



Short assignment ideas for students using the Yad Vashem Online Database of Pages of Testimony

- Israel's first-ever astronaut, Colonel Ilan Ramon ז"ל, was launched into space on January 16, 2003 with Holocaust-era art from Yad Vashem's Art Museum. He contacted Yad Vashem requesting a Holocaust related item to take with him on his launch into space on the shuttle Columbia, due to the significance of the Holocaust to him as a Jew and as an Israeli. On a personal level, the Holocaust is even more meaningful to Ramon as his mother, Tonia Wolferman, is an Auschwitz survivor, and his grandfather, Izchak Kreppel, and other members of his family perished in the death camps. Yad Vashem chose "*Moon Landscape*", created by Petr Ginz, a 14-year-old Jewish boy, during his incarceration in the Theresienstadt ghetto. The moon landscape depicted in Petr's drawing attests to his aspiration to reach a place from where the earth, which threatened his life, could be seen from a secure range. In 1944 Ginz was killed in Auschwitz. Find what you can on the family of Ilan Ramon and Petr Ginz.
- Find out what you can on the family of the 2002 Nobel Prize winner in literature, Imre Kertesz.
- Search for people who were your age when they were killed from the town or country of someone in your family (or someone else that you know).
- Pick one of the above people and find out what you can about their family and the one that filled out his or her page of testimony.
- Find one person from Norway and one from Greece that you find interesting and note what it was that interested you with these persons.
- Find ten Pages of Testimony with photos of children attached to them and tell us how you would use them for a memorial ceremony.
- Find three children under the age of 5 years old.
 - What were their first names?
 - Where were they born?
 - What were their mothers' names?
 - What were their fathers' names?
 - Do you recognize names from your own family members? If so, which ones?
 - Of the names that you find, how many come from the Bible/Tanach?
- Find three people who lived in Berlin, Germany.
 - What were their names?
 - What were their occupations before the Holocaust?
 - Where were they killed and how old were they when they died?
- Use the "Advanced Search" to look for victims who have the same birth month or last name of the student.
- Use the "Stories of Behind the Names" feature on the left hand side of the screen to learn about the people and communities the Nazis destroyed by accessing pictures and information from Pages of



Testimony and by linking a wealth of related images and text culled from the online educational resources of Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies.

- Free lesson plans for working with Pages of Testimony may be downloaded from the Education section of Yad Vashem's website.

Proposal: Student Assignments

Collecting New Pages of Testimony for the Yad Vashem Online Database

- 1) **Family members** – If the student has family members who were murdered in the Holocaust their assignment is to first of all, if they have prior knowledge about these family members, to search the Yad Vashem Online Database of Names to verify if Pages of Testimony have been filled out for them. If they are not certain about the details of their family members killed in the Shoah they should turn to their parents and/or grandparents and collect as much information as possible about all of those persons murdered, including photos if available. After the information has been gathered the student should search the Yad Vashem Online Database to verify if the names of the persons they have collected are already registered. If they do not the student should fill out new Pages of Testimony for each person. If there are Pages in the Database, the student should submit any additional information, scanned photo, letter etc. they have managed to collect that can supplement the existing Page of Testimony (Online forms may be sent directly from the Database screen that has information on a specific victim.)
- 2) **Holocaust survivors** – If the student does not have any family members who were murdered in the Holocaust help them make contact with Holocaust survivors within their community (e.g. a neighbor, at a senior citizen center, a home for the elderly, synagogue etc). The student should carefully approach the survivor and ask if they would be willing to cooperate in this project by sharing information about the family members they lost in the Holocaust for the purpose of filling out Pages of Testimony according to the model described above. You can invite a local nursing home, or survivor group to collaborate with your class in this project.
- 3) **Memorials** – If the student hasn't been successful in finding information about Holocaust victims by searching within the family or with a Holocaust survivor as described above, the third option of finding possible information for this project will be through memorials. After locating memorials for Holocaust victims within their community they should retrieve names and any other information about the individual victims, in order to fill out Pages of Testimony according to the model described above. By a 'memorial' we mean memorial plaques in synagogue, at the community center, cemetery or other location, or any other kind of memorial including information about individual victims of the Holocaust.
- 4) **Commemorations** – Names collected by students can be commemorated at a recitation ceremony marking Yom Hashoah, Kristalnacht, 10 Tevet, or Tisha B'Av.

NOTE: A new user to the Yad Vashem Online Central Database of Shoah Victims' needs to read the user guides, accessible from the site online, or be taught to use the Database in order to optimally utilize and search through the existing Pages of Testimony.