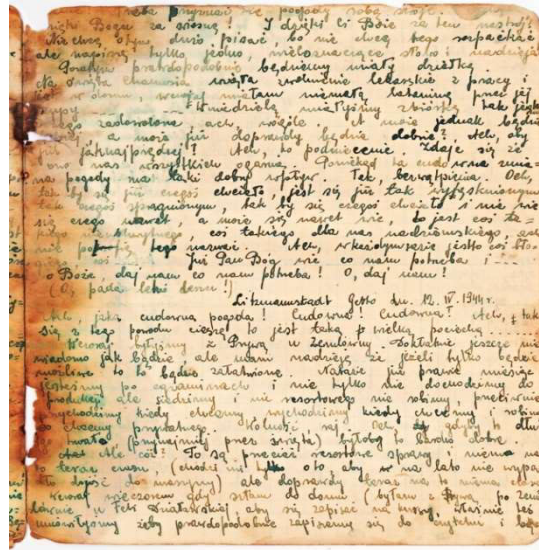


Rywka Lipszyc: Background

Like other young people, Rywka kept a diary during the Holocaust years. This diary, which was miraculously preserved from the years 1943-1944, gives us an insight into the experience of Nazi occupation and mass murder.



7: A page from Rywka's diary.

Activity 2:

Choose two students to read the quotes aloud, providing them with Lesson 1: Handout 1 (see appendix). Lead the students in a discussion of the following questions:

- Have you ever had thoughts similar to those of Rywka?
- What is a diary? What is a log?
- How many of you keep diaries/logs?
- How many of you post on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter?
- Why do we post on social media? As a means of self-expression? Recording our thoughts? Sharing with others? Why is the Twitter logo "Follow me!"?
- Why do you think Rywka kept her own diary?
- Why are diaries an important source for historians?



8: Twitter logo.

Rywka Lipszyc: Background

Lesson 1: Handout 1

Sunday December 11, 1943.

“You know, when I’m very upset I admire life. Then I wonder. Why at the same time are some people crying while others are laughing and or suffering? At the same time some are being born, others die or get sick. Those who are born grow up. They mature in order to live and suffer. And yet all of them want to live, desperately to live. A living person always has hope (sometimes unconsciously). Although life is difficult, it is also beautiful. Life has its strange charm.”

Tuesday October 12, 1943.

“Unfortunately, people only take age into consideration, and not brains. They consider me, a 14-year-old, to be a child...but they are wrong. I am going to waste. But nobody knows it. I can only feel that if I were older, people would understand me better.

Tips for Teaching:

- A good way to introduce the concept of the diary is to compare the similarities and differences between diary entries and entries on social media (Instagram, Twitter, blogs, etc.) Students will find the concept of recording their thoughts familiar, although the concept of privacy has changed somewhat over the past 50 years.
- Consider introducing the term ‘log’ both as a precursor to ‘blog’ (origin: ‘web log’) and as a separate literary form. Some students may view diaries as too emotional, and may identify more with a ship captain, adventurer, or scientist who records daily events and achievements in a brief, unemotional, and yet precise fashion.
- You may wish to ask your students to begin to think about what they would write in their own diary entries. Such an activity will follow at the end of this curriculum.