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Teacher decision making in teaching about the Holocaust through art

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KEYWORDS

Holocaust education; teacher agency; student-centered learning; autonomy; secondary education

ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this comparative case study was to explore how secondary teachers make decisions regarding teaching about the Holocaust using the art of Samuel Bak as text. The researchers analyzed self-created curriculum materials, responses to a questionnaire about teacher decision-making processes, and interviews with three secondary teachers whose students visited an exhibit of Bak's art. The researchers find that teachers have agency to make decisions based on materials, standards and curriculum, and personal connections to the content while relying on a student-centered approach. Implications for further research include a deeper exploration of teachers' awareness of their decision making.

Introduction

Teaching about the Holocaust in U.S. public schools gained traction in the 1960s and became more widespread in the 1970s.¹ There is no national curriculum

in the United States, so individual states determine if they require Holocaust education.² The U.S. Congress passed the Never Again Education Act in 2019 with strong bipartisan support, and the president signed the legislation into law in 2020.³

As of December 2021, the website of Echoes and Reflections, a leading provider of Holocaust-related teaching resources in the United States and partner with the Anti-Defamation League, USC Shoah Foundation, and Yad Vashem, reported only 19 states required secondary students (i.e. those in grades 6–12, or ages 12–18 years old) to learn about the Holocaust. According to the Never Again Education Law, teachers need to carefully select their curriculum and pedagogy when teaching about the Holocaust. With recent significant federal funding, there will be renewed interest in Holocaust education in the United States. Teachers will likely seek support for teaching about the Holocaust, as well as look for access to quality curriculum materials.

As was the case in England after the country statutorily added the Holocaust to its national curriculum in 1991, teaching about the Holocaust will presumably not follow a clear trajectory.⁴ Some researchers have cautioned that requiring teachers by law to teach about the Holocaust may provide organization to the curriculum and raise students' awareness of the genocide, but it may not increase students' ability to think critically about this historical event.⁵ Thus, teacher educators and scholars in the United States should examine teachers' pedagogical perspectives related to this topic to advocate for nuanced ways to teach about this complicated history.

Through this multiple case study,⁶ we (authors) sought to examine the complex nature of teacher decision making. To explore the research question, we categorized the types of classrooms represented in the school groups who visited a Holocaust art exhibit at our university and reviewed the associated curriculum materials we provided to the teachers. We then created a teacher questionnaire, interviewed teachers, and completed a cross-case analysis of individual teacher interviews.

Following our analysis, we suggest that teachers tend to make decisions based on four factors, including standards and existing curriculum, the availability

and quality of materials, their personal connection to the material, and a student-centered approach. We determined the first three factors are closely related to teacher agency, while we parsed taking a student-centered approach into student engagement, student capability, and contemporary context. We further contend that art is valuable in teaching about the Holocaust across disciplines, and we suggest directions for future research. Based on these determinations, we close with recommendations for key stakeholders, such as curriculum designers, Holocaust educators, and museum educators.

Previous research on educational settings and pedagogy

Educators and educational researchers do not yet know how the Never Again Education Act will impact Holocaust education in the United States; however, Congress appropriated \$10 million over five years to support the law and directed the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) to enhance online educational resources and provide professional development for secondary teachers. With the added resources and renewed attention resulting from the law's passage, furthering the current understanding of how teachers plan and implement the teaching of the Holocaust increases in importance. Educators must make decisions regarding how to teach about the Holocaust in various settings (e.g. public schools, private schools, and museums), in multiple classes (e.g. English, social studies, art), and using a variety of texts (e.g. primary-source documents, memoirs, artwork, music). The less familiar teachers are with the content, the more likely they may be to seek professional development to support their pedagogical decisions.

United States public schools

The United States has a decentralized education system that does not include national standards. Consequently, prior to the Never Again Education Act, Holocaust education was typically incorporated in public schools through social studies and English language arts (ELA) classes.⁷ Some states have included language about Holocaust and genocide education in their standards. For example,

in Nebraska, the site of this study, the most recently adopted social studies standards referenced the Holocaust once for both United States and World History. There is no mention of Holocaust or genocide education in the Nebraska ELA Standards. When they were initially developed, 46 states adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), including Iowa, one of the neighboring states with teachers who participated in the exhibit.⁸ While the CCSS do not mention the Holocaust as a historical event, Holocaust texts (e.g. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Play*)⁹ are listed in the online Common Core Text Exemplars appendix as recommended reading.

United States private schools

Private schools in the United States, or those that receive the majority of their funding from private, non-governmental sources, have also committed to including Holocaust education. In Jewish day schools, students typically learn about the Holocaust via Jewish studies courses.¹⁰ Catholic and other Christian schools are similar to public schools: Teachers include the Holocaust in social studies or ELA.¹¹ In both public and private schools, texts often include primary-source documents and films.¹²

United States museums

As previously noted, the U.S. Congress charged the USHMM with carrying out the mandates of the Never Again Education law. Teachers often engage with museums in Holocaust education through school field trips.¹³ Museums are unique sites for education because they present historical narratives, and teachers and museum educators assume responsibility to encourage students to question and analyze those narratives.¹⁴ One perennial challenge of museum education is access; students from low-income urban and rural contexts do not frequently have opportunities to visit museums outside of school, and field trips can be time-consuming and costly.¹⁵ Art museums and exhibits may face additional challenges in overcoming perceptions that such settings are not seen as inviting but rather reserved for those with certain status based on expertise, previous knowledge, or

insights into predetermined truths about the art on display.¹⁶ An alternative to taking students on a field trip to visit a museum is to visit a travelling exhibit instead, though the host site needs to be adequately prepared with docents who have both knowledge of the artwork and an understanding of how to convey that knowledge to middle school and high school students.¹⁷

Teacher pedagogy and professional development

The USHMM commissioned a study in 2003 about how teachers incorporate the Holocaust. At the time, Donnelly found that nearly 75% of teachers taught about the Holocaust, but she also suggested ‘many teachers could benefit from *high-quality* training in Holocaust education’ (emphasis added). Donnelly closed by acknowledging that teachers specifically need support in content, pedagogy, and using materials beyond textbooks.¹⁸

The USHMM has continued its involvement with schools by offering professional development for teachers and teacher educators. Many states, school districts, teacher preparation programs, and individual teachers have turned to the USHMM for guidance, especially its online Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust, to incorporate into their curriculum frameworks and classrooms.¹⁹ The USHMM recognizes that antisemitism continues today and provides specific online resources for teachers to address antisemitism and Holocaust denial. For example, the USHMM website features oral history interviews with Holocaust survivors, including Samuel Bak.

Similarly, Echoes and Reflections offers in-person and online training for teachers, teacher educators, and pre-service teachers. Supported by multiple organizations, Echoes and Reflections also provides lesson plans and pedagogical ideas for teachers. Additionally, Echoes and Reflections has an entire unit on contemporary antisemitism.

