

PLANNING GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

PREPARING

Creating Your Community of Practice

- Invite educators from your school, professional learning community, or a neighboring school or district to join your CP. Participating with educators in different roles can create productive dialogue, so you may want to include instructional coaches, principals, or a district administrator.
 - Participants
 - Select approximately 5 or more educators who:
 - Plan to teach about the Holocaust in 2024-2025
 - Have interest in learning more and actively collaborating with peers
 - Can commit to watching the conference (live or recorded sessions) and meet before and after the conference
 - Have approval to participate from their school or district (if needed)
 - It's ok if:
 - Participants are from a single discipline or multiple disciplines
 - Participants are just beginning to teach about the Holocaust or have more experience
 - Participants are from the same school or different schools
 - Participants can attend live or need to watch recorded sessions

Host A Planning Meeting

Before the 2024 Belfer National Conference for Educators, host a planning session for your CP to kick off your work together.

Pro Tip

Use this [conference planning tool](#) to document your CP's Belfer experience.

- Have CP members introduce themselves and share why teaching about the Holocaust is important to them
- Review the Museum's Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust
- Work as a group to identify shared goals, expected outcomes, and what you hope to learn. Some questions to help you formulate shared goals may include:
 - What outcomes do we hope to see from students?
 - What standards do we hope to address?
 - What do members of the CP want to learn?

- What gaps exist within our current teaching strategy?
- Ensure all CP members are registered for the **2024 Belfer Conference**
- Review the conference schedule to identify sessions that align with your goals using the **Communities of Practice Planning Tool**.
- We encourage your CP to watch the conference together, but they can also attend asynchronously if that works better.
- Select at least one educator from your CP to serve as discussion lead for each session. They will be responsible for facilitating a debrief to identify key insights and observations.
- For each session, identify questions supporting your specific goals:
 - How would I use this content or these approaches in my classroom?
 - What other questions might this content or approach raise for my students?
 - What other background information might I need to prepare for this?

Pro Tip

*Think about creating a **padlet** like this or a Google doc to collaborate with your Community of Practice during the conference.*

- Find a convenient and comfortable space to accommodate the group at a district office, school, community center, or library. Find an accessible location for full group conversation and small group breakout discussions, if needed. Consider whether you will watch the conference on one screen or prefer colleagues use their own devices.
 - If you can't be together, determine the best way to convene virtually to debrief.
- Offer snacks and beverages if possible or encourage educators to bring items to share with the group.

DURING THE CONFERENCE

Gather

When your CP gathers for the conference, take a moment to reorient the group to the goals and expected learning outcomes you've identified, along with an overview of the day's sessions. Remind educators which sessions they've agreed to watch and ensure they have the appropriate guiding questions.

Pro Tip

A resource guide will be provided just before the conference. Have that on hand to reference as you debrief your sessions.

Participate

As educators watch each session, encourage them to take notes, interact with Museum historians and educators, along with peers around the country, using the chat and the community boards. They can bring feedback, insights, and observations to your post-session discussion.

Debrief

Following participation in sessions, educators can discuss what they've learned and work together to consider how it might impact their work preparing and delivering lessons. They should identify lessons or classroom resources covered during the sessions that address their goals. We recommend collecting all of the insights gathered from sessions in one digital document. This will allow everyone to easily review and learn from others, especially if the group can't watch live or if some participants are watching the recorded sessions.

Celebrate

Make time to talk about the benefits of participating in the CP and be sure to affirm your commitment to growing your practice, collaborating with peers, and advancing Holocaust education.

Tell Us About Your Experience

The Museum is interested to know what it was like to participate in the 2024 Belfer National Conference for Educators with your CP. Shortly after the event's conclusion, you will receive a short survey to help us understand what worked and what needs to change to improve the experience.

POST CONFERENCE

Applying What You've Learned

Following the conference, work with educators in your CP to plan which lesson or lessons or other resources you will incorporate into the 2024-2025 school year.

Use the insights gathered during the conference to modify the lesson to address your goals. Discuss how each educator could customize their approach based on subject, grade level, or other criteria to ensure the lesson is relevant to their classroom.

Pro Tip

If you only have 1-2 days, consider using the [Timeline Activity](#), a lesson structured around a multi-layered wall timeline that encourages critical thinking about the relationship between Nazi policy, World War II, historical events, and individual experiences during the Holocaust.

Schedule A Recurring CP Meeting

To ensure your CP can continue to learn together, consider scheduling a regular meeting throughout the school year. This will help educators feel more confident and supported as they prepare for, deliver, and reflect on lesson delivery.

FALL 2024/SPRING 2025

Conduct a CP Refresh

Determine when your CP will be delivering the lesson(s) you've selected and modified as a group. If needed, reacquaint the group with the lesson, key takeaways, and any new information that would support effective instruction.

Use The Lesson In Your Classroom

Before educators deliver the lesson, they may want to review the Museum's **Fundamentals of Teaching about the Holocaust**. If they have any remaining questions, they can also **Ask a Museum Educator** to find answers about resources and instructional strategies.

Reflection on your Experience After Teaching

When it's time for educators in the CP to deliver their lesson, encourage them to reflect on their experience. They should take their insights back to a CP Meeting for discussion with the group.

Share Your Experience Beyond the CP

After delivering the lesson and reflecting on the learning outcomes and changes they would make, educators should share their experiences with other educators in their school, professional learning community or district area. Identify ways to share instructional best practices, lessons learned and Museum resources with local educators through district webinars or relevant conferences.

Explore More

On-Demand professional learning sessions from past Belfer Conferences are available on the Museum's website. Review the **entire collection** to see if other topics may interest you.

About the 2024 Belfer National Conference for Educators

Live, Virtual Sessions: June 24–26

Access Sessions On Demand Following Conference

[REGISTER]

At this free, virtual conference, explore the latest practices in accurate, meaningful teaching about the Holocaust with leading historians and educators. Discover thought-provoking resources that provide students with historical context and opportunities to advance media literacy skills.

- Engage with leading experts in real time through multiple live interactive sessions.
- Watch all sessions at your convenience on-demand following the conference.
- Access historically accurate, classroom-ready lessons and resources based on the Museum's extensive collections.
- Get a first look at the Museum's newest teaching tools.
- Hear directly from Holocaust survivors and experienced educators.
- Connect in real time with a community of educators dedicated to teaching and learning about the Holocaust

Benefits

- Earn 24 hours of certified professional development in most states.
- Enjoy free books and resources mailed directly to you (available for teachers with a US or US territory mailing address).

Why Educators Love The Belfer Conference

“The uniqueness of Belfer is the combination of vetted classroom-ready resources and the exposure to a variety of world-class historians and museum professionals.”

“In 15 years of teaching middle and high school ELA, this conference is, by far, the BEST professional development that I have been privileged to attend.”

“The resources, the people, and the experiences! The opportunity to learn from museum staff and educators is a MUST-do opportunity, especially being virtual—no travel, no arrangements to be made, no expenses.”