



## The Butterfly Project Lesson Plan for Grades 3-4

**Goal:** Children will learn the connection between the symbol of the butterfly and the Holocaust.

**Objectives:** The children should be able to:

1. explain how being different is unique, special, and enriches all of our lives.
2. analyze some children's poetry and drawings from Terezin (Theresienstadt concentration camp).
3. understand the general idea of what life was like for the Jews in a concentration camp during the Holocaust.
4. engage in an art project.

**Materials:**

- [Butterfly painting kit](#)
- [Butterfly Project PowerPoint](#) for grades 3-4
- Pictures of children's drawing from Terezin (included in the PowerPoint presentation)
- Poem – "The Butterfly" (included)

**Activities:**

1. Use PowerPoint to show children pictures of different colors and sizes of butterflies (slide #2).
2. Ask children to make comparisons—similarities and differences--between the butterflies:
  - a. i.e. differences: shape (large or small), color, live in different places; similarities: all have colors, are insects :antennae, three body parts, six legs, two sets of wings, they fly, etc.
3. Emphasize that although the butterflies are different from each other in some ways (unique), they are all beautiful. It is important to state that butterflies are a symbol of freedom because they can fly wherever they want to go.
4. Show children a picture of multi-ethnic children (slide 3). Ask how are they different (sizes, color of skin and hair, shape of eyes, where they live, religions, languages spoken, food eaten, size of family, number of siblings, pets, etc.) and how are they all the same (all G-d's children who NEED to feel loved, cared for, and safe). Emphasize that although the children are different from each other in some ways (unique), they all have the same needs and are beautiful.
5. Read the poem, "The Butterfly"
6. Give a short overview about the Holocaust, and explain to the children that the poem was written in Terezin, which was one of the concentration camps in Czechoslovakia.
7. Read and discuss the poem and ask the students the following questions:
  - a. Who do you think wrote this poem?
  - b. What experience do you think generated this poem?



- c. To what is the poem referring?
  - d. How does this poem make you feel?
  - e. Why do you think the butterfly became a symbol in children's poetry and drawing during this time? (for the teacher – it's a symbol of hope, beauty, and freedom).
8. Art project – Paint a ceramic butterfly (each butterfly represents a child who perished in the Holocaust). Encourage them to make them colorful. When they are finished painting the butterfly, point out the beauty and uniqueness of each one. Be sure to explain to the children that their butterflies (whether they will remain at their own school or be sent to another) will be a reminder to all who view them of the beauty in the differences and the importance of freedom.

**Recommended Book:**

- I Never Saw Another Butterfly edited by Hana Volavkova (a collection of works of art and poetry by children who lived in the Terezin concentration camp).
- Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust by Eve Bunting

**Additional Web Links:**

- <http://www.nonduality.com/terezin.htm>
- [http://richards-creations.net/Pages/8/\\_Irena-s\\_Children.html](http://richards-creations.net/Pages/8/_Irena-s_Children.html)
- <http://www.yadvashem.org>
- <http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/c.juLVJ8MRKtH/b.1580483/k.BE32/Home.htm>
- <http://www.ushmm.org/>



### **“The Butterfly”**

The last, the very last,  
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.  
Perhaps if the sun’s tears would sing  
against a white stone. . . .

Such, such a yellow  
Is carried lightly ‘way up high.  
It went away I’m sure because it wished to  
kiss the world good-bye.

For seven weeks I’ve lived in here,  
Penned up inside this ghetto.  
But I have found what I love here.  
The dandelions call to me  
And the white chestnut branches in the court.  
Only I never saw another butterfly.  
That butterfly was the last one.  
Butterflies don’t live in here,  
in the ghetto.

~ Pavel Friedman 4.6.1942