Teacher decision making

Teachers must select materials and instructional strategies, and those decisions are influenced by multiple factors including teachers’ knowledge of their

students and subject area, individual educator characteristics, and institutional constraints.²⁰ Specific to the Holocaust, teachers must consider how to teach topics that are inherently disturbing, emotional, and complex.²¹ In selecting Holocaust-related content, teachers make decisions based on historical accuracy, available materials, and the graphic nature of the specific topics.²² They also balance the importance of humanizing Holocaust victims through the use of survivor testimonies and storytelling. In using testimonies and stories, teachers understand that these accounts offer unique perspectives that, at times, seem somewhat imaginative and may compromise historical accuracy.²³

Methods and materials

We undertook a multiple case study²⁴ to examine evidence related to the research question: How do secondary teachers make decisions regarding the way they teach about the Holocaust? To gain an understanding of commonalities and differences in relation to the binding concept²⁵ of teachers' decision making related to teaching about the Holocaust, we engaged in thematic analysis²⁶ of individual cases as well as a cross-case analysis. We received approval for this study by the University of Nebraska at Omaha Institutional Review Board (IRB), approval number 0621-19-EX.

Background and context

A mid-size metropolitan university in the Midwestern United States hosted a 70- painting exhibit of world-renowned artist and Holocaust survivor Samuel Bak. He began painting as a child living in the Vilnius Ghetto. Bak survived the Holocaust along with his mother. However, his father, extended family, and childhood friends were murdered in the ghetto or in mass execution sites in the forest near Vilnius. Bak was a child prodigy and remains a prolific artist in his adulthood. His works have been exhibited in leading galleries throughout the world. Yad Vashem features his biography, and his oral history is available through the USHMM. His memoir, *Painted in Words*, recounts his story before, during, and after the Holocaust.²⁷ His art, representing his life before, during, and after the

Holocaust, is characterized by rich symbolism, provocative abstractions, fractured images, and multiple works considered to be self-portraits. An interdisciplinary faculty team representing history, art history, religious studies, and teacher education supported the exhibit, *Witness: The Art of Samuel Bak*.

We identified and addressed potential barriers teachers might consider in their decision to bring students to the exhibit, aiming to increase teachers' agency. The project received external funding to cover transportation and substitute teacher expenses for secondary schools interested in bringing students to the exhibit. To inform teachers and administrators of the educational value, teacher education faculty (article authors) connected the exhibit to the standards of the two states with students who visited the exhibit. As previously described, Nebraska, where the exhibit was held, has its own grades 6–12 state standards in ELA, social studies, visual art, and world languages. Iowa, the neighboring state, adopted the CCSS. We used professional networks to promote school visits with background information on Bak, the exhibit's connections to standards, and guidance on planning gallery visits. We also constructed an educational website, *Witness: The Art of Samuel Bak* where teachers could access additional information about Bak, digital images of the paintings, and schedule their gallery visit.

We created a guide with 11 instructional strategies associated with the exhibit and made available through the educational website. Secondary teachers were encouraged to implement the strategies before, during, or after their students visited the gallery. Each strategy included background knowledge, implementation steps, and references to specific paintings, symbols Bak used, and information in the exhibit catalogue. Complexity and time required to implement the strategies varied. Examples included a two-step visual text-tagging strategy, five-step jigsaw strategy, and an 11-step strategy involving prediction, summarizing, small and whole-group discussion, and writing. (See Table 1 for a brief description of the strategies used along with each painting.)

Table 1. Instructional strategies for *Witness: The Art of Samuel Bak*.

Strategy	Description	Paintings ^a /Symbols Referenced
Reading Visual Text	Individual and small group analysis, small and whole group discussion	<i>Looking Back, Give and Take A, On Time and Its Numbers, Before and After, Burden, Memoir, Chapters</i>
Reading Like a Historian ^b	Whole group analysis/discussion	pears, candles, keys, smoke, flames, cups, ships, birds, bricks, houses, dice, clocks, angels, chess pieces
Rename the Painting	Small group analysis/discussion, whole group analysis/discussion	Student choice
Think, Ink, Pair, Share	Writing, paired discussion, whole group discussion	Student choice
Questions and Answers: Text Tagging Personal Connections	Writing, small group discussion Individual analysis, whole group discussion	<i>Recall</i> Student choice
Self-Portrait ^c	Individual analysis, sketching or writing	<i>Close Up</i>
Become an Expert – Theme Jigsaw	Small group analysis/discussion	Symbols of war: targets, soldiers, missiles, blood, destroyed buildings, smoke, sword; Household symbols: candles, dice, chessboards, ladders, dishes, tables, keys; Symbols of nature: sky, trees, water, clouds, doves, rainbows, mountains, rocks
Reading Comprehension:	Prediction, summarizing, paired/whole group discussion, writing	<i>Disposition, Targeted, Signal of Identity, Icon of Loss- Ancient Memory</i>
R A F T ^d	Small group or individual analysis, writing	<i>For Shifrah, The City, Harvest of the Night, One of the Memorials, Penetrability of Spheres, Voyage, The Wall Continues</i>

^aWineburg, Martin and Monte-Sano, *Witness: The Art of Samuel Bak*, 25–28, 35, 38, 45,46, 49, 55–57.

^bWineburg, Martin and Monte-Sano, *Reading Like a Historian*, ix–xii.

^cFacing History/Facing Ourselves Website, *Interpreting the Works of Samuel Bak*.

^dAlverman, Gillis and Phelps, *Content Area Reading and Literacy*, 330–332.

During visits, trained docents guided classes through the three-room gallery using a script designed specifically for secondary students. The script included a brief historical context of the Holocaust, directed attention to common symbols used in Bak’s art, encouraged small and large group discussions, and allowed time for students to reflect independently on the artwork. Student groups spent approximately 90 min in the gallery. Teachers who accompanied students received classroom sets of the exhibit catalogue. Some teachers distributed these to students, while others kept the catalogues as a classroom set for future use.

Over the exhibit's 70 days, 1,716 secondary students from two states, representing 21 school districts, 37 schools, and 82 class groups visited. School groups from the state's largest and most racially-diverse district attended, as well as groups from suburban, mid-sized cities and small, rural districts. (See Figure 1 for more information about visitors.)

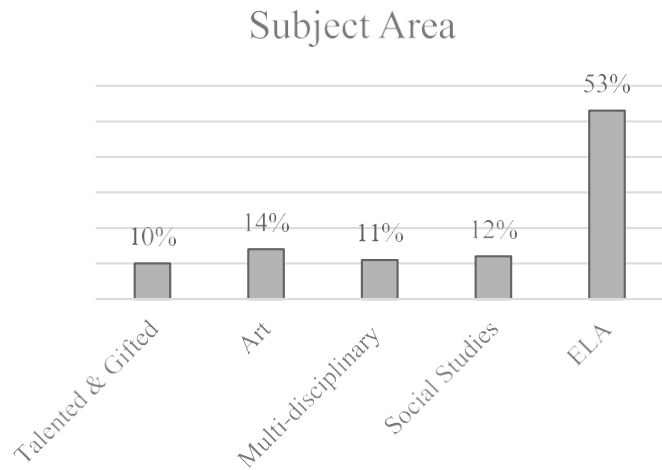
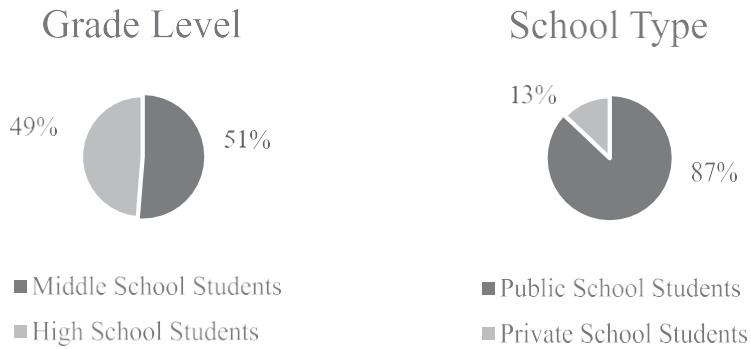


Figure 1. Schools and classes visiting the exhibit.

