

WORLD HISTORY & ENGLISH

Grades 9–12 • Yeshiva High School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to let you know about an important and meaningful lesson your child will be experiencing in our class. We will be viewing and discussing **Episode 4: "What is the Holocaust?"** from a video series presented by Israeli-American actress and advocate **Noa Tishby**. This lesson is designed as part of our unit on Jewish history and identity.

What will students learn?

- The definition of the Holocaust and the etymology of the word *genocide*
- The historical roots of European antisemitism and how Nazi ideology exploited centuries of hatred
- The progression of Nazi persecution: from propaganda and discriminatory laws (Nuremberg Laws, 1935) to ghettos, mass shootings, and the systematic murder of Jews in death camps like Auschwitz-Birkenau and Treblinka
- The fate of Holocaust survivors — displacement, DP camps, and the urgent need for a Jewish homeland
- The connection between the Holocaust and the Zionist movement and the founding of the State of Israel
- Personal reflection on what it means to remember, bear witness, and act against hatred

About the video and presenter:

Noa Tishby is an Israeli-American actress, producer, and author who has become a prominent advocate for Israel and Jewish history education. Her video series is designed to present complex Jewish history in an engaging, accessible, and historically accurate format for young audiences. The video is age-appropriate and does not include graphic imagery.

How we approach this sensitive topic:

The Holocaust is one of history's most painful chapters, and we take its teaching seriously. Our classroom discussion is guided by trauma-informed practices — we create a safe space for students to process difficult emotions, ask questions, and engage thoughtfully. We focus on names, stories, and human dignity, not just statistics. We also connect this history to broader themes of civic responsibility, standing up against hatred, and the importance of Jewish memory and continuity.

Standards alignment:

This lesson aligns with California History-Social Science Content Standards (10.8, 11.7.5) and Common Core ELA Standards for Grades 9–12, including critical reading, evidence-based writing, and collaborative discussion.

How you can support your child at home:

- Ask your child: *'What did you learn in school today about the Holocaust?'* — and listen without interrupting.
- Share any family history related to the Holocaust, if applicable and appropriate.
- Watch the video together at home: search for 'Noa Tishby What is the Holocaust?'
- If your child is processing difficult feelings about this topic, validate those feelings — it means the lesson is working.
- Consider visiting a local Holocaust museum or memorial together.

As a Jewish school, we carry the sacred obligation of Zachor — to remember. Teaching our students the history of the Holocaust is one of the most important things we can do to honor those who were lost and to protect the future. I am grateful for your partnership in this work.

Sincerely,

World History / English Teacher

OPTIONAL PARENT RESPONSE — Please return this portion if you would like to be in touch.

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian name: _____

I would like to discuss this topic further with the teacher.

My child has specific needs I would like you to be aware of (please describe below):

