed guidelines on teaching the Holocaust it is helpful to review the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum suggestions: [USHMM Teaching Guidelines](#)

Be sure to review the other pages on the SCCH website to locate resources and professional development opportunities that can help you ensure that you are successful in meeting these recommendations.