Data collection and participant selection

We initially reviewed the materials by (1) making multiple visits to the exhibit, (2) reviewing the exhibit catalogue and consulting with its authors, (3) participating in docent training, and (4) attending the exhibit along with docent-led groups. As previously mentioned, we created materials provided to teachers who visited the exhibit (i.e. documents that aligned the exhibit to grades 6–12 content standards, instructional strategies, website). Reviewing these materials in light of our research question informed our development of a questionnaire we sent to teachers who brought students to the exhibit.

We electronically distributed the questionnaire and consent statement to all secondary teachers ($n = 38$) listed as the primary point-of-contact for schools that brought students to the exhibit. The questionnaire consisted of five questions and an opportunity for respondents to volunteer as participants for a follow-up interview (see Appendix 1). Nineteen teachers responded to the questionnaire; of those, 11 respondents indicated a willingness to be interviewed.

We emailed the teachers willing to be interviewed, asking them to schedule an online interview. Three of the 11 respondents scheduled interviews resulting in a multiple-case convenience sample.²⁸ We did not solicit additional cases because the respondents represented distinct schools and contexts, multiple grade levels, and two content areas.

Participants included a high school ELA teacher from a large urban school district, a middle school social studies teacher from a small urban private school, and a high school ELA teacher from a mid-size city school district. All participants (referred to by pseudonyms) were white females and had a minimum of three years of experience teaching about the Holocaust.

Each author interviewed one participant approximately two months following the close of the exhibit. Based on the teachers' responses to the questionnaire, we developed eight open-ended questions to conduct semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 2). Participants gave verbal consent to record the interviews. Interviews lasted approximately 30 min, during which time researchers reminded participants of their answers to the questionnaire. Occasionally, participants contributed

evidence that diverged from the interview guide but was relevant to the research question. Interviewers responded to this information with additional, unscripted questions to facilitate further discussion and exploration of the evidence. Consistent with interview practices that Miles and colleagues outlined, we 'coauthored' data in those moments of asking clarifying questions and summarizing participants' responses.²⁹

Data analysis

We compared descriptive statistics of the schools and classes who attended the exhibit to the questionnaire respondents ($n = 19$). Questionnaire respondents represented a sample of those who attended the exhibit, and the three teachers who agreed to additional interviews represented a similar variety. We conducted an inductive cross-case thematic analysis³⁰ (i.e. to deepen understanding, read transcripts multiple times, and look for themes across cases) by first independently analyzing and identifying themes. Next, we engaged in collaborative coding³¹ (i.e. reach consensus through discussion) and identifying common themes across the three cases.³² Rather than sequentially summarizing interview questions and answers, we used a latent approach³³ (i.e. go beyond the data or what was directly stated) to reflect the nuances of the interview. We created what Miles and colleagues referred to as a 'case-level display for partially ordered meta-matrix' (i.e. a table to synthesize and organize the data across cases).³⁴ We agreed on the following common headings (i.e. codes): materials, strategies, decision-making process, other, and interview questions 3–6. See Appendix 3 for an example of the matrix. We transcribed portions of the interviews as recommended by Saldaña: 'Code only the data that relate to your research questions of interest.'³⁵ We then used the matrix and transcriptions to independently write case summaries for the participant we interviewed.

Next, one additional researcher from our group read the participant's responses to the questionnaire, watched the interview recording, read the case summary written by their colleague, and made review notes regarding the case. The two researchers resolved any discrepancies between the initial case summary

and the second researcher's review notes. For example, the author of Victoria's initial case summary did not include references to exhibit materials; however, through notes and discussion, the second reviewer called attention to Victoria's mention of using the catalogue. Following our collective analysis, we revised the written case summaries, and participants validated them via member checks.³⁶

Working together, we continued thematic analysis.³⁷ We searched for themes based on our eight preliminary matrix codes. We collectively arrived at six initial themes: standards and Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum, materials (availability and quality), personal (travel and family), tell the stories, student interest, and current events. Through discussion, we ultimately defined four themes, including student-centered approach, materials, standards and curriculum, and personal connection.

Results

Refining our themes allowed us to visualize data and consider findings related to our research question. See Figure 2 for a visualization of our research question, data collection, analysis, and findings. Following the visual, we will describe each case (i.e. teacher) individually.

High school English elective: Lauren Beckner

Lauren has taught high school English for eight years. She teaches at a large urban high school located in a city near where the exhibit was held. Lauren brought 11th- and 12th- grade students taking a semester-long Holocaust literature elective to the exhibit.

Teacher decision-making process

Initially, Lauren categorized her classroom materials as a 'variety of memoirs of Holocaust survivors, as well as documents (letters, newspapers, images, etc.) from the time period.' During the interview, Lauren explained students read three books as a whole class: *Maus I* and *II*,³⁸ graphic novels by Art Spiegelman; and *The Cage*,³⁹ a memoir by Ruth Minsky Sender. Students also participate in literature

circles, where they select from the following texts: *Night, Dawn, or Day*,⁴⁰ by Elie Wiesel; *The Sunflower*,⁴¹ by Simon Wiesenthal; or *To Life*,⁴² by Ruth Minsky Sender. Students also engage with a unit about children in the Holocaust, as well as view video testimonies from Echoes and Reflections. Additionally, Lauren’s students view online documents from the USHMM, such as a video about early antisemitism and photos from the time period.

