

CURRICULUM RATIONALE



Judy Meisel’s story of suffering, courage, and survival is an excellent way to stimulate student interest in learning about the Holocaust in particular and civil rights in general. Her testimony allows students to feel a personal connection to the Holocaust and thus makes the history of the period come alive for them. Judy’s story will deepen students’ understanding of the human cost of the Holocaust, the range of human goodness and depravity contained in its history, and the capacity each of us has to take actions that make a positive difference in the lives of others. Judy’s message of hope and her faith in humans’ ability to act on ethical principles inspires others to consider how they, out of the circumstances of their own lives, can make a difference in the lives of those around them and in the communities in which they live.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The viewing guide divides *Tak for Alt* into four sections that will enable teachers to guide student learning about the Holocaust, personal ethics, the Rescue of the Danish Jews, and the United States Civil Rights Movement. The four sections are as follows:

- Part 1:** (17 minutes) “I Knew that I Had to Tell My Story” **(00:00-16:57)**
- Part 2:** (15 minutes) “Everybody was Brave” **(16:57-32:00)**
- Part 3:** (15 minutes) “We Only Wanted to Survive as Jews” **(32:00-47:50)**
- Part 4:** (11 minutes) “One Person Can Do a Lot” **(47:50-59:00)**

Each part includes section summaries, viewing objectives, key term definitions, historical background, discussion questions, and post-viewing activities. Teachers may use the entire guide to structure a multi-week unit on the Holocaust, or they may use *Tak for Alt* in shorter teaching units focused on one of the major issues in the film. Judy’s story would work especially well as a supplement to an English, history, or Ethnic Studies curriculum. Before using the film in class, teachers will want to view the film and to read the entire curriculum. This will help teachers identify those historical contexts and post-viewing activities that work best with their curriculum and with their students’ grade level.

If students are to derive maximum benefit from their viewing of *Tak for Alt*, Judy’s story must be contextualized in the history of the Holocaust. For this reason, the curriculum guide includes relevant historical context for Judy’s story that is intended to provide teachers with sufficient background to teach the film. The guide’s Bibliography and list of Additional Resources provide supplementary information for teachers interested in learning more about teaching the Holocaust.

Teachers are encouraged to photocopy and distribute the Viewing/Discussion questions to their students before they view *Tak for Alt*. Having the viewing questions and the relevant key term definitions before them as they view the film will enhance student’s ability to engage actively with Judy’s story. The post-viewing activities are varied and invite further discussion, discovery, and application of the material students learn. The activities are consistent with many states’ standards for grades 10, 11, and 12 in history, social science, writing, listening, and speaking and are designed to provide teachers with multiple measures of assessment for student learning in these areas.

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Before engaging in intensive study of the issues raised in the film, students will benefit from viewing *Tak for Alt* in one sitting. Judy's story is so compelling that students will want to know her entire story before studying specific aspects of her experience and its larger history. If time permits, students may review sections of the film to deepen their understanding of Judy's story, its connection with United States history, and its implications for themselves as citizens in a free and democratic nation.

WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM USING THIS GUIDE

The curriculum guide accompanying *Tak for Alt* is suitable for use in the upper high school grades and at the college level. Although suggested activities are based on specific grade standards, many parts of the curriculum are appropriate for a wider range of viewers, from middle school through college and continuing education for adults. It is our hope that teachers will feel free to use those parts of the curriculum that are appropriate for the age group with which they work.

While the guide is designed to help all teachers incorporate the Holocaust into their curricula, teachers new to teaching the Holocaust may want to collaborate with a colleague who has experience teaching the subject. Teachers are also encouraged to work with local or regional Holocaust memorial centers and to consult the many fine web sites devoted to issues related to teaching the Holocaust. Especially useful are the web sites of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Anti-Defamation League, Yad Vashem, and the Ghetto Fighters' Museum. Consult the Additional Resources page at the end of this viewing guide for a complete list of recommended web sites related to Holocaust studies.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR SECONDARY TEACHERS INTERESTED IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Teachers interested in learning more about how to incorporate the Holocaust into existing state standards are encouraged to read David Nienkamp's study, "Holocaust Education and the States' Secondary Social Studies Standards," which is available on-line at www.csss.org/holocaust. Mr. Nienkamp's study grew out of his work as a Mandel Fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The Mandel Teacher Fellowship Program is a summer institute for secondary school educators interested in deepening their knowledge of Holocaust history and pedagogy. Mr. Nienkamp's web site is an outreach project he created after completing the fellowship program. For more information about the Mandel Teacher Fellowship Program, consult the "For Teachers" section of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum web site (www.ushmm.org).

