

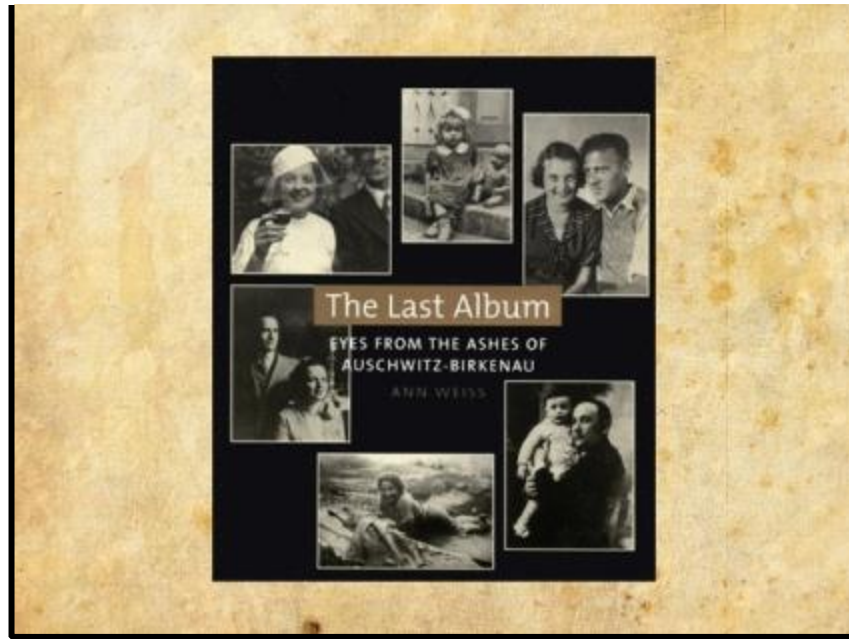
THE LAST ALBUM

EYES FROM THE ASHES OF AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

Teacher's Guide – The Last Album by Sam Parish, Naples, FL

“In October of 1986, during a tour of Auschwitz, I unexpectedly came upon a locked archive whose contents were to become the inspiration for THE LAST ALBUM: Eyes from the Ashes of Auschwitz-Birkenau. There I discovered over 2,000 personal photographs, confiscated from Jews deported in 1943. These were the photos they couldn't leave behind. Millions of photos were brought by millions of people to Nazi slave labor and death camps, but there was a secret Nazi edict to destroy not only the people, but also to destroy the symbols of their memories, i.e. all their personal photos, all their letters and all their drawings. Historians have surmised that, out of all the transports, only the photos from this one transport miraculously survived. How? Why?”

Explore The Last Album photo exhibit which consists of images, historical maps, and a video collage drawn from that trove of photographs discovered by Ann Weiss. Examine how they inject life into the lives of those who became Holocaust victims at Auschwitz-Birkenau.



Suggested ideas:

Photo detective

Watch 'Eyes from the Ashes' photomontage, peruse book The Last Album: Eyes from the Ashes of Auschwitz-Birkenau, or walk through photo exhibit, chose a favorite photo and answer the following questions (idea credit of Ann Weiss and Maureen Marullo Carter of Palm Beach Schools)

- ❖ Why do you suppose the person chose this particular photo to take to Auschwitz?
- ❖ What photo would you bring if you were going to a new place without friends or family? (Not a place like Auschwitz)
- ❖ If you could speak to this person, what would you want to know about them?
- ❖ If you could speak to this person, what would you want them to know about you?
- ❖ What does the video tell you about these people that were on one of the last transports into Auschwitz? Were they like you?

In their Shoes

Chose a personal photo in advance to bring without knowing the activity to come.

- Describe the photo (what is happening, who is pictured by name and relationship to you, what is the location, when was the event pictured taking place, other identifying information).
- What is the story associated with the photo? If you don't know or there isn't one, does the photo remind you of a story or event associated with the photo? Why was the photo taken?
- Why did you choose this particular photo for this activity? Why is it special or meaningful to you? How does it make you feel? What does it make you remember?
- What does the photo say about you?

Think historically, act locally...

- ✚ Post-exhibit visit, or after viewing the book, distribute disposable cameras, or use their cell phone camera to document daily life in their community (Consider large events like parades, but also more subtle, neglected events and locations.) Encourage students to experiment with different views, angles, perspectives, etc.
- ✚ Have students print, develop, create a slideshow or collage, title their work, and explain the meaning behind the picture. Which of those pictures would they treasure the most?

You were There...and took the picture

- o Students select a photo that interests them.
- o Have students brainstorm why the photographer took the picture, why the subject posed as they did, what feeling they were trying to convey, etc..
- o Based on above, have students compose a poem (does not have to rhyme) as if the poet was also the photographer.

One-Pager (idea credit J. Paul Getty Museum Education Department)

- Chose a favorite photo and print it out, or save and open on computer/tablet screen.
- Ensure that the photo is centered.
- Imagine the story that describes or surrounds the photo.
- Using colored pencils, crayons, etc., and images cut from newspaper/magazines, write and add words and images that capture your dominant impressions, feelings and/or thoughts OR use clipart and Word art if on a computer/tablet. Make sure your collage tells a story so that your peers can learn just by observing it.

- Title your project, trying to incorporate Holocaust/WWII/ 1940s themes.
- Add two questions you would like answered about the photo.

Tri-Level Photographic analysis

Fold a piece of colored paper in thirds labeling Level 1, 2, 3 as Factual, Analysis, and Historical Context).

✓ Level I (Factual)

Color, lines, shapes, texture, space

What did you notice first? Where is your eye led?

What are people wearing? How are they posed?

Where are their hands resting?

Are you observing from above, in front of, behind (perspective)

When was the photo made?

✓ Level II (Beginning Analysis)

What are the people in the photo looking at?

What expressions are on their faces?

What are they thinking?

What time of day was the photo taken?

Where was the photo taken?

What are they doing?

✓ Level III (Connect to Historical Context)

Who are the people in the photo?

What message is the photographer trying to convey?

What is the situation depicted? What elements in the photo tell you about the situation?

Do the people in the photo need help? If so, how would you help?

Would a photo like this be taken today? Why/why not?

What title/alternative title would you give the photo? Place title on cover page of tri-fold.

Turning a Phrase Quadrant

- Divide a page into four quadrants.
- Present a photo from The Last Album.
- Label each quadrant with a part of speech (noun, verb, adverb, adjective).
- Break class into groups (Noun Group, Verb Group, Adverb Group, Adjective Group).
- Each group will have five minutes to come up with a list of words.
- Then groups should compose sentences using at least one word from each quadrant to capture what is taking place in the photo.

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