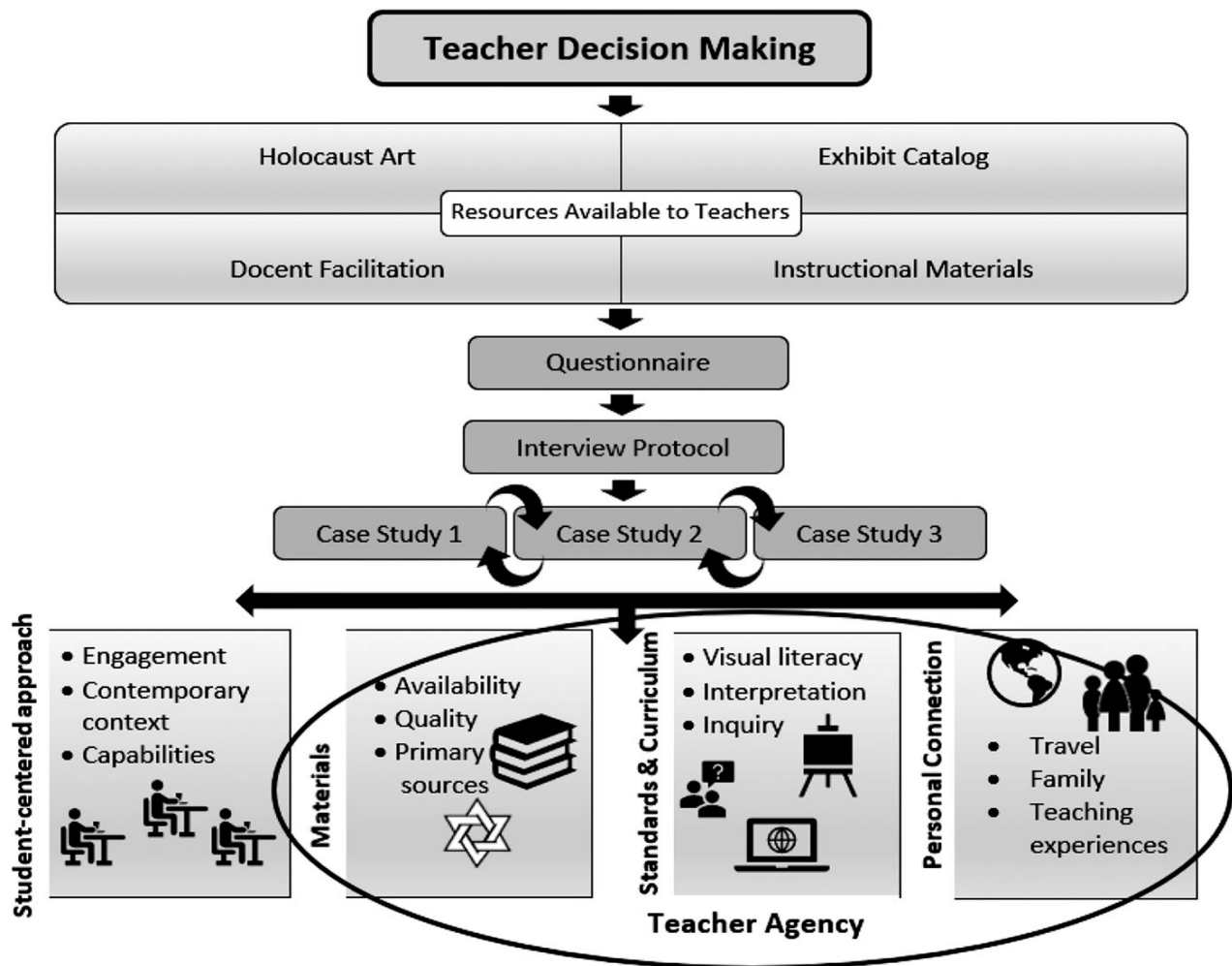


Figure 2. Study design and findings.

On the questionnaire, Lauren wrote the following about the strategies she uses: ‘The entire semester course is devoted to reading literature of survivors and using their story to understand the events and atrocities of the time.’ During the interview, Lauren explained how she moves from teacher-centered strategies to

student-centered strategies, and she tries to elicit student thinking about the texts. For example, when students read *Maus I*, they complete a traditional teacher-created reading guide with several questions per chapter. For *Maus II*, students select the most important moments in a series of double-entry journals. The students create Post-It note annotations for *To Life*, the final whole-class selection. Each student completes a literature circle role, and each group records their discussion. Across the semester, Lauren devotes two or three days a week to students discussing the reading, while the others are 'work days.'

District curriculum guidelines drive Lauren's material choices and strategies. As previously mentioned, she supplements the required texts with primary-source documents and less-traditional texts. Teachers review the curriculum every four years, and electives, such as Lauren's course, have more freedom in selecting materials and strategies. Each English course at the school has standards based on research, reading, writing, multiple literacies, critical thinking, and speaking and listening.

The interviewer asked Lauren how confident she is in her abilities to teach about the Holocaust using art. Lauren mentioned she is probably more confident than most teachers, because her mom is an art teacher, so she grew up viewing and analyzing art. Initially, she said she did not see any barriers to using art to teach about the Holocaust because it is just another art form (similar to literature). However, when the interviewer noted that some people might find access as a barrier to entry, Lauren did say getting students to a museum could be challenging. Lauren also remarked that seeing art in person is different from viewing it online or in a catalogue, which could be challenging for some students.

Prior to visiting the exhibit, Lauren showed a short video about Bak's life and work from the university website, as well as an additional video about Bak she selected.⁴³ She also created a presentation with some of Bak's paintings along with other Holocaust artists' work, and students previewed the catalogue of art included in the exhibit. Through viewing Bak's paintings along with artwork created by other Holocaust survivors, Lauren wanted students to see that 'art is just like a novel; it's like an expression of what happened.' While students visited the exhibit, Lauren used

the instructional strategies guide, which she said was 'useful ... to talk students through who didn't have that background experience.' After visiting the exhibit, Lauren's students used the classroom set of catalogues, the exhibit website, and another website with Bak's paintings to complete the assignment described in the next section.

Student responses to artwork

Students in Lauren's class visited the exhibit while reading *Maus* (unclear if it was volume I or II). While this is a graphic novel, the illustrations are quite different from Bak's paintings, which Lauren said provided another lens and different metaphors and symbols with which to view the Holocaust. Lauren said her students had an emotional reaction to the deep colors and scale of the paintings; she remarked they also latched on to various common symbols including the pear, teddy bear, and candles.

After watching the videos about Bak, Lauren reported her students were especially curious about other artists who were also Holocaust survivors and showed increased interest in children during that time. Lauren suggested her students' interest in children may have also explained why so many of them were drawn to Bak's 2002 painting, *Skies Were the Limit*. As Lauren said, the teddy bear is 'such a universal symbol of childhood.' She continued,

And the novel we were reading, the survivor was much older, in his 20s or 30s, so that was really powerful to them, learning, you know, that Samuel Bak had been much younger? And then seeing that teddy bear as just that example of childhood and innocence, you know, it was just not something you expect to see.

When students returned to the classroom, Lauren had them consult the print catalogue and website to select two of Bak's paintings for writing a poetic response. 'Kind of like art for art,' Lauren quipped. She first had them analyze their paintings by asking, What's going on in the picture? Write down everything you see. What themes could that image be portraying? What do you think it's trying to make you feel, or what emotions are getting brought up by looking at this? In composing their

poems, students had freedom with form; the only stipulation was that the poems must be at least 15 lines.

Lauren identified the most common theme in the students' poetry as loss: Whether it was a loss of innocence ... with the teddy bear one, or the loss of friends, because there was that little boy cut out with the target. Loss of family; there was the one that looked like a chessboard and loss of civilization, so definitely that was probably the biggest.⁴⁴

Based on students' responses while viewing the exhibit and via their poetry, Lauren noted the experience was overwhelmingly positive with great student feedback.

Middle school social studies: Victoria Nescoss

Victoria, a retired high school history teacher, currently substitute teaches in secondary schools and works as an adjunct history instructor at the university hosting the exhibit. Victoria brought 7th- and 8th-grade students who attend an independent private school where she was working as a long-term substitute history teacher to the exhibit.

Teacher decision-making process

Victoria described a variety of primary source materials she used in her former full-time role as a secondary teacher and those she currently uses as a substitute and adjunct professor. Victoria relied on, and continues to select, archival footage, photographs, and interviews of survivors and liberators when teaching about the Holocaust. A local organization dedicated to Holocaust education provides many of these materials. She also uses self-created slides made from photographs taken during her travels to multiple European countries and tours of several different concentration camps.

The varied materials Victoria described include storytelling, which she noted in her questionnaire and repeated during her interview. She stated she selects materials that tell '*the* truth' (emphasis in speech). For example, she referenced selecting a liberator's testimony because it is 'from his mouth.' Victoria tells her students about first-hand accounts related to the Holocaust. As in her self-created

slides, this material has a personal connection to Victoria as she includes stories from members of her family involved in the liberation of the camps or who lived in Europe during World War II.

In the questionnaire, Victoria described selecting strategies that ‘tell and show the truth.’ The focus on truth-telling strategies supports the learning objectives Victoria has for her students. Victoria wants to use strategies that help students understand the ‘evil side’ and ‘good side’ of humans and ‘make them [students] empathetic to all peoples that suffer.’

When asked to explain her questionnaire answers, she elaborated that her strategies focus on primary source images and storytelling. She described scaffolded questioning strategies intended to help students learn to interpret what they see in photographs or other images such as symbolic drawings created by prisoners and resistance fighters. For example, she would ask, ‘What do you see?’ This would be followed by a prompt to notice the brokenness or certain symbols and additional questions asking students how they might read this symbol. In doing so, she attempts to explain the complex stories these images convey.

In a tangent during the interview, she contemplated the strategies other teachers may select. Victoria speculated teachers may be looking for strategies to discuss the resurgence of antisemitism and address the misguided beliefs held by ‘students who think Nazism is cool.’

When asked what drives her decisions about teaching the Holocaust, Victoria summarized by saying, ‘I do not gloss over anything.’ For example, she points out to her students that the flickering quality, still visible today, in the dirt surrounding the former death camps is a result of the magnesium particles in the ashes of Holocaust victims that spewed from crematoria and floated down to the ground.

Over the past six years, Victoria has incorporated Holocaust-related art in her under-graduate world civilizations class. In the interview, she stated she had not used art to teach secondary students. However, she referred to using symbolic drawings of snakes and turtles created by prisoners and members of the resistance when teaching secondary students.

When asked about barriers to using art to teach the Holocaust, Victoria did not

identify specific obstacles and noted most of the students who attended the exhibit likely had past experiences visiting a local art museum. However, she acknowledged that incorporating art requires intentionality to make this an effective strategy.

Victoria believes ‘you need to kind of give them [students] a translation ‘cause it’s just like another language.’ She also noted that in using art, students ‘get an overall gut reaction, but then you have to go from your gut to your brains and like [ask] why are they using these symbols, what does this mean.’

Her ease in referring to form, color, and symbols during her interview reflected her experiences using art to teach about the Holocaust. For example, she noted, ‘All you see is black and white, you know, in all the different documentaries’ but went on to explain how art can add colors that symbolize survival, such as Bak’s inclusion of ‘good redness back in the sky.’ She drew from her experiences in interpreting art to prepare her middle school students to understand the exhibit collection as symbolism of ‘how everything is broken in war and how the human spirit strives to survive no matter what.’

Victoria perceived the Bak exhibit as a ‘chance in a lifetime’ for her 7th- and 8th- grade students who previously had limited exposure to the Holocaust. The secondary state standards address the Holocaust later in the school year and in greater depth in subsequent grades. However, Holocaust study is often part of a larger unit in world history, and this may limit the depth and breadth of the topic’s coverage. To prepare students for Holocaust-related content and visiting the gallery, she introduced art from the exhibit in a pre-teaching activity. She modelled how to analyze Bak’s 2008 painting, *Creation of Wartime, III*, that was on the exhibit catalogue’s cover and then had students practice this skill with other paintings in the catalogue. By the conclusion of the activity, her students were able to ‘search and find the symbols’ and ‘read the different symbols.’

She also incorporated storytelling, asking students to share World War II and Holocaust-related stories they may have heard from their grandparents and great-grandparents. After visiting the gallery, students completed a writing assignment in which they described the piece of art that had the greatest impact on them and explained why.

Student responses to artwork

After Victoria's initial pre-teaching activity, the art piqued students' interest. Victoria attributed the students' engagement to their perception that this was 'secret-coded art... and they knew the symbolism; they got more into it.' During the actual visit, 'They really, really, really, looked at the art. Some of the kids were really just staring at art, and I was like, "*This is it!*"' (emphasis in speech). Many students were intrigued by Bak's 2003 painting, *Close Up*. Victoria attributed students' interest to the size, exquisite display of the painting, and use of one of Bak's common symbols (pear).

Following the exhibit, Victoria introduced students to Bak's experiences living in a Jewish ghetto and his life after the Holocaust. She described the overall impact on students the following way:

No matter what your suffering in the world – from your parents, or the government, or the war, or if they even are feeling depressed in their own life or something – you make your own way, you make your own colors, you make your own kind of system of how *you* are going to survive. You know, and I think they saw it a lot (emphasis in speech).

High school English language arts: Debra Moore

Debra teaches at a 9th–12th grade magnet high school in a large urban school district located in the same city as the university hosting the exhibit. She has been teaching Elie Wiesel's memoir *Night* for three years. Debra brought four sections of ninth- grade honors English students who were preparing to read *Night* to the exhibit.

Teacher decision-making process

On the questionnaire, Debra responded that she used background information and news articles to prepare students to read *Night*. In the interview, she stated that her 9th-grade honors English class addresses the memoir while the U.S. history teachers teach about the Holocaust and World War II. Cross-curricular teaching allows Debra to focus on using news articles from sources such as Newsela to

prepare students for interacting with *Night*. She also includes recent events that are relevant to understanding events and themes in the memoir.

When asked about strategies she used to teach about the Holocaust before attending the exhibit, Debra responded in the past she had used group and partner discussions and visual representations of themes and characters in *Night*. After attending the exhibit, her students created visual representations of some of the exhibit themes, such as hope and destruction. The students viewed each other's representations in a museum walk, similar to the exhibit. In addition, students wrote explanations of their visual representations for this follow-up assignment. Debra stated that prior to attending the exhibit, the structure of the unit for *Night* had less of a creative and visual aspect to it.

Debra's initial responses to her past decision-making processes for materials and activities were varied. She described a combination of decisions made at the district curriculum level and by classroom teachers in how information is presented to students. While the district supplies copies of the memoir, additional supplemental resources are at the teacher's discretion. Debra has used websites and books to provide necessary background information for the unit.

Her choice of *Night* in this honors class complements the district's scope and sequence for ELA, as students read the *Diary of Anne Frank* in 8th grade and *Maus* in 11th grade. She chose *Night* due to its rich language and past student interest. She also noted that the book is on the AP list of recommended reading.

Debra stated that as an English teacher she is not very comfortable with using art to teach about the Holocaust because 'that's not something I particularly studied ... I haven't been trained in art.' She identified other barriers to using art to teach about the Holocaust, including the lack of access to art and the challenge of creating the same quality of experience that occurs when viewing art in a gallery.

Despite Debra's reservations, the art served as a powerful teaching tool for Debra. Her students found Bak's art interesting and engaged with it in a different context than with other materials related to the Holocaust. Debra told her interviewer that Bak's art got students thinking about the Holocaust 'just in a totally different way.' She reflected, 'It was one of those moments where, as a teacher, I felt like I

could kind of pass the conversation on to the students because they had almost as much or more insight than I did.' She hesitated to use what she called a cliché but said the art allowed her 'to kind of step off of the stage and let them kind of go with it. And I think that that was a neat experience.'

Access to the exhibit's educational materials increased Debra's comfort level before her students' visit because she was 'able to read through that book [artwork catalogue] ... and the guide ... so I had some knowledge going into it.' She also felt less pressure to be well-skilled in the analysis of art because she learned Bak's works are 'more open to interpretation, where, like, there ... is a point to it, but at the same time, it's, you know, you can kind of read into it a little bit more.'

The opportunity to visit the exhibit gave her more materials to include in her own approach to teaching about the Holocaust. The class utilized the university-created website and exhibit catalogue, which Debra allowed her students to keep. After the exhibit, Debra's students were able to view the art again. She believed through using these resources 'a lot of the students really kind of started to recognize the symbols more when they went back and looked at the art than they did at the initial exhibit.' She plans to continue to use these resources with future classes.

Student responses to artwork

When asked how the visit to the exhibit impacted her students, Debra said, 'They got to a higher-level thinking about the actual event itself. And so instead of just thinking about *Night*, and what he's talking about, they were thinking about different experiences, how they tied in together, how it related to stuff they looked at last year.'

The symbols and images of trauma within the art resonated with Debra's students and seemed to enhance the development of their visual literacy skills. Her students were able to see visual depictions of the following:

The pain and anguish that was happening in the Holocaust ... and then some of them would look at it, you know, and say, 'Oh, I think this is saying about the, like, trauma that you experience after the event.' And, so, I think it just

allowed them to engage in textual evidence in a way where they weren't just citing quotes.

Later in the interview, Debra again mentioned trauma, saying her students recognized 'the trauma that happened there which is still obviously something that they need to know about.' She noted the importance that her students 'make connections to modern day events and ... to see how that is similar or different to things happening now.'

After visiting the exhibit, she had students create visuals using their own symbols. As students completed this assignment, Debra heard her students' conversations in which they asked questions such as, 'How do we represent hope, while also feeling completely destroyed?' She noted, 'It was interesting to hear them having those conversations and, like, trying to think through how can you visually represent, especially when we were looking at artwork where it is so layered and they can see that, you know, all those different elements.'

The level of impact studying Bak's art continued past the initial visit to the exhibit and associated assignment. Debra mentioned her students really enjoyed the experience of the exhibit, and she was shocked by what students remembered.

It was something that, like, they briefly brought up and mentioned randomly ... it stuck out for them in their minds, and it's something that, like, this semester, we were working on *A Raisin in the Sun*, and someone said, 'Oh, that kind of reminds me of ... the pears and how Samuel Bak used them.'

Cross-case analysis and discussion

We found three themes in relation to teacher decision making regarding teaching about the Holocaust: materials, standards and curriculum, and personal connection. We found a fourth theme in relation to the way students visiting an art exhibit may influence secondary educators' decision-making: student-centered approach. Participants' responses supported each theme, as did existing literature. In addition to the themes, we discuss how teacher agency, or lack thereof, may impact teacher decision making.

Materials

We entered the study assuming teachers would say the materials they selected were dictated by availability, local curriculum guides, and state standards. We also assumed that teachers would be guided by additional resources provided by well-known sources, such as the USHMM and Echoes and Reflections. Although the teachers did not mention resources from USHMM and Echoes and Reflections, our other assumption was mostly confirmed, but we also found teachers supplemented curriculum based on other factors described in the subsequent sections. Furthermore, we found commonalities among the materials the participants selected. Lauren and Debra both mentioned the way district curriculum guided their choices, especially the selection of whole-class, extended texts (e.g. *Maus* and *Night*). The impact of availability and district curriculum on Lauren and Debra's materials selections is, perhaps, not surprising, since they both teach at large public schools with detailed curriculum guides that teachers review on a rotating basis. Victoria did not mention availability, curriculum, or standards, which may be due to her private, independent school context. Instead, Victoria noted the importance of storytelling (discussed more in the Personal Connection section).

All three participants reported supplementing their district's approved materials with primary sources and historical documents (e.g. survivor testimonials, photographs, news articles), as well as videos and other materials from well-known Holocaust education websites. While the ELA and social studies state standards emphasize informational texts, none of the participants directly stated taking standards into consideration when selecting materials. All three participants also used the materials we created in our role as teacher education faculty (i.e. exhibit website and teacher guide with suggested strategies), as well as other materials and services provided by the university (i.e. exhibit catalogue and docent facilitation).

University personnel providing materials to teachers is consistent with Badger and Harker's recommendation that students and teachers need more access to traveling museum exhibits, including materials specific to the exhibit, as well as increased facilitation between the national museum and local host site.⁴⁵ The

Pucker Gallery (managers of Bak's art) and the university (host site) featured in the present study had an extensive connection (e.g. representatives traveling between the gallery and university, joint docent training and frequent consultation about supplemental materials, such as reviewing and providing feedback on the instructional strategies and selection of videos and readings for the website.). We suggest this connection had a positive impact on the quality of the materials, which in turn may have increased teachers' comfort level introducing their students to art.

Standards and curriculum

All three teachers spoke about developing students' visual literacy skills, specifically their analysis of symbolism, through artwork. While visual literacy is not directly suggested in the state standards, there are standards about analyzing texts (including various media) from multiple perspectives. Lauren referenced teaching students to analyze art like literature, Victoria mentioned students supporting their initial reaction to the art by questioning the artist's choices, and Debra noted the poignancy of artwork that is 'open to interpretation.'

Based on state standards, teachers and students are accustomed to engaging in textual inquiry and interpretation (e.g. literature, historical documents, primary and secondary sources) in their ELA and social studies classes. Experts, such as museum and exhibit curators and designers, have frequently previously interpreted these texts.⁴⁶ 'Expert' analyses may leave teachers and students feeling as though the texts are less open to interpretation, or that there are 'right answers.' As Debra said, '[Art] just allowed [students] to engage in textual evidence in a way where they weren't just citing quotes.' Debra's statement coincides with Burgard's suggestion that students must be taught to question museum exhibits, rather than taking the artifacts and placards at face value or thinking there is only one interpretation.⁴⁷ Subsequently, as opposed to more traditional texts, art may provide students with additional opportunities to meet the standards through deep inquiry and interpretation.

Personal connection

Teachers who have a personal connection to their curriculum are likely more enthusiastic about that topic. Teacher enthusiasm frequently leads to positive student outcomes, such as increased motivation and learning.⁴⁸ While some English and social studies teachers may find analyzing or talking about art with their students intimidating and lack enthusiasm, Lauren was comfortable with art analysis, because her mom is an art teacher. Victoria made a personal connection with teaching about the Holocaust through sharing photos from her own travels and family stories with her students. While Debra admitted she was initially uncomfortable teaching her students to analyze art because she was not 'trained in it' and was 'not an expert,' she built her personal knowledge and comfort level by reading through the educational materials ahead of time.

Student-centered approach

Of the three teachers, only Lauren spoke about a student-centered approach to teaching about the Holocaust prior to students visiting the exhibit. However, via the ways their students responded to the artwork and some of the student-led discussions they reported, all three teachers ultimately took students into account in their decision making and engaged in a student-centered approach. In developing their Holocaust curriculum rating scale, promoting a student-centered approach is the most effective in advancing students' critical thinking.⁴⁹ We disaggregated the student-centered approach into three components: student engagement, contemporary context, and student capability.

Student engagement

There is research to suggest classroom enjoyment is reciprocal: teacher enthusiasm prompts student enjoyment and engagement, and student engagement prompts teacher enjoyment.⁵⁰ The three teachers noted various ways their students were captivated by seeing Bak's art in person. Lauren mentioned her students' emotional responses to the scale and colors of the artwork. Victoria found her students 'staring at art,' and she also noted the scale and color of one particular painting, *Close Up* (2003), that the students found intriguing. Debra listened to

students' conversations, especially about trauma, and realized students were involved in a 'totally different way,' and decided to let the students 'go with it.'

Student capability

Some teachers have difficulty giving up control in their classrooms and question students' ability to analyze art;⁵¹ however, prior to attending the exhibit, these three teachers were relatively open to their students analyzing art as text. Burgard recommended a frame- work for teaching students to question museum exhibits, which would also build teachers' trust in students' capability ahead of time.⁵² Though none of these teachers used the specific framework, they did prepare their students to visit the exhibit in a variety of ways. For example, Victoria's students analyzed one of the paintings as a whole class. Lauren's students analyzed text in a student-led way with sticky notes, and Debra previewed the art using the website with her students.

During and after the exhibit, all three teachers recognized the depth of students' responses. In the poems Lauren's students wrote in response to the art, the most common theme was loss, which coincides with a solid analysis of Bak's art. Victoria was confident her students understood the symbolism in the artwork. Debra was willing to 'pass the conversation on to the students because they had almost as much or more insight than I did.' Seeing their students' ability to discuss art at the exhibit and deeply reflect on the experience afterward likely validated the teachers' decision to bring their students, as well as enhanced their willingness to continue incorporating art in teaching about the Holocaust in the future.

Contemporary context

As Ellison argued, the Holocaust is still relevant today.⁵³ Schweber suggested linking the event to contemporary contexts may help reduce 'Holocaust fatigue,' or the sense students already understand the Holocaust because of the way the media has portrayed it.⁵⁴ Warren and colleagues⁵⁵ also urged using the Holocaust as a lens through which to view social justice today, and Schneider posited that 'alternative texts' (e.g. art) humanize the Holocaust and allow for application to

contemporary society.⁵⁶

Though Lauren did not mention how she or her students related the Holocaust to a contemporary context, she did note questions her students had after visiting the exhibit that were different from previous semesters. For example, her students were curious about other artists who were also Holocaust survivors and had an increased interest in children who survived. In her classroom, art increased students' interest.⁵⁷ Victoria relayed her concern about the rise of antisemitism, connecting to Ellison's argument about current relevance.⁵⁸ She also helped her students make a connection between Bak's survival and forging their own path to survive suffering they may encounter.⁵⁹ Connected to Warren and colleagues' ideas,⁶⁰ Debra specifically mentioned the importance of 'connections to modern-day events and ... to see how that is similar or different to things happening now.'

Teacher agency

While teachers make numerous decisions each day, they are not frequently asked to articulate those decisions or explain why they chose a particular direction.⁶¹ Many teachers may lack agency, or at least perceive they lack agency, in making decisions about curriculum materials and standards. Especially in this case, teachers could have been reluctant to engage with their students around such an emotional and politically-charged event (i.e. the Holocaust) and in an unfamiliar way (i.e. using art). However, our findings were similar to Cohen's in that 'teacher agency and curricular flexibility [were] strong pedagogic approaches for dealing with a sensitive subject.'⁶² Furthermore, in this study, agency was ecological and emerged from transactions between the teachers and their environment; it emerged from a convergence of individual efforts, available resources, and contextual factors within the unique opportunities presented in the exhibit.⁶³

As suggested by Priestley, Biesta, and Robinson's model, the three teachers exercised agency by drawing from their past personal and professional experiences, as well as their shorter-term (i.e. learning about the Holocaust) and longer-term objectives (i.e. developing analysis and critical thinking skills).⁶⁴ The context of the exhibit (e.g. financial support and proximity) likely removed potential barriers to

teacher agency. The teachers' histories and varied objectives were drawn together by the cultural, structural (i.e. funding), and educational materials available to them.

Further discussion and conclusion

Additional questions surfaced during this research, suggesting several directions for further inquiry. First, in the questionnaire and interviews, the brevity of teachers' answers to prompts that specifically mentioned decision making indicated teachers may not be aware of or reflect on their decision-making process. Furthermore, it took in-depth analysis of the interviews to identify innate decision-making processes that contributed to the participants' sense of agency. Additional examination should explore if this phenomenon of a seemingly subconscious decision-making process is more prevalent in teaching about the Holocaust using art than other materials. Agency encompassed multiple themes (i.e. materials, standards and curriculum, personal connection). However, a student-centered approach held equal or more sway in influencing the teachers' decisions. Future research is needed to further examine the relationship between student-centered approaches and teacher decision-making.

The Never Again Education Act will likely increase teaching about the Holocaust in schools across the United States. Findings from this study can inform states and school districts as they consider how to adapt standards and curriculum in response to the legislation. With or without the legislation, results from this study affirm the relevance of teaching about the Holocaust and important opportunities for student engagement in using art to do so.

Stakeholders, such as curriculum designers, Holocaust educators, and museum education staff who look to develop and enhance resources to support teachers can find valuable insights from this study. First, teachers in this study relied on their district and state standards to guide their decisions. Adding explicit guidelines or references regarding using art to teach about the Holocaust to standards and guidelines will likely increase teacher interest and efficacy related to incorporating art into subject areas such as English language arts and social studies where the Holocaust is typically taught.

Second, building efficacy is key as the teachers in this study alluded to the risk-taking factor of using Bak's art to teach about the Holocaust or attending the exhibit. Teachers in this study addressed their initial lack of efficacy by accessing materials prior to their visits. Stakeholders who provide easily accessible resources and encourage teachers to use these prior to engaging with the art or visiting an exhibit can help reduce this potential barrier to using art to teach about the Holocaust.

Finally, student engagement must be a central focus of exhibit curators and designers who wish to engage secondary teachers and students. In this study, the teachers' enthusiasm and interest in the Bak exhibit was fueled by their observations of the students' reactions. Rather than plan an exhibit and then try to attract teachers to bring students to it, stakeholders who plan exhibits should do so in conjunction with teachers who can provide valuable perspectives on how to best engage students.

As teachers make decisions about how to teach about the Holocaust, they should consider the use of art. Using art to teach about the Holocaust proved to be a powerful teaching tool to engage students. Stakeholders, such as museums and Holocaust educators who are not based in schools, can address teacher agency with materials to guide teachers' decision making. These considerations may help stakeholders, teachers, and students have critical conversations about difficult, sensitive topics.

Notes

1. Ellison, *How They Teach*, 2; Johnson and Pennington, *Teaching Other Genocides*, 228–9; and Ragland and Rosenstein, *Holocaust Education Analysis*, 176.
2. Ellison, *How They Teach*, 3.
3. Never Again Education Act of 2020, 20 U.S.C. 21 and 7801.
4. Pearce and Chapman, *Holocaust Education 25 Years*, 224; and Zembylas, Loukaidis, and Antoniou, *Teachers' Pedagogical Perspectives*, 349.
5. Pearce, *The Holocaust in the National Curriculum*, 233.
6. Stake, *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, vi.

7. Donnelly, *Educating Students about the Holocaust*, 51.
8. Barkauskas, *Common Purposes*, 528.
9. Goodrich and Hackett, *The Diary of Anne Frank*.
10. Ellison, *How They Teach*, 5.
11. Wickam, *Holocaust Curriculum Used*, 69.
12. Donnelly, *Educating Students about the Holocaust*, 52; Ellison, *How They Teach*, 5; Johnson and Pennington, *Teaching Other Genocides*, 227, 229–30; Gudgel, *Think Higher Feel Deeper*, 80; Ragland and Rosenstein, *Holocaust Education Analysis*, 176.
13. Badger and Harker, *The Impact of a Museum*, 356–7; and Johnson and Pennington, *Teaching Other Genocides*, 223.
14. Burgard, *Constructing Deeper Meaning*, 58–9.
15. Badger and Harker, *The Impact of a Museum*, 371; Burgard, *Constructing Deeper Meaning*, 59.
16. Sayers, *Investing the Impact of Contrasting Paradigms*, 411.
17. Harker and Badger, *Traveling Exhibitions as Sites*, 275.
18. Donnelly, *Educating Students about the Holocaust*, 54.
19. Nowell and Poindexter, *Holocaust Education as a Path*, 286; and Ragland and Rosenstein,
20. *Holocaust Education Analysis*, 178–9.
21. Borko and Shavelson, *Teacher Decision Making*, 318–22; and Kennedy, *Parsing the Practice of Teaching*, 10–13.
22. Cohen, *Teacher Autonomy*, 173, 183; Gudgel, *Think Higher Feel Deeper*, 16; Lindquist, *Complicating Issues in Holocaust Education*, 31–2; and Zembylas, Loukaidis, and Antoniou, *Teachers' Pedagogical Perspectives*, 349.
23. Lindquist, *Developing Holocaust Curricula*, 27.
24. Cooke and Frieze, *Imagination, Performance and Affect*, 162–3.
25. Stake, *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, vi.
26. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 135.
27. Alhojailan, *Thematic Analysis*, 40–41; and Braun and Clarke, *Using Thematic Analysis*, 79–81.
28. Bak, *Painted in Words*.

29. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 33–4.
30. Ibid., 31.
31. Ibid., 95, 97; Braun and Clarke, *Using Thematic Analysis*, 84.
32. Smagorinsky, *The Methods Section*, 401–2.
33. Braun and Clarke, *Using Thematic Analysis*, 81; and Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 33–4.
34. Braun and Clarke, *Using Thematic Analysis*, 83–4.
35. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 135.
36. Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 28.
37. Stake, *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, 37.
38. Braun and Clarke, *Using Thematic Analysis*, 91.
39. Spiegelman, *Maus : A Survivor's Tale*.
40. Minsky Sender, *The Cage: A Holocaust Memoir*.
41. Wiesel, *Night; Dawn; Day*.
42. Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower*.
43. Minsky Sender, *To Life*.
44. Colon, *Samuel Bak*.
45. Statement about the painting with the boy is a reference to Bak's 2007 painting, *Targeted*, and the statement about the painting with the family is a reference to Bak's 2007 painting, *For One King*.
46. Badger and Harker, *The Impact of a Museum*, 371.
47. Burgard, *Constructing Deeper Meaning*, 60–62.
48. Ibid.
49. Frenzel et al., *Emotion Transmission in the Classroom*, 635; Keller et al., *Feeling and Showing*, 35; and Keller et al., *Teacher Enthusiasm*, 761–2.
50. Ragland and Rosenstein, *Holocaust Education Analysis*, 180–82.
51. Frenzel et al., *Emotion Transmission in the Classroom*, 635.
52. Badger and Harker, *The Impact of a Museum*, 362.
53. Burgard, *Constructing Deeper Meaning*, 61–2.
54. Ellison, *How They Teach*, 8.
55. Schweber, *Holocaust Fatigue*, 53.

56. Warren, Fletcher, and Sansalone, *Pathways to Justice*, 66.
57. Schneider, *Representation of the Holocaust*, 75.
58. Ibid., 77.
59. Ellison, *How They Teach*, 8.
60. Warren, Fletcher, and Sansalone, *Pathways to Justice*, 66.
61. Ibid., 66.
62. Borko and Shavelson, *Teacher Decision Making*, 313; and Kennedy, *Parsing the Practice of Teaching*, 9–10.
63. Cohen, *Teacher Autonomy*, 186.
64. Biesta and Tedder, *Agency and Learning in the Lifecourse*, 145.
65. Priestley, Biesta, and Robinson, *Teachers as 'Agents of Change'*, 192.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Teacher Questionnaire

Describe the manner in which you make instructional decisions in regard to teaching the Holocaust.

- What materials do you currently use?
- What strategies do you currently use?
- How are the above determined? What drove/informed those decisions?
- What are your learning objectives for the unit/lesson(s) in which you teach about the Holocaust?
- How, if at all, might an experience with Holocaust-related art shift the above?

Appendix 2

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

1. Remind participants of their original responses, and ask them to elaborate / be more specific. (Ex: You said you use discussion; do you use a particular strategy or format for those?)
2. Of all the materials available, describe your decision-making process in selecting materials and strategies to use.
3. How confident are you in your abilities to teach about the Holocaust using art?
4. What, if any, barriers do you see in using art to teach about the Holocaust?
5. Did you use any of the materials or strategies provided by [University] before, during, or after bringing your students to the exhibit? (Examples: artwork catalog, website with strategies / info, packet of strategies)
6. How do you think students were impacted by visiting the exhibit? What makes you say that? (may have come from discussions afterward, assignments)
 - a. Reactions in regard to exposure to art
 - b. Reactions in regard to learning about the Holocaust

Appendix 3

Example: Partially Ordered Meta-Matrix for Interview Data Organization and Initial Themes

	Material	Strategies	Decision Making	Other (Explain)
Interview w DM	0:50–1:15 referenced Newsela, current events	2:05–2:28 because of exhibit, had students create visual representations of theme and museum walk	4:30–4:41 curriculum but presentation and additional resources are teacher discretion12:00–12:53 student interest, AP, ties to current world	13:53–14:30 powerful art, led to self-directed learning
Interview w DM	Interview Q3 Confidence – Using Art 4:58–5:53 Not confident, limited in history and art; art is open to interpretation so less pressure for ‘correct’ answer	Interview Q4 Barriers – Using Art 7:45–7:45 Access, quantity/quality	Interview Q5 [University] Materials 2:50–3:05 catalog to help students recognize symbols 5:28–5:38 exhibit material increased confidence for teacher and students 9:11–9:29 need for more interactive activities 16:15–16:58 Will continue to use [University] materials next year and incorporate more art	Interview Q6 Student Impact 1:17–1:26 engagement 3:23–4:06 higher-level thinking, bigger questions 7:04–7:14 student recall 10:10–11:05 made connections, textual analysis 17:32–19:00: ‘stuck out’; students referred back in other units